

כתביהם

THE WRITINGS



תהלים | TEHILLIM
PSALMS

BOOK ONE

1

Happy is the one who has not followed the counsel of the wicked,

or taken the path of sinners,

or joined the company of the insolent;

²rather, this one delights in GOD's teaching,
and studies^a that teaching day and night.

³Such a one is like a tree planted beside streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season,
whose foliage never fades,
and whatever it produces thrives.^b

⁴Not so the wicked;

rather, they are like chaff that wind blows away.

⁵Therefore the wicked will not survive judgment,
nor will sinners, in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶For GOD cherishes the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked is doomed.

2

Why do nations assemble,

and peoples plot^a vain things;

²kings of the earth take their stand,

and regents intrigue together

against the one anointed by GOD?^b

³"Let us break the cords of their yoke,
shake off their ropes from us!"

⁴The One who is enthroned in heaven laughs;
my Sovereign mocks at them.

⁵Then [God] speaks to them in anger,
terrifying them with divine rage,

^a 1.2 *studies* Or "recites"; lit. "utters."

^b 1.3 *it produces thrives* Or "he does prospers."

^a 2.1 *plot* Lit. "utter."

^b 2.2 *against the one anointed by God* Lit. "against GOD and against His anointed one."

⁶“But I have installed My king
on Zion, My holy mountain!”
⁷Let me tell of the decree:
 GOD said to me,
 “You are My son,
 I have fathered you this day.^c
⁸Ask it of Me,
 and I will make the nations your domain;
 your estate, the limits of the earth.
⁹You can smash them with an iron mace,
 shatter them like potter’s ware.”
¹⁰So now, O kings, be prudent;
 accept discipline, you rulers of the earth!
¹¹Serve GOD in awe;
 tremble with fright,^d
¹²pay homage in good faith,^e
 lest [God] be angered, and your way be doomed
 in the mere flash of divine anger.
 Happy are all who take refuge in [God].

3 A psalm of David when he fled from his son Absalom.

²O ETERNAL One, my foes are so many!
 Many are those who attack me;
³many say of me,
 “There is no deliverance for him through God.” *Selah.^a*
⁴But You, O ETERNAL One, are a shield about me,
 my glory, who holds my head high.
⁵I cry aloud to GOD,
 who answers me from the holy mountain. *Selah.*
⁶I lie down and sleep and wake again,
 for GOD sustains me.

^c 2.7 *You are My son, / I have fathered you this day* I.e., GOD agrees to provide the king with what fathers in the ancient Near East normally provide sons: ongoing protection and aid, in return for accountability. Compare 2 Sam. 7.14 and Ps. 89.27ff.

^d 2.11 *tremble with fright* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others “rejoice with trembling.”

^e 2.12 *pay homage in good faith* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 3.3 *Selah* A liturgical direction of uncertain meaning.

⁷I have no fear of the myriad forces
arrayed against me on every side.

⁸Rise, O ETERNAL One!
Deliver me, O my God!
For You slap all my enemies in the face;^b
You break the teeth of the wicked.
⁹Deliverance is GOD's;
Your blessing be upon Your people!

Selah.

4 For the leader; with instrumental music.^a A psalm of David.

²Answer me when I call,
O God, my vindicator!
You freed me from distress;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

³You who side against me,^b how long will my glory be mocked,
will you love illusions,
have recourse to frauds?

Selah.

⁴Know that GOD keeps the faithful close;
GOD hears when I call out.

⁵So tremble, and sin no more;
ponder it on your bed, and sigh.^c

Selah.

⁶Offer sacrifices in righteousness
and trust in GOD.

⁷Many say, “O for good days!”
Bestow Your favor on us,^d O ETERNAL One.

⁸You put joy into my heart
when their grain and wine show increase.

⁹Safe and sound, I lie down and sleep,
for You alone, O ETERNAL One, keep me secure.^e

^b 3.8 *face* Lit. “cheek.”

^a 4.1 *For the leader; with instrumental music* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 4.3 *who side against me* Or “high and mighty ones,” or “people”; force of Heb. uncertain.

^c 4.5 *sigh* In contrast to others “be still.”

^d 4.7 *Bestow Your favor on us* Lit. “Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us”; cf. Num. 6.25–26.

^e 4.9 *for You alone, O ETERNAL One, keep me secure* Or “for You, O ETERNAL One, keep me alone and secure.”

5 For the leader; on *nehiloθ*.^a A psalm of David.

²Give ear to my speech, O ETERNAL One;
consider my utterance.

³Heed the sound of my cry,
my Sovereign and God,
for I pray to You.

⁴Hear my voice, O ETERNAL One, at daybreak;
at daybreak I plead before You, and wait.

⁵For You are not a God who desires wickedness;
evil cannot abide with You;
⁶the wanton cannot endure in Your sight.

You detest all evildoers;

⁷You doom those who speak lies;
deceitful murderers GOD abhors.

⁸But I, through Your abundant love, enter Your house;
I bow down in awe at Your holy temple.

⁹O ETERNAL One, lead me along Your righteous [path]^b
because of my watchful foes;
make Your way straight before me.

¹⁰For there is no sincerity on their lips;^c
their heart is [filled with] malice;
their throat is an open grave;
their tongue slippery.

¹¹Condemn them, O God;
let them fall by their own devices;
cast them out for their many crimes,
for they defy You.

¹²But let all who take refuge in You rejoice,
ever jubilant as You shelter them;
and let those who love Your name exult in You.

¹³For You surely bless the righteous, O ETERNAL One,
encompassing them with favor like a shield.

^a5.1 For the leader; on *nehiloθ* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b5.9 lead me along Your righteous [path] Or “as You are righteous, lead me.”

^c5.10 lips Lit. “mouth.”

6 For the leader; with instrumental music on the *sheminith*.^a A psalm of David.

²O ETERNAL One, do not punish me in anger,
do not chastise me in fury.

³Have mercy on me, O ETERNAL One, for I languish;
heal me, O ETERNAL One, for my bones shake with terror.

⁴My whole being is stricken with terror,
while You, ETERNAL One—O, how long!

⁵O ETERNAL One, turn! Rescue me!

Deliver me as befits Your faithfulness.

⁶For there is no praise of You among the dead;
in Sheol, who can acclaim You?

⁷I am weary with groaning;
every night I drench my bed,
I melt my couch in tears.

⁸My eyes are wasted by vexation,
worn out because of all my foes.

⁹Away from me, all you evildoers,
for GOD heeds the sound of my weeping.

¹⁰GOD heeds my plea,
GOD accepts my prayer.

¹¹All my enemies will be frustrated and stricken with terror;
they will turn back in an instant, frustrated.

7 *Shiggaion of David*,^a which he sang to GOD, concerning Cush, a Benjamite.

²O my ETERNAL God, in You I seek refuge;
deliver me from all my pursuers and save me,
³lest, like a lion, they tear me apart,
rending in pieces, and no one save me.

⁴O my ETERNAL God, if I have done such things,
if my hands bear the guilt of wrongdoing,
⁵if I have dealt evil to my ally—

^a 6.1 *For the leader; with instrumental music on the sheminith* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 7.1 *Shiggaion of David* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

I who rescued my foe without reward^b—
 6then let the enemy pursue and overtake me;
 let my life be trampled to the ground,
 and my body dwell in the dust. Selah.

⁷Rise, O ETERNAL One, in Your anger;
 assert Yourself against the fury of my foes;^c
 bestir Yourself in my behalf;
 You have ordained judgment.

^{8d}Let the assembly of peoples gather about You,
 with You enthroned above, on high.

⁹GOD judges the peoples;
 vindicate me, O ETERNAL One,
 for the righteousness and blamelessness that are mine.

¹⁰Let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
 but establish the righteous;
 the One who probes the mind and conscience^e is God the
 Righteous.

¹¹I look to God to shield me;^f
 the deliverer of the upright.

¹²God vindicates the righteous;
 God pronounces doom^g each day.

¹³If someone [wicked] does not turn back, but whets his sword,
 bends his bow and aims it,
¹⁴then against himself he readies deadly weapons,
 and makes his arrows sharp.^h

¹⁵See, he hatches evil, conceives mischief,
 and gives birth to fraud.

¹⁶He has dug a pit and deepened it,
 and will fall into the trap he made.

¹⁷His mischief will recoil upon his own head;
 his lawlessness will come down upon his skull.

^b 7.5 *I who rescued my foe without reward* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others “or stripped my foe clean.”

^c 7.7 *against the fury of my foes* Or “in Your fury against my foes.”

^d 7.8 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^e 7.10 *conscience* Lit. “kidneys.”

^f 7.11 *I look to God to shield me* Cf. Ibn Ezra and Kimhi; lit. “My Shield is upon God.”

^g 7.12 *pronounces doom* In contrast to others “has indignation.”

^h 7.13–14 Meaning of these verses uncertain. Or, with God as the main subject: “If one does not turn back, [God] whets a sword, / bends a bow and aims it— / ¹⁴preparing deadly weapons for him, / and making the arrows sharp.”

¹⁸I will praise GOD for being righteous,
and sing a hymn to the name of GOD Most High.

8 For the leader; on the *gittith*.^a A psalm of David.

²O ETERNAL One, our Sovereign,
how majestic is Your name throughout the earth—
You who have covered the heavens with Your splendor!^b

³cFrom the mouths of infants and sucklings
You have founded strength on account of Your foes,
to put an end to enemy and avenger.

⁴When I behold Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
the moon and stars that You set in place,
⁵what are human beings that You have been mindful of
them,
mortals that You have taken note of them,
⁶that You have made them little less than divine,^d
and adorned them with glory and majesty?

⁷You have made them master over Your handiwork,
laying the world at their feet—
⁸sheep and oxen, all of them,
and wild beasts, too;
⁹the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea,
whatever travels the paths of the seas.

¹⁰O ETERNAL One, our Sovereign, how majestic is Your name
throughout the earth!

9 For the leader; ‘almuth labben.^a A psalm of David.

²I will praise You, ETERNAL One, with all my heart;
I will tell all Your wonders.

³I will rejoice and exult in You,
singing a hymn to Your name, O Most High.

^a 8.1 For the leader; on the *gittith* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 8.2 You who have covered the heavens with Your splendor Meaning of Heb. uncertain; or “You whose splendor is celebrated all over the heavens!”

^c 8.3 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^d 8.6 divine Or “the angels.”

^a 9.1 For the leader; ‘almuth labben Meaning of Heb. uncertain; some mss. and ancient versions, ‘al muth labben, as though “over the death of the son.”

⁴When my enemies retreat,
 they stumble to their doom at Your presence.
⁵For You uphold my right and claim,
 enthroned as righteous judge.
⁶You blast the nations;
 You destroy the wicked;
 You blot out their name forever.
^{7b}The enemy is no more—
 ruins everlasting;
 You have torn down their cities;
 their very names are lost.
⁸But GOD, whose throne is set up for judgment, abides forever;
 ⁹it is [God] who judges the world with righteousness,
 rules the peoples with equity.
¹⁰GOD is a haven for the oppressed,
 a haven in times of trouble.
¹¹Those who know Your name trust You,
 for You do not abandon those who turn to You, O
 ETERNAL One.
¹²Sing a hymn to the ETERNAL, who reigns in Zion;^c
 declare God's deeds among the peoples.
¹³For [God] does not ignore the cry of the afflicted;
 the One who requites bloodshed is mindful of them.^d
¹⁴Have mercy on me, O ETERNAL One;
 see my affliction at the hands of my foes,
 You who lift me from the gates of death,
 ¹⁵so that in the gates of Fair Zion^e
 I might tell all Your praise,
 I might exult in Your deliverance.
¹⁶The nations sink in the pit they have made;
 their own foot is caught in the net they have hidden.
¹⁷GOD is known,
 having worked judgment;
 the wicked are snared by their own devices.

Higgaion.^f Selah.

^b 9.7 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^c 9.12 *who reigns in Zion* Or “O You who dwell in Zion.”

^d 9.13 Clauses transposed for clarity.

^e 9.15 *Fair Zion* Lit. “the Daughter of Zion.”

^f 9.17 *Higgaion* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁸Let the wicked be^g in Sheol,
 all the nations who ignore God!
¹⁹Not always shall the needy be ignored,
 nor the hope of the afflicted forever lost.
²⁰Rise, O ETERNAL One!
 Let not mortals have power;
 let the nations be judged in Your presence.
²¹Strike fear into them,^h O ETERNAL One;
 let the nations know they are only mortals.

Selah.

10

Why, O ETERNAL One, do You stand aloof,
 heedless in times of trouble?
²The wicked in their arrogance hound the lowly—
 may they be caught in the schemes they devise!^a
³The wicked crow about their unbridled lusts;
 the grasping revile and scorn GOD.
⁴The wicked, arrogant as they are,
 in all their scheming [think],^b
 “God does not care^c
 and does not call to account.”^d
⁵Their ways prosper at all times;
 Your judgments are far beyond them;
 they snort at all their foes.
⁶Such people think, “I shall not be shaken,
 through all time never be in trouble.”
⁷Their mouth is full of oaths, deceit, and fraud;
 mischief and evil are under their tongue.
⁸They lurk in outlying places;
 from a covert they slay the innocent;
 their eyes spy out the hapless.
⁹They wait in a covert like a lion in a lair;
 wait to seize the lowly;
 they seize the lowly as they pull their net shut;

^g 9.18 *be* In contrast to others “return to.”^h 9.21 *Strike fear into them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.^a 10.2 *may they be caught in the schemes they devise* Or “they (i.e., the lowly) are caught by the schemes they devised.”^b 10.3–4 *The wicked crow . . . their scheming [think]* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.^c 10.4 *God does not care* Lit. “There is no God.”^d 10.4 Clauses transposed for clarity.

¹⁰they stoop, they crouch,
and the hapless fall prey to their might.^e

¹¹They think, “God is not mindful,
the divine face is hidden and never looks.”

¹²Rise, O ETERNAL One!
Strike at them,^f O God!
Do not forget the lowly.

¹³Why should the wicked scorn God,
thinking You do not call to account?

¹⁴You do look!
You take note of mischief and vexation!
To require is in Your power.^g
To You the hapless can entrust themselves;
You have ever been the orphans’ help.

¹⁵O break the power of the wicked and evildoers,
so that when You look for^h their wickedness
You will find it no more.

¹⁶GOD is sovereign for ever and ever;
the nations will perish from thisⁱ land.

¹⁷You will listen to the entreaty of the lowly, O ETERNAL One,
You will make their hearts firm;
You will incline Your ear
¹⁸to champion the orphan and the downtrodden,
that mere earthly mortals tyrannize no more.^j

11 For the leader. Of David.

In GOD I take refuge;
how can you say to me,
“Take to the hills like a bird!”^a

²For see, the wicked bend the bow,
they set their arrow on the string
to shoot from the shadows at the upright.

^e 10.10 *and the hapless fall prey to their might* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 10.12 *Strike at them* Lit. “Lift Your hand.”

^g 10.14 *To require is in Your power* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^h 10.15 *look for* A play on *darash*, which in vv. 4 and 13 means “to call to account.”

ⁱ 10.16 *this* Heb. “His.”

^j 10.18 *that mere earthly mortals tyrannize no more* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 11.1 *the hills like a bird* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; lit. “your hill, bird!”

³When the foundations are destroyed,
what can the righteous do?"^b

⁴GOD is in the divine palace;
GOD—whose throne is in heaven,
whose eyes behold, whose gaze searches humankind.

⁵GOD seeks out someone righteous,
but loathes the wicked one who loves injustice.

⁶[God] will rain down upon the wicked blazing coals and
sulfur;
a scorching wind shall be their lot.^c

⁷For GOD is righteous,
and loves righteous deeds;
the upright shall behold God's face.

12 For the leader; on the *sheminith*. A psalm of David.

²Help, O ETERNAL One!
For the faithful are no more;
the loyal have vanished from among mortals.

³People speak lies to one another;
their speech is smooth;
they talk with duplicity.

⁴May GOD cut off all flattering lips,
every tongue that speaks arrogance.

⁵They say, "By our tongues we shall prevail;
with lips such as ours, who can be our master?"

⁶"Because of the groans of the plundered poor and needy,
I will now act," says GOD.

"I will give help," [God] affirms to them.^a

⁷GOD's words are pure words,
silver purged in an earthen crucible,
refined sevenfold.

⁸You, O ETERNAL One, will keep them,
guarding each from this age^b evermore.

^b 11.3 *When the foundations are destroyed, / what can the righteous do?* Or "For the foundations are destroyed; what has the Righteous One done?" Or "If the foundations are destroyed, what have the righteous accomplished?"

^c 11.6 *their lot* Lit. "the portion of their cup."

^a 12.6 *"I will give help," [God] affirms to them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 12.8 *from this age* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁹On every side the wicked roam
when baseness is exalted among mortals.^c

13 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²How long, O ETERNAL One; will You ignore me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?
³How long will I have cares on my mind,
grief in my heart all day?
How long will my enemy have the upper hand?
⁴Look at me, answer me, O my ETERNAL God!
Restore the luster to my eyes,
lest I sleep the sleep of death;
⁵lest my enemy say, “I have overcome him,”
my foes exult when I totter.
⁶But I trust in Your faithfulness,
my heart will exult in Your deliverance.
I will sing to GOD,
who has been good to me.

14 ^aFor the leader. Of David.

The scoundrel thinks,
“God does not care.”^b
Human^c deeds are corrupt and loathsome;
no one does good.
²GOD looks down from heaven on humankind
to find someone with understanding,
someone mindful of God.
³All have turned bad,
altogether foul;
there is no one who does good,
not even one.
⁴Are they so witless, all those evildoers,
who devour my people as they devour food,
and do not invoke GOD?

^c 12.9 *when baseness is exalted among mortals* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 14.1 Cf. Psalm 53.

^b 14.1 *God does not care* Lit. “There is no God”; cf. 10.4.

^c 14.1 *Human* Heb. “Their.”

⁵There they will be seized with fright,
 for God is present in the circle of the righteous.
⁶You may set at naught the counsel of the lowly,
 but GOD is their refuge.

⁷O that the deliverance of Israel might come from Zion!
When GOD restores the fortunes of this covenanted people,
 Jacob will exult, Israel will rejoice.

15 A psalm of David.

GOD, who may sojourn in Your tent,
 who may dwell on Your holy mountain?
²Anyone who lives without blame,
 who does what is right,
 and in their heart acknowledges the truth;
³whose tongue is not given to evil;^a
 who has never done harm to a compatriot,
 or borne reproach for [acts toward] a neighbor;
⁴for whom someone contemptible is abhorrent,
 but who honors those who fear GOD;
 who keeps an oath even when it hurts;
⁵who has never lent money at interest,
 or accepted a bribe against the innocent.
One who acts thus shall never be shaken.

16 A *michtam*^a of David.

Protect me, O God, for I seek refuge in You.

²I say to GOD,
 “You are my Sovereign, my benefactor;
 there is none above You.”^b

³As to the holy and mighty ones that are in the land,
 my whole desire concerning them is that

^a 15.3 *whose tongue is not given to evil* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; or “who has no slander upon the tongue.”

^a 16.1 *michtam* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 16.2 *my benefactor; / there is none above You* In contrast to others “I have no good but in You.”

⁴those who espouse another [god]
 may have many sorrows!^c
 I will have no part of their bloody libations;
 their names will not pass my lips.
⁵GOD is my allotted share and portion;^d
 You control my fate.
⁶Delightful country has fallen to my lot;
 lovely indeed is my estate.
⁷I bless GOD who has guided me;
 my conscience^e admonishes me at night.
⁸I am ever mindful of GOD's presence—
 who is at my right hand; I shall never be shaken.
⁹So my heart rejoices,
 my whole being exults,
 and my body rests secure.
¹⁰For You will not abandon me to Sheol,
 or let Your faithful one see the Pit.
¹¹You will teach me the path of life.
 In Your presence is perfect joy;
 delights are ever in Your right hand.

17 A prayer of David.

Hear, O ETERNAL One, what is just;
 heed my cry, give ear to my prayer,
 uttered without guile.
²My vindication will come from You;
 Your eyes will behold what is right.
³You have visited me at night, probed my mind,
 You have tested me and found nothing amiss;
 I determined that my mouth should not transgress.
⁴As for mortals' dealings,
 in accord with the command of Your lips,^a
 I have kept in view the fate^b of the lawless.

^c 16.3–4 *As to the holy and mighty ones . . . sorrows* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; “holy and mighty ones” taken as epithets for divine beings; cf. *qedoshim* in Ps. 89.6, 8, and *'addirim* in 1 Sam. 4.8.

^d 16.5 *portion* Lit. “cup.”

^e 16.7 *conscience* Lit. “kidneys.”

^a 17.3–4 *I determined . . . lips* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 17.4 *fate* Cf. Prov. 1.19; lit. “paths.”

⁵My feet have held to Your paths;
my legs have not given way.

⁶I call on You;
You will answer me, God;
turn Your ear to me,
hear what I say.

⁷Display Your faithfulness in wondrous deeds,
You who deliver with Your right hand
those who seek refuge from assailants.

⁸Guard me like the apple of Your eye;
hide me in the shadow of Your wings
⁹from the wicked who despoil me,
my mortal enemies who^c encircle me.

¹⁰Their hearts are closed to pity;^d
they mouth arrogance;
¹¹now they hem in our feet on every side;
they set their eyes roaming over the land.

¹²They are^e like a lion eager for prey,
a king of beasts lying in wait.

¹³Rise, O ETERNAL One! Go forth to meet my enemies.^f
Bring them down;

rescue me from the wicked with Your sword,
¹⁴from mortals, O ETERNAL One, with Your hand,
from mortals whose share in life is fleeting.

But as to Your treasured ones,
fill their bellies.^g

Their children too shall be satisfied,
and have something to leave over for their young.

¹⁵Then I, justified, will behold Your face;
awake, I am filled with the vision of You.

^c 17.9 *my mortal enemies who* Or “from my enemies who avidly.”

^d 17.10 *Their hearts are closed to pity* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 17.12 *They are* Heb. “He is.”

^f 17.13 *my enemies* Heb. “him.”

^g 17.14 *from mortals, O ETERNAL One, . . . fill their bellies* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

18

^aFor the leader. Of David, the servant of GOD, who addressed the words of this song to GOD after GOD had saved him from the hands of all his enemies and from the clutches of Saul.

²He said:

I adore you, O ETERNAL One, my strength,^b

³O ETERNAL One, my crag, my fortress, my deliverer,
my God, my rock in which I take shelter,
my shield, my mighty champion,^c my haven.

⁴All praise! I called on GOD^d

and was delivered from my enemies.

⁵Ropes^e of Death encompassed me;

torrents of Belial^f terrified me;

⁶ropes of Sheol encircled me;

snares of Death confronted me.

⁷In my anguish I called on the ETERNAL,

cried out to my God,

who from a heavenly abode^g heard my voice,

whose ears received my cry.

⁸Then the earth rocked and quaked;

the foundations of the mountains shook—

rocked by divine indignation;

⁹smoke went up from God's nostrils,

devouring fire from God's mouth—

live coals blazing forth.

¹⁰[God] bent the sky and came down,

thick cloud beneath divine feet.

¹¹[God] mounted a cherub and flew,

gliding on the wings of the wind.

¹²[God] made darkness a screen—

pavilions of dark thunderheads,

dense clouds of the sky all around.

^a18.1–51 This poem occurs again at 2 Sam. 22, with a number of variations, some of which are cited in the following notes.

^b18.2 *I adore you, O ETERNAL One, my strength* Not in 2 Sam. 22.2.

^c18.3 *mighty champion* Lit. “horn of rescue.”

^d18.4 *All praise! I called on GOD* Construction of Heb. uncertain.

^e18.5 *Ropes* Cf. 2 Sam. 22.5 “breakers.”

^f18.5 *Belial* I.e., the netherworld, like “Death” and “Sheol.”

^g18.7 *a heavenly abode* Lit. “His temple”; cf. v. 10.

- ¹³In the divine brilliance,
 hail and fiery coals pierced those clouds.^h
- ¹⁴Then GOD thundered from heaven,
 the Most High gave forth voice—
 hail and fiery coalsⁱ—
¹⁵letting shafts fly, and scattering them;
 discharging lightning, and routing them.
- ¹⁶The ocean bed was exposed;
 the foundations of the world were laid bare
 by Your mighty roaring, O ETERNAL One,
 at the blast of Your breath.^j
- ¹⁷Reaching down from on high, [God] took me,
 drawing me out of the mighty waters—
¹⁸rescuing me from my fierce enemy,
 from foes too strong for me.
- ¹⁹They confronted me on the day of my calamity,
 but GOD was my support—
²⁰bringing me out to freedom,
 pleased with me enough to rescue me.
- ²¹GOD rewarded me according to my merit—
 requiting the cleanliness of my hands—
²²for I have kept to the ways of GOD
 and have not been guilty before my God;
²³for I am mindful of all God's rules
 and have not disregarded God's laws.
- ²⁴I have been blameless toward [God],
 and have guarded myself against sinning;
²⁵and GOD has requited my merit,
 according to the evident cleanliness of my hands.
- ²⁶With the loyal, You deal loyally;
 with the blameless,^k blamelessly.
- ²⁷With the pure, You act purely,
 and with the perverse, You are wily.
- ²⁸It is You who deliver lowly folk,
 but haughty eyes You humble.

^h 18.13 *pierced those clouds* Cf. 2 Sam. 22.13 “blazed.”

ⁱ 18.14 *hail and fiery coals* Not in 2 Sam. 22.14.

^j 18.16 *Your breath* Lit. “the breath of Your nostrils.”

^k 18.26 *the blameless* Heb. “blameless man.”

29 It is You who light my lamp;
 my ETERNAL God lights up my darkness.
 30 With You, I can rush a barrier;^l
 with my God, I can scale a wall.
 31 The way of God is perfect;
 the word of the ETERNAL is pure.
 [God] shields all who seek refuge.
 32 Truly, who is a god except the ETERNAL,
 who is a rock but our God?—
 33 the God who girded me with might,
 who made my way secure;
 34 who made my legs like a deer's,
 and set me firmly on the^m heights;
 35 who trained my hands for battle—
 my arms can bend a bow of bronze!
 36 You have granted me the shield of Your protection;
 Your right hand has sustained me,
 Your careⁿ has made me great.
 37 You have let me stride on freely;
 my feet have not slipped.
 38 I pursued my enemies and overtook them;
 I did not turn back till I destroyed them.
 39 I struck them down,
 and they could rise no more;
 they lay at my feet.
 40 You have girded me with strength for battle,
 brought low my adversaries before me,
 41 made my enemies turn tail before me;
 I wiped out my foes.
 42 They cried out, but there was none to deliver;
 to GOD, who did not answer them.
 43 I ground them fine as windswept dust;
 I trod them flat like dirt of the streets.
 44 You have rescued me from the strife of people;
 You have set me at the head of nations;
 peoples I knew not must serve me.

^l 18.30 *barrier* Cf. note to 2 Sam. 22.30; or “troop.”

^m18.34 *the* Taking *bamothai* as a poetic form of *bamoth*; cf. Hab. 3.19; in contrast to others “my.”

ⁿ18.36 *care* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others “condescension.”

⁴⁵At the mere report of me they are submissive;
foreign peoples cower before me.

⁴⁶Foreign peoples lose courage,
and come trembling out of their strongholds.^o

⁴⁷GOD lives! Blessed is my rock!
Exalted be God, my deliverer,

⁴⁸the God who has vindicated me
and made peoples subject to me,
⁴⁹who rescued me from my enemies,
who raised me clear of my adversaries,
saved me from the lawless opposition!

⁵⁰For this I sing Your praise among the nations, ETERNAL One,
and hymn Your name:

⁵¹According great victories^p to Your^q king,
keeping faith with Your^r anointed,
with David and his offspring evermore.

19 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²The heavens declare the glory of God,
the sky proclaims God's handiwork.

³Day to day makes utterance,
night to night speaks out.

⁴There is no utterance,
there are no words,
whose sound goes unheard.^a

⁵Their^b voice^c carries throughout the earth,
their words to the end of the world.

[God] placed in them a tent for the sun,
⁶who is like a groom coming forth from the chamber,
like a hero, eager to run his course.

^o 18.46 *and come trembling out of their strongholds* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^p 18.51 *According great victories* Cf. 2 Sam. 22.51, "Tower of victory."

^q 18.51 *Your* Heb. 3rd person.

^r 18.51 *Your* See preceding note.

^a 19.4 *whose sound goes unheard* With Septuagint, Symmachus, and Vulgate; or "their sound is not heard."

^b 19.5 *Their* Namely, of the heavens.

^c 19.5 *voice* Cf. Septuagint, Symmachus, and Vulgate; Arabic *qawwah*, "to shout."

⁷His rising-place is at one end of heaven,
and his circuit reaches the other;
nothing escapes his heat.

⁸The teaching of GOD is perfect,
renewing life;
the decrees of GOD are enduring,
making the simple wise,

⁹The precepts of GOD are just,
rejoicing the heart;
the instruction of GOD is lucid,
making the eyes light up.

¹⁰The fear of GOD is pure,
abiding forever;
the judgments of GOD are true,
righteous altogether,
¹¹more desirable than gold,
than much fine gold;
sweeter than honey,
than drippings of the comb.

¹²Your servant pays them heed;
in obeying them there is much reward.

¹³Who can be aware of errors?
Clear me of unperceived guilt,

¹⁴and from willful sins^d keep Your servant;
let them not dominate me;
then shall I be blameless
and clear of grave offense.

¹⁵May the words of my mouth
and the prayer of my heart^e
be acceptable to You,
O ETERNAL One, my rock and my redeemer.

20 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²May GOD answer you in time of trouble,
the name of Jacob's God keep you safe—

^d19.14 *willful sins* Or “the arrogant”; cf. 119.51.

^e19.15 *heart* For *leb* as a source of speech, see note to Eccl. 5.1.

³sending you help from the sanctuary,
and sustaining you from Zion.
⁴May [God] receive the tokens^a of all your grain offerings,
and approve^b your burnt offerings. *Selah.*
⁵May your desire be granted,
your every plan fulfilled.
⁶May we shout for joy in your victory,
arrayed by standards in the name of our God.
 May GOD fulfill your every wish.
⁷Now I know that GOD will give victory to our anointed one,
will answer him from the heavenly sanctuary
with the mighty victories of God's right arm.
⁸They [call] on chariots, they [call] on horses,
but we call on the name of the ETERNAL our God.
⁹They collapse and lie fallen,
but we rally and gather strength.
¹⁰O ETERNAL One, grant victory to the king;
may [God] answer us when we call.^c

21 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²O ETERNAL One, the king rejoices in Your strength;
how greatly he exults in Your victory!
³You have granted him the desire of his heart,
have not denied the request of his lips. *Selah.*
⁴You have proffered him blessings of good things,
have set upon his head a crown of fine gold.
⁵He asked You for life; You granted it;
a long life, everlasting.
⁶Great is his glory through Your victory;
You have endowed him with splendor and majesty.
⁷You have made him blessed forever,
gladdened him with the joy of Your presence.

^a **20.4 receive the tokens** Cf. 'azkarah, "token portion" of grain offering; Lev. 2.2, 9, 16, etc.

^b **20.4 approve** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c **20.10 O ETERNAL One, grant victory to the king; / may [God] answer us when we call** Or "O ETERNAL One, grant victory! / May the King answer us when we call," depicting GOD as the figure who leads the (divine) army into battle.

⁸For the king trusts in GOD;
 through the faithfulness of the Most High
 he will not be shaken.

⁹Your hand is equal to all Your enemies;
 Your right hand overpowers Your foes.

¹⁰You set them ablaze like a furnace
 when You show Your presence.^a

GOD in anger destroys them;
 fire consumes them.

¹¹You wipe their offspring from the earth,
 their issue from among humankind.

¹²For they schemed against You;
 they laid plans,
 but could not succeed.

¹³For You make them turn back^b
 by Your bows aimed at their face.

¹⁴Be exalted, O ETERNAL One, through Your strength;
 we will sing and chant the praises of Your mighty deeds.

22 For the leader; on *ayyeleth ha-shahar*.^a A psalm of David.

²My God, my God,
 why have You abandoned me;
 why so far from delivering me
 and from my anguished roaring?

³My God,
 I cry by day—You answer not;
 by night, and have no respite.

⁴But You are the Holy One,
 enthroned,
 the Praise of Israel.^b

⁵In You our ancestors trusted;
 they trusted, and You rescued them.

⁶To You they cried out
 and they escaped;

^a 21.10 *when You show Your presence* Or “at the time of Your anger.”

^b 21.13 *For You make them turn back* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 22.1 *ayyeleth ha-shahar* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 22.4 *But You are the Holy One, / enthroned, / the Praise of Israel* Or “But You are holy, enthroned upon the praises of Israel.”

in You they trusted
and were not disappointed.

⁷But I am a worm, less than human;^c
scorned by everyone, despised by people.

⁸All who see me mock me;
they curl their lips,^d
they shake their heads.

⁹“Let him commit himself to GOD;
let [God] rescue him,
let [God] save him,
for [God] is pleased with him.”

¹⁰You drew me^e from the womb,
made me secure at my mother’s breast.

¹¹I became Your charge at birth;
from my mother’s womb You have been my God.

¹²Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

¹³Many bulls surround me,
mighty ones of Bashan encircle me.

¹⁴They open their mouths at me
like tearing, roaring lions.

¹⁵My life ebbs away:^f
all my bones are disjointed;
my heart is like wax,
melting within me;
¹⁶my vigor dries up like a shard;
my tongue cleaves to my palate;
You commit me to the dust of death.

¹⁷Dogs surround me;
a pack of evil ones closes in on me,
like lions [they maul] my hands and feet.^g

¹⁸I take the count of all my bones
while they look on and gloat.

^c 22.7 *less than human* Or “inconsequential.”

^d 22.8 *they curl their lips* Lit. “they open wide with a lip.”

^e 22.10 *drew me* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 22.15 *My life ebbs away* Lit. “I am poured out like water.”

^g 22.17 *like lions [they maul] my hands and feet* With Rashi; cf. Isa. 38.13.

¹⁹They divide my clothes among themselves,
casting lots for my garments.

²⁰But You, O ETERNAL One, be not far off;
my strength, hasten to my aid.

²¹Save my life from the sword,
my precious life^h from the clutches of a dog.

²²Deliver me from a lion's mouth;
from the horns of wild oxen rescueⁱ me.

²³Then will I proclaim Your fame to my kin,
praise You in the congregation.

²⁴You who fear GOD, give praise!
All you offspring of Jacob, show honor!
Be in dread, all you offspring of Israel!

²⁵For [God] did not scorn, and did not spurn,
the plea^j of anyone lowly;
[God] did not turn away^k from them;
when they cried out, [God] listened.

²⁶Because of You I offer praise^l in the great congregation;
I pay my vows in the presence of God's worshipers.

²⁷Let the lowly eat and be satisfied;
let all who seek GOD give praise.
Always be of good cheer!

²⁸Let all the ends of the earth pay heed and turn to GOD,
and the peoples of all nations prostrate themselves before
You;

²⁹for sovereignty is GOD's,
who rules the nations.

³⁰^mAll those in full vigor shall eat and prostrate themselves;
all those at death's door, whose spirits flag,
shall bend the knee in submission.

³¹Offspring shall serve [God];

^h **22.21** *precious life* Lit. "only one."

ⁱ **22.22** *rescue* Lit. "answer."

^j **22.25** *plea* Or "plight."

^k **22.25** *turn away* Lit. "hide His face."

^l **22.26** *Because of You I offer praise* Lit. "From You is my praise."

^m **22.30** Meaning of verse uncertain; in contrast to others "All the fat ones of the earth shall eat and worship; / All they that go down to the dust shall kneel before Him, / Even he that cannot keep his soul alive."

the Sovereign's fame shall be proclaimed to the generation
³²to come;
they shall tell of the beneficence to people yet to be born,
for [God] has acted.

23 A psalm of David.

GOD is my shepherd;
I lack nothing.
²[God] makes me lie down in green pastures,
and leads me to water in places of repose—^a
³renewing my life,
guiding me in the right paths
as befits the divine name.
⁴Though I walk through a valley of deepest darkness,^b
I fear no harm, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff—they comfort me.
⁵You spread a table for me in full view of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my drink is abundant.
⁶Only goodness and steadfast love shall pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in GOD's house
for many long years.

24 Of David. A psalm.

The earth is GOD's and all that it holds,
the world and its inhabitants.
²For [God] founded it upon the ocean,
set it on the nether-streams.
³Who may ascend GOD's mountain?
Who may stand in this holy place?—
⁴Anyone who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who has not taken a false oath by My^a life
or sworn deceitfully.

^a 23.2 *water in places of repose* In contrast to others "still waters."

^b 23.4 *a valley of deepest darkness* In contrast to others "the valley of the shadow of death."

^a 24.4 *My* Ancient versions and some mss. read "God's."

⁵They shall carry away a blessing from GOD,
a just reward from God, their deliverer.

⁶Such is the circle^b of those who turn to [You],^c
Jacob, who seek Your presence.

Selah.

⁷O gates, lift up your heads!
Up high, you everlasting doors,
so the King^d of glory may come in!

⁸Who is the King of glory?—
GOD, mighty and valiant,
GOD, valiant in battle.

⁹O gates, lift up your heads!
Lift them up, you everlasting doors,
so the King of glory may come in!

¹⁰Who is the King of glory?—
GOD of Hosts
is truly the King of glory!

Selah.

25 Of David.

- ¶ O ETERNAL One, I set my hope on You;
- ¶ ²my God, in You I trust;
may I not be disappointed,
may my enemies not exult over me.
- ¶ ³O let no one who looks to You be disappointed;
let the faithless be disappointed, empty-handed.
- ¶ ⁴Let me know Your paths, O ETERNAL One;
teach me Your ways;
- ¶ ⁵guide me in Your true way and teach me,
for You are God, my deliverer;
it is You I look to at all times.
- ¶ ⁶O ETERNAL One, be mindful of Your compassion
and Your faithfulness;
they are old as time.
- ¶ ⁷Be not mindful of my youthful sins and transgressions;
in keeping with Your faithfulness consider what is in my favor,
as befits Your goodness, O ETERNAL One.

^b 24.6 *circle* Lit. “generation.”

^c 24.3 [You] Heb. 3rd person.

^d 24.7 *King* I.e., the One who leads the celestial army.

- ¶ ⁸Good and upright is GOD,
 who shows sinners the way.
- ¶ ⁹[God] guides the lowly in the right path,
 and teaches the lowly the godly way.
- ¶ ¹⁰All GOD's paths are steadfast love
 for those who keep the decrees of the covenant.
- ¶ ¹¹As befits Your name, O ETERNAL One,
 pardon my iniquity though it be great.
- ¶ ¹²Whoever fears GOD
 will be shown what path to choose.
- ¶ ¹³They shall live a happy life,
 and their children shall inherit the land.
- ¶ ¹⁴GOD's counsel^a is for those who show reverence;
 to them the covenant is made known.
- ¶ ¹⁵My eyes are ever toward GOD,
 who will loose my feet from the net.
- ¶ ¹⁶Turn to me, have mercy on me,
 for I am alone and afflicted.
- ¶ ¹⁷My deep distress^b increases;
 deliver me from my straits.
- ¶ ¹⁸Look at my affliction and suffering,
 and forgive all my sins.
- ¶ ¹⁹See how numerous my enemies are,
 and how unjustly they hate me!
- ¶ ²⁰Protect me and save me;
 let me not be disappointed,
 for I have sought refuge in You.
- ¶ ²¹May integrity and uprightness watch over me,
 for I look to You.
- ²²O God, redeem Israel
 from all its distress.

26 Of David.

Vindicate me, O ETERNAL One,
 for I have walked without blame;

^a 25.14 *counsel* Or “secret.”

^b 25.17 *My deep distress* Lit. “The distress of my heart.”

I have trusted in GOD;
 I have not faltered.

²Probe me, O ETERNAL One, and try me,
 test my heart and mind;^a
³for my eyes are on Your steadfast love;
 I have set my course by it.^b

⁴I do not consort with scoundrels,
 or mix with hypocrites;

⁵I detest the company of evildoers,
 and do not consort with the wicked;

⁶I wash my hands in innocence,
 and walk around Your altar, O ETERNAL One,

⁷raising my voice in thanksgiving,
 and telling all Your wonders.

⁸O ETERNAL One, I love Your temple abode,
 the dwelling-place of Your glory.

⁹Do not sweep me away with sinners,
 or [snuff out] my life with murderers,
¹⁰who have schemes at their fingertips,
 and hands full of bribes.

¹¹But I walk without blame;
 redeem me, have mercy on me!

¹²My feet are on level ground.
 In assemblies I will bless GOD.

27 Of David.

GOD is my light and my help;
 whom should I fear?

GOD is the stronghold of my life,
 whom should I dread?

²When evildoers assail me
 to devour my flesh^a—
 it is they, my foes and my enemies,
 who stumble and fall.

^a 26.2 *heart and mind* Lit. “kidneys and heart.”

^b 26.3 *for my eyes are on Your steadfast love; / I have set my course by it* Or “I am aware of Your faithfulness, and always walk in Your true [path].”

^a 27.2 *to devour my flesh* Or “to slander me”; cf. Dan. 3.8; 6.25.

³Should an army besiege me,
 my heart would have no fear;
 should war beset me,
 still would I be confident.

⁴One thing I ask of GOD,
 only that do I seek:
 to live in GOD's house
 all the days of my life,
 to gaze upon GOD's beauty,
 to frequent^b the temple.

⁵I will be sheltered in God's pavilion
 on an evil day,
 granted the protection of God's tent,
 and raised up high upon a rock.

⁶Now is my head high
 over my enemies round about;
 I sacrifice in that tent with shouts of joy,
 singing and chanting a hymn to GOD.

⁷Hear, O ETERNAL One, when I cry aloud;
 have mercy on me, answer me.

⁸In Your behalf^c my heart says:
 "Seek My face!"

O ETERNAL One, I seek Your face.

⁹Do not hide Your face from me;
 do not thrust aside Your servant in anger;
 You have ever been my help.

Do not forsake me, do not abandon me,
 O God, my deliverer.

¹⁰Though my father and mother abandon me,
 GOD will take me in.

¹¹Show me Your way, O ETERNAL One,
 and lead me on a level path
 because of my watchful foes.

¹²Do not subject me to the will of my foes,
 for false witnesses and unjust accusers
 have appeared against me.

^b 27.4 *to frequent* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 27.8 *In Your behalf* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹³Had I not the assurance
that I would enjoy GOD's goodness
in the land of the living . . .

¹⁴Look to GOD;
be strong and of good courage!
O look to GOD!

28 Of David.

O ETERNAL One, I call to You;
my rock, do not disregard me,
for if You hold aloof from me,
I shall be like those gone down into the Pit.

²Listen to my plea for mercy
when I cry out to You,
when I lift my hands
toward Your inner sanctuary.

³Do not count me^a with the wicked and evildoers
who profess goodwill toward their fellows
while malice is in their heart.

⁴Pay them according to their deeds,
their malicious acts;
according to their handiwork pay them,
give them their deserts.

⁵For they do not consider GOD's deeds,
the work of divine hands.

May [God] tear them down,
never to rebuild them!

⁶Blessed is GOD,
who listens to my plea for mercy.

⁷GOD is my strength and my shield,
the One in whom my heart trusts.

I was helped,^b and my heart exulted,
so I will give glory with my song.

^a 28.3 *count me* Or “drag me off”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 28.7 *helped* Or “strengthened.”

⁸GOD is their strength;^c
 and a stronghold for the deliverance of our anointed ruler.^d
⁹Deliver and bless Your very own people;
 tend them and sustain them forever.

29 A psalm of David.

Ascribe to GOD, O divine beings,
 ascribe to GOD glory and strength.
²Ascribe to GOD the glory of the holy name;
 bow down to GOD, majestic in holiness.
³GOD's voice is over the waters;
 the God of glory thunders,
 GOD, over the mighty waters.
⁴GOD's voice is power;
 GOD's voice is majesty;
⁵GOD's voice breaks cedars;
 GOD shatters the cedars of Lebanon—
⁶making Lebanon skip like a calf,^a
 Sirion, like a young wild ox.
⁷GOD's voice kindles flames of fire;
⁸GOD's voice convulses the wilderness;
 GOD convulses the wilderness of Kadesh;
⁹GOD's voice causes hinds to calve,
 and strips forests bare;^b
 while in the divine temple all say “Glory!”
¹⁰GOD sat enthroned at the Flood;
 GOD sits enthroned, ruler forever.
¹¹May strength be granted to GOD's people;
 may GOD bless this people with well-being.

^c 28.8 *their strength* Septuagint, Saadia, and others render, and some mss. read, ‘oz le’ammo, “the strength of God’s people.”

^d 28.8 *our anointed ruler* Heb. “His anointed one.”

^a 29.6 *making Lebanon skip like a calf* Lit. “makes them skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion....”

^b 29.9 *and strips forests bare* Or “brings ewes to early birth.”

30 A psalm of David. A song for the dedication of the House.^a

²I extol You, O ETERNAL One,
for You have lifted me up,
and not let my enemies rejoice over me.

³O my ETERNAL God,
I cried out to You,
and You healed me.

⁴O ETERNAL One, You brought me up from Sheol,
preserved me from going down into the Pit.

⁵O you faithful of GOD, sing out,
and praise the holy name.

⁶For [God] is angry but a moment,
and when pleased, there is life.

One may lie down weeping at nightfall;^b
but at dawn there are shouts of joy.

⁷When I was untroubled,
I thought, “I shall never be shaken,”
⁸for You, O ETERNAL One, when You were pleased,
made [me]^c firm as a mighty mountain.

When You hid Your face,
I was terrified.

⁹I called to You, O ETERNAL One;
to my Sovereign I made appeal,

¹⁰“What is to be gained from my death,^d
from my descent into the Pit?

Can dust praise You?
Can it declare Your faithfulness?

¹¹Hear, O ETERNAL One, and have mercy on me;
O ETERNAL One, be my help!”

¹²You turned my lament into dancing,
you undid my sackcloth and girded me with joy,
¹³that [my] whole being might sing hymns to You endlessly;
O my ETERNAL God, I will praise You forever.

^a30.1 *the House* I.e., the temple.

^b30.6 *One may lie down weeping at nightfall* Or “Weeping may linger for the night.”

^c30.8 [me] Following Saadia, R. Isaiah of Trani; cf. Ibn Ezra.

^d30.10 *death* Lit. “blood.”

31 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²I seek refuge in You, O ETERNAL One;
 may I never be disappointed;
 as You are righteous, rescue me.

³Incline Your ear to me;
 be quick to save me;
 be a rock, a stronghold for me,
 a citadel, for my deliverance.

⁴For You are my rock and my fortress;
 You lead me and guide me as befits Your name.

⁵You free me from the net laid for me,
 for You are my stronghold.

⁶Into Your hand I entrust my spirit;
 You redeem me, O ETERNAL One, faithful God.

⁷I detest those who rely on empty folly,
 but I trust in GOD.

⁸Let me exult and rejoice in Your faithfulness
 when You notice my affliction,
 are mindful of my deep distress,
⁹and do not hand me over to my enemy,
 but grant me relief.^a

¹⁰Have mercy on me, O ETERNAL One,
 for I am in distress;
 my eyes are wasted by vexation,
 my substance and body too.^b

¹¹My life is spent in sorrow,
 my years in groaning;
 my strength fails because of my iniquity,
 my limbs waste away.

¹²Because of all my foes
 I am the particular butt of my neighbors,
 a horror to my friends;
 those who see me on the street avoid me.

¹³I am put out of mind like the dead;
 I am like an object given up for lost.

^a 31.9 *grant me relief* Lit. “make my feet stand in a broad place.”

^b 31.10 *my substance and body too* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁴I hear the whisperings of many,
intrigue^c on every side,
as they scheme together against me,
plotting to take my life.

¹⁵But I trust in You, O ETERNAL One;
I say, “You are my God!”

¹⁶My fate is in Your hand;
save me from the hand of my enemies and pursuers.

¹⁷Show favor to Your servant;
as You are faithful, deliver me.

¹⁸O ETERNAL One, let me not be disappointed when I call You;
let the wicked be disappointed;
let them be silenced in Sheol;
¹⁹let lying lips be stilled
that speak haughtily against the righteous
with arrogance and contempt.

²⁰How abundant is the good
that You have in store for those who fear You,
that You do in full view
for those who take refuge in You.

²¹You grant them the protection of Your presence
against the opposition’s schemes;^d
You shelter them in Your pavilion
from contentious tongues.

²²Blessed is GOD,
who has been wondrously faithful to me,
a veritable bastion.

²³Alarmed, I had thought,
“I am thrust out of Your sight”;
yet You listened to my plea for mercy
when I cried out to You.

²⁴So love GOD, all you faithful;
GOD guards the loyal,
and more than requites
the one who acts arrogantly.

^c 31.14 *intrigue* In contrast to others “terror.”

^d 31.21 *against the opposition’s schemes* Or “against human schemes.” Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²⁵Be strong and of good courage,
all you who wait for GOD.

32 Of David. A *maskil*.^a

Happy is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered over.

²Happy the person whom GOD does not hold guilty,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

³As long as I said nothing,
my limbs wasted away
from my anguished roaring all day long.

⁴For night and day
Your hand lay heavy on me;
my vigor waned
as in the summer drought.

Selah.

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to You;
I did not cover up my guilt;
I resolved, “I will confess my transgressions to GOD,”
and You forgave the guilt of my sin.

Selah.

⁶Therefore let all the faithful pray to You
upon discovering [their sin],^b
that the rushing mighty waters
not overtake them.

⁷You are my shelter;
You preserve me from distress;
You surround me with the joyous shouts of deliverance.

Selah.

⁸Let me enlighten you
and show you which way to go;
let me offer counsel; my eye is on you.

⁹Be not like a senseless horse or mule
whose movement must be curbed by bit and bridle;^c
far be it from you!^d

^a32.1 *maskil* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b32.6 *upon discovering [their sin]* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others “in a time when You may be found.”

^c32.9 *whose movement must be curbed by bit and bridle* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d32.9 *far be it from you* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; for this rendering cf. Ibn Ezra.

¹⁰Many are the torments of the wicked,
but those who trust in GOD
shall be surrounded with favor.

¹¹Rejoice in GOD and exult, O you righteous;
shout for joy, all the upright!

33

Sing forth, O you righteous, to GOD;
it is fitting that the upright offer praise.

²Praise GOD with the lyre;
with the ten-stringed harp sing out;
³sing [God] a new song;
play sweetly with shouts of joy.

⁴For the word of GOD is right,
and God's every deed is faithful.

⁵[God] loves what is right and just;
the earth is full of GOD's faithful care.

⁶By the word of GOD the heavens were made,
by the breath of God's mouth, all their host.

⁷[God] heaps up the ocean waters like a mound,
stores the deep in vaults.

⁸Let all the earth fear GOD;
let all the inhabitants of the world feel dread.

⁹For [God] spoke, and it was;
issued the command, and it endured.

¹⁰GOD frustrates the plans of nations,
brings to naught the designs of peoples.

¹¹What GOD plans endures forever,
what [God] designs, for ages on end.

¹²Happy the nation whose God is the ETERNAL,
the people who are chosen as a permanent possession.

¹³GOD looks down from heaven
and sees all humankind.

¹⁴From God's dwelling-place the divine gaze touches
on all the inhabitants of the earth—

¹⁵the One who fashions the hearts of them all,
who discerns all their doings.

¹⁶Kings are not delivered by a large force;
warriors are not saved by great strength;

¹⁷horses are a false hope for deliverance;
 for all their great power they provide no escape.
¹⁸Truly GOD's eye is on those who show reverence,
 who wait for God's faithful care
¹⁹to save them from death,
 to sustain them in famine.
²⁰We set our hope on GOD,
 who is our help and shield;
²¹in whom our hearts rejoice,
 in whose holy name we trust.
²²May we enjoy, O ETERNAL One, Your faithful care,
 as we have put our hope in You.

34 Of David, when he feigned madness in the presence of Abimelech, who turned him out, and he left.^a

- ¶ ²I bless GOD at all times;
 praise is ever in my mouth.
- ¶ ³I glory in GOD;
 let the lowly hear it and rejoice.
- ¶ ⁴Exalt GOD with me;
 let us extol the divine name together.
- ¶ ⁵I turned to GOD, and I was answered;
 I was saved from all my terrors.
- ¶ ⁶People look to [God] and are radiant;
 let their faces not be downcast.
- ¶ ⁷Here was a lowly man who called—
 GOD listened,
 and delivered him from all his troubles.
- ¶ ⁸The angel of GOD camps around those who show awe,
 and rescues them.
- ¶ ⁹Taste and see how good GOD is;
 happy the one^b who takes refuge in the divine!
- ¶ ¹⁰Fear the ETERNAL, you consecrated ones,
 for those who fear [God] lack nothing.
- ¶ ¹¹Lions have been reduced to starvation,
 but those who turn to GOD shall not lack any good.

^a 34.1 *when he feigned madness . . . and he left* Cf. 1 Sam. 21.14ff.

^b 34.9 *one* Or “virile man.”

- ¶ ¹²Come, my children, listen to me;
I will teach you what it is to fear GOD.
- ¶ ¹³Which of you are eager for life
and desire years of good fortune?
- ¶ ¹⁴Guard your tongue from evil,
your lips from deceitful speech.
- ¶ ¹⁵Shun evil and do good,
seek amity^c and pursue it.
- ¶ ¹⁶GOD's eyes are on the righteous,
the ears, attentive to their cry.
- ¶ ¹⁷GOD's face is set against evildoers,
to erase their names from the earth.
- ¶ ¹⁸They^d cry out, and GOD hears,
and saves them from all their troubles.
- ¶ ¹⁹GOD is close to the brokenhearted;
those crushed in spirit are delivered.
- ¶ ²⁰Though their misfortunes be many,
GOD will save the righteous from them all,
- ¶ ²¹Keeping all his bones intact,
not one of them being broken.
- ¶ ²²One misfortune is the deathblow of the wicked;
the foes of the righteous shall be ruined.
- ²³GOD redeems the life of those who render service;
no one who takes refuge in [God] shall be ruined.

35 Of David.

O ETERNAL One, strive with my adversaries,
give battle to my foes,
²take up shield and buckler,
and come to my defense;
³ready the spear and javelin
against my pursuers;
tell me, “I am your deliverance.”

⁴Let those who seek my life
be frustrated and put to shame;
let those who plan to harm me
fall back in disgrace.

^c34.15 *amity* Or “integrity.”

^d34.18 *They* Namely, the righteous of v. 16.

⁵Let them be as chaff in the wind,
 GOD's angel driving them on.
 ⁶Let their path be dark and slippery,
 with GOD's angel in pursuit.
 ⁷For without cause they hid a net to trap me;
 without cause they dug a pit^a for me.
 ⁸Let disaster overtake them unawares;
 let the net they hid catch them;
 let them fall into it when disaster [strikes].
 ⁹Then shall I exult in GOD,
 rejoice in having been delivered.
 ¹⁰All my bones shall say,
 “ETERNAL One, who is like You?
 You save a pauper from someone stronger,
 a needy pauper from a despoiler.”
 ¹¹Malicious witnesses appear
 who question me about things I do not know.
 ¹²They repay me evil for good,
 [seeking] my bereavement.
 ¹³Yet, when they were ill,
 my dress was sackcloth,
 I kept a fast—
 may what I prayed for happen to me!^b
 ¹⁴I walked about as though it were my friend or my kin;
 I was bowed with gloom, like one mourning for a mother.
 ¹⁵But when I stumble, they gleefully gather;
 wretches gather against me,
 I know not why;
 they tear at me without end.
 ¹⁶With impious, mocking grimace^c
 they gnash their teeth at me.
 ¹⁷O my Sovereign, how long will You look on?
 Rescue me from their attacks,^d
 my precious life, from the lions,

^a 35.7 *a pit* Transferred from first clause for clarity.

^b 35.13 *may what I prayed for happen to me* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; lit. “my prayer returns upon my bosom.”

^c 35.15–16 *they tear...grimace* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 35.17 *from their attacks* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁸that I may praise You in a great congregation,
acclaim You in a mighty throng.
¹⁹Let not my treacherous enemies rejoice over me,
or those who hate me without reason wink their eyes.
²⁰For they do not offer amity,
but devise fraudulent schemes against harmless folk.
²¹They open wide their mouths at me,
saying, “Aha, aha, we have seen it!”
²²You have seen it, O ETERNAL One;
do not hold aloof!
O my Sovereign, be not far from me!
²³Wake, rouse Yourself for my cause,
for my claim, O my God and my Sovereign!
²⁴Take up my cause, O my ETERNAL God, as You are
beneficent,
and let them not rejoice over me.
²⁵Let them not think,
“Aha, just what we wished!”
Let them not say,
“We have destroyed him!”
²⁶May those who rejoice at my misfortune
be frustrated and utterly disgraced;
may those who vaunt themselves over me
be clad in frustration and shame.
²⁷May those who desire my vindication
sing forth joyously;
may they always say,
“Extolled be GOD
who desires the well-being of one who renders service,”
²⁸while my tongue shall recite Your beneficent acts,
Your praises all day long.

36 For the leader. Of the servant of GOD, of David.

²I know^a what Transgression says to the wicked;
they have no sense of the dread of God,
³because its speech is seductive to them

^a 36.2 *I know* Lit. “In my heart is.”

till their iniquity be found out and they be hated.^b
⁴Their words are evil and deceitful;
 they will not consider doing good.
⁵In bed they plot mischief;
 they are set on a path of no good,
 they do not reject evil.

⁶O ETERNAL One, Your faithfulness reaches to heaven;
 Your steadfastness to the sky;
⁷Your beneficence is like the high mountains;
 Your justice like the great deep;
 human and animal You deliver, O ETERNAL One.

⁸How precious is Your faithful care, O God!
 Humankind shelters in the shadow of Your wings.
⁹They feast on the rich fare of Your house;
 You let them drink at Your refreshing stream.

¹⁰With You is the fountain of life;
 by Your light do we see light.

¹¹Bestow Your faithful care on those devoted to You,
 and Your beneficence on the upright.

¹²Let not the foot of the arrogant tread on me,
 or the hand of the wicked drive me away.

¹³There lie the evildoers, fallen,
 thrust down, unable to rise.

37 Of David.

- ¶ Do not be vexed by evildoers;
 do not be incensed by wrongdoers;
²for they soon wither like grass,
 like verdure fade away.
- ¶ ³Trust in GOD and do good,
 abide in the land and remain loyal.
- ⁴Seek GOD's favor,
 and you will be granted the desires of your heart.
- ¶ ⁵Leave all^a to GOD;
 be trusting; [God] will do it—

^b 36.3 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^a 37.5 *all* Lit. "your way."

- ⁶causing your vindication to shine forth like the light,
the justice of your case, like the noonday sun.
- ¶ 7 Be patient and wait for GOD,
do not be vexed by the one who is prospering—
the opponent who carries out schemes.
- ¶ 8 Give up anger, abandon fury,
do not be vexed;
it can only do harm.
- ¶ 9 For evildoers will be cut off,
but those who look to GOD—
they shall inherit the land.
- ¶ 10 A little longer and there will be no wicked;
you will look at where they were—
they will be gone.
- ¶ 11 But the lowly shall inherit the land,
and delight in abundant well-being.
- ¶ 12 The wicked scheme against the righteous,
and gnash their teeth at them.
- ¶ 13 My Sovereign laughs at them,
knowing that their day will come.
- ¶ 14 The wicked draw their swords, bend their bows,
to bring down the lowly and needy,
to slaughter the upright.^b
- ¶ 15 Their swords shall pierce their own hearts,
and their bows shall be broken.
- ¶ 16 Better the little that a righteous person has
than the great abundance of the wicked.
- ¶ 17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
but GOD is the support of the righteous.
- ¶ 18 GOD is concerned for the needs^c of the blameless;
their portion lasts forever;
¹⁹they shall not come to grief in bad times;
in famine, they shall eat their fill.
- ¶ 20 But the wicked shall perish,
and GOD's enemies shall be consumed,
like meadow grass^d consumed in smoke.

^b 37.14 *the upright* Lit. “those whose way is upright.”

^c 37.18 *needs* Lit. “days.”

^d 37.20 *meadow grass* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¶ 21 The wicked borrow and do not repay;
 the righteous are generous and keep giving.
- 22 Those blessed by [God] shall inherit the land,
 but those who are cursed shall be cut off.
- ¶ 23 People's steps^e are made firm by GOD,
 when their way is a delight to [God].
- 24 Though they stumble, they do not fall down,
 for GOD gives them support.
- ¶ 25 I have been young and am now old,
 but I have never seen someone righteous abandoned,
 or their children seeking bread.
- 26 They are always generous, and lend,
 and their children are held blessed.
- ¶ 27 Shun evil and do good,
 and you shall abide forever.
- 28 For GOD loves what is right,
 and does not abandon those who are faithful.
 They are preserved forever,
 while the children of the wicked will be cut off.
- 29 The righteous shall inherit the land,
 and abide forever in it.
- ¶ 30 The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom,
 and their tongue speaks what is right.
- 31 The teaching of their God is in their heart;
 their feet do not slip.
- ¶ 32 The wicked watch for the righteous,
 seeking to put them to death;
 GOD will not abandon them to their power,
 and will not let them be condemned in judgment.
- ¶ 34 Look to GOD and keep to the godly way,
 and you will be raised high that you may inherit the land;
 when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.
- ¶ 35 I saw the wicked, powerful,
 well-rooted like a robust native tree.
- 36 Suddenly they vanished and were gone;
 I sought them, but they were not to be found.
- ¶ 37 Mark the blameless, note the upright,
 for there is a future for the person of integrity.

^e 37.23 *People's steps* Or “[Even] the steps of virile men.”

- ³⁸But transgressors shall be utterly destroyed,
the future of the wicked shall be cut off.
- ¶ ³⁹The deliverance of the righteous comes from GOD,
their stronghold in time of trouble.
- ⁴⁰GOD helps them and rescues them,
rescues them from the wicked and delivers them,
for in [God] they seek refuge.

38 A psalm of David. *Lehazkir.^a*

- ²O ETERNAL One, do not punish me in wrath;
do not chastise me in fury.
- ³For Your arrows have struck me;
Your blows have fallen upon me.
- ⁴There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your rage,
no wholeness in my bones because of my sin.
- ⁵For my iniquities have overwhelmed me;^b
they are like a heavy burden, more than I can bear.
- ⁶My wounds stink and fester
because of my folly.
- ⁷I am all bent and bowed;
I walk about in gloom all day long.
- ⁸For my sinews are full of fever;
there is no soundness in my flesh.
- ⁹I am all benumbed and crushed;
I roar because of the turmoil in my mind.
- ¹⁰O my Sovereign, You are aware of all my entreaties;
my groaning is not hidden from You.
- ¹¹My mind reels;
my strength fails me;
my eyes too have lost their luster.
- ¹²My friends and companions stand back from my affliction;
my kin stand far off.
- ¹³Those who seek my life lay traps;
those who wish me harm speak malice;
they utter deceit all the time.

^a38.1 *Lehazkir* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b38.5 *overwhelmed me* Lit. “passed over my head.”

¹⁴But I am like the deaf, unhearing,
 like the mute who cannot speak up;
¹⁵I am like one who does not hear,
 whose mouth has no retort.
¹⁶But I wait for You, O ETERNAL One;
 You will answer, O my Sovereign, my God.
¹⁷For I fear they will rejoice over me;
 when my foot gives way they will vaunt themselves
 against me.
¹⁸For I am on the verge of collapse;
 my pain is always with me.
¹⁹I acknowledge my iniquity;
 I am fearful over my sin;
²⁰for my mortal enemies are numerous;
 my treacherous foes are many.
²¹Those who repay evil for good
 harass me for pursuing good.
²²Do not abandon me, O ETERNAL One;
 my God, be not far from me;
²³hasten to my aid,
 O my Sovereign, my deliverance.

39 For the leader; for *Jeduthun*. A psalm of David.

²I resolved I would watch my step
 lest I offend by my speech;
 I would keep my mouth muzzled
 while the villain was in my presence.
³I was dumb, silent;
 I was very^a still
 while my pain was intense.
⁴My mind was in a rage,
 my thoughts were all aflame;
 I spoke out:
⁵Tell me, O ETERNAL One, what my term is,
 what is the measure of my days;
 I would know how fleeting my life is.

^a39.3 *very* Cf. use of *twb* in Hos. 10.1; Jonah 4.4.

⁶You have made my life just handbreadths long;
 its span is as nothing in Your sight;
 no human endures any longer than a breath.^b

Selah.

⁷Everyone walks about as a mere shadow;
 mere futility is their hustle and bustle,
 amassing and not knowing who will gather in.

⁸What, then, can I count on, O my Sovereign?
 In You my hope lies.

⁹Deliver me from all my transgressions;
 make me not the butt of the benighted.

¹⁰I am dumb, I do not speak up,
 for it is Your doing.

¹¹Take away Your plague from me;
 I perish from Your blows.

¹²You chastise everyone in punishment for sin,
 consuming like a moth what they treasure.

No human is more than a breath.

Selah.

¹³Hear my prayer, O ETERNAL One;
 give ear to my cry;
 do not disregard my tears;
 for like all my forebears
 I am an alien, resident with You.

¹⁴Look away from me, that I may recover,^c
 before I pass away and am gone.

40 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²I put my hope in GOD,
 who inclined toward me,
 and heeded my cry.

³I was lifted out of the miry pit,
 the slimy clay,
 and my feet were set on a rock,
 my legs steadied.

⁴A new song was placed into my mouth,
 a hymn to our God.

^b 39.6 *no human endures any longer than a breath* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 39.14 *that I may recover* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

May many see it and stand in awe,
and trust in GOD.

⁵Happy is the one^a who trusts in GOD,
who turns not to the arrogant or to followers of falsehood.

⁶You, O my ETERNAL God, have done many things;
the wonders You have devised for us
cannot be set out before You;^b
I would rehearse the tale of them,
but they are more than can be told.

⁷You gave me to understand that^c
You do not desire sacrifice and grain offering;
You do not ask for burnt offering and purgation offering.

⁸Then I said,
“See, I will bring a scroll recounting what befell me.”^d

⁹To do what pleases You, my God, is my desire;
Your teaching is in my inmost parts.

¹⁰I proclaimed [Your] righteousness in a great congregation;
see, I did not withhold my words;
O ETERNAL One, You must know it.

¹¹I did not keep Your beneficence to myself;
I declared Your faithful deliverance;
I did not fail to speak of Your steadfast love in a great
congregation.

¹²O ETERNAL One, You will not withhold from me Your
compassion;
Your steadfast love will protect me always.

¹³For misfortunes without number envelop me;
my iniquities have caught up with me;
I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head;
I am at my wits' end.^e

^a 40.5 *the one* Or “a virile man.”

^b 40.6 *You, O my ETERNAL God, have done many things; / the wonders You have devised for us / cannot be set out before You* Or “You, O my ETERNAL God, have done many things— / the wonders You have devised for us; / none can equal You.”

^c 40.7 *You gave me to understand that* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 40.8 *See, I will bring a scroll recounting what befell me* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 40.13 *I am at my wits' end* Or “my courage fails me.”

¹⁴^fO favor me, ETERNAL One, and save me;
O ETERNAL One, hasten to my aid.

¹⁵Let those who seek to destroy my life
be frustrated and disgraced;
let those who wish me harm
fall back in shame.

¹⁶Let those who say “Aha! Aha!” over me
be desolate because of their frustration.

¹⁷But let all who seek You be glad and rejoice in You;
let those who are eager for Your deliverance always say,
“Extolled be GOD!”

¹⁸But I am poor and needy;
may my Sovereign devise [deliverance] for me.
You are my help and my rescuer;
my God, do not delay.

41 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²Happy is someone who is thoughtful of the wretched;
in bad times may GOD keep them^a from harm.

³May GOD guard them and preserve them;
and may they be thought happy in the land.

Do not subject them to the will of their enemies.

⁴GOD will sustain them on their sickbed;
You shall wholly transform their bed of suffering.^b

⁵I said, “O ETERNAL One, have mercy on me,
heal me, for I have sinned against You.”

⁶My enemies speak evilly of me,
“When will he die and his name perish?”

⁷Each of them who comes to visit speaks falsely,
storing up evil thoughts—
speaking them once outside.

⁸All my enemies whisper together against me,
imagining the worst for me.

⁹“Something baneful has settled in him;
he’ll not rise from his bed again.”

^f 40.14–18 Cf. Psalm 70.

^a 41.2 *them* I.e., the thoughtful person.

^b 41.4 *You shall wholly transform their bed of suffering* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁰My ally in whom I trusted,
even someone who shares my bread,
has been utterly false to me.^c

¹¹But You, O ETERNAL One, have mercy on me;
let me rise again and repay them.

¹²Then shall I know that You are pleased with me:
when my enemy cannot shout in triumph over me.

¹³You will support me because of my integrity,
and let me abide in Your presence forever.

¹⁴Blessed is the ETERNAL God of Israel,
from eternity to eternity.
Amen and Amen.

BOOK TWO

42 For the leader. A *maskil* of the Korahites.

²Like a hind crying for water,^a
my soul cries for You, O God;
³my soul^b thirsts for God, the living God;
O when will I come to appear before God!

⁴My tears have been my food day and night;
I am ever taunted with, “Where is your God?”

⁵When I think of this, I pour out my soul:
how I walked with the crowd, moved with them,^c
the festive throng, to the House of God
with joyous shouts of praise.

⁶Why so downcast, my soul,
why disquieted within me?
Have hope in God;
I will yet give praise
for God’s saving presence.^d

^c 41.10 *has been utterly false to me* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 42.2 *water* Lit. “watercourses.”

^b 42.3 *soul* Or “throat.”

^c 42.5 *walked with the crowd, moved with them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 42.6 *for God’s saving presence* Several ancient versions and Heb. mss. connect the end of this verse with the first word in v. 7, reading *yeshu’ot panai we-’Elohai*, “my ever-present help, my God,” as in v. 12 and 43.5.

⁷O my God, my soul is downcast;
 therefore I think of You
 in this land of Jordan and Hermon,
 in Mount Mizar,
⁸where deep calls to deep
 in the roar of Your cataracts;^e
 all Your breakers and billows have swept over me.

⁹By day may GOD devote faithful care,
 so that at night a song may be with me:
 a prayer to the God of my life.

¹⁰I say to God, my rock,
 “Why have You forgotten me,
 why must I walk in gloom,
 oppressed by my enemy?”

¹¹Crushing my bones,^f
 my foes revile me,
 taunting me always with, “Where is your God?”

¹²Why so downcast, my soul,
 why disquieted within me?
 Have hope in God;
 I will yet give praise,
 my ever-present help, my God.

43

^aVindicate me, O God,
 champion my cause
 against faithless people;
 rescue me from treacherous, dishonest opponents.

²For You are my God, my stronghold;
 why have You rejected me?
 Why must I walk in gloom,
 oppressed by the enemy?

³Send forth Your light and Your truth;
 they will lead me;
 they will bring me to Your holy mountain,
 to Your dwelling-place,
⁴that I may come to the altar of God,

^e 42.8 *Your cataracts* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 42.11 *Crushing my bones* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 43.1 A continuation of Psalm 42.

God, my delight, my joy;
 that I may praise You with the lyre,
 O God, my God.
⁵Why so downcast, my soul,
 why disquieted within me?
 Have hope in God;
 I will yet give praise,
 my ever-present help, my God.

44 For the leader. Of the Korahites. A *maskil*.

²We have heard, O God,
 our ancestors have told us
 the deeds You performed in their time,
 in days of old.
³With Your hand You planted them,
 displacing nations;
 You brought misfortune on peoples,
 and drove them out.
⁴It was not by their sword that they took the land,
 their arm did not give them victory,
 but Your right hand, Your arm, and Your goodwill,
 for You favored them.
⁵You are my king,^a O God;
 decree victories for Jacob!
⁶Through You we gore our foes;
 by Your name we trample our adversaries;
⁷I do not trust in my bow;
 it is not my sword that gives me victory;
⁸You give us victory over our foes;
 You thwart those who hate us.
⁹In God we glory at all times,
 and praise Your name unceasingly. Selah.
¹⁰Yet You have rejected and disgraced us;
 You do not go with our armies.
¹¹You make us retreat before our foe;
 our enemies plunder us at will.

^a 44.5 *king* See note at 24.7.

- ¹²You let them devour us like sheep;
 You disperse us among the nations.
- ¹³You sell Your people for no fortune,
 You set no high price on them.
- ¹⁴You make us the butt of our neighbors,
 the scorn and derision of those around us.
- ¹⁵You make us a byword among the nations,
 a laughingstock^b among the peoples.
- ¹⁶I am always aware of my disgrace;
 I am wholly covered with shame
 ¹⁷at the sound of taunting revilers,
 in the presence of the vengeful foe.
- ¹⁸All this has come upon us,
 yet we have not forgotten You,
 or been false to Your covenant.
- ¹⁹Our hearts have not gone astray,
 nor have our feet swerved from Your path,
 ²⁰though You cast us, crushed, to where the sea monster^c is,
 and covered us over with deepest darkness.
- ²¹If we forgot the name of our God
 and spread forth our hands to a foreign god,
 ²²God would surely search it out,
 as the One who knows the secrets of the heart.
- ²³It is for Your sake that we are slain all day long,
 that we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.
- ²⁴Rouse Yourself; why do You sleep, O my Sovereign?
 Awaken, do not reject us forever!
- ²⁵Why do You hide Your face,
 ignoring our affliction and distress?
- ²⁶We lie prostrate in the dust;
 our body clings to the ground.
- ²⁷Arise and help us,
 redeem us, as befits Your faithfulness.

^b **44.15** *laughingstock* Lit. “wagging of the head.”

^c **44.20** *sea monster* Heb. *tannim* = *tannin*, as in Ezek. 29.3; 32.2.

45 For the leader; on *shoshannim*.^a Of the Korahites. A *maskil*. A love song.

²My heart is astir with gracious words;
I speak my poem to a king;
my tongue is the pen of an expert scribe.

³You are fairer than all mortals;
your speech is endowed with grace;
rightly has God given you an eternal blessing.

⁴Gird your sword upon your thigh, O hero,
in your splendor and glory;
⁵^b in your glory, win success;
ride on in the cause of truth and meekness and right;
and let your right hand lead you to awesome deeds.

⁶Your arrows, sharpened,
[pierce] the breast of the king's enemies;
peoples fall at your feet.^c

⁷Your divine throne^d is everlasting;
your royal scepter is a scepter of equity.

⁸You love righteousness and hate wickedness;
rightly has God, your God, chosen to anoint you
with oil of gladness over all your peers.

⁹All your robes [are fragrant] with
myrrh and aloes and cassia;
from ivoried palaces
lutes entertain you.

¹⁰Royal princesses are your favorites;
the consort stands at your right hand,
decked in gold of Ophir.

¹¹Take heed, lass, and note,
incline your ear:
forget your people and your father's house,
¹²and let the king be aroused by your beauty;
since he is your lord, bow to him.

¹³O Tyrian lass,

^a 45.1 *shoshannim* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 45.5 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^c 45.6 [pierce] the breast of the king's enemies; / peoples fall at your feet Clauses transposed for clarity.

^d 45.7 *divine throne* Cf. 1 Chron. 29.23.

the wealthiest people will court your favor with gifts,
¹⁴ goods of all sorts.

The royal princess,
 her dress embroidered with golden mountings,
¹⁵ is led inside to the king;^e
 maidens in her train, her companions,
 are presented to you.
¹⁶ They are led in with joy and gladness;
 they enter the palace of the king.
¹⁷ Your sons will succeed your fathers;
 you will appoint them princes throughout the land.
¹⁸ I commemorate your fame for all generations,
 so peoples will praise you forever and ever.

46 For the leader. Of the Korahites; *alamoth*.^a A song.

² God is our refuge and stronghold,
 a help in trouble, very near.
³ Therefore we are not afraid
 though the earth reels,
 though mountains topple into the sea—
⁴ its waters rage and foam;
 in its swell mountains quake. Selah.
⁵ There is a river whose streams gladden God's city,
 the holy dwelling-place of the Most High.
⁶ God is in its midst, it will not be toppled;
 by daybreak God will come to its aid.
⁷ Nations rage, kingdoms topple;
 at the sound of God's thunder the earth dissolves.
⁸ GOD of hosts is with us;
 the God of Jacob is our haven. Selah.
⁹ Come and see what GOD has done,
 how devastation has been wrought on the earth.
¹⁰ [God] puts a stop to wars throughout the earth,
 breaking the bow, snapping the spear,
 consigning wagons to the flames.

^e 45.14–15 *goods of all sorts . . . to the king* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 46.1 *alamoth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹¹“Desist! Realize that I am God!
I dominate the nations;
I dominate the earth.”

¹²GOD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our haven.

Selah.

47 For the leader. Of the Korahites. A psalm.

²All you peoples, clap your hands,
raise a joyous shout for God.

³For GOD Most High is awesome,
great ruler over all the earth,
⁴who subjects peoples to us,
sets nations at our feet.

⁵[God] chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob the beloved.

Selah.

⁶God ascends midst acclamation;
the ETERNAL, to the blasts of the horn.

⁷Sing, O sing to God;
sing, O sing to our sovereign;
⁸for God is ruler over all the earth;
sing a hymn.^a

⁹God reigns over the nations;
God is seated on the holy throne.

¹⁰The great of the peoples are gathered together,
the retinue of Abraham’s God;
for the guardians of the earth belong to God,
who is greatly exalted.

48 A song. A psalm of the Korahites.

²GOD is great and much acclaimed
in the city of our God,

the holy mountain—

³fair-crested, joy of all the earth,
Mount Zion, summit of Zaphon,^a
city of the great ruler.

^a 47.8 *hymn* Heb. *maskil*, a musical term of uncertain meaning.

^a 48.3 *Zaphon* A term for the divine abode.

⁴Through its citadels, God has become known as a haven.

⁵See, the kings joined forces;
they advanced together.

⁶At the mere sight of it they were stunned,

they were terrified, they panicked;

⁷they were seized there with a trembling,

like a woman in the throes of labor,

⁸as the Tarshish fleet was wrecked

in an easterly gale.^b

⁹The likes of what we heard we have now witnessed
in the city of GOD of hosts,
in the city of our God—
may God preserve it forever!

Selah.

¹⁰In Your temple, God,
we meditate upon Your faithful care.

¹¹The praise of You, God, like Your name,
reaches to the ends of the earth;
Your right hand is filled with beneficence.

¹²Let Mount Zion rejoice!

Let the towns^c of Judah exult,
because of Your judgments.

¹³Walk around Zion,
circle it;
count its towers,
¹⁴take note of its ramparts;
go through^d its citadels,
that you may recount it to a future age.

¹⁵For God truly is our God forever,
who will lead us evermore.^e

49 For the leader. Of the Korahites. A psalm.

²Hear this, all you peoples;
give ear, all inhabitants of the world,

^b 48.8 as the Tarshish fleet . . . gale See 1 Kings 22.49.

^c 48.12 towns Or “women.”

^d 48.14 go through Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 48.15 evermore Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ³both low and high,
rich and poor alike.
- ⁴My mouth utters wisdom,
my speech^a is full of insight.
- ⁵I will turn my attention to a theme,
set forth my lesson to the music of a lyre.
- ⁶In time of trouble, why should I fear
the encompassing evil of those who would supplant me—
⁷those who trust in their riches,
who glory in their great wealth?
- ⁸Ah, it^b cannot redeem anyone,
or pay one's ransom to God;
⁹the price of life is too high;
and so one ceases to be, forever.
- ¹⁰Shall anyone live eternally,
and never see the grave?
- ¹¹For one sees that the wise die,
that the foolish and ignorant both perish,
leaving their wealth to others.
- ¹²Their grave^c is their eternal home,
the dwelling-place for all generations
of those once famous on earth.
- ¹³Mortals do not abide in honor;
they are like the beasts that perish.
- ¹⁴Such is the fate of those who are self-confident,
the end of those pleased with their own talk.^d *Selah.*
- ¹⁵Sheeplike they head for Sheol,
with Death as their shepherd.
The upright shall rule over them at daybreak,
and their form shall waste away in Sheol
till its nobility be gone.^e
- ¹⁶But God will redeem my life from the clutches of Sheol,
by taking me. *Selah.*

^a 49.4 *my speech* Lit. “utterance of my heart”; on *leb*, cf. 19.15.

^b 49.8 *Ah, it* Or “A brother.”

^c 49.12 *Their grave* Heb. *qirbam*, taken with ancient versions and medieval commentators as the equivalent of *qibrām*.

^d 49.14 *the end of those pleased with their own talk* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 49.15 *and their form . . . gone* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¹⁷Do not be afraid when someone else becomes rich,
when their household goods increase;
¹⁸for when they die they can take none of it along;
their goods cannot follow them down.
- ¹⁹Though they congratulate themselves in their lifetime
—“All must admit that you did well by yourself”^f—
²⁰yet they must join the company of their ancestors,
who will never see daylight again.
- ²¹Mortals do not understand honor;
they are like the beasts that perish.

50 A psalm of Asaph.

- God, the ETERNAL God^a spoke
and summoned the world from east to west.
- ²From Zion, perfect in beauty,
God appeared
³—let our God come and not fail to act!
[God] was preceded by devouring fire,
with a fierce storm all around.
- ⁴The heavens above were summoned,
and the earth, for the trial of God’s people.
- ⁵“Bring in My devotees,
who made a covenant with Me over sacrifice!”
- ⁶Then the heavens proclaimed God’s righteousness,
for this is a God who judges. *Selah.*
- ⁷“Pay heed, My people, and I will speak,
O Israel, and I will arraign you.
I am God, your God.
- ⁸I censure you not for your sacrifices,
and your burnt offerings, made to Me daily;
⁹I claim no bull from your estate,
no he-goats from your pens.
- ¹⁰For Mine is every animal of the forest,
the beasts on a thousand mountains.^b
- ¹¹I know every bird of the mountains,

^f 49.19 *All must admit that you did well by yourself* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 50.1 *God, ... God* Heb. 'El' Elohim.

^b 50.10 *a thousand mountains* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

the creatures of the field are subject to Me.

¹²Were I hungry, I would not tell you,
for Mine is the world and all it holds.

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

¹⁴Sacrifice a thank offering to God,
and pay your vows to the Most High.

¹⁵Call upon Me in time of trouble;
I will rescue you, and you shall honor Me.”

¹⁶And to the wicked, God said:

“Who are you to recite My laws,
and mouth the terms of My covenant,
¹⁷seeing that you spurn My discipline,
and brush My words aside?

¹⁸You fall in with a thief when you see one,
and throw in your lot with adulterers;

¹⁹you devote your mouth to evil,
and yoke your tongue to deceit;

²⁰you are busy maligning your kin,
defaming the child of your mother.

²¹If I failed to act when you did these things,
you would fancy that I was like you;
so I censure you and confront you with charges.

²²Mark this, you who are unmindful of God,
lest I tear you apart and no one save you.

²³Whoever sacrifices a thank offering honors Me,
and to one who sets out on the proper way^c
I will show the salvation of God.”

51 For the leader. A psalm of David, ²when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had come to Bathsheba.^a

³Have mercy upon me, O God,
as befits Your faithfulness;
in keeping with Your abundant compassion,
blot out my transgressions.

^c 50.23 and to one who sets out on the proper way Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 51.2 when Nathan . . . Bathsheba Cf. 2 Sam. 12.

- ⁴Wash me thoroughly of my iniquity,
 and purify me of my sin;
⁵for I recognize my transgressions,
 and am ever conscious of my sin.
⁶Against You alone have I sinned,
 and done what is evil in Your sight;
 so You are just in Your sentence,
 and right in Your judgment.
⁷Indeed I was born with iniquity;
 with sin my mother conceived me.
⁸^bIndeed You desire truth about that which is hidden;
 teach me wisdom about secret things.
⁹Purge me with hyssop till I am pure;
 wash me till I am whiter than snow.
¹⁰Let me hear tidings of joy and gladness;
 let the bones You have crushed exult.
¹¹Hide Your face from my sins;
 blot out all my iniquities.
¹²Fashion a pure heart for me, O God;
 create in me a steadfast spirit.
¹³Do not cast me out of Your presence,
 or take Your holy spirit away from me.
¹⁴Let me again rejoice in Your help;
 let a vigorous spirit sustain me.
¹⁵I will teach transgressors Your ways,
 that sinners may return to You.
¹⁶Save me from bloodguilt,
 O God, God, my deliverer,
 that I may sing forth Your beneficence.
¹⁷O my Sovereign, open my lips,
 and let my mouth declare Your praise.
¹⁸You do not want me to bring sacrifices;
 You do not desire burnt offerings;
¹⁹True sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit;
 God, You will not despise
 a contrite and crushed heart.

^b 51.8 Meaning of verse uncertain.

²⁰May it please You to make Zion prosper;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

²¹Then You will want sacrifices offered in righteousness,
burnt and whole offerings;
then bulls will be offered on Your altar.

52 For the leader. A *maskil* of David, ²when Doeg the Edomite came and informed Saul, telling him, “David came to Ahimelech’s house.”^a

³Why do you boast of your evil, brave fellow?
God’s faithfulness never ceases.^b

⁴Your tongue devises mischief,
like a sharpened razor that works treacherously.

⁵You prefer evil to good,
the lie, to speaking truthfully.

Selah.

⁶You love all pernicious words,
treacherous speech.

⁷So God will tear you down for good,
will break you and pluck you from your tent,
and root you out of the land of the living.

Selah.

⁸The righteous, seeing it, will be awestruck;
they will jibe at you,^c saying,
⁹“Here was a fellow who did not make God his refuge,
but trusted in his great wealth,
relied upon his mischief.”

¹⁰But I am like a thriving olive tree in God’s house;
I trust in the faithfulness of God forever and ever.

¹¹I praise You forever, for You have acted;
I declare that Your name is good^d
in the presence of Your faithful ones.

^a 52.2 Cf. 1 Sam. 22.9ff.

^b 52.3 *never ceases* Lit. “is all the day.”

^c 52.8 *you* Heb. “him.”

^d 52.11 *I declare that Your name is good* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others “I will wait for Your name for it is good.”

53

^aFor the leader; on *mahalath*. ^bA *maskil* of David.

²The scoundrel thinks,
“God does not care.”^c

Mortals’^d wrongdoing is corrupt and loathsome;
no one does good.

³God looks down from heaven on humankind
to find someone with understanding,
someone mindful of God.

⁴Everyone is dross,
altogether foul;
there is no one who does good,
not even one.

⁵Are they so witless, those evildoers,
who devour my people as they devour food,
and do not invoke God?

⁶There they will be seized with fright
—never was there such a fright—
for God has scattered the bones of your besiegers;
you have put them to shame,^e
for God has rejected them.

⁷O that the deliverance of Israel might come from Zion!
When God restores the fortunes of this covenanted people,
Jacob will exult, Israel will rejoice.

54

For the leader; with instrumental music. A *maskil* of David, ²when the Ziphites came and told Saul, “Know, David is in hiding among us.”^a

³O God, deliver me by Your name;
by Your power vindicate me.

⁴O God, hear my prayer;
give ear to the words of my mouth.

⁵For strangers have risen against me,
and those who are ruthless seek my life;
they are unmindful of God.

Selah.

^a53.1 Cf. Psalm 14.

^b53.1 *mahalath* Meaning of Heb. unknown.

^c53.2 *God does not care* Lit. “There is no God”; cf. 10.4.

^d53.2 *Mortals’* Heb. “Their.”

^e53.6 *never was there . . . put them to shame* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a54.2 Cf. 1 Sam. 23.19.

⁶See, God is my helper;
 my Sovereign is my support.
⁷[God] will repay the evil of my watchful foes;
 by Your faithfulness, destroy them!
⁸Then I will offer You a freewill sacrifice;
 I will praise Your name, ETERNAL One, for it is good,
⁹for it has saved me from my foes,
 and let me gaze triumphant upon my enemies.

55 For the leader; with instrumental music. A *maskil* of David.

²Give ear, O God, to my prayer;
 do not ignore my plea;
³pay heed to me and answer me.
 I am tossed about, complaining and moaning
⁴at the clamor of the enemy,
 because of the oppression of the wicked;
 for they bring evil upon me
 and furiously harass me.
⁵My heart is convulsed within me;
 terrors of death assail me.
⁶Fear and trembling invade me;
 I am clothed with horror.
⁷I said,
 “O that I had the wings of a dove!
 I would fly away and find rest;
⁸surely, I would flee far off;
 I would lodge in the wilderness; *selah*
⁹I would soon find me a refuge
 from the sweeping wind,
 from the tempest.”
¹⁰O my Sovereign, confound their speech, confuse it!
 For I see lawlessness and strife in the city;
¹¹day and night they make their rounds on its walls;
 evil and mischief are inside it.
¹²Malice is within it;
 fraud and deceit never leave its square.
¹³It is not an enemy who reviles me
 —I could bear that;

it is not my foe who boasts against me
—*for then I could hide;*
¹⁴*but it is you, my equal,*
my companion, my friend;
¹⁵*sweet was our fellowship;*
we walked together in God's house.
¹⁶*Let [God] incite death against them;*
may they go down alive into Sheol!
For where they dwell,
there evil is.

¹⁷*As for me, I call to God;*
God will deliver me.
¹⁸*Evening, morning, and noon,*
I complain and moan,
and my voice is heard.
¹⁹*[God] redeems me unharmed*
from the battle against me;
it is as though many are on my side.^a
²⁰*God who has reigned from the first,*
who will have no successor,
hears and humbles those who show no reverence. *Selah.*

²¹*My companion^b caused harm to allies*
and broke a pact—
²²*with talk smoother than butter,*
yet with a mind set on war;
with words that were softer than oil,
yet in fact were drawn swords.

²³*Cast your burden on GOD and you will be sustained;*
the righteous will never be allowed to collapse.
²⁴*For You, O God, will bring them down to the nethermost*
Pit—
those treacherous murderers;
they shall not live out half their days—
but I trust in You.

^a 55.19 *it is as though many are on my side* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 55.21 *My companion* Heb. "He," i.e., the friend of v. 14.

56 For the leader; on *yonath elem reḥokim*.^a Of David. A *michtam*; when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

²Have mercy on me, O God,
 for people persecute me;
 all day long my adversary oppresses me.
³My watchful foes persecute me all day long;
 many are my adversaries, O Exalted One.
⁴When I am afraid, I trust in You,
⁵in God, whose word I praise,
 in God I trust;
 I am not afraid;
 what can mortals^b do to me?
⁶All day long they cause me grief in my affairs,^c
 they plan only evil against me.
⁷They plot, they lie in ambush;
 they watch my every move, hoping for my death.
⁸Cast them out for their evil;
 subdue peoples in Your anger, O God.
⁹^dYou keep count of my wanderings;
 put my tears into Your flask,
 into Your record.
¹⁰Then my enemies will retreat when I call on You;
 this I know, that God is for me.
¹¹In God, whose word I praise,
 in GOD, whose word I praise,
¹²in God I trust;
 I am not afraid;
 what can mere humans do to me?
¹³I must pay my vows to You, O God;
 I will render thank offerings to You.
¹⁴For You have saved me from death,
 my foot from stumbling,
 that I may walk before God in the light of life.

^a 56.1 *yonath elem reḥokim* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 56.5 *mortals* Lit. “flesh.”

^c 56.6 *they cause me grief in my affairs* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 56.9 Meaning of verse uncertain.

57 For the leader; *al tashheth.*^a Of David. A *michtam*; when he fled from Saul into a cave.

²Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me,
for I seek refuge in You,
I seek refuge in the shadow of Your wings,
until danger passes.

³I call to God Most High,
to God who is good to me,
⁴who will reach down from heaven and deliver me—
sending down steadfast love;
my persecutor reviles.

Selah.

⁵As for me, I lie down among lions who devour humans—
whose teeth are spears and arrows,
whose tongue is a sharp sword.

⁶Exalt Yourself over the heavens, O God,
let Your glory be over all the earth!

⁷They prepared a net for my feet to ensnare me;^b
they dug a pit for me,
but they fell into it.

Selah.

⁸^cMy heart is firm, O God;
my heart is firm;
I will sing, I will chant a hymn.

⁹Awake, O my soul!
Awake, O harp and lyre!
I will wake the dawn.

¹⁰I will praise You among the peoples, O my Sovereign;
I will sing a hymn to You among the nations—
¹¹for Your faithfulness is as high as heaven;
Your steadfastness reaches to the sky.

¹²Exalt Yourself over the heavens, O God,
let Your glory be over all the earth!

^a 57.1 *al tashheth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 57.7 *to ensnare me* Cf. Mishnaic Heb. *kefifah*, a wicker basket used in fishing.

^c 57.8–12 Cf. 108.2–6.

58 For the leader; *al tash̄heth*. Of David. A *michtam*.

²O mighty ones,^a do you really decree what is just?
 Do you judge humankind with equity?
³In your minds you devise wrongdoing in the land;
 with your hands you deal out lawlessness.^b
⁴The wicked are defiant from birth;
 the liars go astray from the womb.
⁵Their venom is like that of a snake,
 a deaf viper that stops its ears
 ⁶so as not to hear the voice of charmers
 or the expert mutterer of spells.

⁷O God, smash their teeth in their mouth;
 shatter the fangs of lions, O ETERNAL One;
⁸let them melt, let them vanish like water—
 aim Your arrows that they be cut down—
 ⁹like a snail that melts away as it moves;^c
 like a woman's stillbirth—may they never see the sun!
¹⁰Before the thorns grow into a bramble,
 whirl them away alive in fury.^d

¹¹The righteous will rejoice when they see revenge;
 they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.
¹²People will say,
 "There is, then, a reward for the righteous;
 there is, indeed, divine justice on earth."

59 For the leader; *al tash̄heth*. Of David. A *michtam*; when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to put him to death.^a

²Save me from my enemies, O my God;
 secure me against my assailants.
³Save me from evildoers;
 deliver me from murderers.

^a 58.2 *O mighty ones* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 58.3 *with your hands you deal out lawlessness* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 58.9 *like a snail that melts away as it moves* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 58.10 *the thorns grow . . . in fury* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 59.1 *when Saul sent . . . death* Cf. 1 Sam. 19.11.

⁴For see, they lie in wait for me;
 fierce people plot against me
 for no offense of mine,
 for no transgression, O ETERNAL One;
⁵for no guilt of mine
 do they rush to array themselves against me.

Look, rouse Yourself in my behalf!

⁶You, O ETERNAL One, God of hosts,
 God of Israel,
 bestir Yourself to bring all nations to account;
 have no mercy on any treacherous villain.

Selah.

⁷They come each evening growling like dogs,
 roaming the city.

⁸They rave with their mouths,
 sharp words^b are on their lips;
 [they think,] “Who hears?”

⁹But You, O ETERNAL One, laugh at them;
 You mock all the nations.

¹⁰O my^c strength, I wait for You;
 for God is my haven.

¹¹My faithful God will come to aid me;
 God will let me gloat over my watchful foes.

¹²Do not kill them lest my people be unmindful;
 with Your power make wanderers of them;
 bring them low, O our shield, my Sovereign,
¹³because of their sinful mouths,
 the words on their lips.

Let them be trapped by their pride,
 and by the imprecations and lies they utter.

¹⁴In Your fury put an end to them;
 put an end to them that they be no more;
 that it may be known to the ends of the earth
 that God does rule over Jacob.

Selah.

¹⁵They come each evening growling like dogs,
 roaming the city.

^b 59.8 *sharp words* Lit. “swords.”

^c 59.10 *my* With several mss.; cf. v. 18; Heb. 3rd person.

- ¹⁶They wander in search of food;
and whine if they are not satisfied.
- ¹⁷But I will sing of Your strength,
extol each morning Your faithfulness;
for You have been my haven,
a refuge in time of trouble.
- ¹⁸O my strength, to You I sing hymns;
for God is my haven, my faithful God.

60 For the leader; on *shushan eduth*.^a A *michtam* of David (to be taught),
²when he fought with Aram-naharaim and Aram-zobah, and Joab re-
turned and defeated Edom—[an army] of twelve thousand men—in
the Valley of Salt.^b

- ³O God, You have rejected us,
You have made a breach in us;
You have been angry;
restore us!
- ⁴You have made the land quake;
You have torn it open.
Mend its fissures,
for it is collapsing.
- ⁵You have made Your people suffer hardship;
You have given us wine that makes us reel.^c
- ⁶Give those who fear You because of Your truth
a banner for rallying.^d
- ^{7e}That those whom You love might be rescued,
deliver with Your right hand and answer me.
- ⁸God promised in the sanctuary^f
that I would exultingly divide up Shechem,
and measure the Valley of Sukkoth;
⁹Gilead and Manasseh would be mine,

Selah.

^a **60.1** *shushan eduth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b **60.2** Cf. 2 Sam. 8; 1 Chron. 18.

^c **60.5** *You have given us wine that makes us reel* Or “You have sated Your people with a bitter draft.”

^d **60.6** *Give those . . . rallying* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e **60.7–14** Cf. Ps. 108.7–14.

^f **60.8** *in the sanctuary* Or “by God’s holiness.”

Ephraim my chief stronghold,
 Judah my scepter;
¹⁰Moab would be my washbasin;
 on Edom I would cast my shoe;
 acclaim me, O Philistia!

¹¹Would that I were brought to the bastion!
 Would that I were led to Edom!

¹²But You have rejected us, O God;
 God, You do not march with our armies.
¹³Grant us Your aid against the foe,
 for human help is worthless.
¹⁴We shall triumph with God,
 who will trample our foes.

61 For the leader; with instrumental music. Of David.

²Hear my cry, O God,
 heed my prayer.
³From the end of the earth I call to You;
 when my heart is faint,
 You lead me to a rock that is high above me.
⁴For You have been my refuge,
 a tower of strength against the enemy.
⁵O that I might dwell in Your tent forever,
 take refuge under Your protecting wings. Selah.
⁶O God, You have heard my vows;
 grant the request^a of those who fear Your name.
⁷Add days to the days of the king;
 may his years extend through generations;
⁸may he dwell in God's presence forever;
 appoint^b steadfast love to guard him.
⁹So I will sing hymns to Your name forever,
 as I fulfill my vows day after day.

^a 61.6 *request* Taking the noun *yrsht* as an alternate form of *'rsht*; cf. Ps. 21.3.

^b 61.8 *appoint* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

62

For the leader; on *Jeduthun*. A psalm of David.

²Truly my soul waits quietly for God,
from whom my deliverance comes.

³Truly [God] is my rock and deliverance,
my haven; I shall never be shaken.

⁴How long will all of you attack^a someone,
to crush^b them, as though they were
a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

⁵You lay plans to topple them from their status;
you delight in falsehood;
you bless with your mouths,
while inwardly you curse.^c

Selah.

⁶Truly, wait quietly for God, O my soul,
from whom comes my hope.

⁷[God] is my rock and deliverance,
my haven; I shall not be shaken.

⁸I rely on God, my deliverance and glory,
my rock of strength;
in God is my refuge.

⁹Trust in [God] at all times, O people;
pour out your hearts before the Holy One;
God is our refuge.

Selah.

¹⁰Humans are mere breath;
mortals, an illusion^d—
placed on a scale all together,
they weigh even less than a breath.

¹¹Do not trust in violence,
or put false hopes in robbery;
if force bears fruit pay it no mind.

¹²One thing God has spoken;
two things have I heard:
that might belongs to God,

^a 62.4 *attack* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 62.4 *crush* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 62.5 *You...your...you* Heb. “They...their...they.”

^d 62.10 *Humans are mere breath; / mortals, an illusion* Or “The common people are mere breath; / even the notables, an illusion—”; or “Mortals are mere breath; / partisans, an illusion—.”

¹³and faithfulness is Yours, O my Sovereign,
to reward everyone according to their deeds.

63 A psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

- ²God, You are my God;
 I search for You,
 my soul thirsts for You,
 my body yearns for You,
 as a parched and thirsty land that has no water.
- ³I shall behold You in the sanctuary,
 and see Your might and glory,
- ⁴Truly Your faithfulness is better than life;
 my lips declare Your praise.
- ⁵I bless You all my life;
 I lift up my hands, invoking Your name.
- ⁶I am sated as with a rich feast,^a
 I sing praises with joyful lips
⁷when I call You to mind upon my bed,
 when I think of You in the watches of the night—
⁸for You are my help,
 and in the shadow of Your wings
 I shout for joy.
- ⁹My soul is attached to You;
 Your right hand supports me.
- ¹⁰May those who seek to destroy my life
 enter the depths of the earth.
- ¹¹May they be gutted by the sword;
 may they be prey to jackals.
- ¹²But the king shall rejoice in God;
 all who swear by [God] shall exult,
 when the mouth of liars is stopped.

64 For the leader. A psalm of David.

- ²Hear my voice, O God, when I plead;
 guard my life from the enemy's terror.
- ³Hide me from a band of evildoers,

^a63.6 *rich feast* Lit. “suet and fat.”

from a crowd of wrongdoers,
⁴who whet their tongues like swords;
 they aim their arrows—cruel words—
⁵to shoot from hiding at someone blameless,
 shooting suddenly and without fear.
⁶They arm themselves with an evil word;
 when they speak, it is to conceal traps;^a
 they think, “Who will see them?”
^{7b}Let the wrongdoings they have concealed,^c
 each one’s inner, secret thoughts,
 be wholly exposed.
⁸God shall shoot them with arrows;
 they shall be struck down suddenly.
⁹Their tongue shall be their downfall;
 all who see them shall recoil in horror;
¹⁰all people shall stand in awe;
 they shall proclaim the work of God
 whose deed they perceived.
¹¹In GOD shall the righteous rejoice
 and take refuge;
 all the upright shall exult.

65 For the leader. A psalm of David. A song.

²Praise befits You in Zion, O God;
 vows are paid to You;
³all humankind^a comes to You,
 You who hear prayer.
⁴When all manner of sins overwhelm me,
 it is You who forgive our iniquities.
⁵Happy is the one You choose and bring near
 to dwell in Your courts;
 may we be sated with the blessings of Your house,
 Your holy temple.

^a 64.6 *They arm themselves . . . conceal traps* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 64.7 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^c 64.7 *they have concealed* Reading *tamnu* with some mss. (cf. Minhat Shai) and Rashi;
 most printed editions *tamnu*, traditionally rendered “they have accomplished.”

^a 65.3 *humankind* Lit. “flesh.”

- ⁶Answer us with victory through awesome deeds,
 O God, our deliverer,
 in whom all the ends of the earth
 and the distant seas
 put their trust;
⁷who by divine power fixed the mountains firmly,
 who is girded with might,
⁸who stills the raging seas,
 the raging waves,
 and tumultuous peoples.
- ⁹Those who live at the ends of the earth are awed by Your signs;
 You make the lands of sunrise and sunset shout for joy.
- ¹⁰You take care of the earth and irrigate it;
 You enrich it greatly,
 with the channel of God full of water;
 You provide grain for all;^b
 for so do You prepare it.
- ¹¹Saturating its furrows,
 leveling its ridges,
 You soften it with showers,
 You bless its growth.
- ¹²You crown the year with Your bounty;
 fatness is distilled in Your paths—
¹³the pasturelands distill it;
 the hills are girded with joy.
- ¹⁴The meadows are clothed with flocks,
 the valleys mantled with grain;
 they raise a shout, they break into song.

66 For the leader. A song. A psalm.

Raise a shout for God, all the earth;
²sing the glory of God's name,
 make glorious God's praise.

³Say to God,
 "How awesome are Your deeds,
 Your enemies cower before Your great strength;
⁴all the earth bows to You,

^b 65.10 *grain for all* Heb. "their grain."

and sings hymns to You;
all sing hymns to Your name.”

Selah.

⁵Come and see the works of God,
who is held in awe by mortals for acts divine,
⁶and who turned the sea into dry land:
Israel^a crossed the river on foot;
we therefore rejoice in [God].

⁷[God] rules forever with divine might,
eyes scanning the nations—
not letting the rebellious assert themselves.

Selah.

⁸O peoples, bless our God;
celebrate with praises
⁹the One who has granted us life,
and has not let our feet slip.

¹⁰You have tried us, O God,
refining us, as one refines silver.

¹¹You have caught us in a net,
caught us in trammels.^b

¹²You have let people ride over us;
we have endured fire and water,
and You have brought us through to prosperity.

¹³I enter Your house with burnt offerings,
I pay my vows to You,
¹⁴[vows] that my lips pronounced,
that my mouth uttered in my distress.

¹⁵I offer up fatlings to You,
with the odor of burning rams;
I sacrifice bulls and he-goats.

Selah.

¹⁶Come and hear, all you who fear God,
as I tell what was done for me.

¹⁷I called aloud to [God],
glorification on my tongue.

¹⁸Had I an evil thought in my mind,
my Sovereign would not have listened.

^a 66.6 *Israel* Heb. “they”; cf. Josh. 4.23.

^b 66.11 *caught us in trammels* Lit. “put a trammel on our loins.”

¹⁹But God did listen—
paying heed to my prayer.
²⁰Blessed is God who has not turned away my prayer,
or faithful care, from me.

67 For the leader; with instrumental music. A psalm. A song.

²May God be gracious to us and bless us,
showing us favor, *selah*
³that Your way be known on earth,
Your deliverance among all nations.

⁴Peoples will praise You, O God;
all peoples will praise You.

⁵Nations will exult and shout for joy,
for You rule the peoples with equity,
You guide the nations of the earth. *Selah.*

⁶The peoples will praise You, O God;
all peoples will praise You.

⁷May the earth yield its produce;
may God, our God, bless us.

⁸May God bless us,
and be revered to the ends of the earth.

68 ^aFor the leader. Of David. A psalm. A song.

²God will arise;
all opponents shall be scattered,
and foes shall flee.

³Disperse them as smoke is dispersed;
as wax melts at fire,
so the wicked shall perish before God.

⁴But the righteous shall rejoice;
they shall exult in the presence of God;
they shall be exceedingly joyful.

⁵Sing to God, chant hymns to the divine name;
extol the One who rides the clouds,
the One whose name is Yah.^b

^a 68.1 The coherence of this psalm and the meaning of many of its passages are uncertain.

^b 68.5 *Yah* A shortened form of the divine Name; see Isa. 12.2; 26.4.

Exult in God's presence—

⁶the guardian of the fatherless, the champion of widows,
God, dwelling in holiness.

⁷God restores the lonely to their homes,

sets free the imprisoned, safe and sound,
while the rebellious must live in a parched land.

⁸O God, when You went at the head of Your army,

when You marched through the desert,

selah

⁹the earth trembled, the sky rained because of God,
yon Sinai, because of God—the God of Israel.

¹⁰You released a bountiful rain, O God;

when Your own land languished, You sustained it.

¹¹Your tribe dwells there;

O God, in Your goodness You provide for the needy.

¹²My Sovereign gives a command;

the women who bring the news are a great host:

¹³“The kings and their armies are in headlong flight;

the women at home are sharing in the spoils;

¹⁴even for those of you who lie among the sheepfolds

there are wings of a dove sheathed in silver,

its pinions in fine gold.”

¹⁵When Shaddai scattered the kings,

it seemed like a snowstorm in Zalmon.

¹⁶O majestic mountain, Mount Bashan;

O jagged mountain, Mount Bashan;

¹⁷why so hostile, O jagged mountains,

toward the mountain God desired as a dwelling?

GOD shall abide there forever.

¹⁸God's chariots are myriads upon myriads,

thousands upon thousands;

my Sovereign is among them as in Sinai in holiness.

¹⁹You went up to the heights, having taken captives,

having received tribute of people,

even of those who rebel

against the abiding there of Yah—who is God.

²⁰Blessed is my Sovereign,
day by day supporting us—
God, our deliverance.

Selah.

²¹God is for us a God of deliverance;
GOD my Sovereign provides an escape from death.

²²God will smash the heads of all opponents,
the hairy crown of the one who walks about in guilt.

²³My Sovereign said, “I will retrieve from Bashan,
I will retrieve from the depths of the sea;
²⁴that your feet may wade through blood,
that the tongue of your dogs may have its portion of your
enemies.”

²⁵People see Your processions, O God,
the processions of my God, my monarch,
into the sanctuary.

²⁶First come singers, then musicians,
amidst maidens playing hand-drums.^c

²⁷In assemblies bless God,
ETERNAL One, O you who are from the fountain of Israel.

²⁸There is little Benjamin who rules them,
the princes of Judah who command them,
the princes of Zebulun and Naphtali.

²⁹Your God has ordained strength for you,
the strength, O God,
that You displayed for us
³⁰from Your temple above Jerusalem.

The kings bring You tribute.

³¹Blast the beast of the marsh,
the herd of bulls among the peoples, the calves,
till they come cringing with pieces of silver.

Scatter the peoples who delight in wars!

³²Tribute-bearers shall come from Egypt;
Cush shall hasten its gifts to God.

³³O kingdoms of the earth,
sing to God;
chant hymns to my Sovereign,

selah

^c 68.26 maidens playing hand-drums See note at Exod. 15.20.

- ³⁴to the One who rides the ancient highest heavens,
who thunders forth with a mighty voice.
- ³⁵Ascribe might to God,
whose majesty is over Israel,
whose might is in the skies.
- ³⁶You are awesome, O God, in Your holy places;
it is the God of Israel who gives might and power to the
people.
Blessed is God.

69 For the leader. On *shoshannim*.^a Of David.

- ²Deliver me, O God,
for the waters have reached my neck;
- ³I am sinking into the slimy deep
and find no foothold;
I have come into the watery depths;
the flood sweeps me away.
- ⁴I am weary with calling;
my throat is dry;
my eyes fail
while I wait for God.
- ⁵More numerous than the hairs of my head
are those who hate me without reason;
many are those who would destroy me,
my treacherous enemies.
- Must I restore what I have not stolen?
- ⁶God, You know my folly;
my guilty deeds are not hidden from You.
- ⁷Let those who look to You,
O my Sovereign, GOD of hosts,
not be disappointed on my account;
let those who seek You,
O God of Israel,
not be shamed because of me.
- ⁸It is for Your sake that I have been reviled,
that shame covers my face;

^a 69.1 *shoshannim* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ⁹I am a stranger to my kin,
an alien to my own siblings.
- ¹⁰My zeal for Your house has been my undoing;
the reproaches of those who revile You have fallen upon
me.
- ¹¹When I wept and fasted,
I was reviled for it.
- ¹²I made sackcloth my garment;
I became a byword among them.
- ¹³Those who sit in the gate talk about me;
I am the taunt of drunkards.
- ¹⁴As for me, may my prayer come to You, O ETERNAL One,
at a favorable moment;
O God, in Your abundant faithfulness,
answer me with Your sure deliverance.
- ¹⁵Rescue me from the mire;
let me not sink;
let me be rescued from my enemies,
and from the watery depths.
- ¹⁶Let the floodwaters not sweep me away;
let the deep not swallow me;
let the mouth of the Pit not close over me.
- ¹⁷Answer me, O ETERNAL One,
according to Your great steadfastness;
in accordance with Your abundant mercy
turn to me;
- ¹⁸do not hide Your face from Your servant,
for I am in distress;
answer me quickly.
- ¹⁹Come near to me and redeem me;
free me from my enemies.
- ²⁰You know my reproach,
my shame, my disgrace;
You are aware of all my foes.
- ²¹Reproach breaks my heart,
I am in despair;^b

^b **69.21** *in despair* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- I hope for consolation, but there is none,
 for comforters, but find none.
- ²²They give me gall for food,
 vinegar to quench my thirst.
- ²³May their table be a trap for them,
 a snare for their allies.
- ²⁴May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see;
 may their loins collapse continually.
- ²⁵Pour out Your wrath on them;
 may Your blazing anger overtake them;
- ²⁶may their encampments be desolate;
 may their tents stand empty.
- ²⁷For they persecute those You have struck;
 they talk about the pain of those You have felled.
- ²⁸Add that to their guilt;
 let them have no share of Your beneficence;
- ²⁹may they be erased from the book of life,
 and not be inscribed with the righteous.
- ³⁰But I am lowly and in pain;
 Your help, O God, keeps me safe.
- ³¹I will extol God's name with song,
 exultation, and praise.
- ³²That will please GOD more than oxen,
 than bulls with horns and hoofs.
- ³³The lowly will see and rejoice;
 you who are mindful of God, take heart!
- ³⁴For GOD listens to the needy,
 and does not spurn those held captive.
- ³⁵Heaven and earth shall sing praise,
 the seas, and all that moves in them.
- ³⁶For God will deliver Zion
 and rebuild the cities of Judah;
 they shall live there and inherit it;
- ³⁷the offspring of God's servants shall possess it;
 those who cherish God's name shall dwell there.

70 For the leader. Of David. *Lehazkir.*^a

²^bHasten, O God, to save me;
O ETERNAL One, to aid me!

³Let those who seek my life
be frustrated and disgraced;
let those who wish me harm,
fall back in shame.

⁴Let those who say, “Aha! Aha!”
turn back because of their frustration.

⁵But let all who seek You be glad and rejoice in You;
let those who are eager for Your deliverance always say,
“Extolled be God!”

⁶But I am poor and needy;
O God, hasten to me!
You are my help and my rescuer;
O ETERNAL One, do not delay.

71

I seek refuge in You, O ETERNAL One;
may I never be disappointed.

²As You are beneficent, save me and rescue me;
incline Your ear to me and deliver me.

³Be a sheltering rock for me to which I may always repair;
decree my deliverance,
for You are my rock and my fortress.

⁴My God, rescue me from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of the unjust and the lawless.

⁵For You are my hope,
O my Sovereign GOD,
my trust from my youth.

⁶While yet unborn, I depended on You;
in the womb of my mother, You were my support;^a
I sing Your praises always.

⁷I have become an example for many,
since You are my mighty refuge.

^a70.1 *Lehazkir* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b70.2–6 Cf. Ps. 40.14–18.

^a71.6 *support* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁸My mouth is full of praise to You,
glorifying You all day long.
⁹Do not cast me off in old age;
when my strength fails, do not forsake me!

¹⁰For my enemies talk against me;
those who wait for me are of one mind,
¹¹saying, “God has forsaken him;
chase him and catch him,
for no one will save him!”

¹²O God, be not far from me;
my God, hasten to my aid!

¹³Let my accusers perish in frustration;
let those who seek my ruin be clothed in reproach and
disgrace!

¹⁴As for me, I will hope always,
and add to the many praises of You.

¹⁵My mouth tells of Your beneficence,
of Your deliverance all day long,
though I know not how to tell it.

¹⁶I come with praise of Your mighty acts, O my Sovereign
GOD;

I celebrate Your beneficence, Yours alone.

¹⁷You have let me experience it, God, from my youth;
until now I have proclaimed Your wondrous deeds,
¹⁸and even in hoary old age do not forsake me, God,
until I proclaim Your strength to the next generation,
Your mighty acts, to all who are to come,
¹⁹Your beneficence, high as the heavens, O God,
You who have done great things;
O God, who is Your peer!

²⁰You who have made me undergo many troubles and
misfortunes
will revive me again,
and raise me up from the depths of the earth.

²¹You will grant me much greatness,
You will turn and comfort me.

²²Then I will acclaim You to the music of the lyre
for Your faithfulness, O my God;

I will sing a hymn to You with a harp,
O Holy One of Israel.

²³My lips shall be jubilant, as I sing a hymn to You,
my whole being, which You have redeemed.

²⁴All day long my tongue shall recite Your beneficent acts,
how those who sought my ruin were frustrated and
disgraced.

72 Of Solomon.

O God, endow the king with Your judgments,
the king's son with Your righteousness;
²that he may judge Your people rightly,
Your lowly ones, justly.

³Let the mountains produce well-being for the people,
the hills, the reward of justice.

⁴Let him champion the lowly among the people,
deliver the needy folk,
and crush those who wrong them.

⁵Let them fear You as long as the sun shines,
while the moon lasts, generations on end.

⁶Let him be like rain that falls on a mown field,
like a downpour of rain on the ground,
⁷that the righteous may flourish in his time,
and well-being abound, till the moon is no more.

⁸Let him rule from sea to sea,
from the river to the ends of the earth.

⁹Let desert-dwellers kneel before him,
and his enemies lick the dust.

¹⁰Let kings of Tarshish and the islands pay tribute,
kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.

¹¹Let all kings bow to him,
and all nations serve him.

¹²For he saves the needy who cry out,
the lowly who have no helper.

¹³He cares about the poor and the needy;
He brings the needy deliverance.

¹⁴He redeems them from fraud and lawlessness;

the shedding of their blood weighs heavily upon him.^a

¹⁵So let him live, and receive gold of Sheba;
let prayers for him be said always,
blessings on him invoked at all times.

¹⁶Let abundant grain be in the land, to the tops of the
mountains;
let his crops thrive like the forest of Lebanon;
and let the people sprout up in towns like country grass.

¹⁷May his name be eternal;
while the sun lasts, may his name endure;^b
let peoples invoke his blessedness upon themselves;
let all nations count him happy.

¹⁸Blessed is the ETERNAL God, God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things;

¹⁹Blessed is God's glorious name forever;
such glory fills the whole world.

Amen and Amen.

²⁰End of the prayers of David son of Jesse.

BOOK THREE

73 A psalm of Asaph.

God is truly good to Israel,
to those whose heart is pure.

²As for me, my feet had almost strayed,
my steps were nearly led off course,
³for I envied the wanton;
I saw the wicked at ease.

⁴Death has no pangs for them;
their body is healthy.

⁵They have no part in human travail;
they are not afflicted like the rest of humankind.

^a72.14 *the shedding of their blood weighs heavily upon him* Or “their life is precious in his sight.”

^b72.16–17 *Let abundant grain . . . endure* Meaning of some Heb. phrases in these verses uncertain.

⁶So pride adorns their necks,
 lawlessness enwraps them as a mantle.

⁷Fat shuts out their eyes;
 their fancies are extravagant.^a

⁸They scoff and plan evil;
 from their eminence they plan wrongdoing.

⁹They set their mouths against heaven,
 and their tongues range over the earth.

¹⁰^bSo they pound this people again and again,
 until they are drained of their very last tear.

¹¹Then they say, “How could God know?
 Is there knowledge with the Most High?”

¹²Such are the wicked;
 ever tranquil, they amass wealth.

¹³It was for nothing that I kept my heart pure
 and washed my hands in innocence,

¹⁴seeing that I have been constantly afflicted,
 that each morning brings new punishments.

¹⁵Had I decided to say these things,
 I should have been false to the circle of Your disciples.

¹⁶So I applied myself to understand this,
 but it seemed a hopeless task
¹⁷till I entered God’s sanctuary
 and reflected on their fate.

¹⁸You surround them with flattery;
 You make them fall through blandishments.

¹⁹How suddenly are they ruined,
 wholly swept away by terrors.

²⁰When You are aroused You despise their image,
 as one does a dream after waking, O my Sovereign.

²¹My mind was stripped of its reason,
 my feelings were numbed.^c

²²I was a dolt, without knowledge;
 I was brutish toward You.

^a73.7 *Fat . . . extravagant* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b73.10 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^c73.21 *my feelings were numbed* Lit. “I was pierced through in my kidneys.”

²³Yet I was always with You,
 You held my right hand;
²⁴You guided me by Your counsel
 and led me toward honor.^d
²⁵Whom else have I in heaven?
 And having You, I want no one on earth.
²⁶My body and mind fail;
 but God is the stay^e of my mind, my portion forever.
²⁷Those who keep far from You perish;
 You annihilate all who are untrue to You.
²⁸As for me, nearness to God is good;
 I have made the Sovereign GOD my refuge,
 that I may recount all Your works.

74 A *maskil* of Asaph.

Why, O God, do You forever reject us,
 do You fume in anger at the flock that You tend?
²Remember the community You made Yours long ago,
 Your very own tribe that You redeemed,
 Mount Zion, where You dwell.
³Bestir Yourself^a because of the perpetual tumult,^b
 all the outrages of the enemy in the sanctuary.
⁴Your foes roar inside Your meeting-place;
 they take their signs for true signs.
⁵It is like those who wield axes
 against a gnarled tree;
⁶with hatchet and pike
 they hacked away at its carved work.^c
⁷They made Your sanctuary go up in flames;
 they brought low in dishonor the dwelling-place of Your
 presence.
⁸They resolved, “Let us destroy them altogether!”
 They burned all God’s tabernacles in the land.

^d73.24 *and led me toward honor* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others
 “And afterward receive me with glory.”

^e73.26 *stay* Lit. “rock.”

^a74.3 *Bestir Yourself* Lit. “Lift up Your feet.”

^b74.3 *perpetual tumult* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c74.5–6 *It is like . . . carved work* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁹No signs appear for us;
there is no longer any prophet;
no one among us knows for how long.

¹⁰Till when, O God, will the foe blaspheme,
will the enemy forever revile Your name?

¹¹Why do You hold back Your hand, Your right hand?
Draw it out of Your bosom!^d

¹²O God, my Sovereign from of old,
who brings deliverance throughout the land;
¹³it was You who drove back the sea with Your might,
who smashed the heads of the monsters in the waters;
¹⁴it was You who crushed the heads of Leviathan,
who left it as food for the denizens of the desert;^e
¹⁵it was You who released springs and torrents,
who made mighty rivers run dry;
¹⁶the day is Yours, the night also;
it was You who set in place the orb of the sun;
¹⁷You fixed all the boundaries of the earth;
summer and winter—You made them.

¹⁸Be mindful of how the enemy blasphemers GOD,
how base people revile Your name.

¹⁹Do not deliver Your dove to the wild beast;
do not ignore forever the band of Your lowly ones.

²⁰Look to the covenant!
For the dark places of the land are full of the haunts of
lawlessness.

²¹Let not the downtrodden turn away disappointed;
let the poor and needy praise Your name.

²²Rise, O God, champion Your cause;
be mindful that You are blasphemed by scoundrels all day
long.

²³Do not ignore the shouts of Your foes,
the din of Your adversaries that ascends all the time.

^d74.11 *Draw it out of Your bosom* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e74.14 *the denizens of the desert* Or “seafaring peoples”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

75 For the leader; *al tash̄heth.*

A psalm of Asaph, a song.

²We praise You, O God;
we praise You;
Your presence is near;
people tell of Your wondrous deeds.

³“At the time I choose,
I will give judgment equitably.

⁴Earth and all its inhabitants dissolve;
it is I who keep its pillars firm.

Selah.

⁵To the wanton I say, ‘Do not be wanton!’
to the wicked, ‘Do not lift up your horns!’”

⁶Do not lift your horns up high
in vainglorious bluster.^a

⁷For exaltation comes not from the east
or from the west or the wilderness;^b
⁸for God it is who gives judgment—
bringing down one and lifting up another.

⁹There is a cup in God’s hand
with foaming wine fully mixed;
from this [God] pours;
all the wicked of the earth drink,
draining it to the very dregs.

¹⁰As for me, I will declare forever,
I will sing a hymn to the God of Jacob.

¹¹“All the horns of the wicked I will cut;
but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up.”

76 For the leader; with instrumental music.

A psalm of Asaph, a song.

²God is known in Judah,
God’s name is great in Israel;
³Salem became an abode;
Zion, the divine den.

^a75.6 *in vainglorious bluster* Lit. “with arrogant neck you speak.”

^b75.7 *wilderness* Reading *midbār* (with *qamaṣ*, not *pataḥ*), as in many mss.

⁴There [God] broke the fiery arrows of the bow,
the shield and the sword of war. *Selah.*

⁵You were resplendent,
glorious, on the mountains of prey.

⁶The stout-hearted were despoiled;
they were in a stupor;
the bravest of soldiers could not lift a hand.

⁷At Your blast, O God of Jacob,
horse and chariot lay stunned.

⁸O You! You are awesome!
Who can withstand You
when You are enraged?

⁹In heaven You pronounced sentence;
the earth was numbed with fright
¹⁰as God rose to execute judgment,
to deliver all the lowly of the earth. *Selah.*

^{11^a}Even the fiercest among humans shall acknowledge You,
when You gird on the last bit of fury.

¹²Make vows and pay them to the ETERNAL your God;
those all around shall bring tribute to the Awesome
One—^b

¹³who curbs the spirit of princes,
inspires awe in the kings of the earth.

77

For the leader; on *Jeduthun*.
Of Asaph. A psalm.

²I cry aloud to God;
I cry to God that I may be heard.

³In my time of distress I turn to my Sovereign,
with my hand [uplifted];
[my eyes] flow all night without respite;^a
I will not be comforted.

⁴I call God to mind, I moan,
I complain, my spirit fails. *Selah.*

^a76.11 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^b76.12 *all around . . . Awesome One* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a77.3 *with my hand . . . without respite* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 77.11 *It is my fault / . . . changed* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 77.12 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

Your tracks could not be seen.

²¹You led Your people like a flock
in the care of Moses and Aaron.

78 A *maskil* of Asaph.

Give ear, my people, to my teaching,
turn your ear to what I say.

²I will expound a theme,
hold forth on the lessons of the past—
³things we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.

⁴We will not withhold them from their children,
telling the coming generation
the praises of GOD and of divine might,
and the wonders performed.

⁵[God] established a decree in Jacob,
ordained a teaching in Israel,
charging our ancestors
to make them known to their children,
⁶that a future generation might know—
children yet to be born—
and in turn tell their children
⁷that they might put their confidence in God,
and not forget God's great deeds,
but observe the commandments,
⁸and not be like their ancestors,
a wayward and defiant generation,
a generation whose heart was inconstant,
whose spirit was not true to God.

⁹Like the Ephraimite archers
who played false in the day of battle,
¹⁰they did not keep God's covenant,
they refused to follow divine instruction;
¹¹they forgot what was done for them
and the wonders they were shown.

¹²[God] performed marvels in the sight of their ancestors,
in the land of Egypt, the plain of Zoan.

¹³[God] split the sea and took them through it—

making the waters stand like a wall.
¹⁴[God] led them with a cloud by day,
 and throughout the night by the light of fire.
¹⁵[God] split rocks in the wilderness
 and gave them drink as if from the great deep.
¹⁶[God] brought forth streams from a rock
 and made them flow down like a river.

¹⁷But they went on sinning,
 defying the Most High in the parched land.
¹⁸To test God was in their mind
 when they demanded food for themselves.
¹⁹They spoke against God, saying,
 “Can God spread a feast in the wilderness?
²⁰True, [God]^a struck the rock and waters flowed,
 streams gushed forth;
 but can [God] provide bread
 and supply meat for this people?”
²¹GOD heard and then raged;
 fire broke out against Jacob,
 anger flared up at Israel,
 ²²because they did not put their trust in God,
 did not rely on divine deliverance.
²³So [God] commanded the skies above,
 opened the doors of heaven
 ²⁴and rained manna upon them for food,
 giving them heavenly grain.
²⁵Each person ate a hero's meal;
 they were sent provision in plenty.
²⁶[God] set the east wind moving in heaven,
 and drove the south wind mightily.
²⁷[God] rained meat on them like dust,
 winged birds like the sands of the sea,
 ²⁸making them come down inside God's camp,
 around the divine dwelling-place.
²⁹They ate till they were sated;
 they were given what they craved.
³⁰They had not yet wearied of what they craved,

^a78.20 [God] I.e., Moses, acting as God's agent; cf. Exod. 17.5–6.

the food was still in their mouths
³¹when God's anger flared up at them.
[God] slew their sturdiest,
 struck down the youth of Israel.
³²Nonetheless, they went on sinning
 and had no faith in God's wonders.
³³Their days were made to end in futility,
 their years in sudden death.
³⁴When stricken,^b they returned,
 and sought God once again.
³⁵They remembered that God was their rock,
 God Most High, their Redeemer.
³⁶Yet they deceived [God] with their speech,
 and lied with their words.
³⁷Their hearts were inconstant;
 they were untrue to the covenant.
³⁸But [God], being merciful, forgave iniquity—
 and would not destroy—
 restraining wrath time and again
 and not giving full vent to such fury—
³⁹remembering that they were but flesh,
 a passing breath that does not return.
⁴⁰How often did they act defiantly in the wilderness,
 then cause grief in the wasteland!
⁴¹Again and again they tested God,
 vexed^c the Holy One of Israel.
⁴²They did not remember God's strength,
 or the day they were redeemed from the foe;
⁴³how [God] displayed signs in Egypt,
 and wonders in the plain of Zoan.
⁴⁴[God first] turned their rivers into blood—
 making their waters undrinkable;
⁴⁵then inflicted upon them swarms of insects to devour them,
 frogs to destroy them;
⁴⁶then gave their crops over to grubs,
 their produce to locusts;

^b 78.34 *stricken* Lit. "killed."

^c 78.41 *vexed* Or "set a limit to."

47 then killed their vines with hail,
 their sycamores with frost;^d
 48 then gave their beasts over to hail,
 their cattle to lightning bolts;
 49 and inflicted a burning anger upon them—
 wrath, indignation, trouble,
 a band of deadly messengers.
 50 [God] cleared a path for that anger,
 and did not stop short of slaying them,
 but gave them over to pestilence.
 51 [God] struck every [male] first-born in Egypt,
 the first fruits of their vigor in the tents of Ham.
 52 God's own people were set moving like sheep,
 driven like a flock in the wilderness.
 53 [God] led them in safety; they were unafraid;
 as for their enemies, the sea covered them.
 54 [God] brought them to the holy realm,^e
 the mountain God's right hand had acquired.
 55 [God] expelled nations before them,
 settled the tribes of Israel in their tents,
 allotting them their portion by the line.^f
 56 Yet they defiantly tested God Most High,
 and did not observe divine decrees.
 57 They fell away, disloyal like their ancestors;
 they played false like a treacherous bow.
 58 They provoked anger with their high places;
 they kindled wrath with their idols.
 59 God heard it and was enraged—
 utterly rejecting Israel.
 60 [God] forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh,
 the tent that had been set among mortals.
 61 God's might^g was allowed to go into captivity,
 that glory into the hands of the foe.
 62 This people was given over to the sword;
 God's very own the object of rage.

^d 78.47 *with frost* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 78.54 *realm* Or "hill" with Septuagint and Saadia.

^f 78.55 *settled the tribes of Israel in their tents, / allotting them their portion by the line*
Clauses transposed for clarity.

^g 78.61 *God's might* I.e., the Ark; cf. Ps. 132.8.

⁶³Fire consumed their young men,
 and their maidens remained unwed.^h
⁶⁴Their priests fell by the sword,
 and their widows could not weep.
⁶⁵The Sovereign awoke as from sleep—
 like a warrior shaking offⁱ wine—
⁶⁶and beat back all foes,
 dealing them lasting disgrace.
⁶⁷[God] rejected the clan of Joseph
 and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.
⁶⁸[God] did choose the tribe of Judah—
 Mount Zion, which was beloved—
⁶⁹building the Sanctuary like the heavens,
 like the earth that [God] established forever.
⁷⁰David, God's servant, was chosen,
 and taken from the sheepfolds.
⁷¹He was brought from minding the nursing ewes
 to tend the people of Jacob, Israel, God's very own.
⁷²He tended them with blameless heart;
 with skillful hands he led them.

79 A psalm of Asaph.

O God, heathens have entered Your domain,
 defiled Your holy temple,
 and turned Jerusalem into ruins.
²They have left Your servants' corpses
 as food for the fowl of heaven,
 and the flesh of Your faithful for the wild beasts.
³Their blood was shed like water around Jerusalem,
 with none to bury them.
⁴We have become the butt of our neighbors,
 the scorn and derision of those around us.
⁵How long, O ETERNAL One, will You be angry forever,
 will Your indignation blaze like fire?
⁶Pour out Your fury on the nations that do not know You,

^h78.63 *remained unwed* Lit. "had no nuptial song."

ⁱ78.65 *shaking off* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name,
⁷for they have devoured Jacob
and desolated his home.
- ⁸Do not hold our former iniquities against us;
let Your compassion come swiftly toward us,
for we have sunk very low.
- ⁹Help us, O God, our deliverer,
for the sake of the glory of Your name.
Save us and forgive our sin,
for the sake of Your name.
- ¹⁰Let the nations not say, “Where is their God?”
Before our eyes let it be known among the nations
that You avenge the spilled blood of Your servants.
- ¹¹Let the groans of the prisoners reach You;
rerieve those condemned to death,
as befits Your great strength.
- ¹²Pay back our neighbors sevenfold
for the abuse they have flung at You, O Sovereign.
- ¹³Then we, Your people,
the flock You shepherd,
shall glorify You forever;
for all time we shall tell Your praises.

80 For the leader; on *shoshannim, eduth*. Of Asaph. A psalm.

- ²Give ear, O shepherd of Israel
who leads Joseph like a flock!
Appear, You who are enthroned on the cherubim,
³at the head of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh!
Rouse Your might and come to our help!
- ⁴Restore us, O God;
show Your favor that we may be delivered.
- ⁵O ETERNAL One, God of hosts,
how long will You be wrathful
toward the prayers of Your people?
- ⁶You have fed them tears as their daily bread,
made them drink great measures of tears.
- ⁷You set us at strife with our neighbors;
our enemies mock us at will.

⁸O God of hosts, restore us;
 show Your favor that we may be delivered.

⁹You plucked up a vine from Egypt;
 You expelled nations and planted it.

¹⁰You cleared a place for it;
 it took deep root and filled the land.

¹¹The mountains were covered by its shade,
 mighty cedars by its boughs.

¹²Its branches reached the sea,
 its shoots, the river.

¹³Why did You breach its wall
 so that every passerby plucks its fruit,
¹⁴wild boars gnaw at it,
 and creatures of the field feed on it?

¹⁵O God of hosts, turn again,
 look down from heaven and see;
 take note of that vine,
¹⁶the stock planted by Your right hand,
 the stem^a you have taken as Your own.

¹⁷For it is burned by fire and cut down,
 perishing before Your angry blast.

¹⁸Grant Your help^b to the one at Your right hand,
 the mortal You have taken as Your own.

¹⁹We will not turn away from You;
 preserve our life that we may invoke Your name.

²⁰O ETERNAL One, God of hosts, restore us;
 show Your favor that we may be delivered.

81 For the leader; on the *gittith*. Of Asaph.

²Sing joyously to God, our strength;
 raise a shout for the God of Jacob.

³Take up the song,
 sound the hand-drum,
 the melodious lyre and harp.

⁴Blow the horn on the new moon,
 on the full moon for our feast day.

^a80.16 *stem* Lit. "son."

^b80.18 *help* Lit. "hand."

⁵For it is a law for Israel,
 a ruling of the God of Jacob—
⁶imposed as a decree upon Joseph
 when he went forth from^a the land of Egypt;
 I heard a language that I knew not.

⁷“I relieved his shoulder of the burden,
 his hands were freed from the basket.

⁸In distress you called and I rescued you;
 I answered you from the secret place of thunder^b
 I tested you at the Waters of Meribah.

Selah.

⁹Hear, My people, and I will admonish you;
 Israel, if you would but listen to Me!

¹⁰You shall have no foreign god,
 you shall not bow to an alien god.

¹¹I the ETERNAL am your God
 who brought you out of the land of Egypt;
 open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

¹²But My people would not listen to Me,
 Israel would not obey Me.

¹³So I let them go after their willful heart
 that they might follow their own devices.

¹⁴If only My people would listen to Me,
 if Israel would follow My paths,
¹⁵then would I subdue their enemies at once,
 strike their foes again and again.”

¹⁶Those who hate GOD shall cower;
 their doom shall be eternal.

¹⁷[God] fed Israel^c the finest wheat;
 “I sated you with honey from the rock.”

82 A psalm of Asaph.

God stands in the divine assembly,
 pronouncing judgment among the divine beings.

^a 81.6 *he went forth from* Or “[God] went forth against.”

^b 81.8 *secret place of thunder* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 81.17 *Israel* Heb. “him.”

²How long will you judge perversely,
 showing favor to the wicked?

Selah.

³Judge the wretched and the orphan,
 vindicate the lowly and the poor,
⁴rescue the wretched and the needy;
 save them from the hand of the wicked.

⁵They neither know nor understand,
 they go about in darkness;
 all the foundations of the earth totter.

⁶I had taken you for divine beings,
 attendants^a of the Most High, all of you;
⁷but you shall die as mortals do,
 fall like any prince.

⁸Arise, O God, judge the earth,
 for all the nations are Your possession.

83 A song, a psalm of Asaph.

²O God, do not be silent;
 do not hold aloof;
 do not be quiet, O God!

³For Your enemies rage,
 Your foes assert themselves.^a

⁴They plot craftily against Your people,
 take counsel against Your treasured ones.

⁵They say, “Let us wipe them out as a nation;
 Israel’s name will be mentioned no more.”

⁶Unanimous in their counsel
 they have made an alliance against You—
 ⁷the clans of Edom and the Ishmaelites,

Moab and the Hagrites,

⁸Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek,

Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;

⁹Assyria too joins forces with them;

they give support to the descendants of Lot.^b

Selah.

^a82.6 *attendants* Lit. “sons.”

^a83.3 *assert themselves* Lit. “lift up the head.”

^b83.9 *the descendants of Lot* I.e., the Moabites and the Ammonites; cf. Gen. 19.36–38.

- ¹⁰Deal with them as You did with Midian,
 with Sisera, with Jabin,
 at the brook Kishon—
¹¹who were destroyed at En-dor,
 who became dung for the field.
- ¹²Treat their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,
 all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
¹³who said, “Let us take the meadows of God as our
 possession.”
- ¹⁴O my God, make them like thistledown,
 like stubble driven by the wind.
- ¹⁵As a fire burns a forest,
 as flames scorch the hills,
¹⁶pursue them with Your tempest,
 terrify them with Your storm.
- ¹⁷Cover^c their faces with shame
 so that they seek Your name, O ETERNAL One.
- ¹⁸May they be frustrated and terrified,
 disgraced and doomed forever.
- ¹⁹May they know
 that Your name, Yours alone, is GOD,
 supreme over all the earth.

84 For the leader; on the *gittith*. Of the Korahites. A psalm.

- ²How lovely is Your dwelling-place,
 O GOD of Hosts.
- ³I long, I yearn for the courts of the ETERNAL One;
 my body and soul shout for joy to the living God.
- ⁴Even the sparrow has found a home,
 and the swallow a nest for herself
 in which to set her young,
 near Your altar, O GOD of Hosts,
 my monarch and my God.
- ⁵Happy are those who dwell in Your house;
 they forever praise You. Selah.
- ⁶Happy are those who find refuge in You,
 whose mind is on the [pilgrim] highways.

^c 83.17 *Cover* Lit. “Fill.”

⁷They pass through the Valley of Baca,
 regarding it as a place of springs,
 as if the early rain had covered it with blessing.^a

⁸They go from rampart to rampart,^b
 appearing before God in Zion.

⁹O ETERNAL God of hosts,
 hear my prayer;
 give ear, O God of Jacob.

Selah.

¹⁰O God, behold our shield,
 look upon the face of Your anointed.

¹¹Better one day in Your courts than a thousand [anywhere else];
 I would rather stand at the threshold of God's house
 than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

¹²For the ETERNAL God is sun^c and shield;
 GOD bestows grace and glory,
 and does not withhold bounty from those who live
 without blame.

¹³O GOD of Hosts,
 happy is the one who trusts in You.

85 For the leader. Of the Korahites. A psalm.

²O ETERNAL One, You will favor^a Your land,
 restore^b Jacob's fortune;

³You will forgive^c Your people's iniquity,
 pardon^d all their sins;

selah

⁴You will withdraw^e all Your anger,
 turn^f away from Your rage.

⁵Turn again, O God, our helper,
 revoke Your displeasure with us.

^a84.7 *regarding it . . . blessing* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b84.8 *rampart to rampart* In contrast to others "strength to strength."

^c84.12 *sun* Or "bulwark," with Targum; cf. Isa. 54.12.

^a85.2 *will favor* Or "have favored."

^b85.2 *restore* Or "have restored."

^c85.3 *will forgive* Or "have forgiven."

^d85.3 *pardon* Or "have pardoned."

^e85.4 *will withdraw* Or "have withdrawn."

^f85.4 *turn* Or "have turned."

- ⁶Will You be angry with us forever,
 prolong Your wrath for all generations?
⁷Surely You will revive us again,
 so that Your people may rejoice in You.
⁸Show us, O ETERNAL One, Your faithfulness;
 grant us Your deliverance.
- ⁹Let me hear what God, the ETERNAL, will speak,
 as a promise of well-being to the faithful ones—this
 people;
 may they not turn to folly.
- ¹⁰Help is very near those who show reverence,
 to make God's glory dwell in our land.
- ¹¹Faithfulness and truth meet;
 justice and well-being kiss.
- ¹²Truth springs up from the earth;
 justice looks down from heaven.
- ¹³GOD also bestows bounty;
 our land yields its produce.
- ¹⁴Justice walks in front
 as [God] sets out on the way.

86 A prayer of David.

- Incline Your ear, O ETERNAL One,
 answer me,
 for I am poor and needy.
- ²Preserve my life, for I am steadfast;
 O You, my God,
 deliver Your servant who trusts in You.
- ³Have mercy on me, O my Sovereign,
 for I call to You all day long;
⁴bring joy to Your servant's life,
 for on You, my Sovereign, I set my hope.
- ⁵For You, my Sovereign, are good and forgiving,
 abounding in steadfast love to all who call on You.
- ⁶Give ear, O ETERNAL One, to my prayer;
 heed my plea for mercy.
- ⁷In my time of trouble I call You,
 for You will answer me.

⁸There is none like You among the gods, O my Sovereign,
and there are no deeds like Yours.
⁹All the nations You have made
will come to bow down before You, O my Sovereign,
and they will pay honor to Your name.
¹⁰For You are great and perform wonders;
You alone are God.
¹¹Teach me Your way, O ETERNAL One;
I will walk in Your truth;
let my heart be undivided in reverence for Your name.
¹²I will praise You, O my Sovereign, my God, with all my heart
and pay honor to Your name forever.
¹³For Your steadfast love toward me is great;
You have saved me from the depths of Sheol.
¹⁴O God, arrogant people have risen against me;
a ruthless band seeks my life;
they are not mindful of You.
¹⁵But You, O my Sovereign, are a God
compassionate and merciful,
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.
¹⁶Turn to me and have mercy on me;
grant Your strength to Your servant
and deliver the son of Your maidservant.
¹⁷Show me a sign of Your favor,
that my enemies may see and be frustrated
because You, O ETERNAL One, have given me aid and
comfort.

87 ^aOf the Korahites. A psalm. A song.

The temple's^b foundation on the holy mountains—
²the gates of Zion—
 GOD loves
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
³Glorious things are spoken of you,
O city of God. *Selah.*

^a87.1–7 The meaning of many passages in this psalm is uncertain.

^b87.1 *The temple's* Heb. “Its.”

⁴I mention Rahab^c and Babylon among those who acknowledge Me;

Philistia, and Tyre, and Cush—each was born there.

⁵Indeed, it shall be said of Zion,

“They^d were all born there.”

It is the Most High who will preserve it.^e

⁶GOD will inscribe in the register of peoples
that each was born there.

Selah.

⁷Singers and dancers alike [will say]:

“All my roots^f are in You.”

88 A song. A psalm of the Korahites. For the leader; *mahalath leannoth*.^a A *maskil* of Heman the Ezrahite.

²O ETERNAL One, God of my deliverance,
when I cry out in the night^b before You,
³let my prayer reach You;
incline Your ear to my cry.

⁴For I am sated with misfortune;
I am at the brink of Sheol.

⁵I am numbered with those who go down to the Pit;
I am like someone helpless^c
⁶abandoned^d among the dead,
like bodies lying in the grave
of whom You are mindful no more,
and who are cut off from Your care.

⁷You have put me at the bottom of the Pit,
in the darkest places, in the depths.

⁸Your fury lies heavy upon me;
You afflict me with all Your breakers.

Selah.

⁹You make my companions shun me;
You make me abhorrent to them;

^c 87.4 *Rahab* A primeval monster; here, a poetic term for Egypt; cf. Isa. 30.7.

^d 87.5 *They* I.e., the nations of v. 4, or their members.

^e 87.5 *It is the Most High who will preserve it* Or “[God] will preserve it supreme.”

^f 87.7 *roots* Lit. “sources.”

^a 88.1 *mahalath leannoth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 88.2 *when I cry out in the night* Or “by day I cry out [and] by night.”

^c 88.5 *like someone helpless* Or “like a virile man who is helpless.”

^d 88.6 *abandoned* Lit. “released.”

I am shut in and do not go out.

¹⁰ My eyes pine away from affliction;

I call to You, O ETERNAL One, each day;

I stretch out my hands to You.

¹¹ Do You work wonders for the dead?

Do the shades rise to praise You?

Selah.

¹² Is Your faithful care recounted in the grave,

Your constancy in the place of perdition?

¹³ Are Your wonders made known in the netherworld,^e

Your beneficent deeds in the land of oblivion?

¹⁴ As for me, I cry out to You, O ETERNAL One;

each morning my prayer greets You.

¹⁵ Why, O ETERNAL One, do You reject me,

do You hide Your face from me?

¹⁶ From my youth I have been afflicted

and near death;

I suffer Your terrors wherever I turn.^f

¹⁷ Your fury overwhelms me;

Your terrors destroy me.

¹⁸ They swirl about me like water all day long;

they encircle me on every side.

¹⁹ You have put friend and neighbor far from me

and my companions out of my sight.^g

89 A maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.

² I will sing of GOD's steadfast love forever;

to all generations I will proclaim Your faithfulness with my mouth.

³ I declare, "Your steadfast love is confirmed forever;

there in the heavens You establish Your faithfulness."

⁴ "I have made a covenant with My chosen one;

I have sworn to My servant David:

⁵ I will establish your offspring forever,

I will confirm your throne for all generations."

Selah.

^e 88.13 *netherworld* Lit. "darkness."

^f 88.16 *wherever I turn* Following Saadia; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 88.19 *out of my sight* Lit. "into darkness."

⁶Your wonders, O ETERNAL One, are praised by the heavens,
 Your faithfulness, too, in the assembly of holy beings.
⁷For who in the skies can equal GOD,
 can compare with GOD among the divine beings,
⁸a God greatly dreaded in the council of holy beings,
 held in awe by those all around?
⁹O ETERNAL One, God of hosts,
 who is mighty like You, O Yah?^a
 Your faithfulness surrounds You;
¹⁰You rule the swelling of the sea;
 when its waves surge, You still them.
¹¹You crushed Rahab; he was like a corpse;
 with Your powerful arm You scattered Your enemies.
¹²The heaven is Yours,
 the earth too;
 the world and all it holds—
 You established them.
¹³North and south—
 You created them;
 Tabor and Hermon sing forth Your name.
¹⁴Yours is an arm endowed with might;
 Your hand is strong;
 Your right hand, exalted.
¹⁵Righteousness and justice are the base of Your throne;
 steadfast love and faithfulness stand before You.
¹⁶Happy is the people who know the joyful shout;
 O ETERNAL One, they walk in the light of Your presence.
¹⁷They rejoice in Your name all day long;
 they are exalted through Your righteousness.
¹⁸For You are their strength in which they glory;
 our horn is exalted through Your favor.
¹⁹Truly our shield is of GOD,
 our monarch, of the Holy One of Israel.
²⁰Then^b You spoke to Your faithful ones in a vision
 and said, “I have conferred power upon a warrior;

^a 89.9 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

^b 89.20 *Then* Referring to vv. 4–5; cf. 2 Sam. 7.1–17.

I have exalted one chosen out of the people.
²¹I have found David, My servant;
 anointed him with My sacred oil.
²²My hand shall be constantly with him,
 and My arm shall strengthen him.
²³No enemy shall oppress him,^c
 no one vile afflict him.
²⁴I will crush his adversaries before him;
 I will strike down those who hate him.
²⁵My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;
 his horn shall be exalted through My name.
²⁶I will set his hand upon the sea,
 his right hand upon the rivers.
²⁷He shall say to Me,
 ‘You are my father,^d my God, the rock of my deliverance.’
²⁸I will appoint him first-born,
 highest of the kings of the earth.
²⁹I will maintain My steadfast love for him always;
 My covenant with him shall endure.
³⁰I will establish his line forever,
 his throne, as long as the heavens last.
³¹If his sons forsake My Teaching
 and do not live by My rules;
³²if they violate My laws,
 and do not observe My commands,
³³I will punish their transgression with the rod,
 their iniquity with plagues.
³⁴But I will not take away My steadfast love from him;
 I will not betray My faithfulness.
³⁵I will not violate My covenant,
 or change what I have uttered.
³⁶I have sworn by My holiness, once and for all;
 I will not be false to David.
³⁷His line shall continue forever,
 his throne, as the sun before Me,
³⁸as the moon, established forever,
 an enduring witness in the sky.”

Selah.

^c 89.23 *oppress him* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 89.27 *father* I.e., with the authority to declare which offspring (= nation's king) is the favored one.

³⁹Yet You have rejected, spurned,
and become enraged at Your anointed.

⁴⁰You have repudiated the covenant with Your servant;
You have dragged his dignity in the dust.

⁴¹You have breached all his defenses,
shattered his strongholds.

⁴²All who pass by plunder him;
he has become the butt of his neighbors.

⁴³You have exalted the right hand of his adversaries,
and made all his enemies rejoice.

⁴⁴You have turned back the blade of his sword,
and have not sustained him in battle.

⁴⁵You have brought his splendor^e to an end
and have hurled his throne to the ground.

⁴⁶You have cut short the days of his youth;
You have covered him with shame.

Selah.

⁴⁷How long, O ETERNAL One; will You forever hide Your face,
will Your fury blaze like fire?

⁴⁸O remember how short my life is;^f
why should You have created every person in vain?

⁴⁹Who^g can live and not see death,
can escape the clutches of Sheol?

Selah.

⁵⁰O my Sovereign, where is Your steadfast love of old
that You swore to David in Your faithfulness?

⁵¹Remember, O my Sovereign, the abuse flung at Your servants
that I have borne in my bosom [from] many peoples,^h

⁵²how Your enemies, O ETERNAL One, have flung abuse,
abuse at Your anointed at every step.

⁵³Blessed is GOD forever;
Amen and Amen.

^e 89.45 *his splendor* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 89.48 *how short my life is* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 89.49 *Who* Or “What virile man.”

^h 89.51 *that I have borne in my bosom [from] many peoples* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

BOOK FOUR

90 A prayer of Moses, the agent of God.

O my Sovereign, You have been our refuge in every generation.

²Before the mountains came into being,
 before You brought forth the earth and the world,
 from eternity to eternity You are God.

³You return humans to dust;^a
 You decreed, “Return, you mortals!”

⁴For in Your sight a thousand years
 are like yesterday that has passed,
 like a watch of the night.

⁵You engulf mortals^b in sleep;^c
 at daybreak they are like grass that renews itself;
 ⁶at daybreak it flourishes anew;
 by dusk it withers and dries up.

⁷So we are consumed by Your anger,
 terror-struck by Your fury.

⁸You have set our iniquities before You,
 our hidden sins in the light of Your face.

⁹All our days pass away in Your wrath;
 we spend our years like a sigh.

¹⁰The span of our life is seventy years,
 or, given the strength, eighty years;
 but the best of them^d are trouble and sorrow.

They pass by speedily, and we are in darkness.^e

¹¹Who can know Your furious anger?
Your wrath matches the fear of You.

¹²Teach us to count our days rightly,
 that we may obtain a wise heart.

¹³Turn, O ETERNAL One!
How long?
Show mercy to Your servants.

^a90.3 *dust* Or “contrition.”

^b90.5 *mortals* Heb. “them.”

^c90.4–5 *For in Your sight . . . sleep* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d90.10 *best of them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e90.10 *are in darkness* Or “fly away.”

- ¹⁴Satisfy us at daybreak with Your steadfast love
that we may sing for joy all our days.
¹⁵Give us joy for as long as You have afflicted us,
for the years we have suffered misfortune.
¹⁶Let Your deeds be seen by Your servants,
Your glory by their children.
¹⁷May the favor of my Sovereign, our God, be upon us;
let the work of our hands prosper,
O prosper the work of our hands!

91

- O you who dwell in the shelter of the Most High
and abide in the protection of Shaddai—
²I say of GOD, my refuge and stronghold,
my God in whom I trust,
³that you will be saved from the fowler's trap,
from the destructive plague.
⁴With pinions you will be covered;
you will find refuge under God's wings—
whose fidelity is an encircling shield.
⁵You need not fear the terror by night,
or the arrow that flies by day,
⁶the plague that stalks in the darkness,
or the scourge that ravages at noon.
⁷A thousand may fall at your left side,
ten thousand at your right,
but it shall not reach you.
⁸You will see it with your eyes,
you will witness the punishment of the wicked.
⁹Because you took GOD—my refuge,
the Most High—as your haven,
¹⁰no harm will befall you,
no disease touch your tent.
¹¹For God's angels will be ordered
to guard you wherever you go.
¹²They will carry you in their hands
lest you hurt your foot on a stone.
¹³You will tread on cubs and vipers;
you will trample lions and asps.

¹⁴“Because such people are devoted to Me, I will deliver them;
I will keep them safe, for they know My name.

¹⁵When they call on Me, I will answer them;
I will be with them in distress;
I will rescue them and make them honored;
¹⁶I will let them live to a ripe old age,
and show them My salvation.”

92 A psalm. A song; for the sabbath day.

²It is good to praise GOD,
to sing hymns to Your name, O Most High,

³To proclaim Your steadfast love at daybreak,
Your faithfulness each night

⁴With a ten-stringed harp,
with voice and lyre together.

⁵You have gladdened me by Your deeds, O ETERNAL One;
I shout for joy at Your handiwork.

⁶How great are Your works, O ETERNAL One,
how very subtle^a Your designs!

⁷A brute cannot know,
a fool cannot understand this:
⁸though the wicked sprout like grass,
though all evildoers blossom,
it is only that they may be destroyed forever.

⁹But You are exalted, O ETERNAL One, for all time.

¹⁰Surely, Your enemies, O ETERNAL One,
surely, Your enemies perish;
all evildoers are scattered.

¹¹You raise my horn high like that of a wild ox;
I am soaked in freshening oil.

¹²I shall see the defeat of my watchful foes,
hear of the downfall of the wicked who beset me.

¹³The righteous bloom like a date-palm;
they thrive like a cedar in Lebanon;
¹⁴planted in the house of GOD,
they flourish in the courts of our God.

^a92.6 *subtle* Or “profound.”

¹⁵In old age they still produce fruit;
they are full of sap and freshness—
¹⁶attesting that GOD is upright,
my rock, in whom there is no wrong.

93

GOD is sovereign,
and robed in grandeur;
GOD is robed,
and girded with strength.
The world stands firm;
it cannot be shaken.
²Your throne stands firm from of old;
from eternity You have existed.
³The ocean sounds, O ETERNAL One,
the ocean sounds its thunder,
the ocean sounds its pounding.
⁴Above the thunder of the mighty waters,
more majestic than the breakers of the sea
is GOD, majestic on high.
⁵Your decrees are indeed enduring;
holiness befits Your house,
O ETERNAL One, for all times.

94

God of retribution, ETERNAL One,
God of retribution, appear!
²Rise up, judge of the earth,
give the arrogant their deserts!
³How long shall the wicked, O ETERNAL One,
how long shall the wicked exult,
⁴shall they utter insolent speech,
shall all evildoers vaunt themselves?
⁵They crush Your people, O ETERNAL One,
they afflict Your very own;
⁶they kill the widow and the stranger;
they murder the fatherless,
⁷thinking, “Yah^a does not see it,
the God of Jacob does not pay heed.”

^a94.7 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

- ⁸Take heed, you most brutish people;
 fools, when will you get wisdom?
- ⁹Shall the One who implants the ear not hear,
 the One who forms the eye not see?
- ¹⁰Shall the One who disciplines nations not punish,
 the One who instructs humankind in knowledge?
- ¹¹GOD knows human designs to be futile.
- ¹²Happy are those^b whom You discipline, O Yah,
 whom You instruct in Your teaching,
 ¹³whom You give tranquility in times of misfortune,
 until a pit be dug for the wicked.
- ¹⁴For GOD will not forsake this people;
 God's very own will not be abandoned.
- ¹⁵Judgment shall again accord with justice
 and all the upright shall rally to it.
- ¹⁶Who will take my part against evildoers?
 Who will stand up for me against wrongdoers?
- ¹⁷Were not GOD my help,
 I should soon dwell in silence.
- ¹⁸When I think my foot has given way,
 Your faithfulness, O ETERNAL One, supports me.
- ¹⁹When I am filled with cares,
 Your assurance soothes my soul.
- ²⁰Shall the seat of injustice be Your partner,
 that frames mischief by statute?
- ²¹They band together to do away with the righteous;
 they condemn the innocent to death.
- ²²But GOD is my haven;
 my God is my sheltering rock.
- ²³Their evil will be made to recoil upon them,
 through their own wickedness they will be annihilated;
 the ETERNAL our God will annihilate them.

95

Come, let us sing joyously to GOD,
 raise a shout for our rock and deliverer;

^b **94.12** *are those* Or “is the virile man.”

- ²let us come into the divine presence with praise;
 let us shout out in song!
- ³For the ETERNAL is a great God,
 the great ruler of all divine beings.
- ⁴In God's hand are the depths of the earth;
 the peaks of the mountains are God's.
- ⁵The sea is God's—the One who made it;
 and the land, fashioned by God's hands.
- ⁶Come, let us bow down and kneel,
 bend the knee before the ETERNAL our maker,
⁷for this One is our God,
 and we are the people being cared for—the tended flock.
- O, if you would but heed God's charge this day:
- ⁸Do not be stubborn as at Meribah,
 as on the day of Massah, in the wilderness,
⁹when your ancestors put Me to the test,
 tried Me, though they had seen My deeds.
- ¹⁰Forty years I was provoked by that generation;
 I thought, "They are a senseless people;
 they would not know My ways."
- ¹¹Concerning them I swore in anger,
 "They shall never come to My resting-place!"

96

- ^aSing to GOD a new song,
 sing to GOD, all the earth.
- ²Sing to GOD, bless this name,
 proclaim God's victory day after day.
- ³Tell of this glory among the nations,
 God's wondrous deeds, among all peoples.
- ⁴For GOD is great and much acclaimed,
 and is held in awe by all divine beings.
- ⁵All the gods of the peoples are mere idols,
 but the ETERNAL made the heavens.
- ⁶Glory and majesty are present;
 strength and splendor are in the holy temple.
- ⁷Ascribe to GOD, O families of the peoples,
 ascribe to GOD glory and strength.

^a96.1–13 Cf. 1 Chron. 16.23–33.

⁸Ascribe to GOD the glory of this name,
 bring tribute and enter the temple's^b courts.
⁹Bow down to GOD, majestic in holiness;
 tremble in the divine presence, all the earth!
¹⁰Declare among the nations, "GOD is sovereign!"
 The world stands firm; it cannot be shaken;
 the peoples will be judged with equity.
¹¹Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult;
 let the sea and all within it thunder,
¹²the fields and everything in them exult;
 then shall all the trees of the forest shout for joy
¹³at the presence of GOD, who is coming,
 coming to rule the earth—
 to rule the world justly,
 and its peoples in faithfulness.

97

GOD is sovereign!
 Let the earth exult,
 the many islands rejoice!
²Surrounded by dense clouds—
 righteousness and justice are the base of the heavenly
 throne.
³Fire is the vanguard,
 burning up foes on every side.
⁴God's lightnings light up the world;
 the earth is convulsed at the sight;
⁵mountains melt like wax at GOD's presence,
 at the presence of the Sovereign of all the earth.
⁶The heavens proclaim God's righteousness
 and all peoples see God's glory.
⁷All who worship images,
 who vaunt their idols,
 are dismayed;
 all divine beings bow down in homage.
⁸Zion, hearing it, rejoices,
 the towns^a of Judah exult,

^b 96.8 *the temple's* Heb. "its."

^a 97.8 *towns* Or "women."

because of Your judgments, O ETERNAL One.
⁹For You, ETERNAL One, are supreme over all the earth;
 You are exalted high above all divine beings.

¹⁰O you who love GOD, hate evil!
 For the lives of the loyal are guarded;
 they are saved from the hand of the wicked.

¹¹Light is sown for the righteous,
 radiance^b for the upright.

¹²O you righteous, rejoice in GOD
 and acclaim God's holy name!

98 A psalm.

Sing to GOD a new song,
 who has worked wonders—
 who with right hand, and holy arm,
 has won victory.

²GOD has manifested victory,
 and displayed triumph in the sight of the nations—
³mindful of God's steadfast love and faithfulness toward
 the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth beheld the victory of our God.

⁴Raise a shout to GOD, all the earth,
 break into joyous songs of praise!

⁵Sing praise to GOD with the lyre,
 with the lyre and melodious song.

⁶With trumpets and the blast of the horn
 raise a shout before GOD, the King.^a

⁷Let the sea and all within it thunder,
 the world and its inhabitants;
⁸let the rivers clap their hands,
 the mountains sing joyously together
⁹at the presence of GOD—
 who is coming to rule the earth:
 [God] will rule the world justly,
 and its peoples with equity.

^b 97.11 *radiance* In contrast to others "joy."

^a 98.6 *King* I.e., the One who leads the celestial army to victory.

99

GOD, enthroned on cherubim, is sovereign,
peoples tremble,^a the earth quakes.

²GOD is great in Zion,
and exalted above all peoples.

³They praise Your name as great and awesome;
[God] is holy!

⁴Mighty ruler^b who loves justice,
it was You who established equity,
You who worked righteous judgment in Jacob.

⁵Exalt the ETERNAL our God
and bow down to the divine footstool;
[God] is holy!

⁶Moses and Aaron among God's priests,
Samuel, among those who call on the divine name—
when they called to GOD,
they were answered.

⁷[God] spoke to them in a pillar of cloud;
they obeyed those decrees,
the law given to them.

⁸Our ETERNAL God, You answered them;
You were a forgiving God for them,
but You exacted retribution for their misdeeds.

⁹Exalt the ETERNAL our God,
and bow toward God's holy hill,
for the ETERNAL our God is holy.

100

A psalm for praise.^a

Raise a shout for GOD, all the earth;

²worship GOD in gladness;

come into the divine presence with shouts of joy.

³Acknowledge that the ETERNAL is God,

^a99.1 GOD, enthroned on cherubim, is sovereign, / peoples tremble Clauses transposed for clarity.

^b99.4 Mighty ruler Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a100.1 for praise Traditionally “for the thanksgiving offering.”

who made us and to whom we belong,^b
 a covenanted people, the flock whom [God] tends.
⁴Enter the temple's gates with praise,
 its courts with acclamation.
 Give praise!
 Bless the divine name!
⁵For GOD—whose steadfast love is eternal,
 and whose faithfulness is for all generations—
 is good.

101 Of David. A psalm.

I will sing of faithfulness and justice;
 I will chant a hymn to You, O ETERNAL One.
²I will study the way of the blameless;
 when shall I attain it?
 I will live without blame within my house.
³I will not set before my eyes anything base;
 I hate crooked dealing;
 I will have none of it.
⁴Perverse thoughts will be far from me;
 I will know nothing of evil.
⁵One who slanders a friend in secret I will destroy;
 I cannot endure anyone haughty and proud.
⁶My eyes are on the trustworthy ones of the land,
 to have them at my side.
 One who follows the way of the blameless
 shall be in my service.
⁷One who deals deceitfully
 shall not live in my house;
 one who speaks untruth
 shall not stand before my eyes.
⁸Each morning I will destroy
 all the wicked of the land,
 to rid God's city
 of all evildoers.

^b 100.3 *to whom we belong* So *qere; kethib* and some ancient versions “not we ourselves.”

102 A prayer of one who is lowly and faint, pouring forth a plea before GOD.

²O ETERNAL One, hear my prayer;
 let my cry come before You.

³Do not hide Your face from me
 in my time of trouble;
 turn Your ear to me;
 when I cry, answer me speedily.

⁴For my days have vanished like smoke
 and my bones are charred like a hearth.

⁵My body is stricken and withered like grass;
 too wasted^a to eat my food;
 ⁶on account of my vehement groaning
 my bones show through my skin.^b

⁷I am like a great owl in the wilderness,
 an owl among the ruins.

⁸I lie awake; I am like
 a lone bird upon a roof.

⁹All day long my enemies revile me;
 my deriders use my name to curse.

¹⁰For I have eaten ashes like bread
 and mixed my drink with tears,
 ¹¹because of Your wrath and Your fury;
 for You have cast me far away.

¹²My days are like a lengthening shadow;
 I wither like grass.

¹³But You, O ETERNAL One, are enthroned forever;
 Your fame endures throughout the ages.

¹⁴You will surely arise and take pity on Zion,
 for it is time to be gracious to her;
 the appointed time has come.

¹⁵Your servants take delight in its stones,
 and cherish its dust.

¹⁶The nations will fear the name of GOD,
 all the kings of the earth, Your glory.

^a102.5 *too wasted* In contrast to others “I forget.”

^b102.6 *show through my skin* Lit. “cling to my flesh.”

¹⁷For GOD has built Zion,
 appearing in all the divine glory—
¹⁸turning to the prayer of the destitute^c
 and not spurning their prayer.
¹⁹May this be written down for a coming generation,
 that people yet to be created may praise Yah.^d
²⁰Looking down from the holy heights,
 GOD beholds the earth from heaven
²¹to hear the groans of the prisoner,
 to release those condemned to death;
²²that GOD's fame may be recounted in Zion,
 with praises offered in Jerusalem,
²³when the nations gather together,
 the kingdoms, to serve GOD.
²⁴My strength was drained in mid-course,
 my days shortened.
²⁵I say, “O my God, do not take me away
 in the midst of my days,
 You whose years go on for generations on end.
²⁶Of old You established the earth;
 the heavens are the work of Your hands.
²⁷They shall perish, but You shall endure;
 they shall all wear out like a garment;
 You change them like clothing and they pass away.
²⁸But You are the same, and Your years never end.
²⁹May the children of Your servants dwell securely
 and their offspring endure in Your presence.”

103 Of David.

Bless GOD, O my soul,
 all my being, that holy name.
²Bless the ETERNAL One, O my soul,
 and do not forget all God's bounties.
³All your sins are forgiven,
 all your diseases healed.

^c 102.18 *of the destitute* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 102.19 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

⁴Your life is redeemed from the Pit,
 you are surrounded with steadfast love and mercy.

⁵You are satisfied with good things in the prime of life,^a
 so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

⁶GOD executes righteous acts
 and judgments for all who are wronged—
 ⁷making known to Moses the divine ways,
 and to the children of Israel, holy deeds.

⁸GOD is compassionate and gracious,
 slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love.

⁹[God] will not contend forever,
 or nurse anger for all time.

¹⁰[God] has not dealt with us according to our sins,
 nor requited us according to our iniquities.

¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
 so great is divine steadfast love toward those who show
 reverence.

¹²As east is far from west,
 so far have our sins been removed from us.

¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
 so GOD has compassion for those who show reverence.

¹⁴For [God] knows how we are formed,
 and is mindful that we are dust.

¹⁵Mortals, their days are like those of grass;
 they bloom like a flower of the field;

¹⁶a wind passes by and it is no more,
 its own place no longer knows it.

¹⁷But GOD's steadfast love is for all eternity
 toward those who show reverence,
 and God's beneficence is for the children's children
 ¹⁸of those who keep the covenant
 and remember to observe the divine precepts.

¹⁹GOD has established the heavenly throne,
 with a sovereign rule over all.

²⁰Bless the ETERNAL One, O angels,
 mighty creatures who do God's bidding,

^a 103.5 *the prime of life* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

ever obedient to that bidding;
²¹bless the ETERNAL One, all you^b hosts,
 you^c servants who do God's will;
²²bless the ETERNAL One, all God's works,
 through the length and breadth of God's realm;
 bless the ETERNAL One, O my soul.

104

- Bless the ETERNAL One, O my soul;
 O ETERNAL One, my God, You are very great;
 You are clothed in glory and majesty,
²wrapped in a robe of light;
 You spread the heavens like a tent cloth.
³[God] sets the rafters of the heavenly lofts in the waters—
 making the clouds a chariot,
 moving on the wings of the wind.
⁴[God] makes messengers of the winds,
 servants of fiery flames.
⁵[God] established the earth on its foundations,
 so that it shall never totter.
⁶You made the deep cover it as a garment;
 the waters stood above the mountains.
⁷They fled at Your blast,
 rushed away at the sound of Your thunder—
⁸mountains rising, valleys sinking—
 to the place You established for them.
⁹You set bounds they must not pass
 so that they never again cover the earth.
¹⁰You make springs gush forth in torrents;
 they make their way between the hills,
¹¹giving drink to all the wild beasts;
 the wild asses slake their thirst.
¹²The birds of the sky dwell beside them
 and sing among the foliage.
¹³You water the mountains from Your^a lofts;
 the earth is sated from the fruit of Your work.

^b 103.21 *you* Heb. "His."

^c 103.21 *you* See preceding note.

^a 104.13 *Your* Heb. "God's."

¹⁴You make the grass grow for the cattle,
and herbage for humans' labor
that they may get food out of the earth—
¹⁵wine that cheers human hearts,
oil that makes the face shine,^b
and bread that sustains human life.

¹⁶The trees of GOD drink their fill,
the cedars of Lebanon, God's own planting,
¹⁷where birds make their nests;
the stork has her home in the junipers.
¹⁸The high mountains are for wild goats;
the crags are a refuge for rock-badgers.

¹⁹[God] made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows when to set.

²⁰You bring on darkness and it is night,
when all the beasts of the forests stir.

²¹The lions roar for prey,
seeking their food from God.

²²When the sun rises, they come home
and couch in their dens.

²³People then go out to their work,
to their labor until the evening.

²⁴How many are the things You have made, O ETERNAL One;
You have made them all with wisdom;
the earth is full of Your creations.

²⁵There is the sea, vast and wide,
with its creatures beyond number,
living things, small and great.

²⁶There go the ships,
and Leviathan that You formed to sport with.

²⁷All of them look to You
to give them their food when it is due.

²⁸Give it to them, they gather it up;
open Your hand, they are well satisfied;
²⁹hide Your face, they are terrified;
take away their breath, they perish

^b **104.15 oil that makes the face shine** Lit. "to make the face shine from oil."

and turn again into dust;
³⁰send back Your breath, they are created,
 and You renew the face of the earth.

³¹May GOD's glory endure forever;
 may GOD rejoice in these works!
³²[God] looks at the earth and it trembles,
 touches the mountains and they smoke.

³³I will sing to GOD as long as I live;
 all my life I will chant hymns to my God.
³⁴May my prayer be found pleasing;
 I will rejoice in GOD.

³⁵May sinners disappear from the earth,
 and the wicked be no more.

Bless Yah,^c O my soul.
 Hallelujah.

105

Praise GOD;
 call on this name;
 proclaim God's deeds among the peoples.

²Sing out praises;
 speak of all those wondrous acts.

³Exult in the holy name;
 let all who seek GOD rejoice.

⁴Turn to GOD, to divine might;^a
 seek God's presence constantly.

⁵Remember the wonders that have been done,
 the portents, and judgments pronounced,
⁶O offspring of Abraham, God's servant,
 O descendants of Jacob, the chosen ones.

⁷The ETERNAL is our God,
 whose judgments are throughout the earth.

⁸[God] is ever mindful of the covenant,
 the promise given for a thousand generations,
⁹that was made with Abraham,
 sworn to Isaac,

^c 104.35 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

^a 105.4 *divine might* I.e., the Ark; cf. Ps. 78.61; 132.8.

¹⁰and confirmed in a decree for Jacob,
for Israel, as an eternal covenant,
¹¹saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your allotted heritage.”

¹²They were then few in number,
a mere handful, sojourning there,
¹³wandering from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another.
¹⁴None were allowed to oppress them;
kings were reproved on their account,
¹⁵“Do not touch My anointed ones;
do not harm My prophets.”

¹⁶A famine was called down on the land,
destroying every staff of bread.

¹⁷[God] sent ahead of them an agent—
Joseph, sold into slavery.

¹⁸His feet were subjected to fetters;
an iron collar was put on his neck.

¹⁹Until his prediction came true
God’s decree purged him.

²⁰The king sent to have him freed;
the ruler of nations released him.

²¹He made him the lord of his household,
empowered him over all his possessions,
²²to discipline his princes at will,
to teach his elders wisdom.

²³Then Israel came to Egypt;
Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

²⁴[God] made that people very fruitful,
more numerous than their foes,
²⁵then changed the heart^b [of the Egyptians] to hate this
people,
to plot against God’s servants.

²⁶Moses—God’s servant—was sent,
and Aaron, who had been chosen.

²⁷They performed God’s signs among them,

^b 105.25 *changed the heart* Or “Their heart changed.”

- and wonders, against the land of Ham.
- ²⁸[God] sent darkness; it was very dark;
did they not defy God's word?^c
- ²⁹Their waters were turned into blood
and their fish were killed.
- ³⁰Their land teemed with frogs,
even the rooms of their king.
- ³¹Swarms of insects came at God's command,
lice, throughout their country.
- ³²They were given hail for rain,
and flaming fire in their land.
- ³³Their vines and fig trees were struck,
the trees of their country broken down.
- ³⁴Locusts came at God's command,
grasshoppers without number.
- ³⁵They devoured every green thing in the land;
they consumed the produce of the soil.
- ³⁶[God] struck down every [male] first-born in the land,
the first fruit of their vigor.
- ³⁷Israel^d was led out with silver and gold;
none among their tribes faltered.
- ³⁸Egypt rejoiced when they left,
for dread of Israel^e had fallen upon them.
- ³⁹[God] spread a cloud for a cover,
and fire to light up the night.
- ⁴⁰They asked, and were brought quail,
and were satisfied with food from heaven.
- ⁴¹[God] opened a rock so that water gushed forth;
it flowed as a stream in the parched land.
- ⁴²Mindful of the sacred promise
to Abraham—God's servant,
- ⁴³The people were led out in gladness,
God's chosen ones with joyous song.
- ⁴⁴They were given the lands of nations;
they inherited the wealth of peoples,

^c 105.28 *did they not defy God's word* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 105.37 *Israel* Heb. "them."

^e 105.38 *Israel* Heb. "them."

⁴⁵that they might keep God's laws
and observe God's teachings.
Hallelujah.

106

Hallelujah.

Praise GOD, who is good—
whose steadfast love is eternal.
²Who can tell GOD's mighty acts,
proclaim all due praises?

³Happy are those who act justly,
who do right at all times.

⁴Be mindful of me, O ETERNAL One, when You favor Your
people;
take note of me when You deliver them,
⁵that I may enjoy the prosperity of Your chosen ones,
share the joy of Your nation,
glory in Your very own people.

⁶We have sinned like our ancestors;
we have gone astray, done evil.

⁷Our ancestors in Egypt did not perceive Your wonders;
they did not remember Your abundant love,
but rebelled at the sea, at the Sea of Reeds.

⁸Yet they were saved, as befits God's name,
to make known God's might.

⁹A blast was sent against the Sea of Reeds;
it became dry;
they were led through the deep as through a wilderness.

¹⁰They were delivered from the foe,
redeemed from the enemy.

¹¹Water covered their adversaries;
not one of them was left.

¹²Then they believed God's promise,
and sang God's praises.

¹³But they soon forgot those deeds;
they would not wait to learn the divine plan.

¹⁴They were seized with craving in the wilderness,
and put God to the test in the wasteland.

¹⁵They were given what they asked for,

- then made to waste away.
- ¹⁶There was envy of Moses in the camp,
and of Aaron, GOD's holy one.
- ¹⁷The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan,
closed over the party of Abiram.
- ¹⁸A fire blazed among their party,
a flame that consumed the wicked.
- ¹⁹They made a calf at Horeb
and bowed down to a molten image.
- ²⁰They exchanged their glory
for the image of a bull that feeds on grass.
- ²¹They forgot God who saved them,
who performed great deeds in Egypt,
²²wondrous deeds in the land of Ham,
awesome deeds at the Sea of Reeds.
- ²³They would have been destroyed
had not Moses, God's chosen one,
stood in the breach
to avert God's destructive wrath.
- ²⁴They rejected the desirable land,
and put no faith in the divine promise.
- ²⁵They grumbled in their tents
and disobeyed GOD.
- ²⁶So a divine hand was raised in oath
to make them fall in the wilderness,
²⁷to disperse^a their offspring among the nations
and scatter them through the lands.
- ²⁸They attached themselves to Baal Peor,
ate sacrifices offered to the dead.
- ²⁹They provoked anger by their deeds,
and a plague broke out among them.
- ³⁰Phinehas stepped forth and intervened,
and the plague ceased.
- ³¹It was reckoned to his merit
for all generations, to eternity.
- ³²They provoked wrath at the waters of Meribah
and Moses suffered on their account,

^a 106.27 *disperse* Cf. Targum, Kimhi.

³³because they rebelled against [God]
and he spoke rashly.

³⁴They did not destroy the nations
as GOD had commanded them,
³⁵but mingled with the nations
and learned their ways.

³⁶They worshiped their idols,
which became a snare for them.

³⁷Their own sons and daughters
they sacrificed to demons.

³⁸They shed innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan;
so the land was polluted with bloodguilt.

³⁹Thus they became defiled by their acts,
debauched through their deeds.

⁴⁰GOD was angry with this people
and abhorred them as an inheritance.

⁴¹They were handed over to the nations;
their foes ruled them.

⁴²Their enemies oppressed them
and they were subject to their power.

⁴³They were saved time and again,
but they were deliberately rebellious,
and so they were brought low by their iniquity.

⁴⁴Upon seeing that they were in distress,
and hearing their cry,

⁴⁵[God] was mindful of the covenant
and in great faithfulness relented.

⁴⁶Their captors were made to be kindly disposed toward them.

⁴⁷Deliver us, our ETERNAL God,
and gather us from among the nations,
to acclaim Your holy name,
to glory in Your praise.

⁴⁸Blessed is the ETERNAL, God of Israel,
From eternity to eternity.
Let all the people say, "Amen."
Hallelujah.

BOOK FIVE

107

"Praise GOD, who is good—
whose steadfast love is eternal!"

²Thus let GOD's redeemed say,
those redeemed from adversity,
³who have been gathered in from the lands,
from east and west,
from the north and from the sea.

⁴Some lost their way in the wilderness,
in the wasteland;
they found no settled place.

⁵Hungry and thirsty,
their spirit failed.

⁶In their adversity they cried to GOD,
and they were rescued from their troubles.

⁷They were shown a direct way
to reach a settled place.

⁸Let them give praise for GOD's steadfast love
and wondrous deeds for humankind—
⁹for satisfying the thirsty,
and filling the hungry with all good things.

¹⁰Some lived in deepest darkness,
bound in cruel irons,
¹¹because they defied the word of God,
spurned the counsel of the Most High.

¹²Their hearts were humbled through suffering;
they stumbled with no one to help.

¹³In their adversity they cried to GOD,
and were rescued from their troubles.

¹⁴They were brought out of deepest darkness,
their bonds broken asunder.

¹⁵Let them give praise for GOD's steadfast love
and wondrous deeds for humankind—
¹⁶shattering gates of bronze,
breaking their iron bars.

¹⁷There were fools who suffered for their sinful way,
and for their iniquities.

- ¹⁸All food was loathsome to them;
they reached the gates of death.
- ¹⁹In their adversity they cried to GOD
and they were saved from their troubles.
- ²⁰[God] gave an order and healed them—
delivering them from the pits.^a
- ²¹Let them give praise for GOD's steadfast love
and wondrous deeds for humankind.
- ²²Let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,
and tell those deeds in joyful song.
- ²³Others go down to the sea in ships,
ply their trade in the mighty waters;
- ²⁴they have seen GOD's works
and those wonders in the deep.
- ²⁵God's word raised a storm wind
that made the waves surge.
- ²⁶Mounting up to the heaven,
plunging down to the depths,
disgorging in their misery,
- ²⁷they reeled and staggered like a drunk,
all their skill to no avail.
- ²⁸In their adversity they cried to GOD,
and were saved from their troubles.
- ²⁹The storm was reduced to a whisper;
the waves were stilled.
- ³⁰They rejoiced when all was quiet,
and were brought to the port they desired.
- ³¹Let them give praise for GOD's steadfast love,
and wondrous deeds for humankind.
- ³²Let them exalt in the congregation of the people,
acclaim in the assembly of the elders.
- ³³The rivers are turned into a wilderness,
springs of water into thirsty land,
- ³⁴fruitful land into a salt marsh,
because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.
- ³⁵The wilderness is turned into pools,

^a 107.20 *the pits* Of death.

parched land into springs of water.
³⁶There the hungry are settled;
 they build a place to settle in.
³⁷They sow fields and plant vineyards
 that yield a fruitful harvest.
³⁸They are blessed and they increase greatly—
 their cattle do not decrease,
³⁹after they had been few and crushed
 by oppression, misery, and sorrow.
⁴⁰[God] pours contempt on nobles
 and makes them lose their way in trackless deserts;
⁴¹but the needy are secured from suffering,
 their families increased like flocks.
⁴²The upright see it and rejoice;
 the mouth of all wrongdoers is stopped.
⁴³One who is wise will take note of these things
 and consider GOD's steadfast love.

108 A song. A psalm of David.

^{2a}My heart is firm, O God;
 I will sing and chant a hymn with all my soul.
³Awake, O harp and lyre!
 I will wake the dawn.
⁴I will praise You among the peoples, O ETERNAL One,
 sing a hymn to You among the nations;
⁵for Your faithfulness is higher than the heavens;
 Your steadfastness reaches to the sky.
⁶Exalt Yourself over the heavens, O God;
 let Your glory be over all the earth!
^{7b}That those whom You love may be rescued,
 deliver with Your right hand and answer me.
⁸God promised in the sanctuary^c
 that I would exultingly divide up Shechem,
 and measure the Valley of Sukkoth;

^a 108.2–6 Cf. Ps. 57.8–12.

^b 108.7–14 Cf. Ps. 60.7–14.

^c 108.8 *in the sanctuary* Or “by God's holiness.”

⁹Gilead and Manasseh would be mine,
 Ephraim my chief stronghold,
 Judah my scepter;
¹⁰Moab would be my washbasin;
 on Edom I would cast my shoe;
 I would raise a shout over Philistia.
¹¹Would that I were brought to the bastion!
 Would that I were led to Edom!
¹²But You have rejected us, O God;
 God, You do not march with our armies.
¹³Grant us Your aid against the foe,
 for human help is worthless.
¹⁴We shall triumph with God,
 who will trample our foes.

109 For the leader. Of David. A psalm.

O God of my praise,
 do not keep aloof,
²for the wicked and the deceitful
 open their mouth against me;
 they speak to me with lying tongue.
³They encircle me with words of hate;
 they attack me without cause.
⁴They answer my love with accusation
 and I must stand judgment^a
⁵They repay me with evil for good,
 with hatred for my love.
⁶Appoint someone wicked over him;
 may an accuser stand at his right side;
⁷may he be tried and convicted;
 may he be judged and found guilty.
⁸May his days be few;
 may another take over his position.^b
⁹May his children be orphans,
 his wife a widow.

^a 109.4 *and I must stand judgment* Or “but I am all prayer”; meaning of Heb. uncertain, but see v. 7.

^b 109.8 *his position* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¹⁰May his children wander from their hovels,
 begging in search of [bread].
- ¹¹May his creditor seize all his possessions;
 may strangers plunder his wealth.
- ¹²May no one show him mercy;
 may none pity his orphans;
- ¹³may his posterity be cut off;
 may their names be blotted out in the next generation.
- ¹⁴May God be ever mindful of his father's iniquity,
 and may the sin of his mother not be blotted out.
- ¹⁵May GOD be aware of them always
 and cause their names to be cut off from the earth,
- ¹⁶because he was not minded to act kindly,
 and hounded to death the poor and needy man,^c
 one crushed in spirit.
- ¹⁷He loved to curse—may a curse come upon him!
He would not bless—may blessing be far from him!
- ¹⁸May he be clothed in a curse like a garment,
 may it enter his body like water,
 his bones like oil.
- ¹⁹Let it be like the cloak he wraps around him,
 like the belt he always wears.
- ²⁰May GOD thus repay my accusers,
 all those who speak evil against me.
- ²¹Now You, O GOD, my Sovereign,
 act in my behalf as befits Your name.
Good and faithful as You are, save me.
- ²²For I am poor and needy,
 and my heart is pierced within me.
- ²³I fade away like a lengthening shadow;
 I am shaken off like locusts.
- ²⁴My knees give way from fasting;
 my flesh is lean, has lost its fat.
- ²⁵I am the object of their scorn;
 when they see me, they shake their head.
- ²⁶Help me, O my ETERNAL God;
 save me in accord with Your faithfulness—

^c 109.16 *the poor and needy man* The psalmist himself; cf. vv. 22, 31.

²⁷that all may know that it is Your hand,
that You, O ETERNAL One, have done it.
²⁸Let them curse, but You bless;
let them rise up, but come to grief,
while Your servant rejoices.
²⁹My accusers shall be clothed in shame,
wrapped in their disgrace as in a robe.
³⁰My mouth shall sing much praise to GOD;
I will acclaim in the midst of a throng,
³¹because [God] stands at the right hand of the needy,
to save them from those who would condemn them.

110 Of David. A psalm.

GOD said to my lord,^a
“Sit at My right hand
while I make your enemies your footstool.”
²GOD will stretch forth from Zion your mighty scepter;
hold sway over your enemies!
³^bYour people come forward willingly on your day of battle.
In majestic holiness, from the womb,
from the dawn, yours was the dew of youth.
⁴GOD has sworn and will not relent,
“You are a priest forever, a rightful king by My decree.”^c
⁵My Sovereign is at your right hand—
crushing kings in the day of divine anger.
⁶[God] works judgment upon the nations,
heaping up bodies,
crushing heads far and wide.
⁷My lord^d drinks from the stream on his way;
therefore he holds his head high.^e

^a 110.1 *my lord* I.e., the king, who leads his army on campaigns.

^b 110.3 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^c 110.4 *a rightful king by My decree* Or “after the manner of Melchizedek.”

^d 110.7 *My lord* Heb. “He”; cf. v. 1.

^e 110.7 *holds his head high* A sign of victory; cf. 3.4; 27.6.

111

Hallelujah.

- ¶ I praise GOD with all my heart
- ב in the assembled congregation of the upright.
- ג ²GOD's works are great,
- ת within reach of all who desire them.^a
- ה ³Splendid and glorious are God's deeds;
- ו God's beneficence is everlasting;
- ז ⁴renowned are God's wonders.
- מ GOD is gracious and compassionate—
- ט ⁵giving food to those who show reverence,
- י and ever mindful of the covenant—
- כ ⁶revealing powerful works to this people,
- ל and giving them the heritage of nations.
- מ ⁷Truth and justice are God's handiwork—
- ג whose precepts are enduring,
- ס ⁸well-founded for all eternity,
- ע wrought of truth and equity.
- פ ⁹Redeeming this people,
- א [God] ordained the covenant for all time;
- ק holy and awesome is God's name.
- ר ¹⁰The beginning^b of wisdom is reverence toward GOD;
- ש all who practice it gain sound understanding.
- נ Praise of [God] is everlasting.

112

Hallelujah.

- ¶ Happy are those who fear GOD,
- ב who are ardently devoted to God's commandments.
- ג ²Their descendants will be mighty in the land,
- ת a blessed generation of the upright.
- ה ³Wealth and riches are in their house,
- ו and their beneficence lasts forever.
- ז ⁴A light shines^a for the upright in the darkness;
- מ they are^b gracious, compassionate, and beneficent.
- ט ⁵All goes well with those who lend generously,
- ו who conduct affairs with equity.

^a 111.2 *within reach of all who desire them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 111.10 *beginning* Or “chief part.”

^a 112.4 *A light shines* Or “[God] shines as a light.”

^b 112.4 *they are* Or “[God] is.”

- כ** 6They shall never be shaken;
the beneficent will be remembered forever.

ל 7They are not afraid of evil tidings;
their heart is firm, they trust in GOD.

מ 8Their heart is resolute, they are unafraid;
in the end they will see the fall of their foes.

נ 9They give freely to the poor;
their beneficence lasts forever;

פ their horn is exalted in honor.

ק 10The wicked shall see it and be vexed;
they shall gnash their teeth; their courage shall fail.

ר The desire of the wicked shall come to nothing.

113

Hallelujah.

O servants of GOD, give praise;
praise the name of GOD.

²Let GOD's name be blessed
now and forever.

³From east to west

GOD's name is praised.

⁴GOD is exalted above all nations;
God's glory is above the heaven

⁵Who is like the ETERNAL our God—

the One who, enthroned on high,
sees what is below,
in heaven and on earth?

⁷[God] raises the poor from the dust.

lifts up the needy from the refuse heap

⁸to set them with the nobles,

with the nobles of God?

⁹and sets the childless woman;

as a happy mother of children.

Hallelujah.

when Israel went forth from Egypt.

the house of Jacob from

114

When Israel went forth from Egypt

the house of Jacob from a people of strange speech,

²Judah became God's holy one,⁶

Israel, God's dominion.

^a 114.2 *holy one* Or “sanctuary.”

³The sea saw them and fled,
 Jordan ran backward,
⁴mountains skipped like rams,
 hills like sheep.
⁵What alarmed you, O sea, that you fled,
 Jordan, that you ran backward,
⁶mountains, that you skipped like rams,
 hills, like sheep?
⁷Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Sovereign,
 at the presence of the God of Jacob,
⁸who turned the rock into a pool of water,
 the flinty rock into a fountain.

115

Not to us, O ETERNAL One, not to us
 but to Your name bring glory
 for the sake of Your love and Your faithfulness.
²Let the nations not say,
 “Where, now, is their God?”
³when our God is in heaven
 and whatever [God] wants is accomplished.
⁴^aTheir idols are silver and gold,
 the work of human hands.
⁵They have mouths, but cannot speak,
 eyes, but cannot see;
⁶they have ears, but cannot hear,
 noses, but cannot smell;
⁷they have hands, but cannot touch,
 feet, but cannot walk;
 they can make no sound in their throats.
⁸Those who fashion them,
 all who trust in them,
 shall become like them.
⁹O Israel, trust in GOD—
 who is your^b help and shield.
¹⁰O house of Aaron, trust in GOD—
 who is your^c help and shield.

^a 115.4–11 Cf. Ps. 135.15–20.^b 115.9 *your* Heb. “their.”^c 115.10 *your* See note at v. 9.

¹¹O you who fear GOD, trust in GOD—
who is your^d help and shield.

¹²GOD is mindful of us.

We will be blessed;

GOD will bless the house of Israel,
and will bless the house of Aaron,

¹³and will bless those who show reverence—
small and great alike.

¹⁴May GOD increase your numbers,
yours and your children's also.

¹⁵May you be blessed by GOD,
Maker of heaven and earth.

¹⁶The heavens belong to GOD,
but the earth was given over to humankind.

¹⁷The dead cannot praise Yah,^e
nor any who go down into silence.

¹⁸But we will bless Yah
now and forever.

Hallelujah.

116

I love the ETERNAL One
for hearing my voice, my pleas;^a
^bfor turning an ear to me
whenever I call.

³The bonds of death encompassed me;
the torments of Sheol overtook me.

I came upon trouble and sorrow
⁴and I invoked GOD's name,
“O ETERNAL One, save my life!”

⁵GOD is gracious and beneficent;
our God is compassionate.

⁶GOD protects the simple;
I was saved, after having been brought low.

^d115.11 *your* See note at v. 9.

^e115.17 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

^a116.1 *I love the ETERNAL One / for hearing my voice, my pleas* Heb. transposed for clarity; in contrast to others “I would love that the LORD hear,” etc.

⁷Be at rest, once again, O my soul,
 for GOD has been good to you.
⁸You^b have delivered me from death,
 my eyes from tears,
 my feet from stumbling.
⁹I shall walk before GOD
 in the lands of the living.
¹⁰I trust [in GOD];
 out of great suffering I spoke^c
¹¹and said rashly,
 “All people are false.”
¹²How can I repay GOD
 for all the bounties given to me?
¹³I raise the cup of deliverance
 and invoke GOD’s name.
¹⁴I will pay my vows to GOD
 in the presence of all those assembled.
¹⁵The death of God’s faithful ones
 is grievous in GOD’s sight.
¹⁶O ETERNAL One,
 I am Your servant,
 Your servant, the child of Your maidservant;
 You have undone the cords that bound me.
¹⁷I will sacrifice a thank offering to You
 and invoke GOD’s name.
¹⁸I will pay my vows to GOD
 in the presence of all those assembled,
¹⁹in the courts of GOD’s house,
 in the midst of^d Jerusalem.
 Hallelujah.

117

Praise GOD, all you nations;
 extol [God], all you peoples,
²for great is this steadfast love toward us;
 GOD’s faithfulness endures forever.
 Hallelujah.

^b 116.8 *You* I.e., God.

^c 116.10 *I trust . . . I spoke* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 116.19 *of* In contrast to others “of you.”

118

Praise GOD, who is good—
whose steadfast love is eternal.

²Let Israel declare,
“God’s steadfast love is eternal.”

³Let the house of Aaron declare,
“God’s steadfast love is eternal.”

⁴Let those who fear GOD declare,
“God’s steadfast love is eternal.”

⁵In distress I called on Yah;^a
Yah answered me and brought me relief.

⁶GOD is on my side,
I have no fear;
what can mortals do to me?

⁷With GOD on my side as my helper,
I will see the downfall of my foes.

⁸It is better to take refuge in GOD
than to trust in mortals;
⁹it is better to take refuge in GOD
than to trust in the great.

¹⁰All nations have beset me;
by GOD’s name I will surely cut them down.^b

¹¹They beset me, they surround me;
by GOD’s name I will surely cut them down.

¹²They have beset me like bees;
they shall be extinguished like burning thorns;
by GOD’s name I will surely cut them down.

¹³You^c pressed me hard,
I nearly fell;
but GOD helped me.

¹⁴Yah is my strength and might,
and has become my deliverance.

¹⁵The tents of the victorious^d resound with joyous shouts of
deliverance,

^a 118.5 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

^b 118.10 *cut them down* Meaning of ‘amilam in this verse and vv. 11–12 uncertain.

^c 118.13 *You* I.e., the enemy.

^d 118.15 *victorious* Or “righteous.”

“GOD’s right hand is triumphant!
¹⁶GOD’s right hand is exalted!
 GOD’s right hand is triumphant!”

¹⁷I shall not die but live
 and proclaim the works of Yah.
¹⁸Yah punished me severely,
 but did not hand me over to death.
¹⁹Open the gates of victory^e for me
 that I may enter them and praise Yah.
²⁰This is the gateway to GOD—
 the victorious^f shall enter through it.

²¹I praise You, for You have answered me,
 and have become my deliverance.
²²The stone that the builders rejected
 has become the chief cornerstone.
²³This is GOD’s doing;
 it is marvelous in our sight.
²⁴This is the day that GOD has made—
 let us exult and rejoice on it.

²⁵O ETERNAL One, deliver us!
 O ETERNAL One, let us prosper!

²⁶May everyone who enters be blessed in the name of GOD;
 we bless you from the House of GOD.
²⁷The ETERNAL is God,
 who has given us light;
 bind the festal offering to the horns of the altar with
 cords.^g

²⁸You are my God and I will praise You;
 You are my God and I will extol You.
²⁹Praise GOD, who is good—
 whose steadfast love is eternal.

119  Happy are those whose way is blameless,
 who follow GOD’s teaching.

^e 118.19 *victory* Or “righteousness.”

^f 118.20 *victorious* Or “righteous.”

^g 118.27 *bind . . . with cords* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ²Happy are those who observe God's decrees,
 who turn to the divine wholeheartedly.
- ³They have done no wrong,
 but have followed God's ways.
- ⁴You have commanded that Your precepts
 be kept diligently.
- ⁵Would that my ways were firm
 in keeping Your laws;
- ⁶then I would not be ashamed
 when I regard all Your commandments.
- ⁷I will praise You with a sincere heart
 as I learn Your just rules.
- ⁸I will keep Your laws;
 do not utterly forsake me.
- ¶ ⁹How can youths keep their way pure?—
 by holding to Your word.
- ¹⁰I have turned to You with all my heart;
 do not let me stray from Your commandments.
- ¹¹In my heart I treasure Your promise;
 therefore I do not sin against You.
- ¹²Blessed are You, O ETERNAL One;
 train me in Your laws.
- ¹³With my lips I rehearse
 all the rules You proclaimed.
- ¹⁴I rejoice over the way of Your decrees
 as over all riches.
- ¹⁵I study Your precepts;
 I regard Your ways;
- ¹⁶I take delight in Your laws;
 I will not neglect Your word.
- ¶ ¹⁷Deal kindly with Your servant,
 that I may live to keep Your word.
- ¹⁸Open my eyes, that I may perceive
 the wonders of Your teaching.
- ¹⁹I am only a sojourner in the land;
 do not hide Your commandments from me.
- ²⁰My soul is consumed with longing
 for Your rules at all times.

- ²¹You blast the accursed insolent ones
 who stray from Your commandments.
²²Take away from me taunt and abuse,
 because I observe Your decrees.
²³Though princes meet and speak against me,
 Your servant studies Your laws.
²⁴For Your decrees are my delight,
 my intimate companions.
- ¶ ²⁵My soul clings to the dust;
 revive me in accordance with Your word.
²⁶I have declared my way, and You have answered me;
 train me in Your laws.
²⁷Make me understand the way of Your precepts,
 that I may study Your wondrous acts.
²⁸I am racked with grief;
 sustain me in accordance with Your word.
²⁹Remove all false ways from me;
 favor me with Your teaching.
³⁰I have chosen the way of faithfulness;
 I have set Your rules before me.
³¹I cling to Your decrees;
 O ETERNAL One, do not put me to shame.
³²I eagerly pursue Your commandments,
 for You broaden my understanding.
- ¶ ³³Teach me, O ETERNAL One, the way of Your laws;
 I will observe them to the utmost.^a
³⁴Give me understanding, that I may observe Your teaching
 and keep it wholeheartedly.
³⁵Lead me in the path of Your commandments,
 for that is my concern.
³⁶Turn my heart to Your decrees
 and not to love of gain.
³⁷Avert my eyes from seeing falsehood;
 by Your ways preserve me.
³⁸Fulfill Your promise to Your servant,
 which is for those who worship You.

^a 119.33 *to the utmost* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ³⁹Remove the taunt that I dread,
for Your rules are good.
- ⁴⁰See, I have longed for Your precepts;
by Your righteousness preserve me.
- ¶ ⁴¹May Your steadfast love reach me, O ETERNAL One,
Your deliverance, as You have promised.
- ⁴²I shall have an answer for those who taunt me,
for I have put my trust in Your word.
- ⁴³Do not utterly take the truth away from my mouth,
for I have put my hope in Your rules.
- ⁴⁴I will always obey Your teaching,
forever and ever.
- ⁴⁵I will walk about at ease,
for I have turned to Your precepts.
- ⁴⁶I will speak of Your decrees,
and not be ashamed in the presence of kings.
- ⁴⁷I will delight in Your commandments,
which I love.
- ⁴⁸I reach out for Your commandments, which I love;
I study Your laws.
- ¶ ⁴⁹Remember Your word to Your servant
through which You have given me hope.
- ⁵⁰This is my comfort in my affliction,
that Your promise has preserved me.
- ⁵¹Though the arrogant have cruelly mocked me,
I have not swerved from Your teaching.
- ⁵²I remember Your rules of old, O ETERNAL One,
and find comfort in them.
- ⁵³I am seized with rage
because of the wicked who forsake Your teaching.
- ⁵⁴Your laws are a source of strength to me^b
wherever I may dwell.
- ⁵⁵I remember Your name at night, O ETERNAL One,
and obey Your teaching.
- ⁵⁶This has been my lot,
for I have observed Your precepts.

^b 119.54 *a source of strength to me* Or “songs for me.”

- ¶ ⁵⁷GOD is my portion;
 I have resolved to keep Your words.
- ⁵⁸I have implored You with all my heart;
 have mercy on me, in accordance with Your promise.
- ⁵⁹I have considered my ways,
 and have turned back to Your decrees.
- ⁶⁰I have hurried and not delayed
 to keep Your commandments.
- ⁶¹Though the bonds of the wicked are coiled round me,
 I have not neglected Your teaching.
- ⁶²I arise at midnight to praise You
 for Your just rules.
- ⁶³I am a companion to all who fear You,
 to those who keep Your precepts.
- ⁶⁴Your steadfast love, O ETERNAL One, fills the earth;
 teach me Your laws.
- ℣ ⁶⁵You have treated Your servant well,
 according to Your word, O ETERNAL One.
- ⁶⁶Teach me good sense and knowledge,
 for I have put my trust in Your commandments.
- ⁶⁷Before I was humbled I went astray,
 but now I keep Your word.
- ⁶⁸You are good and beneficent;
 teach me Your laws.
- ⁶⁹Though the arrogant have accused me falsely,
 I observe Your precepts wholeheartedly.
- ⁷⁰Their minds are thick like fat;
 as for me, Your teaching is my delight.
- ⁷¹It was good for me that I was humbled,
 so that I might learn Your laws.
- ⁷²I prefer the teaching You proclaimed
 to thousands of gold and silver pieces.
- ℣ ⁷³Your hands made me and fashioned me;
 give me understanding that I may learn Your
 commandments.
- ⁷⁴Those who fear You will see me and rejoice,
 for I have put my hope in Your word.
- ⁷⁵I know, O ETERNAL One, that Your rulings are just;

rightly have You humbled me.

⁷⁶May Your steadfast love comfort me
in accordance with Your promise to Your servant.

⁷⁷May Your mercy reach me, that I might live,
for Your teaching is my delight.

⁷⁸Let the insolent be dismayed, for they have wronged me
without cause;
I will study Your precepts.

⁷⁹May those who fear You,
those who know Your decrees,
turn again to me.

⁸⁰May I wholeheartedly follow Your laws
so that I do not come to grief.

▷ ⁸¹I long for Your deliverance;
I hope for Your word.

⁸²My eyes pine away for Your promise;
I say, “When will You comfort me?”

⁸³Though I have become like a water-skin dried in smoke,
I have not neglected Your laws.

⁸⁴How long has Your servant to live?
when will You bring my persecutors to judgment?

⁸⁵The insolent have dug pits for me,
flouting Your teaching.

⁸⁶All Your commandments are enduring;
I am persecuted without cause; help me!

⁸⁷Though they almost wiped me off the earth,
I did not abandon Your precepts.

⁸⁸As befits Your steadfast love, preserve me,
so that I may keep the decree You proclaimed.

↳ ⁸⁹GOD exists forever;
Your word stands firm in heaven.

⁹⁰Your faithfulness is for all generations;
You have established the earth, and it stands.

⁹¹They stand this day to [carry out] Your rulings,
for all are Your servants.

⁹²Were not Your teaching my delight
I would have perished in my affliction.

⁹³I will never neglect Your precepts,

for You have preserved my life through them.

⁹⁴I am Yours; save me!

For I have turned to Your precepts.

⁹⁵The wicked hope to destroy me,

but I ponder Your decrees.

⁹⁶I have seen that all things have their limit,

but Your commandment is broad beyond measure.

¶ ⁹⁷O how I love Your teaching!

It is my study all day long.

⁹⁸Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies;

they always stand by me.

⁹⁹I have gained more insight than all my teachers,

for Your decrees are my study.

¹⁰⁰I have gained more understanding than my elders,

for I observe Your precepts.

¹⁰¹I have avoided every evil way

so that I may keep Your word.

¹⁰²I have not departed from Your rules,

for You have instructed me.

¹⁰³How pleasing is Your word to my palate,

sweeter than honey.

¹⁰⁴I ponder Your precepts;

therefore I hate every false way.

¶ ¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp to my feet,

a light for my path.

¹⁰⁶I have firmly sworn

to keep Your just rules.

¹⁰⁷I am very much afflicted;

O ETERNAL One, preserve me in accordance with Your word.

¹⁰⁸Accept, O ETERNAL One, my freewill offerings;

teach me Your rules.

¹⁰⁹Though my life is always in danger,

I do not neglect Your teaching.

¹¹⁰Though the wicked have set a trap for me,

I have not strayed from Your precepts.

¹¹¹Your decrees are my eternal heritage;

they are my heart's delight.

¹¹²I am resolved to follow Your laws
to the utmost^c forever.

¶ ¹¹³I hate the double-minded,
but I love Your teaching.

¹¹⁴You are my protection and my shield;
I hope for Your word.

¹¹⁵Keep away from me, you evildoers,
that I may observe the commandments of my God.

¹¹⁶Support me as You promised, so that I may live;
do not thwart my expectation.

¹¹⁷Sustain me that I may be saved,
and I will always muse upon Your laws.

¹¹⁸You reject all who stray from Your laws,
for they are false and deceitful.

¹¹⁹You do away with the wicked as if they were dross;
rightly do I love Your decrees.

¹²⁰My flesh creeps from fear of You;
I am in awe of Your rulings.

¶ ¹²¹I have done what is just and right;
do not abandon me to those who would wrong me.

¹²²Guarantee Your servant's well-being;
do not let the arrogant wrong me.

¹²³My eyes pine away for Your deliverance,
for Your promise of victory.

¹²⁴Deal with Your servant as befits Your steadfast love;
teach me Your laws.

¹²⁵I am Your servant;
give me understanding,
that I might know Your decrees.

¹²⁶It is a time to act for GOD,
for they have violated Your teaching.

¹²⁷Rightly do I love Your commandments
more than gold, even fine gold.

¹²⁸Truly by all [Your] precepts I walk straight;^d
I hate every false way.

^c 119.112 *to the utmost* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 119.128 *by all [Your] precepts I walk straight* Or "I declare all [Your] precepts to be just."

- ¶ 129 Your decrees are wondrous;
 rightly do I observe them.
- 130 The words You inscribed give^e light,
 and grant understanding to the simple.
- 131 I open my mouth wide, I pant,
 longing for Your commandments.
- 132 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
 as is Your rule with those who love Your name.
- 133 Make my feet firm through Your promise;
 do not let iniquity dominate me.
- 134 Redeem me from being wronged by others,
 that I may keep Your precepts.
- 135 Show favor to Your servant,
 and teach me Your laws.
- 136 My eyes shed streams of water
 because others do not obey Your teaching.
- ¶ 137 You are righteous, O ETERNAL One;
 Your rulings are just.
- 138 You have ordained righteous decrees;
 they are firmly enduring.
- 139 I am consumed with rage
 over my foes' neglect of Your words.
- 140 Your word is exceedingly pure,
 and Your servant loves it.
- 141 Though I am belittled and despised,
 I have not neglected Your precepts.
- 142 Your righteousness is eternal;
 Your teaching is true.
- 143 Though anguish and distress come upon me,
 Your commandments are my delight.
- 144 Your righteous decrees are eternal;
 give me understanding, that I might live.
- ¶ 145 I call with all my heart;
 answer me, O ETERNAL One,
 that I may observe Your laws.

^e 119.130 *The words You inscribed give* With Targum; or “The exposition of Your words gives”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁴⁶I call upon You; save me,
that I may keep Your decrees.

¹⁴⁷I rise before dawn and cry for help;
I hope for Your word.

¹⁴⁸My eyes greet each watch of the night,
as I meditate on Your promise.

¹⁴⁹Hear my voice as befits Your steadfast love;
O ETERNAL One, preserve me, as is Your rule.

¹⁵⁰Those who pursue intrigue draw near;
they are far from Your teaching.

¹⁵¹You, O ETERNAL One, are near,
and all Your commandments are true.

¹⁵²I know from Your decrees of old
that You have established them forever.

¶ ¹⁵³See my affliction and rescue me,
for I have not neglected Your teaching.

¹⁵⁴Champion my cause and redeem me;
preserve me according to Your promise.

¹⁵⁵Deliverance is far from the wicked,
for they have not turned to Your laws.

¹⁵⁶Your mercies are great, O ETERNAL One;
as is Your rule, preserve me.

¹⁵⁷Many are my persecutors and foes;
I have not swerved from Your decrees.

¹⁵⁸I have seen traitors and loathed^f them,
because they did not keep Your word in mind.

¹⁵⁹See that I have loved Your precepts;
O ETERNAL One, preserve me, as befits Your steadfast love.

¹⁶⁰Truth is the essence of Your word;
Your just rules are eternal.

℣ ¹⁶¹Princes have persecuted me without reason;
my heart thrills at Your word.

¹⁶²I rejoice over Your promise
as one who obtains great spoil.

¹⁶³I hate and abhor falsehood;
I love Your teaching.

^f **119.158** *loathed* Or “have contended with.”

- ¹⁶⁴I praise You seven times each day
for Your just rules.
- ¹⁶⁵Those who love Your teaching enjoy well-being;
they encounter no adversity.
- ¹⁶⁶I hope for Your deliverance, O ETERNAL One;
I observe Your commandments.
- ¹⁶⁷I obey Your decrees
and love them greatly.
- ¹⁶⁸I obey Your precepts and decrees;
all my ways are before You.
- ¶ ¹⁶⁹May my plea reach You, O ETERNAL One;
grant me understanding according to Your word.
- ¹⁷⁰May my petition come before You;
save me in accordance with Your promise.
- ¹⁷¹My lips shall pour forth praise,
for You teach me Your laws.
- ¹⁷²My tongue shall declare Your promise,
for all Your commandments are just.
- ¹⁷³Lend Your hand to help me,
for I have chosen Your precepts.
- ¹⁷⁴I have longed for Your deliverance, O ETERNAL One;
Your teaching is my delight.
- ¹⁷⁵Let me live, that I may praise You;
may Your rules be my help;
- ¹⁷⁶I have strayed like a lost sheep;
search for Your servant,
for I have not neglected Your commandments.

120 A song of ascents.^a

In my distress I called to GOD—
who answered me.

²O ETERNAL One, save me from treacherous lips,
from a deceitful tongue!

³What can you profit,
what can you gain,
O deceitful tongue?

^a 120.1 *ascents* A term of uncertain meaning.

⁴A warrior's sharp arrows,
with hot coals of broom-wood.

⁵Woe is me, that I live with Meshech,
that I dwell among the clans of Kedar.

⁶Too long have I dwelt with those who hate peace.

⁷I am all peace;
but when I speak,
they are for war.

121 A song for ascents.

I turn my eyes to the mountains;
from where will my help come?

²My help comes from GOD,
maker of heaven and earth.

³[God] will not let your foot give way;
your guardian will not slumber.

⁴See, the guardian of Israel
neither slumbers nor sleeps!

⁵GOD is your guardian,
GOD is your protection
at your right hand.

⁶By day the sun will not strike you,
nor the moon by night.

⁷GOD will guard you from all harm,
and will guard your life.

⁸GOD will guard your going and coming
now and forever.

122 A song of ascents. Of David.

I rejoiced when they said to me,
“We are going to the House of GOD.”

²Our feet stood inside your gates, O Jerusalem,
³Jerusalem built up, a city knit together,
⁴to which tribes would make pilgrimage,
the tribes of Yah,^a

^a122.4 **Yah** See note at 68.5.

as was enjoined upon Israel—
to praise GOD's name.

⁵There the thrones of judgment stood,
thrones of the house of David.

⁶Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem;
“May those who love you be at peace.

⁷May there be well-being within your ramparts,
peace in your citadels.”

⁸For the sake of my kin and friends,
I pray for your well-being;
⁹for the sake of the house of the ETERNAL our God,
I seek your good.

123 A song of ascents.

To You, enthroned in heaven,
I turn my eyes.

²As the eyes of servants follow their master's hand,
as the eyes of a maid follow the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes are toward the ETERNAL our God,
awaiting divine favor.

³Show us favor, O ETERNAL One,
show us favor!

We have had more than enough of contempt.

⁴Long enough have we endured
the scorn of the complacent,
the contempt of the haughty.

124 A song of ascents. Of David.

Were it not for GOD, who was on our side,
let Israel now declare,

²were it not for GOD, who was on our side
when others assailed us,

³they would have swallowed us alive
in their burning rage against us;

⁴the waters would have carried us off,
the torrent would have swept over us;

⁵over us would have swept
the seething waters.

⁶Blessed is GOD, who did not let us
be ripped apart by their teeth.

⁷We are like a bird escaped from the fowler's trap;
the trap broke and we escaped.

⁸Our help is the name of GOD,
maker of heaven and earth.

125 A song of ascents.

Those who trust in GOD
are like Mount Zion
that cannot be moved,
enduring forever.

²Jerusalem, hills enfold it,
and GOD enfolds this people
now and forever.

^{3^a}The scepter of the wicked shall never rest
upon the land allotted to the righteous,
that the righteous not set their hand to wrongdoing.

⁴Do good, O ETERNAL One, to the good,
to the upright in heart.

⁵But those who in their crookedness act corruptly,^b
let GOD make them go the way of evildoers.
May it be well with Israel!

126 A song of ascents.

When GOD restores the fortunes of Zion
—we see it as in a dream^a—
²our mouths shall be filled with laughter,
our tongues, with songs of joy.

Then shall they say among the nations,
“GOD has done great things for them!”

³GOD will do great things for us
and we shall rejoice.

⁴Restore our fortunes, O ETERNAL One,
like watercourses in the Negeb.

^a 125.3 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^b 125.5 *But those who in their crookedness act corruptly* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 126.1 *we see it as in a dream* Lit. “we are veritable dreamers.”

⁵They who sow in tears
 shall reap with songs of joy.
⁶One who goes along weeping,
 carrying the seed-bag,
 shall come back with songs of joy,
 carrying the sheaves.

127 A song of ascents. Of Solomon.

Unless GOD builds the house,
 its builders labor in vain on it;
 unless GOD watches over the city,
 the guard keeps vigil in vain.
²In vain do you rise early
 and stay up late,
 you who toil for the bread you eat;
 God's loved ones are provided for while they sleep.^a

³Sons are the provision^b of GOD;
 the fruit of the womb, divine reward.

⁴Like arrows in the hand of a warrior
 are sons born to a man in his youth.

⁵Happy is the man who fills his quiver with them;
 they shall not be put to shame
 when they contend with the enemy in the gate.

128 A song of ascents.

Happy is any man^a who fears GOD,
 who follows godly ways.

²You shall enjoy the fruit of your labors;
 you shall be happy and you shall prosper.

³Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house;
 your children, like olive saplings around your table.

⁴So shall all^b who fear GOD be blessed.

⁵May GOD bless you from Zion;

^a 127.2 *God's loved ones . . . they sleep* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 127.3 *provision* Lit. "heritage."

^a 128.1 *man* Moved up from v. 4 for clarity.

^b 128.4 *all* Moved down from v. 1 for clarity there.

may you share the prosperity of Jerusalem
 all the days of your life,
⁶and live to see your children's children.
 May all be well with Israel!

129 A song of ascents.

Since my youth they have often assailed me,
 let Israel now declare,
²since my youth they have often assailed me,
 but they have never overcome me.
³Plowers plowed across my back;
 they made long furrows.
⁴GOD, the righteous one,
 has snapped the cords of the wicked.
⁵Let all who hate Zion
 fall back in disgrace.
⁶Let them be like grass on roofs
 that fades before it can be pulled up,
⁷that affords no handful for the reaper,
 no armful for the gatherer of sheaves,
⁸no exchange with passersby:
 “GOD’s blessing be upon you.”
 “We bless you by GOD’s name.”

130 A song of ascents.

Out of the depths I call You, O ETERNAL One.
²O my Sovereign, listen to my cry;
 let Your ears be attentive
 to my plea for mercy.
³If You keep account of sins, O Yah,^a
 my Sovereign, who will survive?
⁴Yours is the power to forgive
 so that You may be held in awe.
⁵I look to GOD;
 my whole being is looking;

^a 130.3 **Yah** See note at 68.5.

- I await God's word.
⁶I am more eager for my Sovereign
 than guards for the morning,
 guards for the morning.
- ⁷O Israel, wait for GOD;
 for with GOD is steadfast love
 and great power to redeem.
- ⁸It is this One who will redeem Israel from all their iniquities.

131 A song of ascents. Of David.

O ETERNAL One, my heart is not proud
 nor my look haughty;
 I do not aspire to great things
 or to what is beyond me;
²^abut I have taught myself to be contented
 like a weaned child with its mother;
 like a weaned child am I in my mind.

³O Israel, wait for GOD
 now and forever.

132 A song of ascents.

O ETERNAL One, remember in David's favor
 his extreme self-denial,
²how he swore to GOD,
 vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob,
³"I will not enter my house,
 nor will I mount my bed,
⁴I will not give sleep to my eyes,
 or slumber to my eyelids"^a
⁵until I find a place for GOD,
 an abode for the Mighty One of Jacob."

⁶We heard it was in Ephrath;
 we came upon it in the region of Jaar.^b

^a 131.2 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^a 132.4 *eyelids* Lit. "eyes."

^b 132.6 *region of Jaar* Cf. 1 Sam. 7.1-2; 1 Chron. 13.5-6.

⁷Let us enter God's abode,
 bow at the divine footstool.
⁸Advance, O ETERNAL One, to Your resting-place,
 You and Your mighty Ark!
⁹Your priests are clothed in triumph;
 Your loyal ones sing for joy.
¹⁰For the sake of Your servant David
 do not reject Your anointed one.

¹¹GOD swore to David
 a firm oath that will not be renounced,
 “One of your own issue I will set upon your throne.”

¹²If your sons keep My covenant
 and My decrees that I teach them,
 then their sons also,
 to the end of time,
 shall sit upon your throne.”

¹³For GOD has chosen Zion,
 desiring it for a seat.

¹⁴“This is my resting-place for all time;
 here I will dwell, for I desire it.

¹⁵I will amply bless its store of food,
 give its needy their fill of bread.

¹⁶I will clothe its priests in victory,
 its loyal ones shall sing for joy.

¹⁷There I will make a horn sprout for David;
 I have prepared a lamp for My anointed one.

¹⁸I will clothe his enemies in disgrace,
 while on him his crown shall sparkle.”

133 A song of ascents. Of David.

How good and how pleasant it is
 that kindred^a dwell together.
²It is like fine oil on the head
 running down onto the beard,
 the beard of Aaron,
 that comes down over the collar of his robe;

^a133.1 *kindred* Heb. “brothers,” i.e., Jerusalem’s pilgrims, or the Israelite tribes.

³like the dew of Hermon
that falls upon the mountains of Zion.
There GOD ordained blessing,
everlasting life.

134 A song of ascents.

Now bless GOD,
all you servants of GOD
who stand nightly
in GOD's house.
²Lift your hands toward the sanctuary
and bless GOD.
³May GOD,
maker of heaven and earth,
bless you from Zion.

135 Hallelujah.

Praise the name of GOD;
give praise, you servants of GOD
²who stand in the house of GOD,
in the courts of the house of our God.
³Praise Yah,^a for GOD is good;
sing hymns to this name, for it is pleasant.
⁴For Yah has chosen to keep Jacob close,
[treating] Israel as a treasured possession.
⁵For I know that GOD is great,
that our Sovereign is greater than all gods.
⁶Whatever GOD desires is done
in heaven and earth,
in the seas and all the depths.
⁷This is who makes clouds rise from the end of the earth;
who makes lightning for the rain;
who releases the wind from divine vaults.
⁸[God] struck down the [male] first-born of Egypt,
human and animal alike—

^a 135.3 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

⁹sending signs and portents against^b Egypt,
 against Pharaoh and all his servants,
¹⁰striking down many nations
 and slaying numerous kings—
¹¹Sihon, king of the Amorites,
 Og, king of Bashan,
 and all the royalty of Canaan—
¹²and giving their lands as a heritage,
 as a heritage to Israel—God's people.

¹³O ETERNAL One, Your name endures forever,
 Your fame, O ETERNAL One, through all generations;
¹⁴for GOD will champion this people,
 and obtain satisfaction for their service.^c

¹⁵^dThe idols of the nations are silver and gold,
 the work of human hands.

¹⁶They have mouths, but cannot speak;
 they have eyes, but cannot see;
¹⁷they have ears, but cannot hear,
 nor is there breath in their mouths.

¹⁸Those who fashion them,
 all who trust in them,
 shall become like them.

¹⁹O house of Israel, bless GOD;
 O house of Aaron, bless GOD;
²⁰O house of Levi, bless GOD;
 you who fear GOD, bless GOD.

²¹Blessed is GOD from Zion,
 the One who dwells in Jerusalem.
 Hallelujah.

136

Praise GOD, who is good,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal.
²Praise the God of gods,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal.

^b 135.9 *against* In contrast to others “against you.”

^c 135.14 *their service* Lit. “His servants.”

^d 135.15–20 Cf. Ps. 115.4–11.

³Praise the Sovereign of sovereigns,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
⁴Who alone works great marvels,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
⁵Who made the heavens with wisdom,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
⁶Who spread the earth over the water,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
⁷Who made the great lights,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
⁸the sun to dominate the day,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
⁹the moon and the stars to dominate the night,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹⁰Who struck Egypt through their [male] first-born,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹¹and brought Israel out of their midst,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹²with a strong hand and outstretched arm,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹³Who split apart the Sea of Reeds,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹⁴and made Israel pass through it,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹⁵Who hurled Pharaoh and his army into the Sea of Reeds,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹⁶Who led this people through the wilderness,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹⁷Who struck down great kings,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹⁸and slew mighty kings,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
¹⁹Sihon, king of the Amorites,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
²⁰Og, king of Bashan,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
²¹and gave their land as a heritage,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
²²a heritage to Israel—God's servant,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;

²³Who took note of us in our degradation,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
²⁴and rescued us from our enemies,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal;
²⁵Who gives food to all flesh,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal.
²⁶Praise the God of heaven,
 —whose steadfast love is eternal.

137

By the rivers of Babylon,
 there we sat,
 sat and wept,
 as we thought of Zion.

²There on the poplars
 we hung up our lyres,
³for our captors asked us there for songs,
 our tormentors,^a for amusement:
 “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.”

⁴How can we sing a song of GOD
 on alien soil?

⁵If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
 let my right hand wither;^b
⁶let my tongue stick to my palate
 if I cease to think of you,
 if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory
 even at my happiest hour.

⁷Remember, O ETERNAL One, against the Edomites
 the day of Jerusalem’s fall;
 how they cried, “Strip her, strip her
 to her very foundations!”

⁸Fair Babylon, you predator,^c
 a blessing on the one who repays you in kind
 what you have inflicted on us;
⁹a blessing on the one who seizes your babies
 and dashes them against the rocks!

^a137.3 *tormentors* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b137.5 *wither* In contrast to others “forget its cunning.”

^c137.8 *predator* With Targum; in contrast to others “who are to be destroyed.”

138 Of David.

I praise You with all my heart,
 sing a hymn to You before the divine beings;
²I bow toward Your holy temple
 and praise Your name for Your steadfast love and
 faithfulness,
 because You have exalted Your name, Your word, above
 all.^a

³When I called, You answered me,
 You inspired me with courage.^b

⁴All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O ETERNAL One,
 for they have heard the words You spoke.

⁵They shall sing of GOD's ways,
 "Great is GOD's majesty!"

⁶From way up high GOD sees the lowly;
 aloft, yet perceiving from afar.

⁷Though I walk among enemies,
 You preserve me in the face of my foes;
 You extend Your hand;
 with Your right hand You deliver me.

⁸GOD will settle accounts for me.
 O ETERNAL One, Your steadfast love is eternal;
 do not forsake the work of Your hands.

139 For the leader. Of David. A psalm.

O ETERNAL One, You have examined me and know me.
²When I sit down or stand up You know it;
 You discern my thoughts from afar.
³You observe^a my walking and reclining,
 and are familiar with all my ways.
⁴There is not a word on my tongue
 but that You, O ETERNAL One, know it well.
⁵You hedge me before and behind;
 You lay Your hand upon me.

^a 138.2 *Your name, Your word, above all* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 138.3 *You inspired me with courage* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 139.3 *You observe* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁶It is beyond my knowledge;
 it is a mystery; I cannot fathom it.
⁷Where can I escape from Your spirit?
 Where can I flee from Your presence?
⁸If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
 if I descend to Sheol, You are there too.
⁹If I take wing with the dawn
 to come to rest on the western horizon,
¹⁰even there Your hand will be guiding me,
 Your right hand will be holding me fast.
¹¹If I say, “Surely darkness will conceal me,
 night will provide me with cover,”^b
¹²darkness is not dark for You;
 night is as light as day;
 darkness and light are the same.
¹³It was You who created my conscience;^c
 You fashioned me in my mother’s womb.
¹⁴I praise You,
 for I am awesomely, wondrously made;
 Your work is wonderful;
 I know it very well.
¹⁵My frame was not concealed from You
 when I was shaped in a hidden place,
 knit together in the recesses of the earth.
¹⁶Your eyes saw my unformed limbs;
 they were all recorded in Your book;
 in due time they were formed,
 to the very last one of them.^d
¹⁷How weighty Your thoughts seem to me, O God,
 how great their number!
¹⁸I count them—they exceed the grains of sand;
 I end—but am still with You.
¹⁹O God, if You would only slay the wicked—
 you murderers, away from me!—

^b 139.11 *will conceal me, / night will provide me with cover* Cf. Rashi, Ibn Ezra; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 139.13 *conscience* Lit. “kidneys.”

^d 139.16 *to the very last one of them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²⁰who invoke You for intrigue,
 Your enemies who swear by You falsely.^e
²¹O ETERNAL One, You know I hate those who hate You,
 and loathe Your adversaries.
²²I feel a perfect hatred toward them;
 I count them my enemies.
²³Examine me, O God, and know my mind;
 probe me and know my thoughts.
²⁴See if I have vexatious ways,
 and guide me in ways everlasting.

140 For the leader. A psalm of David.

²Rescue me, O ETERNAL One, from evildoers;
 save me from lawless opponents,
³whose minds are full of evil schemes,
 who plot war every day.
⁴They sharpen their tongues like serpents;
 spiders' poison is on their lips. *Selah.*

⁵O ETERNAL One, keep me out of the clutches of the wicked;
 save me from lawless opponents
 who scheme to make me fall.^a

⁶Arrogant ones laid traps with ropes for me;
 they spread out a net along the way;
 they set snares for me. *Selah.*

⁷I said to GOD: You are my God;
 give ear, O ETERNAL One, to my pleas for mercy.
⁸O GOD, my Sovereign, the strength of my deliverance,
 You protected my head on the day of battle.^b

⁹O ETERNAL One, do not grant the desires of the wicked;
 do not let their plan succeed,
 else they be exalted. *Selah.*

¹⁰May the heads of those who beset me
 be covered with the mischief of their lips.^c

^e 139.20 *who invoke You . . . falsely* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 140.5 *make me fall* Lit. "push my feet."

^b 140.8 *battle* Lit. "arms."

^c 140.9–10 *else they . . . lips* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¹¹May coals of fire drop down upon them,
and they be cast into pits, never to rise again.
¹²Let slanderers have no place in the land;
let the evil of the lawless drive them into corrals.
¹³I know that GOD will champion
the cause of the poor, the right of the needy.
¹⁴The righteous shall surely praise Your name;
the upright shall dwell in Your presence.

141

A psalm of David.

- I call You, O ETERNAL One, hasten to me;
give ear to my cry when I call You.
²Take my prayer as an offering of incense,
my upraised hands as an evening sacrifice.
³O ETERNAL One, set a guard over my mouth,
a watch at the door of my lips;
⁴let my mind not turn to an evil thing,
to practice deeds of wickedness
with those evildoers;^a
let me not feast on their dainties.
^{5b}Let someone righteous strike me in loyalty
and reprove me;
let my head not refuse such choice oil.
My prayers are still against their^c evil deeds.
⁶May their judges slip on the rock,
but let my words be heard, for they are sweet.
⁷As when the earth is cleft and broken up
our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol.
⁸My eyes are fixed upon You, O GOD my Sovereign;
I seek refuge in You, do not put me in jeopardy.
⁹Keep me from the trap laid for me,
and from the snares of evildoers.
¹⁰Let the wicked fall into their nets
while I alone come through.

^a141.4 *those evildoers* Or “grandees who do evil”; force of Heb. uncertain.^b141.5–7 Meaning of verses uncertain.^c141.5 *their* I.e., the evildoers of v. 4.

142 A maskil of David, while he was in the cave.^a A prayer.

²I cry aloud to GOD;
 I appeal to GOD loudly for mercy.
³I pour out my complaint directly;
 I recount my tale of trouble
⁴when my spirit fails within me.
 You know my course;
 they have laid a trap in the path I walk.
⁵Look at my right and see—
 I have no friend;
 there is nowhere I can flee,
 no one cares about me.
⁶So I cry to You, O ETERNAL One;
 I say, “You are my refuge,
 all I have in the land of the living.”
⁷Listen to my cry, for I have been brought very low;
 save me from my pursuers,
 for they are too strong for me.
⁸Free me from prison,
 that I may praise Your name.
 The righteous shall glory in me^b
 for Your gracious dealings with me.

143 A psalm of David.

O ETERNAL One, hear my prayer;
 give ear to my plea, as You are faithful;
 answer me, as You are beneficent.
²Do not enter into judgment with Your servant,
 for before You no creature is in the right.
³My foe hounded me;
 he crushed me to the ground;
 he made me dwell in darkness
 like those long dead.
⁴My spirit failed within me;
 my mind was numbed with horror.

^a 142.1 Cf. 1 Sam. 24.3–4.

^b 142.8 *shall glory in me* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁵Then I thought of the days of old;
I rehearsed all Your deeds,
recounted the work of Your hands.

⁶I stretched out my hands to You,
longing for You like thirsty earth.

Selah.

⁷Answer me quickly, O ETERNAL One;
my spirit can endure no more.

Do not hide Your face from me,
or I shall become like those who descend into the Pit.

⁸Let me learn of Your faithfulness by daybreak,
for in You I trust;
let me know the road I must take,
for on You I have set my hope.

⁹Save me from my foes, O ETERNAL One;
to You I look for cover.^a

¹⁰Teach me to do Your will,
for You are my God.

Let Your gracious spirit lead me
on level ground.

¹¹For the sake of Your name, O ETERNAL One, preserve me;
as You are beneficent, free me from distress.

¹²As You are faithful, put an end to my foes;
destroy all my mortal enemies,
for I am Your servant.

144 Of David.

Blessed is GOD, my rock,
who trains my hands for battle,
my fingers for warfare;
²my faithful one, my fortress,
my haven and my deliverer,
my shield, in whom I take shelter,
who makes peoples^a subject to me.

³O ETERNAL One, what are mortals that You should care about
them,

^a143.9 *to You I look for cover* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a144.2 *peoples* So Targum, Saadia; in contrast to others “my people.”

human beings, that You should think of them?
⁴They are like a breath;
 their days are like a passing shadow.
⁵O ETERNAL One, bend Your sky and come down;
 touch the mountains and they will smoke.
⁶Make lightning flash and scatter them;
 shoot Your arrows and rout them.
⁷Reach Your hand down from on high;
 rescue me, save me from the mighty waters,
 from the hands of foreigners,
⁸whose mouths speak lies,
 and whose oaths^b are false.
⁹O God, I will sing You a new song,
 sing a hymn to You with a ten-stringed harp—
¹⁰to the One who gives victory to kings,
 who rescues David—God's servant—from the deadly
 sword.
¹¹Rescue me, save me from the hands of foreigners,
 whose mouths speak lies,
 and whose oaths^c are false.
^{12d}For our sons are like saplings,
 well-tended in their youth;
 our daughters are like cornerstones
 trimmed to give shape to a palace.
¹³Our storehouses are full,
 supplying produce of all kinds;
 our flocks number thousands,
 even myriads, in our fields;
¹⁴our cattle are well cared for.
 There is no breaching and no sortie,
 and no wailing in our streets.
¹⁵Happy the people who have it so;
 happy the people whose God is the ETERNAL.

^b 144.8 *oaths* With Rashi; lit. “right hand.”

^c 144.11 *oaths* See note at v. 8.

^d 144.12–14 The meaning of several phrases in these verses is uncertain.

145

A song of praise. Of David.

- ¶ I will extol You, my God and sovereign,
and bless Your name forever and ever.
- ¶ ²Every day will I bless You
and praise Your name forever and ever.
- ¶ ³Great is GOD and much acclaimed;
such greatness cannot be fathomed.
- ¶ ⁴One generation shall laud Your works to another
and declare Your mighty acts.
- ¶ ⁵The glorious majesty of Your splendor
and Your wondrous acts^a will I recite.
- ¶ ⁶All shall talk of the might of Your awesome deeds,
and I will recount Your greatness.
- ¶ ⁷They shall celebrate Your abundant goodness,
and sing joyously of Your beneficence.
- ¶ ⁸GOD is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and abounding in kindness.
- ¶ ⁹GOD is good to all,
and divine mercy is upon all God's works.
- ¶ ¹⁰All Your works shall praise You, O ETERNAL One,
and Your faithful ones shall bless You.
- ¶ ¹¹They shall talk of the majesty of Your sovereignty,
and speak of Your might,
- ¶ ¹²to make known to all humankind Your^b mighty acts
and Your^c sovereignty's majestic glory.
- ¶ ¹³Your rule is an eternal rule;
Your dominion is for all generations.
- ¶ ¹⁴GOD supports all who stumble,
and makes all who are bent stand straight.
- ¶ ¹⁵The eyes of all look to You expectantly,
and You give them their food when it is due.
- ¶ ¹⁶You give it openhandedly,
feeding every creature to its heart's content.
- ¶ ¹⁷GOD is beneficent in all ways
and faithful in all works.

^a **145.5** *splendor / and Your wondrous acts* A Qumran Psalms scroll reads: "splendor they will speak of / and Your wonders."

^b **145.12** *Your* Heb. 3rd person.

^c **145.12** *Your* See previous note.

- ¶ ¹⁸GOD is near to all who call,
 to all who call with sincerity.
- ¶ ¹⁹Fulfilling the wishes of those who show reverence,
 [God] hears their cry and delivers them.
- ¶ ²⁰GOD watches over all who show their love,
 but all the wicked are destroyed.
- ¶ ²¹My mouth shall utter the praise of GOD,
 whose holy name all creatures^d shall bless forever and ever.

146

Hallelujah.

Praise GOD, O my soul!

²I will praise GOD all my life,
 sing hymns to my God while I exist.³Put not your trust in the great,
 in mortals who cannot save.⁴Their breath departs;
 they return to the dust;
 on that day their plans come to nothing.⁵Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
 whose hope is in the ETERNAL their God,
 ⁶maker of heaven and earth,
 the sea and all that is in them;
 who keeps faith forever;
 ⁷who secures justice for those who are wronged,
 gives food to the hungry.GOD sets prisoners free;
⁸GOD restores sight to the blind;
GOD makes those who are bent stand straight;
GOD loves the righteous;
⁹GOD watches over the stranger
and gives courage to the orphan and widow,
but makes the path of the wicked tortuous.¹⁰GOD shall reign forever,
 your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Hallelujah.^d**145.21** *creatures* Lit. "flesh."

147

Hallelujah.

It is good to chant hymns to our God;
it is pleasant to sing glorious praise.

²GOD rebuilds Jerusalem,
gathering in the exiles of Israel—
³healing their broken hearts,
and binding up their wounds.

⁴[God] reckoned the number of the stars
and gave each its name.

⁵Great and full of power is our Sovereign—
whose wisdom is beyond reckoning.

⁶GOD gives courage to the lowly,
and brings the wicked down to the dust.

⁷Sing to GOD a song of praise,
chant a hymn with a lyre to our God,
⁸who covers the heavens with clouds,
provides rain for the earth,
makes mountains put forth grass;
⁹who gives the beasts their food,
to the raven's brood what they cry for.

¹⁰[God] does not prize the strength of horses,
nor value the warrior's fleetness;^a
¹¹but GOD values those who show reverence,
those who depend on God's faithful care.

¹²O Jerusalem, glorify GOD;
praise your God, O Zion!

¹³For the bars of your gates have been made strong,
and your children have been blessed within you.

¹⁴Your realm has been endowed with well-being,
and you have been satisfied with choice wheat.

¹⁵[God] sends forth words to the earth
with swift commands.

¹⁶[God] lays down snow like fleece,
scatters frost like ashes.

¹⁷[God] tosses down hail like crumbs—
who can endure such icy cold?

^a147.10 *fleetness* Or “prowess”; lit. “thighs.”

- ¹⁸[God] issues a command—it melts them;
breathes, and the waters flow.
- ¹⁹Divine commands were issued to Jacob,
God's statutes and rules to Israel.
- ²⁰This was not done for any other nation;
of such rules they know nothing.
Hallelujah.

148

Hallelujah.

- Praise GOD from the heavens;
give praise on high.
- ²Give praise, all you angels,
give praise, all divine hosts.
- ³Give praise, sun and moon,
give praise, all bright stars.
- ⁴Give praise, highest heavens,
and you waters that are above the heavens.
- ⁵Let them praise the name of GOD—
who commanded that they be created,
- ⁶and who made them endure forever,
establishing an order that shall never change.
- ⁷Praise GOD, O you who are on earth,
all sea monsters and ocean depths,
- ⁸fire and hail, snow and smoke,
storm wind that executes God's command,
- ⁹all mountains and hills,
all fruit trees and cedars,
- ¹⁰all wild and tamed animals,
creeping things and winged birds,
- ¹¹all kings and peoples of the earth,
all princes of the earth and its judges,
- ¹²youths and maidens alike,
old and young together.
- ¹³Let them praise GOD's name—
for sublime is this name alone—
of the One whose splendor covers heaven and earth.
- ¹⁴[God] has exalted the horn of this people
for the glory of all faithful ones,
Israel, the people brought close.
Hallelujah.

149

Hallelujah.

Sing to GOD a new song,
 sing praises in the congregation of the faithful.
²Let Israel rejoice in its maker;
 let the children of Zion exult in their monarch.
³Let them praise God's name in dance;
 with hand-drum and lyre let them chant such praises.
⁴For GOD delights in this people,
 and adorns the lowly with victory.
⁵Let the faithful exult in glory;
 let them shout for joy upon their couches,
⁶with paeans to God in their throats
 and two-edged swords in their hands,
⁷to impose retribution upon the nations,
 punishment upon the peoples,
⁸binding their kings with shackles,
 their nobles with chains of iron,
⁹executing the doom decreed against them.

This is the glory of all the faithful.

Hallelujah.

150

Hallelujah.

Give praise in the divine sanctuary;
 give praise in the sky, the divine stronghold.
²Give praise for mighty acts;
 give praise for^a exceeding greatness.
³Give praise with blasts of the horn;
 give praise with harp and lyre.
⁴Give praise with hand-drum and dance;
 give praise with lute and pipe.
⁵Give praise with resounding cymbals;
 give praise with loud-clashing cymbals.
⁶Let all that breathes praise Yah.^b

Hallelujah.

^a 150.2 *for* Or "as befits."^b 150.6 *Yah* See note at 68.5.

מִשְׁלֵי | MISHLEI
PROVERBS

¶ The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

- ²For learning wisdom and discipline;
For understanding words of discernment;
³For acquiring the discipline for success,
Righteousness, justice, and equity;
⁴For endowing the simple with shrewdness,
The young with knowledge and foresight.
⁵—The wise, hearing them, will gain more wisdom;
The discerning will learn to be adroit;
⁶For understanding proverb and epigram,
The words of the wise and their riddles.
- ⁷The fear of GOD is the beginning^a of knowledge;
Fools despise wisdom and discipline.
- ⁸My son, heed the discipline of your father,
And do not forsake the instruction of your mother;
⁹For they are a graceful wreath upon your head,
A necklace about your throat.
- ¹⁰My son, if sinners entice you, do not yield;
¹¹If they say, “Come with us,
Let us set an ambush to shed blood,
Let us lie in wait for the innocent
(Without cause!)
- ¹²Like Sheol, let us swallow them alive;
Whole, like those who go down into the Pit.
- ¹³We shall obtain every precious treasure;
We shall fill our homes with loot.
- ¹⁴Throw in your lot with us;
We shall all have a common purse.”
- ¹⁵My son, do not set out with them;
Keep your feet from their path.
- ¹⁶For their feet run to evil;
They hurry to shed blood.

^a 1.7 *beginning* Or “best part.”

¹⁷In the eyes of every winged creature
 The outspread net means nothing.
¹⁸But they lie in ambush for their own blood;
 They lie in wait for their own lives.
¹⁹Such is the fate of all who pursue unjust gain;
 It takes the life of its possessor.

²⁰Wisdom^b cries aloud in the streets,
 Raises her voice in the squares.
²¹At the head of the busy streets she calls;
 At the entrance of the gates, in the city, she speaks out:
²²“How long will you simple ones love simplicity,
 You scoffers be eager to scoff,
 You dullards hate knowledge?
²³You are indifferent to my rebuke;
 I will now speak my mind to you,
 And let you know my thoughts.
²⁴Since you refused me when I called,
 And paid no heed when I extended my hand,
²⁵You spurned all my advice,
 And would not hear my rebuke,
²⁶I will laugh at your calamity,
 And mock when terror comes upon you,
²⁷When terror comes like a disaster,
 And calamity arrives like a whirlwind,
 When trouble and distress come upon you.
²⁸Then they shall call me but I will not answer;
 They shall seek me but not find me.
²⁹Because they hated knowledge,
 And did not choose fear of GOD;
³⁰They refused my advice,
 And disdained all my rebukes,
³¹They shall eat the fruit of their ways,
 And have their fill of their own counsels.
³²The tranquility of the simple will kill them,
 And the complacency of dullards will destroy them.
³³But the one who listens to me will dwell in safety,
 Untroubled by the terror of misfortune.”

^b **1.20** *Wisdom* In Proverbs, wisdom is personified as a woman.

2

My son, if you accept my words
 And treasure up my commandments;
²If you make your ear attentive to wisdom
 And your mind open to discernment;
³If you call to understanding
 And cry aloud to discernment,
⁴If you seek it as you do silver
 And search for it as for treasures,
⁵Then you will understand the fear of GOD
 And attain knowledge of God.
⁶For GOD grants wisdom;
 Knowledge and discernment are by God's decree.
⁷Ability is reserved for the upright
 And [God] is a shield for those who live blamelessly,
⁸Guarding the paths of justice,
 Protecting the way of those who are loyal.
⁹You will then understand what is right, just,
 And equitable—every good course.
¹⁰For wisdom will enter your mind
 And knowledge will delight you.
¹¹Foresight will protect you,
 And discernment will guard you.
¹²It will save you from an evildoer's ways,
 From a man who speaks duplicity—
¹³Those who leave the paths of rectitude
 To follow the ways of darkness,
¹⁴Who rejoice in doing evil
 And exult in an evildoer's duplicity,
¹⁵All whose paths are crooked
 And who are devious in their course.
¹⁶It will save you from the forbidden^a woman,
 From the alien woman whose talk is smooth,
¹⁷Who forsakes the companion of her youth
 And disregards the covenant of her God.
¹⁸Her house sinks down to Death,
 And her course leads to the shades.
¹⁹All who go to her cannot return
 And find again the paths of life.

^a 2.16 *forbidden* Lit. "strange."

²⁰So follow the way of the good
And keep to the paths of the just.
²¹For the upright will inhabit the earth,
The blameless will remain in it.
²²While the wicked will vanish from the land
And the treacherous will be rooted out of it.

3

My son, do not forget my teaching,
But let your mind retain my commandments;
²For they will bestow on you length of days,
Years of life and well-being.
³Let fidelity and steadfastness not leave you;
Bind them about your throat,
Write them on the tablet of your mind,
⁴And you will find favor and approbation
In the eyes of God and human beings.
⁵Trust in GOD with all your heart,
And do not rely on your own understanding.
⁶In all your ways acknowledge [God],
And your paths will be made smooth.
⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes;
Fear GOD and shun evil.
⁸It will be a cure for your body,^a
A tonic for your bones.
⁹Honor GOD with your wealth,
With the best of all your income,
¹⁰And your barns will be filled with grain,
Your vats will burst with new wine.
¹¹Do not reject GOD's discipline, my son;
Do not abhor such rebuke.
¹²For whom GOD loves, [God] rebukes,
As a father the son whom he favors.
¹³Happy is the one who finds wisdom,
The one who attains understanding.
¹⁴Her^b value in trade is better than silver,
Her yield, greater than gold.

^a3.8 *body* Lit. "navel."

^b3.14 *Her* See note at 1.20.

¹⁵She is more precious than rubies;

All of your goods cannot equal her.

¹⁶In her right hand is length of days,

In her left, riches and honor.

¹⁷Her ways are pleasant ways,

And all her paths, peaceful.

¹⁸She is a tree of life to those who grasp her,

And whoever holds on to her is happy.

¹⁹GOD founded the earth by wisdom

And established the heavens by understanding;

²⁰By God's knowledge the depths burst apart,

And the skies distilled dew.

²¹My son, do not lose sight of them;

Hold on to resourcefulness and foresight.

²²They will give life to your spirit

And grace to your throat.

²³Then you will go your way safely

And not injure your feet.

²⁴When you lie down you will be unafraid;

You will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.

²⁵You will not fear sudden terror

Or the disaster that comes upon the wicked,

²⁶For GOD will be your trust

And will keep your feet from being caught.

²⁷Do not withhold good from those who deserve it

When you have the power to do it [for them].

²⁸Do not say to your fellow, "Come back again;

I'll give it to you tomorrow," when you have it with you.

²⁹Do not devise harm against your fellow

Who lives trustfully with you.

³⁰Do not quarrel with someone for no cause,

When they have done you no harm.

³¹Do not envy a lawless man,

Or choose any of his ways;

³²For the one who goes astray is an abomination to GOD,

But the straightforward are intimates.

³³GOD's curse is on the house of the evildoer,

But the abode of the righteous is blessed.

³⁴At scoffers [God] scoffs,
But the lowly are shown grace.
³⁵The wise shall obtain honor,
But dullards get disgrace as their portion.

4

Sons, heed the discipline of a father;
Listen and learn discernment,
²For I give you good instruction;
Do not forsake my teaching.
³Once I was a son to my father,
The tender darling of my mother.
⁴He instructed me and said to me,
“Let your mind hold on to my words;
Keep my commandments and you will live.
⁵Acquire wisdom, acquire discernment;
Do not forget and do not swerve from my words.
⁶Do not forsake her^a and she will guard you;
Love her and she will protect you.
⁷The beginning^b of wisdom is—acquire wisdom;
With all your acquisitions, acquire discernment.
⁸Hug her to you and she will exalt you;
She will bring you honor if you embrace her.
⁹She will adorn your head with a graceful wreath;
Crown you with a glorious diadem.”
¹⁰My son, heed and take in my words,
And you will have many years of life.
¹¹I instruct you in the way of wisdom;
I guide you in straight courses.
¹²You will walk without breaking stride;
When you run, you will not stumble.
¹³Hold fast to discipline; do not let go;
Keep it; it is your life.
¹⁴Do not enter on the path of the wicked;
Do not walk on the way of evildoers.
¹⁵Avoid it; do not pass through it;
Turn away from it; pass it by.

^a 4.6 *her* See note at 1.20.

^b 4.7 *beginning* Or “best part.”

¹⁶For they cannot sleep unless they have done evil;
Unless they make someone fall they are robbed of sleep.

¹⁷They eat the bread of wickedness
And drink the wine of lawlessness.

¹⁸The path of the righteous is like radiant sunlight,
Ever brightening until noon.

¹⁹The way of the wicked is all darkness;
They do not know what will make them stumble.

²⁰My son, listen to my speech;
Incline your ear to my words.

²¹Do not lose sight of them;
Keep them in your mind.

²²They are life to those who find them,
Healing for the whole body.

²³More than all that you guard, guard your mind,
For it is the source of life.

²⁴Put crooked speech away from you;
Keep devious talk far from you.

²⁵Let your eyes look forward,
Your gaze be straight ahead.

²⁶Survey the course you take,
And all your ways will prosper.

²⁷Do not swerve to the right or the left;
Keep your feet from evil.

5

My son, listen to my wisdom;
Incline your ear to my insight,

²That you may have foresight,
While your lips hold fast to knowledge.

³For the lips of a forbidden^a woman drip honey;
Her mouth is smoother than oil;

⁴But in the end she is as bitter as wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.

⁵Her feet go down to Death;
Her steps take hold of Sheol.

⁶She does not chart a path of life;
Her course meanders for lack of knowledge.

^a5.3 *forbidden* Lit. "strange."

⁷So now, sons, pay heed to me,
 And do not swerve from the words of my mouth.
⁸Keep yourself far away from her;
 Do not come near the doorway of her house
⁹Lest you give up your vigor to others,
 Your years to a ruthless one;
¹⁰Lest strangers eat their fill of your strength,
 And your toil be for the house of another;
¹¹And in the end you roar,
 When your flesh and body are consumed,
¹²And say,
 “O how I hated discipline,
 And heartily spurned rebuke.
¹³I did not pay heed to my teachers,
 Or incline my ear to my instructors.
¹⁴Soon I was in dire trouble
 Amidst the assembled congregation.”
¹⁵Drink water from your own cistern,
 Running water from your own well.
¹⁶Your springs will gush forth
 In streams in the public squares.
¹⁷They will be yours alone,
 Others having no part with you.
¹⁸Let your fountain be blessed:
 Find joy in the wife of your youth—
¹⁹A loving doe, a graceful mountain goat.
 Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
 Be infatuated with love of her always.
²⁰Why be infatuated, my son, with a forbidden^b woman?
 Why clasp the bosom of an alien woman?
²¹For everyone’s ways are before the eyes of God,
 Who surveys their entire course.
²²The wicked man will be trapped in his iniquities;
 He will be caught up in the ropes of his sin.
²³He will die for lack of discipline,
 Infatuated by his great folly.

^b 5.20 *forbidden* Or “a stranger.”

6

My son, if you have stood surety for your fellow,
 Given your hand for another,^a
²You have been trapped by the words of your mouth,
 Snared by the words of your mouth.
³Do this, then, my son, to extricate yourself,
 For you have come into the power of your fellow:
 Go grovel—and badger your fellow;
⁴Give your eyes no sleep,
 Your pupils no slumber.
⁵Save yourself like a deer out of the hand [of a hunter],
 Like a bird out of the hand of a fowler.

⁶Lazybones, go to the ant;
 Study its ways and learn.
⁷Without leaders, officers, or rulers,
⁸It lays up its stores during the summer,
 Gathers in its food at the harvest.
⁹How long will you lie there, lazybones;
 When will you wake from your sleep?
¹⁰A bit more sleep, a bit more slumber,
 A bit more hugging yourself in bed,
¹¹And poverty will come calling upon you,^b
 And want, like a man with a shield.

¹²A scoundrel, an evil man
 Lives by crooked speech,
¹³Winking his eyes,
 Shuffling his feet,
 Pointing his finger.
¹⁴Duplicity is in his heart;
 He plots evil all the time;
 He incites quarrels.
¹⁵Therefore calamity will come upon him without warning;
 Suddenly he will be broken beyond repair.

¹⁶GOD hates six things—
 And abominates seven:
¹⁷A haughty bearing,

^a 6.1 *Given your hand for another* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 6.11 *calling upon you* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

A lying tongue,
 Hands that shed innocent blood,
¹⁸A mind that hatches evil plots,
 Feet quick to run to evil,
¹⁹A false witness testifying lies,
 And one who incites siblings to quarrel.

²⁰My son, keep your father's commandment;
 Do not forsake your mother's teaching.

²¹Tie them over your heart always;
 Bind them around your throat.

²²When you walk it will lead you;
 When you lie down it will watch over you;
 And when you are awake it will talk with you.

²³For the commandment is a lamp,
 The teaching is a light,

And the way to life is the rebuke that disciplines.

²⁴It will keep you from an evil woman,
 From the smooth tongue of a forbidden^c woman.

²⁵Do not lust for her beauty
 Or let her captivate you with her eyes.

²⁶The last loaf of bread will go for a prostitute;
 A married woman will snare a person of honor.

²⁷Can anyone rake embers into their bosom
 Without burning their clothes?

²⁸Can anyone walk on live coals
 Without scorching their feet?

²⁹It is the same with the man who sleeps with his fellow's wife;
 No one who touches her will go unpunished.

³⁰A thief is not held in contempt
 For stealing to appease his hunger;

³¹Yet if caught he must pay sevenfold;
 He must give up all he owns.

³²He who commits adultery is devoid of sense;
 Only one who would destroy himself does such a thing.

³³He will meet with disease and disgrace;
 His reproach will never be expunged.

³⁴The fury of the husband will be passionate;

^c 6.24 *forbidden* Lit. "alien."

He will show no pity on his day of vengeance.
³⁵He will not have regard for any ransom;
 He will refuse your bribe, however great.

7

My son, heed my words;
 And store up my commandments with you.
²Keep my commandments and live,
 My teaching, as the apple of your eye—
³Bind them on your fingers,
 Write them on the tablet of your mind.
⁴Say to Wisdom, “You are my sister,”^a
 And call Understanding a kinswoman.
⁵She will guard you from a forbidden^b woman;
 From an alien woman whose talk is smooth.
⁶From the window of my house,
 Through my lattice, I looked out
⁷And saw among the simple,
 Noticed among the youths,
 A young man devoid of sense.
⁸He was crossing the street near her corner,
 Walking toward her house
⁹In the dusk of evening,
 In the dark hours of night.
¹⁰A woman comes toward him
 Dressed like a streetwalker, with set purpose.^c
¹¹She is bustling and restive;
 She is never at home.
¹²Now in the street, now in the square,
 She lurks at every corner.
¹³She lays hold of him and kisses him.
 Brazenly she says to him,
¹⁴“I had to make a sacrifice of well-being;
 Today I fulfilled my vows.
¹⁵Therefore I have come out to you,
 Seeking you, and have found you.

^a7.4 *sister* See note at 1.20.

^b7.5 *forbidden* Lit. “strange.”

^c7.10 *Dressed like a streetwalker, with set purpose* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁶I have decked my couch with covers
Of dyed Egyptian linen;
¹⁷I have sprinkled my bed
With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
¹⁸Let us drink our fill of love till morning;
Let us delight in amorous embrace.
¹⁹For the man of the house is away;^d
He is off on a distant journey.
²⁰He took his bag of money with him
And will return only at mid-month.”

²¹She sways him with her eloquence,
Turns him aside with her smooth talk.
²²Thoughtlessly he follows her,
Like an ox going to the slaughter,
Like a fool to the stocks for punishment^e—
²³Until the arrow pierces his liver.
He is like a bird rushing into a trap,
Not knowing his life is at stake.
²⁴Now, sons, listen to me;
Pay attention to my words;
²⁵Let your mind not wander down her ways;
Do not stray onto her paths.
²⁶For many are those she has struck dead,
And numerous are her victims.
²⁷Her house is a highway to Sheol
Leading down to Death’s inner chambers.

8

It is Wisdom calling,
Understanding raising her^a voice.
²She takes her stand at the topmost heights,
By the wayside, at the crossroads,
³Near the gates at the city entrance;
At the entryways, she shouts,
⁴“O human race, I call to you;

^d7.19 *the man of the house is away* Or “that other guy is not home,” namely, the speaker’s husband.

^e7.22 *Like a fool to the stocks for punishment* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a8.1 *her* See note at 1.20.

My cry is to all mortals.
⁵O simple ones, learn shrewdness;
O dullards, instruct your minds.
⁶Listen, for I speak noble things;
Uprightness comes from my lips.
⁷My mouth utters truth;
Wickedness is abhorrent to my lips.
⁸All my words are just,
None of them perverse or crooked;
⁹All are straightforward to anyone with intelligence,
And right to those who have attained knowledge.
¹⁰Accept my discipline rather than silver,
Knowledge rather than choice gold.
¹¹For wisdom is better than rubies;
No goods can equal her.

¹²I, Wisdom, live with Prudence;
I attain knowledge and foresight.
¹³To fear GOD is to hate evil;
I hate pride, arrogance, the evil way,
And duplicity in speech.
¹⁴Mine are counsel and resourcefulness;
I am understanding; courage is mine.
¹⁵Through me kings reign
And rulers decree just laws;
¹⁶Through me princes rule,
Great men and all the righteous judges.^b
¹⁷Those who love me I love,
And those who seek me will find me.
¹⁸Riches and honor belong to me,
Enduring wealth and success.
¹⁹My fruit is better than gold, fine gold,
And my produce better than choice silver.
²⁰I walk on the way of righteousness,
On the paths of justice.
²¹I endow those who love me with substance;
I will fill their treasuries.

^b 8.16 *righteous judges* According to some Heb. mss. and printed editions, “judges of the earth.”

²²^c “I was created at the beginning of GOD’s course
 As the first of the works of old.
²³In the distant past I was fashioned,
 At the beginning, at the origin of earth.
²⁴There was still no deep when I was brought forth,
 No springs rich in water;
²⁵Before [the foundations of] the mountains were sunk,
 Before the hills I was born.
²⁶Earth and fields had not yet been made,
 Or the world’s first clumps of clay.
²⁷I was there when the heavens were set into place;
 When the horizon was fixed upon the deep;
²⁸When the heavens above were made firm,
 And the fountains of the deep gushed forth;
²⁹When the sea was assigned its limits,
 So that its waters never transgress God’s command;
 When the foundations of the earth were fixed,
³⁰I was with [God] as a confidant,^d
 A source of delight every day,
 Rejoicing before [God] at all times,
³¹Rejoicing in God’s inhabited world,
 Finding delight with mortals.

³²Now, children, listen to me;
 Happy are they who keep my ways.
³³Heed discipline and become wise;
 Do not spurn it.
³⁴Happy is the one who listens to me,
 Coming early to my gates each day,
 Waiting outside my doors.
³⁵For one who finds me finds life
 And obtains favor from GOD.
³⁶But one who misses me self-destructs;
 All who hate me love death.”

9

Wisdom has built her house,
 She has hewn her seven pillars.

^c 8.22–31 Wisdom recounts her existence and role prior to the Creation (see also 3.19–20).

^d 8.30 *confidant* Or “protégée.”

²She has prepared the feast,
Mixed the wine,
And also set the table.
³She has sent out her maids to announce
On the heights of the town,
⁴“Let the simple enter here.”
To those devoid of sense she says,
⁵“Come, eat my food
And drink the wine that I have mixed;
⁶Give up simpleness and live,
Walk in the way of understanding.”

⁷To correct a scoffer,
Or rebuke an evildoer regarding a blemish,
Is to call down abuse on oneself.^a
⁸Do not rebuke scoffers, for they will hate you;
Reprove the wise, and they will love you.
⁹Instruct the wise, and they will grow wiser;
Teach the righteous, and they will gain in learning.
¹⁰The beginning of wisdom is fear of GOD,
And knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
¹¹For through me your days will increase,
And years be added to your life.
¹²If you are wise, you are wise for yourself;
If you are a scoffer, you bear it alone.
¹³The stupid woman bustles about;
She is simple and knows nothing.
¹⁴She sits in the doorway of her house,
Or on a chair at the heights of the town,
¹⁵Calling to all the wayfarers
Who go about their own affairs,
¹⁶“Let the simple enter here”;
And to those devoid of sense she says,
¹⁷“Stolen waters are sweet,
And bread eaten furtively is tasty.”
¹⁸He does not know that the shades are there,
That her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

^a 9.7 Or rebuke an evildoer regarding a blemish, / Is to call down abuse on oneself
Clauses transposed for clarity.

10 The proverbs of Solomon:

- A wise son brings joy to his father;
 A dull son is his mother's sorrow.
- ²Ill-gotten wealth is of no avail,
 But righteousness saves from death.
- ³GOD will not let a righteous person go hungry,
 But denies the wicked what they crave.
- ⁴Negligent hands cause poverty,
 But diligent hands enrich.
- ⁵He who lays in stores during the summer is a capable son,
 But he who sleeps during the harvest is an incompetent.
- ⁶Blessings light upon the head of a righteous person,
 But lawlessness covers the mouths of the wicked.
- ⁷The name of a righteous person is invoked in blessing,
 But the fame of the wicked rots.
- ⁸Whoever has a wise heart accepts commands,
 But one whose speech is foolish comes to grief.
- ⁹Whoever lives blamelessly lives safely,
 But one who walks a crooked path will be found out.
- ¹⁰Whoever winks causes sorrow;
 One whose speech is foolish comes to grief.
- ¹¹The mouth of a righteous person is a fountain of life,
 But lawlessness covers the mouths of the wicked.
- ¹²Hatred stirs up strife,
 But love covers up all faults.
- ¹³Wisdom is to be found on the lips of the intelligent,
 But a rod is ready for the back of the senseless.
- ¹⁴The wise store up knowledge;
 The mouth of a fool is an imminent ruin.
- ¹⁵For someone rich, wealth is a fortress;
 For the poor, poverty is a ruin.
- ¹⁶The labor of the righteous makes for life;
 The produce of the wicked makes for want.
- ¹⁷One who follows discipline shows the way to life,
 But one who ignores reproof leads astray.
- ¹⁸One who conceals hatred has lying lips,
 While one who speaks forth slander is a dullard.
- ¹⁹Where there is much talking, there is no lack of transgressing,

But one who curbs the tongue^a shows sense.
 20 The tongue of a righteous person is choice silver,
 But the mind of the wicked is of little worth.
 21 The lips of a righteous person sustain many,
 But fools die for lack of sense.
 22 It is the blessing of GOD that enriches,
 And no toil can increase it.
 23 As mischief is sport for the dullard,
 So is wisdom for the man of understanding.
 24 What an evildoer plots backfires;
 What the righteous desire is granted.
 25 When the storm passes a wicked person is gone,
 But the righteous person is an everlasting foundation.
 26 Like vinegar to the teeth,
 Like smoke to the eyes,
 Are sluggards to those who send them on a mission.
 27 The fear of GOD prolongs life,
 While the years of the wicked will be shortened.
 28 The righteous can look forward to joy,
 But the hopes of the wicked are doomed.
 29 The way of GOD is a stronghold for a blameless person,
 But a ruin for evildoers.
 30 The righteous person will never be shaken;
 The wicked will not inhabit the earth.
 31 The mouth of a righteous person produces wisdom,
 But the treacherous tongue shall be cut off.
 32 The lips of a righteous person know what is pleasing;
 The mouth of the wicked [knows] duplicity.

11

False scales are an abomination to GOD,
 Who finds an honest^a weight pleasing.
 2 When arrogance appears, disgrace follows,
 But wisdom is with those who are unassuming.
 3 The integrity of the upright guides them;
 The deviousness of the treacherous leads them to ruin.
 4 Wealth is of no avail on the day of wrath,
 But righteousness saves from death.

^a 10.19 *tongue* Lit. “lips.”

^a 11.1 *honest* Lit. “whole.”

- ⁵The righteousness of the blameless smooths their way,
But the wicked fall by their wickedness.
- ⁶The righteousness of the upright saves them,
But the treacherous are trapped by their malice.
- ⁷At death the hopes of a wicked person are doomed,
And the ambition of evildoers^b comes to nothing.
- ⁸A righteous person is rescued from trouble
And it comes to the wicked instead.
- ⁹An impious person destroys a neighbor through speech,
But through knowledge the righteous are rescued.
- ¹⁰When the righteous prosper the city exults;
When the wicked perish there are shouts of joy.
- ¹¹A city is built up by the blessing of the upright,
But it is torn down by the speech of the wicked.
- ¹²One who speaks contemptuously of neighbors is devoid of
sense;
A prudent man keeps his peace.
- ¹³A base fellow gives away secrets,
But a trustworthy soul keeps a confidence.
- ¹⁴For want of strategy an army falls,
But victory comes with much planning.
- ¹⁵Harm awaits one who stands surety for another;^c
One who spurns pledging shall be secure.
- ¹⁶A graceful woman obtains honor;
Ruthless men obtain wealth.
- ¹⁷A kindly man benefits himself;
A cruel one makes trouble for himself.
- ¹⁸A wicked person earns illusory wages,
But one who sows righteousness has a true reward.
- ¹⁹Righteousness is a prop of life,
But to pursue evil leads to death.
- ²⁰Crooked minds are an abomination to GOD,
But those whose way is blameless are pleasing.
- ²¹Assuredly,^d the evildoer will not escape,
But the offspring of the righteous will be safe.

^b 11.7 *ambition of evildoers* Or “wish for posterity,” i.e., hope for family continuity; cf. Rashi.

^c 11.15 *another* Or “a stranger.”

^d 11.21 *Assuredly* Lit. “Hand to hand”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²²Like a gold ring in the snout of a pig
Is a beautiful woman bereft of sense.
²³What the righteous desire can only be good;
What the wicked hope for [stirs] wrath.
²⁴Some give generously and end with more;
Others stint on doing the right thing and incur a loss.
²⁵A generous person enjoys prosperity;
One who satisfies others shall likewise be sated.
²⁶Whoever withholds grain earns the curses of the people,
But blessings are on the head of the one who dispenses it.
²⁷One who earnestly seeks good pursues what is pleasing;
Evil comes to someone who is bent on it.
²⁸One who trusts in wealth shall fall,
But the righteous shall flourish like foliage.
²⁹He who makes trouble for his household shall inherit the
wind;
A fool is a slave to the wise-hearted.
³⁰The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life;
The wise captivate people.
³¹If the righteous on earth get their deserts,
How much more evildoers and sinners.

12

One who loves discipline loves knowledge;
Whoever spurns reproof is a brute.
²A good person earns the favor of GOD,
A man of intrigues, God's condemnation.
³No one can be established in wickedness,
But the root of the righteous will not be shaken loose.
⁴A woman of substance is a crown for her husband,
But an incompetent one is like rot in his bones.
⁵The purposes of the righteous are justice,
The schemes of the wicked are deceit.
⁶The words of the wicked are a deadly ambush,
But the speech of the upright saves them.
⁷Overtake the wicked and they are gone,
But the house of the righteous will endure.
⁸A man is commended according to his intelligence;
A twisted mind is held up to contempt.
⁹Better to be lightly esteemed and have a servant

Than to put on airs and have no food.

¹⁰A righteous person knows the needs of their beast,
But the compassion of the wicked is cruelty.

¹¹He who tills his land shall have food in plenty,
But one who pursues vanities is devoid of sense.

¹²^aA wicked man covets the catch of evildoers;
The root of the righteous yields [fruit].

¹³Sinful speech is a trap for the evildoer,
But a righteous man escapes from trouble.

¹⁴A man gets his fill of good from the fruit of his speech;
One is repaid in kind for one's deeds.

¹⁵The way of fools is right in their own eyes;
But those who are wise accept advice.

¹⁶Fools' vexation is known at once,
But the clever conceal their humiliation.

¹⁷A faithful witness tells the truth,
But a false witness, deceit.

¹⁸There is blunt talk like sword-thrusts,
But the speech of the wise is healing.

¹⁹Truthful speech abides forever,
A lying tongue for but a moment.

²⁰Deceit is in the minds of those who plot evil;
For those who plan good there is joy.

²¹No harm befalls a righteous person,
But the wicked have their fill of misfortune.

²²Lying speech is an abomination to GOD,
But those who act faithfully are pleasing.

²³A clever person conceals knowledge,
But the mind of dullards cries out folly.

²⁴The hand of the diligent wields authority;
The negligent are held in subjection.

²⁵If there is anxiety in someone's mind, let them quash it,
And turn it into joy with a good word.

²⁶A righteous person gives friends direction,^b
But the way of the wicked leads astray.

²⁷A negligent person never has game to roast;

^a12.12 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^b12.26 *gives friends direction* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

A diligent one has precious wealth.^c

²⁸The road of righteousness leads to life;
By way of its path there is no death.

13

A wise son—it is through the discipline of his father;

A scoffer—he never heard reproof.

²A man enjoys good from the fruit of his speech;
But out of the throat of the treacherous comes lawlessness.

³Those who guard their tongue^a preserve their life;
Those who open wide their lips, it is their ruin.

⁴A sluggard craves, but has nothing;
The diligent shall feast on rich fare.

⁵The righteous hate lies;
The wicked are vile and disgraceful.

⁶Righteousness protects the one whose way is blameless;
Wickedness subverts the sinner.

⁷Some pretend to be rich and have nothing;
Others profess to be poor and have much wealth.

⁸Riches are ransom for a person's life,
The poor never heard a reproof.

⁹The light of the righteous is radiant;
The lamp of the wicked is extinguished.

¹⁰Arrogance yields nothing but strife;^b
Wisdom belongs to those who seek advice.

¹¹Wealth may dwindle to less than nothing,
But one who gathers little by little increases it.

¹²Hope deferred sickens the heart,
But desire realized is a tree of life.

¹³One who disdains a precept will be injured thereby;
One who respects a command will be rewarded.

¹⁴The instruction of the wise is a fountain of life,
Enabling one to avoid deadly snares.

¹⁵Good sense wins favor;
The way of treacherous men is unchanging.^c

¹⁶Those who are clever act knowledgeably,

^c 12.27 *A diligent one has precious wealth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 13.3 *tongue* Lit. "mouth."

^b 13.10 *Arrogance yields nothing but strife* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 13.15 *unchanging* Or "harsh."

But dullards expose their stupidity.
¹⁷Harm befalls a wicked messenger;
A faithful courier brings healing.
¹⁸Poverty and humiliation are for the one who spurns
discipline;
But one who takes reproof to heart gets honor.
¹⁹Desire realized is sweet to the soul;
To turn away from evil is abhorrent to the stupid.
²⁰One who keeps company with the wise becomes wise,
But one who consorts with dullards comes to grief.
²¹Misfortune pursues sinners,
But the righteous are well rewarded.
²²A good man has what to bequeath to his grandchildren,
For the wealth of sinners is stored up for the righteous.
²³The tillage of the poor yields much food;
But substance is swept away for lack of moderation.
²⁴He who spares the rod hates his son,
But he who loves him disciplines him early.
²⁵The righteous person eats to satiety,
But the belly of the wicked is empty.

14

The wisest of women builds her house,
But folly tears it down with its own hands.
²One who walks a straight path fears GOD;
But one whose ways are devious shows scorn.
³In the mouth of a fool is a rod of haughtiness,
But the lips of the wise protect them.
⁴If there are no oxen the crib is clean,
But a rich harvest comes through the strength of the ox.
⁵An honest witness will not lie;
A false witness testifies lies.
⁶Scoffers seek wisdom in vain,
But knowledge comes easily to the intelligent.
⁷Keep your distance from a dull man,
For^a you will not learn wise speech.
⁸It is the wisdom of a clever man to understand his course;
But the stupidity of dullards is delusion.

^a 14.7 *Keep your distance from a dull man, / For* Or “Engage with a dull fellow / And.”

- ⁹Reparations mediate between fools,
Between the upright, good will.
- ¹⁰The heart alone knows its bitterness,
And no outsider can share in its joy.
- ¹¹The house of the wicked will be demolished,
But the tent of the upright will flourish.
- ¹²The road ahead may seem right,
But in the end it can be a road to death.
- ¹³The heart may ache even in laughter,
And joy may end in grief.
- ¹⁴Those who are unprincipled reap the fruits of their ways;
The good man, of his deeds.^b
- ¹⁵The simple believe anything;
The clever ponders their course.
- ¹⁶A sage is diffident and shuns evil,
But a dullard rushes in confidently.
- ¹⁷A hothead commits folly;
A man of intrigues will be hated.
- ¹⁸Folly is the lot of the simple,
But the clever glory in knowledge.^c
- ¹⁹Evildoers are brought low before the good,
So are the wicked at the gates of the righteous.
- ²⁰The poor are despised even by their peers,
But the rich have many friends.
- ²¹Those who despise their fellows are wrong;
Those who show pity for the lowly are happy.
- ²²Surely those who plan evil go astray,
While those who plan good earn steadfast love.
- ²³From all toil there is some gain,
But idle chatter is pure loss.
- ²⁴The ornament of the wise is their wealth;
The stupidity of dullards is stupidity.
- ²⁵A truthful witness saves lives;
A lying witness [spreads] deceit.
- ²⁶Fear of GOD is a stronghold,
A refuge for one's children.

^b 14.14 *of his deeds* Taking ‘al as from ‘ll; cf. Hos. 12.3.

^c 14.18 *glory in knowledge* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ²⁷Fear of GOD is a fountain of life,
Enabling one to avoid deadly snares.
- ²⁸A numerous people is the glory of a king;
Without a nation a ruler is ruined.
- ²⁹Patience results in much understanding;
Impatience gets folly as its portion.
- ³⁰A calm disposition gives bodily health;
Passion is rot to the bones.
- ³¹One who withholds what is due to the poor affronts their Maker;
One who shows pity for the needy shows honor.
- ³²The wicked fall by their own evil;
The righteous find security in their death.
- ³³Wisdom rests quietly in the mind of a prudent person,
But among dullards it makes itself known.
- ³⁴Righteousness exalts a nation;
Sin is a reproach to any people.
- ³⁵The king favors a capable servant;
He rages at an incompetent one.

15

- A gentle response allays wrath;
A harsh word provokes anger.
- ²The tongue of the wise produces much knowledge,
But the mouth of dullards pours out folly.
- ³GOD's eyes are everywhere,
Observing the bad and the good.
- ⁴A healing tongue is a tree of life,
But a devious one makes for a broken spirit.
- ⁵A fool spurns a parent's discipline,
But one who heeds reproof becomes clever.
- ⁶In the house of the righteous there is much treasure,
But in the harvest of the wicked there is trouble.
- ⁷The lips of the wise disseminate knowledge;
Not so the minds of dullards.
- ⁸The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to GOD,
But the prayer of the upright is pleasing.
- ⁹The way of the wicked is an abomination to GOD,
But those who pursue righteousness are loved.
- ¹⁰Discipline seems bad to whoever forsakes the way;
One who spurns reproof will die.

- ¹¹Sheol and Abaddon lie exposed to GOD,
How much more the minds of mortals!
- ¹²The scoffer, who dislikes being reproved,
Will not resort to the wise.
- ¹³A joyful heart makes a cheerful face;
A sad heart makes a despondent mood.
- ¹⁴The mind of a prudent person seeks knowledge;
The mouth of dullards pursues folly.
- ¹⁵All the days of a pauper are wretched,
But contentment is a feast without end.
- ¹⁶Better a little with fear of GOD
Than great wealth with confusion.
- ¹⁷Better a meal of vegetables where there is love
Than a fattened ox where there is hate.
- ¹⁸A hot-tempered man provokes a quarrel;
A patient person calms strife.
- ¹⁹The way of a sluggard is like a hedge of thorns,
But the path of the upright is paved.
- ²⁰A wise son makes his father happy;
A fool of a man humiliates his mother.
- ²¹Folly is joy to one devoid of sense;
A prudent man walks a straight path.
- ²²Plans are foiled for want of counsel,
But they succeed through many advisers.
- ²³Having a ready response feels satisfying,
And how good is a word rightly timed!
- ²⁴For the intelligent the path of life leads upward,
In order to avoid Sheol below.
- ²⁵GOD will tear down the house of the proud—
But will establish the homestead of the widow.
- ²⁶Evil thoughts are an abomination to GOD,
But pleasant words are pure.
- ²⁷Whoever pursues ill-gotten gain makes trouble for the
household;
One who spurns gifts will live long.
- ²⁸A righteous person's heart^a rehearses the answer,
But the mouth of the wicked blurts out evil things.

^a 15.28 *heart* For *leb* as a source of speech, see note to Eccl. 5.1.

²⁹GOD is far from the wicked—
But hears the prayer of the righteous.
³⁰What brightens the eye gladdens the heart;
Good news puts fat on the bones.
³¹One whose ear heeds the discipline of life
Lodges among the wise.
³²Those who spurn discipline hate themselves;
But those who heed reproof gain understanding.
³³The fear of GOD is the discipline of wisdom;
Humility precedes honor.

16

Mortals may arrange their thoughts,
But what they say depends on GOD.
²People look approvingly on their own ways,
But GOD probes motives.
³Entrust your affairs to GOD,
And your plans will succeed.
⁴GOD made everything for a purpose,
Even the wicked for an evil day.
⁵Everyone haughty is an abomination to GOD;
Assuredly,^a they will not go unpunished.
⁶Iniquity is expiated by loyalty and faithfulness,
And evil is avoided through fear of GOD.
⁷GOD, when pleased with someone's conduct,
May turn even their enemies into allies.
⁸Better a little with righteousness
Than a large income with injustice.
⁹Mortals may plot out their course,
But it is GOD who directs their steps.
¹⁰There is magic on the lips of the king;
He cannot err in judgment.
¹¹Honest scales and balances are GOD's,
Whose work includes all the weights in the bag.
¹²Wicked deeds are an abomination to kings,
For the throne is established by righteousness.
¹³Truthful speech wins the favor of kings;
They love those who speak honestly.

^a 16.5 *Assuredly* Lit. "Hand to hand"; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁴The king's wrath is a messenger of death,
But a man who is wise can appease it.

¹⁵The king's smile means life;
His favor is like a rain cloud in spring.

¹⁶How much better to acquire wisdom than gold;
To acquire understanding is preferable to silver.

¹⁷The highway of the upright avoids evil;
Those who would preserve their lives watch their way.

¹⁸Pride goes before ruin,
Arrogance, before failure.

¹⁹Better to be humble and among the lowly
Than to share spoils with the proud.

²⁰One who is adept in a matter will attain success;
Happy is the one who trusts in GOD.

²¹The wise-hearted are called discerning;
Those whose speech is pleasing gain wisdom.

²²Good sense is a fountain of life to those who have it,
And folly is the punishment of fools.

²³The mind of the wise makes their speech effective
And increases the wisdom on their lips.

²⁴Pleasant words are like a honeycomb,
Sweet to the palate and a cure for the body.

²⁵The road ahead may seem right,
But in the end it can be a road to death.

²⁶The appetite of laborers labors for them,
Because their hunger^b forces them on.^c

²⁷A worthless man plots^d evil;
What is on his lips is like a scorching fire.

²⁸A shifty man stirs up strife,
And a querulous one alienates his friend.

²⁹A lawless man misleads his friend,
Making him take the wrong way.

³⁰He closes his eyes while meditating deception;
He purses his lips while deciding upon evil.

^b 16.26 *hunger* Lit. "mouth."

^c 16.26 *forces them on* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 16.27 *plots* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

³¹Gray hair is a crown of glory;
It is attained by the way of righteousness.
³²Better to be forbearing than mighty,
To have self-control than to conquer a city.
³³Lots are cast into the lap;
The decision depends on GOD.

17

Better a dry crust with peace
Than a house full of feasting with strife.
²A capable servant will dominate an incompetent son
And share the inheritance with the brothers.
³For silver—the crucible,
For gold—the furnace,
And GOD tests the mind.
⁴An evildoer listens to mischievous talk;
A liar gives ear to malicious words.
⁵One who mocks the poor affronts their Maker;
One who rejoices over another's misfortune will not go
unpunished.
⁶Grandchildren are the crown of their elders,
And the glory of children is their parents.
⁷Lofty words are not fitting for a villain,
Much less lying words for a noble.
⁸A bribe seems like a charm to its user;
It brings success at every turn.
⁹One who seeks love overlooks faults,
But one who harps on a matter alienates friends.
¹⁰A rebuke works on an intelligent person
More than one hundred blows on a fool.
¹¹Evildoers seek only to rebel;
A ruthless messenger will be sent against them.
¹²Sooner meet a bereaved she-bear
Than a fool immersed in nonsense.
¹³Evil will never depart from the house
Of one who repays good with evil.
¹⁴To start a quarrel is to open a sluice;
Before a dispute flares up,^a drop it.

^a 17.14 *flares up* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¹⁵To acquit the guilty and convict the innocent—
Both are an abomination to GOD.
- ¹⁶What good is money in the hand of a fool
To purchase wisdom, when that person has no mind?
- ¹⁷A friend is devoted at all times;
A sibling is born to share adversity.
- ¹⁸Devoid of sense are the people who give their hand
To stand surely for their fellows.
- ¹⁹One who loves transgression loves strife;
One who builds a high threshold invites broken bones.
- ²⁰Crooked minds come to no good,
And the double-tongued fall into trouble.
- ²¹One begets a dullard to one's own grief;
The father of a villain has no joy.
- ²²A joyful heart makes for good health;^b
Despondency dries up the bones.
- ²³The wicked draw bribes out of their bosom
To pervert the course of justice.
- ²⁴Wisdom lies before the intelligent;
The eyes of dullards range to the ends of the earth.
- ²⁵A stupid son is vexation for his father
And a heartache for the woman who bore him.
- ²⁶To punish an innocent is surely not right,
Or to flog the great for their uprightness.
- ²⁷One who is knowledgeable is sparing with words;
A man of understanding is reticent.
- ²⁸Even fools who keep silent are deemed wise;
Intelligent, while their mouth^c is shut.

18

- ^aThose who isolate themselves pursue their desires;
They disdain all competence.
- ²Fools do not desire understanding,
But only to air their thoughts.
- ³Along with the wicked comes derision,
And with rogues, contempt.

^b 17.22 *good health* Or “a cheerful face”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 17.28 *mouth* Lit. “lips.”

^a 18.1 Meaning of verse uncertain.

- ⁴The words a person speaks are deep waters,
A flowing stream, a fountain of wisdom.
- ⁵It is not right to be partial to the guilty
And subvert the innocent in judgment.
- ⁶The words of fools lead to strife;
Their speech invites blows.
- ⁷The fools' speech is their ruin;
Their words are a trap for them.
- ⁸The words of a grumbler are bruising;^b
They penetrate one's inmost parts.
- ⁹One who is slack at work
Is akin^c to a vandal.
- ¹⁰GOD's name is a tower of strength
To which the righteous run and are safe.
- ¹¹The wealth of the rich is their fortress;
In their fancy^d it is a protective wall.
- ¹²Before ruin a person's heart is proud;
Humility goes before honor.
- ¹³To answer before listening—
This is foolish and disgraceful.
- ¹⁴A person's spirit can endure an illness;
But low spirits—who can bear them?
- ¹⁵The mind of an intelligent person acquires knowledge;
The ears of the wise seek out knowledge.
- ¹⁶A gift eases a person's way
And gives access to the great.
- ¹⁷The first to speak in court seems right
Till the other party cross-examines.
- ¹⁸The lot puts an end to strife
And separates those locked in dispute.
- ¹⁹A sibling offended is more formidable than a stronghold;
Such strife is like the bars of a fortress.
- ²⁰A man's belly is filled by the fruit of his mouth;
He will be filled by the produce of his lips.
- ²¹Death and life are in the power of the tongue;
Those who love it will eat its fruit.

^b18.8 *bruising* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c18.9 *akin* Lit. "a brother."

^d18.11 *In their fancy* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²²He who finds a wife has found happiness
And has won GOD's favor.
²³The pauper speaks in terms of mercy;
The rich person's answer is harsh.
²⁴There are companions to keep one company,
And there is a friend more devoted than a sibling.

19

Better a pauper who lives blamelessly
Than one who speaks perversely and is a dullard.
²A person without knowledge is surely not good;
One who moves hurriedly blunders.
³Mortals' folly subverts their way,
And their hearts rage against GOD.
⁴Wealth makes many friends,
But a pauper is left friendless.
⁵A false witness will not go unpunished;
One who testifies lies will not escape.
⁶Many court the favor of a noble,
And all are the friends of a man who dispenses gifts.
⁷The poor are despised even by their kin;
How much more are they shunned by their friends!
One who pursues words—they are of no avail.^a
⁸Those who acquire wisdom are their own best friend;
They preserve understanding and attain happiness.
⁹A false witness will not go unpunished;
One who testifies falsely is doomed.
¹⁰Luxury is not fitting for a dullard,
Much less that a servant rule over princes.
¹¹People show intelligence by their forbearance;
It is their glory when they overlook an offense.
¹²The rage of a king is like the roar of a lion;
His favor is like dew upon the grass.
¹³A stupid son is a calamity to his father;
The nagging of a wife is like the endless dripping of water.
¹⁴Property and riches are bequeathed by fathers,
But an efficient^b wife comes from GOD.

^a 19.7 One who pursues words—they are of no avail Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 19.14 efficient Or “astute.”

¹⁵Laziness induces sleep,
And a negligent person will go hungry.
¹⁶Those who have regard for their lives pay regard to
commandments;
Those who are heedless of their ways will die.
¹⁷Those who are generous to the poor make a loan to GOD—
They will receive their due.
¹⁸Discipline your son while there is still hope,
And^c do not set your heart on his destruction.^d
¹⁹A hot-tempered man incurs punishment;
If you try to save him you will only make it worse.^e
²⁰Listen to advice and accept discipline
In order that you may be wise in the end.
²¹Many designs are in a person's mind,
But it is GOD's plan that is accomplished.
²²Greed is a reproach to a man;^f
Better be poor than a deceitful man.
²³One who fears GOD earns life,
And shall abide in contentment,^g
Free from misfortune.
²⁴A sluggard buries a hand in the bowl,
And will not even bring it to the mouth.
²⁵Beat scoffers and the simple will become clever;
Reprove the intelligent and they gain knowledge.
²⁶A son who causes shame and disgrace
Plunders his father, puts his mother to flight.
²⁷My son, cease to stray from words of knowledge
And receive discipline.
²⁸A malicious witness scoffs at justice,
And the speech of the wicked conceals mischief.
²⁹Punishments are in store for scoffers
And blows for the backs of dullards.

20

Wine is a scoffer, strong drink a roisterer;
No one who is muddled by them will ever grow wise.

^c 19.18 *And* Or “But.”

^d 19.18 *set your heart on his destruction* Or “pay attention to his moaning.”

^e 19.19 *If you try to save him you will only make it worse* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 19.22 *Greed is a reproach to a man* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 19.23 *And shall abide in contentment* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²The terror of a king is like the roar of a lion;
 Whoever provokes it forfeits life.
³It is honorable for a man to desist from strife,
 But every fool becomes embroiled.^a
⁴In winter sluggards do not plow;
 At harvesttime they seek, and find nothing.
⁵The designs in a person's mind are^b deep waters,
 But a man of understanding can draw them out.
⁶He calls many a man his loyal friend,
 But who can find a faithful man?
⁷The righteous live blamelessly;
 Happy are their children who come after them.
⁸The king seated on the throne of judgment
 Can winnow out all evil by his glance.
⁹Who can say, "I have cleansed my heart,
 I am purged of my sin"?
¹⁰False weights and false measures—
 Both are an abomination to GOD.
¹¹Children may be dissembling in their behavior
 Even though their actions are blameless and proper.
¹²The ear that hears, the eye that sees—
 GOD made them both.
¹³Do not love sleep lest you be impoverished;
 Keep your eyes open and you will have plenty of food.
¹⁴"Bad, bad," says the buyer,
 Then goes away in self-congratulation.
¹⁵Gold is plentiful, jewels abundant,
 But wise speech is a precious object.
¹⁶Seize his garment, for he stood surety for another;^c
 Take it as a pledge, [for he stood surety] for an unfamiliar
 woman.
¹⁷Bread gained by fraud may be tasty to a man,
 But later his mouth will be filled with gravel.
¹⁸Plans laid in council will succeed;
 Wage war with stratagems.
¹⁹Whoever gives away secrets is base;
 Do not take up with a big-mouth.

^a 20.3 *becomes embroiled* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 20.5 *The designs in a person's mind are* Or "The counsel in another person's mind is."

^c 20.16 *another* Or "a stranger."

²⁰Whoever reviles their father or mother,
 Will be without lamplight when darkness comes.
²¹An estate acquired in haste at the outset
 Will not be blessed in the end.
²²Do not say, “I will requite evil”;
 Put your hope in GOD and you will be delivered.
²³False weights are an abomination to GOD;
 Dishonest scales are not right.
²⁴People's steps^d are decided by GOD;
 What do mortals know about their own way?
²⁵It is a snare for mortals to pledge a sacred gift rashly^e
 And after the vows to reconsider.
²⁶A wise king winnows out the wicked,
 And turns the wheel upon them.
²⁷A mortal's lifebreath is GOD's lamp
 Revealing all their inmost parts.^f
²⁸Faithfulness and loyalty protect the king;
 He maintains his throne by faithfulness.
²⁹The glory of young men is their strength;
 The majesty of elders is their gray hair.
³⁰Bruises and wounds are repayment^g for evil,
 Striking at one's inmost parts.

21

Like channeled water is the mind of the king in GOD's hand—
 For it is directed according to God's wishes.
²People look approvingly on their own ways,
 But GOD probes the mind.
³To do what is right and just
 Is more desired by GOD than sacrifice.
⁴Haughty looks, a proud heart—
 The tillage of the wicked is sinful.
⁵The plans of the diligent make only for gain;
 All rash haste makes only for loss.
⁶Treasures acquired by a lying tongue
 Are like driven vapor, heading for extinction.^a

^d20.24 *People's steps* Or “[Even] the steps of virile men.”

^e20.25 *to pledge a sacred gift rashly* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f20.27 *their inmost parts* Lit. “the chambers of the belly.”

^g20.30 *repayment* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a21.6 *Are like driven vapor, heading for extinction* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ⁷The violence of the wicked sweeps them away,
For they refuse to act justly.
- ⁸A person's way may be tortuous and strange,
Though their actions are blameless and proper.
- ⁹Dwelling in the corner of a roof is better
Than a contentious wife in a spacious house.^b
- ¹⁰The desire of the wicked is set upon evil;
Their neighbors find no favor in their eyes.
- ¹¹When scoffers are punished, the simple are edified;
When sages are taught, they gain insight.
- ¹²The Righteous One observes the house of a wicked person—
And subverts the wicked to their ruin.
- ¹³One who turns a deaf ear to the cry of the wretched
Will likewise call and not be answered.
- ¹⁴A gift in secret subdues anger,
A present in private, fierce rage.
- ¹⁵Justice done is a joy to the righteous,
To evildoers, ruination.
- ¹⁶One who strays from the path of prudence
Will rest in the company of ghosts.
- ¹⁷A man who loves pleasure comes to want;
He who loves wine and oil does not grow rich.
- ¹⁸The wicked are the ransom of the righteous;
The traitor comes in place of the upright.
- ¹⁹It is better to live in the desert
Than with a contentious, vexatious wife.
- ²⁰Precious treasure and oil are in the house of a wise man,
And a fool of a man will run through them.
- ²¹One who strives to do good and kind deeds
Attains life, success, and honor.
- ²²One wise man prevailed over a city of warriors
And brought down its mighty stronghold.
- ²³One who watches over mouth and tongue
Keeps out of trouble.
- ²⁴The proud, insolent person, named scoffer,
Acts in a frenzy of insolence.
- ²⁵The cravings of sluggards are fatal,
For their hands refuse to work.

^b 21.9 *spacious house* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²⁶All day long they are seized with craving
While the righteous give without stint.
²⁷The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination,
The more so when offered in depravity.
²⁸A false witness is doomed,
But a man who listens^c will testify with success.
²⁹The wicked man is brazen-faced;
The upright man discerns his course.
³⁰No wisdom, no prudence, and no counsel
Can prevail against GOD.
³¹The horse is readied for the day of battle,
But victory comes from GOD.

22

Repute is preferable to great wealth,
Grace is better than silver and gold.
²The rich and the poor meet;^a
GOD made them both.
³One who was shrewd saw trouble and took cover;
The simple kept going and paid the penalty.
⁴The effect of humility is fear of GOD,
Wealth, honor, and life.
⁵Thorns and snares are in the path of the crooked;
Those who value their life will keep far from them.
⁶Train children in the way they each ought to go;
They will not swerve from it even in old age.
⁷A rich person rules the poor,
And the borrower is a slave to the man who lends.
⁸One who sows injustice shall reap misfortune;
The rod of wrath shall fail.
⁹One who is generous is blessed,
While giving bread to the poor.
¹⁰Expel the scoffer and contention departs,
Quarrel and contumely cease.
¹¹A pure-hearted comrade—
His speech is gracious;
He has the king for his companion.

^c 21.28 *a man who listens* Habitually, as a matter of character. Or “one who really heard.”

^a 22.2 *meet* Occasionally, as members of society.

¹²The eyes of GOD watch the person who is wise;^b
[God] subverts the words of the treacherous.

¹³The sluggard says, “There’s a lion in the street;
I shall be killed if I step outside.”^c

¹⁴The mouth of a forbidden^d woman is a deep pit;
He who is doomed by GOD falls into it.

¹⁵If folly settles in the heart of a youth,
The rod of discipline will remove it.

¹⁶To profit by withholding what is due to the poor
Is like making gifts to the rich—pure loss.

¹⁷Incline your ear and listen to the words of the sages;
Pay attention to my wisdom.

¹⁸It is good that you store them inside you,
And that all of them be constantly on your lips,
¹⁹That you may put your trust in GOD.

I let you know today—yes, you—

²⁰Indeed, I wrote down for you a threefold lore,^e
Wise counsel,

²¹To let you know truly reliable words,
That you may give a faithful reply to those who sent you.

²²Do not rob the wretched because they are wretched;
Do not crush the poor in the gate;

²³For GOD will take up their cause
And despoil those who despoil them of life.

²⁴Do not associate with a hothead,
Or go about with a hot-tempered man,

²⁵Lest you learn their ways
And find yourself ensnared.

²⁶Do not be one of those who give their hand,
Who stand surety for debts,

²⁷Lest your bed be taken from under you
When you have no money to pay.

²⁸Do not remove the ancient boundary stone
That your ancestors set up.

^b 22.12 *the person who is wise* Or “knowledge,” i.e., words of knowledge; cf. v. 17.

^c 22.13 *if I step outside* Lit. “in the square.”

^d 22.14 *forbidden* Lit. “strange.”

^e 22.20 *a threefold lore* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²⁹See a man skilled at his work—
He shall attend upon kings;
He shall not attend upon the lowly.^f

23

When you sit down to dine with a ruler,
Consider well who is before you.

²Thrust a knife into your gullet
If you have a large appetite.

³Do not crave the dainties,
For they are counterfeit food.

⁴Do not toil to gain wealth;
Have the sense to desist.

⁵You see it, then it is gone;
It grows wings and flies away,
Like an eagle, heavenward.

⁶Do not eat of a miser's food;
Do not crave for his dainties;

⁷He is like one keeping accounts;
“Eat and drink,” he says to you,
But he does not really mean it.

⁸The morsel you eat you will vomit;
You will waste your courteous words.

⁹Do not speak to a dullard—
Who will disdain your sensible words.

¹⁰Do not remove ancient boundary stones;
Do not encroach upon the field of orphans,

¹¹For they have a mighty Redeemer,
Who will surely take up their cause with you.

¹²Apply your mind to discipline
And your ears to wise sayings.

¹³Do not withhold discipline from children;
If you beat them with a rod they will not die.

¹⁴Beat them with a rod
And you will save them from the grave.

¹⁵My son, if your mind gets wisdom,
My mind, too, will be gladdened.

^f 22.29 *the lowly* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¹⁶I shall rejoice with all my heart^a
When your lips speak right things.
¹⁷Do not envy sinners in your heart,
But only those who fear GOD, at all times,
¹⁸For then you will have a future,
And your hope will never fail.
- ¹⁹Listen, my son, and get wisdom;
Lead your mind in a [proper] path.
²⁰Do not be of those who guzzle wine,
Or glut themselves on meat,
²¹For guzzlers and gluttons will be impoverished,
And drowsing will clothe you in tatters.
- ²²Listen to your father who begot you;
Do not disdain your mother when she is old.
²³Buy truth and never sell it,
And wisdom, discipline, and understanding.
²⁴The father of a righteous person will exult;
He who begets a wise child will rejoice in them.
²⁵Your father and mother will rejoice;
She who bore you will exult.
²⁶Give your mind to me, my son;
Let your eyes watch my ways.
²⁷A prostitute is a deep pit;
A forbidden^b woman is a narrow well.
²⁸She too lies in wait as if for prey,
And destroys the unfaithful among men.
- ²⁹Who cries, “Woe!” who, “Alas!”;
Who has quarrels, who complaints;
Who has wounds without cause;
Who has bleary eyes?
³⁰Those whom wine keeps till the small hours,
Those who gather to drain the cups.
³¹Do not ogle that red wine
As it lends its color to the cup,
As it flows on smoothly;

^a 23.16 *heart* Lit. “kidneys.”^b 23.27 *forbidden* Lit. “alien.”

³²In the end, it bites like a snake;
 It spits like a basilisk.
³³Your eyes will see strange sights;
 Your heart^c will speak distorted things.
³⁴You will be like one lying in bed on high seas,
 Like one lying on top of the rigging.^d
³⁵“They struck me, but I felt no hurt;
 They beat me, but I was unaware;
 As often as I wake,
 I go after it again.”

24

Do not envy the wicked;
 Do not desire to be with them;
²For their hearts^a talk violence,
 And their lips speak mischief.

³A house is built by wisdom,
 And is established by understanding;
⁴By knowledge are its rooms filled
 With all precious and beautiful things.

⁵A wise man is strength;
 A knowledgeable man exerts power;
⁶For by stratagems you wage war,
 And victory comes with much planning.

⁷Wisdom is too lofty for an ignoramus;
 He does not open his mouth in the gate.

⁸One who lays plans to do harm
 Is called a schemer.

⁹The schemes of folly are sin,
 And a scoffer is an abomination to all.^b

¹⁰If you showed yourself slack in time of trouble,
 Wanting in power,

¹¹If you refrained from rescuing those taken off to death,
 Those condemned to slaughter—

^c 23.33 *heart* See note to 15.28.

^d 23.34 *on top of the rigging* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 24.2 *hearts* See note to 15.28.

^b 24.9 *all* Lit. “humankind.”

¹²If you say, “We knew nothing of it,”
 Surely the One who fathoms hearts will discern [the truth],
 The One who watches over your life will know it,
 And [God] will pay each person as they deserve.

¹³My son, eat honey, for it is good;
 Let its sweet drops be on your palate.

¹⁴Know: such is wisdom for your soul;
 If you attain it, there is a future;
 Your hope will not be cut off.

¹⁵Wicked ones! Do not lurk by the home of the righteous;
 Do no violence to their dwellings.

¹⁶Seven times a righteous person falls and gets up,
 While the wicked are tripped by one misfortune.

¹⁷If your enemies fall, do not exult;
 If they trip, let your heart not rejoice,
¹⁸Lest GOD see it and be displeased,
 And avert God’s wrath from them.

¹⁹Do not be vexed by evildoers;
 Do not be incensed by the wicked;
²⁰For there is no future for an evildoer;
 The lamp of the wicked goes out.

²¹Fear GOD, my son, and the king,
 And do not mix with dissenters,
²²For disaster comes from them suddenly;
 The doom both decree who can foreknow?

²³These also are by the sages:

It is not right to be partial in judgment.

²⁴One who says to the guilty, “You are innocent,”
 Shall be cursed by peoples,
 Damned by nations;

²⁵But it shall go well with them who decide justly;
 Blessings of good things will light upon them.

²⁶Giving a straightforward reply
 Is like giving a kiss.

²⁷Put your external affairs in order,

Get ready what you have in the field,
Then build yourself a home.

²⁸Do not be a witness against your fellow without good cause;
Would you mislead with your speech?

²⁹Do not say, “I will do to him what he did to me;
I will pay the man what he deserves.”

³⁰I passed by the field of a lazy man,
By the vineyard of someone lacking sense.

³¹It was all overgrown with thorns;
Its surface was covered with chickweed,
And its stone fence lay in ruins.

³²I observed and took it to heart;
I saw it and learned a lesson.

³³A bit more sleep, a bit more slumber,
A bit more hugging yourself in bed,

³⁴And poverty will come calling upon you,^c
And want, like a man with a shield.

25

These too are proverbs of Solomon, which the officials of King Hezekiah of Judah copied:

²It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,
And the glory of a king to plumb a matter.

³Like the heavens in their height, like the earth in its depth,
Is the mind of kings—unfathomable.

⁴The dross having been separated from the silver,
A vessel emerged for the smith.

⁵Remove the wicked from the king’s presence,
And his throne will be established in justice.

⁶Do not exalt yourself in the king’s presence;
Do not stand in the place of nobles.

⁷For it is better to be told, “Step up here,”
Than to be degraded in the presence of the great.

Do not let what your eyes have seen

⁸Be vented rashly in a quarrel;
Think^a of what it will effect in the end,

^c 24.34 *calling upon you* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 25.8 *Think* Lit. “Lest.”

- When your fellow puts you to shame.
⁹Defend your right against your fellow,
 But do not give away the secrets of another,
¹⁰Lest someone who hears it reproach you,
 And your bad repute never end.
- ¹¹Like golden apples in silver showpieces^b
 Is a phrase well turned.
¹²Like a ring of gold, a golden ornament,
 Is a wise person's reproof in a receptive ear.
¹³Like the coldness of snow at harvesttime
 Is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him;
 He lifts his master's spirits.
¹⁴Like clouds, wind—but no rain—
 Is a man who boasts of gifts not given.
¹⁵Through forbearance a ruler may be won over;
 A gentle tongue can break bones.
¹⁶If you find honey, eat only what you need,
 Lest, surfeiting yourself, you throw it up.
¹⁷Visit your neighbor sparingly,
 Lest he have his surfeit of you and loathe you.
¹⁸Like a club, a sword, a sharpened arrow,
 Is a man who testifies falsely against his fellow.
¹⁹Like a loose tooth and an unsteady leg,
 Is a treacherous support in time of trouble.
²⁰Disrobing on a chilly day,
 Like vinegar on natron,
 Is one who sings songs to a sorrowful soul.
- ²¹If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat;
 If he is thirsty, give him water to drink.
²²You will be heaping live coals on his head,
 And GOD will reward you.
- ²³A north wind produces rain,
 And whispered words, a glowering face.
²⁴Dwelling in the corner of a roof is better
 Than a contentious woman in a spacious house.^c

^b 25.11 *showpieces* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 25.24 *a spacious house* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ²⁵Like cold water to a parched throat
Is good news from a distant land.
- ²⁶Like a muddied spring, a ruined fountain,
Are the righteous fallen before the wicked.
- ²⁷It is not good to eat much honey,
Nor is it honorable to search for honor.^d
- ²⁸Like an open city without walls
Is a man whose temper is uncurbed.

26

- Like snow in summer and rain at harvesttime,
So honor is not fitting for a dullard.
- ²As a sparrow must flit and a swallow fly,
So a gratuitous curse must backfire.^a
- ³A whip for a horse and a bridle for a donkey,
And a rod for the back of dullards.
- ⁴Do not answer a dullard in accord with his folly,
Else you will become like him.
- ⁵Answer a dullard in accord with his folly,
Else he will think himself wise.
- ⁶One who sends a message by a dullard
Will wear out legs and must put up with^b lawlessness.
- ⁷As legs hang limp on a cripple,
So is a proverb in the mouth of dullards.
- ⁸Like a pebble in a sling,
So is paying honor to a dullard.
- ⁹As a thorn comes to the hand of a drunkard,
So a proverb to the mouth of a dullard.
- ¹⁰A master can produce anything,^c
But anyone who hires a dullard is as one who hires transients.^d
- ¹¹As a dog returns to its vomit,
So a dullard repeats his folly.
- ¹²If you see a man who thinks himself wise,
There is more hope for a dullard than for him.
- ¹³The sluggard says,

^d 25.27 *Nor is it honorable to search for honor* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 26.2 *backfire* Kethib, “fail.”

^b 26.6 *must put up with* Lit. “drink.”

^c 26.10 *A master can produce anything* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 26.10 *transients* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

“There’s a cub on the road, a lion in the squares.”

¹⁴The door turns upon the hinge,
And the sluggard upon the bed.

¹⁵The sluggard buries a hand in the bowl,
And will not even bring it to the mouth.

¹⁶In self-regard, the sluggard is wiser
Than seven who give good advice.

¹⁷A passerby who gets embroiled in someone else’s quarrel
Is like one who seizes a dog by its ears.

¹⁸Like a lunatic^e scattering deadly firebrands, arrows,

¹⁹Is the man who cheats his fellow and says, “I was only joking.”

²⁰For lack of wood a fire goes out,
And without a grumbler contention is stilled.

²¹Charcoal for embers and wood for a fire
And a contentious man for kindling strife.

²²The words of a grumbler are bruising;^f
They penetrate one’s inmost parts.

²³Base silver laid over earthenware
Are ardent lips with an evil mind.

²⁴An enemy dissembles with his speech,
Inwardly he harbors deceit.

²⁵Though he be fair-spoken do not trust him,
For seven abominations are in his mind.

²⁶His hatred may be concealed by dissimulation,
But his evil will be exposed to public view.

²⁷One who digs a pit will fall in it,
And a stone will roll back upon the one who is rolling it.

²⁸A lying tongue hates those crushed by it;^g
Smooth speech throws one down.

27

Do not boast of tomorrow,
For you do not know what the day will bring.

²Let the mouth of another praise you, not yours,
The lips of a stranger, not your own.

^e 26.18 *lunatic* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 26.22 *bruising* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 26.28 *those crushed by it* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ³A stone has weight, sand is heavy,
But a fool's vexation outweighs them both.
- ⁴There is the cruelty of fury, the overflowing of anger,
But who can withstand jealousy?
- ⁵Open reproof is better than concealed love.
- ⁶Wounds by a loved one are long lasting;
The kisses of an enemy are profuse.
- ⁷A sated appetite despairs honey,
But to a ravenous appetite, even the bitter is sweet.
- ⁸Like a sparrow wandering from its nest
Is a man who wanders from his home.
- ⁹Oil and incense gladden the heart,
And the sweetness of a friend is better than one's own counsel.
- ¹⁰Do not desert your friend and your father's friend;
Do not enter your brother's house in your time of misfortune;
A close neighbor is better than a distant brother.
- ¹¹Get wisdom, my son, and gladden my heart,
That I may have what to answer those who taunt me.
- ¹²The shrewd man saw trouble and took cover;
The simple kept going and paid the penalty.
- ¹³Seize his garment, for he stood surety for another;^a
Take it as a pledge, [for he stood surety] for an unfamiliar woman.
- ¹⁴He who greets his fellow loudly early in the morning
Shall have it reckoned to him as a curse.
- ¹⁵An endless dripping on a rainy day
And a contentious wife are alike;
- ¹⁶As soon repress her as repress the wind,
Or declare one's right hand to be oil.
- ¹⁷As iron sharpens iron
So a man sharpens the wit^b of his friend.
- ¹⁸One who tends a fig tree will enjoy its fruit,
And one who cares for a master will be honored.
- ¹⁹As face answers to face in water,
So does one's heart to another's.
- ²⁰Sheol and Abaddon cannot be satisfied,
Nor can the human eye be satisfied.

^a 27.13 *another* Or "a stranger."^b 27.17 *wit* Lit. "face."

²¹For silver—the crucible, for gold—the furnace,
And a person is tested by praise.

²²Even if you pound the fool in a mortar
With a pestle along with grain,
His folly will not leave him.

²³Mind well the looks of your flock;
Pay attention to your herds;

²⁴For property does not last forever,
Or a crown for all generations.

²⁵Grass vanishes, new grass appears,
And the herbage of the hills is gathered in.

²⁶The lambs will provide you with clothing,
The he-goats, the price of a field.

²⁷The goats' milk will suffice for your food,
The food of your household,
And the maintenance of your maids.

28

A wicked person flees though no one gives chase,
But the righteous are as confident as a lion.

²When there is rebellion in the land, many are its rulers;
But with someone who has^a understanding and knowledge,
stability will last.^b

³A poor man who withholds what is due to the wretched
Is like a destructive rain that leaves no food.

⁴Those who forsake instruction praise the wicked,
But those who heed instruction fight them.

⁵The wicked cannot discern judgment,
But those who seek GOD discern all things.

⁶Better is a poor man who lives blamelessly
Than a rich man whose ways are crooked.

⁷An intelligent son heeds instruction,
But he who keeps company with gluttons disgraces his father.

⁸He who increases his wealth by loans at discount or interest
Amasses it for one who is generous to the poor.

⁹He who turns a deaf ear to instruction—
His prayer is an abomination.

^a 28.2 *someone who has* Referring to the ruler. Or “people who have,” referring to the populace.

^b 28.2 *But with someone . . . will last* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¹⁰He who misleads the upright into an evil course
 Will fall into his own pit,
 But the blameless will prosper.
- ¹¹A rich man is clever in his own eyes,
 But a perceptive pauper can see through him.
- ¹²When the righteous exult there is great glory,
 But when the wicked rise up, everyone^c makes themselves scarce.
- ¹³No one who covers up faults will succeed;
 One who confesses and gives them up will find mercy.
- ¹⁴Happy is the person who is anxious always,
 But one who is hard-hearted falls into misfortune.
- ¹⁵A roaring lion and a prowling bear
 Is a wicked man ruling a helpless people.
- ¹⁶A prince who lacks understanding is very oppressive;
 One who spurns ill-gotten gains will live long.
- ¹⁷Anyone oppressed by bloodguilt will flee to a pit;
 Let none offer support.
- ¹⁸One who lives blamelessly will be delivered,
 But one whose ways are crooked will fall all at once.
- ¹⁹Those who till their land will have food in plenty,
 But those who pursue vanities will have poverty in plenty.
- ²⁰A dependable man will receive many blessings,
 But one in a hurry to get rich will not go unpunished.
- ²¹To be partial is not right;
 Even one who is valiant may do wrong for a piece of bread.
- ²²A miserly man runs after wealth;
 He does not realize that loss will overtake it.
- ²³One who reproves a person will in the end
 Find more favor than a flatterer.
- ²⁴Anyone who robs their father and mother and says, “It is no
 offense,”
 Is the companion to^d a vandal.
- ²⁵A gaping maw provokes quarrels,
 But one who trusts GOD shall enjoy prosperity.
- ²⁶Those who trust their own instincts are dullards,
 But those who live by wisdom shall escape.

^c 28.12 *everyone* Lit. “person.” Or “the upright”; cf. Eccl. 7.23.

^d 28.24 *the companion to* Or “tantamount to.”

²⁷Those who give to the poor will not be in want,
But those who turn a blind eye will be roundly cursed.
²⁸When the wicked rise up, everyone^e goes into hiding,
But when they perish the righteous increase.

29

One oft reproved may become stiffnecked—
But then will be suddenly broken beyond repair.
²When the righteous become great the people rejoice,
But when the wicked dominate the people groan.
³A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father,
But he who keeps company with prostitutes will lose his
wealth.

⁴By justice a king sustains the land,
But a fraudulent man^a tears it down.

⁵A man who flatters his fellow
Spreads a net for his feet.

⁶An evil man's offenses are a trap for himself,
But a righteous person sings out joyously.

⁷The righteous are concerned with the cause of the wretched;
The wicked cannot understand such concern.

⁸Scoffers inflame a city,
But the wise allay anger.

⁹When someone who is wise^b enters into litigation with a fool
There is ranting and ridicule, but no satisfaction.

¹⁰Those who are bloodthirsty detest the blameless,
But the upright seek them out.

¹¹A dullard gives full vent to rage,
But a wise person calms it down.

¹²A ruler who listens to lies—
All his ministers will be wicked.

¹³The poor and the fraudulent meet;^c
GOD gives luster to the eyes of both.

¹⁴A king who judges the wretched honestly—
His throne will be established forever.

¹⁵Rod and reproof produce wisdom,
But a youth out of control is a disgrace to his mother.

^e 28.28 *everyone* See note at v. 12 above.

^a 29.4 *a fraudulent man* I.e., a monarch who is by nature deceitful.

^b 29.9 *who is wise* I.e., who aspires to be so.

^c 29.13 *meet* Occasionally, as members of society.

¹⁶When the wicked increase, offenses increase,
But the righteous will see their downfall.
¹⁷Discipline your son and he will give you peace;
He will gratify you with dainties.
¹⁸For lack of vision a people lose restraint,
But happy is he who heeds instruction.
¹⁹A slave cannot be disciplined by words;
Though he may comprehend, he does not respond.
²⁰If you see a man hasty in speech,
There is more hope for a fool than for him.
²¹A slave pampered from youth
Will come to a bad end.^d
²²An angry man provokes a quarrel;
A hothead commits many offenses.
²³Pride of mortals will bring humiliation,
But one who is humble will obtain honor.
²⁴He who shares with a thief is his own enemy;
He hears the imprecation and does not tell.^e
²⁵A person's fears become^f a trap,
But one who trusts in GOD shall be safeguarded.
²⁶Many seek audience with a ruler,
But it is from GOD that a [wronged] party gets justice.
²⁷The unjust man is an abomination to the righteous,
And one whose way is straight is an abomination to the wicked.

30

The words of Agur son of Jakeh, [man of] Massa; the speech of the man to Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal:

²I am more brutish than anyone else;^a
I lack common sense.
³I have not learned wisdom,
Nor do I possess knowledge of the Holy One.
⁴Who has ascended heaven and come down?
Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hand?
Who has wrapped the waters in his garment?

^d29.21 *Will come to a bad end* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e29.24 *hears the imprecation and does not tell* Cf. Lev. 5.1.

^f29.25 *A person's fears become* Or “Fear of other people becomes.”

^a30.2 *more brutish than anyone else* Or “brutish, less than a man.”

Who has established all the extremities of the earth?
What is his name or his son's name, if you know it?

⁵Every word of God is pure,
A shield to those who seek refuge.

⁶Do not add to God's words,
Lest you be indicted and proved to be a liar.

⁷Two things I ask of You; do not deny them to me before I die:

⁸Keep lies and false words far from me;

Give me neither poverty nor riches,

But provide me with my daily bread,

⁹Lest, being sated, I renounce, saying,

“Who is GOD?”

Or, being impoverished, I take to theft

And profane^b the name of my God.

¹⁰Do not inform on a slave to his master,

Lest he curse you and you incur guilt.

¹¹There is a breed of people that brings a curse on its fathers

And brings no blessing to its mothers,

¹²A breed that thinks itself pure,

Though it is not washed of its filth;

¹³A breed so haughty of bearing, so supercilious;

¹⁴A breed whose teeth are swords,

Whose jaws are knives,

Ready to devour the poor of the land,

The needy among us.^c

¹⁵The leech has two daughters, “Give!” and “Give!”

Three things are insatiable;

Four never say, “Enough!”:

¹⁶Sheol, an infertile womb,

Earth that cannot get enough water,

And fire that never says, “Enough!”

¹⁷The eye that mocks a father

And disdains the homage due a mother—

The ravens of the brook will gouge it out,

Young eagles will devour it.

^b 30.9 *profane* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 30.14 *us* Heb. “humankind.”

¹⁸Three things are beyond me;
 Four I cannot fathom:
¹⁹How an eagle makes its way over the sky;
 How a snake makes its way over a rock;
 How a ship makes its way through the high seas;
 How a man has his way with a maiden.

²⁰Such is the way of an adulteress:
 She eats, wipes her mouth,
 And says, “I have done no wrong.”

²¹The earth shudders at three things,
 At four that it cannot bear:
²²A slave who becomes king;
 A scoundrel sated with food;

²³A loathsome woman who gets married;
 A maidservant who supplants her mistress.

²⁴Four are among the tiniest on earth,
 Yet they are the wisest of the wise:
²⁵Ants are a folk without power,
 Yet they prepare food for themselves in summer;

²⁶The badger is a folk without strength,
 Yet it makes its home in the rock;

²⁷The locusts have no king,
 Yet they all march forth in formation;

²⁸You can catch the lizard^d in your hand,
 Yet it is found in royal palaces.

²⁹There are three that are stately of stride,
 Four that carry themselves well:
³⁰The lion is mightiest among the beasts,
 And recoils before none;

³¹^eThe greyhound, the he-goat,
 The king whom none dares resist.

³²If you have been scandalously arrogant,
 If you have been a schemer,
 Then clap your hand to your mouth.

³³As milk under pressure produces butter,

^d30.28 *lizard* Or “spider.”

^e30.31 Meaning of verse uncertain.

And a nose under pressure produces blood,
So patience under pressure produces strife.

31 The words of Lemuel, king of Massa, with which his mother admonished him:

²No, my son!
No, O son of my womb!
No, O son of my vows!
³Do not give your strength to women,
Your vigor,^a to those who destroy kings.^b
⁴Wine is not for kings, O Lemuel;
Not for kings to drink,
Nor any strong drink for princes,
⁵Lest they drink and forget what has been ordained,
And infringe on the rights of the poor.
⁶Give strong drink to the hapless
And wine to the embittered.
⁷Let them drink and forget their poverty,
And put their troubles out of mind.
⁸Speak up for the dumb,
For the rights of all the unfortunate.
⁹Speak up, judge righteously,
Champion the poor and the needy.

- ¶ ¹⁰How precious^c is a woman of substance!
Her worth is far beyond that of rubies.
- ¶ ¹¹Her husband puts his confidence in her,
And lacks no good thing.
- ¶ ¹²She is good to him, never bad,
All the days of her life.
- ¶ ¹³She looks for wool and flax,
And sets her hand to them with a will.
- ¶ ¹⁴She is like a merchant fleet,
Bringing her food from afar.
- ¶ ¹⁵She rises while it is still night,
And supplies provisions for her household,

^a31.3 *vigor* Lit. "ways."

^b31.3 *to those who destroy kings* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c31.10 *How precious* Lit. "Who can find." Cf. 20.6.

- The daily fare of her maids.
- ¶¹⁶ She sets her mind on an estate and acquires it;
She plants a vineyard by her own labors.
- ¶¹⁷ She girds herself with strength,
And performs her tasks with vigor.^d
- ¶¹⁸ She sees^e that her business thrives;
Her lamp never goes out at night.
- ¶¹⁹ She sets her hand to the distaff;
Her fingers work the spindle.
- ¶²⁰ She gives generously to the poor;
Her hands are stretched out to the needy.
- ¶²¹ She is not worried for her household because of snow,
For her whole household is dressed in crimson.
- ¶²² She makes covers for herself;
Her clothing is linen and purple.
- ¶²³ Her husband is prominent in the gates,
As he sits among the elders of the land.
- ¶²⁴ She makes cloth and sells it,
And offers a girdle to the merchant.
- ¶²⁵ She is clothed with strength and splendor;
She looks to the future cheerfully.
- ¶²⁶ Her mouth is full of wisdom,
Her tongue with kindly teaching.
- ¶²⁷ She oversees the activities of her household
And never eats the bread of idleness.
- ¶²⁸ Her children declare her happy;
Her husband praises her,
- ¶²⁹ “Many women have done well,
But you surpass them all.”
- ¶³⁰ Grace is deceptive,
Beauty is illusory;
It is for her fear of GOD
That a woman is to be praised.
- ¶³¹ Give her of the fruit of her hands,^f
And let her works praise her in the gates.

^d 31.17 *And performs her tasks with vigor* Lit. “And exerts her arms.”

^e 31.18 *sees* Lit. “tastes.”

^f 31.31 *Give her of the fruit of her hands* Cf. Gersonides. Or “Extol her for.”

There was a man in the land of Uz named Job. That man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.² Seven sons and three daughters were born to him;³ his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred jennies, and a very large household. That man was wealthier than anyone in the East.

⁴ It was the custom of his sons to hold feasts, each on his set day in his own home. They would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.⁵ When a round of feast days was over, Job would send word to them to sanctify themselves, and, rising early in the morning, he would make burnt offerings, one for each of them; for Job thought, “Perhaps my children have sinned and blasphemed God in their thoughts.” This is what Job always used to do.

⁶ One day the divine beings presented themselves before GOD, and the Adversary^a came along with them.⁷ GOD said to the Adversary, “Where have you been?” The Adversary answered GOD, “I have been roaming all over the earth.”⁸ GOD said to the Adversary, “Have you noticed My servant Job? There is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil!”⁹ The Adversary answered GOD, “Does Job not have good reason to fear God?¹⁰ Why, it is You who have fenced him round, him and his household and all that he has. You have blessed his efforts so that his possessions spread out in the land.¹¹ But lay Your hand upon all that he has and he will surely blaspheme You to Your face.”¹² GOD replied to the Adversary, “See, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on him.” The Adversary departed from GOD’s presence.

¹³ One day, as his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother,¹⁴ a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the jennies were grazing alongside them¹⁵ when Sabeans attacked them and carried them off, and put the attendants to the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you.”¹⁶ This one was still speaking when another came and said, “God’s fire fell from heaven, took hold of the sheep and the attendants, and burned them up; I alone

^a 1.6 *the Adversary* Heb. *hassatan*.

have escaped to tell you.”¹⁷This one was still speaking when another came and said, “A Chaldean formation of three columns made a raid on the camels and carried them off and put the attendants to the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you.”¹⁸This one was still speaking when another came and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother¹⁹when suddenly a mighty wind came from the wilderness. It struck the four corners of the house so that it collapsed upon the young people and they died; I alone have escaped to tell you.”

²⁰Then Job arose, tore his robe, cut off his hair, and threw himself on the ground and worshiped.²¹He said, “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there; GOD has given, and GOD has taken away; blessed be GOD’s name.”

²²For all that, Job did not sin nor did he cast reproach on God.

2 One day the divine beings presented themselves before GOD. The Adversary came along with them to present himself before GOD.²GOD said to the Adversary, “Where have you been?” The Adversary answered GOD, “I have been roaming all over the earth.”³GOD said to the Adversary, “Have you noticed My servant Job? There is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil. He still keeps his integrity; so you have incited Me against him to destroy him for no good reason.”⁴The Adversary answered GOD, “Skin for skin^a—all that the man has he will give up for his life.⁵But lay a hand on his bones and his flesh, and he will surely blaspheme You to Your face.”⁶So GOD said to the Adversary, “See, he is in your power; only spare his life.”⁷The Adversary departed from GOD’s presence and inflicted a severe inflammation on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.⁸He took a potsherd to scratch himself as he sat in ashes.⁹His wife said to him, “You still keep your integrity! Blaspheme God and die!”¹⁰But he said to her, “You talk as any shameless woman might talk! Should we accept only good from God and not accept evil?” For all that, Job said nothing sinful.

¹¹When Job’s three friends heard about all these calamities that had befallen him, each came from his home—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to go and console and comfort him.¹²When they saw him from a distance,

^a 2.4 *Skin for skin* Apparently a proverb whose meaning is uncertain.

they could not recognize him, and they broke into loud weeping; each one tore his robe and threw dust into the air onto his head.¹³ They sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights. None spoke a word to him for they saw how very great was his suffering.

3 ^aAfterward, Job began to speak and cursed the day of his birth.² Job spoke up and said:

³Perish the day on which I was born,
And the night it was announced,
“A male has been conceived!”
⁴May that day be darkness;
May God above have no concern for it;
May light not shine on it;
⁵May darkness and deep gloom reclaim it;
May a pall lie over it;
May what blackens^b the day terrify it.
⁶May obscurity carry off that night;
May it not be counted among the days of the year;
May it not appear in any of its months;
⁷May that night be desolate;
May no sound of joy be heard in it;
⁸May those who cast spells upon the day^c damn it,
Those prepared to disable Leviathan;
⁹May its twilight stars remain dark;
May it hope for light and have none;
May it not see the glimmerings of the dawn—
¹⁰Because it did not block my mother’s womb,
And hide trouble from my eyes.

¹¹Why did I not die at birth,
Expire as I came forth from the womb?
¹²Why were there knees to receive me,
Or breasts for me to suck?

^a **3.1** There are many difficulties in the poetry of Job, making the interpretation of words, verses, and even chapters uncertain. The rubric “Meaning of Heb. [or: verse] uncertain” in this book indicates only some of the extreme instances.

^b **3.5** *what blackens* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c **3.8** *day* Or “sea,” taking Heb. *yom* as equivalent of *yam*; compare the combination of sea with Leviathan in Ps. 74.13, 14 and with Dragon in Job 7.12; cf. also Isa. 27.1.

¹³For now would I be lying in repose, asleep and at rest,
¹⁴With the world's kings and counselors who rebuild ruins for
 themselves,
¹⁵Or with nobles who possess gold and who fill their houses
 with silver.
¹⁶Or why was I not like a buried stillbirth,
 Like babies who never saw the light?
¹⁷There the wicked cease from troubling;
 There rest those whose strength is spent.
¹⁸Prisoners are wholly at ease;
 They do not hear the taskmaster's voice.
¹⁹Small and great alike are there,
 And the slave is free of his master.
²⁰Why does [God] give light to the sufferer
 And life to the bitter in spirit;
²¹To those who wait for death but it does not come,
 Who search for it more than for treasure,
²²Who rejoice to exultation,
 And are glad to reach the grave;
²³To the man who has lost his way,
 Whom God has hedged about?
²⁴My groaning serves as my bread;
 My roaring pours forth as water.
²⁵For what I feared has overtaken me;
 What I dreaded has come upon me.
²⁶I had no repose, no quiet, no rest,
 And trouble came.

4 Then Eliphaz the Temanite said in reply:

²If one ventures a word with you, will it be too much?
 But who can hold back his words?
³See, you have encouraged many;
 You have strengthened failing hands.
⁴Your words have kept him who stumbled from falling;
 You have braced knees that gave way.
⁵But now that it overtakes you, it is too much;
 It reaches you, and you are unnerved.

6 Is not your piety your confidence,
 Your integrity your hope?
 7 Think now, what innocent ever perished?
 Where have the upright been destroyed?
 8 As I have seen, those who plow evil
 And sow mischief reap them.
 9 They perish by a blast from the divine,
 Are gone at the breath of God's nostrils.
 10 The lion may roar, the cub may howl,
 But the teeth of the king of beasts are broken.^a
 11 The lion perishes for lack of prey,
 And its whelps are scattered.
 12 A word came to me in stealth;
 My ear caught a whisper of it.
 13 In thought-filled visions of the night,
 When deep sleep falls on everyone,
 14 Fear and trembling came upon me,
 Causing all my bones to quake with fright.
 15 A wind passed by me,
 Making the hair of my flesh bristle.
 16 It halted; its appearance was strange to me;
 A form loomed before my eyes;
 I heard a murmur, a voice,
 17 “Can a mortal be acquitted by God?
 Can a man be cleared by his Maker?
 18 If God's own servants cannot be trusted,
 And angels receive reproach,^b
 19 How much less those who dwell in houses of clay,
 Whose origin is dust,
 Who are crushed like the moth,
 20 Shattered between daybreak and evening,
 Perishing forever, unnoticed.
 21 Their cord is pulled up
 And they die, and not with wisdom.”

^a 4.10 *are broken* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 4.18 *reproach* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

5

Call now! Will anyone answer you?
 To whom among the holy beings will you turn?
²Vexation kills the fool;
 Passion slays the simpleton.
³I myself saw a fool who had struck roots;
 Impulsively, I cursed his home:
⁴May his children be far from success;
 May they be oppressed in the gate with none to deliver them;
⁵May the hungry devour his harvest,
 Carrying it off in baskets;
 May the thirsty swallow their wealth.^a
⁶Evil does not grow out of the soil,
 Nor does mischief spring from the ground;
⁷For people are born to [do] mischief,
 Just as sparks fly upward.
⁸But I would resort to God;
 I would lay my case before God,
⁹Who performs great deeds that cannot be fathomed,
 Wondrous things without number;
¹⁰Who gives rain to the earth,
 And sends water over the fields;
¹¹Who raises the lowly up high,
 So that the dejected are secure in victory;
¹²Who thwarts the designs of the crafty,
 So that their hands cannot gain success;
¹³Who traps the clever in their own wiles;
 The plans of the crafty go awry.
¹⁴By day they encounter darkness,
 At noon they grope as in the night.
¹⁵But [God] saves the needy from the sword of their mouth,
 From the clutches of the strong.
¹⁶So there is hope for the wretched;
 The mouth of wrongdoing is stopped.
¹⁷^b See how happy is the person whom God reproves;
 Do not reject the discipline of the Almighty.

^a5.5 *Carrying . . . wealth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b5.17–27 Eliphaz advises Job specifically.

¹⁸[God] injures, but also binds up;
 God's hands wound, but also heal.
¹⁹You will be delivered from six troubles;
 In seven no harm will reach you:
²⁰In famine you will be redeemed from death,
 In war, from the sword.
²¹You will be sheltered from the scourging tongue;
 You will have no fear when violence comes.
²²You will laugh at violence and starvation,
 And have no fear of wild beasts.
²³For you will have a pact with the rocks in the field,
 And the beasts of the field will be your allies.
²⁴You will know that all is well in your tent;
 When you visit your wife^c you will never fail.
²⁵You will see that your offspring are many,
 Your descendants like the grass of the earth.
²⁶You will come to the grave in ripe old age,^d
 As shocks of grain are taken away in their season.
²⁷See, we have inquired into this and it is so;
 Hear it and accept it.

6 Then Job said in reply:

²If my anguish were weighed,
 My full calamity laid on the scales,
³It would be heavier than the sand of the sea;
 That is why I spoke recklessly.^a
⁴For the arrows of the Almighty are in me;
 My spirit absorbs their poison;
 God's terrors are arrayed against me.
⁵Does a wild ass bray when it has grass?
 Does a bull bellow over its fodder?
⁶Can what is tasteless be eaten without salt?
 Does mallow juice^b have any flavor?
⁷I refuse to touch them;
 They are like food when I am sick.

^c 5.24 *wife* Lit. "home."

^d 5.26 *in ripe old age* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 6.3 *recklessly* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 6.6 *mallow juice* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁸Would that my request were granted,
 That God gave me what I wished for;
⁹Would that God consented to crush me,
 Loosed a divine hand and cut me off.
¹⁰Then this would be my consolation,
 As I writhed in unsparing^c pains:
 That I did not suppress my words against the Holy One.^d
¹¹What strength have I, that I should endure?
 How long have I to live, that I should be patient?
¹²Is my strength the strength of rock?
 Is my flesh bronze?
¹³Truly, I cannot help myself;
 I have been deprived of resourcefulness.
¹⁴^eA friend owes loyalty to one who fails,
 Though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty;
¹⁵My comrades are fickle, like a wadi,
 Like a bed on which streams once ran.
¹⁶^fThey are dark with ice;
 Snow obscures them;
¹⁷But when they thaw, they vanish;
 In the heat, they disappear where they are.
¹⁸Their course twists and turns;
 They run into the desert and perish.
¹⁹Caravans from Tema look to them;
 Processions from Sheba count on them.
²⁰They are disappointed in their hopes;
 When they reach the place, they stand aghast.
²¹So you are as nothing:^g
 At the sight of misfortune, you take fright.
²²Did I say to you, “I need your gift;
 Pay a bribe for me out of your wealth;
²³Deliver me from the clutches of my enemy;
 Redeem me from the violent”?

^c 6.10 *As I writhed in unsparing* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 6.10 *suppress my words against the Holy One* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others “deny the words of the Holy One.”

^e 6.14 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^f 6.16 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^g 6.21 *as nothing* Following *kethib*, with Targum; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²⁴Teach me; I shall be silent;
 Tell me where I am wrong.
²⁵How trenchant honest words are;^h
 But what sort of reproof comes from you?
²⁶Do you devise words of reproof,
 But count the words of someone hopeless as wind?
²⁷You would even cast lots over an orphan,
 Or barter away your friend.
²⁸Now be so good as to face me;
 I will not lie to your face.
²⁹Relent! Let there not be injustice;
 Relent! I am still in the right.
³⁰Is injustice on my tongue?
 Can my palate not discern evil?

7

Truly mortals have a term of service on earth;
 Their days are like those of a hireling—
²Like a slave who longs for [evening's] shadows,
 Like a hireling who waits to be paid.
³So have I been allotted months of futility;
 Nights of misery have been apportioned to me.
⁴When I lie down, I think,
 “When shall I rise?”
 Night drags on,^a
 And I am sated with tossings till morning twilight.
⁵My flesh is covered with maggots and clods of earth;
 My skin is broken and festering.
⁶My days fly faster than a weaver's shuttle,
 And come to their end without hope.^b
⁷Consider that my life is but wind;
 I shall never see happiness again.
⁸The eye that gazes on me will not see me;
 Your eye will seek me, but I shall be gone.
⁹As a cloud fades away,
 So whoever goes down to Sheol does not come up;

^h 6.25 *How trenchant honest words are* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 7.4 *drags on* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 7.6 *without hope* Or “when the thread runs out.”

¹⁰They return no more to their home;
Their place does not know them.

¹¹On my part, I will not speak with restraint;
I will give voice to the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

¹²Am I the sea or the Dragon,^c
That You have set a watch over me?

¹³When I think, “My bed will comfort me,
My couch will share my sorrow,”

¹⁴You frighten me with dreams,
And terrify me with visions,

¹⁵Till I prefer strangulation,
Death, to my wasted frame.

¹⁶I am sick of it.

I shall not live forever;

Let me be, for my days are a breath.

¹⁷What are mortals, that You make much of them,
That You fix Your attention upon them?

¹⁸You inspect them every morning,
Examine them every minute.

¹⁹Will You not look away from me for a while,
Let me be, till I swallow my spittle?

²⁰If I have sinned, what have I done to You,
Watcher of humankind?

Why make of me Your target,
And a burden to myself?

²¹Why do You not pardon my transgression
And forgive my iniquity?

For soon I shall lie down in the dust;
When You seek me, I shall be gone.

8 Bildad the Shuhite said in reply:

²How long will you speak such things?
Your utterances are a mighty wind!

³Will God pervert the right?
Will the Almighty pervert justice?

^c 7.12 *Dragon* See note at 3.8.

⁴If your children sinned against [God],
 They were dispatched for their transgression.
⁵But if you seek God
 And supplicate the Almighty,
⁶If you are blameless and upright,
 [God] will protect you,
 And grant well-being to your righteous home.
⁷Though your beginning be small,
 In the end you will grow very great.

⁸Ask the generation past,
 Study what their forebears have searched out—
⁹For we are of yesterday and know nothing;
 Our days on earth are a shadow—
¹⁰Surely they will teach you and tell you,
 Speaking out of their understanding.
¹¹Can papyrus thrive without marsh?
 Can rushes grow without water?
¹²While still tender, not yet plucked,
 They would wither before any other grass.
¹³Such is the fate of all who forget God;
 The hope of the impious man comes to naught—
¹⁴Whose confidence is a thread of gossamer,^a
 Whose trust is a spider's web.
¹⁵He leans on his house—it will not stand;
 He seizes hold of it, but it will not hold.
¹⁶He stays fresh even in the sun;
 His shoots spring up in his garden;
¹⁷^b His roots are twined around a heap,
 They take hold of a house of stones.
¹⁸When he is uprooted from his place,
 It denies him, [saying,]
 “I never saw you.”
¹⁹Such is his happy lot;
 And from the earth others will grow.
²⁰Surely God does not despise the blameless,
 And gives no support to evildoers.

^a 8.14 *thread of gossamer* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 8.17 Meaning of verse uncertain.

²¹Your mouth will yet be filled with laughter,
And your lips with shouts of joy.

²²Your enemies will be clothed in disgrace;
The tent of the wicked will vanish.

9 Job said in reply:

²Indeed I know that it is so:

A mortal cannot win a suit against God.

³If someone insisted on such a trial,

Not one charge in a thousand would be answered.

⁴Wise of heart and mighty in power—

Who ever challenged divine decree and came out whole?—

⁵The One who moves mountains without their knowing it,

Who overturns them in anger;

⁶Who shakes the earth from its place,

Till its pillars quake;

⁷Who commands the sun not to shine;

Who seals up the stars;

⁸Who alone spread out the heavens,

And trod on the back of the sea;

⁹Who made the Bear^a and Orion,

Pleiades, and the chambers of the south wind;

¹⁰Who performs great deeds that cannot be fathomed,

And wondrous things without number.

¹¹[God] passes me by—I am oblivious;

[God] goes by me, but I do not notice.

¹²[God] snatches away—who can put a stop to it?

Who can say, “What are You doing?”

¹³Rahab's^b helpers sink down under God

Who does not refrain from anger.

¹⁴How then can I answer,

Or choose what arguments to make?

¹⁵Though I were in the right, I could not speak out,

But I would plead for mercy with my judge.

¹⁶If I issued a summons and were answered,

I do not believe my voice would be heard.

^a9.9 *Bear* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b9.13 *Rahab* A primeval monster.

¹⁷For [God] crushes me for a hair,^c
 And wounds me much for no cause—
¹⁸Not letting me catch my breath,
 But sating me with bitterness.
¹⁹If a trial of strength—[God] is the strong one;
 If a trial in court—who will make the arrangements for me?
²⁰Though I were innocent,
 My mouth would condemn me;
 Though I were blameless, [God] would prove me crooked.
²¹I am blameless—I am distraught;
 I am sick of life.
²²It is all one; therefore I say,
 “The blameless are destroyed along with the guilty.”
²³When suddenly a scourge brings death,
 [God] mocks as the innocent fail.
²⁴The earth is handed over to the wicked one;
 The eyes of its judges are covered.
 If it is not [God], then who?

²⁵My days fly swifter than a runner;
 They flee without seeing happiness;
²⁶They pass like reed-boats,
 Like an eagle swooping onto its prey.
²⁷If I say, “I will forget my complaint;
 Abandon my sorrow^d and be diverted,”
²⁸I remain in dread of all my suffering;
 I know that You will not acquit me.
²⁹It will be I who am in the wrong;
 Why then should I waste effort?
³⁰If I washed with soap,
 Cleansed my hands with lye,
³¹You would dip me in muck
 Till my clothes would abhor me.
³²[God] is not someone like me whom I can answer,
 That we can go to law together.
³³No arbiter is between us
 To lay his hand on us both.

^c 9.17 *for a hair* With Targum and Peshitta; or “with a storm.”

^d 9.27 *sorrow* Lit. “face.”

³⁴If [God] would only take the rod away from me
And call off the terror that frightens,
³⁵Then I would speak out without fear;
For I know myself not to be so.

10

I am disgusted with life;
I will give rein to my complaint,
Speak in the bitterness of my soul.
²I say to God, “Do not condemn me;
Let me know what You charge me with.
³Does it benefit You to defraud,
To despise the toil of Your hands,
While smiling on the counsel of the wicked?
⁴Do You have the eyes of flesh?
Is Your vision that of a mere mortal?
⁵Are Your days the days of a mortal,
Are Your years the years of a person,
⁶That You seek my iniquity
And search out my sin?
⁷You know that I am not guilty,
And that there is none to deliver from Your hand.
⁸“Your hands shaped and fashioned me,
Then destroyed every part of me.
⁹Consider that You fashioned me like clay;
Will You then turn me back into dust?
¹⁰You poured me out like milk,
Congealed me like cheese;
¹¹You clothed me with skin and flesh
And wove me of bones and sinews;
¹²You bestowed on me life and care;
Your providence watched over my spirit.
¹³Yet these things You hid in Your heart;
I know that You had this in mind:
¹⁴To watch me when I sinned
And not clear me of my iniquity;
¹⁵Should I be guilty—the worse for me!
And even when innocent, I cannot lift my head;
So sated am I with shame,

And drenched in my misery.

¹⁶It is something to be proud of^a to hunt me like a lion,
To show Yourself wondrous through^b me time and again!

¹⁷You keep sending fresh witnesses against me,
Letting Your vexation with me grow.
I serve my term and am my own replacement.^c

¹⁸“Why did You let me come out of the womb?

Better had I expired before any eye saw me,

¹⁹Had I been as though I never was,
Had I been carried from the womb to the grave.

²⁰My days are few, so desist!

Leave me alone, let me be diverted awhile

²¹Before I depart—never to return—

For the land of deepest gloom;

²²A land whose light is darkness,
All gloom and disarray,
Whose light is like darkness.”

11 Then Zophar the Naamathite said in reply:

²Is a multitude of words unanswerable?

Must a loquacious person be right?

³Your prattle may silence people;

You may mock without being rebuked,

⁴And say, “My doctrine is pure,
And I have been innocent in Your sight.”

⁵But would that God might speak,

And talk to you directly.

⁶You would be told the secrets of wisdom,

For there are many sides to sagacity;

And know that God has overlooked for you some of your
iniquity.^a

⁷Would you discover the mystery of God?

Would you discover the limit of the Almighty?

^a 10.16 *It is something to be proud of* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 10.16 *show Yourself wondrous through* Or “make sport of”; cf. Palestinian Aramaic ‘aphli.

^c 10.17 *I serve my term and am my own replacement* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 11.6 *For there are . . . your iniquity* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁸Higher than heaven—what can you do?
 Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?
⁹Its measure is longer than the earth
 And broader than the sea.
¹⁰^b Should [God] pass by, or confine,
 Or call an assembly, who can put a stop to it?
¹¹For [God] is aware of deceitful people,
 And when seeing iniquity, discerns it.^c
¹²The hollow person will get understanding,
 When a wild ass is born a human.^d

¹³But if you direct your mind,
 And spread forth your hands toward [God]—
¹⁴If there is iniquity with you, remove it,
 And do not let injustice reside in your tent—
¹⁵Then, free of blemish, you will hold your head high,
 And, when in straits,^e be unafraid.
¹⁶You will then put your misery out of mind,
 Consider it as water that has flowed past.
¹⁷Life will be brighter than noon;^f
 You will shine, you will be like the morning.
¹⁸You will be secure, for there is hope,
 And, entrenched,^g you will rest secure;
¹⁹You will lie down undisturbed;
 The great will court your favor.
²⁰But the eyes of the wicked pine away;
 Escape is cut off from them;
 They have only their last breath to look forward to.

12 Then Job said in reply:

²Indeed, you are the [voice of] the people,
 And wisdom will die with you.
³But I, like you, have a mind,

^b 11.10 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^c 11.11 *discerns it* Heb. “is it not discerned?”

^d 11.12 *The hollow person . . . born a human* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 11.15 *when in straits* Heb. *musaq*; other Heb. editions *muṣṣaq*, “you will be firm.”

^f 11.17 *Life will be brighter than noon* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 11.18 *And, entrenched* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

And am not less than you.
 Who does not know such things?
⁴I have become a laughingstock to my friend—
 “One who calls to God and is answered,
 Blamelessly innocent”—a laughingstock.
⁵^aIn the thought of the complacent there is contempt for
 calamity;
 It is ready for those whose foot slips.
⁶Robbers live untroubled in their tents,
 And those who provoke God are secure,
 Those whom God’s hands have produced.^b
⁷But ask the beasts, and they^c will teach you;
 The birds of the sky, they will tell you,
⁸Or speak to the earth, it will teach you;
 The fish of the sea, they will inform you.
⁹Who among all these does not know
 That God’s hand has done this?
¹⁰In that hand is every living soul
 And the breath of all humankind.^d
¹¹Truly, the ear tests arguments
 As the palate tastes foods.
¹²Is wisdom in the aged
 And understanding in the long-lived?
¹³Wisdom and courage are God’s,
 As are counsel and understanding.
¹⁴Whatever [God] tears down cannot be rebuilt;
 Whoever is imprisoned cannot be set free.
¹⁵When the waters are held back, they dry up;
 When they are let loose, they tear up the land.
¹⁶Strength and resourcefulness are God’s,
 So are erring and causing to err.
¹⁷[God] thus makes counselors go about naked^e

^a 12.5 Meaning of verse uncertain.^b 12.6 *Those whom God’s hands have produced* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.^c 12.7 *the beasts, and they* Or “behemoth, and it,” referring to a mythological being; cf. 40.15–24.^d 12.10 *all humankind* Or “every single being,” i.e., including the animals, birds, and fish of vv. 7–9; cf. Gen. 7.2.^e 12.17 *naked* A sign of madness.

And causes judges to go mad;
¹⁸Undoes the belts of kings
 And fastens loincloths on them;
¹⁹Makes priests go about naked^f
 And leads temple-servants^g astray;
²⁰Deprives trusted ones of speech
 And takes away the reason of elders;
²¹Pours disgrace upon nobles
 And loosens the belt of the mighty;
²²Draws mysteries out of the darkness
 And brings obscurities to light;
²³Exalts nations, then destroys them,
 And expands nations, then leads them away.
²⁴[God] deranges the leaders of the people
 And makes them wander in a trackless waste.
²⁵They grope without light in the darkness,
 Made to wander as if drunk.

13

My eye has seen all this;
 My ear has heard and understood it.
²What you know, I know also;
 I am not less than you.
³Indeed, I would speak to the Almighty;
 I insist on arguing with God.
⁴But you invent lies;
 All of you are quacks.
⁵If you would only keep quiet
 It would be considered wisdom on your part.
⁶Hear now my arguments,
 Listen to my pleading.
⁷Will you speak unjustly on God's behalf—
 Speaking deceitfully
⁸And showing partiality?
 Will you plead God's cause?
⁹Will it go well when you are examined?
 Will you fool [God] as you would a mortal?

^f 12.19 *naked* See note at v. 17.

^g 12.19 *temple-servants* Cf. Ugaritic *ytnm*, a class of temple servants; in contrast to others “the mighty.”

¹⁰Surely you will be reproved
If in your heart^a you show partiality.
¹¹God's threat will terrify you,
And fear will seize you.
¹²Your briefs are empty^b platitudes;
Your responses are unsubstantial.^c

¹³Keep quiet; I will have my say,
Come what may upon me.
¹⁴How long! I will take my flesh in my teeth;
I will take my life in my hands.
¹⁵I may well be slain; I may have no hope;^d
Yet I will argue my case before [God].
¹⁶In this too is my salvation:
That no one impious can come into God's presence.

¹⁷Listen closely to my words;
Give ear to my discourse.
¹⁸See now, I have prepared a case;
I know that I will win it.
¹⁹For who is it that would challenge me?
I should then keep silent and expire.
²⁰But two things do not do to me,
So that I need not hide from You:
²¹Remove Your hand from me,
And let not Your terror frighten me.
²²Then summon me and I will respond,
Or I will speak and You reply to me.
²³How many are my iniquities and sins?
Advise me of my transgression and sin.
²⁴Why do You hide Your face,
And treat me like an enemy?
²⁵Will You harass a driven leaf,
Will You pursue dried-up straw,
²⁶That You decree for me bitter things
And make me answer for^e the iniquities of my youth,

^a 13.10 *your heart* Lit. "secret."^b 13.12 *empty* Lit. "ashen."^c 13.12 *unsubstantial* Lit. "clayey."^d 13.15 *I may well be slain; I may have no hope* So with *kethib.*^e 13.26 *answer for* Lit. "inherit."

²⁷That You put my feet in the stocks
And watch all my ways,
Hemming in my footsteps?^f
²⁸One wastes away like a rotten thing,
Like a garment eaten by moths.

14

Humankind, born of woman, is short-lived and sated with trouble,
²Blossoms like a flower and withers,
Vanishes like a shadow and does not endure.
³Do You fix Your gaze on such a one?
Will You go to law with me?
⁴^aWho can produce a pure thing out of an impure one? No one!
⁵Their days are determined;
You know the number of months;
You have set them limits that they cannot pass.
⁶Turn away from them, that they may be at ease
Until, like a hireling, they finish out their day.
⁷There is hope for a tree;
If it is cut down it will renew itself;
Its shoots will not cease.
⁸If its roots are old in the earth,
And its stump dies in the ground,
⁹At the scent of water it will bud
And produce branches like a sapling.
¹⁰But people languish and die;
Humans expire; where are they?
¹¹The waters of the sea fail,
And the river dries up and is parched.
¹²So each of us lies down never to rise—
And will awake only when the heavens are no more,
Only then be aroused from sleep.
¹³O that You would hide me in Sheol,
Conceal me until Your anger passes,
Set me a fixed time to attend to me.
¹⁴Can someone who dies live again?

^f 13.27 *Hemming in my footsteps* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 14.4 Meaning of verse uncertain.

All the time of my service I wait
 Until my replacement comes.
¹⁵You would call and I would answer You;
 You would set Your heart on Your handiwork.
¹⁶Then You would not count my steps,
 Or keep watch over my sin.
¹⁷My transgression would be sealed up in a pouch;
 You would coat over my iniquity.
¹⁸Mountains collapse and crumble;
 Rocks are dislodged from their place.
¹⁹Water wears away stone;
 Torrents wash away earth;
 So you destroy a mortal's hope,
²⁰You overpower him forever and he perishes;
 You alter his visage and dispatch him.
²¹His children attain honor and he does not know it;
 They are humbled and he is not aware of it.
²²He feels only the pain of his flesh,
 And his spirit mourns in him.

15 Eliphaz the Temanite said in reply:

²Does a wise man answer with windy opinions,
 And fill his belly with the east wind?
³Should he argue with useless talk,
 With words that are of no worth?
⁴You subvert piety
 And restrain prayer to God.
⁵Your sinfulness dictates your speech,
 So you choose crafty language.
⁶Your own mouth condemns you—not I;
 Your lips testify against you.
⁷Were you the first human born?
 Were you created before the hills?
⁸Have you listened in on the council of God?
 Have you sole possession of wisdom?
⁹What do you know that we do not know,
 Or understand that we do not?

¹⁰Among us are gray-haired aged men,
Older by far than your father.
¹¹Are God's consolations not enough for you,
And those gentle words to you?
¹²How your heart has carried you away,
How your eyes have failed^a you,
¹³That you could vent your anger on God,
And let such words out of your mouth!
¹⁴What are mortals that they can be cleared of guilt,
Those born of woman, that they be in the right?
¹⁵[God] puts no trust in the holy ones;
The heavens are not guiltless in God's sight;
¹⁶What then of those loathsome and foul,
The ones^b who drink wrongdoing like water!
¹⁷I will hold forth; listen to me;
What I have seen, I will declare—
¹⁸That which the wise have transmitted from their ancestors,
And have not withheld,
¹⁹To whom alone the land was given,
No stranger passing among them:
²⁰The wicked man writhes in torment all his days;
Few years are reserved for the ruthless.
²¹Frightening sounds fill his ears;
When he is at ease a robber falls upon him.
²²He is never sure he will come back from the dark;
A sword stares him in the face.
²³He wanders about for bread—where is it?
He knows that the day of darkness has been readied for him.
²⁴Troubles terrify him, anxiety overpowers him,
Like a king expecting a siege.^c
²⁵For he has raised his arm against God
And played the hero against the Almighty.
²⁶He runs at [God] defiantly^d
With his thickly bossed shield.

^a 15.12 *have failed* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 15.16 *The ones* I.e., humankind.

^c 15.24 *expecting a siege* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 15.26 *defiantly* Lit. "with neck."

²⁷His face is covered with fat
And his loins with blubber.^e
²⁸He dwells in cities doomed to ruin,
In houses that shall not be lived in,
That are destined to become heaps of rubble.
²⁹He will not be rich;
His wealth will not endure;
His produce shall not bend to the earth.^f
³⁰He will never get away from the darkness;
Flames will sear his shoots;
He will pass away by the breath of God's mouth.
³¹He will not be trusted;
He will be misled by falsehood,
And falsehood will be his recompense.^g
³²He will wither before his time,
His boughs never having flourished.
³³He will drop his unripe grapes like a vine;
He will shed his blossoms like an olive tree.
³⁴For the company of the impious is desolate;
Fire consumes the tents of the briber;
³⁵For they have conceived mischief, given birth to evil,
And their womb has produced deceit.

16 Job said in reply:

²I have often heard such things;
You are all mischievous comforters.
³Have windy words no limit?
What afflicts you that you speak on?
⁴I would also talk like you
If you were in my place;
I would barrage you with words,
I would wag my head over you.
⁵I would encourage you with advice,^a
My moving lips would bring relief.

^e 15.26–27 *With his . . . blubber* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 15.29 *His produce shall not bend to the earth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 15.30–31 *He will pass away . . . recompense.* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 16.5 *advice* Lit. "my mouth."

6 If I speak, my pain will not be relieved,
 And if I do not—what have I lost?
 7 Now [God] has truly worn me out;
 You have destroyed my whole community.
 8 You have shriveled me;
 My gauntness serves as a witness,
 And testifies against me.
 9 By God's anger I am torn and persecuted;
 With teeth gnashing at me,
 My Foe stabs me with a stare.
 10 They open wide their mouths at me;
 Reviling me, they strike my cheeks;
 They inflame themselves against me.
 11 God hands me over to an evildoer,
 Thrusts me into the clutches of the wicked.
 12 I had been untroubled, and [God] broke me in pieces—
 Taking me by the scruff and shattering me,
 Setting me up as a target,
 13 As archers surrounded me;
 My kidneys were pierced; I was shown no mercy;
 My bile spilled onto the ground.
 14 [God] breached me, breach after breach,
 Rushing at me like a warrior.
 15 I sewed sackcloth over my skin;
 I buried my glory in^b the dust.
 16 My face is red with weeping;
 Darkness covers my eyes
 17 For no injustice on my part
 And for the purity of my prayer!^c
 18 Earth, do not cover my blood;
 Let there be no resting place for my outcry!
 19 Surely now my witness is in heaven;
 The One who can testify for me is on high.
 20 O my advocates, my fellows,
 Before God my eyes shed tears;

^b 16.15 *buried my glory in* Lit. “made my horn enter into.”

^c 16.17 Or “Though I did no injustice, / And my prayer was pure.”

²¹Let arbitration be made between a person^d and God
As between one mortal and another.

²²For a few more years will pass,
And I shall go the way of no return.

17

My spirit is crushed, my days run out;
The graveyard waits for me.

²Surely mockers keep me company,
And with their provocations I close my eyes.

³Come now, stand surety for me!
Who will give a hand in my behalf?

⁴You have hidden understanding from their minds;
Therefore You must not exalt [them].

⁵One informs on friends for a share [of their property],
And the eyes of one's children pine away.

⁶[God] made me a byword among people;
I have become like Topheth^a of old.

⁷My eyes fail from vexation;
All shapes seem to me like shadows.

⁸The upright are amazed at this;
The pure are aroused against the impious.

⁹The righteous hold to their way;
They whose hands are pure grow stronger.

¹⁰But all of you, come back now;
I shall not find anyone wise among you.

¹¹My days are done, my tendons severed,
The strings of my heart.

¹²They say that night is day,
That light is here—in the face of darkness.

¹³If I must look forward to Sheol as my home,
And make my bed in the dark place,

¹⁴Say to the Pit, “You are my father,”
To the maggots, “Mother,” “Sister”—

¹⁵Where, then, is my hope?
Who can see hope for me?

^d16.21 *a person* Or “this man,” i.e., Job.

^a17.6 *Topheth* A place that infamously consumed children; cf. Jer. 7.31.

¹⁶Will it descend to Sheol?
Shall we go down together to the dust?

18 Then Bildad the Shuhite said in reply:

²How long? Put an end to talk!
Consider, and then we shall speak.
³Why are we thought of as brutes,
Regarded by you as stupid?
⁴You who tear yourself to pieces in anger—
Will earth's order be disrupted^a for your sake?
Will rocks be dislodged from their place?
⁵Indeed, the light of the wicked fails;
The flame of his fire does not shine.
⁶The light in his tent darkens;
His lamp fails him.
⁷His iniquitous strides are hobbled;
His schemes overthrow him.
⁸He is led by his feet into the net;
He walks onto the toils.
⁹The trap seizes his heel;
The noose tightens on him.
¹⁰The rope for him lies hidden on the ground;
His snare, on the path.
¹¹Terrors assault him on all sides
And send his feet flying.
¹²His progeny hunger;
Disaster awaits his wife.^b
¹³The tendons under his skin are consumed;
Death's first-born consumes his tendons.
¹⁴He is torn from the safety of his tent;
Terror marches him to the king.^c
¹⁵It lodges in his desolate tent;
Sulfur is strewn upon his home.
¹⁶His roots below dry up,
And above, his branches wither.

^a18.4 *earth's order be disrupted* Lit. "the earth be abandoned."

^b18.12 *wife* Lit. "side" (cf. Gen. 2.22); or "stumbling."

^c18.14 *the king* Of the netherworld.

¹⁷All mention of him vanishes from the earth;
 He has no name abroad.
¹⁸He is thrust from light to darkness,
 Driven from the world.
¹⁹He has no seed or breed among his people,
 No survivor where he once lived.
²⁰Generations to come will be appalled at his fate,
 As the previous ones are seized with horror.
²¹“These were the haunts of the wicked;
 Here was the place of someone who knew not God.”

19 Job said in reply:

²How long will you grieve my spirit,
 And crush me with words?
³Time and again^a you humiliate me,
 And are not ashamed to abuse me.
⁴If indeed I have erred,
 My error remains with me.
⁵Though you are overbearing toward me,
 Reproaching me with my disgrace,
⁶Yet know that God has wronged me,
 And has thrown up siege works around me.
⁷I cry, “Violence!” but am not answered;
 I shout, but can get no justice.
⁸My way has been barred; I cannot pass;
 Darkness has been laid upon my path.
⁹My glory has been stripped from me,
 The crown removed from my head.
¹⁰[God] tears down every part of me; I perish;
 My hopes are uprooted like a tree.
¹¹God’s anger is kindled against me;
 I am regarded as a foe.
¹²Heavenly troops advance together;
 They build their road toward me
 And encamp around my tent.
¹³My kin have been alienated from me;
 My acquaintances disown me.

^a 19.3 *Time and again* Lit. “Ten times.”

¹⁴My relatives are gone;
 My friends have forgotten me.
¹⁵My dependents and maidservants regard me as a stranger;
 I am an outsider to them.
¹⁶I summon my servant but he does not respond;
 I must myself entreat him.
¹⁷My odor is repulsive to my wife;
 I am loathsome to my children.
¹⁸Even youngsters disdain me;
 When I rise, they speak against me.
¹⁹All my bosom friends detest me;
 Those I love have turned against me.
²⁰My bones stick to my skin and flesh;
 I escape with the skin of my teeth.
²¹Pity me, pity me! You are my friends;
 For the hand of God has struck me!
²²Why do you pursue me like God,
 Maligning me insatiably?^b
²³O that my words were written down;
 Would they were inscribed in a record,
²⁴Incised on a rock forever
 With iron stylus and lead!
²⁵But I know that my Vindicator lives,
 And in the end will testify on earth—
²⁶This, after my skin will have been peeled off.
 But I would behold God while still in my flesh,
²⁷I myself, not another, would do so;
 Would see with my own eyes:
 My heart^c pines within me.
²⁸You say, “How do we persecute him?
 The root of the matter is in him.”^d
²⁹Be in fear of the sword,
 For [your] fury is iniquity worthy of the sword;
 Know there is a judgment!

^b 19.22 *Maligning me insatiably* Lit. “You are not satisfied with my flesh.”

^c 19.27 *heart* Lit. “kidneys.”

^d 19.28 *him* With many mss. and versions; Tiberian Masoretic mss. and printed editions, “me.”

20 Zophar the Naamathite said in reply:

²In truth, my thoughts urge me to answer
 (It is because of my feelings
³When I hear reproof that insults me);
 A spirit out of my understanding makes me reply:
⁴Do you not know this, that from time immemorial,
 Since humankind was set on earth,
⁵The joy of the wicked has been brief,
 The happiness of the impious man, fleeting?
⁶Though he grows as high as the sky,
 His head reaching the clouds,
⁷He perishes forever, like his dung;
 Those who saw him will say, “Where is he?”
⁸He flies away like a dream and cannot be found;
 He is banished like a night vision.
⁹Eyes that glimpsed him do so no more;
 They cannot see him in his place any longer.
¹⁰His children ingratiate themselves with the poor;
 His own hands must give back his wealth.
¹¹His bones, still full of vigor,
 Lie down in the dust with him.
¹²Though evil is sweet to his taste,
 And he conceals it under his tongue;
¹³Though he saves it, does not let it go,
 Holds it inside his mouth,
¹⁴His food in his bowels turns
 Into asps' venom within him.
¹⁵The riches he swallows he vomits;
 God empties it out of his stomach.
¹⁶He sucks the poison of asps;
 The tongue of the viper kills him.
¹⁷Let him not enjoy the streams,
 The rivers of honey, the brooks of cream.
¹⁸He will give back the goods unswallowed;
 The value of the riches, undigested.
¹⁹Because he crushed and tortured the poor,
 He will not build up the house he took by force.
²⁰He will not see his children tranquil;

He will not preserve one of his dear ones.^a
²¹With no survivor to enjoy it,
 His fortune will not prosper.
²²When he has all he wants, trouble will come;
 Misfortunes of all kinds will batter him.
²³Let that fill his belly;
 Let [God] loose burning anger at him,
 And God's weapons rain down upon him.
²⁴Fleeing from iron arrows,
 He is shot through from a bow of bronze.
²⁵Brandished and run through his body,
 The blade, through his gall,
 Strikes terror into him.
²⁶Utter darkness waits for his treasured ones;
 A fire, fanned by no one, will consume him;
 Who survives in his tent will be crushed.
²⁷Heaven will expose his iniquity;
 Earth will rise up against him.
²⁸His household will be cast forth by a flood,
 Spilled out on the day of God's wrath.
²⁹This is the wicked man's portion from God,
 The lot God has ordained for him.

21 Job said in reply:

²Listen well to what I say,
 And let that be your consolation.
³Bear with me while I speak,
 And after I have spoken, you may mock.
⁴Is my complaint directed toward a human?
 Why should I not lose my patience?
⁵Look at me and be appalled,
 And clap your hand to your mouth.
⁶When I think of it I am terrified;
 My body is seized with shuddering.
⁷Why do the wicked live on,
 Prosper and grow wealthy?

^a 20.20 *children...dear ones* For this meaning of *bēten* and *hamud*, cf. Hos. 9.16.

8 Their children are with them always,
 And they see their children's children.
 9 Their homes are secure, without fear;
 They do not feel the rod of God.
 10 Their bull breeds and does not fail;
 Their cow calves and never miscarries;
 11 They let their infants run loose like sheep,
 And their children skip about.
 12 They sing to the music of hand-drum and lute,
 And revel to the tune of the pipe;
 13 They spend their days in happiness,
 And go down to Sheol in peace.
 14 They say to God, "Leave us alone,
 We do not want to learn Your ways;
 15 What is Shaddai that we should render service?
 What will we gain by offering prayer?"
 16 Their happiness is not their own doing.
 (The thoughts of the wicked are beyond me!)
 17 How seldom does the lamp of the wicked fail,
 Does the calamity they deserve befall them,
 Are their lots apportioned in anger!
 18 Let them become like straw in the wind,
 Like chaff carried off by a storm.
 19 [You say,] "God is reserving his punishment for his children";
 Let it be paid back to him that he may feel it,
 20 Let his eyes see his ruin,
 And let him drink the wrath of Shaddai!
 21 For what does he care about the fate of his family,
 When his number of months runs out?
 22 Can God be instructed in knowledge,
 The One who judges from such heights?
 23 This one^a dies in robust health,
 All tranquil and untroubled,
 24 With the pails full of milk,
 The bones' marrow juicy.
 25 While that one^b dies embittered,
 Never having tasted happiness.

^a 21.23 *This one* I.e., someone wicked.

^b 21.25 *that one* I.e., someone righteous.

²⁶They both lie in the dust
And are covered with worms.

²⁷Oh, I know your thoughts,
And the tactics you will devise against me.

²⁸You will say, “Where is the house of the noble—
And where the tent in which the wicked dwelled?”

²⁹You must have consulted the wayfarers;
You cannot deny their evidence.

³⁰For the evildoer is spared on the day of calamity,
On the day when wrath is led forth.

³¹Who will upbraid him to his face?
Who will requite him for what he has done?

³²He is brought to the grave,
While a watch is kept at his tomb.

³³The clods of the wadi are sweet to him,
Everyone follows behind him,
Innumerable are those who precede him.

³⁴Why then do you offer me empty consolation?
Of your replies only the perfidy remains.

22 Eliphaz the Temanite said in reply:

²Can an individual be of use to God,
An intellect provide benefit?

³Does Shaddai gain if you are righteous,
Or profit if your conduct is blameless?

⁴Is it because of your piety that you are arraigned,
And entered into God’s judgment?

⁵You know that your wickedness is great,
And that your iniquities have no limit.

⁶You exact pledges from your fellows without reason,
And leave them naked, stripped of their clothes;

⁷You do not give the thirsty water to drink;
You deny bread to the hungry.

⁸The land belongs to the strong;
The privileged occupy it.

⁹You have sent away widows empty-handed;
The strength of the fatherless is broken.

¹⁰Therefore snares are all around you,
And sudden terrors frighten you,
¹¹Or darkness, so you cannot see;
A flood of waters covers you.

¹²God is in the heavenly heights;
See the highest stars, how lofty!
¹³You say, "What can God know?
Is it possible to govern through the dense cloud?

¹⁴The clouds form an opaque screen
As [God] moves about the circuit of heaven."
¹⁵Have you observed the immemorial path
That evildoers have trodden;

¹⁶How they were shriveled up before their time
And their foundation poured out like a river?

¹⁷They said to God, "Leave us alone;
What can Shaddai do about it?"

¹⁸But it was this One who filled their houses with good things.
(The thoughts of the wicked are beyond me!)

¹⁹The righteous, seeing the fate of the wicked,^a rejoiced;
The innocent laughed with scorn.

²⁰Surely their substance was destroyed,
And their remnant consumed by fire.

²¹Be close to [God] and wholehearted;
Good things will come to you thereby.
²²Accept instruction from God's mouth;

Lay up those words in your heart.

²³If you return to Shaddai you will be restored,
If you banish iniquity from your tent;

²⁴If you regard treasure as dirt,
Ophir-gold as stones of the wadi,
²⁵And Shaddai be your treasure

And precious silver for you,

²⁶When you seek the favor of Shaddai,
And lift up your face to God,

²⁷You will offer prayer, and be heard,
And you will pay your vows.

^a 22.19 *the fate of the wicked* Heb. "it"; cf. v. 16.

²⁸You will decree and it will be fulfilled,
And light will shine upon your affairs.
²⁹When others sink low, you will say it is pride;
For [God] saves the humble.
³⁰The guilty^b will be delivered—
Through the cleanness of your hands.

23 Job said in reply:

²Today again my complaint is bitter;
My strength is spent^a on account of my groaning.
³Would that I knew how to reach [God],
How to get to the heavenly dwelling-place.
⁴I would set out my case,
And fill my mouth with arguments.
⁵I would learn what answers were waiting for me,
And know how the reply would be.
⁶Would [God] contend with me overbearingly?
Surely I would not be accused!
⁷There the upright would be cleared by divine decree,
And I would escape forever from my judge.
⁸But if I go East—[God] is not there;
West—I still appear to be alone;
⁹North—I cannot discern One who is concealed;
South—also there hidden from my sight.
¹⁰But [God] knows the way I take;
Would it be assayed, I should emerge pure as gold.
¹¹I have followed in God's tracks,
Kept that way without swerving,
¹²I have not deviated from what God's lips commanded;
I have treasured those words more than my daily bread.
¹³Single-minded, not readily dissuaded,
[God] desires, and it comes to pass.
¹⁴For this One will bring my term to an end,
But there are many more such who are held in reserve.
¹⁵Therefore I am terrified at God's presence;

^b 22.30 *The guilty* Or “The guiltless”; cf. Ibn Janah.

^a 23.2 *My strength is spent* Lit. “My hand is heavy.”

When I consider, I feel dread.

¹⁶God has made me fainthearted;

Shaddai has terrified me.

¹⁷Yet I am not cut off by the darkness;

The thick gloom has been concealed from me.

24

Why are times for judgment not reserved by Shaddai?

Even those held close cannot foresee God's actions.^a

²People remove boundary-stones;

They carry off flocks and pasture them;

³They lead away the donkeys of the fatherless,

And seize the widow's bull as a pledge;

⁴They chase the needy off the roads;

All the poor of the land are forced into hiding.

⁵Like the wild asses of the wilderness,

They go about their tasks, seeking food;

The wilderness provides each with food for their young;

⁶They harvest fodder in the field,

And glean the late grapes in the vineyards of the wicked.

⁷They pass the night naked for lack of clothing,

They have no covering against the cold;

⁸They are drenched by the mountain rains,

And huddle against the rock for lack of shelter.

^{9^b}They snatch the fatherless infant from the breast,

And seize the child of the poor as a pledge.

¹⁰They go about naked for lack of clothing,

And, hungry, carry sheaves;

¹¹Between rows [of olive trees] they make oil,

And, thirsty, they tread the winepresses.

¹²Mortals groan in the city;

The souls of the dying cry out;

Yet God does not regard it as a reproach.

¹³They are rebels against the light;

They are strangers to its ways,

And do not stay in its path.

^a 24.1 *actions* Lit. "days."

^b 24.9 This verse belongs to the description of the wicked in vv. 2–4a.

¹⁴The murderer arises in the evening^c

To kill the poor and needy,

And at night he acts the thief.

¹⁵The eyes of the adulterer watch for twilight,

Thinking, “No one will glimpse me then.”

He masks his face.

¹⁶In the dark they break into houses;

By day they shut themselves in;

They do not know the light.

¹⁷For all of them morning is darkness;

It is then that they discern the terror of darkness.

¹⁸^dMay they be flotsam on the face of the water;

May their portion in the land be cursed;

May none turn aside by way of their vineyards.

¹⁹May drought and heat snatch away their snow waters,

And Sheol, those who have sinned.

²⁰May the womb forget him;

May he be sweet to the worms;

May he be no longer remembered;

May wrongdoers be broken like a tree.

²¹May he consort with an infertile woman who bears no child,

Leave his widow deprived of good.

²²Though he has the strength to seize bulls,

May he live with no assurance of survival.

²³Yet [God] gives him the security on which he relies,

And keeps watch over his affairs.

²⁴Exalted for a while, let them be gone;

Be brought low, and shrivel like mallows,

And wither like the heads of grain.

²⁵Surely no one can confute me,

Or prove that I am wrong.

25 Bildad the Shuhite said in reply:

²Dominion and dread are God’s,

Who imposes peace on high.

^c 24.14 *in the evening* Cf. Mishnaic Heb. ‘or, Aramaic ‘orta, “evening”; in contrast to others “with the light.”

^d 24.18 From here to the end of the chapter the translation is largely conjectural.

³Can the celestial troops be numbered?
 On whom does God's light not shine?
⁴How can a mortal be in the right before God?
 How can one born of woman be cleared of guilt?
⁵Even the moon is not bright,
 And the stars are not pure in God's sight.
⁶How much less a mortal, a worm,
 One born of humans, a maggot.

26 Then Job said in reply:

²You would help without having the strength;
 You would deliver with arms that have no power.
³Without having the wisdom, you offer advice
 And freely give your counsel.
⁴To whom have you addressed words?
 Whose breath issued from you?
⁵The shades tremble
 Beneath the waters and their denizens.
⁶Sheol stands naked;
 Abaddon has no cover.
⁷[God] is the One who stretched out Zaphon^a over chaos,
 Who suspended earth over emptiness.
⁸The waters were wrapped up in God's clouds;
 Yet no cloud burst under their weight.
⁹[God] shuts off the view of the heavenly throne,
 Spreading a cloud over it,^b
¹⁰Drawing a boundary on the surface of the waters,
 At the extreme where light and darkness meet.
¹¹The pillars of heaven tremble,
 Astounded at God's blasts.
¹²With power [God] stilled the sea;
 With skill [God] struck down Rahab.
¹³With a wind [God] calmed the heavens;
 God's hand pierced the Elusive Serpent.^c
¹⁴These are but glimpses of God's rule,

^a26.7 *Zaphon* A poetic name for heaven; cf. Isa. 14.13; Ps. 48.3.

^b26.9 *shuts off... over it* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c26.13 *Elusive Serpent* Cf. Isa. 27.1.

The mere whisper we are able to perceive;
Who can absorb the thunder of God's mighty deeds?

27 Job again took up his theme and said:

²By God who has deprived me of justice!
By Shaddai who has embittered my life!
³As long as there is life in me,
And God's breath is in my nostrils,
⁴My lips will speak no wrong,
Nor my tongue utter deceit.
⁵Far be it from me to say you are right;
Until I die I will maintain my integrity.
⁶I persist in my righteousness and will not yield;
I shall be free of reproach^a as long as I live.

⁷May my enemy be as the wicked;
My assailant, as the wrongdoer.
⁸For what hope has the impious man when he is cut down,
When God takes away his life?
⁹Will God hear his cry
When trouble comes upon him,
¹⁰When he seeks the favor of Shaddai,
Calls upon God at all times?
¹¹I will teach you what is in God's power,
And what is with Shaddai I will not conceal.
¹²All of you have seen it,
So why talk nonsense?
¹³This is the evil man's portion from God,
The lot that the ruthless receive from Shaddai:
¹⁴Should he have many children—they are marked for the sword;
His descendants will never have their fill of bread;
¹⁵Those who survive him will be buried in a plague,
And their widows will not weep;
¹⁶Should he pile up silver like dust,
Lay up clothing like dirt—
¹⁷He may lay it up, but the righteous will wear it,
And the innocent will share the silver.

^a 27.6 *I shall be free of reproach* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁸The house he built is like a bird's nest,
Like the booth a watchman makes.
¹⁹He lies down, a rich man, with [his wealth] intact;
When he opens his eyes it is gone.
²⁰Terror overtakes him like a flood;
A storm wind makes off with him by night.
²¹The east wind carries him far away, and he is gone;
It sweeps him from his place.
²²Then it hurls itself at him without mercy;
He tries to escape from its force.
²³It claps its hands at him,
And whistles at him from its place.

28

There is a mine for silver,
And a place where gold is refined.
²Iron is taken out of the earth,
And copper smelted from rock.
³Bounds for darkness are set,
Every limit is probed,
To rocks in deepest darkness.
^{4^a}A shaft was forged where no one lives,
[In places] forgotten by wayfarers,
Destitute of mortals, far removed.
⁵Earth, out of which food grows,
Is changed below as if into fire.
⁶Its rocks are a source of sapphires;
It contains gold dust too.
⁷No bird of prey knows the path to it;
The falcon's eye has not gazed upon it.
⁸The proud beasts have not reached it;
The lion has not crossed it.
⁹The hand is set against the flinty rock,
And mountains are overturned by the roots.
¹⁰Channels are carved through rock,
And every precious thing can be seen;
¹¹The sources of the streams are dammed up
So all that is hidden may be brought to light.

^a 28.4 Meaning of verse uncertain.

¹²But where can wisdom be found;
Where is the source of understanding?
¹³No mortal can set a value on it;
It cannot be found in the land of the living.
¹⁴The deep says, “It is not in me”;
The sea says, “I do not have it.”
¹⁵It cannot be bartered for gold;
Silver cannot be paid out as its price.
¹⁶The finest gold of Ophir cannot be weighed against it,
Nor precious onyx, nor sapphire.
¹⁷Gold or glass cannot match its value,
Nor vessels of fine gold be exchanged for it.
¹⁸Coral and crystal cannot be mentioned with it;
A pouch of wisdom is better than rubies.
¹⁹Topaz from Cush cannot match its value;
Pure gold cannot be weighed against it.

²⁰But whence does wisdom come?
Where is the source of understanding?
²¹It is hidden from the eyes of all living,
Concealed from the fowl of heaven.
²²Abaddon and Death say,
“We have only a report of it.”
²³God understands the way to it—
Knowing its source,
²⁴Seeing to the ends of the earth,
Observing all that is beneath the heavens.
²⁵When [God] fixed the weight of the winds,
Set the measure of the waters,
²⁶And made a rule for the rain
And a course for the thunderstorms,
²⁷Then [God] saw it and gauged it,
Measured it and probed it.
²⁸[God] said to humankind,
“See! Fear of the Sovereign is wisdom;
To shun evil is understanding.”

29 Job again took up his theme and said:

2 O that I were as in months gone by,
 In the days when God watched over me,
 3 When God's lamp shone over my head,
 When I walked in the dark by its light,
 4 When I was in my prime,
 When God's company graced my tent,
 5 When Shaddai was still with me,
 When my attendants surrounded me,
 6 When my feet were bathed in cream,
 And rocks poured out streams of oil for me.
 7 When I passed through the city gates
 To take my seat in the square,
 8 Young men saw me and hid,
 Elders rose and stood;
 9 Nobles held back their words;
 They clapped their hands to their mouths.
 10 The voices of princes were hushed;
 Their tongues stuck to their palates.
 11 The ear that heard me acclaimed me;
 The eye that saw, commended me.
 12 For I saved the pauper who cried out,
 The orphan who had no helper.
 13 I received the blessing of the lost;
 I gladdened the heart of the widow.
 14 I clothed myself in righteousness and it robed me;
 Justice was my cloak and turban.
 15 I was eyes to the blind
 And feet to the lame.
 16 I was a father to the needy,
 And I looked into the case of the stranger.
 17 I broke the jaws of the wrongdoer,
 And I wrested prey from his teeth.
 18 I thought I would end my days with my family,^a
 And be as long-lived as the phoenix,^b
 19 My roots reaching water,

^a 29.18 *family* Lit. “nest.”

^b 29.18 *be as long-lived as the phoenix* In contrast to others “multiply days like sand.”

And dew lying on my branches;
²⁰My vigor refreshed,
 My bow ever new in my hand.
²¹Men would listen to me expectantly,
 And wait for my counsel.
²²After I spoke they had nothing to say;
 My words were as drops [of dew] upon them.
²³They waited for me as for rain,
 For the late rain, their mouths open wide.
²⁴When I smiled at them, they would not believe it;
 They never expected^c a sign of my favor.
²⁵I decided their course and presided over them;
 I lived like a king among his troops,
 Like one who consoles mourners.

30

But now those younger than I deride me,
 Those whose fathers I would have disdained to put among my
 sheep dogs.
²Of what use to me is the strength of their hands?
 All their vigor^a is gone.
³Wasted from want and starvation,
 They flee to a parched land,
 To the gloom of desolate wasteland.
⁴They pluck saltwort and wormwood;
 The roots of broom are their food.
⁵Driven out from society,^b
 They are cried at like a thief.
⁶They live in the gullies of wadis,
 In holes in the ground, and in rocks,
⁷Braying among the bushes,
 Huddling among the nettles,
⁸Scoundrels, nobodies,
 Stricken from the earth.
⁹Now I am the butt of their gibes;
 I have become a byword to them.

^c 29.24 *expected* Taking *yappilun* as from *pll*; cf. Gen. 48.11.

^a 30.2 *vigor* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 30.5 *from society* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁰They abhor me; they keep their distance from me;
They do not withhold spittle from my face.

¹¹Because [God] has disarmed^c and humbled me,
They have thrown off restraint in my presence.

¹²Mere striplings assail me at my right hand:
They put me to flight;
They build their roads for my ruin.

¹³They tear up my path;
They promote my fall,
Although it does them no good.

¹⁴They come as through a wide breach;
They roll in like raging billows.^d

¹⁵Terror tumbles upon me;
It sweeps away my honor like the wind;
My dignity^e vanishes like a cloud.

¹⁶So now my life runs out;
Days of misery have taken hold of me.

¹⁷By night my bones feel gnawed;
My sinews never rest.

¹⁸f With great effort I change clothing;
The neck of my tunic fits my waist.

¹⁹[God] regarded me as clay,
I have become like dust and ashes.

²⁰I cry out to You, but You do not answer me;
I wait, but You do [not] consider me.

²¹You have become cruel to me;
With Your powerful hand You harass me.

²²You lift me up and mount me on the wind;
You make my courage melt.

²³I know You will bring me to death,
The house assigned for all the living.

²⁴g Surely [God] would not strike at a ruin
If, in calamity, one cried out.

²⁵Did I not weep for the unfortunate?

^c 30.11 *disarmed* Lit. “loosened my [bow] string.”

^d 30.14 *like raging billows* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 30.15 *dignity* Heb. *yeshu'ah* taken as related to *shoa'*, “noble.”

^f 30.18 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^g 30.24 Meaning of verse uncertain.

Did I not grieve for the needy?
²⁶I looked forward to good fortune, but evil came;
 I hoped for light, but darkness came.
²⁷My bowels are in turmoil without respite;
 Days of misery confront me.
²⁸I walk about in sunless gloom;
 I rise in the assembly and cry out.
²⁹I have become a brother to jackals,
 A companion to ostriches.
³⁰My skin, blackened, is peeling off me;
 My bones are charred by the heat.
³¹So my lyre is given over to mourning,
 My pipe, to accompany weepers.

31

I have covenanted with my eyes
 Not to gaze on a maiden.
²What fate is decreed by God above?
 What lot, by Shaddai in the heights?
³Calamity is surely for the iniquitous;
 Misfortune, for the worker of mischief.
⁴Surely [God] observes my ways,
 Takes account of my every step.
⁵Have I walked with the worthless,
 Or my feet hurried to deceit?
⁶Let me be weighed on the scale of righteousness;
 Let God ascertain my integrity.
⁷If my feet have strayed from their course,
 My heart followed after my eyes,
 And a stain sullied my hands,
⁸May I sow, but another reap,
 May the growth of my field be uprooted!
⁹If my heart was ravished by the wife of my neighbor,
 And I lay in wait at his door,
¹⁰May my wife grind for another,
 May others kneel over her!
¹¹For that would have been debauchery,
 A criminal offense,
¹²A fire burning down to Abaddon,

Consuming the roots of all my increase.

¹³Did I ever brush aside the case of my servants, man or maid,
When they made a complaint against me?

¹⁴What then should I do when God arises;
When I am called to account, what should I answer?

¹⁵Did not the One who made me in my mother's belly make him?
Did not One form us both in the womb?

¹⁶Did I deny the poor their needs,
Or let a^a widow pine away,

¹⁷By eating my food alone,
The fatherless not eating of it also?

¹⁸Why, from my youth he grew up with me as though I were
his father;

Since I left my mother's womb I was the widow's^b guide.

¹⁹I never saw an unclad wretch,
Someone needy without clothing,

²⁰Whose loins did not bless me
As they warmed themselves with the shearings of my sheep.

²¹If I raised my hand against the fatherless,
Looking to my supporters in the gate,

²²May my arm drop off my shoulder;
My forearm break off at the elbow.^c

²³For I am in dread of God-sent calamity;
I cannot bear such a threat.

²⁴Did I put my reliance on gold,
Or regard fine gold as my bulwark?

²⁵Did I rejoice in my great wealth,
In having attained plenty?

²⁶If ever I saw the light shining,
The moon on its course in full glory,

²⁷And I secretly succumbed,
And my hand touched my mouth in a kiss,

²⁸That, too, would have been a criminal offense,
For I would have denied God above.

²⁹Did I rejoice over my enemies' misfortune?
Did I thrill because evil befell them?

^a31.16 *a* Lit. "the eyes of a."

^b31.18 *the widow's* Heb. "her."

^c31.22 *at the elbow* Lit. "from its shaft," i.e., the humerus.

³⁰I never let my mouth^d sin
 By wishing their death in a curse.
³¹(Indeed, those of my clan said,
 “We would consume his flesh^e insatiably!”)
³²No sojourner spent the night in the open;
 I opened my doors to the road.
³³Did I hide my transgressions like Adam,
 Bury my wrongdoing in my bosom,
³⁴That I should [now] fear the great multitude,
 And am shattered by the contempt of families,
 So that I keep silent and do not step outdoors?

³⁵O that I had someone to give me a hearing;
 O that Shaddai would reply to my writ,
 Or my accuser draw up a true bill!
³⁶I would carry it on my shoulder;
 Tie it around me for a wreath.
³⁷I would give an account of my steps,
 Offer it as to a commander.

³⁸If my land cries out against me,
 Its furrows weep together;
³⁹If I have eaten its produce without payment,
 And made its [rightful] owners despair,
⁴⁰May nettles grow there instead of wheat;
 Instead of barley, stinkweed!

The words of Job are at an end.

32 These three men ceased replying to Job, for he considered himself right. ²Then Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was angry—angry at Job because he thought himself right against God. ³He was angry as well at his three friends, because they found no reply, but merely condemned Job. ⁴Elihu waited out Job’s speech, for they were all older than he. ⁵But when Elihu saw that the three men had nothing to reply, he was angry.

⁶Then Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite said in reply:

^d **31.30** *mouth* Lit. “palate.”

^e **31.31** *consume his flesh* I.e., malign Job; cf. 19.22; Ps. 27.2.

I have but few years, while you are old;
 Therefore I was too awestruck and fearful
 To hold forth among you.
⁷I thought, “Let age speak;
 Let advanced years declare wise things.”
⁸But truly it is the spirit in mortals,
 The breath of Shaddai, that gives them understanding.
⁹It is not the aged who are wise,
 The elders, who understand how to judge.
¹⁰Therefore I say, “Listen to me;
 I too would hold forth.”
¹¹Here I have waited out your speeches,
 I have given ear to your insights,
 While you probed the issues;
¹²But as I attended to you,
 I saw that none of you could argue with Job,
 Or offer replies to his statements.
¹³I fear you will say, “We have found the wise course;
 God will defeat him, not other people.”
¹⁴He did not set out his case against me,
 Nor shall I use your reasons to reply to him.
¹⁵They have been broken and can no longer reply;
 Words fail them.
¹⁶I have waited till they stopped speaking,
 Till they ended and no longer replied.
¹⁷Now I also would have my say;
 I too would like to hold forth,
¹⁸For I am full of words;
 The wind in my belly presses me.
¹⁹My belly is like wine not yet opened,
 Like jugs of new wine ready to burst.
²⁰Let me speak, then, and get relief;
 Let me open my lips and reply.
²¹I would not show regard for anybody,
 Or temper my speech for the sake of any mortal;
²²For I do not know how to temper my speech—
 My Maker would soon carry me off!

33

But now, Job, listen to my words,
 Give ear to all that I say.

²Now I open my lips;
 My tongue forms words in my mouth.
³My words bespeak the uprightness of my heart;
 My lips utter insight honestly.
⁴The spirit of God formed me;
 The breath of Shaddai sustains me.
⁵If you can, answer me;
 Argue against me, take your stand.
⁶You and I are the same before God;
 I too was nipped from clay.
⁷You are not overwhelmed by fear of me;
 My pressure does not weigh heavily on you.

⁸Indeed, you have stated in my hearing,
 I heard the words spoken,
⁹"I am guiltless, free from transgression;
 I am innocent, without iniquity.
¹⁰But [God] finds reasons to oppose me,
 And considers me an enemy.
¹¹My feet are placed in stocks,
 And all my ways are watched."

¹²In this you are not right;
 I will answer you: God is greater than any mortal.
¹³Why do you level the complaint
 That there is no reply to anyone's charges?
¹⁴For God speaks time and again^a—
 Though no one perceives it—
¹⁵In a dream, a night vision,
 When deep sleep falls on everyone,
 While they slumber on their beds.
¹⁶Then everyone's understanding is opened,
 And God's signature is left by disciplining them—
¹⁷To turn a mortal away from an action,
 To suppress pride in a man.
¹⁸[God] spares him from the Pit,
 His person, from perishing by the sword.

^a 33.14 *time and again* Lit. "once . . . twice."

¹⁹He is reprobated by pains on his bed,
And the trembling in his bones is constant.
²⁰He detests food;
Fine food [is repulsive] to him.
²¹His flesh wastes away till it cannot be seen,
And his bones are rubbed away till they are invisible.
²²He comes close to the Pit,
His life [verges] on death.
²³If he has a representative,
One advocate against a thousand
To declare the person upright,
²⁴Then [God] has mercy on him and decrees,
“Redeem him from descending to the Pit,
For I have obtained his ransom;
²⁵Let his flesh be healthier^b than in his youth;
Let him return to his younger days.”
²⁶He prays to God, who accepts him;
He enters the divine presence with shouts of joy,
For [God] requites humans for their righteousness.
²⁷The contrite person^c declares^d to all,
“I have sinned; I have perverted what was right;
But I was not paid back for it.”
²⁸He is redeemed from passing into the Pit;
He^e will enjoy the light.
²⁹Truly, God does all these things
Two or three times to a man,
³⁰To bring him back from the Pit,
That he may bask in the light of life.

³¹Pay heed, Job, and hear me;
Be still, and I will speak;

³²If you have what to say, answer me;
Speak, for I am eager to vindicate you.
³³But if not, you listen to me;
Be still, and I will teach you wisdom.

^b **33.25** *healthier* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c **33.27** *The contrite person* Heb. “he.”

^d **33.27** *declares* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e **33.28** *He...He* Or with *kethib*, “me...I.”

34 Elihu said in reply:

²Listen, O wise men, to my words;
 You who have knowledge, give ear to me.
³For the ear tests arguments
 As the palate tastes food.
⁴Let us decide for ourselves what is just;
 Let us know among ourselves what is good.
⁵For Job has said, “I am right;
 God has deprived me of justice.
⁶I declare the judgment against me false;
 My arrow-wound is deadly, though I am free from transgression.”
⁷What man is like Job,
 Who drinks mockery like water;
⁸Who makes common cause with evildoers,
 And goes with those who are wicked?
⁹For he says, “A man gains nothing
 When he is in God’s favor.”

¹⁰Therefore, men of understanding, listen to me;
 Wickedness be far from God,
 Wrongdoing, from Shaddai!
¹¹For [God] pays mortals according to their actions,
 And provides for people according to their conduct;
¹²For God surely does not act wickedly;
 Shaddai does not pervert justice.
¹³Who placed the earth in God’s charge?
 Who ordered the entire world?
¹⁴If [God] but intends it,
 Spirit and breath can be recalled;
¹⁵All flesh would at once expire,
 And humankind return to dust.

¹⁶If you would understand, listen to this;
 Give ear to what I say.
¹⁷Would one who hates justice govern?
 Would you condemn the Just Mighty One?
¹⁸Would you call a king a scoundrel,
 Nobles, wicked?
¹⁹[God] is not partial to princes;
 The honorable are not preferred to the wretched;

For all of them are the work of God's hands.
20 Some die suddenly in the middle of the night;
People are in turmoil and pass on;
Even heroes are removed—not by human hands.
21 For God's eyes are upon everyone's ways,
Observing their every step.
22 Neither darkness nor gloom offers
A hiding-place for evildoers.
23 There is no set time for anyone
To appear before God in judgment.
24 The mighty are shattered without number
And others set in their place.
25 Truly, [God] knows their deeds;
Night is over, and they are crushed.
26 The wicked are struck down
Where people can see,
27 Because they acted disloyally
And have not understood any of God's ways;
28 Thus the cry of the poor is admitted;
The cry of the needy is heard.
29 When [God] is silent, who will condemn?
If the divine face becomes hidden, who will see it,
Be it nation or person?
30 No one impious rules anymore,
Nor do those who ensnare the people.
31 Has anyone said to God,
“I will bear [my punishment] and offend no more.
32 What I cannot see You teach me.
If I have done iniquity, I shall not do so again”?
33 Should [God] require as you see fit?
But you have acted with disdain!
You must decide, not I;
Speak what you know.
34 Men of understanding say to me,
Wise men who hear me,
35 “Job does not speak with knowledge;
His words lack understanding.”
36 Would that Job were tried to the limit
For answers that befit those who are evil.

³⁷He adds to his sin;
He increases his transgression among us;
He multiplies his statements against God.

35 Elihu said in reply:

²Do you think it just
To say, “I am right against God”?
³If you ask how it benefits you,
“What have I gained from not sinning?”
⁴I shall give you a reply,
You, along with your friends.
⁵Behold the heavens and see;
Look at the skies high above you.
⁶If you sin, what do you do to [God]?
If your transgressions are many,
How do you affect [God]?
⁷If you are righteous,
What do you offer;
What does [God] receive from your hand?
⁸Your wickedness affects parties like yourself;
Your righteousness, other people.
⁹Because of contention the oppressed cry out;
They shout because of the power of the great.
¹⁰But none says, “Where is my God, my Maker,
Who gives strength in the night;
¹¹Who gives us more knowledge than the beasts of the earth,
Makes us wiser than the birds of the sky?”
¹²Then they cry out, but they are not answered
Because of the arrogance of evildoers.
¹³Surely it is false that God does not listen,
That Shaddai does not take note of it.
¹⁴Though you say, “You do not take note of it,”
The case is before [God];
So you must wait.
^{15^a}But since now it does not seem so,
He vents his anger;

^a 35.15 Meaning of verse uncertain.

He does not realize that it may be long drawn out.

¹⁶Hence Job mouths empty words,

And piles up words without knowledge.

36 Then Elihu spoke once more.

²Wait a little and let me hold forth;

There is still more to say for God.

³I will make my opinions widely known;

I will justify my Maker.

⁴In truth, my words are not false;

Someone of sound opinions is before you.

⁵See, God is mighty, but not contemptuous—

Mighty in strength and mind—

⁶Not letting the wicked live,

granting justice to the lowly.

⁷God's eyes are trained upon the righteous,

And upon kings on thrones;

For they are seated forever, and exalted.

⁸If they are bound in shackles

And caught in trammels of affliction,

⁹[God] declares to them what they have done,

And that their transgressions are excessive—

¹⁰Opening their understanding by discipline,

And ordering them back from mischief.

¹¹If they will serve obediently,

They shall spend their days in happiness,

Their years in delight.

¹²But if they are not obedient,

They shall perish by the sword,

Die for lack of understanding.

¹³But the impious in heart become enraged;

They do not cry for help when afflicted.

¹⁴They die in their youth;

[Expire] among the depraved.

¹⁵Rescuing the lowly from their affliction,

[God] opens their understanding through distress.

¹⁶Indeed, you are drawn away from the brink of distress

To a broad place where there is no constraint;

Your table is laid out with rich food.
¹⁷You are obsessed with the case of someone wicked,
 But the justice of the case will be upheld.
¹⁸Let anger at his affluence not mislead you;
 Let much bribery not turn you aside.
¹⁹Will your limitless wealth avail you,^a
 All your powerful efforts?
²⁰Do not long for the night
 When peoples vanish where they are.
²¹Beware! Do not turn to mischief;
 Because of that you have been tried by affliction.
²²See, God is beyond reach in divine power;
 Who governs like this?
²³Who ever reproached [God] on account of conduct?
 Who ever said, "You have done wrong"?
²⁴Remember, then, to magnify God's work,
 Of which humankind has sung,
²⁵Which all have beheld,
 Mortals have seen, from a distance.
²⁶See, God is greater than we can know—
 Whose age in years cannot be counted—
²⁷Who forms the droplets of water,
 Which cluster into rain, from celestial mist.
²⁸The skies rain;
 They pour down on all humankind.
²⁹Can one, indeed, contemplate the expanse of clouds,
 The thunderings from God's pavilion?
³⁰See, with the lightning spread over it,
 It fills the bed of the sea.
³¹By these things peoples are controlled;
 Food is given in abundance.
³²Lightning fills God's hands,
 Who orders it to hit the mark.
³³Its noise tells of its Source.
 The kindling of anger against iniquity.^b

^a36.19 *Will your limitless wealth avail you* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b36.33 *The kindling of anger against iniquity* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

37

Because of this, too, my heart quakes,
And leaps from its place.
²Just listen to the noise of the rumbling,
To the sound that comes out of God's mouth.
³It is let loose beneath the entire heavens—
God's lightning, to the ends of the earth.
⁴After it, a roar is released—
Thundered in God's majestic voice.
 No one can find a trace of it by the time God's voice is heard.
⁵Thundering marvelously with that voice,
[God] works wonders that we cannot understand.
⁶The snow is commanded, "Fall to the ground!"
 And the downpour of rain, God's mighty downpour of rain,
⁷Is as a sign on everyone's hand,
That all may know God's doings.
⁸Then the beast enters its lair,
And remains in its den.
⁹The storm wind comes from its chamber,
 And the cold from the constellations.
¹⁰By the breath of God ice is formed,
 And the expanse of water becomes solid.
¹¹[God] also loads the clouds with moisture
 And scatters the lightning-clouds.
¹²Turning and overturning events via stratagems,^a
 That they might accomplish all God's commands
 Throughout the inhabited earth,
¹³[God] causes each of them to happen to the land,
 Whether as a scourge or as a blessing.
¹⁴Give ear to this, Job;
 Stop to consider the marvels of God.
¹⁵Do you know what charge God lays upon them
 By making the lightning-clouds shine?
¹⁶Do you know the marvels worked upon the expanse of clouds
 By the One whose understanding is perfect,
¹⁷Why your clothes become hot^b
 When the land is becalmed by the south wind?

^a 37:12 *Turning and overturning events via stratagems* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 37:17 *Why your clothes become hot* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹⁸Can you help to stretch out the heavens,
Firm as a mirror of cast metal?
¹⁹Inform us, then, what we may say to [God];
We cannot argue because [we are in] darkness.
²⁰Is anything conveyed when I speak?
Can a person say anything while confused?
²¹Now, then, one cannot see the sun,
Though it be bright in the heavens,
Until the wind comes and clears them [of clouds].
²²By the north wind the golden rays emerge;
The splendor about God is awesome.
²³Shaddai—to whom we cannot attain—
Is great in power and justice
And abundant in righteousness, and does not torment.
²⁴Therefore, humankind is in awe of the One
Whom none of the wise can perceive.

38 Then GOD replied to Job out of the tempest and said:

²Who is this who darkens counsel,
Speaking without knowledge?
³Gird your loins like a man;^a
I will ask and you will inform Me.
⁴Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations?
Speak if you have understanding.
⁵Do you know who fixed its dimensions
Or who measured it with a line?
⁶Onto what were its bases sunk?
Who set its cornerstone
⁷When the morning stars sang together
And all the divine beings shouted for joy?
⁸Who closed the sea behind doors
When it gushed forth out of the womb,
⁹When I clothed it in clouds,
Swaddled it in dense clouds,
¹⁰When I made breakers My limit for it,

^a38.3 *Gird your loins like a man* I.e., *en garde*—prepare to defend yourself (verbally), for I am about to challenge you.

And set up its bar and doors,

¹¹And said, “You may come so far and no farther;
Here your surging waves will stop”?

¹²Have you ever commanded the day to break,
Assigned the dawn its place,

¹³So that it seizes the corners of the earth
And shakes the wicked out of it?

¹⁴It changes like clay under the seal
Till [its hues] are fixed like those of a garment.

¹⁵Their light is withheld from the wicked,
And the upraised arm is broken.

¹⁶Have you penetrated to the sources of the sea,
Or walked in the recesses of the deep?

¹⁷Have the gates of death been disclosed to you?
Have you seen the gates of deep darkness?

¹⁸Have you surveyed the expanses of the earth?
If you know of these—tell Me.

¹⁹Which path leads to where light dwells,
And where is the place of darkness,

²⁰That you may take it to its domain
And know the way to its home?

²¹Surely you know, for you were born then,
And the number of your years is many!

²²Have you penetrated the vaults of snow,
Seen the vaults of hail,

²³Which I have put aside for a time of adversity,
For a day of war and battle?

²⁴By what path is the west wind^b dispersed,
The east wind scattered over the earth?

²⁵Who cut a channel for the torrents
And a path for the thunderstorms,

²⁶To rain down on uninhabited land,
On the wilderness where no one lives,

²⁷To saturate the desolate wasteland,
And make the crop of grass sprout forth?

^b 38.24 *west wind* As Aramaic *'urya*.

²⁸Does the rain have a progenitor?
 Who begot the dewdrops?
²⁹From whose belly came forth the ice?
 Who gave birth to the frost of heaven?
³⁰Water congeals like stone,
 And the surface of the deep compacts.

³¹Can you tie cords to Pleiades
 Or undo the reins of Orion?
³²Can you lead out Mazzaroth^c in its season,
 Conduct the Bear with her children?
³³Do you know the laws of heaven
 Or impose its authority on earth?

³⁴Can you send up an order to the clouds
 For an abundance of water to cover you?
³⁵Can you dispatch the lightning on a mission
 And have it answer you, “I am ready”?
³⁶Who put wisdom in the hidden parts?
 Who gave understanding to the mind?^d
³⁷Who is wise enough to give an account of the heavens?
 Who can tilt the bottles of the sky,
³⁸Whereupon the earth melts into a mass,
 And its clods stick together.

³⁹Can you hunt prey for the lion,
 And satisfy the appetite of the king of beasts?
⁴⁰They crouch in their dens,
 Lie in ambush in their lairs.
⁴¹Who provides food for the raven
 When its young cry out to God
 And wander about without food?

39

Do you know the season when the mountain goats give birth?
 Can you mark the time when the hinds calve?
²Can you count the months they must complete?

^c 38.32 *Mazzaroth* Evidently a constellation.

^d 38.36 *mind* Or “rooster”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Do you know the season they give birth,
 ³When they couch to bring forth their offspring,
 To deliver their young?
 ⁴Their young are healthy; they grow up in the open;
 They leave and return no more.

⁵Who sets the wild ass free?
 Who loosens the bonds of the onager,
 ⁶Whose home I have made the wilderness,
 The salt land its dwelling-place?
 ⁷It scoffs at the tumult of the city,
 Does not hear the shouts of the driver.
 ⁸It roams the hills for its pasture;
 It searches for any green thing.

⁹Would the wild ox agree to serve you?
 Would it spend the night at your crib?
 ¹⁰Can you hold the wild ox by ropes to the furrow?
 Would it plow up the valleys behind you?
 ¹¹Would you rely on its great strength
 And leave your toil to it?
 ¹²Would you trust the ox^a to bring in the seed
 And gather it in from your threshing floor?

¹³The wing of the ostrich beats joyously;
 Are its pinions and plumage like the stork's?
 ¹⁴It leaves its eggs on the ground,
 Letting them warm in the dirt,
 ¹⁵Forgetting they may be crushed underfoot,
 Or trampled by a wild beast.
 ¹⁶Its young are cruelly abandoned as if they were not its own;
 Its labor is in vain for lack of concern.
 ¹⁷For God deprived it of wisdom,
 Gave it no share of understanding,
 ¹⁸Else it would soar on high,
 Scoffing at the horse and its rider.
 ¹⁹Do you give the horse its strength?
 Do you clothe its neck with a mane?

^a 39.12 *the ox* Heb. "it."

²⁰Do you make it quiver like locusts,
 Its majestic snorting [spreading] terror?
²¹It^b paws with force, it runs with vigor,
 Charging into battle.
²²It scoffs at fear; it cannot be frightened;
 It does not recoil from the sword.
²³A quiverful of arrows whizzes by it,
 And the flashing spear and the javelin.
²⁴Trembling with excitement, it swallows^c the land;
 It does not turn aside at the blast of the trumpet.
²⁵As the trumpet sounds, it says, “Aha!”
 From afar it smells the battle,
 The roaring and shouting of the officers.
²⁶Is it by your wisdom that the hawk grows pinions,
 Spreads its wings to the south?
²⁷Does the eagle soar at your command,
 Building its nest high,
²⁸Dwelling in the rock,
 Lodging upon the fastness of a jutting rock?
²⁹From there it spies out its food;
 From afar its eyes see it.
³⁰Its young gulp blood;
 Where the slain are, there it is.

40 GOD said in reply to Job.

²Shall one who should be disciplined complain against Shaddai?^a
 He who arraigns God must respond.

³Job said in reply to GOD:

⁴See, I am of small worth; what can I answer You?
 I clap my hand to my mouth.
⁵I have spoken once, and will not reply;
 Twice, and will do so no more.

^b 39.21 *It* Heb. “They . . .”

^c 39.24 *swallows* Or “digs up.”

^a 40.2 *Shall one who should be disciplined complain against Shaddai?* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁶Then GOD replied to Job out of the tempest and said:

⁷Gird your loins like a man;^b
I will ask, and you will inform Me.
⁸Would you impugn My justice?
Would you condemn Me that you may be right?
⁹Have you an arm like God's?
Can you thunder with a voice like this?
¹⁰Deck yourself now with grandeur and eminence;
Clothe yourself in glory and majesty.
¹¹Scatter wide your raging anger;
See all who are proud, and bring them low.
¹²See all who are proud, and humble them,
And bring the wicked down where they stand.
¹³Bury them all in the earth;
Hide their faces in obscurity.
¹⁴Then even I would praise you
For the triumph your right hand won you.

¹⁵Take now behemoth, whom I made as I did you;
It eats grass, like the cattle.
¹⁶Its strength is in its loins,
Its might in the muscles of its belly.
¹⁷It makes its tail stand up^c like a cedar;
The sinews of its thighs are knit together.
¹⁸Its bones are like tubes of bronze,
Its limbs like iron rods.
¹⁹It is the first of God's works;
Only its Maker can draw the sword against it.
²⁰The mountains yield it produce,
Where all the beasts of the field play.
²¹It lies down beneath the lotuses,
In the cover of the swamp reeds.
²²The lotuses embower it with shade;
The willows of the brook surround it.
²³It can restrain the river from rushing away;
It is confident the stream^d will gush at its command.

^b **40.7** *Gird your loins like a man* See note at 38.3.

^c **40.17** *It makes its tail stand up* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d **40.23** *stream* Lit. "Jordan."

²⁴Can it be taken by its eyes?
 Can its nose be pierced by hooks?
²⁵Can you draw out Leviathan by a fishhook?
 Can you press down its tongue by a rope?
²⁶Can you put a ring through its nose,
 Or pierce its jaw with a barb?
²⁷Will it plead with you at length?
 Will it speak soft words to you?
²⁸Will it make an agreement with you
 To be taken as your lifelong slave?
²⁹Will you play with it like a bird,
 And tie it down for your maids?
³⁰Shall traders traffic in it?^e
 Will it be divided up among merchants?
³¹Can you fill its skin with darts
 Or its head with fish-spears?
³²Lay a hand on it,
 And you will never think of battle again.

41

See, any hope [of capturing] it must be disappointed;
 One is prostrated by the very sight of it.
²There is no one so fierce as to rouse it;
 Who then can stand up to Me?
³Whoever confronts Me I will requite,
 For everything under the heavens is Mine.
⁴^aI will not be silent concerning it
 Or the praise of its martial exploits.
⁵Who can uncover its outer garment?
 Who can penetrate the folds of its jowls?
⁶Who can pry open the doors of its face?
 Its bared teeth strike terror.
⁷Its protective scales are its pride,
 Locked with a binding seal.
⁸One scale touches the other;
 Not even a breath can enter between them.

^e 40.30 *Shall traders traffic in it?* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 41.4 Meaning of verse uncertain.

⁹Each clings to each;
 They are interlocked so they cannot be parted.
¹⁰Its sneezings flash lightning,
 And its eyes are like the glimmerings of dawn.
¹¹Firebrands stream from its mouth;
 Fiery sparks escape.
¹²Out of its nostrils comes smoke
 As from a steaming, boiling cauldron.
¹³Its breath ignites coals;
 Flames blaze from its mouth.
¹⁴Strength resides in its neck;
 Power leaps before it.
¹⁵The layers of its flesh stick together;
 It is as though cast hard; it does not totter.
¹⁶Its heart is cast hard as a stone,
 Hard as the nether millstone.
¹⁷Divine beings are in dread as it rears up;
 As it crashes down, they cringe.
¹⁸No sword that overtakes it can prevail,
 Nor spear, nor missile, nor lance.
¹⁹It regards iron as straw,
 Bronze, as rotted wood.
²⁰No arrow can put it to flight;
 Slingstones turn into stubble for it.
²¹Clubs^b are regarded as stubble;
 It scoffs at the quivering javelin.
²²Its underpart is jagged shards;
 It spreads a threshing-sledge on the mud.
²³It makes the depths seethe like a cauldron;
 It makes the sea [boil] like an ointment-pot.
²⁴Its wake is a luminous path;
 It makes the deep seem white-haired.
²⁵There is no one on land who can dominate it,
 Made as it is without fear.
²⁶It sees all that is haughty;
 It reigns over all proud beasts.

^b **41.21 Clubs** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

42 Job said in reply to GOD:

²I know that You can do everything,
 That nothing You propose is impossible for You.
³Who is this who obscures counsel without knowledge?
 Indeed, I spoke without understanding
 Of things beyond me, which I did not know.
⁴Hear now, and I will speak;
 I will ask, and You will inform me.
⁵I had heard You with my ears,
 But now I see You with my eyes;
⁶Therefore, I recant and relent,
 Being but dust and ashes.

⁷After GOD had spoken these words to Job, GOD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “I am incensed at you and your two friends, for you have not spoken the truth about Me as did My servant Job. ⁸Now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to My servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. And let Job, My servant, pray for you; for to him I will show favor and not treat you vilely, since you have not spoken the truth about Me as did My servant Job.” ⁹Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as GOD had told them, and GOD showed favor to Job. ¹⁰GOD restored Job’s fortunes when he prayed on behalf of his friends, and GOD gave Job twice what he had before.

¹¹All his brothers and sisters and all his former friends came to him and had a meal with him in his house. They consoled and comforted him for all the misfortune that GOD had brought upon him. Each gave him one *kesitah*^a and each one gold ring. ¹²Thus GOD blessed the latter years of Job’s life more than the former. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand jennies. ¹³He also had seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴The first he named Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch. ¹⁵Nowhere in the land were women as beautiful as Job’s daughters to be found. Their father gave them estates together with their brothers. ¹⁶Afterward, Job lived one hundred and forty years to see four generations of children and grandchildren. ¹⁷So Job died old and contented.

^a 42.11 *kesitah* A unit of unknown value.

שיר השירים | SHIR HA-SHIRIM
THE SONG OF SONGS

¶ The Song of Songs, by^a Solomon.

²Oh, give me of the kisses of your mouth,^b
For your love is more delightful than wine.

³Your ointments yield a sweet fragrance,
Your name is like finest^c oil—
Therefore do maidens love you.

⁴Draw me after you, let us run!
The king has brought me to his chambers.^d
Let us delight and rejoice in your love,
Savoring it more than wine—
Like new wine^e they love you!

⁵I am dark—and beautiful—
O daughters of Jerusalem:
Like the tents of Kedar,
Like the pavilions of Solomon.

⁶Don't stare at me because I'm so dark,
Because the sun has gazed upon me.
My mother's sons quarreled with me,
They made me guard the vineyards;
My own vineyard I did not guard.

⁷Tell me, you whom I love so well;
Where do you pasture your sheep?
Where do you rest them at noon?
Let me not be as one who strays^f
Beside the flocks of your fellows.

⁸If you do not know, O fairest of women,
Go follow the tracks of the sheep,

^a 1.1 *by* Or “concerning.”

^b 1.2 *Oh, give me of the kisses of your mouth* Heb. “Let him give me of the kisses of his mouth!”

^c 1.3 *finest* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 1.4 *The king has brought me to his chambers* Emendation yields “Bring me, O king, to your chambers.”

^e 1.4 *new wine* Understanding *mesharim* as related to *tirosh*; cf. Aramaic *merath*.

^f 1.7 *as one who strays* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

And graze your kids^g
By the tents of the shepherds.

⁹I have likened you, my darling,
To a mare in Pharaoh's chariots:
¹⁰Your cheeks are comely with plaited wreaths,
Your neck with strings of jewels.
¹¹We will add wreaths of gold
To your spangles of silver.

¹²While the king was on his couch,
My nard gave forth its fragrance.
¹³My beloved to me is a bag of myrrh
Lodged between my breasts.
¹⁴My beloved to me is a spray of henna blooms
From the vineyards of En-gedi.

¹⁵Ah, you are fair, my darling,
Ah, you are fair,
With your dove-like eyes!
¹⁶And you, my beloved, are handsome,
Beautiful indeed!
Our couch is in a bower;
¹⁷Cedars are the beams of our house,
Cypresses the rafters.

2

I am a rose^a of Sharon,
A lily of the valleys.

²Like a lily among thorns,
So is my darling among the maidens.

³Like an apple tree among trees of the forest,
So is my beloved among the youths.
I delight to sit in his shade,
And his fruit is sweet to my mouth.

⁴He brought me to the banquet room
And his banner of love was over me.^b

^g 1.8 *graze your kids* As a pretext for coming.

^a 2.1 *rose* Lit. "crocus."

^b 2.4 *And his banner of love was over me* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁵“Sustain me with raisin cakes,
Refresh me with apples,
For I am faint with love.”

⁶His left hand was under my head,
His right arm embraced me.

⁷I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem,
By gazelles or by hinds of the field:
Do not wake or rouse
Love until it please!

⁸Hark! My beloved!
There he comes,
Leaping over mountains,
Bounding over hills.

⁹My beloved is like a gazelle
Or like a young stag.
There he stands behind our wall,

Gazing through the window,
Peering through the lattice.

¹⁰My beloved spoke thus to me,
“Arise, my darling;

My fair one, come away!

¹¹For now the winter is past,
The rains are over and gone.

¹²The blossoms have appeared in the land,
The time of pruning^c has come;
The song of the turtledove
Is heard in our land.

¹³The green figs form on the fig tree,
The vines in blossom give off fragrance.
Arise, my darling;
My fair one, come away!

¹⁴“O my dove, in the cranny of the rocks,
Hidden by the cliff,
Let me see your face,
Let me hear your voice;
For your voice is sweet
And your face is comely.”

^c 2.12 *pruning* Or “singing.”

¹⁵Catch us the foxes,
The little foxes
That ruin the vineyards—
For our vineyard is in blossom.

¹⁶My beloved is mine
And I am his
Who browses among the lilies.
¹⁷When the day blows gently^d
And the shadows flee,^e
Set out, my beloved,
Swift as a gazelle
Or a young stag,
For the hills of spices!^f

3

Upon my couch at night^a
I sought the one I love—
I sought, but found him not.
²“I must rise and roam the town,
Through the streets and through the squares;
I must seek the one I love.”
I sought but found him not.
³The watchmen came upon me
While patrolling the town—
“Have you seen the one I love?”
⁴Scarcely had I passed them
When I found the one I love.
I held him fast, I would not let him go
Till I brought him to my mother’s house,
To the chamber of her who conceived me
⁵I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem,
By gazelles or by hinds of the field:
Do not wake or rouse
Love until it please!

^d2.17 *blows gently* Emendation yields “declines”; cf. Jer. 6.4.

^e2.17 *flee* Septuagint reads “lengthen”; cf. Jer. 6.4.

^f2.17 *spices* Heb. *bather*, of uncertain meaning; 8.14 reads *besamim* “spices.”

^a3.1 *at night* Apparently in a dream.

⁶Who is she that comes up from the desert
Like columns of smoke,
In clouds of myrrh and frankincense,
Of all the powders of the merchant?

⁷There is Solomon's couch,
Encircled by sixty warriors
Of the warriors of Israel,
⁸All of them trained^b in warfare,
Skilled in battle,
Each with sword on thigh
Because of terror by night.

⁹King Solomon made him a palanquin
Of wood from Lebanon.

¹⁰He made its posts of silver,
Its back^c of gold,
Its seat of purple wool.
Within, it was decked with love
By the maidens of Jerusalem.^d
¹¹O maidens of Zion, go forth
And gaze upon King Solomon
Wearing the crown that his mother
Gave him on his wedding day,
On his day of bliss.

4

Ah, you are fair, my darling,
Ah, you are fair.
Your eyes are like doves
Behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
Streaming down Mount Gilead.
²Your teeth are like a flock of ewes^a
Climbing up from the washing pool;
All of them bear twins,
And not one loses her young.

^b 3.8 *trained* Cf. Akkadian *ahāzu* “to learn.”

^c 3.10 *back* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 3.10 *love / By the maidens of Jerusalem* Emendation yields “ebony, / O maidens of Jerusalem!”

^a 4.2 *ewes* Cf. 6.6; exact nuance of *qešuboth* uncertain, perhaps “shorn ones.”

³Your lips are like a crimson thread,
 Your mouth is lovely.
 Your brow behind your veil
 [Gleams] like a pomegranate split open.
⁴Your neck is like the Tower of David,
 Built to hold weapons,^b
 Hung with a thousand shields—
 All the quivers of warriors.
⁵Your breasts are like two fawns,
 Twins of a gazelle,
 Browsing among the lilies.
⁶^cWhen the day blows gently
 And the shadows flee,
 I will betake me to the mount of myrrh,
 To the hill of frankincense.
⁷Every part of you is fair, my darling,
 There is no blemish in you.
⁸From Lebanon come with me;
 From Lebanon, my bride, with me!
 Trip down from Amana's peak,
 From the peak of Senir^d and Hermon,
 From the dens of lions,
 From the hills^e of leopards.

⁹You have captured my heart,
 My own,^f my bride,
 You have captured my heart
 With one [glance] of your eyes,
 With one coil of your necklace.
¹⁰How sweet is your love,
 My own, my bride!
 How much more delightful your love than wine,
 Your ointments more fragrant
 Than any spice!

^b 4.4 *to hold weapons* Apparently a poetic figure for jewelry; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 4.6 See notes at 2.17.

^d 4.8 *Senir* Cf. Deut. 3.9.

^e 4.8 *hills* Emendation yields “lairs”; cf. Nah. 2.13.

^f 4.9 *own* Lit. “sister”; and so frequently below.

¹¹Sweetness drops
From your lips, O bride;
Honey and milk
Are under your tongue;
And the scent of your robes
Is like the scent of Lebanon.

¹²A garden locked
Is my own, my bride,
A fountain locked,
A sealed-up spring.

¹³Your limbs are an orchard of pomegranates
And of all luscious fruits,
Of henna and of nard—

¹⁴Nard and saffron,
Fragrant reed and cinnamon,
With all aromatic woods,
Myrrh and aloes—

All the choice perfumes.

¹⁵[*You are*] a garden spring,
A well of fresh water,^g
A rill of Lebanon.

¹⁶Awake, O north wind,
Come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden,
That its perfume may spread.
Let my beloved come to his garden
And enjoy its luscious fruits!

5

I have come to my garden,
My own, my bride;
I have plucked my myrrh and spice,
Eaten my honey and honeycomb,
Drunk my wine and my milk.

Eat, lovers, and drink:
Drink deep of love!

^g 4.15 [*You are*] *a garden spring, / A well of fresh water* Emendation yields “The spring in my garden / Is a well of fresh water.”

²^aI was asleep,
 But my heart was wakeful.
 Hark, my beloved knocks!
 “Let me in, my own,
 My darling, my faultless dove!
 For my head is drenched with dew,
 My locks with the damp of night.”
³I had taken off my robe—
 Was I to don it again?
 I had bathed my feet—
 Was I to soil them again?
⁴My beloved took his hand off the latch,^b
 And my heart was stirred for him.^c
⁵I rose to let in my beloved;
 My hands dripped myrrh—
 My fingers, flowing myrrh—
 Upon the handles of the bolt.
⁶I opened the door for my beloved,
 But my beloved had turned and gone.
 I was faint because of what he said.^d
 I sought, but found him not;
 I called, but he did not answer.
⁷The watchmen came upon me
 While patrolling the town—
 They struck me, they bruised me.
 The guards of the walls
 Stripped me of my mantle.
⁸I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem!
 If you meet my beloved, tell him this:
 That I am faint with love.
⁹How is your beloved better than another,^e
 O fairest of women?

^a5.2–8 In these verses, the woman apparently relates a dream.

^b5.4 *took his hand off the latch* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c5.4 *for him* Many manuscripts and editions read “within me” (*'alai*).

^d5.6 *because of what he said* Change of vocalization yields “because of him.”

^e5.9 *How is your beloved better than another* Or “What sort of beloved is your beloved . . . ?”

How is your beloved better than another^f
 That you adjure us so?

¹⁰My beloved is clear-skinned and ruddy,
 Preeminent among ten thousand.

¹¹His head is finest gold,
 His locks are curled
 And black as a raven.

¹²His eyes are like doves
 By watercourses,
 Bathed in milk,
 Set by a brimming pool.^g

¹³His cheeks are like beds of spices,
 Banks of^h perfume
 His lips are like lilies;
 They drip flowing myrrh.

¹⁴His hands are rods of gold,
 Studded with beryl;
 His belly a tablet of ivory,
 Adorned with sapphires.

¹⁵His legs are like marble pillars
 Set in sockets of fine gold.

He is majestic as Lebanon,
 Stately as the cedars.

¹⁶His mouth is delicious
 And all of him is delightful.
 Such is my beloved,
 Such is my darling,
 O maidens of Jerusalem!

6

“Whither has your beloved gone,
 O fairest of women?

Whither has your beloved turned?
 Let us seek him with you.”

²My beloved has gone down to his garden,
 To the beds of spices,

^f 5.9 *How is your beloved better than another* See preceding note.

^g 5.12 *Set by a brimming pool* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^h 5.13 *Banks of* Septuagint vocalizes as participle, “producing.”

To browse in the gardens
 And to pick lilies.
³I am my beloved's
 And my beloved is mine;
 He browses among the lilies.

⁴You are beautiful, my darling, as Tirzah,
 Comely as Jerusalem,
 Awesome as bannered hosts.^a

⁵Turn your eyes away from me,
 For they overwhelm me!
 Your hair is like a flock of goats
 Streaming down from Gilead.

⁶Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
 Climbing up from the washing pool;
 All of them bear twins,
 And not one loses her young.

⁷Your brow behind your veil
 [Gleams] like a pomegranate split open.

⁸There are sixty queens,
 And eighty concubines,
 And maidens without number.

⁹Only one is my dove,
 My perfect one,
 The only one of her mother,
 The delight of her who bore her.
 Young women see and acclaim her;
 Queens and concubines, and praise her.

¹⁰Who is she that shines through like the dawn,
 Beautiful as the moon,
 Radiant as the sun
 Awesome as bannered hosts?^b

¹¹I went down to the nut grove
 To see the budding of the vale;
 To see if the vines had blossomed,
 If the pomegranates were in bloom.

^a6.4 *Awesome as bannered hosts* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b6.10 *Awesome as bannered hosts* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹²^c Before I knew it,
My desire set me
Mid the chariots of Ammi-nadib.

7

Turn back, turn back,
O maid of Shulem!
Turn back, turn back,
That we may gaze upon you.
“Why will you gaze at the Shulammite
In^a the Mahanaim dance?”

²How lovely are your feet in sandals,
O daughter of nobles!

Your rounded thighs are like jewels,
The work of a master’s hand.

³Your navel is like a round goblet—
Let mixed wine not be lacking!—
Your belly like a heap of wheat
Hedged about with lilies.

⁴Your breasts are like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle.

⁵Your neck is like a tower of ivory,
Your eyes like pools in Heshbon
By the gate of Bath-rabbim,
Your nose like the Lebanon tower
That faces toward Damascus.

⁶The head upon you is like crimson wool,^b
The locks of your head are like purple—
A king is held captive in the tresses.^c

⁷How fair you are, how beautiful!
O Love, with all its rapture!

⁸Your stately form is like the palm,
Your breasts are like clusters.

⁹I say: Let me climb the palm,

^c 6.12 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^a 7.1 *In* With many manuscripts and editions; Tiberian Masoretic mss. read “Like.” Meaning of entire line uncertain.

^b 7.6 *crimson wool* So Ibn Janah and Ibn Ezra, taking *karmel* as a by-form of *karmil*: cf. 2 Chron. 2.6, 13; 3.14.

^c 7.6 *A king is held captive in the tresses* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Let me take hold of its branches;
 Let your breasts be like clusters of grapes,
 Your breath like the fragrance of apples,
¹⁰ And your mouth like choicest wine.
 “Let it flow to my beloved as new wine^d
 Gliding over the lips of sleepers.”^e

¹¹I am my beloved’s,
 And his desire is for me.
¹²Come, my beloved,
 Let us go into the open;
 Let us lodge among the henna shrubs.^f
¹³Let us go early to the vineyards;
 Let us see if the vine has flowered,
 If its blossoms have opened,
 If the pomegranates are in bloom.
 There I will give my love to you.
¹⁴The mandrakes yield their fragrance,
 At our doors are all choice fruits;
 Both freshly picked and long-stored
 Have I kept, my beloved, for you.

8

If only it could be as with a brother,
 As if you had nursed at my mother’s breast:
 Then I could kiss you
 When I met you in the street,
 And no one would despise me.
²I would lead you, I would bring you
 To the house of my mother,
 Of her who taught^a me—
 I would let you drink of the spiced wine,
 Of my pomegranate juice.

³His left hand was under my head,
 His right hand caressed me.
⁴I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem:

^d7.10 *new wine* See note at 1.4 end.

^e7.10 *Gliding over the lips of sleepers* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f7.12 *among the henna shrubs* Or “in the villages.”

^a8.2 *taught* Emendation yields “bore”; cf. 6.9; 8.5.

Do not wake or rouse
Love until it please!

⁵Who is she that comes up from the desert,
Leaning upon her beloved?

Under the apple tree I roused you;
It was there your mother conceived you,
There she who bore you conceived you.

⁶Let me be a seal upon your heart,
Like the seal upon your hand.^b
For love is fierce as death,
Passion is mighty as Sheol;
Its darts are darts of fire,
A blazing flame.

⁷Vast floods cannot quench love,
Nor rivers drown it.

If someone offered all his household's wealth for love,
He would be laughed to scorn.

⁸"We have a little sister,
Whose breasts are not yet formed.
What shall we do for our sister
When she is spoken for?

⁹If she be a wall,
We will build upon it a silver battlement;
If she be a door,
We will panel it in cedar."

¹⁰I am a wall,
My breasts are like towers.
So I became in his eyes
As one who finds favor.

¹¹Solomon had a vineyard
In Baal-hamon.
He had to post guards in the vineyard:
Anyone^c would give for its fruit

^b 8.6 *hand* Lit. "arm."

^c 8.11 *He had to post guards in the vineyard: Anyone* Or "He consigned the vineyard to tenants: / Each."

A thousand pieces of silver.

¹²I have my very own vineyard:

You may have the thousand, O Solomon,
And the guards of the fruit two hundred!

¹³^dO you who linger in the garden,^e

A lover^f is listening;

Let me hear your voice.

¹⁴“Hurry, my beloved,

Swift as a gazelle or a young stag,
To the hills of spices!”

^d8.13 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^e8.13 *garden* Heb. plural.

^f8.13 *lover* Heb. plural.

רות | RUT
RUTH

In the days when the chieftains^a ruled, there was a famine in the land; and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, with his wife and two sons, went to reside in the country of Moab. ²The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name was Naomi, and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the country of Moab and remained there.

³Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left with her two sons. ⁴They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth, and they lived there about ten years. ⁵Then those two—Mahlon and Chilion—also died; so the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband.

⁶She started out with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab; for in the country of Moab she had heard that GOD had taken note of the people [of Israel] and given them food. ⁷Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law, she left the place where she had been living; and they set out on the road back to the land of Judah.

⁸But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Turn back, each of you to her mother's house. May GOD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me! ⁹May GOD grant that each of you find security in the house of a husband!” And she kissed them farewell. They broke into weeping ¹⁰and said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.”

¹¹But Naomi replied, “Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Have I any more sons in my body who might be husbands for you? ¹²Turn back, my daughters, for I am too old to be married. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I were married tonight and I also bore sons, ¹³should you wait for them to grow up? Should you on their account debar yourselves from marriage? Oh no, my daughters! My lot is far more bitter than yours, for GOD's hand has struck out against me.”

¹⁴They broke into weeping again, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell. But Ruth clung to her. ¹⁵So she said, “See, your sister-in-law

^a 1.1 *chieftains* I.e., the leaders who arose in the period before the monarchy; in contrast to others “judges.”

has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law.”

¹⁶But Ruth replied, “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God.

¹⁷Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may GOD do to me^b if anything but death parts me from you.” ¹⁸When [Naomi] saw how determined she was to go with her, she ceased to argue with her; ¹⁹and the two went on until they reached Bethlehem.

When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole city buzzed with excitement over them. The women said, “Can this be Naomi?” ²⁰“Do not call me Naomi,”^c she replied. “Call me Mara,^d for Shaddai^e has made my lot very bitter. ²¹I went away full, and GOD has brought me back empty. How can you call me Naomi, when GOD has dealt harshly with^f me, when Shaddai has brought misfortune upon me!”

²²Thus Naomi returned from the country of Moab; she returned with her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabite. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

2 Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband’s side, a man of substance, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.

²Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “I would like to go to the fields and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone who may show me kindness.” “Yes, daughter, go,” she replied; ³and off she went. She came and gleaned in a field, behind the reapers; and, as luck would have it, it was the piece of land belonging to Boaz, who was of Elimelech’s family.

⁴Presently Boaz arrived from Bethlehem. He greeted the reapers, “GOD be with you!” And they responded, “GOD bless you!” ⁵Boaz said to the servant who was in charge of the reapers, “Whose girl is that?” ⁶The servant in charge of the reapers replied, “She is a Moabite who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. ⁷She said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers.’ She has been on her feet ever since she came this morning. She has hardly rested at all in the hut.”^a

^b 1.17 *Thus and more may GOD do to me* A formula of imprecation.

^c 1.20 *Naomi* I.e., “Pleasantness.”

^d 1.20 *Mara* I.e., “Bitterness.”

^e 1.20 *Shaddai* Usually rendered “the Almighty.”

^f 1.21 *dealt harshly with* In contrast to others “testified against.”

^a 2.7 *She has hardly rested at all in the hut* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁸Boaz said to Ruth, “Listen to me, daughter.^b Don’t go to glean in another field. Don’t go elsewhere, but stay here close to my maid-servants. ⁹Keep your eyes on the field they are reaping, and follow them. I have ordered the workers not to harass you. And when you are thirsty, go to the jars and drink some of [the water] that the workers have drawn.”

¹⁰She prostrated herself with her face to the ground, and said to him, “Why are you so kind as to single me out, when I am a foreigner?”

¹¹Boaz said in reply, “I have been told of all that you did for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and came to a people you had not known before. ¹²May GOD reward your deeds. May you have a full recompense from the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have sought refuge!”

¹³She answered, “You are most kind, my lord, to comfort me and to speak gently to your maid-servant—though I am not so much as one of your maid-servants.”

¹⁴At mealtime, Boaz said to her, “Come over here and partake of the meal, and dip your morsel in the vinegar.” So she sat down beside the reapers. He handed her roasted grain, and she ate her fill and had some left over.

¹⁵When she got up again to glean, Boaz gave orders to his workers, “You are not only to let her glean among the sheaves, without interference,¹⁶but you must also pull some [stalks] out of the heaps and leave them for her to glean, and not scold her.”

¹⁷She gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned—it was about an *ephah* of barley—¹⁸and carried it back with her to the town. When her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned, and when she also took out and gave her what she had left over after eating her fill,¹⁹her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be he who took such generous notice of you!” So she told her mother-in-law whom she had worked with, saying, “The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.”

²⁰Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “Blessed be he of GOD, who has not failed to show kindness to the living or to the dead! For,” Naomi explained to her daughter-in-law, “the man is related to us; he

^b 2.8 *Listen to me, daughter* Lit. “Have you not heard, daughter?”

is one of our redeeming kinsmen.”^c ²¹Ruth the Moabite said, “He even told me, ‘Stay close by my workers until all my harvest is finished.’” ²²And Naomi answered her daughter-in-law Ruth, “It is best, daughter, that you go out with his maidservants, and not be accosted in some other field.” ²³So she stayed close to the maidservants of Boaz, and gleaned until the barley harvest and the wheat harvest were finished. Then she stayed at home with her mother-in-law.

3 Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “Daughter, I must seek a home for you, where you may be happy. ²Now there is our kinsman Boaz, whose girls you were close to. He will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor tonight. ³So bathe, anoint yourself, dress up, and go down to the threshing floor. But do not disclose yourself to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴When he lies down, note the place where he lies down, and go over and uncover his feet and lie down.^a He will tell you what you are to do.” ⁵She replied, “I will do everything you tell me.”

⁶She went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. ⁷Boaz ate and drank, and in a cheerful mood went to lie down beside the grainpile. Then she went over stealthily and uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸In the middle of the night, the man gave a start and pulled back—there was a woman lying at his feet!

⁹“Who are you?” he asked. And she replied, “I am your handmaid Ruth. Spread your robe over your handmaid,^b for you are a redeeming kinsman.”

¹⁰He exclaimed, “Be blessed of GOD, daughter! Your latest deed of loyalty^c is greater than the first,^d in that you have not turned to younger men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹And now, daughter, have no fear. I will do in your behalf whatever you ask, for all the elders of my town^e know what a fine woman you are. ¹²But while it is true

^c **2.20 one of our redeeming kinsmen** Cf. Lev. 25.25 and note, and Deut. 25.5–6. The fact that Boaz is a kinsman of Ruth’s dead husband opens up the possibility of providing an heir for the latter.

^a **3.4 uncover his feet and lie down** An act both risqué and risky, making an unmarried woman vulnerable to social disgrace.

^b **3.9 Spread your robe over your handmaid** A formal act of espousal; cf. Ezek. 16.8. Or “Spread your wings . . .,” a figure for protective intervention; cf. 2.12.

^c **3.10 Your latest deed of loyalty** Namely, to have sought out a kinsman of her dead husband; see note at 2.20.

^d **3.10 the first** Namely, to have returned with Naomi.

^e **3.11 elders of my town** Lit. “gate of my people.”

I am a redeeming kinsman, there is another redeemer closer than I.¹³ Stay for the night. Then in the morning, if he will act as a redeemer, good! Let him redeem. But if he does not want to act as redeemer for you, I will do so myself, as GOD lives! Lie down until morning.”

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until dawn. She rose before one person could distinguish another, for he thought, “Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.”¹⁵ And he said, “Hold out the shawl you are wearing.” She held it while he measured out six measures of barley, and he put it on her back.

When she^f got back to the town,¹⁶ she came to her mother-in-law, who asked, “How is it with you, daughter?” She told her all that the man had done for her;¹⁷ and she added, “He gave me these six measures of barley, saying to me, ‘Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”¹⁸ And Naomi said, “Stay here, daughter, till you learn how the matter turns out. For the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.”

4 Meanwhile, Boaz had gone to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer whom Boaz had mentioned passed by. He called, “Come over and sit down here, So-and-so!” And he came over and sat down.² Then [Boaz] took ten elders of the town and said, “Be seated here”; and they sat down.

³ He said to the redeemer, “Naomi, now returned from the country of Moab, must sell the piece of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. ⁴ I thought I should disclose the matter to you and say: Acquire it in the presence of those seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you are willing to redeem it, redeem! But if you^a will not redeem, tell me, that I may know. For there is no one to redeem but you, and I come after you.” “I am willing to redeem it,” he replied. ⁵ Boaz continued, “When you acquire the property from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabite, you must also acquire^b the wife of the deceased,^c so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate.” ⁶ The redeemer replied, “Then I cannot redeem it for myself,

^f 3.15 *she* So in many Heb. mss; Tiberian Masoretic mss. read “he.”

^a 4.4 *you* So many Heb. mss., Septuagint, and Targum; Tiberian Masoretic mss. read “he.”

^b 4.5 *you must also acquire* So *qere*; *kethib* “I acquire.”

^c 4.5 *and from Ruth the Moabite, you must also acquire the wife of the deceased* Emendation yields “you must also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the wife of the deceased”; cf. v. 10.

lest I impair my own estate.^d You take over my right of redemption, for I am unable to exercise it."

⁷Now this was formerly done in Israel in cases of redemption or exchange: to validate any transaction, one party would take off a sandal and hand it to the other. Such was the practice^e in Israel. ⁸So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Acquire for yourself," he drew off his sandal. ⁹And Boaz said to the elders and to the rest of the people, "You are witnesses today that I am acquiring from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰I am also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate, that the name of the deceased may not disappear from among his kinsmen and from the gate of his home town. You are witnesses today."

¹¹All the people at the gate and the elders answered, "We are. May GOD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the House of Israel! Prosper in Ephrathah^f and perpetuate your name in Bethlehem! ¹²And may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah—through the offspring that GOD will give you by this young woman."

¹³So Boaz married Ruth; she became his wife, and he cohabited with her. GOD let her conceive, and she bore a son. ¹⁴And the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be GOD, who has not withheld a redeemer from you today! May his name be perpetuated in Israel! ¹⁵He will renew your life and sustain your old age; for he is born of your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons."

¹⁶Naomi took the child and held it to her bosom. She became its foster mother,¹⁷and the women neighbors gave him a name, saying, "A son is born to Naomi!" They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, father of David.

¹⁸This is the line of Perez: Perez begot Hezron,¹⁹Hezron begot Ram, Ram begot Amminadab,²⁰Amminadab begot Nahshon, Nahshon begot Salmon,^g²¹Salmon begot Boaz, Boaz begot Obed,²²Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

^d **4.6** *impair my own estate* By expending capital for property that will go to the son legally regarded as Mahlon's; see Deut. 25.5–6.

^e **4.7** *practice* Understanding Heb. *te'udah* in the sense of the Arabic *'ādah* and Syriac *'yādā*. Cf. Ibn Ezra.

^f **4.11** *Ephrathah* Matriarch of the clan to which the Bethlehemites belonged; cf. 1.2; Mic. 5.1; 1 Chron. 2.50–51.

^g **4.20** *Salmon* Heb. "Salmah."

LAMENTATIONS

- א** ^aAlas!
 Lonely sits the city
 Once great with people!
 She that was great among nations
 Is become like a widow;
 The princess among states
 Is become a thrall.
- ב** ²Bitterly she weeps in the night,
 Her cheek wet with tears.
 There is none to comfort her
 Of all her friends.^b
 All her allies have betrayed her;
 They have become her foes.
- ג** ³Judah has gone into exile
 Because of misery and harsh oppression;
 When she settled among the nations,
 She found no rest;
 All her pursuers overtook her
 In the narrow places.^c
- ד** ⁴Zion's roads are in mourning,
 Empty of festival pilgrims;
 All her gates are deserted.
 Her priests sigh,
 Her maidens are unhappy—
 She is utterly disconsolate!
- ה** ⁵Her enemies are now the masters,
 Her foes are at ease,
 Because GOD has afflicted her
 For her many transgressions;
 Her infants have gone into captivity
 Before the enemy.

^a 1.1 Chaps. 1–4 are alphabetical acrostics, i.e., the verses begin with the successive letters of the Heb. alphabet. Chap. 3 is a triple acrostic. In chaps. 2–4 the letter *pe* precedes the 'ayin.

^b 1.2 *friends* Or "lovers," i.e., political allies.

^c 1.3 *In the narrow places* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¶ ⁶Gone from Fair Zion are all
That were her glory;
Her leaders were like stags
That found no pasture;
They could only walk feebly
Before the pursuer.
- ¶ ⁷All that she treasured
In the days of old
Jerusalem recalled
In her days of woe and sorrow,
When her people fell by enemy hands
With none to help her;
When enemies looked on and gloated
Over her downfall.
- ¶ ⁸Jerusalem has greatly sinned,
Therefore she is become a mockery.
All who admired her despise her,
For they have seen her disgraced;^d
And she can only sigh
And shrink back.
- ¶ ⁹Her impurity^e clings to her skirts.
She gave no thought to her future;
She has sunk appallingly,
With none to comfort her.—
“See, O ETERNAL One, my misery;
How the enemy jeers!”
- ¶ ¹⁰The foe has laid hands
On everything dear to her.
She has seen her Sanctuary
Invaded by nations
That You have denied admission
Into Your community.
- ¶ ¹¹All her inhabitants sigh
As they search for bread;
They have bartered their treasures^f for food,
To keep themselves alive.—

^d1.8 *disgraced* Lit. “nakedness,” i.e., her shame.

^e1.9 *impurity* I.e., her moral guilt or the impurity of sexual immorality; cf. Jer. 2.22.

^f1.11 *treasures* i.e., jewels or children; cf. Hos. 9.16.

“See, O ETERNAL One, and behold,
How abject^g I have become!”

- ↳ ^{12^h}“May it never befall you,ⁱ
All who pass along the road—
Look about and see:
Is there any agony like mine,
Which was dealt out to me
When GOD afflicted me
On this day of wrath?
- ↳ ¹³From above [God] sent a fire
Down into my bones,
Then spread a net for my feet
And hurled me backward—
Leaving me forlorn,
In constant misery.
- ↳ ^{14^j}The yoke of my offenses is bound fast,
Lashed tight by God’s hand;
Imposed upon my neck,
It saps my strength;
The Sovereign has delivered me into the hands
Of those I cannot withstand.
- ↳ ¹⁵The Sovereign in my midst has rejected
All my heroes,
And proclaimed a set time against me
To crush my young men.
As in a press the Sovereign has trodden
Fair Maiden Judah.
- ↳ ¹⁶For these things do I weep,
My eyes flow with tears:
Far from me is any comforter
Who might revive my spirit;
My children are forlorn,
For the foe has prevailed.”
- ↳ ¹⁷Zion spreads out her hands,
She has no one to comfort her;

^g 1.11 *How abject* Or (ironically) “What a glutton”; cf. Prov. 23.20–21.

^h 1.12–16 A lament by Zion personified.

ⁱ 1.12 *May it never befall you* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^j 1.14 Meaning of parts of vv. 14 and 15 uncertain.

GOD has summoned against Jacob
 His enemies all about him;
 Jerusalem has become an outcast^k among them.

¶ ¹⁸^l “GOD is in the right,
 For I have been disobedient.
 Hear, all you peoples,
 And behold my agony:
 My maidens and my youths
 Have gone into captivity!

¶ ¹⁹I cried out to my friends,^m
 But they played me false.
 My priests and my elders
 Have perished in the city
 As they searched for food
 To keep themselves alive.

¶ ²⁰See, O ETERNAL One, the distress I am in!
 My heart is in anguish,
 I know how wrong I wasⁿ
 To disobey.
 Outside the sword deals death;
 Indoors, the plague.

¶ ²¹When they heard how I was sighing,
 There was none to comfort me;
 All my foes heard of my plight and exulted.
 For it is Your doing:
 You have brought on the day that You threatened.
 Oh, let them become like me!^o

¶ ²²Let all their wrongdoing come before You,
 And deal with them
 As You have dealt with me
 For all my transgressions.
 For my sighs are many,
 And my heart is sick.”

^k 1.17 *an outcast* Or “a menstrual woman”; cf. Ezek. 36.17.

^l 1.18–22 Another lament by Zion personified.

^m 1.19 *friends* See note at v. 2.

ⁿ 1.20 *I know how wrong I was* Lit. “My heart has turned over within me”; cf. Exod. 14.5; Hos. 11.8.

^o 1.21 *You have brought on the day that You threatened. / Oh, let them become like me!* Emendation yields “Oh, bring on them what befell me, / And let them become like me!”

- 2** **¶** Alas!
- The Sovereign out of wrath
 Has shamed^a Fair Zion,
 Has cast down from heaven to earth
 The majesty of Israel.
 God's Footstool^b was not remembered
 On this day of wrath.
- ¶** ²The Sovereign has laid waste without pity
 All the habitations of Jacob—
 Has razed in anger
 Fair Judah's strongholds,
 Bringing low in dishonor
 The kingdom and its leaders.
- ¶** ³In blazing anger [God] has cut down
 All the might of Israel—
 Withdrawing vital support^c
 In the presence of the foe,
 And ravaging Jacob like flaming fire,
 Consuming on all sides.
- ¶** ⁴[God] bent the bow like an enemy,
 Poised the right hand like a foe,
 And slew all who delighted the eye.
 God's wrath was poured out like fire
 In the Tent of Fair Zion.
- ¶** ⁵The Sovereign has acted like a foe—
 Laying waste Israel,
 Laying waste all her citadels,
 Destroying her strongholds,
 Increasing within Fair Judah
 Mourning and moaning.
- ¶** ⁶God's Booth^d has been stripped like a garden,
 And the Tabernacle, destroyed;^e
 GOD has ended in Zion
 Festival and sabbath;

^a **2.1** *shamed* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b **2.1** *God's Footstool* I.e., the temple.

^c **2.3** *vital support* Lit. "His right hand."

^d **2.6** *God's Booth* I.e., the temple.

^e **2.6** *Tabernacle* Lit. "(Tent of) Meeting."

- And in raging anger has spurned
King and priest.
- ¶ ⁷The Sovereign has rejected the altar,
Disdained the Sanctuary,
Handing over to the foe
The walls of its citadels;
They raised a shout in the House of GOD
As on a festival day.
- ¶ ⁸GOD resolved to destroy
The wall of Fair Zion—
Measuring it with a line,^f refraining not
From bringing destruction.
Wall and rampart have been made to mourn,
Together they languish.
- ¶ ⁹Her gates have sunk into the ground,
Her bars have been smashed to bits;
Her king and her leaders are in exile,^g
Instruction^h is no more;
Her prophets, too, receive
No vision from GOD.
- ¶ ¹⁰Silent sit on the ground
The elders of Fair Zion;
They have strewn dust on their heads
And girded themselves with sackcloth;
The maidens of Jerusalem have bowed
Their heads to the ground.
- ¶ ¹¹My eyes are spent with tears,
My heart is in tumult,
My being melts awayⁱ
Over the ruin of my poor people,^j
As babes and sucklings languish
In the squares of the city.
- ¶ ¹²They keep asking their mothers,
“Where is bread and wine?”

^f 2.8 *Measuring it with a line* I.e., making plans.

^g 2.9 *in exile* Lit. “among the nations.”

^h 2.9 *Instruction* Heb. *torah*, here priestly instruction; cf. Jer. 18.18; Hag. 2.11; Mal. 2.6.

ⁱ 2.11 *My being melts away* Lit. “My liver spills on the ground.”

^j 2.11 *my poor people* Lit. “the daughter of my people”; so elsewhere in poetry.

- As they languish like battle-wounded
 In the squares of the town,
 As their life runs out
 In their mothers' bosoms.
- ¶ ¹³What can I take as witness^k or liken
 To you, O Fair Jerusalem?
 What can I match with you to console you,
 O Fair Maiden Zion?
 For your ruin is vast as the sea:
 Who can heal you?
- ¶ ¹⁴Your seers prophesied to you
 Delusion and folly.
 They did not expose your iniquity
 So as to restore your fortunes,
 But prophesied to you oracles
 Of delusion and deception.
- ¶ ¹⁵All who pass your way
 Clap their hands at you;
 They hiss and wag their head^l
 At Fair Jerusalem:
 “Is this the city that was called
 Perfect in Beauty,
 Joy of All the Earth?”
- ¶ ¹⁶All your enemies
 Jeer at you;
 They hiss and gnash their teeth,
 And cry: “We’ve ruined her!
 Ah, this is the day we hoped for;
 We have lived to see it!”^m
- ¶ ¹⁷GOD has done what was purposed,
 Carrying out the decree
 That had been ordained long ago,
 And tearing down without pity.
 The foe has been allowed to rejoice over you,
 Has exalted the might of your enemies.

^k 2.13 *take as witness* Emendation yields “compare.”

^l 2.15 *hiss and wag their head* Gestures intended to ward off the calamity from the viewer; cf., e.g., Jer. 18.16 and note; Job 27.23.

^m2.16 *We have lived to see it* Lit. “We have attained, we have seen.”

¶¹⁸ Their heart cried outⁿ to the Sovereign.

O wall of Fair Zion,
Shed tears like a torrent
Day and night!
Give yourself no respite,
Your eyes no rest.

¶¹⁹ Arise, cry out in the night
At the beginning of the watches,
Pour out your heart like water
In the presence of the Sovereign!
Lift up your hands to [God]
For the life of your infants,
Who faint for hunger
At every street corner.

¶²⁰^o See, O ETERNAL One, and behold,
To whom You have done this!
Alas, women eat their own fruit,
Their newborn^p babes!
Alas, priest and prophet are slain
In the Sanctuary of the Sovereign!

¶²¹ Prostrate in the streets lie
Both young and old.
My maidens and youths
Are fallen by the sword;
You slew them on Your day of wrath,
You slaughtered without pity.

¶²² You summoned, as on a festival,
My neighbors from round about.
On the day of GOD's wrath,
None survived or escaped;
Those whom I bore^q and reared
My foe has consumed."

ⁿ 2.18 *Their heart cried out* Emendation yields "Cry aloud."

^o 2.20–22 A plea by Zion personified.

^p 2.20 *newborn* The root has this meaning in Arabic; in contrast to others "dandled."

^q 2.22 *bore* See note at 2.20.

- 3** ¶ I am the man^a who has known affliction
 Under^b the rod of God's wrath;
²It is I who was driven on and on
 In unrelieved darkness;
³On none but me God's hand descends
 Again and again, without cease.
- ¶ ⁴My flesh and skin has been worn away;
 My bones have been shattered.
⁵All around me have been built
 Misery^c and hardship;
⁶I am made to dwell in darkness,
 Like those long dead.
- ¶ ⁷I have been walled in and I cannot break out;
 And am weighed down with chains.
⁸And when I cry and plead,
 [God] shuts out my prayer—
⁹Walling in my ways with hewn blocks,
 And making my paths a maze.
- ¶ ¹⁰A lurking bear [God] is to me,
 A lion in hiding—
¹¹Forcing me off my way^d and mangling me,
 Leaving me numb.
¹²[God] has bent the bow and made me
 The target of divine arrows—
- ¶ ¹³Shooting into my vitals
 A quiver's shafts.
¹⁴I have become a laughingstock to all people,
 The butt of their gibes all day long.
¹⁵I have been filled with bitterness,
 And sated with wormwood.
- ¶ ¹⁶[God] has broken my teeth on gravel,
 Has ground me into the dust.

^a **3.1** *the man* A Job-like figure, a counterpart to the female city who was given voice in 1.12–16, 18–22; 2.20–22.

^b **3.1** *who has known affliction / Under* Emendation yields “whom the Sovereign has shepherded with.”

^c **3.5** *Misery* Taking *ro'sh* as equivalent to *resh*.

^d **3.11** *Forcing me off my way* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ¹⁷My life was bereft of peace,
I forgot what happiness was.
¹⁸I thought my strength and hope
Had perished before GOD.
¶ ¹⁹To recall my distress and my misery
Was wormwood and poison;
²⁰Whenever I thought of them,
I was bowed low.
- ²¹But this do I call to mind,
Therefore I have hope:
¶ ²²The kindness of GOD has not ended,
And God's mercies are not spent.
²³They are renewed every morning—
Ample is Your grace!
²⁴"GOD is my portion," I say with full heart;
This is the One in whom I have hope.
¶ ²⁵Good comes to those who trust in GOD,
To the one who seeks God's presence;
²⁶It is good to wait patiently
Till rescue comes from GOD.
²⁷It is good for a man, when young,
To bear a yoke;
, ²⁸Let him sit alone and be patient,
When it is laid upon him.
²⁹Let him put his mouth to the dust—
There may yet be hope.
³⁰Let him offer his cheek to the aggressor;
Let him be surfeited with mockery.
¶ ³¹For the Sovereign does not
Reject forever,
³²But first afflicts, then pardons
In abundant kindness.
³³For [God] does not willfully bring grief
Or affliction to those involved,^e
↳ ³⁴Crushing underfoot
All the prisoners of the earth.

^e 3.33 *those involved* In misdeeds—and who thus deserve punishment.

- ³⁵To deny a man his rights
 In the presence of the Most High,
³⁶To wrong a man in his cause—
 This the Sovereign does not choose.
- ¶ ³⁷Whose decree was ever fulfilled,
 Unless the Sovereign willed it?
³⁸Is it not at the word of the Most High,
 That weal and woe befall?
³⁹Of what shall a living man complain?
 Each one of his own sins!
- ¶ ⁴⁰Let us search and examine our ways,
 And turn back to GOD;
⁴¹Let us lift up our hearts with^f our hands
 To God in heaven:
⁴²We have transgressed and rebelled,
 And You have not forgiven.
- ¶ ⁴³You have clothed Yourself in anger and pursued us,
 You have slain without pity.
⁴⁴You have screened Yourself off with a cloud,
 That no prayer may pass through.
⁴⁵You have made us filth and refuse
 In the midst of the peoples.
- ¶ ⁴⁶All our enemies loudly
 Rail against us.
⁴⁷Panic and pitfall are our lot,
 Death and destruction.
⁴⁸My eyes shed streams of water
 Over the ruin of my poor^g people.
- ¶ ⁴⁹My eyes shall flow without cease,
 Without respite,
⁵⁰Until GOD looks down
 And beholds from heaven.
⁵¹My eyes have brought me grief^h
 Over all the maidens of my city.

^f 3.41 *with* Lit. “to”; emendation yields “in contrast to others”; cf. Joel 2.13.

^g 3.48 *my poor* Lit. “the daughter of my”; so frequently in poetry.

^h 3.50–51 *Until...grief* Emendation yields: ⁵⁰“Until GOD looks down from heaven / And beholds ⁵¹my affliction. / GOD has brought me grief.”

¶ 52 My foes have snared me like a bird,
Without any cause.

53 They have ended my life in a pit
And cast stones at me.

54 Waters flowed over my head;
I said: I am lost!

¶ 55 I have called on Your name, O ETERNAL One,
From the depths of the Pit.

56 Hear my plea;
Do not shut Your ear

To my groan, to my cry!

57 You have ever drawn nigh when I called You;
You have said, "Do not fear!"

¶ 58 You championed my cause, O my Sovereign,
You have redeemed my life.

59 You have seen, O ETERNAL One, the wrong done me;
Oh, vindicate my right!

60 You have seen all their malice,
All their designs against me;

¶ 61 You have heard, O ETERNAL One, their taunts,
All their designs against me,

62 The mouthings and chattering of my adversaries
Against me all day long.

63 See how, at their ease or at work,
I am the butt of their gibes.

¶ 64 Give them, O ETERNAL One, their deserts
According to their deeds.

65 Give them anguishⁱ of heart;
Your curse be upon them!

66 Oh, pursue them in wrath and destroy them
From under GOD's heavens!

4 ¶ Alas!

The gold is dulled,^a
Debased the finest gold!

ⁱ 3.65 *anguish* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 4.1 *dulled* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- The sacred^b gems are spilled
At every street corner.
- ¶ 2 The precious children of Zion;
Once valued as gold—
Alas, they are accounted as earthen pots,
Work of a potter's hands!
- ¶ 3 Even jackals offer the breast
And suckle their young;
But my poor people has turned cruel,
Like ostriches of the desert.
- ¶ 4 The tongue of the sucking cleaves
To its palate for thirst.
Little children beg for bread;
None gives them a morsel.
- ¶ 5 Those who feasted on dainties
Lie famished in the streets;
Those who were reared in purple
Have embraced refuse heaps.
- ¶ 6 The guilt^c of my poor^d people
Exceeded the iniquity^e of Sodom,
Which was overthrown in a moment,
Without a hand striking it.
- ¶ 7 Her elect were purer than snow,
Whiter than milk;
Their limbs were ruddier than coral,
Their bodies^f were like sapphire.
- ¶ 8 Now their faces are blacker than soot,
They are not recognized in the streets;
Their skin has shriveled on their bones,
It has become dry as wood.
- ¶ 9 Better off were the slain of the sword
Than those slain by famine,
Who pined away, [as though] wounded,
For lack of^g the fruits of the field.

^b 4.1 *sacred* Emendation yields “precious.”

^c 4.6 *guilt* I.e., punishment.

^d 4.6 *my poor* See note at 3.48.

^e 4.6 *iniquity* I.e., punishment.

^f 4.7 *bodies* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 4.9 *Who pined away, [as though] wounded, / For lack of* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

- ‘ 10With their own hands, tenderhearted women
Have cooked their children;
Such became their fare,
In the disaster of my poor^h people.
- ¶ 11GOD gave full vent to fury,
And poured out blazing wrath—
Kindling a fire in Zion
That consumed its foundations.
- ¶ 12The kings of the earth did not believe,
Nor any of the inhabitants of the world,
That foe or adversary could enter
The gates of Jerusalem.
- ¶ 13It was for the sins of her prophets,
The iniquities of her priests,
Who had shed in her midst
The blood of the just.
- ¶ 14They wandered blindly through the streets,
Defiled with blood,
So that no one was able
To touch their garments.
- ¶ 15“Away! Unclean!” people shouted at them,
“Away! Away! Touch not!”
So they wandered and wandered again;
For the nations had resolved:
“They shall stay here no longer.”
- ¶ 16GOD’s countenance has turned away from them,ⁱ
And will look on them no more.
They showed no regard for priests,
No favor to elders.
- ¶ 17Even now our eyes pine away
In vain for deliverance.
As we waited, still we wait
For a nation that cannot help.
- ¶ 18Our steps were checked,
We could not walk in our squares.^j

^h 4.10 *my poor* See note at 3.48.

ⁱ 4.16 *GOD’s countenance has turned away from them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^j 4.18 *in our squares* Or “With long strides.”

- Our doom is near, our days are done—
 Alas, our doom has come!
- ¶ ¹⁹Our pursuers were swifter
 Than the eagles in the sky;
 They chased us in the mountains,
 Lay in wait for us in the wilderness.
- ¶ ²⁰The breath of our life, GOD's anointed,^k
 Was captured in their traps—
 He in whose shade we had thought
 To live among the nations.
- ¶ ²¹Rejoice and exult, Fair Edom,
 Who dwell in the land of Uz!
 To you, too, the cup shall pass,
 You shall get drunk and expose your nakedness.
- ¶ ²²Your iniquity, Fair Zion, is expiated;
 You will be exiled no longer.
 Your iniquity, Fair Edom, [God] will note,
 And uncover your sins.

5

Remember, O ETERNAL One, what has befallen us;
 Behold, and see our disgrace!

²Our heritage has passed to aliens,
 Our homes to strangers.

³We have become orphans, fatherless;
 Our mothers are like widows.

⁴We must pay to drink our own water,
 Obtain our own kindling at a price.

⁵We are hotly^a pursued;
 Exhausted, we are given no rest.

⁶We hold out a hand to Egypt;
 To Assyria, for our fill of bread.

⁷Our ancestors sinned and are no more;
 And we must bear their guilt.

⁸Slaves are ruling over us,
 With none to rescue us from them.

^k **4.20 GOD's anointed** I.e., the last Davidic king on the throne of Judah; cf. 2 Kings

^{25.4–7.}

^a **5.5 hotly** Lit. "on our neck"; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

⁹We get our bread at the peril of our lives,
Because of the sword of the wilderness.^b

¹⁰Our skin glows like an oven,
With the fever of famine.

¹¹Those slaves^c have abused women in Zion,
Maidens in the towns of Judah.

¹²Princes have been hanged by them;
No respect has been shown to elders.

¹³Young men must carry millstones,
And youths stagger under loads of wood.

¹⁴The elders are gone from the gate,
The youngsters from their music.

¹⁵Gone is the joy of our hearts;
Our dancing is turned into mourning.

¹⁶The crown has fallen from our head;
Woe to us that we have sinned!

¹⁷Because of this our hearts are sick,
Because of these our eyes are dimmed:

¹⁸Because of Mount Zion, which lies desolate;
Jackals prowl over it.

¹⁹But You, O ETERNAL One, are enthroned forever,
Your throne endures through the ages.

²⁰Why have You forgotten us utterly,
Forsaken us for all time?

²¹Take us back, O ETERNAL One, to Yourself,
And let us come back;

Renew our days as of old!

²²For truly, You have rejected us,
Bitterly raged against us.

Take us back, O ETERNAL One, to Yourself,
And let us come back;
Renew our days as of old!

^b 5.9 *sword of the wilderness* Or “heat (cf. Deut. 28.22) of the wilderness”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 5.11 *Those slaves* Heb. “They.”

קְהַלֶּת | KOHELET
ECCLESIASTES

¶ The words of Koheleth^a son of David, king in Jerusalem.

²Utter futility!—said Koheleth—
Utter futility! All is futile!
³What real value is there for humankind
In all the gains^b they make beneath the sun?
⁴One generation goes, another comes,
But the earth remains the same forever.
⁵The sun rises, and the sun sets—
And glides^c back to where it rises.
⁶Southward blowing,
Turning northward,
Ever turning blows the wind;
On its rounds the wind returns.
⁷All streams flow into the sea,
Yet the sea is never full;
To the place [from] which they flow
The streams flow back again.^d
⁸All such things are wearisome:
No one can ever state them;
The eye never has enough of seeing,
Nor the ear enough of hearing.
⁹Only that shall happen
That has happened,
Only that occur
That has occurred;
There is nothing new
Beneath the sun!

¹⁰Sometimes there is a phenomenon of which they say, “Look, this one is new!”—it occurred long since, in ages that went by before us.

^a 1.1 **Koheleth** Probably “the Assembler,” namely of hearers or of sayings; cf. 12.9–11.

^b 1.3 **gains** So Rashbam. Heb. ‘amal usually has this sense in Ecclesiastes; cf. Ps. 105.44.

^c 1.5 **glides** So Targum; cf. *Bereshith Rabbah* on Gen. 1.17.

^d 1.7 **flow back again** According to popular belief, through tunnels; so Targum and Rashi.

¹¹The earlier ones are not remembered; so too those that will occur later will no more be remembered than^e those that will occur at the very end.

¹²I, Koheleth, was king in Jerusalem over Israel. ¹³I set my mind to study and to probe with wisdom all that happens under the sun.—An unhappy business, that, which God gave mortals to be concerned with! ¹⁴I observed all the happenings beneath the sun, and I found that all is futile and pursuit^f of wind:

¹⁵A twisted thing that cannot be made straight,
A lack that cannot be made good.

¹⁶I said to myself: “Here I have grown richer and wiser than any who ruled before me over Jerusalem, and my mind has zealously absorbed wisdom and learning.” ¹⁷And so I set my mind to appraise wisdom and to appraise madness and folly. And I learned—that this too was pursuit of wind:

¹⁸For as wisdom grows, vexation grows;
To increase learning is to increase heartache.

2 I said to myself, “Come, I will treat you to merriment. Taste mirth!” That too, I found, was futile.

²Of revelry I said, “It’s mad!”
Of merriment, “What good is that?”

³I ventured to tempt my flesh with wine, and to grasp folly, while letting my mind direct with wisdom, to the end that I might learn which of the two was better for mortals to practice in their few days of life under heaven. ⁴I multiplied my possessions. I built myself houses and I planted vineyards. ⁵I laid out gardens and groves, in which I planted every kind of fruit tree. ⁶I constructed pools of water, enough to irrigate a forest shooting up with trees. ⁷I bought male and female slaves, and I acquired stewards. I also acquired more cattle, both herds and flocks, than all who were before me in Jerusalem. ⁸I further amassed silver and gold and treasures of kings and provinces; and I got myself male and female singers, as well as the luxuries of commoners—

^e 1.11 *will no more be remembered than* Lit. “will not be remembered like . . .” For ‘im meaning “like,” cf. 2.16; 7.11; Job 9.26.

^f 1.14 *pursuit* Lit. “tending,” from root *r’h*, “to shepherd.”

coffers^a and coffers of them. ⁹Thus, I gained more wealth than anyone before me in Jerusalem. In addition, my wisdom remained with me: ¹⁰I withheld from my eyes nothing they asked for, and denied myself no enjoyment; rather, I got enjoyment out of^b all my wealth. And that was all I got out of my wealth.

¹¹Then my thoughts turned to all the fortune my hands had built up, to the wealth I had acquired and won—and oh, it was all futile and pursuit of wind; there was no real value under the sun! ¹²^cFor what will the man be like who will succeed the one who is ruling^d over what was built up long ago?

My thoughts also turned to appraising wisdom and madness and folly. ¹³I found that

Wisdom is superior to folly
As light is superior to darkness;
¹⁴The wise have their eyes in their head,
Whereas fools walk in darkness.

But I also realized that the same fate awaits them all. ¹⁵So I reflected: “The fate of the fool is also destined for me; to what advantage, then, have I been wise?” And I came to the conclusion that that too was futile, ¹⁶because the wise, just like^e the foolish, are not remembered forever; for, as the succeeding days roll by, both are forgotten. Alas, the wise die, just like^f the foolish!

¹⁷And so I loathed life. For I was distressed by all that goes on under the sun, because everything is futile and pursuit of wind.

¹⁸So, too, I loathed all the wealth that I was gaining under the sun. For I shall leave it to the man who will succeed me—¹⁹and who knows whether he will be wise or foolish?—and he will control all the wealth that I gained by toil and wisdom under the sun. That too is futile. ²⁰And so I came to view with despair all the gains I had made under the sun. ²¹For sometimes a person whose fortune was made with wisdom, knowledge, and skill must hand it on to be the portion

^a 2.8 *coffers* The Heb. *shiddah* occurs only here in the Bible; in the Mishnah it designates a kind of chest.

^b 2.10 *out of* Septuagint and a few Heb. manuscripts have “(in exchange) for”; cf. 2.24; 3.13, 22; 5.17.

^c 2.12 Sentences transposed for clarity.

^d 2.12 *the one who is ruling* Change of vocalization yields “me, and who is to rule”; cf. vv. 18–19.

^e 2.16 *like* See note at 1.11.

^f 2.16 *like* See note at 1.11.

of somebody who did not toil for it. That too is futile, and a grave evil.²²For what do mortals get for all the toiling and worrying they do under the sun?²³All their days their thoughts are grief and heartache, and even at night their mind has no respite. That too is futile!

²⁴There is nothing worthwhile for mortals but to eat and drink and afford themselves enjoyment with their means. And even that, I noted, comes from God.²⁵For who eats and who enjoys but myself?^g
²⁶One, namely, who pleases [God] is given the wisdom and shrewdness for enjoyment;^h while one who displeases is given the urge to gather and amass—only for handing on to someone who is pleasing to God. That too is futile and pursuit of wind.

3

A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven:^a

²A time for birthing and a time for dying,
A time for planting and a time for uprooting the planted;
³A time for slaying and a time for healing,^b
A time for tearing down and a time for building up;
⁴A time for weeping and a time for laughing,
A time for wailing and a time for dancing;
⁵A time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones,
A time for embracing and a time for shunning embraces;
⁶A time for seeking and a time for losing,
A time for keeping and a time for discarding;
⁷A time for ripping and a time for sewing,
A time for silence and a time for speaking;
⁸A time for loving and a time for hating;
A time for war and a time for peace.

⁹What value, then, can those who labor get from what they earn?

¹⁰I have observed the business that God gave humankind to be concerned with:¹¹[God] brings everything to pass precisely at its time; [God] also puts eternity in their mind,^c but without people ever guessing, from first to last, all the things that God brings to pass.¹²Thus I

^g 2.25 *myself* Some mss. and ancient versions read *mimmennu*, “by God’s doing.”

^h 2.26 *the wisdom and shrewdness for enjoyment* Lit. “wisdom and knowledge and enjoyment.”

^a 3.1 I.e., all human experiences are preordained by God; see v. 11.

^b 3.3 *slaying...healing* Emendation yields “wrecking...repairing”; cf. 1 Kings 18.30.

^c 3.11 *puts eternity in their mind* I.e., God preoccupies humankind with the attempt to discover the times of future events; cf. 8.17.

realized that the only worthwhile thing there is for them is to enjoy themselves and do what is good^d in their lifetime; ¹³also, that whenever people do eat and drink and get enjoyment out of all their wealth, it is a gift of God.

¹⁴I realized, too, that whatever God has brought to pass will recur evermore:

Nothing can be added to it
And nothing taken from it—

and God has brought to pass that mortals feel reverence.

¹⁵e What is occurring occurred long since,
And what is to occur occurred long since:

and God seeks the pursued. ¹⁶And, indeed, I have observed under the sun:

Alongside justice there is wickedness,
Alongside righteousness there is wickedness.

¹⁷I mused: “God will doom both righteous and wicked, for there is^f a time for every experience and for every happening.” ¹⁸g So I decided, as regards human beings, to dissociate them [from] the divine beings and to face the fact that they are animals.^h ¹⁹For in respect of the fate of humans and the fate of animals, they have one and the same fate: as the one dies so dies the other, and both have the same lifebreath; humans have no superiority over animals, since both amount to nothing. ²⁰Both go to the same place; both came from dust and both return to dust. ²¹Who knows if the lifebreath of humans does rise upward and if the breath of animals does sink down into the earth?

²²I saw that there is nothing better for people than to enjoy their possessions, since that is their portion. For who can enable them to see what will happen afterward?

4 I further observed^a all the oppression that goes on under the sun: the tears of the oppressed, with none to comfort them; and their oppressors’ power, with none to comfort them. ²Then I accounted those who died long since more fortunate than those who are still

^d 3.12 *what is good* I.e., what the author has already concluded (2.24) is good.

^e 3.15 Meaning of parts of verse uncertain.

^f 3.17 *there is* Shift of a diacritical point yields “[God] has set.”

^g 3.18 Meaning of parts of verse uncertain.

^h 3.18 Contrast Ps. 8.5–6.

^a 4.1 *further observed* Cf. 3.16.

living; ³and happier than either are those who have not yet come into being and have never witnessed the miseries that go on under the sun.

⁴I have also noted that all labor and skillful enterprise come from people's envy of one another—another futility and pursuit of wind!
⁵[True,]

Fools fold their hands together^b
 And have to eat their own flesh.

⁶[But no less truly,]

Better is a handful of gratification
 Than two fistfuls of labor that is pursuit of wind.

⁷And I have noted this further futility under the sun: ⁸the case of a man who is alone, with no companion, who has neither son nor brother; yet he amasses wealth without limit, and his eye is never sated with riches. For whom, now, is he amassing it while denying himself^c enjoyment? That too is a futility and an unhappy business.

⁹^dTwo are better off than one, in that they have greater benefit from^e their earnings. ¹⁰For should they fall, one can raise the other; but woe to someone who is alone and falls with no companion to assist! ¹¹Further, when two lie together they are warm; but how can someone who is alone get warm? ¹²Also, if someone attacks, two can withstand it. A threefold cord is not readily broken!

¹³Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer has the sense to heed warnings. ¹⁴For the former can emerge from a dungeon to become king; while the latter, even if born to kingship, can become a pauper.^f ¹⁵[However,] I reflected about all the living who walk under the sun with^g that youthful successor^h who steps into his place. ¹⁶Unnumbered are the multitudes of all those who pre-

^b 4.5 *fold their hands together* I.e., do not work; cf. Prov. 6.10; 24.33.

^c 4.8 *is he amassing it while denying himself* Lit. "am I amassing . . . myself."

^d 4.9–5.8 This section consists of a series of observations, each of which is introduced by some slight association with what precedes. The theme of 4.4–8 is resumed with 5.9.

^e 4.9 *benefit from* Emendation yields "hope for"; cf. 2.20.

^f 4.14 *become a pauper* Taking *rash* as a verb; cf. Ps. 34.11.

^g 4.15 *who walk under the sun with* I.e., are contemporaries of.

^h 4.15 *that youthful successor* Or: "the next youngster," i.e., whoever comes in line to displace the youth mentioned in v. 13.

ceded them;ⁱ and later generations will not acclaim him either.^j For that^k too is futile and pursuit of wind.

¹⁷Be not overeager to go^l to the House of God: more acceptable is obedience than the offering of fools, for they know nothing [but] to do wrong. **5** ¹Keep your mouth from being rash, and let not your throat^a be quick to bring forth speech before God. For God is in heaven and you are on earth; that is why your words should be few. ²Just as dreams come with much brooding, so does foolish utterance come with much speech. ³When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. For [God] has no pleasure in fools; what you vow, fulfill. ⁴It is better not to vow at all than to vow and not fulfill. ⁵Don't let your mouth bring you into disfavor, and don't plead before the messenger^b that it was an error, but fear God;^c else God may be angered by your talk and destroy your possessions. ⁶^dFor much dreaming leads to futility and to superfluous talk.

⁷If you see in a province oppression of the poor and suppression of right and justice, don't wonder at the fact; for one high official is protected by a higher one, and both of them by still higher ones. ⁸Thus the greatest advantage in all the land is his: he controls a field that is cultivated.^e

⁹A lover of money is never satisfied with money, nor a lover of wealth, with income. That too is futile. ¹⁰As one's substance increases, so do those who consume it; what, then, does the success of its owner amount to but feasting the eyes? ¹¹Workers'^f sleep is sweet, whether they have much or little to eat; but the abundance of the rich doesn't let them sleep.

ⁱ 4.16 *those who preceded them* And so never heard of the gifted youth.

^j 4.16 *later generations will not acclaim him either* For despite his wisdom, he too will be forgotten; cf. 2.16.

^k 4.16 *that* Namely, the advantage of wisdom over folly.

^l 4.17 *Be not overeager to go* Lit. "Guard your foot when it [or, you] would go."

^a 5.1 *throat* Heb. *leb*, lit. "heart," sometimes designates the organ of speech; cf. Isa. 33.18; 59.13; Ps. 19.15; 49.4; Job 8.10.

^b 5.5 *the messenger* Some ancient versions read "God."

^c 5.5 *but fear God* Moved up from v. 6 for clarity.

^d 5.6 Meaning of verse uncertain. Emendation yields "Much brooding results in dreams; and much talk in futilities"; cf. v. 2.

^e 5.8 I.e., the high official profits from the labor of others; but meaning of verse uncertain.

^f 5.11 *workers'* Some ancient versions have "slaves."

¹²Here is a grave evil I have observed under the sun: riches hoarded to the detriment of the owners,¹³in that those riches are lost in some unlucky venture; and if they produce children, they have nothing in hand.

¹⁴Another grave evil is this: The rich^g must depart just as they came.^h As they came out of their mother's womb, so must they depart at last, naked as they came. They can take nothing of their wealth to carry with them. ¹⁵So what is the good of their toiling for the wind? ¹⁶Besides, all their days they eat in darkness,ⁱ with much vexation and grief and anger.

¹⁷Only this, I have found, is a real good: to eat and drink and get pleasure with all the gains you make under the sun, during the numbered days of life that God has given you; for that is your portion.

¹⁸Also, whenever people are given riches and property by God, and they are also permitted to enjoy them and to take their portion and get pleasure for their gains—that is a gift of God. ¹⁹For [such people] will not brood much over the days of their life,^j because God keeps them busy enjoying themselves.

6 There is an evil I have observed under the sun, and a grave one it is for mortals:²that God sometimes grants a man riches, property, and wealth, so that he does not want for anything his appetite may crave, but God does not permit him to enjoy it; instead, a stranger will enjoy it. That is futility and a grievous ill. ³Even if a man should beget a hundred children and live many years—no matter how many the days of his years may come to, if his gullet is not sated through his wealth, I say: The stillbirth, though it was not even accorded a burial,^a is more fortunate than he. ⁴Though it comes into futility and departs into darkness, and its very name is covered with darkness,^bthough it has never seen or experienced the sun, it is better off than he—⁶yes, even if the other lived a thousand years twice over but never had his fill of enjoyment! For are not both of them bound for the same place?
⁷^bAll of a person's earning is for [filling] the mouth, yet the gullet is not sated. ⁸What advantage then have the wise over the foolish, what

^g 5.14 *The rich* Heb. "He."

^h 5.14 *Another grave evil is this: The rich must depart just as they came* Moved up from v. 15 for clarity.

ⁱ 5.16 *they eat in darkness* Septuagint reads "are [spent] in darkness and mourning."

^j 5.19 *the days of their life* The thought of which is depressing; see v. 16.

^a 6.3 *not even accorded a burial* Stillbirths were cast into pits or hidden in the ground in no recognizable graves; cf. v. 4 end.

^b 6.7 Cf. Prov. 16.26.

advantage have paupers who know how to get on in life?^c ^{9d} Is the feasting of the eyes more important than the pursuit of desire? That, too, is futility and pursuit of wind.

¹⁰ Whatever happens, it was designated long ago and it was known that it would happen; as for humankind, they cannot contend with the One who is stronger than they are. ¹¹ Often, much talk means much futility. How does it benefit a person? ¹² Who can possibly know what is best for people to do in life—the few days of this fleeting life? For^e who can tell what the future holds for them under the sun?

7 ^a A good name is better than fragrant oil, and the day of death than the day of birth.^b

² It is better to go to a house of mourning than to a house of feasting; for that is the end of every mortal, and the living should take it to heart.

³ Vexation is better than revelry;^c for though the face be sad, the heart may be glad. ⁴ The wise are drawn to a house of mourning, and the foolish to a house of merrymaking.

⁵ It is better to listen to the reproof of someone wise than to listen to the praise of fools. ⁶ For the levity^d of the fool is like the crackling of nettles under a kettle. ^e But that too is illusory; ^f for cheating^f may rob the wise of reason and destroy the prudence of the cautious.^g

⁸ The end of a matter is better than the beginning of it.

Better a patient spirit than a haughty spirit.

⁹ Don't let your spirit be quickly vexed, for vexation abides in the breasts of fools.

^c 6.7–8 yet the gullet is not sated. What advantage then have the wise over the foolish, what advantage have paupers who know how to get on in life? Meaning of Heb. uncertain; emendation yields “And if the gullet is not sated, ^bwhat advantage have the wise over fools, those who know how to get on in life over paupers?”

^d 6.9 Meaning of first half of verse uncertain.

^e 6.12 *For* Lit. “according to the shadow that”; cf. Qumran Aramaic *betel* and Syriac *mettol*; and see 8.13.

^a 7.1–24 The author now offers a number of practical maxims, which, however, he concludes (vv. 23–24) are of limited value.

^b 7.1 Until the moment of death, people risk forfeiting their good name.

^c 7.3 For empty revelry precludes real happiness; cf. 2.2.

^d 7.6 *levity* Emendation yields “praise” (*shbh*).

^e 7.6–7 This section, to end of v. 7, is apparently a continuation of the thought in vv. 11–12 and 19.

^f 7.7 *cheating* Emendation yields “riches.”

^g 7.7 *the cautious* Lit. “caution”; cf. postbiblical *mathun* “cautious.”

¹⁰Don't say, "How has it happened that former times were better than these?" For it is not wise of you to ask that question.

¹¹Wisdom is as good as a patrimony, and even better, for those who behold the sun. ¹²For to be in the shelter of wisdom is to be also in the shelter of money,^h and the advantage of intelligence is that wisdom preserves the life of the one who possesses it.

^{13ⁱ}Consider God's doing! Who can straighten what has been twisted?

¹⁴So in a time of good fortune enjoy the good fortune; and in a time of misfortune, reflect: The one no less than the other was God's doing; consequently, mortals may find no fault with [God].^j

¹⁵In my own brief span of life, I have seen both these things: sometimes someone good perishes despite their goodness, and sometimes someone wicked endures despite their wickedness. ¹⁶So don't overdo goodness and don't act too wise, or you may be dumfounded. ¹⁷Don't overdo wickedness and don't be a fool, or you may die before your time. ¹⁸It is best that you grasp the one without letting go of the other, for those who fear God will do their duty^k by both.

¹⁹Wisdom is more of a stronghold to someone wise than ten magnates^l that a city may contain.

^{20^m}For there is not one good person on earth who does what is bestⁿ and doesn't err.

²¹Finally, don't pay attention to everything that is said, so that you may not hear your slave reviling you; ²²for well you remember^o the many times that you yourself have reviled others.

²³All this I tested with wisdom. I thought I could fathom it,^p but it eludes me. ²⁴[The secret of] what happens is elusive and deep, deep down; who can discover it? ²⁵I put my mind to studying, exploring, and seeking wisdom and the reason of things, and to studying wickedness, stupidity, madness, and folly. ²⁶Now, I find more bitter than

^h7.12 *For to be in the shelter of wisdom is to be also in the shelter of money* Emendation yields "For the possessor of wisdom becomes a possessor of money."

ⁱ7.13–14 These verses continue the thought of v. 10.

^j7.14 *The one no less than the other...find no fault with [God]* So Rashi; cf. the same thought in Job 1.22; 2.10.

^k7.18 *do their duty* Cf. postbiblical *yasa' yede*.

^l7.19 *ten magnates* Emendation yields "the riches of the magnates"; cf. Prov. 18.11.

^m7.20 Apparently continuing the thought of v. 16.

ⁿ7.20 *does what is best* Refers back to 6.12.

^o7.22 *well you remember* Lit. "your heart knows"; the same idiom occurs again in 8.5.

^p7.23 *it* Refers back to 6.12.

death the woman who^q is all traps, whose hands are fetters, and whose heart is snares. He who is pleasing to God escapes her, and he who is displeasing is caught by her.²⁷ See, this is what I found, said Koheleth, item by item in my search for the reason of things.²⁸ As for what I sought further but did not find: I found only one [true] human being in a thousand, and among all these I did not find a [truly compatible] woman.²⁹ But, see, this I did find:^r God made human beings plain, but they have engaged in too much reasoning.

8 Who is like the sage,^a and who knows the meaning of the adage:

“Wisdom lights up a person’s face,
So that deep discontent^b is dissembled”?

²I do! “Obey the king’s orders—and don’t rush^c into uttering an oath by God.”^d ³Leave his presence; do not tarry^e in a dangerous situation, for he can do anything he pleases;^f ⁴inasmuch as a king’s command is authoritative, and none can say to him, “What are you doing?”^g One who obeys orders will not suffer from the dangerous situation.

Someone wise, however, will bear in mind^f that there is a time of doom.^g ⁶For there is a time for every experience, including the doom; for calamity^h overwhelms.⁷ Indeed, what is to happen is unknown; even when it is on the point of happening, who can tell?ⁱ No one has authority over the lifebreath—to hold back the lifebreath;^j there is no authority over the day of death. There is no mustering out from that war; wickedness^j is powerless to save its owner.

^q7.26 *I find more bitter than death the woman who . . . whose hands . . . whose heart* Or “I find woman more bitter than death; she . . . her hands . . . her heart.” Force of Heb. uncertain.

^r7.28–29 *among all these . . . this I did find* Force of Heb. uncertain.

^a8.1 *Who is like the sage* Some ancient versions read “Who here is wise.”

^b8.1 *discontent* Lit. “face”; cf. 1 Sam. 1.18; Job 9.27.

^c8.2 *don’t rush* Moved up from v. 3 for English word order.

^d8.2 The answer to the inquiry about the implications of the proverb in v. 1 is given in the form of another proverb, of which only the first half is relevant and is enlarged upon.

^e8.3 *Leave his presence; do not tarry* Or “Give ground before him; do not resist.”

^f8.5 *bear in mind* The same idiom as in 7.22.

^g8.5 *time of doom* Lit. “time and doom”; cf. the synonymous “time of misfortune,” lit. “time and misfortune,” 9.11.

^h8.6 *calamity* Still another term for death; cf. “the time of calamity” for “the hour of death,” 9.12.

ⁱ8.8 *hold back the lifebreath* From leaving the body when the time comes; see 12.7; cf. Ps. 104.29; 146.4.

^j8.8 *wickedness* Emendation yields “riches.”

⁹All these things I observed; I noted all that went on under the sun, while people still had authority over others to treat them unjustly.
¹⁰And then I saw scoundrels coming from the Holy Site and being brought to burial,^k while such as had acted righteously were forgotten in the city.

And here is another frustration: ¹¹the fact that the sentence imposed for evil deeds is not executed swiftly, which is why people are emboldened to do evil—¹²the fact that sinners may do evil a hundred times and their [punishment] still be delayed. For although I am aware that “It will be well with those who revere God since they show reverence,”^l and it will not be well with scoundrels, and they will not live long, because^l they do not revere God”—¹⁴here is a frustration that occurs in the world: sometimes someone upright is requited according to the conduct of the scoundrel; and sometimes the scoundrel is requited according to the conduct of the upright. I say all that is frustration.

¹⁵I therefore praised enjoyment. For the only good people can have under the sun is to eat and drink and enjoy themselves. That much can accompany them, in exchange for their wealth, through the days of life that God has granted them under the sun.

¹⁶For I have set my mind to learn wisdom and to observe the business that goes on in the world—even to the extent of going without sleep day and night—¹⁷and I have observed all that God brings to pass. Indeed, human beings cannot guess the events that occur under the sun. For humans try strenuously, but fail to guess them; and even if those who are wise should think to discover them they would not be able to guess them.

9 For all this I noted, and I ascertained^a all this: that the actions of even the righteous and the wise are determined by God. Even love! Even hate! Humankind knows none of these in advance—²none!^b For the

^k **8.10** *coming from the Holy Site and being brought to burial* Meaning uncertain; emendation yields “approaching [to minister]. They would come and profane the Holy Site.”

^l **8.13** *because* See note at 6.12.

^a **9.1** *ascertained* Meaning of verb uncertain; construction as in Hos. 12.3; Ezra 3.12.

^b **9.1–2** *Even love! Even hate! Humankind knows none of these in advance—none!* Emendation yields “Even love, even hate, no one can know in advance. All ²are insignificant.”

same fate is in store for all: for the righteous, and for the wicked; for the good and pure,^c and for the impure; for one who sacrifices, and for one who does not;^d for one who is pleasing,^e and for one who is displeasing; and for one who swears, and for one who shuns oaths.^f ³That is the sad thing about all that goes on under the sun: that the same fate is in store for all. (Not only that, but people's hearts are full of sadness, and their minds of madness, while they live; and then—to the dead!) ⁴For one who is reckoned among^g the living has something to look forward to—even a live dog is better than a dead lion—⁵since the living know they will die. But the dead know nothing; they have no more recompense,^h for even the memory of them has died. ⁶Their loves, their hates, their jealousies have long since perished; and they have no more share till the end of time in all that goes on under the sun.

⁷Go, [my son,] eat your bread in gladness, and drink your wine in joy; for your action was long ago approved by God.ⁱ ⁸Let your clothes always be freshly washed, and your head never lack ointment. ⁹Enjoy happiness with a woman you love all the fleeting days of life that have been granted to you under the sun—all your fleeting days. For that alone is what you can get out of life and out of the means you acquire under the sun. ¹⁰Whatever it is in your power to do, do with all your might. For there is no action, no reasoning, no learning, no wisdom in Sheol, where you are going.

¹¹I have further observed under the sun that
 The race is not won by the swift,
 Nor the battle by the valiant;
 Nor is bread won by the wise,
 Nor wealth by the intelligent,
 Nor favor by the learned.

For the time of mischance^j comes to all.^k ¹²And human beings cannot

^c 9.2 *the good and pure* I.e., those who observe the laws of ritual purity.

^d 9.2 Cf. 4.17.

^e 9.2 *pleasing* To God; cf. 2.26; 7.26.

^f 9.2 Cf. 8.2.

^g 9.4 *reckoned among* Lit. “joined to all.”

^h 9.5 *recompense* Emendation yields “hope.”

ⁱ 9.7 *approved by God* Cf. 2.24–25; 3.13; 5.18.

^j 9.11 *time of mischance* Euphemism for death.

^k 9.11 I.e., the insignificant duration of life renders all successes illusory; cf. 4.15–16.

even know their time. As fishes are enmeshed in a fatal net, and as birds are trapped in a snare, so humans are caught at the time of calamity,^l when it comes upon them without warning.

¹³This thing too I observed under the sun about wisdom, and it affected me profoundly. ¹⁴There was a little city, with few men^m in it; and to it came a great king, who invested it and built mighty siege works against it. ¹⁵Present in the city was a poor wise man who might have savedⁿ it with his wisdom, but nobody thought of^o that poor man.

¹⁶So I observed: Wisdom is better than valor; but

The wisdom of the poor is scorned,
And their words are not heeded.

¹⁷^pWords spoken softly by wise men are heeded sooner than those shouted by a lord in folly.^q

¹⁸Wisdom is more valuable than weapons of war,^r but a single error destroys much of value.

10

Dead flies turn the perfumer's ointment fetid and putrid;^a so a little folly outweighs massive wisdom.

²A sage's mind tends toward the right hand, a fool's toward the left.^b

³The mind of a fool is wanting also when traveling—which lets everybody know who is a fool.

⁴If the wrath of a lord flares up against you, don't give up your post;^c for when wrath abates, grave offenses are pardoned.^d

⁵Here is an evil I have seen under the sun as great as an error committed by a ruler: ⁶Folly was placed on lofty heights, while the rich sat in low estate. ⁷I have seen slaves on horseback, and nobles walking on the ground like slaves.

^l 9.12 *time of calamity* Euphemism for death.

^m9.14 *men* I.e., potential defenders.

ⁿ9.15 *who might have saved* Or “and it was he who saved.”

^o9.15 *thought of* Or “remembered.”

^p9.17–10.19 These verses constitute a group of loosely connected aphorisms.

^q9.17 *sooner than those shouted by a lord in folly* Lit. “than the scream of a lord in [the manner of] the fools.”

^r9.18 *weapons of war* Emendation yields “everything precious.”

^a10.1 *putrid* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b10.2 I.e., a sage's mind brings good luck; a fool's brings bad luck.

^c10.4 *post* Emendation yields “hope.”

^d10.4 *when wrath abates, grave offenses are pardoned* Lit. “abatement (2 Chron. 36.16) remits grave offenses.” For *hinniah* “to remit,” cf. *Abodah Zarah* 13a; cf. *hanahah* “remission of taxes,” Esth. 2.18.

⁸One who digs a pit will fall into it; one who breaches a stone fence will be bitten by a snake. ⁹One who quarries stones will be hurt by them; one who splits wood will be harmed by^e it. ¹⁰If the ax has become dull and the edge has not been whetted, then more strength must be exerted. Thus the advantage of a skill [depends on the exercise of] prudence. ¹¹If the snake bites because no spell was uttered, no advantage is gained by the trained charmer.

¹²Sages' talk brings them favor, but fools' lips are their undoing. ¹³Their talk begins as silliness and ends as disastrous madness. ¹⁴Yet fools talk and talk!

⁸Humans cannot know what will happen; who can tell them what the future holds?

¹⁵^hThe exertions of fools tire them out, for they don't know how to get to a town.

¹⁶Alas for you, O land whose king is a lackey and whose ministers dine in the morning! ¹⁷Happy are you, O land whose king is a master and whose ministers dine at the proper time—with restraint, not with guzzling!

¹⁸Through slothfulness the ceiling sags,

Through lazy hands the house caves in.

¹⁹Theyⁱ make a banquet for revelry; wine makes life merry, and money answers every need.

²⁰Don't revile a king even among your intimates.^j

Don't revile someone who is rich even in your bedchamber;

For a bird of the air may carry the utterance,

And a winged creature may report the word.

11 Send your bread forth upon the waters; for after many days you will find it. ²Distribute portions to seven or even to eight, for you cannot know what misfortune may occur on earth.

³If the clouds are filled, they will pour down rain on the earth; and if a tree falls to the south or to the north, the tree will stay where

^e **10.9** *be hurt by them; one who splits wood will be harmed by* Emendation yields “profit . . . shall make use of.”

^f **10.10** Meaning of verse uncertain.

^g **10.14** The thought of this sentence is resumed at v. 20.

^h **10.15** This verse continues the thought of v. 3.

ⁱ **10.19** *They* The ministers of v. 16.

^j **10.20** *intimates* In contrast to others “thoughts”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

it falls.^a ⁴Whoever watches the wind will never sow; and whoever observes the clouds will never reap. ⁵Just as you do not know how the lifebreath passes into^b the limbs within the womb of the pregnant woman, so you cannot foresee the actions of God, who causes all things to happen. ⁶Sow your seed in the morning, and don't hold back your hand in the evening, since you don't know which is going to succeed, the one or the other, or if both are equally good.

⁷How sweet is the light, what a delight for the eyes to behold the sun! ⁸Even someone who lives many years should rejoice during all of them, remembering how many the days of darkness are going to be. The only future is nothingness!

⁹O youth, enjoy yourself while you are young! Let your heart lead you to enjoyment in the days of your youth. Follow the desires of your heart and the glances of your eyes—but know well that God will call you to account for all such things—¹⁰and banish care from your mind, and pluck sorrow out of your flesh! For youth and black hair are fleeting.

12 So appreciate your vigor^a in the days of your youth, before those days of sorrow come and those years arrive of which you will say, “I have no pleasure in them”; ^bbefore sun and light and moon and stars grow dark, and the clouds come back again after the rain:

^cWhen the guards of the house^b become shaky,
And the soldiers^c are bent,
And the maids that grind,^d grown few, are idle,
And the ladies that peer through the windows^e grow dim,
^fAnd the doors to the street^f are shut—

^a 11.3 *if a tree falls to the south or to the north, the tree will stay where it falls* Emen-dation yields, “if a thunderbolt (lit. arrow, cf., e.g., 2 Sam. 22.15) falls . . . where the thunderbolt falls, only there will it strike.”

^b 11.5 *into* So many mss. and Targum; Tiberian Masoretic mss. read “like.”

^a 12.1 *So appreciate your vigor* Cf. postbiblical *bori*; in contrast to others “Remember your Creator.”

^b 12.3 *guards of the house* I.e., the arms.

^c 12.3 *soldiers* I.e., the legs.

^d 12.3 *maids that grind* I.e., the teeth.

^e 12.3 *ladies that peer through the windows* I.e., the eyes.

^f 12.4 *doors to the street* I.e., the ears.

With the noise of the hand mill growing fainter,
 And the song of the bird growing feebler,^g
 And all the strains of music dying down;^h
⁵When one is afraid of heights
 And there is terror on the road.—
 For the almond tree may blossom,
 The grasshopper be burdened,ⁱ
 And the caper bush may bud again;^j
 But mortals set out for their eternal abode,
 With mourners all around in the street.—
⁶Before the silver cord snaps
 And the golden bowl crashes,
 The jar is shattered at the spring,
 And the jug^k is smashed at the cistern.^l
⁷And the dust returns to the ground
 As it was,
 And the lifebreath returns to God
 Who bestowed it.
⁸Utter futility—said Koheleth—
 All is futile!

⁹A further word: Because Koheleth was a sage, he continued to instruct the people. He listened to and tested the soundness^m of many maxims. ¹⁰Koheleth sought to discover useful sayings and recordedⁿ genuinely truthful sayings. ¹¹The sayings of the wise are like goads, like nails fixed in prodding sticks.^o They were given by one Shepherd.^p

^g 12.4 *growing feebler* Exact meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^h 12.4 *strains of music dying down* Cf. 2 Sam. 19.36.

ⁱ 12.5 *The grasshopper be burdened* Emendation yields “The squill (postbiblical Heb. *hašab*) resume its burden,” i.e., its blossom stalk and its leaves.

^j 12.5 *caper bush may bud again* These plants, after seeming dead for part of the year, revive, unlike human beings; cf. Job 14.7–10.

^k 12.6 *jug* So in Punic; in contrast to others “wheel.”

^l 12.6 *smashed at the cistern* Poetic figure for the end of life.

^m 12.9 *soundness* A noun, like *dibber* (Jer. 5.13), which occurs in such postbiblical phrases as *shanim ke-thiq(qe)nan* “normal years” (lit. “years according to their propriety”).

ⁿ 12.10 *recorded* Heb. *we-khathub* is equivalent to *we-khathob*, an infinitive employed as in Esth. 9.16 and elsewhere.

^o 12.11 *in prodding sticks* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^p 12.11 *They were given by one Shepherd* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Emendation yields “They are accounted as a sharp ox goad” (post-biblical *mardea'*).

¹²A further word: Against them,^q my son, be warned!

The making of many books is without limit

And much study^r is a wearying of the flesh.

¹³The sum of the matter, when all is said and done: Revere God and observe the commandments! For this applies to all humankind: ¹⁴that God will call every creature to account for everything unknown,^s be it good or bad.

The sum of the matter, when all is said and done:

Revere God and observe the commandments!

For this applies to all humankind.

^q 12.12 *Against them* Emendation yields “Slow, there!” Cf. Arabic *mah* and *mah mah*; so also *mah (meh)* in Prov. 31.2.

^r 12.12 *study* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^s 12.14 *everything unknown* Emendation yields “all their conduct.”

אסתר | 'ESTER
ESTHER

It happened in the days of Ahasuerus—that Ahasuerus who reigned over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to Cush.² In those days, when King Ahasuerus occupied the royal throne in the fortress^a Shushan,³ in the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all the officials and courtiers—the administration of Persia and Media, the nobles and the governors of the provinces in his service.⁴ For no fewer than a hundred and eighty days he displayed the vast riches of his kingdom and the splendid glory of his majesty.⁵ At the end of this period, the king gave a banquet for seven days in the court of the king's palace garden for all the people who lived in the fortress Shushan, high and low alike.^{6b} [There were hangings of] white cotton and blue wool, caught up by cords of fine linen and purple wool to silver rods and alabaster columns; and there were couches of gold and silver on a pavement of marble, alabaster, mother-of-pearl, and mosaics.⁷ Royal wine was served in abundance, as befits a king, in golden beakers, beakers of varied design.⁸ And the rule for the drinking was, “No restrictions!”^c For the king had given orders to every palace steward to comply with each man's wishes.⁹ In addition, Queen Vashti gave a banquet for women, in the royal palace^d of King Ahasuerus.

¹⁰ On the seventh day, when the king was merry with wine, he ordered Mehuman, Bizzetha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs in attendance on King Ahasuerus,¹¹ to bring Queen Vashti before the king wearing a royal diadem, to display her beauty to the peoples and the officials; for she was a beautiful woman.¹² But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command conveyed by the eunuchs. The king was greatly incensed, and his fury burned within him.

¹³ Then the king consulted the sages learned in procedure.^e (For

^a 1.2 *fortress* I.e., the fortified city.

^b 1.6 Meaning of part of this verse uncertain.

^c 1.8 *And the rule for the drinking was, “No restrictions!”* Or “As for drinking according to the rule—no one enforced it.”

^d 1.9 *palace* Or “hall”; cf. 5.1.

^e 1.13 *procedure* Lit. “the times.”

it was the royal practice [to turn] to all who were versed in law and precedent.¹⁴ His closest advisers were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven ministers of Persia and Media who had access to the royal presence and occupied the first place in the kingdom.)¹⁵ “What,” [he asked,] “shall be done, according to law, to Queen Vashti for failing to obey the command of King Ahasuerus conveyed by the eunuchs?”

¹⁶ Thereupon Memucan declared in the presence of the king and the ministers: “Queen Vashti has committed an offense not only against Your Majesty but also against all the officials and against all the peoples in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.¹⁷ For the queen’s behavior will make all wives despise their husbands, as they reflect that King Ahasuerus himself ordered Queen Vashti to be brought before him, but she would not come.¹⁸ This very day the ladies of Persia and Media, who have heard of the queen’s behavior, will cite it to all Your Majesty’s officials, and there will be no end of scorn and provocation!

¹⁹ “If it please Your Majesty, let a royal edict be issued by you, and let it be written into the laws of Persia and Media, so that it cannot be abrogated, that Vashti shall never enter the presence of King Ahasuerus. And let Your Majesty bestow her royal state upon another who is more worthy than she.²⁰ Then will the judgment executed by Your Majesty resound throughout your realm, vast though it is; and all wives will treat their husbands with respect, high and low alike.”

²¹ The proposal was approved by the king and the ministers, and the king did as Memucan proposed.²² Dispatches were sent to all the provinces of the king, to every province in its own script and to every nation in its own language, that every man should wield authority in his home and speak the language of his own people.

2 Some time afterward, when the anger of King Ahasuerus subsided, he thought of Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her.² The king’s servants who attended him said, “Let beautiful young virgins be sought out for Your Majesty.³ Let Your Majesty appoint officers in every province of your realm to assemble all the beautiful young virgins at the fortress Shushan, in the harem under the supervision of Hege, the king’s eunuch, guardian of the women. Let them be provided with their cosmetics.⁴ And let the maiden who pleases Your Majesty be queen instead of Vashti.” The proposal pleased the king, and he acted upon it.

⁵In the fortress Shushan lived a Jew by the name of Mordecai, son of Jair son of Shimei son of Kish, a Benjaminite. ⁶[Kish] had been exiled from Jerusalem in the group that was carried into exile along with King Jeconiah of Judah, who had been driven into exile by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. ⁷He was foster father to Hadassah—that is, Esther—his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The maiden was shapely and beautiful; and when her father and mother died, Mordecai adopted her as his own daughter.

⁸When the king's order and edict was proclaimed, and when many maidens were assembled in the fortress Shushan under the supervision of Hegai,^a Esther too was taken into the king's palace under the supervision of Hegai, guardian of the women. ⁹The maiden pleased him and won his favor, and he hastened to furnish her with her cosmetics and her rations, as well as with the seven maids who were her due from the king's palace; and he treated her and her maids with special kindness in the harem. ¹⁰Esther did not reveal her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had told her not to reveal it. ¹¹Every single day Mordecai would walk about in front of the court of the harem, to learn how Esther was faring and what was happening to her.

¹²When each maiden's turn came to go to King Ahasuerus at the end of the twelve months' treatment prescribed for women (for that was the period spent on beautifying them: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and women's cosmetics,¹³ and it was after that that the maiden would go to the king), whatever she asked for would be given her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace.¹⁴ She would go in the evening and leave in the morning for a second harem in charge of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, guardian of the concubines. She would not go again to the king unless the king wanted her, when she would be summoned by name.¹⁵ When the turn came for Esther daughter of Abihail—the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his own daughter—to go to the king, she did not ask for anything but what Hegai, the king's eunuch, guardian of the women, advised. Yet Esther won the admiration of all who saw her.

¹⁶Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, in his royal palace,^b in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.¹⁷ The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and

^a 2.8 *Hegai* Identical with Hege in v. 3.

^b 2.16 *palace* See note at 1.9.

she won his grace and favor more than all the virgins. So he set a royal diadem on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.¹⁸ The king gave a great banquet for all his officials and courtiers, “the banquet of Esther.” He proclaimed a remission of taxes^c for the provinces and distributed gifts as befits a king.

^{19d} When the virgins were assembled a second time, Mordecai sat in the palace gate.²⁰ But Esther still did not reveal her kindred or her people, as Mordecai had instructed her; for Esther obeyed Mordecai’s bidding, as she had done when she was under his tutelage.

²¹ At that time, when Mordecai was sitting in the palace gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king’s eunuchs who guarded the threshold, became angry, and plotted to do away with King Ahasuerus.²² Mordecai learned of it and told it to Queen Esther, and Esther reported it to the king in Mordecai’s name.²³ The matter was investigated and found to be so, and the two were impaled on stakes. This was recorded in the book of annals at the king’s behest.

3 Some time afterward, King Ahasuerus promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite; he advanced him and seated him higher than any of his fellow officials.² All the king’s courtiers in the palace gate knelt and bowed low to Haman, for such was the king’s order concerning him; but Mordecai would not kneel or bow low.³ Then the king’s courtiers who were in the palace gate said to Mordecai, “Why do you disobey the king’s order?”⁴ When they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai’s resolve would prevail; for he had explained to them that he was a Jew.^a When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel or bow low to him, Haman was filled with rage.⁵ But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone; having been told who Mordecai’s people were, Haman plotted to do away with all the Jews, Mordecai’s people, throughout the kingdom of Ahasuerus.

⁷ In the first month, that is, the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, *pur*—which means “the lot”—was cast before Haman concerning every day and every month, [until it fell on] the twelfth month, that is, the month of Adar.⁸ Haman then said to King

^c 2.18 *a remission of taxes* Or “an amnesty.”

^d 2.19 Meaning of verse uncertain.

^a 3.4 *he was a Jew* I.e., that as a Jew he could not bow to a descendant of Agag, the Amalekite king; see 1 Samuel 15, and cf. Exod. 17.14–16; Deut. 25.17–19.

Ahasuerus, “There is a certain people, scattered and dispersed among the other peoples in all the provinces of your realm, whose laws are different from those of any other people and who do not obey the king’s laws; and it is not in Your Majesty’s interest to tolerate them. ⁹If it please Your Majesty, let an edict be drawn for their destruction, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the stewards for deposit in the royal treasury.” ¹⁰Thereupon the king removed his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hamedatha the Agagite, the foe of the Jews. ¹¹And the king said, “The money and the people are yours to do with as you see fit.”

¹²On the thirteenth day of the first month, the king’s scribes were summoned and a decree was issued, as Haman directed, to the king’s satraps, to the governors of every province, and to the officials of every people, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language. The orders were issued in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king’s signet. ¹³Accordingly, written instructions were dispatched by couriers to all the king’s provinces to destroy, massacre, and exterminate all the Jews, young and old, children and women, on a single day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—that is, the month of Adar—and to plunder their possessions. ¹⁴The text of the document was to the effect that a law should be proclaimed in every single province; it was to be publicly displayed to all the peoples, so that they might be ready for that day.

¹⁵The couriers went out posthaste on the royal mission, and the decree was proclaimed in the fortress Shushan. The king and Haman sat down to feast, but the city of Shushan was dumfounded.

4 When Mordecai learned all that had happened, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. He went through the city, crying out loudly and bitterly, ²until he came in front of the palace gate; for one could not enter the palace gate wearing sackcloth.—³Also, in every province that the king’s command and decree reached, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing, and everybody lay in sackcloth and ashes.—⁴When Esther’s maids and eunuchs came and informed her, the queen was greatly agitated. She sent clothing for Mordecai to wear, so that he might take off his sackcloth; but he refused.

⁵Thereupon Esther summoned Hathach, one of the eunuchs whom the king had appointed to serve her, and sent him to Mordecai to

learn the why and wherefore of it all.⁶ Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square in front of the palace gate;⁷ and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and all about the money that Haman had offered to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews.⁸ He also gave him the written text of the law that had been proclaimed in Shushan for their destruction. [He bade him] show it to Esther and inform her, and charge her to go to the king and to appeal to him and to plead with him for her people.⁹ When Hathach came and delivered Mordecai's message to Esther,¹⁰ Esther told Hathach to take back to Mordecai the following reply:¹¹ "All the king's courtiers and the people of the king's provinces know that if any person, man or woman, enters the king's presence in the inner court without having been summoned, there is but one law for him—that he be put to death. Only if the king extends the golden scepter to him may he live. Now I have not been summoned to visit the king for the last thirty days."

¹² When Mordecai was told what Esther had said,¹³ Mordecai had this message delivered to Esther: "Do not imagine that you, of all the Jews, will escape with your life by being in the king's palace.¹⁴ On the contrary, if you keep silent in this crisis, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter, while you and your father's house will perish. And who knows, perhaps you have attained to royal position for just such a crisis."¹⁵ Then Esther sent back this answer to Mordecai:¹⁶ "Go, assemble all the Jews who live in Shushan, and fast in my behalf; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will observe the same fast. Then I shall go to the king, though it is contrary to the law; and if I am to perish, I shall perish!"¹⁷ So Mordecai went about [the city] and did just as Esther had commanded him.

5 On the third day, Esther put on royal apparel and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, facing the king's palace, while the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room facing the entrance of the palace.² As soon as the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won his favor. The king extended to Esther the golden scepter that he had in his hand, and Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.³ "What troubles you, Queen Esther?" the king asked her. "And what is your request? Even to half the kingdom, it shall be granted you."⁴ "If it please Your Majesty," Esther replied, "let Your Majesty and Haman come today to the feast that I have prepared for

him.”⁵ The king commanded, “Tell Haman to hurry and do Esther’s bidding.” So the king and Haman came to the feast that Esther had prepared.

⁶ At the wine feast, the king asked Esther, “What is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half the kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.”⁷ “My wish,” replied Esther, “my request—⁸ if Your Majesty will do me the favor, if it please Your Majesty to grant my wish and accede to my request—let Your Majesty and Haman come to the feast that I will prepare for them; and tomorrow I will do Your Majesty’s bidding.”

⁹ That day Haman went out happy and lighthearted. But when Haman saw Mordecai in the palace gate, and Mordecai did not rise or even stir on his account, Haman was filled with rage at him.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Haman controlled himself and went home. He sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh,¹¹ and Haman told them about his great wealth and his many sons, and all about how the king had promoted him and advanced him above the officials and the king’s courtiers.¹² “What is more,” said Haman, “Queen Esther gave a feast, and besides the king she did not have anyone but me. And tomorrow too I am invited by her along with the king.¹³ Yet all this means nothing to me every time I see that Jew Mordecai sitting in the palace gate.”¹⁴ Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, “Let a stake be put up, fifty cubits high, and in the morning ask the king to have Mordecai impaled on it. Then you can go gaily with the king to the feast.” The proposal pleased Haman, and he had the stake put up.

6 That night, sleep deserted the king, and he ordered the book of records, the annals, to be brought; and it was read to the king.² There it was found written that Mordecai had denounced Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king’s eunuchs who guarded the threshold, who had plotted to do away with King Ahasuerus.³ “What honor or advancement has been conferred on Mordecai for this?” the king inquired. “Nothing at all has been done for him,” replied the king’s servants who were in attendance on him.⁴ “Who is in the court?” the king asked. For Haman had just entered the outer court of the royal palace, to speak to the king about having Mordecai impaled on the stake he had prepared for him.⁵ “It is Haman standing in the court,” the king’s servants answered him. “Let him enter,” said the king.⁶ Haman entered, and the king asked him, “What should be done for a man whom the king desires to honor?”

Haman said to himself, “Whom would the king desire to honor more than me?”⁷ So Haman said to the king, “For the man whom the king desires to honor,⁸ let royal garb that the king has worn be brought, and a horse on which the king has ridden and on whose head a royal diadem has been set;⁹ and let the attire and the horse be put in the charge of one of the king’s noble courtiers. And let the man whom the king desires to honor be attired and paraded on the horse through the city square, while they proclaim before him: This is what is done for the man whom the king desires to honor!”¹⁰ “Quick, then!” said the king to Haman. “Get the garb and the horse, as you have said, and do this to Mordecai the Jew, who sits in the king’s gate. Omit nothing of all you have proposed.”¹¹ So Haman took the garb and the horse and arrayed Mordecai and paraded him through the city square; and he proclaimed before him: This is what is done for the man whom the king desires to honor!

¹² Then Mordecai returned to the king’s gate, while Haman hurried home, his head covered in mourning.¹³ There Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had befallen him. His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, “If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish stock, you will not overcome him; you will fall before him to your ruin.”

¹⁴ While they were still speaking with him, the king’s eunuchs arrived and hurriedly brought Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

7 So the king and Haman came to feast with Queen Esther.² On the second day, the king again asked Esther at the wine feast, “What is your wish, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half the kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.”³ Queen Esther replied: “If Your Majesty will do me the favor, and if it pleases Your Majesty, let my life be granted me as my wish, and my people as my request.⁴ For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, massacred, and exterminated. Had we only been sold as bondmen and bondwomen, I would have kept silent; for the adversary^a is not worthy of the king’s trouble.”

⁵ Thereupon King Ahasuerus demanded of Queen Esther, “Who is he and where is he who dared to do this?”⁶ “The adversary and enemy,”

^a **7.4 the adversary** Emendation yields “a trifle” (*hişsar*), lit. “little finger.”

replied Esther, “is this evil Haman!” And Haman cringed in terror before the king and the queen. ⁷The king, in his fury, left the wine feast for the palace garden, while Haman remained to plead with Queen Esther for his life; for he saw that the king had resolved to destroy him. ⁸When the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet room, Haman was lying prostrate on the couch on which Esther reclined. “Is he attempting,” cried the king, “a conquest of the queen in my own palace?” No sooner did these words leave the king’s lips than Haman’s face was covered.^b ⁹Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “What is more, a stake is standing at Haman’s house, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai—the man whose words saved the king.” “Impale him on it!” the king ordered. ¹⁰So they impaled Haman on the stake that he had put up for Mordecai, and the king’s fury abated.

8 That very day King Ahasuerus gave the property of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther. Mordecai presented himself to the king, for Esther had revealed how he was related to her. ²The king slipped off his ring, which he had taken back from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther put Mordecai in charge of Haman’s property.

³Esther spoke to the king again, falling at his feet and weeping, and pleading with him to avert the evil plotted by Haman the Agagite against the Jews. ⁴The king extended the golden scepter to Esther, and Esther arose and stood before the king. ⁵“If it please Your Majesty,” she said, “and if I have won your favor and the proposal seems right to Your Majesty, and if I am pleasing to you—let dispatches be written countering those that were written by Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, embodying his plot to annihilate the Jews throughout the king’s provinces. ⁶For how can I bear to see the disaster that will befall my people! And how can I bear to see the destruction of my kindred!”

⁷Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, “I have given Haman’s property to Esther, and he has been impaled on the stake for scheming against the Jews. ⁸And you may further write with regard to the Jews as you see fit. [Write it] in the king’s name and seal it with the king’s signet, for an edict that has been written in the king’s name and sealed with the king’s signet may not be revoked.”

^b **7.8 was covered** Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Emendation yields “blanched”; cf. Ps. 34.6.

⁹So the king's scribes were summoned at that time, on the twenty-third day of the third month, that is, the month of Sivan; and letters were written, at Mordecai's dictation, to the Jews and to the satraps, the governors and the officials of the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to Cush: to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. ¹⁰He had them written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet. Letters were dispatched by mounted couriers, riding steeds used in the king's service, bred of the royal stud,^a ¹¹to this effect: The king has permitted the Jews of every city to assemble and fight for their lives; if any people or province attacks them, they may destroy, massacre, and exterminate its armed force together with women and children, and plunder their possessions—¹²on a single day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, namely, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, that is, the month of Adar. ¹³The text of the document was to be issued as a law in every single province: it was to be publicly displayed to all the peoples, so that the Jews should be ready for that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. ¹⁴The couriers, mounted on royal steeds, went out in urgent haste at the king's command; and the decree was proclaimed in the fortress Shushan.

¹⁵Mordecai left the king's presence in royal robes of blue and white, with a magnificent crown of gold and a mantle of fine linen and purple wool. And the city of Shushan rang with joyous cries. ¹⁶The Jews enjoyed light and gladness, happiness and honor. ¹⁷And in every province and in every city, when the king's command and decree arrived, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many of the people of the land professed to be Jews, for the fear of the Jews had fallen upon them.

9 And so, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—that is, the month of Adar—when the king's command and decree were to be executed, the very day on which the enemies of the Jews had expected to get them in their power, the opposite happened, and the Jews got their enemies in their power. ²Throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the Jews mustered in their cities to attack those who sought their hurt; and not a single one could withstand them, for the fear of them had fallen upon

^a **8.10** *used in the king's service, bred of the royal stud* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

all the peoples.³Indeed, all the officials of the provinces—the satraps, the governors, and the king’s stewards—showed deference to the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon them.⁴For Mordecai was now powerful in the royal palace, and his fame was spreading through all the provinces; this man Mordecai was growing ever more powerful.⁵So the Jews struck at their enemies^a with the sword, slaying and destroying; they wreaked their will upon their enemies.

⁶In the fortress Shushan the Jews killed a total of five hundred of them.⁷They also killed^b

Parshandatha,
Dalphon,
Aspatha,
⁸Poratha,
Adalia,
Aridatha,
⁹Parmashta,
Arisai,
Aridai,
and Vaizatha,

¹⁰the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the foe of the Jews. But they did not lay hands on the spoil.

¹¹When the number of those slain in the fortress Shushan was reported on that same day to the king,¹²the king said to Queen Esther, “In the fortress Shushan alone the Jews have killed a total of five hundred, as well as the ten sons of Haman. What then must they have done in the provinces of the realm! What is your wish now? It shall be granted you. And what else is your request? It shall be fulfilled.”¹³If it please Your Majesty,” Esther replied, “let the Jews in Shushan be permitted to act tomorrow also as they did today; and let Haman’s ten sons be impaled on the stake.”¹⁴The king ordered that this should be done, and the decree was proclaimed in Shushan. Haman’s ten sons were impaled:¹⁵and the Jews in Shushan mustered again on the fourteenth day of Adar and slew three hundred men in Shushan. But they did not lay hands on the spoil.

^a9.5 *their enemies* I.e., those armed forces that were reckless enough to attack, despite the king’s declaration that the Jews could stand their ground with impunity; cf. v. 2 and 8.11.

^b9.7 *They also killed* Moved up from v. 10 for clarity.

¹⁶The rest of the Jews, those in the king's provinces, likewise mustered and fought for their lives. They disposed of their enemies,^c killing seventy-five thousand of their foes; but they did not lay hands on the spoil. ¹⁷That was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar; and they rested on the fourteenth day and made it a day of feasting and merrymaking. ¹⁸(But the Jews in Shushan mustered on both the thirteenth and fourteenth days, and so rested on the fifteenth, and made it a day of feasting and merrymaking.) ¹⁹That is why village Jews, who live in unwalled towns, observe the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and make it a day of merrymaking and feasting, and as a holiday and an occasion for sending gifts to one another.

²⁰Mordecai recorded these events. And he sent dispatches to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus, near and far, ²¹charging them to observe the fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar, every year—²²the same days on which the Jews enjoyed relief from their foes and the same month that had been transformed for them from one of grief and mourning to one of festive joy. They were to observe them as days of feasting and merrymaking, and as an occasion for sending gifts to one another and presents to the poor. ²³The Jews accordingly assumed as an obligation that which they had begun to practice and that Mordecai prescribed for them.

²⁴For Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the foe of all the Jews, had plotted to destroy the Jews, and had cast *pur*—that is, the lot—with intent to crush and exterminate them. ²⁵But when [Esther] came before the king, he commanded: “With the promulgation of this decree,^d let the evil plot that he devised against the Jews recoil on his own head!” So they impaled him and his sons on the stake. ²⁶For that reason these days were named Purim, after *pur*.

In view, then, of all the instructions in the said letter and of what they had experienced in that matter and what had befallen them,²⁷ the Jews undertook and irrevocably obligated themselves and their descendants, and all who might join them, to observe these two days in the manner prescribed and at the proper time each year.²⁸ Consequently, these days are recalled and observed in every generation: by every family, every province, and every city. And these days of Purim

^c 9.16 *their enemies* See note at v. 5.

^d 9.25 *With the promulgation of this decree* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

shall never cease among the Jews, and the memory of them shall never perish among their descendants.

^e Then Queen Esther daughter of Abihail wrote a second letter of Purim for the purpose of confirming with full authority the aforementioned one of Mordecai the Jew. ³⁰ Dispatches were sent to all the Jews in the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the realm of Ahasuerus with an ordinance of “equity and honesty”: ^f ³¹ These days of Purim shall be observed at their proper time, as Mordecai the Jew—and now Queen Esther—has obligated them to do, and just as they have assumed for themselves and their descendants the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations.^g

³² And Esther’s ordinance validating these observances of Purim was recorded in a scroll.

10

King Ahasuerus imposed tribute on the mainland and the islands.² All his mighty and powerful acts, and a full account of the greatness to which the king advanced Mordecai, are recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Media and Persia. ³ For Mordecai the Jew ranked next to King Ahasuerus and was highly regarded by the Jews and popular with the multitude of his brethren; he sought the good of his people and interceded for the welfare of all his kindred.

^e 9.29–31 Force of these verses is uncertain in part. Verse 29 reads literally, “Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter of Purim.”

^f 9.30 of “equity and honesty” I.e., of new holidays, the instituting of which is linked to love of equity and honesty in Zech. 8.19.

^g 9.31 just as they have assumed . . . fasts with their lamentations The Jews had long been observing fast days in commemoration of national calamities; see Zech. 7.5; 8.19.



דניאל | DANI'EL
DANIEL

1 In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and laid siege to it. **2** The Sovereign delivered King Jehoiakim of Judah into his power, together with some of the vessels of the House of God, and he brought them to the land of Shinar to the house of his god; he deposited the vessels in the treasury of his god. **3** Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief officer, to bring some Israelites of royal descent and of the nobility—**4** youths without blemish, handsome, proficient in all wisdom, knowledgeable and intelligent, and capable of serving in the royal palace—and teach them the writings and the language of the Chaldeans. **5** The king allotted daily rations to them from the king's food and from the wine he drank. They were to be educated for three years, at the end of which they^a were to enter the king's service.

6 Among them were the Judahites Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. **7** The chief officer gave them new names; he named Daniel Belteshazzar, Hananiah Shadrach, Mishael Meshach, and Azariah Abed-nego. **8** Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the king's food or the wine he drank, so he sought permission of the chief officer not to defile himself, **9** and God disposed the chief officer to be kind and compassionate toward Daniel. **10** The chief officer said to Daniel, “I fear that my lord the king, who allotted food and drink to you, will notice that you look out of sorts, unlike the other youths of your age—and you will put my life^b in jeopardy with the king.” **11** Daniel replied to the guard whom the chief officer had put in charge of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, **12** “Please test your servants for ten days, giving us legumes to eat and water to drink. **13** Then compare our appearance with that of the youths who eat of the king's food, and do with your servants as you see fit.” **14** He agreed to this plan of theirs, and tested them for ten days. **15** When the ten days were over, they looked better and healthier than all the youths who were eating of the king's food. **16** So the guard kept on removing their food, and the wine they were supposed to drink, and gave them legumes. **17** God made all

^a 1.5 *at the end of which they* Or “and some of them.”

^b 1.10 *life* Lit. “head.”

four of these young men intelligent and proficient in all writings and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding of visions and dreams of all kinds.¹⁸ When the time the king had set for their presentation had come, the chief officer presented them to Nebuchadnezzar.¹⁹ The king spoke with them, and of them all none was equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; so these entered the king's service.²⁰ Whenever the king put a question to them requiring wisdom and understanding, he found them to be ten times better than all the magicians and exorcists throughout his realm.²¹ Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

2 In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream; his spirit was agitated, yet he was overcome by^a sleep.² The king ordered the magicians, exorcists, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to be summoned in order to tell the king what he had dreamed. They came and stood before the king,³ and the king said to them, “I have had a dream and I am full of anxiety to know what I have dreamed.”⁴ The Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Relate the dream to your servants, and we will tell its meaning.”⁵ The king said in reply to the Chaldeans, “I hereby decree: If you will not make the dream and its meaning known to me, you shall be torn limb from limb and your houses confiscated.^b ⁶ But if you tell the dream and its meaning, you shall receive from me gifts, presents, and great honor; therefore, tell me the dream and its meaning.”⁷ Once again they answered, “Let the king relate the dream to his servants, and we will tell its meaning.”⁸ The king said in reply, “It is clear to me that you are playing for time, since you see that I have decreed⁹ that if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one verdict for you. You have conspired to tell me something false and fraudulent until circumstances change; so relate the dream to me, and I will then know that you can tell its meaning.”¹⁰ The Chaldeans said in reply to the king, “There is no one on earth who can satisfy the king's demand,^c for great king or ruler—none has ever asked such a thing of any magician, exorcist, or Chaldean.¹¹ The thing asked by the king is difficult; there is no one who can tell it to the king except

^a **2.1** *yet he was overcome by* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others “and he could not.”

^b **2.5** *confiscated* Meaning uncertain; or “turned into ruins.”

^c **2.10** *satisfy the king's demand* Lit. “tell the king's matter.”

the gods whose abode is not among mortals.”^d¹²Whereupon the king flew into a violent rage, and gave an order to do away with all the sages of Babylon.

¹³The decree condemning the sages to death was issued. Daniel and his companions were about to be put to death¹⁴when Daniel remonstrated with Arioch, the captain of the royal guard who had set out to put the sages of Babylon to death.¹⁵He spoke up and said to Arioch, the royal officer, “Why is the decree of the king so urgent?” Thereupon Arioch informed Daniel of the matter.¹⁶So Daniel went to ask the king for time, that he might tell the meaning to the king.¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house and informed his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, of the matter,¹⁸that they might implore the God of Heaven for help regarding this mystery, so that Daniel and his colleagues would not be put to death together with the other sages of Babylon.

¹⁹The mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision; then Daniel blessed the God of Heaven.²⁰Daniel spoke up and said:

“Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever,
For wisdom and power are God’s—
²¹Who changes times and seasons,
Removes kings and installs kings;
Who gives the wise their wisdom
And knowledge to those who know;
²²Who reveals deep and hidden things,
Knows what is in the darkness—
With whom light dwells.
²³I acknowledge and praise You,
O God of my ancestors,
You who have given me wisdom and power,
For now You have let me know what we asked of You;
You have let us know what concerns the king.”

²⁴Thereupon Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to do away with the sages of Babylon; he came and said to him as follows, “Do not do away with the sages of Babylon; bring me to the king and I will tell the king the meaning!”²⁵So Arioch rushed Daniel into the king’s presence and said to him, “I have found among the exiles of Judah a man who can make the meaning known to the king!”

^d**2.11 mortals** Lit. “flesh.”

²⁶The king said in reply to Daniel (who was called Belteshazzar), “Can you really make known to me the dream that I saw and its meaning?”

²⁷Daniel answered the king and said, “The mystery about which the king has inquired—sages, exorcists, magicians, and diviners cannot tell to the king.²⁸But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, who has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what is to be at the end of days. This is your dream and the vision that entered your mind in bed:²⁹O king, the thoughts that came to your mind in your bed are about future events; the Revealer of Mysteries has let you know what is to happen.³⁰Not because my wisdom is greater than that of other creatures has this mystery been revealed to me, but in order that the meaning should be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind.

³¹“O king, as you looked on, there appeared a great statue. This statue, which was huge and its brightness surpassing, stood before you, and its appearance was awesome.³²The head of that statue was of fine gold; its breast and arms were of silver; its belly and thighs, of bronze;³³its legs were of iron, and its feet part iron and part clay.³⁴As you looked on, a stone was hewn out, not by hands, and struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.³⁵All at once, the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were crushed, and became like chaff of the threshing floors of summer; a wind carried them off until no trace of them was left. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

³⁶“Such was the dream, and we will now tell the king its meaning.³⁷You, O king—king of kings, to whom the God of Heaven has given kingdom, power, might, and glory,³⁸into whose hands have been given humans, wild animals, and the fowl of heaven, wherever they may dwell; and to whom has been given dominion over them all—you are the head of gold.³⁹But another kingdom will arise after you, inferior to yours; then yet a third kingdom, of bronze, which will rule over the whole earth.⁴⁰But the fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron; just as iron crushes and shatters everything—and like iron that smashes—so will it crush and smash all these.⁴¹You saw the feet and the toes, part potter’s clay and part iron; that means it will be a divided kingdom; it will have only some of the stability of iron, inasmuch as you saw iron mixed with common clay.⁴²And the toes were part iron and part clay; that [means] the kingdom will be in part strong and in part brittle.⁴³You saw iron mixed with common clay; that means: they shall

intermingle through marriage,^e but shall not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.⁴⁴ And in the time of those kings, the God of Heaven will establish a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, a kingdom that shall not be transferred to another people. It will crush and wipe out all these kingdoms, but shall itself last forever—⁴⁵just as you saw how a stone was hewn from the mountain, not by hands, and crushed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold. The great God has made known to the king what will happen in the future. The dream is sure and its interpretation reliable.”

⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar prostrated himself and paid homage to Daniel and ordered that a grain offering and pleasing offerings be made to him. ⁴⁷The king said in reply to Daniel, “Truly your God must be the God of gods and Sovereign of kings and the revealer of mysteries to have enabled you to reveal this mystery.” ⁴⁸The king then elevated Daniel and gave him very many gifts, and made him governor of the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect of all the sages of Babylon. ⁴⁹At Daniel’s request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to administer the province of Babylon; while Daniel himself was at the king’s court.

3 King Nebuchadnezzar made a statue of gold sixty cubits high and six cubits broad. He set it up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. ²King Nebuchadnezzar then sent word to gather the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, officers, and all the provincial officials to attend the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³So the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, officers, and all the provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and stood before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴The herald proclaimed in a loud voice, “You are commanded, O peoples and nations of every language,⁵when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, zither, lyre, psaltery, bagpipe, and all other types of instruments, to fall down and worship the statue of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶Whoever will not fall down and worship shall at once be thrown into a burning fiery furnace.” ⁷And so, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, zither, lyre, psaltery, and all other types of instruments, all peoples and nations of every language fell down

^e 2.43 *through marriage* Lit. “by human seed”; meaning uncertain.

and worshiped the statue of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁸Seizing the occasion, certain Chaldeans came forward to slander the Jews. ⁹They spoke up and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! ¹⁰You, O king, gave an order that everyone who hears the horn, pipe, zither, lyre, psaltery, bagpipe, and all types of instruments must fall down and worship the golden statue, ¹¹and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into a burning fiery furnace. ¹²There are certain Jews whom you appointed to administer the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; those men pay no heed to you, O king; they do not serve your god or worship the statue of gold that you have set up.”

¹³Then Nebuchadnezzar, in raging fury, ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to be brought; so those men were brought before the king. ¹⁴Nebuchadnezzar spoke to them and said, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my god or worship the statue of gold that I have set up? ¹⁵Now if you are ready to fall down and worship the statue that I have made when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, zither, lyre, psaltery, and bagpipe, and all other types of instruments, [well and good]; but if you will not worship, you shall at once be thrown into a burning fiery furnace, and what god is there that can save you from my power?” ¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego said in reply to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter, ¹⁷for if so it must be, our God whom we serve is able to save us from the burning fiery furnace—and will save us from your power, O king. ¹⁸But even if [our God] does not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your god or worship the statue of gold that you have set up.”

¹⁹Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage at Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego that his visage was distorted, and he gave an order to heat up the furnace to seven times its usual heat. ²⁰He commanded some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to throw them into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹So these men, in their shirts, trousers, hats, and other garments, were bound and thrown into the burning fiery furnace. ²²Because the king’s order was urgent, and the furnace was heated to excess, a tongue of flame killed the men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. ²³But those three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, dropped, bound, into the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and, rising in haste,

addressed his companions, saying, “Did we not throw three men, bound, into the fire?” They spoke in reply, “Surely, O king.”²⁵ He answered, “But I see four figures walking about unbound and unharmed in the fire and the fourth looks like a divine being.”²⁶ Nebuchadnezzar then approached the hatch of the burning fiery furnace and called, “Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego, servants of the Most High God, come out!” So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego came out of the fire.²⁷ The satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the royal companions gathered around to look at those men, on whose bodies the fire had had no effect, the hair of whose heads had not been singed, whose shirts looked no different, to whom not even the odor of fire clung.²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar spoke up and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego—in whom they placed their trust—and who sent an angel to save these servants, who flouted the king’s decree at the risk of their lives rather than serve or worship any god but their own God.²⁹ I hereby give an order that [anyone of] any people or nation of whatever language who blasphemes the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb, and their house confiscated, for there is no other God who is able to save in this way.”

³⁰ Thereupon the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the province of Babylon.

³¹ “King Nebuchadnezzar to all people and nations of every language that inhabit the whole earth: May your well-being abound!
³² The signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me I am pleased to relate.³³ How great are God’s signs; how mighty God’s wonders! God’s kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and God’s dominion endures throughout the generations.”

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living serenely in my house, flourishing in my palace.² I had a dream that frightened me, and my thoughts in bed and the vision of my mind alarmed me.³ I gave an order to bring all the sages of Babylon before me to let me know the meaning of the dream.⁴ The magicians, exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners came, and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its meaning known to me.⁵ Finally, Daniel, called Belteshazzar after the name of my god, in whom the spirit of the holy gods was, came to me, and I related the dream to him, [saying],⁶ “Belteshazzar, chief magician, in whom I know the spirit of the holy gods to be, and whom no mystery

baffles, tell me the meaning of my dream vision that I have seen.⁷ In the visions of my mind in bed

I saw a tree of great height in the midst of the earth;
⁸The tree grew and became mighty;
 Its top reached heaven,
 And it was visible to the ends of the earth.
⁹Its foliage was beautiful
 And its fruit abundant;
 There was food for all in it.
 Beneath it the beasts of the field found shade,
 And the birds of the sky dwelt on its branches;
 All creatures fed on it.

¹⁰In the vision of my mind in bed, I looked and saw a holy Watcher coming down from heaven—¹¹who called loudly and said:

'Hew down the tree, lop off its branches,
 Strip off its foliage, scatter its fruit.
 Let the beasts of the field flee from beneath it
 And the birds from its branches,
¹²But leave the stump with its roots in the ground.
 In fetters of iron and bronze
 In the grass of the field,
 Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven,
 And share earth's verdure with the beasts.
¹³Let his mind be altered from that of a human,
 And let him be given the mind of a beast,
 And let seven seasons pass over him.
¹⁴This sentence is decreed by the Watchers;
 This verdict is commanded by the Holy Ones
 So that all creatures may know
 That the Most High is sovereign over human dominion,
 And gives it out at will,
 Perhaps setting over it even the lowest of human beings.'

¹⁵"I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had this dream; now you, Belteshazzar, tell me its meaning, since all the sages of my kingdom are not able to make its meaning known to me, but you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

¹⁶Then Daniel, called Belteshazzar, was perplexed for a while, and alarmed by his thoughts. The king addressed him, "Let the dream and its meaning not alarm you." Belteshazzar replied, "My lord, would

that the dream were for your enemy and its meaning for your foe!

¹⁷The tree that you saw grow and become mighty, whose top reached heaven, which was visible throughout the earth, ¹⁸whose foliage was beautiful, whose fruit was so abundant that there was food for all in it, beneath which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the sky lodged—¹⁹it is you, O king, you who have grown and become mighty, whose greatness has grown to reach heaven, and whose dominion is to the end of the earth. ²⁰The holy Watcher whom the king saw descend from heaven and say,

Hew down the tree and destroy it,
But leave the stump with its roots in the ground.
In fetters of iron and bronze
In the grass of the field,
Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven,
And share the lot of the beasts of the field
Until seven seasons pass over him—

²¹this is its meaning, O king; it is the decree of the Most High that has overtaken my lord the king. ²²You will be driven away from society and have your habitation with the beasts of the field. You will be fed grass like cattle, and be drenched with the dew of heaven; seven seasons will pass over you until you come to know that the Most High is sovereign over human dominion, and gives it out at will. ²³And the meaning of the command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots is that the kingdom will remain yours from the time you come to know that Heaven is sovereign. ²⁴Therefore, O king, may my advice be acceptable to you: Redeem your sins by beneficence and your iniquities by generosity to the poor; then your serenity may be extended.”

²⁵All this befell King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁶Twelve months later, as he was walking on the roof of the royal palace at Babylon, ²⁷the king exclaimed, “There is great Babylon, which I have built by my vast power to be a royal residence for the glory of my majesty!” ²⁸The words were still on the king’s lips, when a voice fell from heaven, “It has been decreed for you, O King Nebuchadnezzar: The kingdom has passed out of your hands. ²⁹You are being driven away from society, and your habitation is to be with the beasts of the field. You are to be fed grass like cattle, and seven seasons will pass over you until you come to know that the Most High is sovereign over human dominion and gives it out at will.” ³⁰There and then the sentence was carried

out upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven away from society, he ate grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like eagle's [feathers] and his nails like [the talons of] birds.

³¹"When the time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason was restored to me. I blessed the Most High, and praised and glorified the Ever-Living One,

Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion
And whose kingdom endures throughout the generations.

³²All the inhabitants of the earth are of no account.

[God] deals at will with the host of heaven,
And with the inhabitants of the earth.

There is none to stay God's hand
Or to ask, 'What have You done?'

³³There and then my reason was restored to me, and my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom. My companions and nobles sought me out, and I was reestablished over my kingdom, and added greatness was given me. ³⁴So now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and glorify the Ruler of Heaven, all of whose works are just and whose ways are right, and who is able to humble those who behave arrogantly."

5 King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for his thousand nobles, and in the presence of the thousand he drank wine. ²Under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar ordered the gold and silver vessels that his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem to be brought so that the king and his nobles, his consorts, and his concubines could drink from them. ³The golden vessels that had been taken out of the sanctuary of the House of God in Jerusalem were then brought, and the king, his nobles, his consorts, and his concubines drank from them. ⁴They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. ⁵Just then, the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace opposite the lampstand, so that the king could see the hand as it wrote. ⁶The king's face darkened, and his thoughts alarmed him; the joints of his loins were loosened and his knees knocked together. ⁷The king called loudly for the exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners to be brought. The king addressed the sages of Babylon, "Whoever can read this writing and tell me its meaning shall be clothed in purple

and wear a golden chain on his neck, and shall rule as one of three^a in the kingdom.”

⁸Then all the king’s sages came, but they could not read the writing or make known its meaning to the king. ⁹King Belshazzar grew exceedingly alarmed and his face darkened, and his nobles were dismayed. ¹⁰Because of the state of the king and his nobles, the queen came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke up and said, “O king, live forever! Let your thoughts not alarm you or your face darken. ¹¹There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him; in your father’s time, illumination, understanding, and wisdom like that of the gods were to be found in him, and your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him chief of the magicians, exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners. ¹²Seeing that there is to be found in Daniel (whom the king called Belteshazzar) extraordinary spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, to explain riddles and solve problems, let Daniel now be called to tell the meaning [of the writing].”

¹³Daniel was then brought before the king. The king addressed Daniel, “You are Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah whom my father, the king, brought from Judah. ¹⁴I have heard about you that you have the spirit of the gods in you, and that illumination, knowledge, and extraordinary wisdom are to be found in you. ¹⁵Now the sages and exorcists have been brought before me to read this writing and to make known its meaning to me. But they could not tell what it meant. ¹⁶I have heard about you, that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing and make known its meaning to me, you shall be clothed in purple and wear a golden chain on your neck and rule as one of three in the kingdom.”

¹⁷Then Daniel said in reply to the king, “You may keep your gifts for yourself, and give your presents to others. But I will read the writing for the king, and make its meaning known to him. ¹⁸O king, the Most High God bestowed kingship, grandeur, glory, and majesty upon your father Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹And because of the grandeur that [God] bestowed upon him, all the peoples and nations of every language trembled in fear of him. He put to death whom he wished, and whom he wished he let live; he raised high whom he wished and whom he wished he brought low. ²⁰But when he grew haughty and willfully presumptuous, he was deposed from his royal throne and his

^a 5.7 *one of three* Cf. 6.3; or “third in rank.”

glory was removed from him.²¹ He was driven away from society, and his mind made like that of a beast, and his habitation was with wild asses. He was fed grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until he came to know that the Most High God is sovereign over human dominion, and sets rulers over it at will.²² But you, Belshazzar his son, did not humble yourself although you knew all this.²³ You exalted yourself against the Sovereign of Heaven, whose temple vessels you had brought to you. You and your nobles, your consorts, and your concubines drank wine from them and praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see, hear, or understand; but the God who controls your lifebreath and every move you make—this One you did not glorify!²⁴ He therefore made the hand appear, and caused the writing to be inscribed.²⁵ This is the writing that is inscribed: MENE MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN.²⁶ And this is its meaning: MENE—God has numbered^b [the days of] your kingdom and brought it to an end;²⁷ TEKEL—you have been weighed^c in the balance and found wanting;²⁸ PERES—your kingdom has been divided^d and given to the Medes and the Persians.”²⁹ Then, at Belshazzar’s command, they clothed Daniel in purple, placed a golden chain on his neck, and proclaimed that he should rule as one of three in the kingdom.

³⁰ That very night, Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was killed,⁶ ¹and Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.² It pleased Darius to appoint over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps to be in charge of the whole kingdom;³ over them were three ministers, one of them Daniel, to whom these satraps reported, in order that the king not be troubled.⁴ This man Daniel surpassed the other ministers and satraps by virtue of his extraordinary spirit, and the king considered setting him over the whole kingdom.⁵ The ministers and satraps looked for some fault in Daniel’s conduct in matters of state, but they could find neither fault nor corruption, inasmuch as he was trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him.⁶ Those men then said, “We are not going to find any fault with this Daniel, unless we find something against him in connection with the laws of his God.”⁷ Then these ministers and satraps came thronging in to the king and said to him, “O King Darius, live forever!⁸ All

^b 5.26 numbered Aramaic *mena*.

^c 5.27 you have been weighed Aramaic *tekila*.

^d 5.28 has been divided Aramaic *perisat*.

the ministers of the kingdom, the prefects, satraps, companions, and governors are in agreement that a royal ban should be issued under sanction of an oath that whoever shall address a petition to anyone, divine or human, besides you, O king, during the next thirty days shall be thrown into a lions' den. ⁹So issue the ban, O king, and put it in writing so that it be unalterable as a law of the Medes and Persians that may not be abrogated.” ¹⁰Thereupon King Darius put the ban in writing.

¹¹When Daniel learned that it had been put in writing, he went to his house, in whose upper chamber he had had windows made facing Jerusalem, and three times a day he knelt down, prayed, and made confession to his God, as he had always done. ¹²Then those men came thronging in and found Daniel petitioning his God in supplication. ¹³They then approached the king and reminded him of the royal ban: “Did you not put in writing a ban that whoever addresses a petition to anyone, divine or human, besides you, O king, during the next thirty days, shall be thrown into a lions' den?” The king said in reply, “The order stands firm, as a law of the Medes and Persians that may not be abrogated.” ¹⁴Thereupon they said to the king, “Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, pays no heed to you, O king, or to the ban that you put in writing; three times a day he offers his petitions [to his God].” ¹⁵Upon hearing that, the king was very disturbed, and he set his heart upon saving Daniel, and until the sun set made every effort to rescue him. ¹⁶Then those men came thronging in to the king and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that any ban that the king issues under sanction of oath is unalterable.” ¹⁷By the king's order, Daniel was then brought and thrown into the lions' den. The king spoke to Daniel and said, “Your God, whom you serve so regularly, will deliver you.” ¹⁸A rock was brought and placed over the mouth of the den; the king sealed it with his signet and with the signet of his nobles, so that nothing might be altered concerning Daniel.

¹⁹The king then went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and his sleep fled from him. ²⁰Then, at the first light of dawn, the king arose and rushed to the lions' den. ²¹As he approached the den, he cried to Daniel in a mournful voice; the king said to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, was the God whom you served so regularly able to deliver you from the lions?” ²²Daniel then talked with the king, “O king, live forever! ²³My God sent an angel, who shut the mouths of the lions so that they did

not injure me, inasmuch as I was deemed to be innocent, nor have I, O king, done you any injury.”²⁴ The king was very glad, and ordered Daniel to be brought up out of the den. Daniel was brought up out of the den, and no injury was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.²⁵ Then, by order of the king, those men who had slandered Daniel were brought and, together with their children and wives, were thrown into the lions’ den. They had hardly reached the bottom of the den when the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

²⁶ Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language that inhabit the earth, “May your well-being abound! ²⁷I have hereby given an order that throughout my royal domain everyone must tremble in fear before the God of Daniel, for this is the living God who endures forever; whose kingdom is indestructible, and whose dominion is to the end of time; ²⁸who delivers and saves, and performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, by having delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.” ²⁹Thus Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and during the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

7 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and a vision of his mind in bed; afterward he wrote down the dream. Beginning the account,² Daniel related the following:

“In my vision at night, I saw the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea. ³Four mighty beasts different from each other emerged from the sea. ⁴The first was like a lion but had eagles’ wings. As I looked on, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted off the ground and set on its feet like a human and given a human mind. ⁵Then I saw a second, different beast, which was like a bear but raised on one side, and with three fangs in its mouth among its teeth; it was told, ‘Arise, eat much meat!’ ⁶After that, as I looked on, there was another one, like a leopard, and it had on its back four wings like those of a bird; the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it. ⁷After that, as I looked on in the night vision, there was a fourth beast—fearsome, dreadful, and very powerful, with great iron teeth—that devoured and crushed, and stamped the remains with its feet. It was different from all the other beasts that had gone before it; and it had ten horns. ⁸While I was gazing upon these horns, a new little horn sprouted up among them; three of the older horns were uprooted to make room for it. There were eyes in this horn like those of a human, and a mouth that spoke arrogantly. ⁹As I looked on,

Thrones were set in place,
 And the Ancient of Days took a seat—
 Wearing a garment like white snow,
 And with hair like lamb's^a wool.
 This throne was tongues of flame;
 Its wheels were blazing fire;
¹⁰A river of fire streamed forth from it.
 Thousands upon thousands rendered service;
 Myriads upon myriads stood in attendance;
 The court sat and the books were opened.

¹¹I looked on. Then, because of the arrogant words that the horn spoke, the beast was killed as I looked on; its body was destroyed and it was consigned to the flames. ¹²The dominion of the other beasts was taken away, but an extension of life was given to them for a time and season.

¹³As I looked on, in the night vision,
 One like a human being
 Came with the clouds of heaven;
 He reached the Ancient of Days
 And was given an audience.
¹⁴Dominion, glory, and kingship were given to him;
 All peoples and nations of every language must serve him.
 His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not
 pass away,
 And his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed.

¹⁵As for me, Daniel, my spirit was disturbed within me and the vision of my mind alarmed me. ¹⁶I approached one of the attendants and asked him the true meaning of all this. He gave me this interpretation of the matter: ¹⁷These great beasts, four in number [mean] four kingdoms^b will arise out of the earth; ¹⁸then holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingdom, and will possess the kingdom forever—forever and ever.' ¹⁹Then I wanted to ascertain the true meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from them all, very fearsome, with teeth of iron, claws of bronze, that devoured and crushed, and stamped the remains; ²⁰and of the ten horns on its head; and of the new one that sprouted, to make room for which three fell—the horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke arrogantly, and which was more

^a7.9 lamb's Or "clean."

^b7.17 kingdoms Lit. "kings."

conspicuous than its fellows.²¹(I looked on as that horn made war with the holy ones and overcame them,²²until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was rendered in favor of the holy ones of the Most High, for the time had come, and the holy ones took possession of the kingdom.)²³This is what he said: ‘The fourth beast [means]—there will be a fourth kingdom upon the earth that will be different from all the kingdoms; it will devour the whole earth, tread it down, and crush it.²⁴And the ten horns [mean]—from that kingdom, ten kings will arise, and after them another will arise. He will be different from the former ones, and will bring low three kings.²⁵He will speak words against the Most High, and will harass the holy ones of the Most High. He will think of changing times and laws, and they will be delivered into his power for a time, times, and half a time.^{c 26}Then the court will sit and his dominion will be taken away, to be destroyed and abolished for all time.²⁷The kingship and dominion and grandeur belonging to all the kingdoms under Heaven will be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High. Their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.’”²⁸Here the account ends.

I, Daniel, was very alarmed by my thoughts, and my face darkened; and I could not put the matter out of my mind.

8 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, a vision appeared to me, to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me earlier.²I saw in the vision—at the time I saw it I was in the fortress of Shushan, in the province of Elam—I saw in the vision that I was beside the Ulai River.³I looked and saw a ram standing between me and the river; he had two horns; the horns were high, with one higher than the other, and the higher sprouting last.⁴I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward. No beast could withstand him, and there was none to deliver from his power. He did as he pleased and grew great.⁵As I looked on, a he-goat came from the west, passing over the entire earth without touching the ground. The goat had a conspicuous horn on its forehead.⁶He came up to the two-horned ram that I had seen standing between me and the river and charged at him with furious force.⁷I saw him reach the ram and rage at him; he struck the ram and broke its two horns, and the ram was powerless to withstand

^c **7.25 time, times, and half a time** I.e., a year, two years, and a half a year.

him. He threw him to the ground and trampled him, and there was none to deliver the ram from his power.⁸ Then the he-goat grew very great, but at the peak of his power his big horn was broken. In its place, four conspicuous horns sprouted toward the four winds of heaven.⁹ From one of them emerged a small horn, which extended itself greatly toward the south, toward the east, and toward the beautiful land.¹⁰ It grew as high as the host of heaven and it hurled some stars of the [heavenly] host to the ground and trampled them.¹¹ It vaunted itself against the very chief of the host; on its account the regular offering was suspended, and God's holy place was abandoned.¹² An army was arrayed iniquitously against the regular offering;^a it hurled truth to the ground and prospered in what it did.

¹³ Then I heard a holy being speaking, and another holy being said to whoever it was who was speaking, "How long will [what was seen in] the vision last—the regular offering be forsaken because of transgression; the sanctuary be surrendered and the [heavenly] host be trampled?"^b ¹⁴ Came the reply,^c "For twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."¹⁵ While I, Daniel, was seeing the vision, and trying to understand it, there appeared before me one who looked like a man.¹⁶ I heard a human voice from the middle of Ulai calling out, "Gabriel, make that man understand the vision."¹⁷ He came near to where I was standing, and as he came I was terrified, and fell prostrate. He said to me, "Understand, O mortal, that the vision refers to the time of the end."¹⁸ When he spoke with me, I was overcome by a deep sleep as I lay prostrate on the ground. Then he touched me and made me stand up,¹⁹ and said, "I am going to inform you of what will happen when wrath is at an end, for [it refers] to the time appointed for the end."

²⁰ "The two-horned ram that you saw [signifies] the kings of Media and Persia;²¹ and the buck, the he-goat—the king of Greece; and the large horn on his forehead, that is the first king.²² One was broken and four came in its stead—that [means]: four kingdoms will arise out of a nation, but without its power.²³ When their kingdoms are at an end, when the measure of transgression^d has been filled, then a king will

^a 8.12 *An army was arrayed iniquitously against the regular offering* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 8.13 *the regular offering . . . be trampled* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 8.14 *Came the reply* Lit. "He said to me"; several ancient versions "He said to him."

^d 8.23 *transgression* Lit. "transgressors."

arise, impudent and versed in intrigue.²⁴ He will have great strength, but not through his own strength. He will be extraordinarily destructive; he will prosper in what he does, and destroy the mighty and the people of holy ones.²⁵ By his cunning, he will use deceit successfully. He will make great plans, will destroy many, taking them unawares, and will rise up against the chief of chiefs, but will be broken, not by [human] hands.²⁶ What was said in the vision about evenings and mornings is true. Now you keep the vision a secret, for it pertains to far-off days.”²⁷ So I, Daniel, was stricken,^e and languished many days. Then I arose and attended to the king’s business, but I was dismayed by the vision and no one could explain it.

9 In the first year of Darius son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—²in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, consulted the books concerning the number of years that, according to the word of GOD that had come to Jeremiah the prophet, were to be the term of Jerusalem’s desolation—seventy years.³ I turned my face to the Sovereign God, devoting myself to prayer and supplication, in fasting, in sackcloth and ashes.⁴ I prayed to the ETERNAL my God, making confession thus: “O Sovereign, great and awesome God, who stays faithful to the covenant with those who show love and keep the commandments!⁵ We have sinned; we have gone astray; we have acted wickedly; we have been rebellious and have deviated from Your commandments and Your rules,⁶ and have not obeyed Your servants the prophets who spoke in Your name to our kings, our officers, our ancestors, and all the people of the land.⁷ With You, O Sovereign, is the right, and the shame is on us to this very day, on the citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all Israel, near and far, in all the lands where You have banished them, for the trespass they committed against You.⁸ The shame, O ETERNAL One, is on us, on our kings, our officers, and our ancestors, because we have sinned against You.⁹ To our Sovereign God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we were rebellious,¹⁰ and did not obey the ETERNAL our God by following the teachings that were set before us through the prophets—God’s servants.¹¹ All Israel has violated Your teaching and gone astray, disobeying You; so the curse and the oath written in the Teaching of Moses, the servant

^e **8.27 was stricken** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

of God, have been poured down upon us, for we have sinned.¹²You^a carried out the threat You^b made against us, and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring upon us great misfortune; under the whole heaven there has never been done the like of what was done to Jerusalem.¹³All that calamity, just as is written in the Teaching of Moses, came upon us, yet we did not supplicate the ETERNAL our God, did not repent of our iniquity or become wise through Your truth.¹⁴Hence GOD was intent upon bringing calamity upon us, for the ETERNAL our God is in the right in all that has been done, but we have not been obedient.

¹⁵“Now, O our Sovereign God—You who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, winning fame for Yourself to this very day—we have sinned, we have acted wickedly.¹⁶O my Sovereign, as befits Your abundant benevolence, let Your wrathful fury turn back from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a mockery among all who are around us.

¹⁷“O our God, hear now the prayer of Your servant and his plea, and show Your favor to Your desolate sanctuary, for [Your] sake, O my Sovereign.¹⁸Incline Your ear, O my God, and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolation and the city to which Your name is attached. Not because of any merit of ours do we lay our plea before You but because of Your abundant mercies.¹⁹O my Sovereign, hear! O my Sovereign, forgive! O my Sovereign, listen, and act without delay for Your own sake, O my God; for Your name is attached to Your city and Your people!”

²⁰While I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and laying my supplication before the ETERNAL my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God—²¹while I was uttering my prayer, the figure whom I had previously seen in the vision, Gabriel, was sent forth in flight, and reached me about the time of the evening offering.²²He made me understand by speaking to me and saying, “Daniel, I have just come forth to give you understanding.²³A word went forth as you began your plea, and I have come to tell it, for you are precious; so mark the word and understand the vision.

²⁴“Seventy weeks^c have been decreed for your people and your holy city until the measure of transgression is filled and that of sin

^a9.12 *You* Heb. 3rd person.

^b9.12 *You* Heb. 3rd person.

^c9.24 *weeks* Of years.

complete, until iniquity is expiated, and eternal righteousness ushered in; and prophetic vision ratified,^d and the Holy of Holies anointed.²⁵ You must know and understand: From the issuance of the word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the [time of the] anointed leader is seven weeks; and for sixty-two weeks it will be rebuilt, square and moat, but in a time of distress.²⁶ And after those sixty-two weeks, the anointed one will disappear and vanish.^e The army of a leader who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary, but its end will come through a flood. Desolation is decreed until the end of war.²⁷ During one week he will make a firm covenant with many. For half a week he will put a stop to the sacrifice and the grain offering. At the corner [of the altar]^f will be an appalling abomination until the decreed destruction will be poured down upon the appalling thing.”

10

In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia, an oracle was revealed to Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar. That oracle was true, but it was a great task to understand the prophecy; understanding came to him through the vision.^a

²At that time, I, Daniel, kept three full weeks of mourning.³ I ate no tasty food, nor did any meat or wine enter my mouth. I did not anoint myself until the three weeks were over.⁴ It was on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, when I was on the bank of the great river—the Tigris⁵—that I looked and saw a figure dressed in linen, his loins girt in fine gold.^b ⁶His body was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and legs had the color of burnished bronze, and the sound of his speech was like the noise of a multitude.

⁷I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the others who were with me did not see the vision, yet they were seized with a great terror and fled into hiding.⁸ So I was left alone to see this great vision. I was drained of strength, my vigor was destroyed, and I could not summon up strength.⁹ I heard him speaking; and when I heard him speaking, overcome by a deep sleep, I lay prostrate on the ground.¹⁰ Then a hand touched me, and shook me onto my hands and knees.¹¹ He said to me, “O Daniel,

^d **9.24 ratified** Lit. “sealed.”

^e **9.26 vanish** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f **9.27 corner [of the altar]** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a **10.1 but it was a great task . . . through the vision** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b **10.5 fine gold** Or “gold of Uphaz.”

precious one, mark what I say to you and stand up, for I have been sent to you.” After he said this to me, I stood up, trembling.¹² He then said to me, “Have no fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to get understanding—practicing self-denial^c before your God—your prayer was heard, and I have come because of your prayer.¹³ However, the prince of the Persian kingdom opposed me for twenty-one days; now Michael, a prince of the first rank, has come to my aid, after I was detained there with the kings of Persia.¹⁴ So I have come to make you understand what is to befall your people in the days to come, for there is yet a vision for those days.”

¹⁵ While he was saying these things to me, I looked down and kept silent.¹⁶ Then [this figure] who looked human touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision, I have been seized with pangs and cannot summon strength.¹⁷ How can this servant of my lord speak with my lord, seeing that my strength has failed and no spirit is left in me?”¹⁸ The one who looked human touched me again, and strengthened me.¹⁹ He said, “Have no fear, precious one, all will be well with you; be strong, be strong!” As he spoke with me, I was strengthened, and said, “Speak on, my lord, for you have strengthened me!”²⁰ Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? Now I must go back to fight the prince of Persia. When I go off, the prince of Greece will come in.²¹^d No one is helping me against them except your prince, Michael. However, I will tell you what is recorded in the book of truth.

11

“In the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to strengthen and fortify him.² And now I will tell you the truth: Persia will have three more kings, and the fourth will be wealthier than them all; by the power he obtains through his wealth, he will stir everyone up against the kingdom of Greece.³ Then a warrior king will appear who will have an extensive dominion and do as he pleases.⁴ But after his appearance, his kingdom will be broken up and scattered to the four winds of heaven, but not for any of his posterity, nor with dominion like that which he had; for his kingdom will be uprooted and belong to others beside these.

⁵“The king of the south will grow powerful; however, one of his officers will overpower him and rule, having an extensive dominion.

^c 10.12 *practicing self-denial* Cf. v. 3.

^d 10.21 Sentences transposed for clarity.

⁶After some years, an alliance will be made, and the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to effect the agreement, but she will not maintain her strength, nor will his strength endure. She will be surrendered together with those who escorted her and the one who begot her and helped her during those times. ⁷A shoot from her stock will appear in his place, will come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north; he will fight and overpower them. ⁸He will also take their gods with their molten images and their precious vessels of silver and gold back to Egypt as booty. For some years he will leave the king of the north alone, ⁹who will [later] invade the realm of the king of the south, but will go back to his land.

¹⁰“His sons will wage war, collecting a multitude of great armies; he will advance and sweep through as a flood, and will again wage war as far as his stronghold. ¹¹Then the king of the south, in a rage, will go out to do battle with him, with the king of the north. He will muster a great multitude, but the multitude will be delivered into his [foe’s] power. ¹²But when the multitude is carried off, he will grow arrogant; he will cause myriads to perish, but will not prevail. ¹³Then the king of the north will again muster a multitude even greater than the first. After a time, a matter of years, he will advance with a great army and much baggage. ¹⁴In those times, many will resist the king of the south, and the lawless sons of your people will assert themselves to confirm the vision, but they will fail. ¹⁵The king of the north will advance and throw up siege ramps and capture a fortress city, and the forces of the south will not hold out; even the elite of his army will be powerless to resist. ¹⁶His opponent will do as he pleases, for none will hold out against him; he will install himself in the beautiful land with destruction within his reach. ¹⁷He will set his mind upon invading the strongholds throughout his [foe’s] kingdom, but in order to destroy it he will effect an agreement with him and give him a daughter in marriage; he will not succeed at it and it will not come about. ¹⁸He will turn to the coastlands and capture many; but a consul will put an end to his insults, nay pay him back for his insults. ¹⁹He will head back to the strongholds of his own land, but will stumble, and fall, and vanish. ²⁰His place will be taken by one who will dispatch an officer to exact tribute for royal glory, but he will be broken in a few days, not by wrath or by war. ²¹His place will be taken by a contemptible man, on whom royal majesty was not conferred; he will come in unawares

and seize the kingdom through trickery.²²The forces of the flood will be overwhelmed by him and will be broken, and so too the covenant leader.²³And, from the time an alliance is made with him, he will practice deceit; and he will rise to power with a small band.²⁴He will invade the richest of provinces unawares, and will do what his father and forefathers never did, lavishing on his followers^a spoil, booty, and wealth; he will have designs upon strongholds, but only for a time.

²⁵“He will muster his strength and courage against the king of the south with a great army. The king of the south will wage war with a very great and powerful army but will not stand fast, for they will devise plans against him.²⁶Those who eat of his food will ruin him. His army will be overwhelmed, and many will fall slain.²⁷The minds of both kings will be bent on evil; while sitting at the table together, they will lie to each other, but to no avail, for there is yet an appointed term.²⁸He will return to his land with great wealth, his mind set against the holy covenant. Having done his pleasure, he will return to his land.²⁹At the appointed time, he will again invade the south, but the second time will not be like the first.³⁰Ships from Kittim will come against him. He will be checked, and will turn back, raging against the holy covenant. Having done his pleasure, he will then attend to those who forsake the holy covenant.³¹Forces will be levied by him; they will desecrate the temple, the fortress; they will abolish the regular offering and set up the appalling abomination.³²He will flatter with smooth words those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people devoted to their God will stand firm.³³The knowledgeable among the people will make the many understand; and for a while they shall fall by sword and flame, suffer captivity and spoliation.³⁴In defeat, they will receive a little help, and many will join them insincerely.³⁵Some of the knowledgeable will fall, that they may be refined and purged and whitened until the time of the end, for an interval still remains until the appointed time.

³⁶“The king will do as he pleases; he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and he will speak awful things against the God of gods. He will prosper until wrath is spent, and what has been decreed is accomplished.³⁷He will not have regard for the god of his ancestors or for the one dear to women; he will not have regard for any god, but will magnify himself above all.³⁸He will honor the god of fortresses

^a 11.24 *his followers* Heb. “them.”

on his stand; he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly things, a god that his ancestors never knew.³⁹ He will deal with fortified strongholds with the help of an alien god. He will heap honor on those who acknowledge him, and will make them master over many; he will distribute land for a price.⁴⁰ At the time of the end, the king of the south will lock horns with him, but the king of the north will attack him with chariots and riders and many ships. He will invade lands, sweeping through them like a flood;⁴¹ he will invade the beautiful land, too, and many will fall, but these will escape his clutches: Edom, Moab, and the chief part of the Ammonites.⁴² He will lay his hands on lands; not even the land of Egypt will escape.⁴³ He will gain control over treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and Cushites will follow at his heel.⁴⁴ But reports from east and north will alarm him, and he will march forth in a great fury to destroy and annihilate many.⁴⁵ He will pitch his royal pavilion between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain, and he will meet his doom with no one to help him.

12

"At that time, the great prince, Michael, who stands beside the sons of your people, will appear. It will be a time of trouble, the like of which has never been since the nation came into being. At that time, your people will be rescued, all who are found inscribed in the book.² Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence.³ And the knowledgeable will be radiant like the bright expanse of sky, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever.

⁴"But you, Daniel, keep the words secret, and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will range far and wide and knowledge will increase."

⁵Then I, Daniel, looked and saw two others standing, one on one bank of the river, the other on the other bank of the river.⁶ One said to that figure clothed in linen, who was above the water of the river, "How long until the end of these awful things?"⁷ Then I heard the figure clothed in linen, who was above the water of the river, swear by the Ever-Living One as he lifted his right hand and his left hand to heaven: "For a time, times, and half a time;^a and when the breaking of the power of the holy people comes to an end, then shall all these things be fulfilled."

^a 12.7 *time, times, and half a time* See note at 7.25.

⁸I heard and did not understand, so I said, “My lord, what will be the outcome of these things?” ⁹He said, “Go, Daniel, for these words are secret and sealed to the time of the end. ¹⁰Many will be purified and purged and refined; the wicked will act wickedly and none of the wicked will understand; but the knowledgeable will understand. ¹¹(From the time the regular offering is abolished, and an appalling abomination is set up—it will be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. ¹²Happy the one who waits and reaches one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.) ¹³But you, go on to the end; you shall rest, and arise to your destiny at the end of the days.”



1 In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, when the word of GOD spoken by Jeremiah was fulfilled,^a GOD roused the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia to issue a proclamation throughout his realm by word of mouth and in writing as follows:

²“Thus said King Cyrus of Persia: The ETERNAL God of Heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and has charged me with building a house [of God] in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³May your God be with those of you among this people who wish to go up to Jerusalem that is in Judah and build the House of the ETERNAL God of Israel, the God that is in Jerusalem; ⁴and all who stay behind, wherever that may be, let the people of that place render assistance with silver, gold, goods, and livestock, besides the freewill offering to the House of God that is in Jerusalem.”

⁵So the heads of the clans of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites, all whose spirit had been roused by God, got ready to go up to build the House of GOD that is in Jerusalem. ⁶All their neighbors supported them with silver vessels, with gold, with goods, with livestock, and with precious objects, besides what had been given as a freewill offering. ⁷King Cyrus released the vessels of GOD’s house that Nebuchadnezzar had taken away from Jerusalem and had put in the house of his god. ⁸These King Cyrus of Persia released through the office of Mithredath the treasurer, who gave an inventory of them to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. ⁹This is the inventory: 30 gold basins, 1,000 silver basins, 29 knives, ¹⁰30 gold bowls, 410 silver double bowls,^b 1,000 other vessels; ¹¹in all, 5,400 gold and silver vessels. Sheshbazzar brought all these back when the exiles came back from Babylon to Jerusalem.

2 ^aThese are the people of the province who came up from among the captive exiles whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had deported to Babylon, who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own city—²who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah.

^a 1.1 *the word of God spoken by Jeremiah was fulfilled* Cf. Jer. 29.10.

^b 1.10 *double bowls* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 2.1 This chapter appears as Neh. 7.6–72 with variations in the names and numbers.

The list of participants from among the people of Israel: ³the sons of Parosh—2,172; ⁴the sons of Shephatiah—372; ⁵the sons of Arah—775; ⁶the sons of Pahath-moab: the sons of Jeshua and Joab—2,812; ⁷the sons of Elam—1,254; ⁸the sons of Zattu—945; ⁹the sons of Zaccai—760; ¹⁰the sons of Bani—642; ¹¹the sons of Bebai—623; ¹²the sons of Azgad—1,222; ¹³the sons of Adonikam—666; ¹⁴the sons of Bigvai—2,056; ¹⁵the sons of Adin—454; ¹⁶the sons of Ater: Hezekiah—98; ¹⁷the sons of Bezai—323; ¹⁸the sons of Jorah—112; ¹⁹the sons of Hashum—223; ²⁰the sons of Gibbar—95; ²¹the sons of Bethlehem—123; ²²the participants from Netophah—56; ²³the participants from Anathoth—128; ²⁴the sons of Azmaveth—42; ²⁵the sons of Kiriath-arim: Chephirah and Beeroth—743; ²⁶the sons of Ramah and Geba—621; ²⁷the participants from Michmas—122; ²⁸the participants from Bethel and Ai—223; ²⁹the sons of Nebo—52; ³⁰the sons of Magbish—156; ³¹the sons of the other Elam—1,254; ³²the sons of Harim—320; ³³the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono—725; ³⁴the sons of Jericho—345; ³⁵the sons of Senaah—3,630.

³⁶The priests: the sons of Jedaiah: the house of Jeshua—973; ³⁷the sons of Immer—1,052; ³⁸the sons of Pashhur—1,247; ³⁹the sons of Harim—1,017.

⁴⁰The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel: the sons of Hodaviah—74.

⁴¹The singers: the sons of Asaph—128.

⁴²The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, all told—139.

⁴³The temple servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁴the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon, ⁴⁵the sons of Lebannah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub, ⁴⁶the sons of Hagab, the sons of Salmai, the sons of Hanan, ⁴⁷the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah, ⁴⁸the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam, ⁴⁹the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai, ⁵⁰the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephusim, ⁵¹the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, ⁵²the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, ⁵³the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, ⁵⁴the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁵The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Hassophereth, the sons of Peruda, ⁵⁶the sons of Jaalah, the sons of

Darkon, the sons of Giddel,⁵⁷ the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hat-til, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Ami.

⁵⁸The total of temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants—392.

⁵⁹The following were those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer—they were unable to tell whether their father's house and descent were Israelite: ⁶⁰the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda—652.

⁶¹Of the sons of the priests, the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai who had married a daughter of Barzillai the Gileadite and had taken his^b name—⁶²these searched for their genealogical records, but they could not be found, so they were disqualified for the priesthood. ⁶³The Tirshatha^c ordered them not to eat of the most holy things until a priest with Urim and Thummim should appear.

⁶⁴The sum of the entire community was 42,360, ⁶⁵not counting their male and female servants, those being 7,337; they also had 200 male and female singers. ⁶⁶Their horses—736; their mules—245; ⁶⁷their camels—435; their donkeys—6,720.

⁶⁸Some of the heads of the clans, on arriving at the House of GOD in Jerusalem, gave a freewill offering to erect the House of God on its site. ⁶⁹In accord with their means, they donated to the treasury of the work: gold—61,000 drachmas, silver—5,000 *minas*, and priestly robes—100.

⁷⁰The priests, the Levites and some of the people, and the singers, gatekeepers, and the temple servants took up residence in their towns and all Israel in their towns.

3 When the seventh month arrived—the Israelites being settled in their towns—the entire people assembled as one in Jerusalem.² Then Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brother priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his brothers set to and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings upon it as is written in the Teaching of Moses, the agent of God.³ They set up the altar on its site because they were in fear of the peoples of the land, and they offered burnt offerings on it to GOD, burnt offerings each morning and evening.⁴ Then they

^b 2.61 *his* Lit. "their."

^c 2.63 *Tirshatha* A Persian title.

celebrated the festival of Tabernacles as is written, with its daily burnt offerings in the proper quantities, on each day as is prescribed for it,⁵ followed by the regular burnt offering and the offerings for the new moons and for all the sacred fixed times of GOD, and whatever freewill offerings were made to GOD.⁶ From the first day of the seventh month they began to make burnt offerings to GOD, though the foundation of the Temple of GOD had not been laid.⁷ They paid the hewers and artisans with money, and the Sidonians and Tyrians with food, drink, and oil to bring cedarwood from Lebanon by sea to Joppa, in accord with the authorization granted them by King Cyrus of Persia.

⁸In the second year after their arrival at the House of God, at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brother priests and Levites, and all who had come from the captivity to Jerusalem, as their first step appointed Levites from the age of twenty and upward to supervise the work of the House of GOD.⁹ Jeshua, his sons and brothers, Kad-miel and his sons, the sons of Judah,^a together were appointed in charge of those who did the work in the House of God; also the sons of Henadad, their sons and their Levite kin.

¹⁰When the builders had laid the foundation of the Temple of GOD, priests in their vestments with trumpets, and Levites sons of Asaph with cymbals were stationed to give praise to GOD, as King David of Israel had ordained.¹¹ They sang songs extolling and praising GOD, “who is good—whose steadfast love for Israel is eternal.”^b All the people raised a great shout extolling GOD because the foundation of the House of GOD had been laid.¹² Many of the priests and Levites and the heads of the clans, the older ones who had seen the first house, wept loudly at the sight of the founding of this house. Many others shouted joyously at the top of their voices.¹³ The people could not distinguish the shouts of joy from the people’s weeping, for the people raised a great shout, the sound of which could be heard from afar.

- 4** When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the ETERNAL God of Israel,² they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of the clans and said to them, “Let us build with you, since we too worship your God; we have been

^a 3.9 *Judah* Known as Hodaviah in 2.40.

^b 3.11 *who is good . . . eternal* Cf. Ps. 106.1; 136.

offering sacrifices since the time of King Esarhaddon of Assyria, who brought us here.”³ Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of the clans of Israel answered them, “It is not for you and us to build a House to our God, but we alone will build it to the ETERNAL God of Israel, in accord with the charge that the king, King Cyrus of Persia, laid upon us.”⁴ Thereupon the people of the land undermined the resolve of the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build.⁵ They bribed ministers in order to thwart their plans all the years of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia.

⁶ And in the reign of Ahasuerus, at the start of his reign, they drew up an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

⁷ And in the time of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their colleagues wrote to King Artaxerxes of Persia, a letter written in Aramaic and translated.^a

Aramaic:^b Rehum the commissioner and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter concerning Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows: ^c(Then Rehum the commissioner and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their colleagues, the judges, officials, officers, and overseers, of [the peoples from] Erech, and Babylon, and Susa—that is the Elamites—¹⁰and other peoples whom the great and glorious Osnappar deported and settled in the city of Samaria and the rest of the province Beyond the River [wrote]—and now ¹¹this is the text of the letter that they sent to him:)—“To King Artaxerxes [from] your servants, the populace of the province Beyond the River. And now ¹²be it known to the king that the Jews who came up from you to us have reached Jerusalem and are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city; they are completing the walls and repairing the foundation.¹³ Now be it known to the king that if this city is rebuilt and the walls completed, they will not pay tribute, poll-tax, or land-tax, and in the end it will harm the kingdom.¹⁴ Now since we eat the salt of the palace, and it is not right that we should see the king dishonored, we have written to advise the king [of this]¹⁵ so that you may search the records of your ancestors and find in the records and know that this city is a rebellious city, harmful to kings and states. Sedition has been rife in it from early times; on that account this city was destroyed.¹⁶ We advise the king that if this

^a 4.7 *translated* Cf. below v. 18 and note there.

^b 4.7 *Aramaic:* A note indicating that what follows is in the Aramaic language.

^c 4.9–11 These verses amplify v. 8.

city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, you will no longer have any portion in the province Beyond the River.”

¹⁷The king sent back the following message: “To Rehum the commissioner and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their colleagues, who dwell in Samaria and in the rest of the province of Beyond the River, greetings. Now ¹⁸the letter that you wrote me has been read to me in translation.^d ¹⁹At my order a search has been made, and it has been found that this city has from earliest times risen against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been rife in it. ²⁰Powerful kings have ruled over Jerusalem and exercised authority over the whole province of Beyond the River, and tribute, poll-tax, and land-tax were paid to them. ²¹Now issue an order to stop these men; this city is not to be rebuilt until I so order. ²²Take care not to be lax in this matter or there will be much damage and harm to the kingdom.”

²³When the text of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their colleagues, they hurried to Jerusalem, to the Jews, and stopped them by main force. ²⁴At that time, work on the House of God in Jerusalem stopped and remained in abeyance until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.

5 Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem, inspired by the God of Israel.^a ²Thereupon Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak began rebuilding the House of God in Jerusalem, with the full support of the prophets of God. ³At once Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their colleagues descended upon them and said this to them, “Who issued orders to you to rebuild this house and complete its furnishing?” ⁴Then the officials^b said to them, “What are the names of the men who are engaged in the building?” ⁵But God watched over the elders of the Jews and they were not stopped while a report went to Darius and a letter was sent back in reply to it.

⁶This is the text of the letter that Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his colleagues, the officials of Beyond the River, sent to King Darius. ⁷They sent a message to him and this is what was written in it: “To King Darius, greetings,

^d **4.18 in translation** From Aramaic to Persian.

^a **5.1 inspired by the God of Israel** Lit. “with the name of the God of Israel upon them.”

^b **5.4 the officials** Aram. “we”; cf. v. 10. Greek and Syriac read “they.”

and so forth.⁸ Be it known to the king, that we went to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God. It is being rebuilt of hewn stone, and wood is being laid in the walls. The work is being done with dispatch and is going well.⁹ Thereupon we directed this question to these elders, ‘Who issued orders to you to rebuild this house and to complete its furnishings?’¹⁰ We also asked their names so that we could write down the names of their leaders for your information.¹¹ This is what they answered us: ‘We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth; we are rebuilding the house that was originally built many years ago; a great king of Israel built it and completed it.¹² But because our ancestors angered the God of Heaven, they were handed over to Nebuchadnezzar the Chaldean, king of Babylon, who demolished this house and exiled the people to Babylon.¹³ But in the first year of King Cyrus of Babylon, King Cyrus issued an order to rebuild this House of God.¹⁴ Also the silver and gold vessels of the House of God that Nebuchadnezzar had taken away from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to the temple in Babylon—King Cyrus released them from the temple in Babylon to be given to the one called Sheshbazzar whom he had appointed governor.¹⁵ He said to him, “Take these vessels, go, deposit them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the House of God be rebuilt on its original site.”¹⁶ That same Sheshbazzar then came and laid the foundations for the House of God in Jerusalem; and ever since then it has been under construction, but is not yet finished.¹⁷ And now, if it please the king, let the royal archives there in Babylon be searched to see whether indeed an order had been issued by King Cyrus to rebuild this House of God in Jerusalem. May the king convey to us his pleasure in this matter.”

6 Thereupon, at the order of King Darius, they searched the archives where the treasures were stored in Babylon.² But it was in the citadel of Ecbatana, in the province of Media, that a scroll was found in which the following was written: “Memorandum: ³ In the first year of King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued an order concerning the House of God in Jerusalem: ‘Let the house be rebuilt, a place for offering sacrifices, with a base built up high. Let it be sixty cubits high and sixty cubits wide,⁴ with a course of unused timber for each three courses of hewn stone. The expenses shall be paid by the palace.⁵ And the gold and silver vessels of the House of God that Nebuchadnezzar had taken away from the temple in Jerusalem and transported to Babylon shall be returned,

and let each go back to the temple in Jerusalem where it belongs; you shall deposit it in the House of God.'

⁶“Now^a you, Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai and colleagues, the officials of the province of Beyond the River, stay away from that place. ⁷Allow the work of this House of God to go on; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this House of God on its site. ⁸And I hereby issue an order concerning what you must do to help these elders of the Jews rebuild this House of God: the expenses are to be paid to these men with dispatch out of the resources of the king, derived from the taxes of the province of Beyond the River, so that the work not be stopped. ⁹They are to be given daily, without fail, whatever they need of young bulls, rams, or lambs as burnt offerings for the God of Heaven, and wheat, salt, wine, and oil, at the order of the priests in Jerusalem, ¹⁰so that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of Heaven and pray for the life of the king and his heirs. ¹¹I also issue an order that whoever alters this decree shall have a beam removed from his house, and he shall be impaled on it and his house confiscated.^b ¹²And may the God whose name is established there cause the downfall of any king or nation that undertakes to alter or damage that House of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have issued the decree; let it be carried out with dispatch.”

¹³Then Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their colleagues carried out with dispatch what King Darius had written. ¹⁴So the elders of the Jews progressed in the building, urged on by the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah son of Iddo, and they brought the building to completion under the aegis of the God of Israel and by the order of Cyrus and Darius and King Artaxerxes of Persia. ¹⁵The house was finished on the third of the month of Adar in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. ¹⁶The Israelites, the priests, and the Levites, and all the other exiles celebrated the dedication of the House of God with joy. ¹⁷And they sacrificed for the dedication of this House of God one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and twelve goats as a purification offering for all of Israel, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁸They appointed the priests in their courses and the Levites

^a 6.6 Now This introduces the text of the reply of Darius that doubtless contained the preceding narrative (vv. 1–5) as a preliminary.

^b 6.11 confiscated Meaning uncertain; or “turned into ruins.”

in their divisions for the service of God in Jerusalem, according to the prescription in the Book of Moses.

¹⁹^cThe returned exiles celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, ²⁰for the priests and Levites had purified themselves in concert; they were all pure. They slaughtered the passover offering for all the returned exiles, and for their brother priests and for themselves. ²¹The children of Israel who had returned from the exile, together with all who joined them in separating themselves from the impurity of the nations of the lands to worship the ETERNAL God of Israel, ate of it. ²²They joyfully celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days, for GOD had given them cause for joy by inclining the heart of the Assyrian king toward them so as to give them support in the work of the House of God, the God of Israel.

7 After these events, during the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah son of Azariah son of Hilkiah ²son of Shallum son of Zadok son of Ahitub ³son of Amariah son of Azariah son of Meraioth ⁴son of Zerahiah son of Uzzi son of Bukki ⁵son of Abishua son of Phinehas son of Eleazar son of Aaron the chief priest—⁶that Ezra came up from Babylon, a scribe expert in the Teaching of Moses that the ETERNAL God of Israel had given, whose request the king had granted in its entirety, thanks to the benevolence of GOD toward him.

⁷(Some of the Israelites, the priests and Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants set out for Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes, ⁸arriving in Jerusalem in the fifth month in the seventh year of the king.) ⁹On the first day of the first month the journey up from Babylon was started, and on the first day of the fifth month he arrived in Jerusalem, thanks to the benevolent care of his God for him. ¹⁰For Ezra had dedicated himself to study the Teaching of GOD so as to observe it, and to teach laws and rules to Israel.

¹¹The following is the text of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave Ezra the priest-scribe, a scholar in matters concerning GOD's commandments and laws to Israel:

¹²^a“Artaxerxes king of kings, to Ezra the priest, scholar in the law of the God of heaven, and so forth.^b And now,¹³I hereby issue an order

^c 6.19 Hebrew resumes here.

^a 7.12 Aramaic resumes here through v. 26.

^b 7.12 *and so forth* Meaning uncertain.

that anyone in my kingdom who is of the people of Israel and its priests and Levites who feels impelled to go to Jerusalem may go with you.¹⁴ For you are commissioned by the king and his seven advisers to regulate Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God, which is in your care,¹⁵ and to bring the freewill offering of silver and gold that the king and his advisers made to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem,¹⁶ and whatever silver and gold that you find throughout the province of Babylon, together with the freewill offerings that the people and the priests will give for the House of their God, which is in Jerusalem.¹⁷ You shall, therefore, with dispatch acquire with this money bulls, rams, and lambs, with their grain offerings and libations, and offer them on the altar of the House of your God in Jerusalem.¹⁸ And whatever you wish to do with the leftover silver and gold, you and your kinsmen may do, in accord with the will of your God.¹⁹ The vessels for the service of the House of your God that are given to you, deliver to God in Jerusalem,²⁰ and any other needs of the House of your God that it falls to you to supply, do so from the royal treasury.²¹ I, King Artaxerxes, for my part, hereby issue an order to all the treasurers in the province of Beyond the River that whatever request Ezra the priest, scholar in the law of the God of Heaven, makes of you is to be fulfilled with dispatch²² up to the sum of one hundred talents of silver, one hundred *kors* of wheat, one hundred *baths* of wine, one hundred *baths* of oil, and salt without limit.²³ Whatever is by order of the God of Heaven must be carried out diligently for the House of the God of Heaven, else wrath will come upon the king and his sons.²⁴ We further advise you that it is not permissible to impose tribute, poll tax, or land tax on any priest, Levite, singer, gatekeeper, temple servant, or other servant of this House of God.²⁵ And you, Ezra, by the divine wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judges to judge all the people in the province of Beyond the River who know the laws of your God, and to teach those who do not know them.²⁶ Let anyone who does not obey the law of your God and the law of the king be punished with dispatch, whether by death, corporal punishment, confiscation of possessions, or imprisonment.”

²⁷^c Blessed is the ETERNAL God of our ancestors, who put it into the mind of the king to glorify the House of GOD in Jerusalem,²⁸ and who inclined the king and his counselors and the king’s military offi-

^c 7.27 Hebrew resumes here.

cers to be favorably disposed toward me. For my part, thanks to GOD's care for me, I summoned up courage and assembled leaders in Israel to go with me.

8 These are the heads of the clans and the register of the genealogy of those who came up with me from Babylon in the reign of King Artaxerxes: ²Of the sons of Phinehas, Gershon; of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel; of the sons of David, Hattush. ³Of the sons of Shecaniah: of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah; through him the genealogy of 150 males was registered. ⁴Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah, of the sons of Pahath-moab, and with him 200 males. ⁵Of the sons of Shecaniah son of Jahaziel; and with him 300 males. ⁶And of the sons of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan; and with him 50 males. ⁷And of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiah son of Athaliah; and with him 70 males. ⁸And of the sons of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael; and with him 80 males. ⁹Of the sons of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel; and with him 218 males. ¹⁰And of the sons of Shelomith, the son of Josiphiah; and with him 160 males. ¹¹And of the sons of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai; and with him 28 males. ¹²And of the sons of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan; and with him 110 males. ¹³And of the sons of Adonikam, who were the last; and these are their names: Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah; and with them 60 males. ¹⁴And of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and Zaccur; and with them 70 males.

¹⁵These I assembled by the river that enters Ahava, and we encamped there for three days. I reviewed the people and the priests, but I did not find any Levites there. ¹⁶I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, the leading men, and also for Joiarib and Elnathan, the instructors, ¹⁷and I gave them an order for Iddo, the leader at the place [called] Casiphia. I gave them a message to convey to Iddo [and] his brother, temple-servants at the place [called] Casiphia, that they should bring us attendants for the House of our God. ¹⁸Thanks to the benevolent care of our God for us, they brought us a capable man of the family of Mahli son of Levi son of Israel, and Sherebiah^a and his sons and brothers, 18 in all, ¹⁹and Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the family of Merari, his brothers and their sons, 20 in all; ²⁰and of the temple servants whom David and the officers had appointed for the service of the Levites—220 temple servants, all of them listed by name.

^a 8.18 *and Sherebiah* Or “namely, Sherebiah, . . .”

²¹I proclaimed a fast there by the Ahava River to afflict ourselves before our God and to plead for a smooth journey for us and for our children and for all our possessions; ²²for I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and cavalry to protect us against any enemy on the way, since we had told the king, “Our God shows benevolent care for all seekers, but fierce anger against all deserters.” ²³So we fasted and besought our God for this, and our plea was answered. ²⁴Then I selected twelve of the chiefs of the priests, namely Sherebiah and Hashabiah with ten of their brothers, ²⁵and I weighed out to them the silver, the gold, and the vessels, the contribution to the House of our God that the king, his counselors and officers, and all Israel who were present had made. ²⁶I entrusted to their safekeeping the weight of six hundred and fifty talents of silver, one hundred silver vessels of one talent each, one hundred talents of gold; ²⁷also, twenty gold bowls worth one thousand *darics* and two vessels of good, shining bronze, as precious as gold. ²⁸I said to them, “You are consecrated to GOD, and the vessels are consecrated, and the silver and gold are a freewill offering to the ETERNAL God of your ancestors. ²⁹Guard them diligently until such time as you weigh them out in the presence of the officers of the priests and the Levites and the officers of the clans of Israel in Jerusalem in the chambers of the House of GOD.”

³⁰So the priests and the Levites received the cargo of silver and gold and vessels by weight, to bring them to Jerusalem to the House of our God. ³¹We set out for Jerusalem from the Ahava River on the twelfth of the first month. We enjoyed the care of our God, who saved us from enemy ambush on the journey.

³²We arrived in Jerusalem and stayed there three days. ³³On the fourth day the silver, gold, and vessels were weighed out in the House of our God into the keeping of Meremoth son of Uriah the priest, with whom was Eleazar son of Phinehas. Jozabad son of Jeshua, and Noadiah son of Binnui, the Levites, were with them. ³⁴Everything accorded as to number and weight, the entire cargo being recorded at that time.

³⁵The returning exiles who arrived from captivity made burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs and twelve he-goats as a purification offering, all this a burnt offering to GOD. ³⁶They handed the royal orders to the king’s satraps and the governors of the province of Beyond the River who gave support to the people and the House of God.

9 When this was over, the officers approached me, saying, “The people of Israel^a and the priests and Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the land whose abhorrent practices are like those of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. ²They have taken their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed has become intermingled with the peoples of the land; and it is the officers and prefects who have taken the lead in this trespass.”

³When I heard this, I rent my garment and robe, I tore hair out of my head and beard, and I sat desolate. ⁴Around me gathered all who were concerned over the words of the God of Israel because of the returning exiles’ trespass, while I sat desolate until the evening offering. ⁵At the time of the evening offering I ended my self-affliction; still in my torn garment and robe, I got down on my knees and spread out my hands to the ETERNAL my God, ⁶and said, “O my God, I am too ashamed and mortified to lift my face to You, O my God, for our iniquities are overwhelming^b and our guilt has grown high as heaven. ⁷From the time of our ancestors to this very day we have been deep in guilt. Because of our iniquities, we, our kings, and our priests have been handed over to foreign kings, to the sword, to captivity, to pillage, and to humiliation, as is now the case.

⁸“But now, for a short while, there has been a reprieve from the ETERNAL our God, who has granted us a surviving remnant and given us a stake in the temple in Jerusalem,^c restored the luster to our eyes, and furnished us with a little sustenance in our bondage. ⁹For slaves we are, though even in our bondage God has not forsaken us, but has disposed the king of Persia favorably toward us, to furnish us with sustenance and to raise again the House of our God, repairing its ruins and giving us a hold^d in Judah and Jerusalem.

¹⁰“Now, what can we say in the face of this, O our God, for we have forsaken Your commandments,¹¹ which You gave us through Your servants the prophets when You said, ‘The land that you are about to possess

^a 9.1 *The people of Israel* I.e., its (mostly male) heads of households, as responsible for the nation’s welfare.

^b 9.6 *are overwhelming* Lit. “are numerous above the head.”

^c 9.8 *the temple in Jerusalem* Lit. “His holy place.”

^d 9.9 *hold* Lit. “fence.”

is a land made unclean through the uncleanness of the peoples of the land, through their abhorrent practices with which they, in their impurity, have filled it from one end to the other.¹² Now then, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or let their daughters marry your sons; do nothing for their well-being or advantage, then you will be strong and enjoy the bounty of the land and bequeath it to your children forever.¹³ After all that has happened to us because of our evil deeds and our deep guilt—though You, our God, have been forbearing, [punishing us] less than our iniquity [deserves] in that You have granted us such a remnant as this—¹⁴ shall we once again violate Your commandments by intermarrying with these peoples who follow such abhorrent practices? Will You not rage against us till we are destroyed without remnant or survivor?¹⁵ O ETERNAL One, God of Israel, You are benevolent,^e for we have survived as a remnant, as is now the case. We stand before You in all our guilt, for we cannot face You on this account.”

10

While Ezra was praying and making confession, weeping and prostrating himself before the House of God, a very great crowd of Israelites gathered about him, men, women, and children; the people were weeping bitterly.² Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel of the family of Elam spoke up and said to Ezra, “We have trespassed against our God by bringing into our homes foreign women from the peoples of the land; but there is^a still hope for Israel despite this.³ Now then, let us make a covenant with our God to expel all these women and those who have been born to them, in accordance with the bidding of the Sovereign and of all who are concerned over the commandment of our God, and let the Teaching be obeyed.⁴ Take action, for the responsibility is yours and we are with you. Act with resolve!”

⁵ So Ezra at once put the officers of the priests and the Levites and all Israel under oath to act accordingly, and they took the oath.⁶ Then Ezra rose from his place in front of the House of God and went into the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib; there, he ate no bread and drank no water, for he was in mourning over the trespass of those who had returned from exile.⁷ Then a proclamation was issued in Judah and Jerusalem that all who had returned from the exile should

^e 9.15 *benevolent* Or “in the right.”

^a 10.2 *but there is* Or “is there . . . ?”

assemble in Jerusalem,⁸ and that anyone who did not come in three days would, by decision of the officers and elders, have their property confiscated and themselves excluded from the congregation of the returning exiles.

⁹All the citizens of Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem in three days; it was the ninth month, the twentieth of the month. All the people sat in the square of the House of God, trembling on account of the event and because of the rains.¹⁰Then Ezra the priest got up and said to them, “You^b have trespassed by bringing home foreign women, thus aggravating the guilt of Israel.¹¹So now, make confession to the ETERNAL, God of your ancestors—and do God’s will by separating yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign women.”

¹²The entire congregation responded in a loud voice, “We must surely do just as you say.¹³However, many people are involved, and it is the rainy season; it is not possible to remain out in the open, nor is this the work of a day or two, because we have transgressed extensively in this matter.¹⁴Let our officers remain on behalf of the entire congregation, and all our townsmen who have brought home foreign women shall appear before them at scheduled times, together with the elders and judges of each town, in order to avert the burning anger of our God from us on this account.”¹⁵Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah remained for this purpose, assisted by Meshullam and Shabbethai, the Levites.¹⁶The returning exiles did so. Ezra the priest and certain chiefs of the ancestral clans—all listed by name—sequestered themselves on the first day of the tenth month to study the matter.¹⁷By the first day of the first month they were done with all the men who had brought home foreign women.¹⁸Among the priestly families who were found to have brought foreign women were Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah.¹⁹They gave their word^c to expel their wives and, acknowledging their guilt, offered a ram from the flock to expiate it.²⁰Of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah;²¹of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah;²²of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah;²³of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah who is Kelita, Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.²⁴Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and

^b 10.10 *You* Namely, the (mostly male) householders among the people.

^c 10.19 *word* Lit. “hand.”

Uri.²⁵ Of the Israelites: of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah;²⁶ of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah;²⁷ of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza;²⁸ of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai;²⁹ of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Ramoth;³⁰ of the sons of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh;³¹ of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, and Shimeon;³² also Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah;³³ of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei;³⁴ of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, and Uel;³⁵ also Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhu,³⁶ Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,³⁷ Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasai,³⁸ Bani, Binnui, Shimei,³⁹ Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,⁴⁰ Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,⁴¹ Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,⁴² Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph;⁴³ of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

⁴⁴ All these had married foreign women, among whom were some women who had borne children.^d

^d **10.44** *who had borne children* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

נָחָמִית | NEHEMYAH
NEHEMIAH

1 The narrative of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:

In the month of Kislev of the twentieth year,^a when I was in the fortress of Shushan,^b Hanani, one of my brothers, together with some Judahites, arrived, and I asked them about the Jews, the remnant who had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. ^cThey replied, “The survivors who have survived the captivity there in the province are in dire trouble and disgrace; Jerusalem’s wall is full of breaches, and its gates have been destroyed by fire.”

^dWhen I heard that, I sat and wept, and was in mourning for days, fasting and praying to the God of Heaven. ^eI said, “O ETERNAL One, God of Heaven, great and awesome God, who stays faithful to the covenant with those who show love and keep the commandments! ^fLet Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to receive the prayer of Your servant that I am praying to You now, day and night, on behalf of the Israelites, Your servants, confessing the sins that we Israelites have committed against You, sins that I and my father’s house have committed. ^gWe have offended You by not keeping the commandments, the laws, and the rules that You gave to Your servant Moses. ^hBe mindful of the promise You gave to Your servant Moses: ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples; ⁱbut if you turn back to Me, faithfully keep My commandments, even if your dispersed are at the ends of the earth,^j I will gather them from there and bring them to the place where I have chosen to establish My name.’ ^kFor they are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great power and Your mighty hand. ^lO Lord! Let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to hold Your name in awe. Grant Your servant success today, and dispose the one whom I serve^m to be compassionate toward him!”

I was the king’s cupbearer at the time.

2 In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, wine was set before him; I took the wine and gave it to the king—I had

^a 1.1 *the twentieth year* Of King Artaxerxes; cf. 2.1.

^b 1.9 *earth* Lit. “sky.”

^c 1.11 *the one whom I serve* Lit. “this man.”

never been out of sorts in his presence.²The king said to me, “How is it that you look bad, though you are not ill? It must be bad thoughts.” I was very frightened,³but I answered the king, “May the king live forever! How should I not look bad when the city of the graveyard of my ancestors lies in ruins, and its gates have been consumed by fire?”⁴The king said to me, “What is your request?” With a prayer to the God of Heaven,⁵I answered the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor with you, send me to Judah, to the city of my ancestors’ graves, to rebuild it.”⁶With the consort seated at his side, the king said to me, “How long will you be gone and when will you return?” So it was agreeable to the king to send me, and I gave him a date.⁷Then I said to the king, “If it please the king, let me have letters to the governors of the province of Beyond the River, directing them to grant me passage until I reach Judah;⁸likewise, a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the King’s Park, directing him to give me timber for roofing the gatehouses of the temple fortress and the city walls and for the house I shall occupy.” The king gave me these, thanks to my God’s benevolent care for me.⁹When I came to the governors of the province of Beyond the River I gave them the king’s letters. The king also sent army officers and cavalry with me.

¹⁰When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard, it displeased them greatly that someone had come, intent on improving the condition of the Israelites.

¹¹I arrived in Jerusalem. After I was there three days¹²I got up at night, I and a few men with me, and telling no one what my God had put into my mind to do for Jerusalem, and taking no other beast than the one on which I was riding,¹³I went out by the Valley Gate, at night, toward the Jackals’ Spring and the Dung Gate; and I surveyed the walls of Jerusalem that were breached, and its gates, consumed by fire.¹⁴I proceeded to the Fountain Gate and to the King’s Pool, where there was no room for the beast under me to continue.¹⁵So I went up the wadi by night, surveying the wall, and, entering again by the Valley Gate, I returned.¹⁶The prefects knew nothing of where I had gone or what I had done, since I had not yet divulged it to the Jews—the priests, the nobles, the prefects, or the rest of the officials.

¹⁷Then I said to them, “You see the bad state we are in—Jerusalem lying in ruins and its gates destroyed by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and suffer no more disgrace.”¹⁸I told them of my God’s benevolent care for me, also of the things that the king had said

to me, and they said, “Let us start building!” They were encouraged by God’s benevolence.

¹⁹When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arab heard, they mocked us and held us in contempt and said, “What is this that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?” ²⁰I said to them in reply, “The God of Heaven will grant us success—and so we, God’s servants, will start building. But you have no share or claim or stake^a in Jerusalem!”

3 Then Eliashib the high priest and his fellow priests set to and rebuilt the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and set up its doors, consecrating it as far as the Hundred’s Tower, as far as the Tower of Hananel. ²Next to him, a [work] party from Jericho built. Next to them,^a Zaccur son of Imri. ³The sons of Hassenaah rebuilt the Fish Gate; they roofed it and set up its doors, locks, and bars. ⁴Next to them, Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz repaired; and next to him,^b Meshullam son of Berechiah son of Meshezabel. Next to him,^c Zadok son of Baana repaired. ⁵Next to him,^d the Tekoites repaired, though their nobles would not take upon their shoulders^e the work of their lord. ⁶Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah repaired the Jeshanah Gate; they roofed it and set up its doors, locks, and bars. ⁷Next to them, Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite repaired, [with a work] party from Gibeon and Mizpah, under the jurisdiction^f of the governor of the province of Beyond the River. ⁸Next to them,^g Uzziel son of Harhaiah, [of the] smiths, repaired. Next to him, Hananiah, of^h the perfumers. They restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. ⁹Next to them, Rephaiah son of Hur, chief of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired. ¹⁰Next to him,ⁱ Jedaiah son of Harumaph repaired in front of his house. Next to him, Hattush son of Hashabneiah repaired. ¹¹Malchijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-moab repaired

^a 2.20 *stake* Lit. “record.”

^a 3.2 *them* Lit. “him.”

^b 3.4 *him* Lit. “them.”

^c 3.4 *him* Lit. “them.”

^d 3.5 *him* Lit. “them.”

^e 3.5 *take upon their shoulders* Lit. “bring their neck into.”

^f 3.7 *under the jurisdiction* Lit. “of the throne”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^g 3.8 *them* Lit. “him.”

^h 3.8 *of* Lit. “son of,” i.e., member of the guild of.

ⁱ 3.10 *him* Lit. “them.”

a second stretch, including the Tower of Ovens.¹² Next to them,^j Shallum son of Hallohesh,^k chief of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired—he and his daughters.¹³ Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate; they rebuilt it and set up its doors, locks, and bars. And [they also repaired] a thousand cubits of wall to the Dung Gate.¹⁴ Malchijah son of Rechab, chief of the district of Beth-haccerem, repaired the Dung Gate; he rebuilt it and set up its doors, locks, and bars.¹⁵ Shallun son of Col-hozeh, chief of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he rebuilt it and covered it, and set up its doors, locks, and bars, as well as the wall of the irrigation^l pool of the King's Garden as far as the steps going down from the City of David.¹⁶ After him, Nehemiah son of Azbuk, chief of half the district of Beth-zur, repaired, from in front of the graves of David as far as the artificial pool, and as far as the House of the Warriors.¹⁷ After him, the Levites repaired: Rehum son of Bani. Next to him, Hashabiah, chief of half the district of Keilah, repaired for his district.¹⁸ After him, their brothers repaired: Bavvai son of Henadad, chief of half the district of Keilah.¹⁹ Next to him, Ezer son of Jeshua, the chief of Mizpah, repaired a second stretch, from in front of the ascent to the armory [at] the angle [of the wall].²⁰ After him, Baruch son of Zaccai zealously repaired a second stretch, from the angle to the entrance to the house of Eliashib, the high priest.²¹ After him, Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz repaired a second stretch, from the entrance to Eliashib's house to the end of Eliashib's house.²² After him, the priests, inhabitants of the plain, repaired.²³ After them,^m Benjamin and Hasshub repaired in front of their houses. After them,ⁿ Azariah son of Maaseiah son of Ananiah repaired beside his house.²⁴ After him, Binnui son of Henadad repaired a second stretch, from the house of Azariah to the angle, to the corner.²⁵ Palal son of Uzai—from in front of the angle and the tower that juts out of the house of the king, the upper [tower] of the prison compound. After him, Pedaiah son of Parosh.²⁶ (The temple servants were living on the Ophel, as far as a point in front of the Water Gate in the east, and the jutting tower.)²⁷ After him, the Tekoites repaired a second stretch, from in front of the great jutting tower to the wall of the

^j 3.12 *them* Lit. "him."

^k 3.12 *Halohesh* I.e., the charmer.

^l 3.15 *irrigation* Following Kimhi; cf. Mishnaic Heb. *bet hashelaḥin*, irrigated field.

^m 3.23 *them* Lit. "him."

ⁿ 3.23 *them* Lit. "him."

Ophel.²⁸ Above the Horse Gate, the priests repaired, each in front of his house.²⁹ After them,^o Zadok son of Immer repaired in front of his house. After him, Shemaiah son of Shechaniah, keeper of the East Gate, repaired.³⁰ After him, Hananiah son of Shelemiah and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired a second stretch. After them,^p Meshullam son of Berechiah repaired in front of his chamber.³¹ After him, Malchijah of the smiths repaired as far as the house of the temple servants and the merchants, [from] in front of the Muster Gate to the corner loft.³² And between the corner loft to the Sheep Gate the smiths and the merchants repaired.

³³ When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, it angered him, and he was extremely vexed. He mocked the Jews,³⁴ saying in the presence of his brothers and the Samaritan force, “What are the miserable Jews doing? Will they restore, offer sacrifice, and finish one day? Can they revive those stones out of the dust heaps, burned as they are?”³⁵ Tobiah the Ammonite, alongside him, said, “That stone wall they are building—if a fox climbed it he would breach it!”

³⁶ Hear, our God, how we have become a mockery, and return their taunts upon their heads! Let them be taken as spoil to a land of captivity!³⁷ Do not cover up their iniquity or let their sin be blotted out before You, for they hurled provocations at the builders.

³⁸ We rebuilt the wall till it was continuous all around to half its height; for the people’s heart was in the work.

4 When Sanballat and Tobiah, and the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that healing had come to the walls of Jerusalem, that the breached parts had begun to be filled, it angered them very much,² and they all conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to throw it into confusion.³ Because of them we prayed to our God, and set up a watch over the workers^a day and night.

⁴Judah was saying,

“The strength of the basket-carrier has failed,
And there is so much rubble;
We are not able ourselves
To rebuild the wall.”

⁵ And our foes were saying, “Before they know or see it, we shall

^o3.29 *them* Lit. “him.”

^p3.30 *them* Lit. “him.”

^a4.3 *the workers* On the walls; Heb. “them.”

be in among them and kill them, and put a stop to the work.”⁶ When the Jews living near those foes^b would arrive, they would tell us time and again^c [about some plot they had learned of; and we would say to them,] “From all the places where [you get such information] you shall come back to us [and convey it].”^d I stationed, on the lower levels of the place, behind the walls, on the bare rock—I stationed the people by families with their swords, their lances, and their bows.^e Then I decided to exhort the nobles, the prefects, and the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them! Think of the great and awesome Sovereign, and fight for your brothers, your sons and daughters, your wives and homes!”

⁹When our enemies learned that it had become known to us, since God had thus frustrated their plan, we could all return to the wall, each to his work.¹⁰ From that day on, half my servants did work and half held lances and shields, bows and armor. And the officers stood behind the whole house of Judah¹¹ who were rebuilding the wall. The basket-carriers were burdened, doing work with one hand while the other held a weapon.¹² As for the builders, each had his sword girded at his side as he was building. The trumpeter stood beside me.¹³ I said to the nobles, the prefects, and the rest of the people, “There is much work and it is spread out; we are scattered over the wall, far from one another.¹⁴ When you hear a trumpet call, gather yourselves to me at that place; our God will fight for us!”¹⁵ And so we worked on, while half were holding lances, from the break of day until the stars appeared.

¹⁶I further said to the people^e at that time, “Each of you, along with his servant, should lodge in Jerusalem, so that we can use the night to stand guard and the day to work.”¹⁷ Nor did I, my brothers, my servants, or the guards following me ever take off our clothes, [or] each his weapon, even at the water.^f

5 There was a great outcry by the common folk^a against their fellow Jews.² Some said, “Our sons and daughters are numerous; we must get grain to eat in order that we may live!”³ Others said, “We must pawn our fields, our vineyards, and our homes to get grain to stave

^b 4.6 *those foes* Heb. “them.”

^c 4.6 *time and again* Lit. “ten times.”

^d 4.6 [about some plot . . . convey it] Heb. seems to be abbreviated; a possible restoration of the sentence has been provided.

^e 4.16 *the people* I.e., the householders, who act on the people’s behalf.

^f 4.17 [or] *each his weapon, even at the water* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 5.1 *the common folk* Lit. “the common folk and their wives.”

off hunger.”⁴ Yet others said, “We have borrowed money against our fields and vineyards to pay the king’s tax.⁵ Now we are as good as^b our kin, and our children as good as theirs; yet here we are subjecting our sons and daughters to slavery—some of our daughters are already subjected—and we are powerless, while our fields and vineyards belong to others.”

⁶It angered me very much to hear their outcry and these complaints.⁷ After pondering the matter carefully, I censured the nobles and the prefects, saying, “Are you pressing claims on loans made to your own kin?” Then I raised a large crowd against them⁸ and said to them, “We have done our best to buy back our fellow Jews who were sold to the nations; will you now sell your own kin so that they must be sold [back] to us?” They kept silent, for they found nothing to answer.⁹ So I continued, “What you are doing is not right. You ought to act in a God-fearing way so as not to give our enemies, the nations, room to reproach us.¹⁰ I, my kindred, and my servants also have claims of money and grain against them; let us now abandon those claims!¹¹ Give back at once their fields, their vineyards, their olive trees, and their homes, and [abandon] the claims for the hundred pieces of silver, the grain, the wine, and the oil that you have been pressing against them!”¹² They replied, “We shall give them back, and not demand anything of them; we shall do just as you say.” Summoning the priests, I put them under oath to keep this promise.¹³ I also shook out the bosom of my garment and said, “So may God shake loose from their household and property any and all who fail to keep this promise; may they be thus shaken loose and stripped.” All the assembled answered, “Amen,” and praised GOD.

The people kept this promise.

¹⁴ Furthermore, from the day I was commissioned to be governor in the land of Judah—from the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes until his thirty-second year, twelve years in all—neither I nor my brothers ever ate of the governor’s food allowance.¹⁵ The former governors who preceded me laid heavy burdens on the people, and took from them for bread and wine more than^c forty shekels of silver. Their servants also tyrannized over the people. But I, out of the fear of God, did not do so.¹⁶ I also supported the work on this wall; we did not buy any

^b 5.5 *we are as good as* Lit. “our flesh is as good as the flesh of.”

^c 5.15 *more than* Lit. “after”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.

land, and all my servants were gathered there at the work.¹⁷ Although there were at my table, between Jews and prefects, one hundred and fifty men in all, beside those who came to us from surrounding nations;¹⁸ and although what was prepared for each day came to one ox, six select sheep, and fowl, all prepared for me, and at ten-day intervals all sorts of wine in abundance—yet I did not resort to the governor's food allowance, for the [king's] service lay heavily on the people.

¹⁹O my God, remember to my credit all that I have done for this people!

6 When word reached Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a breach remained in it—though at that time I had not yet set up doors in the gateways—²Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, saying, “Come, let us get together in Kephirim in the Ono valley”; they planned to do me harm.³I sent them messengers, saying, “I am engaged in a great work and cannot come down, for the work will stop if I leave it in order to come down to you.”⁴They sent me the same message four times, and I gave them the same answer.⁵Sanballat sent me the same message a fifth time by his servant, who had an open letter with him.⁶Its text was: “Word has reached the nations, and Geshem^a too says that you and the Jews are planning to rebel—for which reason you are building the wall—and that you are to be their king. Such is the word.^b⁷You have also set up prophets in Jerusalem to proclaim about you, ‘There is a king in Judah!’ Word of these things will surely reach the king; so come, let us confer together.”

⁸I sent back a message to him, saying, “None of these things you mention has occurred; they are figments of your imagination”—⁹for they all wished to intimidate us, thinking, “They will desist from the work, and it will not get done.” Now strengthen my hands!

¹⁰Then I visited Shemaiah son of Delaiah son of Mehetabel when he was housebound, and he said,

“Let us meet in the House of God, inside the sanctuary,
And let us shut the doors of the sanctuary, for they are
coming to kill you,
By night they are coming to kill you.”

^a6.6 *Geshem* Heb. *Gashmu*.

^b6.6 *Such is the word* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

¹¹I replied, “Would someone in my position take flight? Besides, who such as I can go into the sanctuary and live? I will not go in.” ¹²Then I realized that it was not God who sent him, but that he uttered that prophecy about me—Tobiah and Sanballat having hired him—¹³because he was a hireling, that I might be intimidated and act thus and commit a sin, and so provide them a scandal with which to reproach me.

¹⁴“O my God, remember against Tobiah and Sanballat these deeds of theirs,^c and against Noadiah the prophetess, and against the other prophets that they wished to intimidate me!”

¹⁵The wall was finished on the twenty-fifth of Elul, after fifty-two days. ¹⁶When all our enemies heard it, all the nations round about us were intimidated, and fell very low in their own estimation; they realized that this work had been accomplished by the help of our God.

¹⁷Also in those days, the nobles of Judah kept up a brisk correspondence with Tobiah, and Tobiah with them. ¹⁸Many in Judah were his confederates, for he was a son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam son of Berechiah. ¹⁹They would also speak well of him to me, and would divulge my affairs to him. Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

7 When the wall was rebuilt and I had set up the doors, tasks were assigned to the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites. ²I put Hanani my brother and Hananiah, the captain of the fortress, in charge of Jerusalem, for he was a more trustworthy and God-fearing man than most. ³I said to them, “The gates of Jerusalem are not to be opened until the heat of the day,^a and before you leave your posts^b let the doors be closed and barred. And assign the inhabitants of Jerusalem to watches, each man to his watch, and each in front of his own house.”

⁴The city was broad and large, the people in it were few, and houses were not yet built. ⁵My God put it into my mind to assemble the nobles, the prefects, and the people, in order to register them by families. I found the genealogical register of those who were the first to come up, and there I found written:

⁶^cThese are the people of the province who came up from among the captive exiles whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had deported,

^c 6.14 *theirs* Lit. “his.”

^a 7.3 *day* Lit. “sun.”

^b 7.3 *before you leave your posts* Lit. “while they are still standing.”

^c 7.6–72 This passage appears as Ezra 2 with variations in the names and numbers.

who returned to Jerusalem and to Judah, each to their own city—⁷who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.

The list of participants from among the people of Israel: ⁸the sons of Parosh—2,172; ⁹the sons of Shephatiah—372; ¹⁰the sons of Arah—652; ¹¹the sons of Pahath-moab: the sons of Jeshua and Joab—2,818; ¹²the sons of Elam—1,254; ¹³the sons of Zattu—845; ¹⁴the sons of Zaccai—760; ¹⁵the sons of Binnui—648; ¹⁶the sons of Bebai—628; ¹⁷the sons of Azgad—2,322; ¹⁸the sons of Adonikam—667; ¹⁹the sons of Bigvai—2,067; ²⁰the sons of Adin—655; ²¹the sons of Ater: Hezekiah—98; ²²the sons of Hashum—328; ²³the sons of Bezai—324; ²⁴the sons of Hariph—112; ²⁵the sons of Gibeon—95; ²⁶the participants from Bethlehem and Netophah—188; ²⁷the participants from Anathoth—128; ²⁸the participants from Beth-azmaveth—42; ²⁹the participants from Kiriath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth—743; ³⁰the participants from Ramah and Geba—621; ³¹the participants from Michmas—122; ³²the participants from Bethel and Ai—123; ³³the participants from the other Nebo—52; ³⁴the sons of the other Elam—1,254; ³⁵the sons of Harim—320; ³⁶the sons of Jericho—345; ³⁷the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono—721; ³⁸the sons of Senaah—3,930.

³⁹The priests: the sons of Jedaiah: the house of Jeshua—973; ⁴⁰the sons of Immer—1,052; ⁴¹the sons of Pashhur—1,247; ⁴²the sons of Harim—1,017.

⁴³The Levites: the sons of Jeshua: Kadmiel, the sons of Hodeiah—74.

⁴⁴The singers: the sons of Asaph—148.

⁴⁵The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai—138.

⁴⁶The temple servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁷the sons of Keros, the sons of Siah, the sons of Padon, ⁴⁸the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Shalmai, ⁴⁹the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, ⁵⁰the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, ⁵¹the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, ⁵²the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephishesim, ⁵³the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, ⁵⁴the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, ⁵⁵the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, ⁵⁶the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁷The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of So-

phereth, the sons of Perida,⁵⁸ the sons of Jala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,⁵⁹ the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Amon.

⁶⁰The total of temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants—392.

⁶¹The following were those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer—they were unable to tell whether their father's house and descent were Israelite: ⁶²the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda—642.

⁶³Of the priests: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai who had married a daughter of Barzillai the Gileadite and had taken his^d name—⁶⁴these searched for their genealogical records, but they could not be found, so they were disqualified for the priesthood. ⁶⁵The Tirshatha^e ordered them not to eat of the most holy things until a priest with Urim and Thummim should appear.

⁶⁶The sum of the entire community was 42,360, ⁶⁷not counting their male and female servants, those being 7,337; they also had 245 male and female singers. ⁶⁸[Their horses—736, their mules—245,]^f camels—435, donkeys—6,720.

⁶⁹Some of the heads of the clans made donations for the work. The Tirshatha donated to the treasury: gold—1,000 drachmas, basins—50, priestly robes—530.

⁷⁰Some of the heads of the clans donated to the work treasury: gold—20,000 drachmas, and silver—2,200 *minas*.

⁷¹The rest of the people donated: gold—20,000 drachmas, silver—2,000, and priestly robes—67.

⁷²The priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants, and all Israel took up residence in their towns.

When the seventh month arrived—the Israelites being [settled] in their towns— **8** ¹the entire people assembled as one in the square before the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the scroll of the Teaching of Moses with which GOD had charged Israel.

²On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest brought the

^d7.63 *his* Lit. “their.”

^e7.65 *Tirshatha* A Persian title.

^f7.68 [Their horses—736, their mules—245,] These words are missing in some mss. and editions; but cf. Ezra 2.66.

Teaching before the congregation, men and women and all who could listen with understanding.³ He read from it, facing the square before the Water Gate, from the first light until midday, to the men and the women and those who could understand; the ears of all the people were given to the scroll of the Teaching.

⁴Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden tower made for the purpose, and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah at his right, and at his left Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, Meshullam. ⁵Ezra opened the scroll in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; as he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶Ezra blessed the ETERNAL, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” with hands upraised. Then they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before GOD with their faces to the ground. ⁷Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites explained the Teaching to the people, while the people stood in their places. ⁸They read from the scroll of the Teaching of God, translating it and giving the sense; so they understood the reading.

⁹Nehemiah the Tirshatha, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were explaining to the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the ETERNAL your God: you must not mourn or weep,” for all the people were weeping as they listened to the words of the Teaching. ¹⁰He further said to them, “Go, eat choice foods and drink sweet drinks and send portions to whoever has nothing prepared, for the day is holy to our Sovereign. Do not be sad, for your rejoicing in GOD is the source of your strength.” ¹¹The Levites were quieting the people, saying, “Hush, for the day is holy; do not be sad.” ¹²Then all the people went to eat and drink and send portions and make great merriment, for they understood the things they were told.

¹³On the second day, the heads of the clans of all the people and the priests and Levites gathered to Ezra the scribe to study the words of the Teaching. ¹⁴They found written in the Teaching that GOD had commanded Moses that the Israelites must dwell in booths during the festival of the seventh month,¹⁵ and that they must announce and proclaim throughout all their towns and Jerusalem as follows, “Go out to the mountains and bring leafy branches of olive trees, pine^a trees, myrtles, palms and [other] leafy^b trees to make booths, as

^a8.15 *pine* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b8.15 *leafy* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

it is written.”¹⁶ So the people went out and brought them, and made themselves booths on their roofs, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the House of God, in the square of the Water Gate and in the square of the Ephraim Gate.¹⁷ The whole community that returned from the captivity made booths and dwelt in the booths—the Israelites had not done so from the days of Joshua^c son of Nun to that day—and there was very great rejoicing.¹⁸ He read from the scroll of the Teaching of God each day, from the first to the last day. They celebrated the festival seven days, and there was a solemn gathering on the eighth, as prescribed.

9 On the twenty-fourth day of this month, the Israelites assembled, fasting, in sackcloth, and with earth upon them.² Those of the stock of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors.³ Standing in their places, they read from the scroll of the Teaching of the ETERNAL their God for one-fourth of the day, and for another fourth they confessed and prostrated themselves before the ETERNAL their God.⁴ On the raised platform of the Levites stood Jeshua and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani, and cried in a loud voice to the ETERNAL their God.⁵ The Levites Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, and Pethahiah said, “Rise, bless the ETERNAL your God who is from eternity to eternity: ‘May Your glorious name be blessed, exalted though it is above every blessing and praise!’

⁶“You alone are GOD. You made the heavens, the highest^a heavens, and all their host, the earth and everything upon it, the seas and everything in them. You keep them all alive, and the host of heaven prostrate themselves before You.⁷ You are the ETERNAL God, who chose Abram, who brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and changed his name to Abraham.⁸ Finding his heart true to You, You made a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Gergashite—to give it to his descendants. And You kept Your word, for You are righteous.⁹ You took note of our ancestors’ affliction in Egypt, and heard their cry at the Sea of Reeds.¹⁰ You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all the people of his land, for You knew that they acted presumptuously toward them. You made a name for Yourself that endures to this day.¹¹ You split the sea before them; they passed

^c 8.17 *Joshua* Heb. *Yeshua*.

^a 9.6 *the highest* Lit. “the heavens of the.”

through the sea on dry land, but You threw their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into the raging waters.

¹²“You led them by day with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way they were to go. ¹³You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke to them from heaven; You gave them right rules and true teachings, good laws and commandments. ¹⁴You made known to them Your holy sabbath, and You ordained for them laws, commandments and Teaching, through Moses Your servant. ¹⁵You gave them bread from heaven when they were hungry, and produced water from a rock when they were thirsty. You told them to go and possess the land that You swore to give them. ¹⁶But they—our ancestors—acted presumptuously; they stiffened their necks and did not obey Your commandments. ¹⁷Refusing to obey, unmindful of Your wonders that You did for them, they stiffened their necks, and in their defiance resolved to return to their slavery. But You, being a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and abounding in faithfulness, did not abandon them. ¹⁸Even though they made themselves a molten calf and said, ‘This is your God who brought you out of Egypt,’ thus committing great impieties, ¹⁹You, in Your abundant compassion, did not abandon them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud did not depart from them to lead them on the way by day, nor the pillar of fire by night to give them light in the way they were to go. ²⁰You endowed them with Your good spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold Your manna from their mouth; You gave them water when they were thirsty. ²¹Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing; their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell.

²²“You gave them kingdoms and peoples, and allotted them territory.^b They took possession of the land of Sihon, the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og, king of Bashan. ²³You made their children as numerous as the stars of heaven, and brought them to the land that You told their ancestors to go and possess. ²⁴The descendants came and took possession of the land: You subdued the Canaanite inhabitants of the land before them; You delivered them into their power, both their kings and the peoples of the land, to do with them as they pleased. ²⁵They captured fortified cities and rich lands; they took possession of houses filled with every good thing, of hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive trees, and fruit trees in abundance. They ate,

^b **9.22 allotted them territory** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

they were filled, they grew fat; they luxuriated in Your great bounty.
²⁶Then, defying You, they rebelled; they cast Your Teaching behind their back. They killed Your prophets who admonished them to turn them back to You; they committed great impieties.

²⁷You delivered them into the power of their adversaries who oppressed them. In their time of trouble they cried to You; You in heaven heard them, and in Your abundant compassion gave them saviors who saved them from the power of their adversaries. ²⁸But when they had relief, they again did what was evil in Your sight, so You abandoned them to the power of their enemies, who subjugated them. Again they cried to You, and You in heaven heard and rescued them in Your compassion, time after time. ²⁹You admonished them in order to turn them back to Your Teaching, but they acted presumptuously and disobeyed Your commandments, and sinned against Your rules—those whereby a person shall live. They turned a defiant shoulder, stiffened their neck, and would not obey. ³⁰You bore with them for many years, admonished them by Your spirit through Your prophets, but they would not give ear, so You delivered them into the power of the peoples of the lands. ³¹Still, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or abandon them, for You are a gracious and compassionate God.

³²And now, our God, great, mighty, and awesome God, who stays faithful to the covenant, do not treat lightly all the suffering that has overtaken us—our kings, our officers, our priests, our prophets, our ancestors, and all Your people—from the time of the Assyrian kings to this day. ³³Surely You are in the right with respect to all that has come upon us, for You have acted faithfully, and we have been wicked. ³⁴Our kings, officers, priests, and ancestors did not follow Your Teaching, and did not listen to Your commandments or to the warnings that You gave them. ³⁵When they had their own kings and enjoyed the good that You lavished upon them, and the broad and rich land that You put at their disposal, they would not serve You, and did not turn from their wicked deeds. ³⁶Today we are slaves, and the land that You gave our ancestors to enjoy its fruit and bounty—here we are slaves on it! ³⁷On account of our sins it yields its abundant crops to kings whom You have set over us. They rule over our bodies and our beasts as they please, and we are in great distress.

10 “In view of all this, we make this pledge and put it in writing; and on the sealed copy [are subscribed] our officials, our Levites, and our priests.

²“On the sealed copy^a [are subscribed]: Nehemiah the Tirshatha son of Hacaliah and Zedekiah, ³Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, ⁴Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, ⁵Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, ⁶Harim, Mere-moth, Obadiah, ⁷Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, ⁸Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, ⁹Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah; these are the priests.

¹⁰“And the Levites: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, and Kadmiel. ¹¹And their brothers: Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, ¹²Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, ¹³Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, ¹⁴Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.

¹⁵“The heads of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, ¹⁶Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, ¹⁷Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, ¹⁸Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, ¹⁹Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, ²⁰Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, ²¹Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, ²²Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, ²³Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, ²⁴Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, ²⁵Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, ²⁶Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, ²⁷and Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, ²⁸Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

²⁹“And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all who separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to [follow] the Teaching of God, their wives, sons and daughters, all who know enough to understand, ³⁰join with their noble brothers, and take an oath with sanctions to follow the Teaching of God, given through Moses the servant of God, and to observe carefully all the commandments, rules, and laws of GOD our Sovereign.

³¹“Namely: We will not give our daughters in marriage to the peoples of the land, or take their daughters for our sons.

³²“The peoples of the land who bring their wares and all sorts of foodstuff for sale on the sabbath day—we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day.

“We will forgo [the produce of] the seventh year, and every outstanding debt.

³³“We have laid upon ourselves obligations: To charge ourselves one-third of a shekel yearly for the service of the House of our God—³⁴for the rows of bread, for the regular grain offering and for the regular burnt offering, [for those of the] sabbaths, new moons, festivals,

^a **10.2 copy** Heb. plural.

for consecrations, for purgation offerings to atone for Israel, and for all the work in the House of our God.

³⁵“We have cast lots [among] the priests, the Levites, and the people, to bring the wood offering to the House of our God by clans annually at set times in order to provide fuel for the altar of the ETERNAL our God, as is written in the Teaching.

³⁶“And [we undertake] to bring to the House of GOD annually the first fruits of our soil, and of every fruit of every tree; ³⁷also, the first-born of our sons and our animals, as is written in the Teaching; and to bring the firstlings of our cattle and flocks to the House of our God for the priests who minister in the House of our God.

³⁸“We will bring to the storerooms of the House of our God the first part of our dough, and our gifts [of grain], and of the fruit of every tree, wine and oil for the priests, and the tithes of our land for the Levites—the Levites who collect the tithe in all our towns subject to royal service.^b ³⁹An Aaronite priest must be with the Levites when they collect the tithe, and the Levites must bring up a tithe of the tithe to the House of our God, to the storerooms of the treasury. ⁴⁰For it is to the storerooms that the Israelites and the Levites must bring the gifts of grain, wine, and oil. The equipment of the sanctuary and of the ministering priests and the gatekeepers and the singers is also there.

“We will not neglect the House of our God.”

11 The officers of the people settled in Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots for one out of ten to come and settle in the holy city of Jerusalem, and the other nine-tenths to stay in the towns. ²The people gave their blessing to all those who willingly settled in Jerusalem.

³These are the heads of the province who lived in Jerusalem—in the countryside^a of Judah, the people lived in their towns, each on his own property, Israelites, priests, Levites, temple servants, and the sons of Solomon’s servants, ⁴while in Jerusalem some of the Judahites and some of the Benjaminites lived:

Of the Judahites: Athaiah son of Uzziah son of Zechariah son of Amariah son of Shephatiah son of Mahalalel, of the clan of Perez, ⁵and Maaseiah son of Baruch son of Col-hozeh son of Hazaiah son of Adaiah son of Joiarib son of Zechariah son of the Shilonite. ⁶All

^b **10.38** *subject to royal service* For this sense of ‘abodah, “service,” cf. 5.18.

^a **11.3** *countryside* Lit. “towns.”

the clan of Perez who were living in Jerusalem—468 able warriors.

⁷These are the Benjaminites: Sallu son of Meshullam son of Joed son of Pedaiah son of Kolaiah son of Maaseiah son of Ithiel son of Jesaiah. ⁸After him, Gabbai and Sallai—928.

⁹Joel son of Zichri was the official in charge of them, and Judah son of Hassenuah was the second-in-command of the city.

¹⁰Of the priests: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, Jachin, ¹¹Seraiah son of Hilkiah son of Meshullam son of Zadok son of Meraioth son of Ahitub, chief officer of the House of God, ¹²and their brothers, who did the work of the House—822; and Adaiah son of Jeroham son of Pelaliah son of Amzi son of Zechariah son of Pashhur son of Malchijah, ¹³and his brothers, heads of clans—242; and Amashsai son of Azarel son of Ahzai son of Meshillemoth son of Immer, ¹⁴and their brothers, valorous warriors—128. Zabdiel son of Haggedolim was the official in charge of them.

¹⁵Of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub son of Azrikam son of Hashabiah son of Bunni, ¹⁶and Shabbethai and Jozabad of the heads of the Levites were in charge of the external work of the House of God.

¹⁷Mattaniah son of Micha son of Zabdi son of Asaph was the head; at prayer, he would lead off with praise; and Bakbukiah, one of his brothers, was his second-in-command; and Abda son of Shammua son of Galal son of Jeduthun. ¹⁸All the Levites in the holy city—284.

¹⁹And the gatekeepers: Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers, who stood watch at the gates—172.

²⁰And the rest of the Israelites, the priests, and the Levites in all the towns of Judah [lived] each on his estate.

²¹The temple servants lived on the Ophel; Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of the temple servants.

²²The overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani son of Hashabiah son of Mattaniah son of Micha, of the Asaphite singers, over the work of the House of God. ²³There was a royal order concerning them, a stipulation concerning the daily duties of the singers.

²⁴Petahiah son of Meshezabel, of the sons of Zerah son of Judah, advised the king concerning all the affairs of the people.

²⁵As concerns the villages with their fields: Some of the Judahites lived in Kiriath-arba and its outlying hamlets, in Dibon and its outlying hamlets, and in Jekabzeel and its villages; ²⁶in Jeshua, in Moladah, and in Beth-pelet; ²⁷in Hazar-shual, in Beer-sheba and its outlying hamlets; ²⁸and in Ziklag and in Meconah and its outlying hamlets;

²⁹in En-rimmon, in Zorah and in Jarmuth; ³⁰Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; Lachish and its fields; Azekah and its outlying hamlets. They settled from Beer-sheba to the Valley of Hinnom.

³¹The Benjaminites: from Geba, Michmash, Aija, and Bethel and its outlying hamlets; ³²Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, ³³Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, ³⁴Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, ³⁵Lod, Ono, Ge-harashim. ³⁶Some of the Judahite divisions of Levites were [shifted] to Benjamin.

12 These are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua:

Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, ²Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, ³Shecaniah, Rehum, Meramoth, ⁴Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, ⁵Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, ⁶Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, ⁷Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were the heads of the priests and their brothers in the time of Jeshua.

⁸The Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, in charge of thanksgiving songs,^a he and his brothers; ⁹and Bakbukiah and Unni [and] their brothers served opposite them by shifts.

¹⁰Jeshua begot Joiakim; Joiakim begot Eliashib; Eliashib begot Joiada; ¹¹Joiada begot Jonathan; Jonathan begot Jaddua.

¹²In the time of Joiakim, the heads of the priestly clans were: Meraiah—of the Seraiah clan; Hananiah—of the Jeremiah clan; ¹³Meshullam—of the Ezra clan; Jehohanan—of the Amariah clan; ¹⁴Jonathan—of the Melicu clan; Joseph—of the Shebaniah clan; ¹⁵Adna—of the Harim clan; Helkai—of the Meraioth clan; ¹⁶Zechariah—of the Iddo clan; Meshullam—of the Ginnethon clan; ¹⁷Zichri—of the Abijah clan . . . of the Miniamin clan; Piltai—of the Moadiah clan; ¹⁸Shammua—of the Bilgah clan; Jehonathan—of the Shemaiah clan; ¹⁹Mattenai—of the Joiarib clan; Uzzi—of the Jedaiah clan; ²⁰Kallai—of the Sallai clan; Eber—of the Amok clan; ²¹Hashabiah—of the Hilkiah clan; Nethanel—of the Jedaiah clan.

²²The Levites and the priests were listed by heads of clans in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua, down to the reign of Darius the Persian. ²³But the Levite heads of clans are listed in the book of the chronicles to the time of Johanan son of Eliashib.

²⁴The heads of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua son of

^a 12.8 *thanksgiving songs* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Kadmiel, and their brothers served opposite them, singing praise and thanksgiving hymns by the ordinance of David the agent of God—served opposite them in shifts; ²⁵Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub, guarding as gatekeepers by shifts at the vestibules of the gates.

²⁶These were in the time of Joiakim son of Jeshua son of Jozadak, and in the time of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

²⁷At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites, wherever they lived, were sought out and brought to Jerusalem to celebrate a joyful dedication with thanksgiving and with song, accompanied by cymbals, harps, and lyres. ²⁸The companies of singers assembled from the [Jordan] plain, the environs of Jerusalem, and from the Netopha-thite villages; ²⁹from Beth-hagilgal, from the countryside of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers built themselves villages in the environs of Jerusalem.

³⁰The priests and Levites purified themselves; then they purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

³¹I had the officers of Judah go up onto the wall, and I appointed two large thanksgiving [choirs] and processions. [One marched] south on the wall, to the Dung Gate; ³²behind them were Hoshaiah and half the officers of Judah, ³³and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, ³⁴Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, ³⁵and some of the young priests, with trumpets; Zechariah son of Jonathan son of Shemaiah son of Mattaniah son of Micaiah son of Zaccur son of Asaph, ³⁶and his brothers Shemaiah, and Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the agent of God; and Ezra the scribe went ahead of them. ³⁷From there to the Fountain Gate, where they ascended the steps of the City of David directly before them, by the ascent on the wall, above the house of David, [and onward] to the Water Gate on the east.

³⁸The other thanksgiving [choir] marched on the wall in the opposite direction, with me and half the people behind it, above the Tower of Ovens to the Broad Wall; ³⁹and above the Gate of Ephraim, the Jeshanah Gate, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, the Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate; and they halted at the Gate of the Prison Compound. ⁴⁰Both thanksgiving choirs halted at the House of God, and I and half the prefects with me, ⁴¹and the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, Hananiah, with

trumpets,⁴² and Maaseiah and Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. Then the singers sounded forth, with Jezrahiah in charge.

⁴³ On that day, they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced, for God made them rejoice greatly; the women and children also rejoiced, and the rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard from afar.

⁴⁴ At that time commissioners were appointed over the chambers that served as treasuries for the gifts, the first fruits, and the tithes, into which the portions prescribed by the Teaching for the priests and Levites were gathered from the fields of the towns; for the people of Judah were grateful to the priests and Levites who were in attendance, ⁴⁵ who kept the charge of their God and the charge of purity, as well as to the singers and gatekeepers [serving] in accord with the ordinance of David and Solomon his son—⁴⁶ for the chiefs of the singers and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God already existed in the time of David and Asaph.⁴⁷ And in the time of Zerubbabel, and in the time of Nehemiah, all Israel contributed the daily portions of the singers and the gatekeepers, and made sacred contributions for the Levites, and the Levites made sacred contributions for the Aaronites.

13 At that time they read to the people from the Book of Moses, and it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite might ever enter the congregation of God,² since they did not meet Israel with bread and water, and hired Balaam against them to curse them; but our God turned the curse into a blessing.³ When they heard the Teaching, they separated all those who had intermingled with Israel.^a

⁴ Earlier, the priest Eliashib, a relative of Tobiah's who had been appointed over the rooms in the House of our God,⁵ had assigned to him a large room where they used to store the grain offering, the frankincense, the equipment, the tithes of grain, wine, and oil, the dues of the Levites, singers and gatekeepers, and the gifts for the priests.⁶ During all this time, I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes of Babylon, I went to the king, and only after a while did I ask leave of the king [to return].⁷ When I arrived in Jerusalem, I learned of the outrage perpetrated by Eliashib in behalf of Tobiah in assigning him a room in the courts of the House of God.⁸ I was greatly

^a **13.3** *they separated all those who had intermingled with Israel* Or “they separated from Israel all those of mixed descent.”

displeased, and had all the household gear of Tobiah thrown out of the room; ⁹I gave orders to purify the rooms, and had the equipment of the House of God and the grain offering and the frankincense put back.

¹⁰I then discovered that the portions of the Levites had not been contributed, and that the Levites and the singers who performed the [temple] service had made off, each to his fields. ¹¹I censured the prefects, saying, “How is it that the House of God has been neglected?” Then I recalled [the Levites] and installed them again in their posts; ¹²and all Judah brought the tithes of grain, wine, and oil into the treasuries. ¹³I put the treasuries in the charge of the priest Shelemiah, the scribe Zadok, and Pedaiah of the Levites; and assisting them was Hanan son of Zaccur son of Mattaniah—for they were regarded as trustworthy persons, and it was their duty to distribute the portions to their brothers.

¹⁴O my God, remember me favorably for this, and do not blot out the devotion I showed toward the House of my God and its attendants.

¹⁵At that time I saw people in Judah treading winepresses on the sabbath, and others bringing heaps of grain and loading them onto donkeys, also wine, grapes, figs, and all sorts of goods, and bringing them into Jerusalem on the sabbath. I admonished them there and then for selling provisions. ¹⁶Tyrians who lived there brought fish and all sorts of wares and sold them on the sabbath to the Judahites in Jerusalem. ¹⁷I censured the nobles of Judah, saying to them, “What evil thing is this that you are doing, profaning the sabbath day! ¹⁸This is just what your ancestors did, and for it God brought all this misfortune on this city; and now you give cause for further wrath against Israel by profaning the sabbath!”

¹⁹When shadows filled the gateways of Jerusalem at the approach of the sabbath, I gave orders that the doors be closed, and ordered them not to be opened until after the sabbath. I stationed some of my servants at the gates, so that no goods should enter on the sabbath.

²⁰Once or twice the merchants and the vendors of all sorts of wares spent the night outside Jerusalem, ²¹but I warned them, saying, “What do you mean by spending the night alongside the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands upon you!” From then on they did not come on the sabbath. ²²I gave orders to the Levites to purify themselves and come and guard the gates, to preserve the sanctity of the sabbath.

This too, O my God, remember to my credit, and spare me in accord with your abundant faithfulness.

²³Also at that time, I saw that Jews had married Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite women; ²⁴a good number of their children spoke the language of Ashdod and the language of those various peoples, and did not know how to speak Judean. ²⁵I censured them, cursed them, flogged certain ones, tore out their hair, and adjured them by God, saying, “You shall not give your daughters in marriage to their sons, or take any of their daughters for your sons or yourselves. ²⁶It was just in such things that King Solomon of Israel sinned! Among the many nations there was not a king like him, and so well loved was he by his God that God made him king of all Israel, yet foreign wives caused even him to sin. ²⁷How, then, can we acquiesce in your doing this great wrong, breaking faith with our God by marrying foreign women?” ²⁸One of the sons of Joiada son of the high priest Eliashib was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; I drove him away from me.

²⁹Remember to their discredit, O my God, how they polluted the priesthood, the covenant of the priests and Levites. ³⁰I purged them of every foreign element, and arranged for the priests and the Levites to work each at his task by shifts, ³¹and for the wood offering [to be brought] at fixed times and for the first fruits.

O my God, remember it to my credit!



דְּבָרִי הַיּוֹם א' | DIVREI HA-YAMIM 'ALEF
1 CHRONICLES

1 Adam, Seth, Enosh; ²Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared; ³Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech; ⁴Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

^{5a}The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ⁶The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Diphath, and Togarmah.

⁷The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

⁸The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. ⁹The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama, and Sabteca. The sons of Raama: Sheba and Dedan. ¹⁰Cush begot Nimrod; he was the first mighty one on earth.

¹¹Mizraim begot the Ludim, the Anamim, the Lehabim, the Naphthuhim, ¹²the Pathrusim, the Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and the Caphtorim.

¹³Canaan begot Sidon his first-born, and Heth, ¹⁴and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Gergashites, ¹⁵the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁶the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

¹⁷The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech. ¹⁸Arpachshad begot Shelah; and Shelah begot Eber. ¹⁹Two sons were born to Eber: the name of the one was Peleg (for in his days the earth was divided), and the name of his brother Joktan. ²⁰Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²¹Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²²Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, ²³Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan.

²⁴Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah; ²⁵Eber, Peleg, Reu; ²⁶Serug, Nahor, Terah; ²⁷Abram, that is, Abraham.

^{28b}The sons of Abraham: Isaac and Ishmael. ²⁹This is their line: The first-born of Ishmael, Nebaioth; and Kedar, Abdeel, Mibsam, ³⁰Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, ³¹Jetur, Naphish, and Kedmah. These are the sons of Ishmael. ³²The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bore Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuaah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan. ³³The sons of Midian: Ephah, Epher, Enoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the descendants of Keturah.

^a 1.5–23 Cf. Gen. 10.1–30.

^b 1.28–33 Cf. Gen. 25.1–16.

³⁴ Abraham begot Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel. ³⁵The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. ³⁶The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek. ³⁷The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

³⁸The sons of Seir: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. ³⁹The sons of Lotan: Hori and Homam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. ⁴⁰The sons of Shobal: Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. ⁴¹The sons of Anah: Dishon. The sons of Dishon: Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. ⁴²The sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Jaakan. The sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

^{43c} These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites: Bela son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dinhbabah. ⁴⁴When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah succeeded him as king. ⁴⁵When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites succeeded him as king. ⁴⁶When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated the Midianites in the country of Moab, succeeded him as king, and the name of his city was Avith. ⁴⁷When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah succeeded him as king. ⁴⁸When Samlah died, Saul of Rehoboth-on-the-River succeeded him as king. ⁴⁹When Saul died, Baal-hanan son of Achbor succeeded him as king. ⁵⁰When Baal-hanan died, Hadad succeeded him as king; and the name of his city was Pai, and his wife's name Mehetabel daughter of Matred daughter of Me-zahab. ⁵¹And Hadad died.

The clans of Edom were the clans of Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, ⁵²Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, ⁵³Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, ⁵⁴Magdiel, and Iram; these are the clans of Edom.

2 These are the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, ²Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. ³The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah; these three, Bath-shua the Canaanite bore to him. But Er, Judah's first-born, was displeasing to GOD, who took his life. ⁴His daughter-in-law Tamar also bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah's sons were five in all.

⁵The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. ⁶The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all. ⁷The sons of Carmi: Achar, the troubler of Israel, who committed a trespass against the proscribed thing; ⁸and Ethan's son was Azariah.

^c 1.43–50 Cf. Gen. 36.31–43.

⁹The sons of Hezron that were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai. ¹⁰Ram begot Amminadab, and Amminadab begot Nahshon, prince of the sons of Judah. ¹¹Nahshon was the father of Salma, Salma of Boaz, ¹²Boaz of Obed, Obed of Jesse. ¹³Jesse begot Eliab his first-born, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, ¹⁴Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, ¹⁵Ozem the sixth, David the seventh; ¹⁶their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three. ¹⁷Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite.

¹⁸Caleb son of Hezron had children by his wife Azubah, and by Jerioth; these were her sons: Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. ¹⁹When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. ²⁰Hur begot Uri, and Uri begot Bezalel.

²¹Afterward Hezron had relations with the daughter of Machir father of Gilead—he had married her when he was sixty years old—and she bore him Segub; ²²and Segub begot Jair; he had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead. ²³But Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-jair, Kenath and its dependencies, sixty towns. All these were the sons of Machir, the father of Gilead. ²⁴After the death of Hezron, in Caleb-ephrathah, Abijah, wife of Hezron, bore Ashhur, the father of Tekoa.

²⁵The sons of Jerahmeel the first-born of Hezron: Ram his first-born, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. ²⁶Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam. ²⁷The sons of Ram the first-born of Jerahmeel: Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. ²⁸The sons of Onam: Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai: Nadab and Abishur. ²⁹The name of Abishur's wife was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. ³⁰The sons of Nadab: Seled and Appaim; Seled died childless. ³¹The sons of Appaim: Ishi. The sons of Ishi: Sheshan. The sons of Sheshan: Ahlai. ³²The sons of Jada, Shammai's brother: Jether and Jonathan; Jether died childless. ³³The sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel. ³⁴Sheshan had no sons, only daughters; Sheshan had an Egyptian slave, whose name was Jarha. ³⁵So Sheshan gave his daughter in marriage to Jarha his slave; and she bore him Attai. ³⁶Attai begot Nathan, and Nathan begot Zabad. ³⁷Zabad begot Ephlal, and Ephlal begot Obed. ³⁸Obed begot Jehu, and Jehu begot Azariah. ³⁹Azariah begot Helez, and Helez begot Eleasah. ⁴⁰Eleasah begot Sisamai, and Sisamai begot Shallum. ⁴¹Shallum begot Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begot Elishama.

⁴²The sons of Caleb brother of Jerahmeel: Meshah his first-born, who was the father of Ziph. The sons of Mareshah father of Hebron.
⁴³The sons of Hebron: Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema. ⁴⁴Shema begot Raham the father of Jorkeam, and Rekem begot Shammai. ⁴⁵The son of Shammai: Maon, and Maon begot Bethzur. ⁴⁶Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez; Haran begot Gazez. ⁴⁷The sons of Jahdai: Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. ⁴⁸Maacah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. ⁴⁹She also bore Shaaph father of Madmannah, Sheva father of Machbenah and father of Gibea; the daughter of Caleb was Achsah. ⁵⁰These were the descendants of Caleb.

The sons of Hur the first-born of Ephrathah: Shobal father of Kiriath-jearim, ⁵¹Salma father of Bethlehem, Hareph father of Beth-gader. ⁵²Shobal father of Kiriath-jearim had sons: Haroeh, half of the Menuhoth. ⁵³And the families of Kiriath-jearim: the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraites; from these came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites. ⁵⁴The sons of Salma: Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth-beth-joab, and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites. ⁵⁵The families of the scribes that dwelt at Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, the Sucathites; these are the Kenites who came from Hammath, father of the house of Rechab.

3 These are the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the first-born Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite; the second Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelite; ²the third Absalom, son of Maacah daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; the fourth Adonijah, son of Haggith; ³the fifth Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth Ithream, by his wife Eglah; ⁴six were born to him in Hebron. He reigned there seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. ^{5a}These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, four by Bath-shua daughter of Ammiel; ⁶then Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, ⁷Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁸Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet—nine. ⁹All were David's sons, besides the sons of the concubines; and Tamar was their sister.

¹⁰The son of Solomon: Rehoboam; his son Abijah, his son Asa, his son Jehoshaphat, ¹¹his son Joram, his son Ahaziah, his son Joash, ¹²his son Amaziah, his son Azariah, his son Jotham, ¹³his son Ahaz, his

^a3.5–8 Cf. 14.4–7.

son Hezekiah, his son Manasseh,¹⁴ his son Amon, and his son Josiah.¹⁵ The sons of Josiah: Johanan the first-born, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum.¹⁶ The descendants of Jehoiakim: his son Jeconiah, his son Zedekiah;¹⁷ and the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel his son,¹⁸ Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah;¹⁹ the sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei; the sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister;²⁰ Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-hesed—five.²¹ And the sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiah; the sons of [Jeshaiah]: Rephaiah; the sons of [Rephaiah]: Arnan; the sons of [Arnan]: Obadiah; the sons of [Obadiah]: Shecaniah.²² And the sons of Shecaniah: Shemaiah; and the sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, and Igal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat—six.²³ And the sons of Neariah: Elioenai, and Hizkiah, and Azrikam—three.²⁴ And the sons of Elioenai: Hodaviah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Delaiah, and Anani—seven.

4 The sons of Judah: Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.² Reaiah son of Shobal begot Jahath, and Jahath begot Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of the Zorathites.³ These were [the sons of] the father of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash; and the name of their sister was Hazlelponi,⁴ and Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These were the sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem.⁵ Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah;⁶ Naarah bore him Ahuzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Ahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.⁷ The sons of Helah: Zereth, Zohar, and Ethnan.⁸ Koz was the father of Anub, Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel son of Harum.⁹ Jabez was more esteemed than his brothers; and his mother named him Jabez, “Because,” she said, “I bore him in pain.”^a ¹⁰Jabez invoked the God of Israel, saying, “Oh, bless me, enlarge my territory, stand by me, and make me not suffer pain from misfortune!” And God granted what he asked.¹¹ Chelub the brother of Shuhah begot Mehir, who was the father of Eshton.¹² Eshton begot Bethrapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah father of Ir-nahash. These were the men of Recah.¹³ The sons of Kenaz: Othniel and Seraiah; and the sons of Othniel:¹⁴ Hathath and Meonothai. He begot Ophrah. Seraiah begot Joab father of

^a 4.9 *pain* Heb. ‘oṣeb, connected with “Jabez.”

Ge-harashim,^b so-called because they were artisans.¹⁵ The sons of Caleb son of Jephunneh: Iru, Elah, and Naam; and the sons of Elah: Kenaz.¹⁶ The sons of Jehallelel: Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel.¹⁷ The sons of Ezrah: Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. She^c conceived and bore Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah father of Eshtemoa.¹⁸ And his Judahite wife bore Jered father of Gedor, Heber father of Soco, and Jekuthiel father of Zanoah. These were the sons of Bithiah daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered married.¹⁹ The sons of Hodiah's wife—a sister of Naham—were the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite.²⁰ The sons of Shimon: Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. The sons of Ishi: Zoheth and Ben-zoheth.²¹ The sons of Shelah son of Judah: Er father of Lecah, Laadah father of Mareshah, and the families of the linen factory at Beth-ashbea;²² and Jokim, and the men of Cozeba and Joash, and Saraph, who married into Moab and Jashubi Lehem (the records are ancient).²³ These were the potters who dwelt at Netaim and Gederah; they dwelt there in the king's service.

²⁴The sons of Simeon: Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul; ²⁵his son Shallum, his son Mibsam, his son Mishma.²⁶ The sons of Mishma: his son Hammuel, his son Zaccur, his son Shimei.²⁷ Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brothers had not many children; in all, their families were not as prolific as the Judahites.²⁸ They dwelt in Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual,²⁹ Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad,³⁰ Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,³¹ Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns until David became king,³² together with their villages, Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan—five towns,³³ along with all their villages that were around these towns as far as Baal; such were their settlements.

Registered in their genealogy were:³⁴ Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah,³⁵ Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah son of Seraiah son of Asiel.³⁶ Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benayah,³⁷ Ziza son of Shippi son of Allon son of Jedaiah son of Shimri son of Shemaiah—³⁸these mentioned by name were chiefs in their families, and their clans increased greatly.³⁹ They went to the approaches to Gedor, to the eastern side of the valley, in search of pasture for their flocks.⁴⁰ They found rich, good pasture, and the land was ample, quiet,

^b 4.14 *Ge-harashim* Lit. “the valley of the artisans.”

^c 4.17 *She* Apparently Bithiah; cf. v. 18.

and peaceful. The former inhabitants were of Ham; ⁴¹those recorded by name came in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, and attacked their encampments and the Meunim who were found there, and wiped them out forever, and settled in their place, because there was pasture there for their flocks. ⁴²And some of them, five hundred of the Simeonites, went to Mount Seir, with Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, sons of Ishi, at their head, ⁴³and they destroyed the last surviving Amalekites, and they live there to this day.

5 The sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel. (He was the first-born; but when he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel, so he is not reckoned as first-born in the genealogy; ²though Judah became more powerful than his brothers and a leader came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph.) ³The sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel: Enoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. ⁴The sons of Joel: his son Shemaiah, his son Gog, his son Shimei, ⁵his son Micah, his son Reaiah, his son Baal, ⁶his son Beerah—whom King Tillegath-pilneser of Assyria exiled—was chieftain of the Reubenites. ⁷And his kindred, by their families, according to their lines in the genealogy: the head, Jeiel, and Zechariah, ⁸and Bela son of Azaz son of Shema son of Joel; he dwelt in Aroer as far as Nebo and Baal-meon. ⁹He also dwelt to the east as far as the fringe of the wilderness this side of the Euphrates, because their cattle had increased in the land of Gilead. ¹⁰And in the days of Saul they made war on the Hagrites, who fell by their hand; and they occupied their tents throughout all the region east of Gilead.

¹¹The sons of Gad dwelt facing them in the land of Bashan as far as Salcah: ¹²Joel the chief, Shapham the second, Janai, and Shaphat in Bashan. ¹³And by clans: Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber—seven. ¹⁴These were the sons of Abihail son of Huri son of Jaroah son of Gilead son of Michael son of Jeshishai son of Jahdo son of Buz; ¹⁵Ahi son of Abdiel son of Guni was chief of their clan, ¹⁶and they dwelt in Gilead, in Bashan, and in its dependencies, and in all the pasturelands of Sharon, to their limits. ¹⁷All of them were registered by genealogies in the days of King Jotham of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam of Israel.

¹⁸The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had warriors who carried shield and sword, drew the bow, and were experienced at war—44,760, ready for service. ¹⁹They made war on

the Hagrites—Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab.²⁰ They prevailed against them; the Hagrites and all who were with them were delivered into their hands, for in the battle they cried to God—who responded to their entreaty because they trusted in [God].²¹ They carried off their livestock: 50,000 of their camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys, and 100,000 people.²² For many fell slain, because it was God's battle. And they dwelt in their place until the exile.

²³ The members of the half-tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land; they were very numerous from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon.²⁴ These were the chiefs of their clans: Epher, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, men of substance, famous men, chiefs of their clans.²⁵ But they trespassed against the God of their ancestors by going astray after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.²⁶ So the God of Israel roused the spirit of King Pul of Assyria—the spirit of King Tillegath-pilneser of Assyria—and he carried them away, namely, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan, to this day.

^{27^a} The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.²⁸ The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.²⁹ The children of Amram: Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.³⁰ Eleazar begot Phinehas, Phinehas begot Abishua,³¹ Abishua begot Bukki, Bukki begot Uzzi,³² Uzzi begot Zerahiah, Zerahiah begot Meraioth,³³ Meraioth begot Amariah, Amariah begot Ahitub,³⁴ Ahitub begot Zadok, Zadok begot Ahimaaz,³⁵ Ahimaaz begot Azariah, Azariah begot Johanan,³⁶ and Johanan begot Azariah (it was he who served as priest in the House that Solomon built in Jerusalem).³⁷ Azariah begot Amariah, Amariah begot Ahitub,³⁸ Ahitub begot Zadok, Zadok begot Shallum,³⁹ Shallum begot Hilkiah, Hilkiah begot Azariah,⁴⁰ Azariah begot Seraiah, Seraiah begot Jehozadak;⁴¹ and Jehozadak went into exile when GOD exiled Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

6 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.² And these are the names of the sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei.³ The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.⁴ The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These were the families of the Levites according to their clans.

^a 5.27 In some editions, chap. 6 begins here.

⁵Of Gershom: his son Libni, his son Jahath, his son Zimmah, ⁶his son Joah, his son Iddo, his son Zerah, his son Jeatherai. ⁷The sons of Kohath: his son Amminadab, his son Korah, his son Assir, ⁸his son Elkanah, his son Ebiasaph, his son Assir, ⁹his son Tahath, his son Uriel, his son Uzziah, and his son Shaul. ¹⁰The sons of Elkanah: Amasai and Ahimoth, ¹¹his son Elkanah, his son Zophai, his son Nahath, ¹²his son Eliab, his son Jeroham, his son Elkanah. ¹³The sons of Samuel: his first-born Vashni, and^a Abijah. ¹⁴The sons of Merari: Mahli, his son Libni, his son Shimei, his son Uzzah, ¹⁵his son Shimea, his son Haggiah, and his son Asaiah.

¹⁶These were appointed by David to be in charge of song in the House of GOD, from the time the Ark came to rest. ¹⁷They served at the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting with song until Solomon built the House of GOD in Jerusalem; and they carried out their duties as prescribed for them. ¹⁸Those were the appointed ones; and their sons were: the Kohathites: Heman the singer, son of Joel son of Samuel ¹⁹son of Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Eliel son of Toah ²⁰son of Zuph son of Elkanah son of Mahath son of Amasai ²¹son of Elkanah son of Joel son of Azariah son of Zephaniah ²²son of Tahath son of Assir son of Ebiasaph son of Korah ²³son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi son of Israel; ²⁴and his kinsman Asaph, who stood on his right, namely, Asaph son of Berechiah son of Shimea ²⁵son of Michael son of Baaseiah son of Malchijah ²⁶son of Ethni son of Zerah son of Adaiah ²⁷son of Ethan son of Zimmah son of Shimei ²⁸son of Jahath son of Gershom son of Levi. ²⁹On the left were their kindred: the sons of Merari: Ethan son of Kishi son of Abdi son of Malluch ³⁰son of Hashabiah son of Amaziah son of Hilkiah ³¹son of Amzi son of Bani son of Shemer ³²son of Mahli son of Mushi son of Merari son of Levi; ³³and their kindred the Levites were appointed for all the service of the Tabernacle of the House of God.

³⁴But Aaron and his sons made offerings upon the altar of burnt offering and upon the altar of incense, performing all the tasks of the most holy place, to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. ³⁵These are the sons of Aaron: his son Eleazar, his son Phinehas, his son Abishua, ³⁶his son Bukki, his son Uzzi, his son Zerahiah, ³⁷his son Meraioth, his son Amariah, his son Ahitub, ³⁸his son Zadok, his son Ahimaaz. ^{39b}These are

^a 6.13 *Vashni, and* Some ancient versions read “Joel, and the second”; cf. 1 Sam. 8.2.

^b 6.39–51 Cf. Josh. 21.3–42.

their dwelling-places according to their settlements within their borders: to the sons of Aaron of the families of Kohathites, for theirs was the [first] lot; ⁴⁰they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah and its surrounding pasturelands, ⁴¹but the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh. ⁴²To the sons of Aaron they gave the cities^c of refuge: Hebron and Libnah with its pasturelands, Jattir and Eshtemoa with its pasturelands, ⁴³Hilen with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands, ⁴⁴Ashan with its pasturelands, and Beth-shemesh with its pasturelands. ⁴⁵From the tribe of Benjamin, Geba with its pasturelands, Alemeth with its pasturelands, and Anathoth with its pasturelands. All their cities throughout their families were thirteen.

⁴⁶To the remaining Kohathites were given by lot out of the family of the tribe, out of the half-tribe, the half of Manasseh, ten cities. ⁴⁷To the Gershonites according to their families were allotted thirteen cities out of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh in Bashan. ⁴⁸To the Merarites according to their families were allotted twelve cities out of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. ⁴⁹So the people of Israel gave the Levites the cities with their pasturelands. ⁵⁰They gave them by lot out of the tribe of the Judahites these cities that are mentioned by name, and out of the tribe of the Simeonites, and out of the tribe of the Benjaminites.

⁵¹And some of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their territory out of the tribe of Ephraim. ⁵²They gave them the cities of refuge: Shechem with its pasturelands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasturelands, ⁵³Jokmeam with its pasturelands, Beth-horon with its pasturelands, ⁵⁴Aijalon with its pasturelands, Gath-rimmon with its pasturelands; ⁵⁵and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Aner with its pasturelands, and Bileam with its pasturelands, for the rest of the families of the Kohathites.

⁵⁶To the Gershonites; out of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands and Ashtaroth with its pasturelands; ⁵⁷and out of the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its pasturelands, Dabir with its pasturelands, ⁵⁸Ramoth with its pasturelands, and Anem with its pasturelands; ⁵⁹out of the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands, ⁶⁰Hukok with its pasturelands, and Rehob with its pasturelands; ⁶¹and out of the tribe of

^c 6.42 *cities* Cf. Josh. 21.13, “city.”

Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands; Hammon with its pasturelands, and Kiriathaim with its pasturelands.⁶² To the rest of the Merarites, out of the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono with its pasturelands, Tabor with its pasturelands;⁶³ and beyond the Jordan at Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, out of the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the wilderness with its pasturelands, Jahaz with its pasturelands,⁶⁴ Kedemoth with its pasturelands, and Mephaath with its pasturelands;⁶⁵ and out of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands, Mahanaim with its pasturelands,⁶⁶ Heshbon with its pasturelands, and Jazer with its pasturelands.

7 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron—four. ²The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, Shemuel, chiefs of their clans, men of substance according to their lines; their number in the days of David was 22,600. ³The sons of Uzzi: Izrahiah. And the sons of Izrahiah: Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah—five. All of them were chiefs. ⁴And together with them, by their lines, according to their clans, were units of the fighting force, 36,000, for they had many wives and sons. ⁵Their kindred belonging to all the families of Issachar were in all 87,000 men of substance; they were all registered by genealogy.

⁶[The sons of] Benjamin: Bela, Becher, and Jediael—three. ⁷The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri—five, chiefs of clans, men of substance, registered by genealogy—22,034. ⁸The sons of Becher: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elionai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these were the sons of Becher; ⁹and they were registered by genealogy according to their lines, as chiefs of their clans, men of substance—20,200. ¹⁰The sons of Jediael: Bilhan. And the sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. ¹¹All these were the sons of Jediael, chiefs of the clans, men of substance—17,200, who made up the fighting force. ¹²And Shuppim and Huppim were the sons of Ir; Hushim the sons of Aher.

¹³The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, the descendants of Bilhah.

¹⁴The sons of Manasseh: Asriel, whom his Aramean concubine bore; she bore Machir the father of Gilead. ¹⁵And Machir took wives for Huppim and for Shuppim. The name of his sister was Maacah. And the name of the second was Zelophehad; and Zelophehad had daughters. ¹⁶And

Maacah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she named him Peresh; and the name of his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam and Re-kem. ¹⁷The sons of Ulam: Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh. ¹⁸And his sister Hammolecheth bore Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah. ¹⁹The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

²⁰The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, his son Bered, his son Tahath, his son Eleadah, his son Tahath, ²¹his son Zabad, his son Shuthelah, also Ezer and Elead. The residents of Gath, born in the land, killed them because they had gone down to take their cattle. ²²And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. ²³He cohabited with his wife, who conceived and bore a son; and she named him Beriah, because it occurred when there was misfortune^a in his house. ²⁴His daughter was Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth-horon, and Uzzen-sheerah. ²⁵His son Rephah, his son Resheph, his son Telah, his son Tahan, ²⁶his son Ladan, his son Ammihud, his son Elishama, ²⁷his son Non, his son Joshua. ²⁸Their possessions and settlements were Bethel and its dependencies, and on the east Naaran, and on the west Gezer and its dependencies, Shechem and its dependencies, and Aiah and its dependencies; ²⁹also along the borders of the Manassites, Beth-shean and its dependencies, Taanach and its dependencies, Megiddo and its dependencies, Dor and its dependencies. In these dwelt the sons of Joseph son of Israel.

³⁰The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. ³¹The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith. ³²Heber begot Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister, Shua. ³³The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These were the sons of Japhlet. ³⁴The sons of Shemer: Ahi, Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram. ³⁵The sons of Helem his brother: Zophah, Imna, Shel-esh, and Amal. ³⁶The sons of Zophah: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, ³⁷Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera. ³⁸The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispa, and Ara. ³⁹The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. ⁴⁰All of these men of Asher, chiefs of the clans, select men, men of substance, heads of the chieftains. And they were registered by genealogy according to fighting force; these men numbered 26,000.

^a7.23 *misfortune* Heb. *bera'ah*.

8 Benjamin begot Bela his first-born, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third, ²Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. ³And Bela had sons: Addar, Gera, Abihud, ⁴Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, ⁵Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram. ⁶These were the sons of Ehud—they were chiefs of clans of the inhabitants of Geba, and they were exiled to Manahath: ⁷Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera—he exiled them and begot Uzza and Ahihud. ⁸And Shaharaim had sons in the country of Moab after he had sent away Hushim and Baara his wives. ⁹He had sons by Hodesh his wife: Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, ¹⁰Jeuz, Sachiah, and Mirmah. These were his sons, chiefs of clans. ¹¹He also begot by Hushim: Abitub and Elpaal. ¹²The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its dependencies, ¹³and Beriah and Shema—they were chiefs of clans of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who put to flight the inhabitants of Gath; ¹⁴and Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth. ¹⁵Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, ¹⁶Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were sons of Beriah. ¹⁷Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, ¹⁸Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal. ¹⁹Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, ²⁰Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, ²¹Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei. ²²Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, ²³Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, ²⁴Hananiah, Elam, Anthothiah, ²⁵Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak. ²⁶Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, ²⁷Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham. ²⁸These were the chiefs of the clans, according to their lines. These chiefs dwelt in Jerusalem.

²⁹The father of Gibeon dwelt in Gibeon, and the name of his wife was Maacah. ³⁰His first-born son: Abdon; then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, ³¹Gedor, Ahio, Zecher. ³²Mikloth begot Shimeah. And they dwelt in Jerusalem opposite their kindred, with their kindred. ³³Ner begot Kish, Kish begot Saul, Saul begot Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal; ³⁴and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begot Micah. ³⁵The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Taarea, and Ahaz. ³⁶Ahaz begot Jehoaddah; and Jehoaddah begot Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; Zimri begot Moza. ³⁷Moza begot Binea; his son Raphah; his son Eleasah, his son Azel. ³⁸Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel. ³⁹The sons of Eshek his brother: Ulam his first-born, Jeush the second, and Elipelet the third. ⁴⁰The descendants of Ulam—men of substance, who drew the bow, had many children and grandchildren—one hundred and fifty; all these were Benjaminites.

9 All Israel was registered by genealogies; and these are in the book of the kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their trespass.^{2a} The first to settle in their towns, on their property, were Israelites, priests, Levites, and temple servants,³ while some of the Judahites and some of the Benjaminites and some of the Ephraimites and Manassehites settled in Jerusalem;⁴ Uthai son of Ammihud son of Omri son of Imri son of Bani, from the sons of Perez son of Judah;⁵ and of the Shilonites: Asaiah the first-born and his sons.⁶ Of the sons of Zerah: Jeuel and their kindred—690.⁷ Of the Benjaminites: Sallu son of Meshullam son of Hodaviah son of Hassenuah,⁸ Ibneiah son of Jeroham, Elah son of Uzzi son of Michri, and Meshullam son of Shephatiah son of Reuel son of Ibneiah;⁹ and their kindred, according to their lines—956. All these were chiefs of their ancestral clans.

¹⁰ Of the priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin,¹¹ and Azariah son of Hilkiah son of Meshullam son of Zadok son of Meraioth son of Ahitub, chief officer of the House of God;¹² and Adaiah son of Jeroham son of Pashhur son of Malchijah, and Maasai son of Adiel son of Jahzerah son of Meshullam son of Meshillemith son of Immer,¹³ together with their kindred, chiefs of their clans—1,760, men of substance for the work of the service of the House of God.

¹⁴ Of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub son of Azrikam son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari;¹⁵ and Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah son of Mica son of Zichri son of Asaph;¹⁶ and Obadiah son of Shemaiah son of Galal son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah son of Asa son of Elkanah, who dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites.

¹⁷ The gatekeepers were: Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman; and their kinsman Shallum was the chief¹⁸ hitherto in the King's Gate on the east. They were the keepers belonging to the Levite camp.¹⁹ Shallum son of Kore son of Ebiasaph son of Korah, and his kindred of his clan, the Korahites, were in charge of the work of the service, guards of the threshold of the Tent; their ancestors had been guards of the entrance to GOD's camp.²⁰ And Phinehas son of Eleazar was the chief officer over them in time past; GOD was with him.²¹ Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was gatekeeper at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.²² All these, who were selected as gatekeepers at the thresholds, were 212. They were selected by genealogies in their villages. David and Samuel the seer established them in their office of trust.

^a 9.2–17 Cf. Neh. 11.3–19.

²³They and their descendants were in charge of the gates of the House of GOD, that is, the House of the Tent, as guards. ²⁴The gatekeepers were on the four sides, east, west, north, and south; ²⁵and their kindred in their villages were obliged to join them every seven days, according to a fixed schedule. ²⁶The four chief gatekeepers, who were Levites, were entrusted to be over the chambers and the treasuries of the House of God. ²⁷They spent the night near the House of God; for they had to do guard duty, and they were in charge of opening it every morning.

²⁸Some of them had charge of the service vessels, for they were counted when they were brought back and taken out. ²⁹Some of them were in charge of the vessels and all the holy vessels, and of the flour, wine, oil, incense, and spices. ³⁰Some of the priests blended the compound of spices. ³¹Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the first-born of Shallum the Korahite, was entrusted with making the flat cakes. ³²Also some of their Kohathite kindred had charge of the rows of bread, to prepare them for each sabbath.

³³Now these are the singers, the chiefs of Levitical clans who remained in the chambers free of other service, for they were on duty day and night. ³⁴These were chiefs of Levitical clans, according to their lines; these chiefs lived in Jerusalem.

³⁵The father of Gibeon, Jeiel, lived in Gibeon, and the name of his wife was Maacah. ³⁶His first-born son, Abdon; then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, ³⁷Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth; ³⁸Mikloth begot Shimeam; and they lived in Jerusalem opposite their kindred, with their kindred. ³⁹Ner begot Kish, Kish begot Saul, Saul begot Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal; ⁴⁰and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begot Micah. ⁴¹The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Taharea; ⁴²Ahaz begot Jarah, and Jarah begot Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; Zimri begot Moza. ⁴³Moza begot Binea; his son was Rephaiah, his son Eleasah, his son Azel. ⁴⁴Azel had six sons and these were their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel.

10

^aThe Philistines attacked Israel, and Israel's side fled before the Philistines—and [many] fell on Mount Gilboa. ²The Philistines pursued Saul and his sons, and the Philistines struck down Jonathan, Abinadab,

^a 10.1–12 Cf. 1 Sam. 31.1–13.

and Malchi-shua, sons of Saul.³ The battle raged around Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded^b by the archers. ⁴Saul said to his arms-bearer, “Draw your sword and run me through, so that these uncircumcised may not come and make sport of me.” But his arms-bearer, out of great awe, refused; whereupon Saul grasped the sword and fell upon it.⁵ When the arms-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died.⁶ Thus Saul and his three sons and his entire house died together.⁷ And when everyone on Israel’s side in the valley saw that their army^c had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their towns and fled; the Philistines then came and occupied them.

⁸The next day the Philistines came to strip the slain, and they found Saul and his sons lying on Mount Gilboa.⁹ They stripped him, and carried off his head and his armor, and sent them throughout the land of the Philistines to spread the news to their idols and among the people.¹⁰ They placed his armor in the temple of their god, and they impaled his head in the temple of Dagan.¹¹ When all Jabesh-gilead heard everything that the Philistines had done to Saul,¹² the stalwarts among them set out, removed the bodies of Saul and his sons, and brought them to Jabesh. They buried the bones under the oak tree in Jabesh, and they fasted for seven days.¹³ Saul died for the trespass that he had committed against GOD in not having fulfilled GOD’s command. Moreover, he had consulted a ghost to seek advice,¹⁴ and did not seek advice of GOD, who had him slain—and had the kingdom transferred to David son of Jesse.

11 ^aAll Israel gathered to David at Hebron and said, “We are your own flesh and blood. ²Long before now, even when Saul was king, you were the leader of Israel; and the ETERNAL your God said to you: You shall shepherd My people Israel; you shall be ruler of My people Israel.”³ All the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a pact with them in Hebron before GOD. And they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of GOD through Samuel.

⁴David and all Israel set out for Jerusalem, that is Jebus, where the Jebusite inhabitants of the land lived.⁵ David was told by the inhabitants of Jebus, “You will never get in here!” But David captured the

^b **10.3** *wounded* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c **10.7** *their army* Heb. “they.”

^a **11.1–9** Cf. 2 Sam. 5.1–10.

stronghold of Zion; it is now the City of David. ⁶David said, “Whoever attacks the Jebusites first will be the chief officer”; Joab son of Zeruiah attacked first, and became the chief.

⁷David occupied the stronghold; therefore it was renamed the City of David. ⁸David also fortified the surrounding area, from the Millo round about, and Joab rebuilt the rest of the city. ⁹David kept growing stronger, for GOD of Hosts was with him.

¹⁰And these were David’s chief warriors who strongly supported him in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of GOD concerning Israel.

^{11b}This is the list of David’s warriors: Jashobeam son of Hachmoni, the chief officer; he wielded his spear against three hundred and slew them all on one occasion. ¹²Next to him was Eleazar son of Dodo, the Ahohite; he was one of the three warriors. ¹³He was with David at Pas Dammim when the Philistines gathered there for battle. There was a plot of ground full of barley there; the troops had fled from the Philistines, ¹⁴but they took their stand in the middle of the plot and defended it, and they routed the Philistines. Thus GOD wrought a great victory.

¹⁵Three of the thirty chiefs went down to the rock to David, at the cave of Adullam, while a force of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁶David was then in the stronghold, and a Philistine garrison was then at Bethlehem. ¹⁷David felt a craving and said, “If only I could get a drink of water from the cistern that is by the gate of Bethlehem!” ¹⁸So the three got through the Philistine camp, and drew water from the cistern that is by the gate of Bethlehem, and they carried it back to David. But David would not drink it, and he poured it out as a libation to GOD. ¹⁹For he said, “God forbid that I should do this! Can I drink the blood of these men who risked their lives?”—for they had brought it at the risk of their lives, and he would not drink it. Such were the exploits of the three warriors.

²⁰Abshai, the brother of Joab, was head of another three. He once wielded his spear against three hundred and slew them. He won a name among the three; ²¹among the three he was more highly regarded than the other two, and so he became their commander. However, he did not attain to the other three.

²²Benaiah son of Jehoiada from Kabzeel was a brave soldier^c who

^b 11.11–41 Cf. 2 Sam. 23.8–39.

^c 11.22 *a brave soldier* Heb. “the son of a brave soldier.”

performed great deeds. He killed the two [sons] of Ariel of Moab. Once, on a snowy day, he went down into a pit and killed a lion.²³ He also killed an Egyptian,^d a giant of a man five cubits tall. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand, like a weaver's beam, yet [Benaiah] went down against him with a club, wrenched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear.²⁴ Such were the exploits of Benaiah son of Jehoiada; and he won a name among the three warriors.²⁵ He was highly regarded among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three. David put him in charge of his bodyguard.^e

²⁶The valiant warriors: Asahel brother of Joab, Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem,²⁷ Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite,²⁸ Ira son of Ikkesh from Tekoa, Abiezer of Anathoth,²⁹ Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite,³⁰ Mahrai the Netophathite, Heled son of Baanah the Netophathite,³¹ Ittai son of Ribai from Gibeah of the Benjaminites, Benaiah of Pirathon,³² Hurai of Nahale-gaash, Abiel the Ar-bathite,³³ Azmaveth the Bahrumite, Eliahba of Shaalbon,³⁴ the sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan son of Shageh the Hararite,³⁵ Ahiam son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphal son of Ur,³⁶ Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,³⁷ Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai son of Ezbai,³⁸ Joel brother of Nathan, Mibhar son of Hagri,³⁹ Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite—the arms-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah—⁴⁰Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,⁴¹ Uriah the Hittite, Zabad son of Ahlai.⁴² Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, a chief of the Reubenites, and thirty with him;⁴³ Hanan son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite;⁴⁴ Uzziah the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel sons of Hotham the Aroerite;⁴⁵ Jedaiael son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite;⁴⁶ Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite;⁴⁷ Eliel, Obed, and Jaassiel the Mezobaite.

12

The following joined David at Ziklag while he was still in hiding from Saul son of Kish; these were the warriors who gave support in battle;² they were armed with the bow and could use both right hand and left hand to sling stones or shoot arrows with the bow; they were kindred of Saul from Benjamin.³ At the head were Ahiezer and Joash, sons of Shemaah of Gibeah; and Jeziel and Pelet, sons of Azmaveth; and Beracah and Jehu of Anathoth;⁴ Ishmaiah of Gibeon, a warrior among

^d 11.23 *an Egyptian* Or “the Egyptian champion”; cf. 1 Sam. 17.4–9.

^e 11.25 *bodyguard* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

the thirty, leading the thirty; ⁵Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, and Jozabad of Gederah; ⁶Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Hariphite; ⁷Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam the Korahites; ⁸Joelah and Zebadiah, sons of Jeroham of Gedor.^a ⁹Of the Gadites, there withdrew to follow David to the wilderness stronghold valiant warriors, fighters fit for battle, armed with shield and spear; they had the appearance of lions, and were as swift as gazelles upon the mountains: ¹⁰Ezer the chief, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third, ¹¹Mashmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, ¹²Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh, ¹³Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth, ¹⁴Jeremiah the tenth, Machbannai the eleventh. ¹⁵Those were the Gadites, heads of the army. The least was equal to a hundred, the greatest to a thousand. ¹⁶These were the ones who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it was at its crest, and they put to flight all the lowlanders to the east and west. ¹⁷Some of the Benjaminites and Judahites came to the stronghold to David, ¹⁸and David went out to meet them, saying to them, “If you come on a peaceful errand, to support me, then I will make common cause with you, but if to betray me to my foes, for no injustice on my part, then let the God of our ancestors take notice and give judgment.” ¹⁹Then the spirit seized Amasai, chief of the captains:

“We are yours, David,
On your side, son of Jesse;
At peace, at peace with you,
And at peace with him who supports you,
For your God supports you.”

So David accepted them, and placed them at the head of his band.

²⁰Some Manassites went over to David’s side when he came with the Philistines to make war against Saul, but they were of no help to them, because the lords of the Philistines in council dismissed him, saying, “He will go over to the side of his lord, Saul, and it will cost us our heads”; ²¹when he went to Ziklag, these Manassites went over to his side—Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, chiefs of the clans of Manasseh.

²²It was they who gave support to David against the band [of Amalekite raiders],^b for all were valiant warriors; and they were officers of the force.

^a 12.8 *Gedor* Or, “the troop,” reading Heb. *gedud* with several mss.

^b 12.22 *the band [of Amalekite raiders]* Cf. 1 Sam. 30.8, 15.

²³Day in day out, people came to David to give him support, until there was an army as vast as the army of God.

²⁴These are the numbers of the [men of the] armed bands who joined David at Hebron to transfer Saul's kingdom to him, in accordance with the word of GOD:

²⁵Judahites, equipped with shield and spear—6,800 armed men; ²⁶Simeonites, valiant warriors, combat troops—7,100; ²⁷of the Levites—4,600; ²⁸Jehoiada, chief officer of the Aaronites; with him, 3,700; ²⁹Zadok, a valiant young warrior, with his clan—22 officers; ³⁰of the Benjaminites, kindred of Saul, 3,000 in their great numbers, hitherto protecting the interests of the house of Saul; ³¹of the Ephraimites, 20,800 valiant warriors, famous men in their clans; ³²of the half-tribe of Manasseh, 18,000, who were designated by name to come and make David king; ³³of the Issacharites, men who knew how to interpret the signs of the times, to determine how Israel should act; their chiefs were 200, and all their kindred followed them; ³⁴of Zebulun, those ready for service, able to man a battle line with all kinds of weapons, 50,000, giving support wholeheartedly; ³⁵of Naphtali, 1,000 chieftains with their shields and lances—37,000; ³⁶of the Danites, able to man the battle line—28,600; ³⁷of Asher, those ready for service to man the battle line—40,000; ³⁸from beyond the Jordan, of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, together with all kinds of military weapons—120,000.

³⁹All these—warriors, manning the battle line with whole heart—came to Hebron to make David king over all Israel. Likewise, all the rest of Israel was of one mind to make David king.

⁴⁰They were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their kindred had provided for them.

⁴¹And also, their relatives as far away as Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali brought food by donkey, camel, mule, and ox—provisions of flour, cakes of figs, raisin cakes, wine, oil, cattle, and sheep in abundance, for there was joy in Israel.

13

Then David consulted with the officers of the thousands and the hundreds, with every chief officer. ²David said to the entire assembly of Israel, “If you approve, and if the ETERNAL our God concurs,^a let us send far and wide to our remaining kindred throughout the territories

^a13.2 *concurs* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

of Israel, including the priests and Levites in the towns where they have pasturelands, that they should gather together to us³ in order to transfer the Ark of our God to us, for throughout the days of Saul we paid no regard to it.”⁴ The entire assembly agreed to do so, for the proposal pleased all the people.⁵ David then assembled all Israel from Shihor of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, in order to bring the Ark of God from Kiriath-jearim.⁶^b David and all Israel went up to Baalah, Kiriath-jearim of Judah, to bring up from there the Ark of God, the ETERNAL, Enthroned on the Cherubim, to which the Name was attached.⁷ They transported the Ark of God on a new cart from the house of Abinadab; Uzza and Ahio guided the cart,⁸ and David and all Israel danced before God with all their might—with songs, lyres, harps, hand-drums, cymbals, and trumpets.⁹ But when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put out his hand to hold the Ark of God because the oxen had stumbled.^c¹⁰ GOD was incensed at Uzza, and struck him down, because he laid a hand on the Ark; and so he died there before God.¹¹ David was distressed because GOD had burst out^d against Uzza; and that place was named Perez-uzza, as it is still called.

¹²David was afraid of God that day; he said, “How can I bring the Ark of God here?”¹³ So David did not remove the Ark to his place in the City of David; instead, he diverted it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.¹⁴ The Ark of God remained in the house of Obed-edom, in its own abode, three months, and GOD blessed the house of Obed-edom and all he had.

14 ^aKing Hiram of Tyre sent envoys to David with cedar logs, stone-masons, and carpenters to build a palace for him.² Thus David knew that GOD had established him as king over Israel, and that his kingship was highly exalted for the sake of Israel—God’s people.

³David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David begot more sons and daughters.⁴^b These are the names of the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon;⁵ Ibhar, Elishua, and Elpelet;⁶ Nogah, Nepheg, and Japhia;⁷ Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

^b **13.6–14** Cf. 2 Sam. 6.2–11.

^c **13.9** *stumbled* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d **13.11** *had burst out* Heb. *paraš...peres*.

^a **14.1–16** Cf. 2 Sam. 5.11–25.

^b **14.4–7** Cf. 3.5–8.

⁸When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David; but David heard of it, and he went out to them. ⁹The Philistines came and raided the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁰David inquired of God, “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hands?” And GOD answered him, “Go up, and I will deliver them into your hands.” ¹¹Thereupon David ascended Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. David said, “God burst out^c against my enemies by my hands as waters burst out.” That is why that place was named Baal-perazim. ¹²They abandoned their gods there, and David ordered these to be burned.

¹³Once again the Philistines raided the valley. ¹⁴David inquired of God once more, and God answered, “Do not go up after them, but circle around them and confront them at the *baca*^d trees. ¹⁵And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the *baca* trees, then go out to battle, for God will be going in front of you to attack the Philistine forces.” ¹⁶David did as God had commanded him; and they routed the Philistines from Gibeon all the way to Gezer. ¹⁷David became famous throughout the lands, and GOD put the fear of him in all the nations.

15 He had houses made for himself in the City of David, and he prepared a place for the Ark of God, and pitched a tent for it. ²Then David gave orders that none but the Levites were to carry the Ark of God, for GOD had chosen them to carry the Ark of GOD and to render service forever. ³David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the Ark of GOD to its place, which he had prepared for it. ⁴Then David gathered together the Aaronites and the Levites: ⁵the sons of Kohath: Uriel the officer and his kindred—120; ⁶the sons of Merari: Asaiah the officer and his kindred—220; ⁷the sons of Gershom: Joel the officer and his kindred—130; ⁸the sons of Elizaphan: Shemaiah the officer and his kindred—200; ⁹the sons of Hebron: Eliel the officer and his kindred—80; ¹⁰the sons of Uzziel: Amminadab the officer and his kindred—112.

¹¹David sent for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites: Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. ¹²He said

^c 14.11 *burst out* Heb. *paras*.

^d 14.14 *baca* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

to them, “You are the heads of the clans of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your kindred, and bring up the Ark of the ETERNAL God of Israel to [the place] I have prepared for it.¹³ By your not having been there the first time,^a we did not show due regard for the ETERNAL our God—who burst out against us.”

¹⁴The priests and Levites sanctified themselves in order to bring up the Ark of the ETERNAL God of Israel. ¹⁵The Levites carried the Ark of God by means of poles on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of GOD. ¹⁶David ordered the officers of the Levites to install their kindred, the singers, with musical instruments, harps, lyres, and cymbals, joyfully making their voices heard. ¹⁷So the Levites installed Heman son of Joel and, of his kindred, Asaph son of Berechiah; and, of the sons of Merari their kindred, Ethan son of Kushaiah. ¹⁸Together with them were their kindred of second rank, Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphalehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom and Jeiel the gatekeepers. ¹⁹Also the singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan to sound the bronze cymbals,²⁰ and Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah with harps on *alamoth*;^b ²¹also Mattithiah, Eliphalehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah, with lyres to lead on the *sheminith*;^c ²²also Chenaniah, officer of the Levites in song;^d he was in charge of the song^e because he was a master. ²³Berechiah and Elkanah were gatekeepers for the Ark. ²⁴Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer the priests sounded the trumpets before the Ark of God, and Obededom and Jehiah were gatekeepers for the Ark. ²⁵^f Then David and the elders of Israel and the officers of the thousands who were going to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of GOD from the house of Obed-edom were joyful. ²⁶Since God helped the Levites who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant of GOD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. ²⁷Now David and all the Levites who were carrying the Ark, and the singers and Chenaniah, officer of song of the singers, were wrapped^g in robes of fine linen, and David wore a linen ephod.

^a 15.13 *By your not having been there the first time* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^b 15.20 *on alamoth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 15.21 *on the sheminith* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 15.22 *song* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 15.22 *song* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 15.25–29 This passage is found also in 2 Sam. 6.12–16.

^g 15.27 *wrapped* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

²⁸All Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of GOD with shouts and with blasts of the horn, with trumpets and cymbals, playing on harps and lyres. ²⁹As the Ark of the Covenant of GOD arrived at the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing, and she despised him for it.

16

^aThey brought in the Ark of God and set it up inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and they sacrificed burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before God. ²When David finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of GOD. ³And he distributed to every person in Israel—man and woman alike—to each a loaf of bread, a cake made in a pan, and a raisin cake.^b ⁴He appointed Levites to minister before the Ark of GOD, to invoke, to praise, and to extol the ETERNAL God of Israel: ⁵Asaph the chief, Zechariah second in rank, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with harps and lyres, and Asaph sounding the cymbals,^c and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests, with trumpets, regularly before the Ark of the Covenant of God. ⁷Then, on that day, David first commissioned Asaph and his kindred to give praise to GOD:

⁸^c“Praise GOD;
call on this name;
proclaim God’s deeds among the peoples.

⁹Sing out praises;
speak of all those wondrous acts.

¹⁰Exult in the holy name;
let all who seek GOD rejoice.

¹¹Turn to GOD, to divine might;^d
seek God’s presence constantly.

¹²Remember the wonders that have been done;
the portents and judgments pronounced,

¹³O offspring of Israel, God’s servant,
O descendants of Jacob, the chosen ones.

¹⁴The ETERNAL is our God,
whose judgments are throughout the earth.

^a 16.1–3 Cf. 2 Sam. 6.17–19.

^b 16.3 *a cake made in a pan, and a raisin cake* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^c 16.8–22 Cf. Ps. 105.1–15.

^d 16.11 *divine might* I.e., the Ark; cf. Ps. 78.61; 132.8.

¹⁵Be ever mindful of God's covenant,
 the promise given for a thousand generations,
¹⁶that was made with Abraham,
 sworn to Isaac,
¹⁷and confirmed in a decree for Jacob,
 for Israel, as an eternal covenant,
¹⁸saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan
 as your allotted heritage.'

¹⁹You were then few in number,
 a handful, merely sojourning there,
²⁰wandering from nation to nation,
 from one kingdom to another.

²¹No one was allowed to oppress them;
 kings were reproved on their account,
²²'Do not touch My anointed ones;
 do not harm My prophets.'

^{23^e}"Sing to GOD, all the earth,
 proclaim God's victory day after day.
²⁴Tell of this glory among the nations,
 God's wondrous deeds among all peoples.
²⁵For GOD is great and much acclaimed,
 and is held in awe by all divine beings.
²⁶All the gods of the peoples are mere idols,
 but the ETERNAL made the heavens.
²⁷Glory and majesty are present;
 strength and joy are in the holy temple.

²⁸"Ascribe to GOD, O families of the peoples,
 ascribe to GOD glory and strength.
²⁹Ascribe to GOD the glory of this name,
 bring tribute and enter the divine presence,
 bow down to GOD, majestic in holiness.
³⁰Tremble in the divine presence, all the earth!
 The world stands firm; it cannot be shaken.
³¹Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult;
 let them declare among the nations, 'GOD is Sovereign!'
³²Let the sea and all within it thunder,

^e 16.23–33 Cf. Ps. 96.1–13.

the fields and everything in them exult;
³³then shall all the trees of the forest shout for joy
 at the presence of GOD,
 who is coming to rule the earth.
³⁴Praise GOD, who is good—
 whose steadfast love is eternal.
³⁵Declare:
 Deliver us, O God, our deliverer,
 and gather us and save us from the nations,
 to acclaim Your holy name,
 to glory in Your praise.

³⁶“Blessed is the ETERNAL, God of Israel, from eternity to eternity.”
 And all the people said, “Amen” and “Praise GOD.”^f

³⁷He left Asaph and his kindred there before the Ark of the Covenant of GOD to minister before the Ark regularly as each day required,
³⁸as well as Obed-edom with their kindred—68; also Obed-edom son of Jedithun and Hosah as gatekeepers; ³⁹also Zadok the priest and his fellow priests before the Tabernacle of GOD at the shrine that was in Gibeon; ⁴⁰to sacrifice burnt offerings to GOD on the altar of the burnt offering regularly, morning and evening, in accordance with what was prescribed in the Teaching of GOD with which Israel was charged. ⁴¹With them were Heman and Jeduthun and the other selected men designated by name to give praise to GOD, “whose steadfast love is eternal.”^g ⁴²Heman and Jeduthun had with them trumpets and cymbals to sound, and instruments for the songs of God; and the sons of Jeduthun were to be at the gate. ⁴³Then all the people went home, and David returned to greet his household.

17 ^aWhen David settled in his palace, David said to the prophet Nathan, “Here I am dwelling in a house of cedar, while the Ark of the Covenant of GOD is under tent-cloths.” ^bNathan said to David, “Do whatever you have in mind, for God is with you.”

³But that same night the word of God came to Nathan: ⁴“Go and say to My servant David: Thus said GOD: You are not the one to build a house for Me to dwell in. ⁵From the day that I brought out Israel to this day, I have not dwelt in a house, but have [gone] from tent to tent and from

^f 16.35–36 Cf. Ps. 106.47–48.

^g 16.41 *whose steadfast love is eternal* Cf. Ps. 106; 107; 118; 136.

^a 17.1–27 Cf. 2 Sam. 7.

one Tabernacle [to another].⁶ As I moved about wherever Israel went, did I ever reproach any of the judges of Israel whom I appointed to care for My people Israel: Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?

⁷“Further, say thus to My servant David: Thus said GOD of Hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be ruler of My people Israel,⁸ and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut down all your enemies before you. Moreover, I will give you renown like that of the greatest men on earth.⁹ I will establish a home for My people Israel and will plant them firm, so that they shall dwell secure and shall tremble no more. Iniquitous people shall not wear them down anymore as in the past,¹⁰ ever since I appointed judges over My people Israel. I will subdue all your enemies.

“And I declare to you: GOD will build a house^b for you.¹¹ When your days are done and you follow your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingship.¹² He shall build a house for Me, and I will establish his throne forever.¹³ I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to Me, but I will never withdraw My favor from him as I withdrew it from your predecessor.¹⁴ I will install him in My house and in My kingship forever, and his throne shall be established forever.”

¹⁵Nathan spoke to David in accordance with all these words and all this prophecy.¹⁶ Then King David came and sat before GOD, and he said, “What am I, O my ETERNAL God, and what is my family, that You have brought me thus far?¹⁷ Yet even this, O God, has seemed too little to You; for You have spoken of Your servant’s house for the future. You regard me as a man of distinction,^c O my ETERNAL God.¹⁸ What more can David add regarding the honoring of Your servant? You know Your servant.¹⁹ O ETERNAL One, for Your servant’s sake, and of Your own accord,^d You have wrought this great thing, and made known all these great things.²⁰ O ETERNAL One, there is none like You, and there is no other God but You, as we have always heard.²¹ And who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth, whom You,^e God, went and redeemed as Your^f people, winning renown for Yourself for great and marvelous deeds, driving out nations

^b 17.10 *house* I.e., a dynasty; play on “house” (i.e., temple) in v. 4.

^c 17.17 *You regard me as a man of distinction* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^d 17.19 *for Your servant’s sake, and of Your own accord* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 17.21 *You* Heb. 3rd person.

^f 17.21 *Your* See previous note.

before Your people whom You redeemed from Egypt.²² You have established Your people Israel as Your very own people forever; and You, O ETERNAL One, have become their God.

²³“And now, O ETERNAL One, let Your promise concerning Your servant and his house be fulfilled forever; and do as You have promised. ²⁴Let it be fulfilled that Your name be glorified forever, in that people will say, ‘GOD of Hosts, God of Israel, is Israel’s God’; and may the house of Your servant David be established before You. ²⁵Because You, my God, have revealed to Your servant that You will build a house for him, Your servant has ventured to pray to You. ²⁶And now, O ETERNAL One, You are God and You have made this gracious promise to Your servant. ²⁷Now, it has pleased You to bless Your servant’s house, that it abide before You forever; for You, O ETERNAL One, have blessed and are blessed forever.”

18

^aSometime afterward, David attacked the Philistines and subdued them; and David took Gath and its dependencies from the Philistines. ^bHe also defeated the Moabites; the Moabites became tributary vassals of David.

³David defeated Hadadezer, king of Zobah-hamath, who was on his way to set up his monument at the Euphrates River. ⁴David captured 1,000 chariots and 7,000 cavalry and 20,000 foot soldiers of his force; and David hamstrung all the chariot horses except for 100, which he retained. ⁵And when the Arameans of Damascus came to the aid of King Hadadezer of Zobah-hamath, David struck down 22,000 of the Arameans. ⁶David stationed [garrisons] in Aram of Damascus, and the Arameans became tributary vassals of David. GOD gave David victory wherever he went. ⁷David took the gold shields^b carried by Hadadezer’s retinue and brought them to Jerusalem; ⁸and from Tibbath and Cun, towns of Hadadezer, David took a vast amount of copper, from which Solomon made the bronze tank, the columns, and the bronze vessels.

⁹When King Tou of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of King Hadadezer of Zobah,¹⁰ he sent his son Hadoram to King David to greet him and to congratulate him on his military victory over Hadadezer—for Hadadezer had been at war with Tou;

^a18.1–17 Cf. 2 Sam. 8.

^b18.7 *shields* Or “quivers.”

[he brought with him] all manner of gold, silver, and copper objects.

¹¹King David dedicated these to GOD, along with the other silver and gold that he had taken from all the nations: from Edom, Moab, and Ammon; from the Philistines and the Amalekites.

¹²Abshai son of Zeruiah struck down Edom in the Valley of Salt, 18,000 in all. ¹³He stationed garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became vassals of David. GOD gave David victory wherever he went.

¹⁴David reigned over all Israel, and David executed true justice among all his people. ¹⁵Joab son of Zeruiah was commander of the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; ¹⁶Zadok son of Ahitub and Abimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Shavsha was scribe; ¹⁷Benaiyah son of Jehoiada was commander of the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were first ministers of the king.

19

^aSometime afterward, Nahash the king of the Ammonites died, and his son succeeded him as king. ²David said, “I will keep faith with Hanun son of Nahash, since his father kept faith with me.” David sent messengers with condolences to him over his father. But when David's courtiers came to the land of Ammon to Hanun, with condolences, ³the Ammonite officials said to Hanun, “Do you think David is really honoring your father just because he sent you consolers? Why, it is to explore, to subvert, and to spy out the land that his courtiers have come to you.” ⁴So Hanun seized David's courtiers, shaved them, and cut away half of their garments up to the buttocks, and sent them off. ⁵When David was told about the men, he dispatched others to meet them, for they were greatly embarrassed. And the king gave orders, “Stay in Jericho until your beards grow back; then you can return.”

⁶The Ammonites realized that they had incurred the wrath of David; so Hanun and the Ammonites sent 1,000 silver talents to hire chariots and riders from Aram-naharaim, Aram-maacah, and Zobah. ⁷They hired 32,000 chariots, the king of Maacah, and his army, who came and encamped before Medeba. The Ammonites were mobilized from their cities and came to do battle.

⁸On learning this, David sent out Joab and the entire army of mighty soldiers. ⁹The Ammonites marched out and took up their battle position at the entrance of the city, while the kings who came [took their stand] separately in the open. ¹⁰Joab saw that there was

^a19.1–19 Cf. 2 Sam. 10.

a battle line against him both front and rear. So he made a selection from all the best soldiers of Israel and arrayed them against the Arameans,¹¹ and the rest of the troops he put under the command of his brother Abishai and arrayed them against the Ammonites.¹² Joab said, “If the Arameans prove too strong for me, you come to my aid; and if the Ammonites prove too strong for you, I will come to your aid.¹³ Let us be strong and resolute for the sake of our people and the towns of our God; and accept the outcome that GOD deems right.”

¹⁴ Joab and the troops with him marched into battle against the Arameans, who fled before him.¹⁵ And when the Ammonites saw that the Arameans had fled, they too fled before his brother Abishai, and withdrew into the city. So Joab went to Jerusalem.

¹⁶ When the Arameans saw that they had been routed by Israel, they sent messengers to bring out the Arameans from across the Euphrates; Shophach, Hadadezer’s army commander, led them.¹⁷ David was informed of it; he assembled all Israel, crossed the Jordan, and came and took up positions against them. David drew up his forces against Aram; and they fought with him.¹⁸ But the Arameans were put to flight by Israel. David killed 7,000 Aramean chariot teams and 40,000 foot soldiers; he also killed Shophach, the army commander.¹⁹ And when all the vassals of Hadadezer saw that they had been routed by Israel, they submitted to David and became his vassals. And the Arameans would not help the Ammonites anymore.

20

^a At the turn of the year, the season when kings go out [to battle], Joab led out the army force and devastated the land of Ammon, and then besieged Rabbah, while David remained in Jerusalem; Joab reduced Rabbah and left it in ruins.² David took the crown from the head of their king; he found that it weighed a talent of gold, and in it were precious stones. It was placed on David’s head. He also carried off a vast amount of booty from the city.³ He led out the people who lived there and he hacked them^b with saws and iron threshing boards and axes;^c David did thus to all the towns of Ammon. Then David and all the troops returned to Jerusalem.⁴ After this, fighting broke out with the Philistines at Gezer; that was when Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Sippai, a descendant of the Rephaim, and they were humbled.

^a 20.1–3 Cf. 2 Sam. 11.1; 12.30–31.

^b 20.3 *he hacked them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain; cf. 2 Sam. 12.31, “set them to work.”

^c 20.3 *axes* Heb. *megeroth*; cf. 2 Sam. 12.31 *magzeroth*, “axes.”

⁵Again there was fighting with the Philistines, and Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite; his spear had a shaft like a weaver's beam. ⁶Once again there was fighting at Gath. There was a giant of a man who had twenty-four fingers [and toes], six [on each hand] and six [on each foot]; he too was descended from the Raphah. ⁷When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of David's brother Shimea killed him. ⁸These were descended from the Raphah in Gath, and they fell by the hands of David and his men.

21

^aSatan arose against Israel and incited David to number Israel. ²David said to Joab and to the commanders of the army, “Go and count Israel from Beer-sheba to Dan and bring me information as to their number.” ³Joab answered, “May GOD increase the people a hundredfold; my lord king, are they not all subjects of my lord? Why should my lord require this? Why should it be a cause of guilt for Israel?”

⁴However, the king's command to Joab remained firm, so Joab set out and traversed all Israel; he then came to Jerusalem. ⁵Joab reported to David the number of the people that had been recorded. All Israel comprised 1,100,000 ready to draw the sword, while in Judah there were 470,000 ready to draw the sword. ⁶He did not record among them Levi and Benjamin, because the king's command had become repugnant to Joab. ⁷God, being displeased about this matter, struck Israel.

⁸David said to God, “I have sinned grievously in having done this thing; please remit the guilt of Your servant, for I have acted foolishly.” ⁹GOD ordered Gad, David's seer: ¹⁰“Go and tell David: Thus said GOD: I offer you three things; choose one of them and I will bring it upon you.” ¹¹Gad came to David and told him, “Thus said GOD: Select for yourself ¹²a three-year famine; or that you be swept away three months before your adversaries with the sword of your enemies overtaking you; or three days of the sword of GOD, pestilence in the land, the angel of GOD wreaking destruction throughout the territory of Israel. Now consider what reply I shall take back to the One who sent me.” ¹³David said to Gad, “I am in great distress. Let me fall into the hands of GOD, whose compassion is very great; and let me not fall into human hands.”

¹⁴GOD sent a pestilence upon Israel, and 70,000 fell in Israel. ¹⁵God

^a 21.1–26 Cf. 2 Sam. 24.

sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but as he was about to wreak destruction, GOD saw and renounced further punishment and said to the destroying angel, “Enough! Stay your hand!” The angel of GOD was then standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.¹⁶ David looked up and saw the angel of GOD standing between heaven and earth, with a drawn sword in his hand directed against Jerusalem. David and the elders, covered in sackcloth, threw themselves on their faces.¹⁷ David said to God, “Was it not I alone who ordered the numbering of the people? I alone am guilty, and have caused severe harm; but these sheep, what have they done? O my ETERNAL God, let Your hand fall upon me and my father’s house, and let not Your people be plagued!”¹⁸ The angel of GOD told Gad to inform David that David should go and set up an altar to GOD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.¹⁹ David went up, following Gad’s instructions, which he had delivered in the name of GOD.²⁰ Ornan too saw the angel; his four sons who were with him hid themselves while Ornan kept on threshing wheat.²¹ David came to Ornan; when Ornan looked up, he saw David and came off the threshing floor and bowed low to David, with his face to the ground.²² David said to Ornan, “Sell me the site of the threshing floor, that I may build on it an altar to GOD. Sell it to me at the full price, that the plague against the people will be checked.”²³ Ornan said to David, “Take it and let my lord the king do whatever he sees fit. See, I donate oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing boards for wood, as well as wheat for a grain offering—I donate all of it.”²⁴ But King David replied to Ornan, “No, I will buy them at the full price. I cannot make a present to GOD of what belongs to you, or sacrifice a burnt offering that has cost me nothing.”²⁵ So David paid Ornan for the site 600 shekels’ worth of gold.²⁶ And David built there an altar to GOD and sacrificed burnt offerings and offerings of well-being. He invoked GOD, who answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offerings.²⁷ GOD ordered the angel to return his sword to its sheath.²⁸ At that time, when David saw that GOD answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there—²⁹ for the Tabernacle of GOD, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offerings were at that time in the shrine at Gibeon,³⁰ and David was unable to go to it to worship God because he was terrified by the sword of the angel of GOD.

22 ¹David said,

“Here will be the House of GOD and here the altar of burnt offerings for Israel.”

²David gave orders to assemble the resident aliens in the land of Israel, and assigned them to be hewers, to quarry and dress stones for building the House of God. ³Much iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for clasps did David lay aside, and so much copper it could not be weighed, ⁴and cedar logs without number—for the Sidonians and the Tyrians brought many cedar logs to David.

⁵For David thought, “My son Solomon is an untried youth, and the House to be built for GOD is to be made exceedingly great to win fame and glory throughout all the lands; let me then lay aside material for him.” So David laid aside much material before he died. ⁶Then he summoned his son Solomon and charged him with building the House for the ETERNAL God of Israel.

⁷David said to Solomon, “My son, I wanted to build a House for the name of my ETERNAL God. ⁸But the word of GOD came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and fought great battles; you shall not build a House for My name, for you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight. ⁹But you will have a son who will be a man at rest, for I will give him rest from all his enemies on all sides; Solomon^a will be his name and I shall confer peace^b and quiet on Israel in his time. ¹⁰He will build a House for My name; he shall be a son to Me and I to him a father, and I will establish his throne of kingship over Israel forever.’ ¹¹Now, my son, may GOD be with you, and may you succeed in building the House of the ETERNAL your God as you were promised. ¹²Only let God give you sense and understanding and put you in charge of Israel and the observance of the Teaching of the ETERNAL your God. ¹³Then you shall succeed, if you observantly carry out the laws and the rules that GOD charged Moses to lay upon Israel. Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid or dismayed. ¹⁴See, by denying myself,^c I have laid aside for the House of GOD one hundred thousand talents of gold and one million talents of silver, and so much copper and iron it cannot be weighed; I have also laid aside wood and stone, and you shall add to them. ¹⁵An abundance of workers is at your disposal—hewers, workers in stone and wood, and every kind of skilled worker in every kind of material—¹⁶gold, silver, copper, and iron without limit. Go and do it, and may GOD be with you.”

¹⁷David charged all the officers of Israel to support his son Solomon,

^a 22.9 *Solomon* Heb. *Shelomoh*.

^b 22.9 *peace* Heb. *shalom*.

^c 22.14 *by denying myself* With Targum; or “in my poverty.”

¹⁸“See, the ETERNAL your God is with you and will give you rest on every side—having delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand so that the land lies conquered before GOD and before this people. ¹⁹Now, set your minds and hearts on worshiping the ETERNAL your God, and go build the Sanctuary of the ETERNAL your God so that you may bring the Ark of the Covenant of GOD and the holy vessels of God to the house that is built for the name of GOD.”

23 When David reached a ripe old age, he made his son Solomon king over Israel. ²Then David assembled all the officers of Israel and the priests and the Levites. ³The Levites, from the age of thirty and upward, were counted; the head-count of their males was 38,000: ⁴of these there were 24,000 in charge of the work of the House of GOD, 6,000 officers and magistrates, ⁵4,000 gatekeepers, and 4,000 for praising GOD “with instruments I devised for singing praises.” ⁶David formed them into divisions:

The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ⁷The Gershonites: Ladan and Shimei. ⁸The sons of Ladan: Jehiel the chief, Zetham, and Joel—3. ⁹The sons of Shimei: Shelomith, Hziel, and Haran—3. These were the chiefs of the clans of the Ladanites. ¹⁰And the sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah; these were the sons of Shimei—4. ¹¹Jahath was the chief and Zizah the second, but Jeush and Beriah did not have many children, so they were enrolled together as a single clan. ¹²The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel—4. ¹³The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. Aaron was set apart, he and his sons, forever, to be consecrated as most holy, to make burnt offerings to GOD and render service and pronounce blessings in God’s name forever. ¹⁴As for Moses, the agent of God, his sons were named after the tribe of Levi. ¹⁵The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer. ¹⁶The sons of Gershom: Shebuel the chief. ¹⁷And the sons of Eliezer were: Rehabiah the chief. Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very numerous. ¹⁸The sons of Izhar: Shelomith the chief. ¹⁹The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. ²⁰The sons of Uzziel: Micah the chief and Isshiah the second. ²¹The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish. ²²Eleazar died having no sons but only daughters; the sons of Kish, their kindred, married them. ²³The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth—3.

²⁴These are the sons of Levi by clans, with their clan chiefs as they

were enrolled, with a list of their names by heads, who did the work of the service of the House of GOD from the age of twenty and upward.²⁵For David said, “The ETERNAL God of Israel has given rest to this people and will dwell in Jerusalem forever.²⁶Therefore the Levites need not carry the Tabernacle and all its various service vessels.”²⁷Among the last acts of David was the counting of the Levites from the age of twenty and upward.²⁸For their appointment was alongside the Aaronites for the service of the House of GOD, to look after the courts and the chambers, and the purity of all the holy things, and the performance of the service of the House of God,²⁹and the rows of bread, and the fine flour for the grain offering, and the unleavened wafers, and the cakes made on the griddle and soaked, and every measure of capacity and length;³⁰and to be present every morning to praise and extol GOD, and at evening too,³¹and whenever offerings were made to GOD, according to the quantities prescribed for them, on sabbaths, new moons and holidays, regularly, before GOD;³²and so to keep watch over the Tent of Meeting, over the holy things, and over the Aaronites their kindred, for the service of the House of GOD.

24 The divisions of the Aaronites were:

The sons of Aaron: Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.²Nadab and Abihu died in the lifetime of their father, and they had no children, so Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests.

³David, Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar divided them into offices by their tasks.⁴The sons of Eleazar turned out to be more numerous by male heads than the sons of Ithamar, so they divided the sons of Eleazar into sixteen chiefs of clans and the sons of Ithamar into eight clans.⁵They divided them by lot, both on an equal footing, since they were all sanctuary officers and officers of God—the sons of Eleazar and the sons of Ithamar.⁶Shemaiyah son of Nathanel, the scribe, who was of the Levites, registered them under the eye of the king, the officers, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and the chiefs of clans of the priests and Levites—one clan more taken for Eleazar for each one taken of Ithamar.^a

⁷The first lot fell on Jehoiarib; the second on Jedaiah; ⁸the third

^a 24.6 *one clan more taken for Eleazar for each one taken of Ithamar* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

on Harim; the fourth on Seorim; ⁹the fifth on Malchijah; the sixth on Mijamin; ¹⁰the seventh on Hakkoz; the eighth on Abijah; ¹¹the ninth on Jeshua; the tenth on Shecaniah; ¹²the eleventh on Eliashib; the twelfth on Jakim; ¹³the thirteenth on Huppah; the fourteenth on Jeshebeab; ¹⁴the fifteenth on Bilgah; the sixteenth on Immer; ¹⁵the seventeenth on Hezir; the eighteenth on Happizzez; ¹⁶the nineteenth on Pethahiah; the twentieth on Jehezkel; ¹⁷the twenty-first on Jachin; the twenty-second on Gamul; ¹⁸the twenty-third on Delaiah; the twenty-fourth on Maaziah.

¹⁹According to this allocation of offices by tasks, they were to enter the House of GOD as was laid down for them by Aaron their father, as the ETERNAL God of Israel had commanded him.

²⁰The remaining Levites: the sons of Amram: Shubael; the sons of Shubael: Jehdeiah; ²¹Rehabiah. The sons of Rehabiah: Isshiah, the chief. ²²Izharites: Shelomoth. The sons of Shelomoth: Jahath ²³and Benai, Jeriah; the second, Amariah; the third, Jahaziel; the fourth, Jekameam. ²⁴The sons of Uzziel: Micah. The sons of Micah: Shamir. ²⁵The brother of Micah: Isshiah. The sons of Isshiah: Zechariah. ²⁶The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Jaazaiah, his son—²⁷the sons of Merari by Jaazaiah his son: Shoham, Zakkur, and Ibri. ²⁸Mahli: Eleazar; he had no sons. ²⁹Kish: the sons of Kish: Jerahmeel. ³⁰The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites by their clans.

³¹These too cast lots corresponding to their kindred, the sons of Aaron, under the eye of King David and Zadok and Ahimelech and the chiefs of the clans of the priests and Levites, on the principle of “chief and youngest brother alike.”

25

David and the officers of the army set apart for service the sons of Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who prophesied to the accompaniment of lyres, harps, and cymbals. The list of those who performed this work, according to their service, was:

²Sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah—sons of Asaph under the charge of Asaph, who prophesied by order of the king. ³Jeduthun—the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, Mattithiah—6, under the charge of their father Jeduthun, who, accompanied on the harp, prophesied, praising and extolling GOD. ⁴Heman—the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-

ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth; ⁵all these were sons of Heman, the seer of the king, [who uttered] prophecies for God's greater glory. (God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.) ⁶All these were under the charge of their father for the singing in the House of GOD, to the accompaniment of cymbals, harps, and lyres, for the service of the House of God by order of the king. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman—⁷their total number with their kindred, trained singers of GOD—all the masters, 288.

⁸They cast lots for shifts on the principle of “small and great alike, like master like apprentice.”

⁹The first lot fell to Asaph—to Joseph; the second, to Gedaliah, he and his brothers and his sons—12; ¹⁰the third, to Zaccur: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹¹the fourth, to Izri: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹²the fifth, to Nethaniah: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹³the sixth, to Bukkiah: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁴the seventh, to Jesarelah: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁵the eighth, to Jeshaiah: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁶the ninth, to Mattaniah: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁷the tenth, to Shimei: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁸the eleventh to Azarel: his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁹the twelfth, to Hashabiah: his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁰the thirteenth, to Shubael: his sons and his brothers—12; ²¹the fourteenth, to Mattithiah: his sons and his brothers—12; ²²the fifteenth, to Jeremoth: his sons and his brothers—12; ²³the sixteenth, to Hananiah: his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁴the seventeenth, to Joshbekashah: his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁵the eighteenth, to Hanani: his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁶the nineteenth, to Mallothi: his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁷the twentieth, to Eliathah: his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁸the twenty-first, to Hothir: his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁹the twenty-second, to Giddalti: his sons and his brothers—12; ³⁰the twenty-third, to Mahazioth: his sons and his brothers—12; ³¹the twenty-fourth, to Romamti-ezer: his sons and his brothers—12.

26 The divisions of the gatekeepers: Korahites: Meshelemiah son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph. ²Sons of Meshelemiah: Zechariah the first-born, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, ³Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh. ⁴Sons of Obed-edom: Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, ⁵Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth—for God had blessed him. ⁶To his

son Shemaiah were born sons who exercised authority in their clans because they were men of substance.⁷ The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Raphael, Obed, Elzabad—his brothers, men of ability, were Elihu and Semachiah.⁸ All these, sons of Obed-edom; they and their sons and brothers, strong and able men for the service—62 of Obed-edom.⁹ Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, able men—18.¹⁰ Hosah of the Merarites had sons: Shimri the chief (he was not the first-born, but his father designated him chief),¹¹ Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth. All the sons and brothers of Hosah—13.

¹²These are the divisions of the gatekeepers, by their chief men, [who worked in] shifts corresponding to their kindred, ministering in the House of GOD.¹³ They cast lots, small and great alike, by clans, for each gate.

¹⁴The lot for the east [gate] fell to Shelemiah. Then they cast lots [for] Zechariah his son, a prudent counselor, and his lot came out to be the north [gate].¹⁵ For Obed-edom, the south [gate], and for his sons, the vestibule.¹⁶ For Shuppim and for Hosah, the west [gate], with the Shallecheth gate on the ascending highway. Watch corresponded to watch:¹⁷ At the east—six Levites; at the north—four daily; at the south—four daily; at the vestibule—two by two;¹⁸ at the colonnade on the west—four at the causeway and two at the colonnade.¹⁹ These were the divisions of the gatekeepers of the sons of Korah and the sons of Merari.

²⁰ And the Levites: Ahijah over the treasures of the House of God and the treasures of the dedicated things.²¹ The sons of Ladan: the sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan; the chiefs of the clans of Ladan, the Gershonite—Jehieli.²² The sons of Jehieli: Zetham and Joel; his brother was over the treasures of the House of GOD.

²³ Of the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, the Uzzielites:²⁴ Shebuel son of Gershom son of Moses was the chief officer over the treasures.²⁵ And his brothers: Eliezer, his son Rehabiah, his son Jeshaiah, his son Joram, his son Zichri, his son Shelomith—²⁶ that Shelomith and his brothers were over all the treasures of dedicated things that were dedicated by King David and the chiefs of the clans, and the officers of thousands and hundreds and the other army officers;²⁷ they dedicated some of the booty of the wars to maintain the House of GOD.²⁸ All that Samuel the seer had dedicated, and Saul son of Kish, and Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruiah—or [what] any other man had dedicated, was under the charge of Shelomith and his brothers.

²⁹The Izharites: Chenaniah and his sons were over Israel as clerks and magistrates for affairs outside [the sanctuary]. ³⁰The Hebronites: Hashabiah and his brothers, capable men, 1,700, supervising Israel on the west side of the Jordan in all matters of GOD and the service of the king. ³¹The Hebronites: Jeriah, the chief of the Hebronites—they were investigated in the fortieth year of David's reign by clans of all their lines, and men of substance were found among them in Jazer-gilead. ³²His brothers, able men, 2,700, chiefs of clans—David put them in charge of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in all matters of God and matters of the king.

27 The number of Israelites—chiefs of clans, officers of thousands and hundreds and their clerks, who served the king in all matters of the divisions, who worked in monthly shifts during all the months of the year—each division, 24,000. ²Over the first division for the first month—Jashobeam son of Zabdiel; his division had 24,000. ³Of the sons of Perez, he, the chief of all the officers of the army, [served] for the first month. ⁴Over the division of the second month—Dodai the Ahohite; Mikloth was chief officer of his division; his division had 24,000. ⁵The third army officer for the third month—Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the chief priest; his division had 24,000. ⁶That was Benaiah, one of the warriors of the thirty and over the thirty; and [over] his division was Ammizabad his son. ⁷The fourth, for the fourth month, Asahel brother of Joab, and his son Zebadiah after him; his division had 24,000. ⁸The fifth, for the fifth month, the officer Shamshut the Izrahite; his division had 24,000. ⁹The sixth, for the sixth month, Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoite; his division had 24,000. ¹⁰The seventh, for the seventh month, Helez the Pelonite, of the Ephraimites; his division had 24,000. ¹¹The eighth, for the eighth month, Sibbecai the Hushathite, of Zerah; his division had 24,000. ¹²The ninth, for the ninth month, Abiezer the Anathothite, of Benjamin; his division had 24,000. ¹³The tenth, for the tenth month, Mahrai the Netophathite, of Zerah; his division had 24,000. ¹⁴The eleventh, for the eleventh month, Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the Ephraimites; his division had 24,000. ¹⁵The twelfth, for the twelfth month, Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel; his division had 24,000.

¹⁶Over the tribes of Israel: Reuben: the chief officer, Eliezer son of Zichri. Simeon: Shephatiah son of Maacah. ¹⁷Levi: Hashabiah son of Kemuel. Aaron: Zadok. ¹⁸Judah: Elihu, of the brothers of David.

Issachar: Omri son of Michael.¹⁹ Zebulun: Ishmaiah son of Obadiah. Naphtali: Jerimoth son of Azriel.²⁰ Ephraimites: Hoshea son of Azaziah. The half-tribe of Manasseh: Joel son of Pedaiah.²¹ Half Manasseh in Gilead: Iddo son of Zechariah. Benjamin: Jaasiel son of Abner.²² Dan: Azarel son of Jeroham. These were the officers of the tribes of Israel.

²³ David did not take a census of those under twenty years of age, for GOD had promised to make Israel as numerous as the stars of heaven.²⁴ Joab son of Zeruiah did begin to count them, but he did not finish; wrath struck Israel on account of this, and the census was not entered into the account of the chronicles of King David.

²⁵ Over the royal treasuries: Azmaveth son of Adiel. Over the treasuries in the country—in the towns, the hamlets, and the citadels: Jonathan son of Uzziah.²⁶ Over the field laborers in agricultural work: Ezri son of Chelub.²⁷ Over the vineyards: Shimei the Ramathite. And over the produce in the vineyards for wine cellars: Zabdi the Shiphmite.²⁸ Over the olive trees and the sycamores in the Shephelah: Baal-hanan the Gederite. Over the oil-stores: Joash.²⁹ Over the cattle pasturing in Sharon: Shirtai the Sharonite. And over the cattle in the valleys: Shaphat son of Adlai.³⁰ Over the camels: Obil the Ishmaelite. And over the jennies: Jehdeiah the Meronothite.³¹ Over the flocks: Jaziz the Hagrite. All these were stewards of the property of King David.³² Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counselor, a master, and a scribe: Jehiel son of Hachmoni was with the king's sons.³³ Ahitophel was a counselor to the king. Hushai the Archite was the king's friend.³⁴ After Ahitophel were Jehoiada son of Benaiah and Abiathar. The commander of the king's army was Joab.

28

David assembled all the officers of Israel—the tribal officers, the divisional officers who served the king, the captains of thousands and the captains of hundreds, and the stewards of all the property and cattle of the king and his sons, with the eunuchs and the warriors, all the men of substance—to Jerusalem.² King David rose to his feet and said, “Hear me, my brothers, my people! I wanted to build a resting-place for the Ark of the Covenant of GOD, for the footstool of our God, and I laid aside material for building.³ But God said to me, ‘You will not build a house for My name, for you are a man of battles and have shed blood.’⁴ The ETERNAL God of Israel chose me of all my father's house to be king over Israel forever. For [God] chose Judah

to be ruler, and of the family of Judah, my father's house; and of my father's sons, I was the preferred choice to be crowned king over all Israel;⁵ and of all my sons—for many are the sons GOD gave me—my son Solomon was chosen to sit on the throne of the kingdom of GOD over Israel.⁶ I was told, 'It will be your son Solomon who will build My House and My courts, for I have chosen him to be a son to Me, and I will be a father to him.'^a ⁷I will establish his kingdom forever, if he keeps firmly to the observance of My commandments and rules as he does now.⁸ And now, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of GOD, and in the hearing of our God, [I say:] Observe and apply yourselves to all the commandments of the ETERNAL your God in order that you may possess this good land and bequeath it to your children after you forever.

⁹"And you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and render service with single mind and fervent heart, for GOD searches all minds and discerns the design of every thought; if you reach out, [God] will be available to you, but if you stop trying, [God] will abandon you forever.¹⁰ See then, GOD chose you to build a house as the sanctuary; be strong and do it."

¹¹David gave his son Solomon the plan of the porch and its houses, its storerooms and its upper chambers and inner chambers; and of the place of the Ark-cover;¹² and the plan of all that he had by the spirit: of the courts of the House of GOD and all its surrounding chambers, and of the treasuries of the House of God and of the treasuries of the holy things;¹³ the divisions of priests and Levites for all the work of the service of the House of GOD and all the vessels of the service of the House of GOD;¹⁴ and gold, the weight of gold for vessels of every sort of use; silver for all the vessels of silver by weight, for all the vessels of every kind of service;¹⁵ the weight of the gold lampstands and their gold lamps, and the weight of the silver lampstands, each lampstand and its silver lamps, according to the use of every lampstand;¹⁶ and the weight of gold for the tables of the rows of bread, for each table, and of silver for the silver tables;¹⁷ and of the pure gold for the forks and the basins and the jars; and the weight of the gold bowls, every bowl; and the weight of the silver bowls, each and every bowl;¹⁸ the weight of refined gold for the incense altar and the gold for the figure of the chariot—the cherubim—those with outspread wings screening the Ark of

^a 28.6 *I will be a father to him* See note at 2 Sam. 7.14.

the Covenant of GOD.¹⁹“All this that GOD made me understand by God’s hand on me, I give you in writing—the plan of all the works.”

²⁰David said to his son Solomon, “Be strong and of good courage and do it; do not be afraid or dismayed, for my ETERNAL God is with you—and will not fail you or forsake you till all the work on the House of GOD is done.²¹Here are the divisions of the priests and Levites for all kinds of service of the House of God, and with you in all the work are others devoted to it, skilled in all sorts of tasks; also the officers and all the people are at your command.”

29 King David said to the entire assemblage, “God has chosen my son Solomon alone, an untried lad, although the work to be done is vast—for the temple^a is not for mortals but for the ETERNAL God.²I have spared no effort to lay up for the House of my God gold for golden objects, silver for silver, copper for copper, iron for iron, wood for wooden, onyx-stone and inlay-stone, stone of antimony and variegated colors—every kind of precious stone and much marble.³Besides, out of my solicitude for the House of my God, I gave over my private hoard of gold and silver to the House of my God—in addition to all that I laid aside for the holy House:⁴3,000 gold talents of Ophir gold, and 7,000 talents of refined silver for covering the walls of the houses⁵(gold for golden objects, silver for silver for all the work)—into the hands of artisans. Now who [among you] are going to make a freewill offering and devote themselves today to GOD?”

⁶The officers of the clans and the officers of the tribes of Israel and the captains of thousands and hundreds and the supervisors of the king’s work made freewill offerings,⁷giving for the work of the House of God: 5,000 talents of gold, 10,000 darics, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of copper, 100,000 talents of iron.⁸Whoever had stones in his possession gave them to the treasury of the House of GOD in the charge of Jehiel the Gershonite.⁹The people rejoiced over the freewill offerings they made, for with a whole heart they made freewill offerings to GOD; King David also rejoiced very much.

¹⁰David blessed GOD in front of all the assemblage; David said, “Blessed are You, ETERNAL One, God of Israel our father, from eternity to eternity.¹¹Yours, ETERNAL One, are greatness, might, splendor,

^a 29.1 *temple* Lit. “fortress.”

triumph, and majesty—yes, all that is in heaven and on earth; to You, ETERNAL One, belong kingship and preeminence above all.¹²Riches and honor are Yours to dispense; You have dominion over all; with You are strength and might, and it is in Your power to make anyone great and strong.¹³Now, God, we praise You and extol Your glorious name.¹⁴Who am I and who are my people, that we should have the means to make such a freewill offering; but all is from You, and it is Your gift that we have given to You.¹⁵For we are sojourners with You, mere transients like our ancestors; our days on earth are like a shadow, with nothing in prospect.¹⁶O ETERNAL One our God, all this great mass that we have laid aside to build You a House for Your holy name is from You, and it is all Yours.¹⁷I know, God, that You search the heart and desire uprightness; I, with upright heart, freely offered all these things; now Your people, who are present here—I saw them joyously making freewill offerings.¹⁸O ETERNAL One God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, remember this to the eternal credit of the thoughts of Your people's hearts, and make their hearts constant toward You.¹⁹As to my son Solomon, give him a whole heart to observe Your commandments, Your admonitions, and Your laws, and to fulfill them all, and to build this temple^b for which I have made provision."

²⁰David said to the whole assemblage, "Now bless the ETERNAL your God." All the assemblage blessed the ETERNAL God of their ancestors, and bowed their heads low to GOD and the king.²¹They offered sacrifices to GOD and made burnt offerings to GOD on the morrow of that day: 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams, 1,000 lambs, with their libations; [they made] sacrifices in great number for all Israel,²²and they ate and drank in GOD's presence on that day with great joy. They again proclaimed Solomon son of David king, and they anointed him as ruler before GOD, and Zadok as high priest.²³Solomon successfully took over the throne of GOD as king instead of his father David, and all went well with him. All Israel accepted him;²⁴all the officials and the warriors, and the sons of King David as well, gave their hand in support of King Solomon.²⁵GOD made Solomon exceedingly great in the eyes of all Israel, and endowed him with a regal majesty that no king of Israel before him ever had.

^b 29.19 *temple* Lit. "fortress."

²⁶Thus David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel; ²⁷the length of his reign over Israel was forty years: he reigned seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ²⁸He died at a ripe old age, having enjoyed long life, riches and honor, and his son Solomon reigned in his stead. ²⁹The acts of King David, early and late, are recorded in the history of Samuel the seer, the history of Nathan the prophet, and the history of Gad the seer, ³⁰together with all the mighty deeds of his kingship and the events that befell him and Israel and all the kingdoms of the earth.

דְּבָרִי הַיּוֹם ב' | DIVREI HA-YAMIM BET
2 CHRONICLES

TSolomon son of David took firm hold of his kingdom, for the ETERNAL his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.² Solomon summoned all Israel—the officers of thousands and of hundreds, and the judges, and all the chiefs of all Israel, the heads of the clans.^{3a} Then Solomon, and all the assemblage with him, went to the shrine at Gibeon, for the Tent of Meeting, which Moses the servant of GOD had made in the wilderness, was there.⁴ (But the Ark of God David had brought up from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.)⁵ The bronze altar, which Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur had made, was also there before the Tabernacle of GOD, and Solomon and the assemblage resorted to it.⁶ There Solomon ascended the bronze altar before GOD, which was at the Tent of Meeting, and on it sacrificed a thousand burnt offerings.

⁷ That night, God appeared to^b Solomon and said to him, “Ask, what shall I grant you?”⁸ Solomon said to God, “You dealt most graciously with my father David, and now You have made me king in his stead.⁹ Now, O ETERNAL God, let Your promise to my father David be fulfilled; for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth.¹⁰ Grant me then the wisdom and the knowledge to lead this people,^c for who can govern Your great people?”¹¹ God said to Solomon, “Because you want this, and have not asked for wealth, property, and glory, nor have you asked for the life of your enemy, or long life for yourself, but you have asked for the wisdom and the knowledge to be able to govern My people over whom I have made you king,¹² wisdom and knowledge are granted to you, and I grant you also wealth, property, and glory, the like of which no king before you has had, nor shall any after you have.”¹³ From the shrine at Gibeon, from the Tent of Meeting, Solomon went to Jerusalem and reigned over Israel.

^{14d} Solomon assembled chariots and horses; he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses that he stationed in the chariot towns and with the

^a 1.3–13 Cf. 1 Kings 3.4–15.

^b 1.7 *appeared to* Or “made contact with.”

^c 1.10 *to lead this people* Lit. “that I may go out before this people and come in.”

^d 1.14–17 Cf. 1 Kings 10.26–29.

king in Jerusalem.¹⁵ The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as the sycamores in the Shephelah.¹⁶ Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Que; the king's traders would buy them from Que at the market price.¹⁷ A chariot imported from Egypt cost 600 shekels of silver, and a horse^{150.} These in turn were exported by them^e to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Arameans.

¹⁸Then Solomon resolved to build a House for GOD's name and a royal palace for himself.

2 "Solomon mustered 70,000 basket carriers and 80,000 quarriers in the hills, with 3,600 supervisors.² Solomon sent this message to King Huram of Tyre, "In view of what you did for my father David in sending him cedars to build a palace for his residence—³see, I intend to build a House for the name of the ETERNAL my God, to whom I will dedicate it and in whose honor I will make incense offering of sweet spices, regular rows of bread, and the morning and evening burnt offerings on sabbaths, new moons, and festivals, as is Israel's eternal duty.⁴ The House that I intend to build will be great, since our God is greater than all gods.⁵ Who indeed is capable of building such a House! Even the heavens to their uttermost reaches cannot contain [God], and who am I that I should build such a House—except as a place for making burnt offerings?⁶ Now send me someone skillful to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue yarn, and who knows how to engrave, alongside the skilled workers I have here in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom my father David provided.⁷ Send me cedars, cypress, and *al gum* wood from the Lebanon, for I know that your servants are skilled at cutting the trees of Lebanon. My servants will work with yours⁸ to provide me with a great stock of timber; for the House that I intend to build will be singularly great.⁹ I have allocated for your servants, the wood-cutters who fell the trees, 20,000 *kors* of crushed wheat and 20,000 *kors* of barley, 20,000 *baths* of wine and 20,000 *baths* of oil."

¹⁰Huram, king of Tyre, sent Solomon this written message in reply, "Because GOD loved the people of Israel,^b you were made king over them."

^e 1.17 *them* That is, Solomon's dealers.

^a 2.1-17 Cf. 1 Kings 5.15-30.

^b 2.10 *the people of Israel* Lit. "His people."

¹¹Hiram continued, “Blessed is the ETERNAL, God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth, who gave King David a wise son, endowed with intelligence and understanding, to build a House for the ETERNAL and a royal palace for himself. ¹²Now I am sending you someone skillful and intelligent, my master^c Huram, ¹³the son of a Danite woman, his father a Tyrian. He is skilled at working in gold, silver, bronze, iron, precious stones, and wood; in purple, blue, and crimson yarn and in fine linen; and at engraving and designing whatever will be required of him, alongside your skilled workers and those of my lord, your father David. ¹⁴As to the wheat, barley, oil, and wine that my lord mentioned, let him send them to his servants. ¹⁵We undertake to cut down as many trees of Lebanon as you need, and deliver them to you as rafts by sea to Jaffa; you will transport them to Jerusalem.”

¹⁶Solomon took a census of all the resident aliens in the land of Israel, besides the census taken by his father David, and they were found to be 153,600. ¹⁷He made 70,000 of them basket carriers, and 80,000 of them quarriers, with 3,600 supervisors to see that the people worked.

3 ^aThen Solomon began to build the House of GOD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where [GOD] had appeared to^b his father David, at the place that David had designated, at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ²He began to build on the second day of the second month of the fourth year of his reign. ³These were the dimensions Solomon established for building the House of God: its length in cubits, by the former measure, was 60, and its breadth was 20. ⁴The length of the porch in front [was equal] to the breadth of the House—20 cubits, and its height was 120. Inside he overlaid it with pure gold. ⁵The House itself he paneled with cypress wood. He overlaid it with fine gold and embossed on it palms and chains. ⁶He studded the House with precious stones for decoration; the gold was from Parvaim. ⁷He overlaid the House with gold—the beams, the thresholds, its walls and doors; he carved cherubim on the walls. ⁸He made the Holy of Holies: its length was [equal to] the breadth of the house—20 cubits, and its breadth was 20 cubits. He overlaid it with 600 talents

^c 2.12 *master* Lit. “father.”

^a 3.1–17 Cf. 1 Kings 6; 7.1–22.

^b 3.1 *appeared to* Or “communicated with,” via the prophet Gad; see 1 Chron. 21.18.

of fine gold. ⁹The weight of the nails was 50 shekels of gold; the upper chambers he overlaid with gold. ¹⁰He made two sculptured cherubim in the Holy of Holies, and they were overlaid with gold. ¹¹The outspread wings of the cherubim were 20 cubits across: one wing 5 cubits long touching one wall of the House, and the other wing 5 cubits long touching the wing of the other cherub; ¹²one wing of the other [cherub] 5 cubits long extending to the other wall of the House, and its other wing 5 cubits long touching the wing of the first cherub. ¹³The wingspread of these cherubim was thus 20 cubits across, and they were standing up facing the House. ¹⁴He made the curtain of blue, purple, and crimson yarn and fine linen, and he worked cherubim into it. ¹⁵At the front of the House he made two columns 35 cubits high; the capitals^c on top of them were 5 cubits high. ¹⁶He made chain-work in the inner Sanctuary and set it on the top of the columns; he made a hundred pomegranates and set them into the chainwork. ¹⁷He erected the columns in front of the Great Hall, one to its right and one to its left; the one to the right was called Jachin, and the one to the left, Boaz.

4 ^aHe made an altar of bronze 20 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 10 cubits high.

²He made the sea^b of cast metal 10 cubits across from brim to brim, perfectly round; it was 5 cubits high, and its circumference was 30 cubits. ³Beneath were figures of oxen set all around it, of 10 cubits, encircling the sea; the oxen were in two rows, cast in one piece with it. ⁴It stood upon twelve oxen: three faced north, three faced west, three faced south, and three faced east, with the sea resting upon them; their haunches were all turned inward. ⁵It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like that of a cup, like the petals of a lily. It held 3,000 baths.

⁶He made ten bronze lavers for washing; he set five on the right and five on the left; they would rinse off in them the parts of the burnt offering; but the sea served the priests for washing. ⁷He made ten lampstands of gold as prescribed, and placed them in the Great Hall, five on the right and five on the left. ⁸He made ten tables and placed them in the Great Hall, five on the right and five on the left. He made

^c 3.15 *capitals* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 4.1-22 Cf. 1 Kings 7.23-50.

^b 4.2 *the sea* I.e., a large basin.

one hundred gold basins.⁹ He built the court of the priests and the great court, and doors for the great court; he overlaid the doors with bronze.¹⁰ He set the sea on the right side, at the southeast corner.

¹¹ Huram made the pails, the shovels, and the basins. With that Huram completed the work he had undertaken for King Solomon in the House of God:¹² the two columns, the globes, and the two capitals on top of the columns; and the two pieces of network to cover the two globes of the capitals on top of the columns;¹³ the four hundred pomegranates for the two pieces of network, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two globes of the capitals on top of the columns;¹⁴ he made the stands and the lavers upon the stands;¹⁵ one sea with the twelve oxen beneath it;¹⁶ the pails, the shovels, and the bowls.^c And all the vessels made for King Solomon for the House of GOD by Huram his master were of burnished bronze.¹⁷ The king had them cast in molds dug out of the earth, in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zeredah.¹⁸ Solomon made a very large number of vessels; the weight of the bronze used could not be reckoned.¹⁹ And Solomon made all the furnishings that were in the House of God: the altar of gold; the tables for the bread of display;²⁰ the lampstands and their lamps, to burn as prescribed in front of the inner Sanctuary, of solid gold;²¹ and the petals, lamps, and tongs, of purest gold;²² the snuffers, basins, ladles, and fire pans, of solid gold; and the entrance to the House: the doors of the innermost part of the House, the Holy of Holies, and the doors of the Great Hall of the House, of gold.

5 ^aWhen all the work that King Solomon undertook for the House of GOD was completed, Solomon brought the things that his father David had consecrated—the silver, the gold, and the utensils—and deposited them in the treasury of the House of God.

² Then Solomon convoked the elders of Israel—all the heads of the tribes and the ancestral chiefs of the Israelites—in Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of GOD from the City of David, that is, Zion.

³ Israel's entire delegation assembled before the king at the Feast [of Booths], in the seventh month. ⁴ When all the elders of Israel had come, the Levites carried the Ark. ⁵ They brought up the Ark and the

^c 4.16 *bowl* Or “forks.”

^a 5.1–14 Cf. 1 Kings 7.51–8.11.

Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent—the Levite priests brought them up.⁶ Meanwhile, King Solomon and the whole community of Israel, who had gathered to him before the Ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen in such abundance that they could not be numbered or counted.

⁷The priests brought the Ark of GOD's Covenant to its place in the inner Sanctuary of the House, in the Holy of Holies, beneath the wings of the cherubim;⁸ for the cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the Ark so that the cherubim covered the Ark and its poles from above.⁹ The poles projected beyond the Ark and the ends of the poles were visible from the front of the inner Sanctuary, but they could not be seen from the outside; and there they remain to this day.¹⁰ There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets that Moses placed [there] at Horeb, when GOD made [a Covenant] with the Israelites after their departure from Egypt.¹¹ When the priests came out of the Sanctuary—all the priests present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to the set divisions—¹²all the Levite singers, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, their sons and their brothers, dressed in fine linen, holding cymbals, harps, and lyres, were standing to the east of the altar, and with them were 120 priests who blew trumpets.¹³ The trumpeters and the singers joined in unison to praise and extol GOD; and as the sound of the trumpets, cymbals, and other musical instruments, and the praise of GOD, “who is good—and whose steadfast love is eternal,” grew louder, the House, the House of GOD, was filled with a cloud.¹⁴ The priests could not stay and perform the service because of the cloud, for the glory of the ETERNAL filled the House of God.

6 ^aThen Solomon declared:

“GOD has chosen
To abide in a thick cloud;
²I have built for You
A stately House,
And a place where You
May dwell forever.”

³Then, as the whole congregation of Israel stood, the king turned and blessed the whole congregation of Israel.⁴ He said, “Blessed is the ETERNAL God of Israel, who made a promise to my father David and

^a 6.1–42 Cf. 1 Kings 8.12–53.

fulfilled it^b—after having said, ⁵‘From the time I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I never chose a city from among all the tribes of Israel to build a House where My name might abide; nor did I choose anyone to be the leader of My people Israel. ⁶But then I chose Jerusalem for My name to abide there, and I chose David to rule My people Israel.’

⁷“Now my father David had wanted to build a House for the name of the ETERNAL God of Israel. ⁸But GOD said to my father David, ‘As for your wanting to build a House for My name, you do well to want that. ⁹However, you shall not build the House; your son, the issue of your loins, he shall build the House for My name.’ ¹⁰Now GOD has fulfilled the promise that was made. I have succeeded^c my father David and have ascended the throne of Israel, as GOD promised. I have built the House for the name of the ETERNAL God of Israel, ¹¹and there I have set the Ark containing the Covenant that GOD made with the Israelites.”

¹²Then, standing before the altar of GOD in front of the whole congregation of Israel, he spread forth his hands. ¹³Solomon had made a bronze platform^d and placed it in the midst of the Great Court; it was 5 cubits long and 5 cubits wide and 3 cubits high. He stood on it; then, kneeling in front of the whole congregation of Israel, he spread forth his hands to heaven ¹⁴and said, “O ETERNAL God of Israel, there is no god like You in the heavens and on the earth, You who steadfastly maintain the Covenant with Your servants who walk before You with all their heart; ¹⁵You who have kept the promises You made to Your servant, my father David; You made a promise and have fulfilled it—as is now the case. ¹⁶And now, O ETERNAL God of Israel, keep that promise that You made to Your servant, my father David, ‘You shall never lack a descendant^e in My sight sitting on the throne of Israel if only your children will look to their way and walk in the [path] of My teachings as you have walked before Me.’ ¹⁷Now, therefore, O God of Israel, let the promise that You made to Your servant, my father David, be confirmed.

¹⁸“Does God really dwell with mortals on earth? Even the heavens

^b 6.4 *who made a promise to my father David and fulfilled it* Lit. “who spoke with His own mouth a promise to my father David and has fulfilled with His own hands.”

^c 6.10 *succeeded* Lit. “risen in place of.”

^d 6.13 *platform* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^e 6.16 *You shall never lack a descendant* See note at 1 Kings 2.4.

to their uttermost reaches cannot contain You; how much less this House that I have built! ¹⁹Yet turn, O ETERNAL One my God, to the prayer and supplication of Your servant, and hear the cry and the prayer that Your servant offers to You. ²⁰May Your eyes be open day and night toward this House, toward the place where You have resolved to make Your name abide; may You heed the prayers that Your servant offers toward this place. ²¹And when You hear the supplications that Your servant and Your people Israel offer toward this place, give heed in Your heavenly abode—give heed and pardon.

²²“If one person commits an offense against another and is made to take an oath and utter a self-imprecation^f and, with that imprecation, comes before Your altar in this House, ²³may You hear in heaven and take action to judge Your servants, requiting the one who is in the wrong by bringing down the punishment of their conduct on their head—while vindicating the other, who is in the right, by rewarding them according to their righteousness.

²⁴“Should Your people Israel be defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against You, and then once again acknowledge Your name and offer prayer and supplication to You in this House, ²⁵may You hear in heaven and pardon the sin of Your people Israel, and restore them to the land that You gave to them and to their ancestors.

²⁶“Should the heavens be shut up and there be no rain because they have sinned against You, and then they pray toward this place and acknowledge Your name and repent of their sins, because You humbled them, ²⁷may You hear in heaven and pardon the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, when You have shown them the proper way in which they are to walk, and send down rain upon the land that You gave to Your people as their heritage. ²⁸So, too, if there is a famine in the land, if there is pestilence, blight, mildew, locusts, or caterpillars, or if an enemy oppresses them in any of the settlements of their land.

“In any plague and in any disease, ²⁹any prayer or supplication offered by any person among all Your people Israel—each of whom knows their own affliction and pain—when they spread forth their hands toward this House, ³⁰may You hear in Your heavenly abode, and pardon. Deal with that individual according to their ways, as You know their heart to be—for You alone know every human heart.

^f **6.22 and is made to take an oath and utter a self-imprecation** Or “and the latter utters an imprecation to bring a curse upon the former.”

³¹Thus may Your people^g revere You all the days that they live on the land that You gave to our ancestors.

³²"Or if a foreigner who is not of Your people Israel comes from a distant land for the sake of Your great name, Your mighty hand, and Your outstretched arm—and if this person comes to pray toward this House, ³³may You hear in Your heavenly abode and grant whatever the foreigner appeals to You for. Thus all the peoples of the earth will know Your name and revere You, as does Your people Israel; and they will recognize that Your name is attached to this House that I have built.

³⁴"When Your people take the field against their enemies in a campaign on which You send them, and they pray to You in the direction of the city that You have chosen and the House that I have built to Your name, ³⁵may You hear in heaven their prayer and supplication and uphold their cause.

³⁶"When they sin against You—for there is no mortal who does not sin—and You are angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and their captors carry them off to an enemy land, near or far; ³⁷and they take it to heart in the land to which they have been carried off, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, 'We have sinned, we have acted perversely, we have acted wickedly,' ³⁸and they turn back to You with all their heart and soul, in the land of their captivity where they were carried off, and pray in the direction of their land that You gave to their ancestors and the city that You have chosen, and toward the House that I have built for Your name—³⁹may You hear their prayer and supplication in Your heavenly abode, uphold their cause, and pardon Your people who have sinned against You. ⁴⁰Now My God, may Your eyes be open and Your ears attentive to prayer from this place, and now,

⁴¹Advance, O ETERNAL God, to your resting-place,
You and Your mighty Ark.

Your priests, O ETERNAL God, are clothed in triumph;
Your loyal ones will rejoice in [Your] goodness.

⁴²O ETERNAL God,
do not reject Your anointed one;
remember the loyalty of Your servant David."

^g 6.31 *Your people* Heb. "they."

7 ^aWhen Solomon finished praying, fire descended from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of GOD filled the House. ²The priests could not enter the House of GOD, for GOD's glory filled the House of GOD. ³All the Israelites witnessed the descent of the fire and GOD's glory on the House; they knelt with their faces to the ground and prostrated themselves, praising GOD, "who is good—and whose steadfast love is eternal."

⁴Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before GOD. ⁵King Solomon offered as sacrifices 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep; thus the king and all the people dedicated the House of God. ⁶The priests stood at their watches; the Levites with the instruments for GOD's music that King David had made to praise GOD, "whose steadfast love is eternal," by means of the psalms of David that they knew. The priests opposite them blew trumpets while all Israel were standing.

⁷Solomon consecrated the center of the court in front of the House of GOD, because he presented there the burnt offerings and the fat parts of the offerings of well-being, since the bronze altar that Solomon had made was not able to hold the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat parts. ⁸At that time Solomon kept the Feast for seven days—all Israel with him—a great assemblage from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt.

⁹On the eighth day they held a solemn gathering; they observed the dedication of the altar seven days, and the Feast seven days. ¹⁰On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he dismissed the people to their homes, rejoicing and in good spirits over the goodness that GOD had shown to David and Solomon and the people Israel.

¹¹Thus Solomon finished building the House of GOD and the royal palace; Solomon succeeded in everything he had set his heart on accomplishing with regard to the House of GOD and his palace. ¹²GOD appeared to^b Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this site as My House of sacrifice. ¹³If I shut up the heavens and there is no rain; if I command the locusts to ravage the land; or if I let loose pestilence against My people, ¹⁴when My people, who bear My name, humble themselves, pray, and seek My favor and turn from their evil ways, I will hear in My heavenly abode and forgive their sins and heal their land. ¹⁵Now My eyes will

^a7:1–22 Cf. 1 Kings 8:54–9:9.

^b7:12 *appeared to* Or "made contact with."

be open and My ears attentive to the prayers from this place.¹⁶ And now I have chosen and consecrated this House that My name be there forever. My eyes and My heart shall always be there.¹⁷ As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked before Me, doing all that I have commanded you, keeping My laws and rules,¹⁸ then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, in accordance with the Covenant I made with your father David, saying, ‘You shall never lack a descendant^c ruling over Israel.’¹⁹ But if you turn away from Me and forsake My laws and commandments that I set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,²⁰ then I will uproot Israel^d from My land that I gave them, and this House that I consecrated to My name I shall cast out of my sight, and make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.²¹ And as for this House, once so exalted, everyone passing by it shall be appalled and say, ‘Why did GOD do thus to this land and to this House?’²² And the reply will be, ‘It is because they forsook the ETERNAL God of their ancestors who freed them from the land of Egypt, and adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore all this calamity was brought upon them.’”

8 “At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon constructed the House of GOD and his palace—²Solomon also rebuilt the cities that Huram had given to him,^b and settled Israelites in them—³Solomon marched against Hamath-zobah and overpowered it.⁴ He built Tadmor in the desert and all the garrison towns that he built in Hamath.⁵ He built Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon as fortified cities with walls, gates, and bars,⁶ as well as Baalath and all of Solomon’s garrison towns, chariot towns, and towns for his riders^c—everything that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem and in the Lebanon, and throughout the territory that he ruled.⁷ All the people that were left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, none of whom were of Israelite stock—⁸those of their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the Israelites had not annihilated—these Solomon subjected to forced labor, as is still the case.⁹ But the Israelites, none of whom Solomon enslaved for his works, served as

^c 7.18 *You shall never lack a descendant* See note at 1 Kings 2.4.

^d 7.20 *Israel* Heb. “them”; cf. 1 Kings 9.7.

^a 8.1–18 Cf. 1 Kings 9.10–28.

^b 8.2 *him* Heb. “Solomon.”

^c 8.6 *riders* Or “horses”; force of Heb. *parash(im)* uncertain.

soldiers and as his chief officers, and as commanders of his chariots and riders.¹⁰ These were King Solomon's prefects—250 supervisors over the people.¹¹ Solomon brought up Pharaoh's daughter from the City of David to the palace that he had built for her, for he said, "No wife of mine shall dwell in a palace of King David of Israel, for [the area] is sacred since the Ark of GOD has entered it."

¹² At that time, Solomon offered burnt offerings on the altar that he had built in front of the porch.¹³ What was due for each day he sacrificed according to the commandment of Moses for the sabbaths, the new moons, and the thrice-yearly festivals—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths.¹⁴ Following the prescription of his father David, he set up the divisions of the priests for their duties, and the Levites for their watches, to praise and to serve alongside the priests, according to each day's requirement, and the gatekeepers in their watches, gate by gate, for such was the commandment of David, the agent of God.¹⁵ They did not depart from the commandment of the king relating to the priests and the Levites in all these matters and also relating to the treasuries.¹⁶ And all of Solomon's work was well executed from the day the House of GOD was founded until the House of GOD was completed to perfection.

¹⁷ At that time Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Eloth on the seacoast of the land of Edom.¹⁸ Huram sent him, under the charge of servants, a fleet with a crew of expert seamen; they went with Solomon's men to Ophir, and obtained gold there in the amount of 450 talents, which they brought to King Solomon.

9

^aThe queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, and came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, accompanied by a very large retinue, including camels bearing spices, a great quantity of gold, and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke to him of all that she had on her mind.² Solomon had answers for all her questions; there was nothing that Solomon did not know, nothing to which he could not give her an answer.

³When the queen of Sheba saw how wise Solomon was and the palace he had built,⁴ the fare of his table, the seating of his courtiers, the service and attire of his attendants, his butlers and their attire, and the procession with which he went up to the House of GOD, it took

^a9.1–31 Cf. 1 Kings 10; 11.41–43.

her breath away.⁵ She said to the king, “What I heard in my own land about you and your wisdom was true. ⁶I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes that not even the half of your great wisdom had been described to me; you surpass the report that I heard. ⁷How fortunate are your people and how fortunate are these courtiers of yours who are always in attendance on you and can hear your wisdom! ⁸Blessed is the ETERNAL your God, who favored you and set you on the throne as a king before the ETERNAL. It is because of your God’s love for Israel and in order to establish them forever that you were made king over them to execute righteous justice.”

⁹She presented the king with 120 talents of gold, and a vast quantity of spices and precious stones. There were no such spices as those that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon—¹⁰also, the servants of Huram and Solomon who brought gold from Ophir brought *al-gum*-wood and precious stones.¹¹ The king made of the *al-gum*-wood ramps for the House of GOD and for the royal palace, and lyres and harps for the musicians, whose like had never before been seen in the land of Judah—¹²King Solomon, in turn, gave the queen of Sheba everything she expressed a desire for, exceeding a return for what she had brought to the king. Then she and her courtiers left and returned to her own land.

¹³The gold that Solomon received every year weighed 666 gold talents,¹⁴besides what traders^b and merchants brought, and the gold and silver that all the kings of Arabia and governors of the regions brought to Solomon. ¹⁵King Solomon made 200 shields of beaten gold—600 shekels of beaten gold for each shield,¹⁶and 300 bucklers of beaten gold—300 [shekels] of gold for each buckler. The king placed them in the Lebanon Forest House. ¹⁷The king also made a large throne of ivory, overlaid with pure gold. ¹⁸Six steps led up to the throne; and the throne had a golden footstool attached to it, and arms on either side of the seat. Two lions stood beside the arms,¹⁹and twelve lions stood on the six steps, six on either side. None such was ever made for any other kingdom. ²⁰All of King Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the utensils of the Lebanon Forest House were of pure gold; silver counted for nothing in Solomon’s days. ²¹The king’s fleet traveled to Tarshish with Huram’s servants. Once every three years, the Tarshish fleet came in, bearing gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

^b 9.14 *traders* Or “traders’ agents.”

²²King Solomon surpassed all the royal rulers of the earth in wealth and wisdom. ²³Every one of them came to pay homage to Solomon and to listen to the wisdom with which God had endowed him. ²⁴Each brought tribute—silver and gold objects, robes, weapons, and spices, horses and mules—in the amount due each year. ²⁵Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 riders, which he stationed in the chariot towns and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁶He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. ²⁷The king made silver as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the Shephelah. ²⁸Horses were brought for Solomon from Egypt and all the lands. ²⁹The other events of Solomon's reign, early and late, are recorded in the chronicle of the prophet Nathan and in the prophecies of Ahijah the Shilonite and in the visions of Jedo the seer concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat. ³⁰Solomon reigned forty years over all Israel in Jerusalem. ³¹Solomon rested with his ancestors and was buried in the city of his father David; his son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

10

^aRehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to acclaim him king. ²Jeroboam son of Nebat learned of it while he was in Egypt where he had fled from King Solomon, and Jeroboam returned from Egypt. ³They sent for him; and Jeroboam and all Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam as follows: ⁴"Your father made our yoke heavy. Now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke that your father laid on us, and we will serve you." ⁵He answered them, "Come back to me in three days." So the people went away.

⁶King Rehoboam took counsel with the elders who had served during the lifetime of his father Solomon. He said, "What answer do you counsel to give these people?" ⁷They answered him, "If you will be good to these people and appease them and speak to them with kind words, they will be your servants always." ⁸But he ignored the counsel that the elders gave him, and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. ⁹"What," he asked, "do you counsel that we reply to these people who said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father laid on us'?" ¹⁰And the young men who had grown up with him answered, "Speak thus to the people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for

^a 10.1–19 Cf. 1 Kings 12.1–19.

us.' Say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins.¹¹ My father imposed a heavy yoke on you, and I will add to your yoke; my father flogged you with whips, but I [will do so] with scorpions.'

¹²Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, since the king had told them, "Come back on the third day."¹³The king answered them harshly; thus King Rehoboam ignored the elders' counsel.¹⁴He spoke to them in accordance with the counsel of the young men, and said, "I will make^b your yoke heavy, and I will add to it; my father flogged you with whips, but I [will do so] with scorpions."¹⁵The king did not listen to the people, for God had brought it about—in order to fulfill the promise that GOD had made through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.¹⁶When all Israel [saw] that the king had not listened to them, the people answered the king:

"We have no portion in David,
No share in Jesse's son!
Everyone to your tents, O Israel!
Now look to your own house, O David."

So all Israel returned to their homes.^c¹⁷But Rehoboam continued to reign over the Israelites who lived in the towns of Judah.¹⁸King Rehoboam sent out Hadoram, who was in charge of the forced labor, but the Israelites pelted him to death with stones. Thereupon, King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot and fled to Jerusalem.¹⁹Israel has been in revolt against the house of David to this day.

11

^aWhen Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he mustered the house of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 of the best soldiers, to make war with Israel in order to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.²But the word of GOD came to Shemaiah, the agent of God:³"Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin:⁴Thus said GOD: You shall not set out to make war on your kin. Return to your homes, for this thing has been brought about by Me." They heeded GOD's words and refrained from marching against Jeroboam.⁵Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem and built fortified towns in Judah.⁶He built up Bethlehem, and Etam, and Tekoa,⁷and Beth-zur, and Soco, and Adullam,⁸and Gath, and Mareshah, and Ziph,⁹and

^b 10.14 *I will make* Some mss. and printed editions read "my father made"; cf. 1 Kings 12.14.

^c 10.16 *homes* Lit. "tents."

^a 11.1–4 Cf. 1 Kings 12.21–24.

Adoraim, and Lachish, and Azekah,¹⁰ and Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and in Benjamin, as fortified towns.¹¹ He strengthened the fortified towns and put commanders in them, along with stores of food, oil, and wine,¹² and shields and spears in every town. He strengthened them exceedingly; thus Judah and Benjamin were his.

¹³The priests and the Levites, from all their territories throughout Israel, presented themselves to him.¹⁴ The Levites had left their pasturelands and their holdings and had set out for Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had prevented them from serving GOD,¹⁵ having appointed his own priests for the shrines, goat-demons, and calves that he had made.¹⁶ From all the tribes of Israel, those intent on seeking the ETERNAL God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the ETERNAL God of their ancestors.¹⁷ They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and supported Rehoboam son of Solomon for three years, for they followed the ways of David and Solomon for three years.

¹⁸Rehoboam married Mahalath daughter of Jerimoth son of David, and Abihail daughter of Eliab son of Jesse.¹⁹ She bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.²⁰ He then took Maacah daughter of Absalom; she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith.²¹ Rehoboam loved Maacah daughter of Absalom more than his other wives and concubines—for he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines; he begot twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters.²² Rehoboam designated Abijah son of Maacah as chief and leader among his brothers, for he intended him to be his successor.²³ He prudently distributed all his sons throughout the regions of Judah and Benjamin and throughout the fortified towns; he provided them with abundant food, and he sought many wives for them.

12 When the kingship of Rehoboam was firmly established, and he grew strong, he abandoned the Teaching of GOD, he and all Israel with him.

²In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem—for they had trespassed against GOD—³with 1,200 chariots, 60,000 riders^a and innumerable troops who came with him from Egypt: Libyans, Sukkites, and Cushites.⁴ He took the fortified towns of Judah and advanced on Jerusalem.⁵ The prophet Shemaiah

^a12.3 *riders* Or “horses”; see note at 8.6.

came to Rehoboam and the officers of Judah, who had assembled in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, “Thus said GOD: You have abandoned Me, so I am abandoning you to Shishak.” ⁶Then the officers of Israel and the king humbled themselves and declared, “GOD is in the right.” ⁷When GOD saw that they had submitted, the word of GOD came to Shemaiah, saying, “Since they have humbled themselves, I will not destroy them but will grant them some measure of deliverance, and My wrath will not be poured out on Jerusalem through Shishak. ⁸They will be subject to him, and they will know the difference between serving Me and serving the kingdoms of the earth.” King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem. ^{9^b}He took away the treasures of the House of GOD and the treasures of the royal palace; he took away everything; he took away the golden shields that Solomon had made. ¹⁰King Rehoboam had bronze shields made in their place, and entrusted them to the officers of the guard^c who guarded the entrance to the royal palace. ¹¹Whenever the king entered the House of GOD, the guards would carry them and then bring them back to the armory of the guards. ¹²After he had humbled himself, the anger of GOD was averted and he was not destroyed entirely; in Judah, too, good things were found.

¹³King Rehoboam grew strong in Jerusalem and exercised kingship. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem—the city GOD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to establish a temple^d there. His mother’s name was Naamah the Ammonitess. ¹⁴He did what was wrong, for he had not set his heart to seek GOD. ¹⁵The deeds of Rehoboam, early and late, are recorded in the chronicles of the prophet Shemaiah and Iddo the seer, in the manner of genealogy. There was continuous war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ¹⁶Rehoboam rested with his ancestors and was buried in the City of David. His son Abijah succeeded him as king.

13 In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah. ²He reigned three years in Jerusalem; his mother’s name was Micaiah daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. ³Abijah joined battle with a force of warriors, 400,000

^b 12.9–16 Cf. 1 Kings 14.26–31.

^c 12.10 *guard* Lit. “runners.”

^d 12.13 *a temple* Lit. “His name,” i.e., the temple bearing GOD’s name.

of the best troops. Jeroboam arrayed for battle against him 800,000 of the best troops, warriors.⁴ Abijah stood on top of Mount Zemaraim in the hill country of Ephraim and said, “Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel.⁵ Surely you know that the ETERNAL God of Israel gave David kingship over Israel forever—to him and his sons—by a covenant of salt.⁶ Jeroboam son of Nebat had been in the service of Solomon son of David, but he rose up and rebelled against his master.⁷ Riffraff and scoundrels gathered around him and pressed hard upon Rehoboam son of Solomon. Rehoboam was inexperienced and fainthearted and could not stand up to them.⁸ Now you are bent on opposing God’s kingdom, which is in the charge of the sons of David, because you are a great multitude and possess the golden calves that Jeroboam made for you as gods.⁹ Did you not banish God’s priests, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and, like the peoples of the land, appoint your own priests? Anyone who offered himself for ordination with a young bull of the herd and seven rams became a priest of no-gods!¹⁰ As for us, our God is the ETERNAL, whom we have not forsaken. The priests who minister to GOD are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites are at their tasks.¹¹ They offer burnt offerings in smoke each morning and each evening, and the aromatic incense, the rows of bread on the pure table; they kindle the golden lampstand with its lamps burning each evening, for we keep the charge of the ETERNAL our God, while you have forsaken it.¹² See who is with us as our chief: God, whose priests have the trumpets for sounding blasts against you. O children of Israel, do not fight the ETERNAL God of your ancestors, because you will not succeed.”¹³ Jeroboam, however, had directed the ambush to go around and come from the rear, thus the main body was^a in front of Judah, while the ambush was behind them.¹⁴ When Judah turned around and saw that the fighting was before and behind them, they cried out to GOD, and the priests blew the trumpets.¹⁵ Judah’s side raised a shout; and when Judah’s side raised a shout, God routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.¹⁶ The Israelites fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hands.¹⁷ Abijah and his army inflicted a severe defeat on them; 500,000 of Israel’s best troops fell slain.¹⁸ The Israelites were crushed at that time, while the people of Judah triumphed because they relied on the ETERNAL God of their ancestors.¹⁹ Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured some of

^a 13.13 *the main body was* Lit. “they were.”

his cities—Bethel with its dependencies, Jeshanah with its dependencies, and Ephrain with its dependencies.²⁰Jeroboam could not muster strength again during the days of Abijah. GOD struck him down and he died.²¹But Abijah grew powerful; he married fourteen wives and begat twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters.

²²The other events of Abijah's reign, his conduct and his acts, are recorded in the story of the prophet Iddo.²³Abijah rested with his ancestors and was buried in the City of David; his son Asa succeeded him as king. The land was untroubled for ten years.

14

Asa did what was good and pleasing to the ETERNAL his God.²He abolished the alien altars and shrines; he smashed the pillars and cut down the sacred posts.^a³He ordered Judah to turn to the ETERNAL God of their ancestors and to observe the Teaching and the Commandment.⁴He abolished the shrines and the incense stands throughout the cities of Judah, and the kingdom was untroubled under him.⁵He built fortified towns in Judah, since the land was untroubled and he was not engaged in warfare during those years, for GOD had granted him respite.⁶He said to Judah, “Let us build up these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars, while the land is at our disposal because we turned to the ETERNAL our God—after we did so, we were given respite on all sides.” They were successful in their building.

⁷Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Judah bearing shields and spears, and 280,000 from Benjamin bearing bucklers and drawing the bow; all these were valiant warriors.⁸Zerah the Cushite marched out against them with an army of a thousand thousand and 300 chariots. When he reached Mareshah⁹Asa confronted him, and the battle lines were drawn in the valley of Zephath by Mareshah.¹⁰Asa called to the ETERNAL his God, and said, “O ETERNAL One, it is all the same to You to help the numerous and the powerless. Help us, our ETERNAL God, for we rely on You, and in Your name we have come against this great multitude. You are the ETERNAL our God. Let no mortal hinder You.”¹¹So GOD routed the Cushites before Asa and Judah, and the Cushites fled.¹²Asa and the army with him pursued them as far as Gerar. Many of the Cushites fell wounded beyond recovery, for they broke before GOD's camp.^bVery much spoil was taken.¹³All the cities

^a14.2 *sacred posts* Used in worship of the goddess Asherah.

^b14.12 *before God's camp* Heb. “before GOD and before His camp.”

in the vicinity of Gerar were ravaged, for a terror of GOD seized them. All the cities were plundered, and they yielded much booty.¹⁴ They also ravaged the encampment of herders, capturing much sheep, and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

15 The spirit of God came upon Azariah son of Oded. ²He came to Asa and said to him, “Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin; GOD is with you as long as you act faithfully.^a If it is [God] whom you seek, you will be answered, but if you forsake [God], you will be forsaken. ³Israel has gone many days without the true God, without a priest to give instruction and without Teaching. ⁴But in distress it returned to the ETERNAL God of Israel, whom it sought—and who, in turn, responded. ⁵At those times, no wayfarer^b was safe, for there was much tumult among all the inhabitants of the lands. ⁶Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God threw them into panic with every kind of trouble. ⁷As for you, be strong, do not be disheartened, for there is reward for your labor.”

⁸When Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage and removed the abominations from the entire land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. He restored the altar of GOD in front of the porch of GOD. ⁹He assembled all the people of Judah and Benjamin and those people of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who sojourned among them, for many in Israel had thrown in their lot with him when they saw that the ETERNAL his God was with him. ¹⁰They were assembled in Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. ¹¹They brought sacrifices to GOD on that day; they brought 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep of the spoil. ¹²They entered into a covenant to worship the ETERNAL God of their ancestors with all their heart and with all their soul. ¹³Whoever would not worship the ETERNAL God of Israel would be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. ¹⁴So they took an oath to GOD in a loud voice and with shouts, with trumpeting and blasts of the horn. ¹⁵All Judah rejoiced over the oath, for they swore with all their heart and sought [God] with all their will. In response, they were given respite on every side.

¹⁶^c King Asa also deposed his mother Maacah from the rank of queen

^a 15.2 *act faithfully* Lit. “are with Him.”

^b 15.5 *wayfarer* Lit. “one who goes out and one who comes in.”

^c 15.16–19 Cf. 1 Kings 15.13–16.

mother, because she had made an abominable thing for [the goddess] Asherah. Asa cut down her abominable thing, reduced it to dust, and burned it in the Wadi Kidron.¹⁷ The shrines, indeed, were not abolished in Israel; however, Asa was wholehearted [with GOD] all his life.¹⁸ He brought into the House of God the things that he and his father had consecrated—silver, gold, and utensils.¹⁹ There was no war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

16 ^aIn the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, King Baasha of Israel marched against Judah and built up Ramah to block all movement^b on behalf of King Asa of Judah.² Asa took all the silver and gold from the treasuries of the House of GOD and the royal palace, and sent them to King Ben-hadad of Aram, who resided in Damascus, with this message:³ “There is a pact between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. I herewith send you silver and gold; go and break your pact with King Baasha of Israel so that he may withdraw from me.”⁴ Ben-hadad acceded to King Asa’s request; he sent his army officers against the towns of Israel and ravaged Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the garrison towns of Naphtali.⁵ When Baasha heard about it, he stopped building up Ramah and put an end to the work on it.⁶ Then King Asa mustered all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber with which Baasha had built up Ramah; with these King Asa built up Geba and Mizpah.

⁷ At that time, Hanani the seer came to King Asa of Judah and said to him, “Because you relied on the king of Aram and did not rely on the ETERNAL your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has slipped out of your hands.⁸ The Cushites and Libyans were a mighty army with chariots and riders^c in very great numbers, yet because you relied on GOD they were delivered into your hands.⁹ For GOD’s eyes range over the entire earth, to give support to those who are wholehearted. You have acted foolishly in this matter, and from now on you will be beset by wars.”¹⁰ Asa was vexed at the seer and put him into the stocks,^d for he was furious with him because of that. Asa inflicted cruelties on some of the people at that time.

¹¹The acts of Asa, early and late, are recorded in the annals of the

^a 16.1–14 Cf. 1 Kings 15.17–24.

^b 16.1 *all movement* Lit. “one who goes out and one who comes in.”

^c 16.8 *riders* Or “horses”; see note at 8.6.

^d 16.10 *stocks* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

kings of Judah and Israel.¹² In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa suffered from an acute foot ailment; but ill as he was, he still did not turn to GOD but to physicians.¹³ Asa rested with his ancestors. He died in the forty-first year of his reign¹⁴ and was buried in the grave that he had made for himself in the City of David. He was laid in his resting-place, which was filled with spices of all kinds, expertly blended; a very great fire was made in his honor.

17 His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him as king, and took firm hold of Israel.² He stationed troops in all the fortified towns of Judah, and stationed garrisons throughout the land of Judah and the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had captured.³ GOD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the earlier ways of his forefather David, and did not worship the Baalim,⁴ but worshiped the God of his father and followed the commandments—unlike the behavior of Israel.⁵ So GOD established the kingdom in his hands, and all Judah gave presents to Jehoshaphat. He had wealth and glory in abundance.⁶ His mind was elevated in GOD's ways. Moreover, he abolished the shrines and the sacred posts^a from Judah.

⁷ In the third year of his reign he sent his officers Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah throughout the cities of Judah to offer instruction.⁸ With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tob-adonijah the Levites; with them were Elishama and Jehoram the priests.⁹ They offered instruction throughout Judah, having with them the Book of the Teaching of GOD. They made the rounds of all the cities of Judah and instructed the people.¹⁰ A terror of GOD seized all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, and they did not go to war with Jehoshaphat.¹¹ From Philistia a load of silver was brought to Jehoshaphat as tribute. The Arabs, too, brought him flocks: 7,700 rams and 7,700 he-goats.¹² Jehoshaphat grew greater and greater, and he built up fortresses and garrison towns in Judah.¹³ He carried out extensive works in the towns of Judah, and had soldiers, valiant warriors, in Jerusalem.¹⁴ They were enrolled according to their clans. Judah: chiefs of thousands, Adnah the chief, who had 300,000 valiant warriors;¹⁵ next to him was Jehohanan the captain, who had 280,000;¹⁶ next to him was Amasiah son of Zichri, who made a freewill offering

^a 17.6 *sacred posts* See note at 14.2.

to GOD. He had 200,000 valiant warriors.¹⁷ Benjamin: Eliada, a valiant warrior, who had 200,000 men armed with bow and buckler;¹⁸ next to him was Jehozabad, who had 180,000 armed men.¹⁹ These served the king, besides those whom the king assigned to the fortified towns throughout Judah.

18 ^aSo Jehoshaphat had wealth and honor in abundance, and he allied himself by marriage to Ahab.² After some years had passed, he came to visit Ahab at Samaria. Ahab slaughtered sheep and oxen in abundance for him and for the people with him, and persuaded him to march against Ramoth-gilead.³ King Ahab of Israel said to King Jehoshaphat of Judah, “Will you accompany me to Ramoth-gilead?” He answered him, “I will do what you do; my troops shall be your troops and shall accompany you in battle.”⁴ Jehoshaphat then said to the king of Israel, “But first inquire for the word of GOD.”

⁵ So the king of Israel gathered the prophets, four hundred of them, and asked them, “Shall I march upon Ramoth-gilead for battle, or shall I not?” “March,” they said, “and God will deliver it into the king’s hands.”⁶ Then Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there not another prophet of GOD here through whom we can inquire?”⁷ And the king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, “There is one more through whom we can inquire of GOD; but I hate him, because he never prophesies anything good for me but always misfortune. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.” Jehoshaphat replied, “Let the king not say such a thing.”⁸ So the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, “Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once.”

⁹ The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah, wearing their robes, were seated on their thrones situated in the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.¹⁰ Zedekiah son of Chenaah had provided himself with iron horns; and he said, “Thus said GOD: With these you shall gore the Arameans till you make an end of them.”¹¹ All the other prophets were prophesying similarly, “March against Ramoth-gilead and be victorious! GOD will deliver it into Your Majesty’s hands.”

¹² The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, the words of the prophets are unanimously favorable to the king. Let your word be like that of the rest of them; speak a favorable

^a 18.1–34 Cf. 1 Kings 22.

word.”¹³“By the life of GOD,” Micaiah answered, “I will speak only what my God tells me.”¹⁴When he came before the king, the king said to him, “Micah,^b shall we march against Ramoth-gilead for battle or shall we not?” He answered him, “March and be victorious! They will be delivered into your hands.”¹⁵The king said to him, “How many times must I adjure you to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of GOD?”¹⁶Then he said, “I saw all Israel scattered over the hills like sheep without a shepherd; and GOD said, ‘These have no master; let everyone return home in safety.’”¹⁷The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good fortune for me, but only misfortune?”

¹⁸Then [Micaiah] said, “Indeed, hear now the word of GOD! I saw GOD seated upon a throne, with all the host of heaven standing in attendance to the right and to the left.¹⁹GOD asked, ‘Who will entice King Ahab of Israel so that he will march and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ Then one said this and another said that,²⁰until a certain spirit came forward and stood before GOD and said, ‘I will entice him.’ ‘How?’ said GOD to him.²¹And he replied, ‘I will go forth and become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then I heard, ‘You will entice with success. Go forth and do it.’²²Thus GOD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours; for GOD has decreed misfortune for you.”

²³Thereupon Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and exclaimed, “However did the spirit of GOD pass from me to speak with you!”²⁴Micaiah replied, “You will see on the day when you try to hide in the innermost room.”²⁵Then the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah and turn him over to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Prince Joash,²⁶and say, ‘The king’s orders are: Put this fellow in prison, and let his fare be scant bread and scant water until I come home safe.’”²⁷To which Micaiah retorted, “If you ever come home safe, GOD has not spoken through me.” He said further, “Listen, all you peoples!”^c

²⁸The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah marched against Ramoth-gilead.²⁹The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself and go^d into the battle, but you, wear your robes.” So the

^b 18.14 *Micah* A shortened form of Micaiah.

^c 18.27 *Listen, all you peoples!* Cf. Mic. 1.2.

^d 18.29 *I will disguise myself and go* Infinitives used for finite verbs; so Targum and Septuagint.

king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into the battle.³⁰ The king of Aram had given these instructions to his chariot officers: “Do not attack anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel.”³¹ When the chariot officers saw Jehoshaphat, whom they took for the king of Israel, they wheeled around to attack him, and Jehoshaphat cried out and GOD helped him, and God diverted them from him.³² And when the chariot officers realized that he was not the king of Israel, they gave up the pursuit.³³ Then another man drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the plates of the^e armor and he said to his charioteer, “Turn around and get me behind the lines; I am wounded.”³⁴ The battle raged all day long,^f and the king remained propped up in the chariot facing Aram until dusk; he died as the sun was setting.

19 King Jehoshaphat of Judah returned safely to his palace, to Jerusalem.² Jehu son of Hanani the seer went out to meet King Jehoshaphat and said to him, “Should one give aid to the wicked and befriend those who hate GOD? For this, wrath is upon you from GOD.³ However, there is some good in you, for you have purged the land of the sacred posts^a and have dedicated yourself to worship God.”

⁴ Jehoshaphat remained in Jerusalem awhile and then went out among the people from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim; he brought them back to the ETERNAL God of their ancestors.⁵ He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified towns of Judah, in each and every town.⁶ He charged the judges: “Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of human beings, but on behalf of GOD—who is with you when you pass judgment.⁷ Now let the dread of GOD be upon you; act with care, for there is no injustice or favoritism or bribe-taking with the ETERNAL our God.”⁸ Jehoshaphat also appointed in Jerusalem some Levites and priests and heads of the clans of Israelites for rendering judgment in matters of GOD, and for disputes. Then they returned to Jerusalem.⁹ He charged them, “This is how you shall act: in fear of GOD, with fidelity, and with whole heart.¹⁰ When a dispute comes before you from your kindred living in their towns, whether about homicide, or about ritual, or laws or rules, you must instruct them so that they do not incur guilt before GOD and

^e 18.33 *plates of the* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^f 18.34 *raged all day long* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

^a 19.3 *sacred posts* See note at 14.2.

wrath be upon you and your kindred. Act so and you will not incur guilt.¹¹ See, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all cases concerning GOD, and Zebadiah son of Ishmael is the commander of the house of Judah in all cases concerning the king; the Levitical officials are at your disposal; act with resolve and GOD be with the good.”

20 After that, Moabites, Ammonites, together with some Ammonim,^a came against Jehoshaphat to wage war. ²The report was brought to Jehoshaphat: “A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Aram, and is now in Hazazon-tamar”—that is, En-gedi. ³Jehoshaphat was afraid; he decided to resort to GOD and proclaimed a fast for all Judah. ⁴Judah assembled to plead before GOD. They also came from all the towns of Judah to seek GOD.

⁵Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the House of GOD at the front of the new court. ⁶He said, “ETERNAL God of our ancestors, truly You are the God in heaven and You rule over the kingdoms of the nations; power and strength are Yours; none can oppose You. ⁷O our God, you dispossessed the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and You gave it to the descendants of Your friend Abraham forever. ⁸They settled in it and in it built for You a House for Your name. They said, ⁹‘Should misfortune befall us—the punishing sword, pestilence, or famine, we shall stand before this House and before You—for Your name is in this House—and we shall cry out to You in our distress, and You will listen and deliver us.’ ¹⁰Now the people of Ammon, Moab, and the hill country of Seir, into whose [land] You did not let Israel come when they came from Egypt, but they turned aside from them and did not wipe them out, ¹¹these now repay us by coming to expel us from Your possession that You gave us as ours. ¹²O our God, surely You will punish them, for we are powerless before this great multitude that has come against us, and do not know what to do, but our eyes are on You.” ¹³All Judah^b stood before GOD with their dependents—their womenfolk and their children.

¹⁴Then in the midst of the congregation the spirit of GOD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah son of Benaiah son of Jeiel son of Mattaniah the Levite, of the sons of Asaph,¹⁵ and he said, “Give heed, all

^a **20.1 Ammonim** Probably for *m'nym* “Meunites” (1 Chron. 4.41); cf. Kimhi.

^b **20.13 All Judah** I.e., the militia that represents Judah on the battlefield.

Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem^c and King Jehoshaphat; thus said GOD to you, ‘Do not fear or be dismayed by this great multitude, for the battle is God’s, not yours. ¹⁶March down against them tomorrow as they come up by the Ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the end of the wadi in the direction of the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷It is not for you to fight this battle; stand by, wait, and witness your deliverance by GOD, O Judah and Jerusalem; do not fear or be dismayed; go forth to meet them tomorrow and GOD will be with you.’” ¹⁸Jehoshaphat bowed low with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem threw themselves down before GOD to worship GOD. ¹⁹Levites of the sons of Kohath and of the sons of Korah got up to extol the ETERNAL God of Israel at the top of their voices.

²⁰Early the next morning they arose and went forth to the wilderness of Tekoa. As they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: Trust firmly in the ETERNAL your God and you will stand firm; trust firmly in God’s prophets and you will succeed.” ²¹After taking counsel with the people, he stationed singers to GOD extolling the One majestic in holiness as they went forth ahead of the vanguard, saying, “Praise GOD, whose steadfast love is eternal.” ²²As they began their joyous shouts and hymns, GOD set ambushes for the Ammonites, Moabites, and [the inhabitants of] the hill country of Seir, who were marching against Judah, and they were routed. ²³The Ammonites and Moabites turned against the inhabitants of the hill country of Seir to exterminate and annihilate them. When they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, each helped to destroy his fellow.

²⁴When Judah reached the lookout in the wilderness and looked for the multitude, they saw them lying on the ground as corpses; not one had survived. ²⁵Jehoshaphat and his army came to take the booty, and found an abundance of goods, corpses, and precious objects, which they pillaged, more than they could carry off. For three days they were taking booty, there was so much of it. ²⁶On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Blessing—for there they blessed GOD; that is why that place is called the Valley of Blessing to this day. ²⁷Judah and Jerusalem’s entire force, with Jehoshaphat at their head, returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for GOD had given them cause for

^c **20.15** *inhabitants of Jerusalem* I.e., the militia that represents the city’s inhabitants on the battlefield.

rejoicing over their enemies.²⁸They came to Jerusalem to the House of GOD, to the accompaniment of harps, lyres, and trumpets.²⁹The terror of God seized all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that GOD had fought the enemies of Israel.³⁰The kingdom of Jehoshaphat was untroubled, and his God granted him respite on all sides.

³¹^dJehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.³²He followed the course of his father Asa and did not deviate from it, doing what was pleasing to GOD.³³However, the shrines did not cease; the people still did not direct their heart toward the God of their ancestors.³⁴As for the other events of Jehoshaphat's reign, early and late, they are recorded in the annals of Jehu son of Hanani, which were included in the book of the kings of Israel.

³⁵Afterward, King Jehoshaphat of Judah entered into a partnership with King Ahaziah of Israel, thereby acting wickedly.³⁶He joined with him in constructing ships to go to Tarshish; the ships were constructed in Ezion-geber.³⁷Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, "As you have made a partnership with Ahaziah, GOD will break up your work." The ships were wrecked and were unable to go to Tarshish.

21 ^aJehoshaphat rested with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the City of David; his son Jehoram succeeded him as king.^bHe had brothers, sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariahu, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were sons of King Jehoshaphat of Israel.^cTheir father gave them many gifts of silver, gold, and [other] presents, as well as fortified towns in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the first-born.

^dJehoram proceeded to take firm hold of his father's kingdom and put to the sword all his brothers, as well as some of the officers of Israel.^eJehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years.^fHe followed the practices of the kings of Israel doing what the House of Ahab had done, for he married a daughter of Ahab; he did what was displeasing to GOD.^gHowever, GOD refrained from destroying the House of David for the sake of

^d**20-31-37** Cf. 1 Kings 22.41-49.

^a**21.1-20** Cf. 2 Kings 8.17-24.

the covenant made with David, and in accordance with the promise to maintain a lamp for him and his descendants for all time.⁸ During his reign, the Edomites rebelled against Judah's rule and set up a king of their own.⁹ Jehoram advanced [against them] with his officers and all his chariots. He arose by night and attacked the Edomites, who surrounded him and the chariot commanders.¹⁰ Edom has been in rebellion against Judah, to this day; Libnah also rebelled against him at that time, because he had forsaken the ETERNAL God of his ancestors.¹¹ Moreover, he built shrines in the hill country of Judah; he led astray the inhabitants of Jerusalem and made Judah wayward.

¹² A letter from Elijah the prophet came to him that read: "Thus says the ETERNAL God of your forefather David: Since you have not followed the practices of your father Jehoshaphat and the practices of King Asa of Judah,¹³ but have followed the practices of the kings of Israel, leading astray Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem as the House of Ahab led them astray, and have also killed your brothers of your father's house, who were better than you,¹⁴ therefore, GOD will inflict a great blow upon your people, your sons, and your wives and all your possessions.¹⁵ As for you, you will be severely stricken with a disorder of the bowels year after year until your bowels drop out."

¹⁶ GOD stirred up the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabs who were neighbors of the Cushites against Jehoram.¹⁷ They marched against Judah, breached its defenses, and carried off all the property that was found in the king's palace, as well as his sons and his wives. The only son who remained was Jehoahaz, his youngest.¹⁸ After this, GOD afflicted him with an incurable disease of the bowels.¹⁹ Some years later, when a period of two years had elapsed, his bowels dropped out because of his disease, and he died a gruesome death. His people did not make a fire for him like the fire for his ancestors.²⁰ He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. He departed unpraised,^b and was buried in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

22 ^aThe inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his stead, because all the older ones had been killed by the troops that penetrated the camp with the Arabs. Ahaziah son of Jehoram

^b **21.20 unpraised** Following Septuagint; cf. Arabic *hamada* "praise."

^a **22.1–6** Cf. 2 Kings 8.25–29.

reigned as king of Judah. ²Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year; his mother's name was Athaliah daughter of Omri. ³He too followed the practices of the house of Ahab, for his mother counseled him to do evil. ⁴He did what was displeasing to GOD, like the house of Ahab, for they became his counselors after his father's death, to his ruination. ⁵Moreover, he followed their counsel and marched with Jehoram son of King Ahab of Israel to battle against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead, where the Arameans wounded Joram. ⁶He returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds inflicted on him at Ramah when he fought against King Hazael of Aram. King Azariah son of Jehoram of Judah went down to Jezreel to visit Jehoram son of Ahab while he was ill. ⁷God caused the downfall of Ahaziah because he visited Joram. During his visit he went out with Jehoram to Jehu son of Nimshi, whom GOD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. ⁸^bIn the course of bringing the house of Ahab to judgment, Jehu came upon the officers of Judah and the nephews of Ahaziah, ministers of Ahaziah, and killed them. ⁹He sent in search of Ahaziah, who was caught hiding in Samaria, was brought to Jehu, and put to death. He was given a burial, because it was said, "He is the son of Jehoshaphat who worshiped GOD wholeheartedly." So the house of Ahaziah could not muster the strength to rule.

¹⁰^cWhen Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, learned that her son was dead, she promptly did away with all who were of the royal stock of the house of Judah. ¹¹But Jehoshabeath, daughter of the king, spirited away Ahaziah's son Joash from among the princes who were being slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Jehoshabeath, daughter of King Jehoram, wife of the priest Jehoiada—she was the sister of Ahaziah—kept him hidden from Athaliah so that he was not put to death. ¹²He stayed with them for six years, hidden in the House of God, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

23

^aIn the seventh year, Jehoiada took courage and brought the chiefs of the hundreds, Azariah son of Jeroham, Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zichri, into a compact with him. ²They went through Judah and assembled the Levites from all the towns of Judah, and the chiefs of

^b 22.8–9 Cf. 2 Kings 9.27–28.

^c 22.10–12 Cf. 2 Kings 11.1–3.

^a 23.1–21 Cf. 2 Kings 11.4–20.

the clans of Israel. They came to Jerusalem ³and the entire assembly made a covenant with the king in the House of God. [Jehoiada] said to them, “The son of the king shall be king according to the promise GOD made concerning the sons of David. ⁴This is what you must do: One third of you, priests and Levites, who are on duty for the week, shall be gatekeepers at the thresholds; ⁵another third shall be stationed in the royal palace, and the other third at the Foundation Gate. All the people shall be in the courts of the House of GOD. ⁶Let no one enter the House of GOD except the priests and the ministering Levites. They may enter because they are sanctified, but all the people shall obey GOD’s proscription. ⁷The Levites shall surround the king on every side, each with his arms at the ready; and whoever enters the House shall be killed. Stay close to the king in his comings and goings.” ⁸The Levites and all Judah did just as Jehoiada the priest ordered: each took his men—those who were on duty that week and those who were off duty that week, for Jehoiada the priest had not dismissed the divisions. ⁹Jehoiada the priest gave the chiefs of the hundreds King David’s spears and shields and quivers that were kept in the House of God. ¹⁰He stationed the entire force, each with his weapon at the ready, from the south end of the House to the north end of the House, at the altar and the House, to guard the king on every side. ¹¹Then they brought out the king’s son, and placed upon him the crown and the insignia. They proclaimed him king, and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and shouted, “Long live the king!”

¹²When Athaliah heard the shouting of the people and the guards and the acclamation of the king, she came out to the people, to the House of GOD. ¹³She looked about and saw the king standing by his pillar at the entrance, the chiefs with their trumpets beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and the singers with musical instruments leading the hymns. Athaliah rent her garments and cried out, “Treason, treason!” ¹⁴Then the priest Jehoiada ordered out the army officers, the chiefs of hundreds, and said to them, “Take her out between the ranks, and if anyone follows her, put him to the sword.” For the priest thought, “Let her not be put to death in the House of GOD.” ¹⁵They cleared a passage for her and she came to the entrance of the Horse Gate to the royal palace; there she was put to death.

¹⁶Then Jehoiada solemnized a covenant between himself and the people and the king that they should be GOD’s people. ¹⁷All the people

then went to the temple of Baal; they tore it down and smashed its altars and images to bits, and they slew Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars.¹⁸ Jehoiada put the officers of the House of GOD in the charge of Levite priests whom David had assigned over the House of GOD to offer up burnt offerings, as is prescribed in the Teaching of Moses, accompanied by joyful song as ordained by David.¹⁹ He stationed the gatekeepers at the gates of the House of GOD to prevent the entry of anyone impure for any reason.²⁰ He took the chiefs of hundreds, the nobles, and the rulers of the people and all the people of the land, and they escorted the king down from the House of GOD into the royal palace by the upper gate, and seated the king on the royal throne.²¹ All the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet. As for Athaliah, she had been put to the sword.

24

^aJehoash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.
^bAll the days of the priest Jehoiada, Jehoash did what was pleasing to God.
^cJehoiada took two wives for him, by whom he had sons and daughters.

^dAfterward, Joash decided to renovate the House of GOD.^e He assembled the priests and the Levites and charged them as follows: "Go out to the towns of Judah and collect money from all Israel for the annual repair of the House of your God. Do it quickly." But the Levites did not act quickly.^f The king summoned Jehoiada the chief and said to him, "Why have you not seen to it that the Levites brought the tax imposed by Moses, the servant of GOD, and the congregation of Israel from Judah and Jerusalem to the Tent of the Pact?"^g For the children of the wicked Athaliah had violated the House of God and had even used the sacred things of the House of GOD for the Baals.^h The king ordered that a chest be made and placed on the outside of the gate of the House of GOD.ⁱ A proclamation was issued in Judah and Jerusalem to bring the tax imposed on Israel in the wilderness by Moses, the servant of God.^j All the officers and all the people gladly brought it and threw it into the chest till it was full.^k Whenever the chest was brought to the royal officers by the Levites, and they saw that it contained much money, the royal scribe and the agent of the chief priest came and emptied out the chest and carried it back to

^a 24.1–27 Cf. 2 Kings 12.1–22.

its place. They did this day by day, and much money was collected.

¹²The king and Jehoiada delivered the money to those who oversaw the tasks connected with the work of the House of GOD. They hired masons and carpenters to renovate the House of GOD, as well as artisans in iron and bronze to repair the House of GOD. ¹³The overseers did their work; under them the work went well and they restored the House of God to its original form and repaired it. ¹⁴When they had finished, they brought the money that was left over to the king and Jehoiada; it was made into utensils for the House of GOD, service vessels: buckets and ladles, golden and silver vessels. Burnt offerings were offered up regularly in the House of GOD all the days of Jehoiada.

¹⁵Jehoiada reached a ripe old age and died; he was one hundred and thirty years old at his death. ¹⁶They buried him in the City of David together with the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and on behalf of God and God's House.

¹⁷But after the death of Jehoiada, the officers of Judah came, bowing low to the king; and the king listened to them. ¹⁸They forsook the House of the ETERNAL God of their ancestors to serve the sacred posts^b and idols; and there was wrath upon Judah and Jerusalem because of this guilt of theirs. ¹⁹GOD sent prophets among them to bring them back; they admonished them but they would not pay heed. ²⁰Then the spirit of God enveloped Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest; he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God said: Why do you transgress the commandments of GOD when you cannot succeed? Since you have forsaken GOD, you yourselves have been forsaken." ²¹They conspired against him and pelted him with stones in the court of the House of GOD, by order of the king. ²²King Joash disregarded the loyalty that his father Jehoiada had shown to him, and killed his son. As he was dying, he said, "May GOD see and requite it."

²³At the turn of the year, the army of Aram marched against him; they invaded Judah and Jerusalem, and wiped out all the officers of the people from among the people, and sent all the booty they took to the king of Damascus. ²⁴The invading army of Aram had come with but a few men, but GOD delivered a very large army into their hands, because they had forsaken the ETERNAL God of their ancestors. They inflicted punishments on Joash. ²⁵When they withdrew, having left him with many wounds, his courtiers plotted against him because of

^b **24.18** *sacred posts* See note at 14.2.

the murder^c of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and they killed him in bed. He died and was buried in the City of David; he was not buried in the tombs of the kings.²⁶ Those who conspired against him were: Zabad son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad son of Shimrith the Moabitess.²⁷ As to his sons, and the many pronouncements against him, and his rebuilding of the House of God, they are recorded in the story in the book of the kings. His son Amaziah succeeded him as king.

25 ^aAmaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. ²He did what was pleasing to GOD, but not with a whole heart. ³Once he had the kingdom firmly under control, he executed the courtiers who had assassinated his father the king. ⁴But he did not put their children to death for [he acted] in accordance with what is written in the Teaching, in the Book of Moses, where GOD commanded, "Parents shall not die for children, nor shall children die for parents, but each shall die only for their own crime."^b

⁵Amaziah assembled the men of Judah, and he put all the men of Judah and Benjamin under officers of thousands and officers of hundreds, by clans. He mustered them from the age of twenty upward, and found that there were 300,000 fine soldiers fit for service, able to bear spear and shield. ⁶He hired 100,000 warriors from Israel for 100 talents of silver. ⁷Then an agent of God came to him and said, "O king! Do not let the army of Israel go with you, for GOD is not with Israel—all these Ephraimites. ⁸But go by yourself and do it; take courage for battle, [else] God will make you fall before the enemy. For in God there is power to help one or make one fall!" ⁹Amaziah said to the agent of God, "And what am I to do about the 100 talents I gave for the Israelite force?" The agent of God replied, "GOD has the means to give you much more than that." ¹⁰So Amaziah detached the force that came to him from Ephraim, [ordering them] to go back to their place. They were greatly enraged against Judah and returned to their place in a rage.

¹¹Amaziah took courage and, leading his army, he marched to the Valley of Salt. He slew 10,000 men from Seir; ¹²another 10,000 the

^c 24.25 *murder* Lit. "blood."

^a 25.1–28 Cf. 2 Kings 14.

^b 25.4 *Parents shall... crime* Cf. Deut. 24.16.

Judahites captured alive and brought to the top of Sela. They threw them down from the top of Sela and every one of them was burst open.¹³The members of the force that Amaziah had sent back so they would not go with him into battle made forays against the towns of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon. They slew 3,000 of them, and took much booty.

¹⁴After Amaziah returned from defeating the Edomites, he had the gods of the people of Seir brought, and installed them as his gods; he prostrated himself before them, and to them he made sacrifice.¹⁵GOD was enraged at Amaziah, and sent a prophet to him who said to him, “Why are you worshiping the gods of a people who could not save their people from you?”¹⁶As he spoke to him, [Amaziah] said to him, “Have we appointed you a counselor to the king? Stop, else you will be killed!” The prophet stopped, saying, “I see God has counseled that you be destroyed, since you act this way and disregard my counsel.”

¹⁷Then King Amaziah of Judah took counsel and sent this message to Joash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, “Come, let us confront each other!”¹⁸King Joash of Israel sent back this message to King Amaziah of Judah, “The thistle in Lebanon sent this message to the cedar in Lebanon, ‘Give your daughter to my son in marriage.’ But a wild beast in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle.¹⁹You boast that you have defeated the Edomites and you are ambitious to get more glory. Now stay at home, lest, provoking disaster you fall, dragging Judah down with you.”²⁰But Amaziah paid no heed—it was God’s doing, in order to deliver them up because they worshiped the gods of Edom.²¹King Joash of Israel marched up, and he and King Amaziah of Judah confronted each other at Beth-shemesh in Judah.²²Judah was routed by Israel, and [the Judahites] fled to their homes.²³King Joash of Israel captured Amaziah son of Joash son of Jehoahaz, king of Judah, in Beth-shemesh. He brought him to Jerusalem and made a breach of 400 cubits in the wall of Jerusalem, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate.²⁴Then, with all the gold and silver and all the utensils that were to be found in the House of God in the custody of Obed-edom, and with the treasures of the royal palace, and with the hostages, he returned to Samaria.

²⁵King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of King Joash son of Jehoahaz of Israel.²⁶The other events of Amaziah’s reign, early and late, are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.²⁷From the time that Amaziah turned from following

GOD, a conspiracy was formed against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent men after him to Lachish and they put him to death there.²⁸ They brought his body back on horses and buried him with his ancestors in the city of Judah.

26 Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and proclaimed him king to succeed his father Amaziah.² It was he who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah after King [Amaziah] rested with his ancestors.

³ Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.⁴ He did what was pleasing to GOD just as his father Amaziah had done.⁵ He applied himself to the worship of God during the time of Zechariah, instructor in the visions^a of God; during the time he worshiped the ETERNAL, God made him prosper.⁶ He went forth to fight the Philistines, and breached the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod; he built towns in [the region of] Ashdod and among the Philistines.⁷ God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabs who lived in Gur-baal, and the Meunites.⁸ The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread to the approaches of Egypt, for he grew exceedingly strong.⁹ Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem on the Corner Gate and the Valley Gate and on the Angle, and fortified them.¹⁰ He built towers in the wilderness and hewed out many cisterns, for he had much cattle, and farmers in the foothills and on the plain, and vine dressers in the mountains and on the fertile lands, for he loved the soil.

¹¹ Uzziah had an army of warriors, a battle-ready force who were mustered by Jeiel the scribe and Maasseiah the adjutant under Hanan-iah, one of the king's officers.¹² The clan chiefs, valiants, totaled 2,600;¹³ under them was the trained army of 307,500, who made war with might and power to aid the king against the enemy.¹⁴ Uzziah pro-vided them—the whole army—with shields and spears, and helmets and mail, and bows and slingstones.¹⁵ He made clever devices in Je-rusalem, set on the towers and the corners, for shooting arrows and large stones. His fame spread far, for he was helped wonderfully, and he became strong.

¹⁶ When he was strong, he grew so arrogant he acted corruptly: he

^a **26.5** *visions* Some Heb. mss. read *byr't*; compare ancient versions, "fear."

trespassed against his God by entering the Temple of GOD to offer incense on the incense altar.¹⁷ The priest Azariah, with eighty other brave priests of GOD, followed him in¹⁸ and, confronting King Uzziah, said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to offer incense to GOD, but for the Aaronite priests, who have been consecrated, to offer incense. Get out of the Sanctuary, for you have trespassed; there will be no glory in it for you from the ETERNAL God.”¹⁹ Uzziah, holding the censer and ready to burn incense, got angry; but as he got angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead in front of the priests in the House of GOD beside the incense altar.²⁰ When the chief priest Azariah and all the other priests looked at him, his forehead was leprous, so they rushed him out of there; he too made haste to get out, for GOD had struck him with a plague.²¹ King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death. He lived in isolated quarters^b as a leper, for he was cut off from the House of GOD—while Jotham his son was in charge of the king’s house and governed the people of the land.

²² The other events of Uzziah’s reign, early and late, were recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.²³ Uzziah rested with his ancestors in the burial field of the kings, because, they said, he was a leper; his son Jotham succeeded him as king.

27 Jotham was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; his mother’s name was Jerushah daughter of Zadok.² He did what was pleasing to GOD just as his father Uzziah had done, but he did not enter the Temple of GOD; however, the people still acted corruptly.³ It was he who built the Upper Gate of the House of GOD; he also built extensively on the wall of Ophel.⁴ He built towns in the hill country of Judah, and in the woods he built fortresses and towers.⁵ Moreover, he fought with the king of the Ammonites and overcame them; the Ammonites gave him that year 100 talents of silver and 10,000 *kors* of wheat and another 10,000 of barley; that is what the Ammonites paid him, and [likewise] in the second and third years.⁶ Jotham was strong because he maintained a faithful course before the ETERNAL his God.

⁷ The other events of Jotham’s reign, and all his battles and his conduct, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.⁸ He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen

^b **26.21** *isolated quarters* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

years in Jerusalem. ⁹Jotham rested with his ancestors, and was buried in the City of David; his son Ahaz succeeded him as king.

28 Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was pleasing to GOD as his forefather David had done, ²but followed the ways of the kings of Israel; he even made molten images for the Baals. ³He made offerings in the Valley of Ben-hinnom and burned his sons in fire, in the abhorrent fashion of the nations that GOD had dispossessed before the Israelites. ⁴He sacrificed and made offerings at the shrines, on the hills, and under every leafy tree. ⁵The ETERNAL his God delivered him over to the king of Aram, who defeated him and took many of his men captive, and brought them to Damascus. He was also delivered over to the king of Israel, who inflicted a great defeat on him. ⁶Pekah son of Remaliah killed 120,000 in Judah—all brave fighters—in one day, because they had forsaken the ETERNAL God of their ancestors. ⁷Zichri, the champion of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam chief of the palace, and Elkanah, the second to the king. ⁸The Israelites captured 200,000 of their kin—including women, boys, and girls; they also took a large amount of booty from them and brought the booty to Samaria.

⁹A prophet of GOD by the name of Oded was there, who went out to meet the army on its return to Samaria. He said to them, “Because of the fury of the ETERNAL God of your ancestors against Judah, they were delivered over to you, and you killed them in a rage that reached heaven. ¹⁰Do you now intend to subjugate the men and women of Judah and Jerusalem to be your slaves? As it is, you have nothing but offenses against the ETERNAL your God. ¹¹Now then, listen to me, and send back the captives you have taken from your kin, for GOD's wrath is upon you!” ¹²Some of the Ephraimite chiefs—Azariah son of Jehohanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai—confronted those returning from the campaign ¹³and said to them, “Do not bring these captives here, for it would mean our offending GOD, adding to our sins and our offenses; for our offense is grave enough, and there is already wrath upon Israel.” ¹⁴So the soldiers released the captives and the booty in the presence of the officers and all the congregation. ¹⁵Then the men named above proceeded to take the captives in hand, and with the booty they clothed all the naked among them—they clothed them and shod them and

gave them to eat and drink and anointed them and provided donkeys for all who were failing and brought them to Jericho, the city of palms, back to their kin. Then they returned to Samaria.

¹⁶At that time, King Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria for help. ¹⁷Again the Edomites came and inflicted a defeat on Judah and took captives. ¹⁸And the Philistines made forays against the cities of the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah; they seized Beth-shemesh and Aijalon and Gederoth, and Soco with its villages, and Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they settled there. ¹⁹Thus GOD brought Judah low on account of King Ahaz of Israel,^a for he threw off restraint in Judah and trespassed against GOD. ²⁰Tillegath-pilneser, king of Assyria, marched against him and gave him trouble, instead of supporting him. ²¹For Ahaz plundered the House of GOD and the house of the king and the officers, and made a gift to the king of Assyria—to no avail.

²²In his time of trouble, this King Ahaz trespassed even more against GOD, ²³sacrificing to the gods of Damascus that had defeated him, for he thought, “The gods of the kings of Aram help them; I shall sacrifice to them and they will help me”; but they were his ruin and that of all Israel. ²⁴Ahaz collected the utensils of the House of God, and cut the utensils of the House of God to pieces. He shut the doors of the House of GOD and made himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem. ²⁵In every town in Judah he set up shrines to make offerings to other gods, vexing the ETERNAL God of his ancestors.

²⁶The other events of his reign and all his conduct, early and late, are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷Ahaz rested with his ancestors and was buried in the city, in Jerusalem; his body was not brought to the tombs of the kings of Israel. His son Hezekiah succeeded him as king.

29

Hezekiah became king at the age of twenty-five, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. ²He did what was pleasing to GOD, just as his forefather David had done.

³He, in the first month of the first year of his reign, opened the doors of the House of GOD and repaired them. ⁴He summoned the priests and the Levites and assembled them in the east square. ⁵He

^a 28.19 *Israel* Some mss. and ancient versions read “Judah.”

said to them, “Listen to me, Levites! Sanctify yourselves and sanctify the House of the ETERNAL God of your ancestors, and take the abhorrent things out of the holy place. ⁶For our ancestors trespassed and did what displeased the ETERNAL our God—whom they forsook as they turned their faces away from the dwelling-place of GOD, turning their backs on it. ⁷They also shut the doors of the porch and put out the lights; they did not offer incense and did not make burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. ⁸GOD’s wrath was upon Judah and Jerusalem; they were made to be an object of horror, amazement, and hissing^a—as you see with your own eyes. ⁹Our ancestors died by the sword, and our sons and daughters and wives are in captivity on account of this. ¹⁰Now I wish to make a covenant with the ETERNAL God of Israel, whose rage may hopefully be withdrawn from us. ¹¹Now, my sons, do not be slack, for GOD chose you to be in attendance, to render service, to minister, and to make offerings.”

¹²So the Levites set to—Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of Azariah of the sons of Kohath; and of the sons of Merari, Kish son of Abdi and Azariah son of Jehallelel; and of the Gershonites, Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah; ¹³and of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; and of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; ¹⁴and of the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel—¹⁵and, gathering their brothers, they sanctified themselves and came, by a command of the king concerning GOD’s ordinances, to purify the House of GOD. ¹⁶The priests went into the House of GOD to purify it, and brought all the impure things they found in the Temple of GOD out into the court of the House of GOD; [there] the Levites received them, to take them outside to Wadi Kidron. ¹⁷They began the sanctification on the first day of the first month; on the eighth day of the month they reached the porch of GOD. They sanctified the House of GOD for eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished. ¹⁸Then they went into the palace of King Hezekiah and said, “We have purified the whole House of GOD and the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the table of the bread of display and all its utensils; ¹⁹and all the utensils that King Ahaz had befouled during his reign, when he trespassed, we have made ready and sanctified. They are standing in front of the altar of GOD.”

^a 29.8 *hissing* See note at Jer. 18.16.

²⁰King Hezekiah rose early, gathered the officers of the city, and went up to the House of GOD. ²¹They brought seven bulls and seven rams and seven lambs and seven he-goats as a purgation offering for the kingdom and for the Sanctuary and for Judah. He ordered the Aaronite priests to offer them on the altar of GOD. ²²The cattle were slaughtered, and the priests received the blood and dashed it against the altar; the rams were slaughtered and the blood was dashed against the altar; the lambs were slaughtered and the blood was dashed against the altar. ²³The he-goats for the purgation offering were presented to the king and the congregation, who laid their hands upon them. ²⁴The priests slaughtered them and performed the purgation rite with the blood against the altar, to expiate for all Israel, for the king had designated the burnt offering and the purgation offering to be for all Israel. ²⁵He stationed the Levites in the House of GOD with cymbals and harps and lyres, as David and Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet had ordained, for the ordinance was by GOD through those prophets.

²⁶When the Levites were in place with the instruments of David, and the priests with their trumpets, ²⁷Hezekiah gave the order to offer the burnt offering on the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song of GOD and the trumpets began also, together with the instruments of King David of Israel. ²⁸All the congregation prostrated themselves, the song was sung and the trumpets were blown—all this until the end of the burnt offering. ²⁹When the offering was finished, the king and all who were there with him knelt and prostrated themselves. ³⁰King Hezekiah and the officers ordered the Levites to praise GOD in the words of David and Asaph the seer; so they praised rapturously, and they bowed and prostrated themselves.

³¹Then Hezekiah said, "Now you have consecrated yourselves to GOD; come, bring sacrifices of well-being and thanksgiving to the House of GOD." The congregation brought sacrifices of well-being and thanksgiving, and all who felt so moved brought burnt offerings. ³²The number of burnt offerings that the congregation brought was 70 cattle, 100 rams, 200 lambs—all these for burnt offerings to GOD. ³³The sacred offerings were 600 large cattle and 3,000 small cattle. ³⁴The priests were too few to be able to slay all the burnt offerings, so their kindred, the Levites, reinforced them till the end of the work, and till the [rest of the] priests sanctified themselves. (The Levites were more conscientious about sanctifying themselves than

the priests.)³⁵ For beside the large number of burnt offerings, there were the fat parts of the sacrifices of well-being and the libations for the burnt offerings; so the service of the House of GOD was properly accomplished.³⁶ Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced over what God had enabled the people to accomplish, because it had happened so suddenly.

30 Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah; he also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to come to the House of GOD in Jerusalem to keep the Passover for the ETERNAL God of Israel.¹ The king and his officers and the congregation in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second month,² for at the time, they were unable to keep it,^a for not enough priests had sanctified themselves, nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem.³ The king and the whole congregation thought it proper⁵ to issue a decree and proclaim throughout all Israel from Beer-sheba to Dan that they come and keep the Passover for the ETERNAL God of Israel in Jerusalem—not often did they act in accord with what was written.⁶ The couriers went out with the letters from the king and his officers through all Israel and Judah, by order of the king, proclaiming, “O you Israelites! Return to the ETERNAL God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and [God] will return to the remnant of you who escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria.⁷ Do not be like your ancestors and kindred who trespassed against the ETERNAL God of their ancestors and were turned into a horror, as you see.⁸ Now do not be stiff-necked like your ancestors; submit yourselves to GOD and come to the sanctuary that has been consecrated forever, and serve the ETERNAL your God, whose anger may hopefully turn back from you.⁹ If you return to GOD, your brothers and children will be regarded with compassion by their captors, and will return to this land; the ETERNAL your God, being gracious and merciful, will not turn away from you if you return.”

¹⁰ As the couriers passed from town to town in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh till they reached Zebulun, they were laughed at and mocked.¹¹ Some of the people of Asher and Manasseh and Zebulun, however, were contrite, and came to Jerusalem.¹² The hand of God was on Judah, too, making them of a single mind to carry out the

^a **30.3** *unable to keep it* On its proper date; cf. Num. 9.1–14.

command of the king and officers concerning the ordinance of GOD.
¹³A great crowd assembled at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month, a very great congregation. ¹⁴They set to and removed the altars that were in Jerusalem, and they removed all the incense stands and threw them into Wadi Kidron. ¹⁵They slaughtered the passover sacrifice on the fourteenth of the second month. The priests and Levites were ashamed, and they sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings to the House of GOD. ¹⁶They took their stations, as was their rule according to the Teaching of Moses, agent of God. The priests dashed the blood [that they received] from the Levites. ¹⁷Since many in the congregation had not sanctified themselves, the Levites were in charge of slaughtering the passover sacrifice for everyone who was not pure, so as to consecrate them to GOD. ¹⁸For most of the people—many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun—had not purified themselves, yet they ate the passover sacrifice in violation of what was written. Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, “The good GOD will provide atonement for ¹⁹all who set their mind on worshiping God—the ETERNAL God of their ancestors—even if they are not purified for the sanctuary.” ²⁰GOD heard Hezekiah and healed the people.

²¹The Israelites who were in Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days, with great rejoicing, the Levites and the priests praising GOD daily with powerful instruments for GOD. ²²Hezekiah persuaded all the Levites who performed skillfully for GOD to spend the seven days of the festival making offerings of well-being, and confessing to the ETERNAL God of their ancestors. ²³All the congregation resolved to keep seven more days, so they kept seven more days of rejoicing. ²⁴King Hezekiah of Judah contributed to the congregation 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep. And the officers contributed to the congregation 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep. And the priests sanctified themselves in large numbers. ²⁵All the congregation of Judah and the priests and the Levites and all the congregation that came from Israel, and the resident aliens who came from the land of Israel and who lived in Judah, rejoiced. ²⁶There was great rejoicing in Jerusalem, for since the time of King Solomon son of David of Israel nothing like it had happened in Jerusalem. ²⁷The Levite priests rose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer went up to God’s holy abode, to heaven.

31 When all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out into the towns of Judah and smashed the pillars, cut down the sacred posts,^a demolished the shrines and altars throughout Judah and Benjamin, and throughout Ephraim and Manasseh, to the very last one. Then all the Israelites returned to their towns, each to their home-stead.

²Hezekiah reconstituted the divisions of the priests and Levites, each of the priests and Levites according to his office, for the burnt offerings, the offerings of well-being, to minister, and to sing hymns and praises in the gates of the courts of GOD; ³also the king's portion, from his property, for the burnt offerings—the morning and evening burnt offering, and the burnt offerings for sabbaths, and new moons, and festivals, as prescribed in the Teaching of GOD.

⁴He ordered the people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to deliver the portions of the priests and the Levites, so that they might devote themselves to the Teaching of GOD. ⁵When the word spread, the Israelites brought large quantities of grain, wine, oil, honey, and all kinds of agricultural produce, and tithes of all, in large amounts. ⁶The people of Israel and Judah living in the towns of Judah—they too brought tithes of cattle and sheep and tithes of sacred things consecrated to the ETERNAL their God, piling them in heaps. ⁷In the third month the heaps began to accumulate, and were finished in the seventh month. ⁸When Hezekiah and the officers came and saw the heaps, they blessed GOD and the people Israel. ⁹Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites about the heaps. ¹⁰The chief priest Azariah, of the house of Zadok, replied to him, saying, “Ever since the gifts began to be brought to the House of GOD, people have been eating to satiety and leaving over in great amounts, for GOD has blessed the people; this huge amount is left over!” ¹¹Hezekiah then gave orders to prepare store-chambers in the House of GOD; and they were prepared. ¹²They brought in the gifts and the tithes and the sacred things faithfully. Their supervisor was Conaniah the Levite, and Shimei his brother was second in rank. ¹³Jehiel and Azaziah and Nahath and Asahel and Jerimoth and Jozabad and Eliel and Ismachiah and Mahath and Benaiyah were commissioners under Conaniah and Shimei his brother by appointment of King Hezekiah; Azariah was supervisor of the House of God. ¹⁴Kore son of Imnah the Levite, the keeper of the East Gate,

^a **31.1** *sacred posts* See note at 14.2.

was in charge of the freewill offerings to God, of the allocation of gifts to GOD, and the most sacred things.¹⁵ Under him were Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in offices of trust in the priestly towns, making allocation to their brothers by divisions, to great and small alike;¹⁶ besides allocating their daily rations to those males registered by families from three years old and up, all who entered the House of GOD according to their service and their shift by division;¹⁷ and in charge of the registry of priests by clans, and of the Levites, from twenty years old and up, by shifts, in their divisions;¹⁸ and the registry of the dependents of their whole company—wives, sons, and daughters—for, relying upon them, they sanctified themselves in holiness.¹⁹ And for the Aaronite priests, in each and every one of their towns with adjoining fields, those named above were to allocate portions to every male of the priests and to every registered Levite.²⁰ Hezekiah did this throughout Judah. He acted in a way that was good, upright, and faithful before the ETERNAL his God.²¹ Every work he undertook in the service of the House of God or in the Teaching and the Commandment, to worship his God, he did with all his heart; and he prospered.

32 ^aAfter these faithful deeds, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah and encamped against its fortified towns with the aim of taking them over. ²When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come, intent on making war against Jerusalem,³ he consulted with his officers and warriors about stopping the flow of the springs outside the city, and they supported him. ⁴A large force was assembled to stop up all the springs and the wadi that flowed through the land, for otherwise, they thought, the king of Assyria would come and find water in abundance. ⁵He acted with vigor, rebuilding the whole breached wall, raising towers on it, and building another wall outside it. He fortified the Millo of the City of David, and made a great quantity of arms and shields. ⁶He appointed battle officers over the people; then, gathering them to him in the square of the city gate, he rallied them, saying,⁷ “Be strong and of good courage; do not be frightened or dismayed by the king of Assyria or by the horde that is with him, for we have more with us than he has with him.⁸ With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the ETERNAL our God, to help us and to fight our

^a **32.1–33** Cf. 2 Kings 18–20; Isa. 36–39.

battles.” The people were encouraged by the speech of King Hezekiah of Judah.

⁹Afterward, King Sennacherib of Assyria sent his officers to Jerusalem—he and all his staff being at Lachish—with this message to King Hezekiah of Judah and to all the people of Judah who were in Jerusalem: ¹⁰“Thus said King Sennacherib of Assyria: On what do you trust to enable you to endure a siege in Jerusalem? ¹¹Hezekiah is seducing you to a death of hunger and thirst, saying, ‘The ETERNAL our God will save us from the king of Assyria.’ ¹²But is not Hezekiah the one who removed your God’s^b shrines and altars and commanded the people of Judah and Jerusalem saying, ‘Before this one altar you shall prostrate yourselves, and upon it make your burnt offerings’? ¹³Surely you know what I and my ancestors have done to the peoples of the lands? Were the gods of the nations of the lands able to save their lands from me? ¹⁴Which of all the gods of any of those nations whom my ancestors destroyed was able to save their people from me, that your God should be able to save you from me? ¹⁵Now then, do not let Hezekiah delude you; do not let him seduce you in this way; do not believe him. For no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to save their people from me or from my ancestors—much less your God, to save you from me!” ¹⁶His officers said still more things against the ETERNAL God and against Hezekiah—God’s servant. ¹⁷He also wrote letters reviling the ETERNAL God of Israel, saying, “Just as the gods of the other nations of the earth did not save their people from me, so the God of Hezekiah will not save this people from me.” ¹⁸They called loudly in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten them into panic, so as to capture the city. ¹⁹They spoke of the God of Jerusalem like they spoke of the gods of the other peoples of the earth, made by human hands. ²⁰Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed about this, and cried out to heaven.

²¹GOD sent an angel who annihilated every mighty warrior, commander, and officer in the army of the king of Assyria, and he returned in disgrace to his land. He entered the house of his god, and there some of his own offspring struck him down by the sword. ²²Thus GOD delivered Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from King Sennacherib of Assyria, and from everyone—providing for them on

^b 32.12 *your God’s* Lit. “His.”

all sides.²³ Many brought tribute to GOD to Jerusalem, and gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah; thereafter he was exalted in the eyes of all the nations.

²⁴ At that time, Hezekiah fell deathly sick. He prayed to GOD, who responded to him and gave him a sign.²⁵ Hezekiah made no return for what had been bestowed upon him, for he grew arrogant; so wrath was decreed for him and for Judah and Jerusalem.²⁶ Then Hezekiah humbled himself where he had been arrogant, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and no wrath of GOD came on them during the reign of Hezekiah.²⁷ Hezekiah enjoyed riches and glory in abundance; he filled treasuries with silver and gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and all lovely objects;²⁸ and store-cities with the produce of grain, wine, and oil, and stalls for all kinds of beasts, and flocks for sheep-folds.²⁹ And he acquired towns, and flocks of small and large cattle in great number, for God endowed him with very many possessions.³⁰ It was Hezekiah who stopped up the spring of water of Upper Gihon, leading it downward west of the City of David; Hezekiah prospered in all that he did.³¹ So too in the matter of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who were sent to him to inquire about the sign that was in the land, when God forsook him in order to test him, to learn all that was in his mind.

³² The other events of Hezekiah's reign, and his faithful acts, are recorded in the visions of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.³³ Hezekiah rested with his ancestors, and was buried on the upper part of the tombs of the sons of David. When he died, all the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem accorded him much honor. Manasseh, his son, succeeded him.

33

^a Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.² He did what was displeasing to GOD, following the abhorrent practices of the nations that GOD had dispossessed before the Israelites.³ He rebuilt the shrines that his father Hezekiah had demolished; he erected altars for the Baals and made sacred posts.^b He bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshiped them,⁴ and he built altars [to them] in the House of GOD, of which

^a 33.1-25 Cf. 2 Kings 21.

^b 33.3 *sacred posts* See note at 14.2.

GOD had said, “My name will be in Jerusalem forever.”⁵ He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the House of GOD.⁶ He consigned his sons to the fire in the Valley of Ben-hinnom, and he practiced soothsaying, divination, and sorcery, and consulted ghosts and familiar spirits; he did much that was displeasing to GOD in order to provoke anger.⁷ He placed a sculptured image that he made in the House of God, of which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, “In this House and in Jerusalem, which I chose out of all the tribes of Israel, I will establish My name forever.⁸ And I will never again remove the feet of Israel from the land that I assigned to their ancestors, if only they observe faithfully all that I have commanded them—all the teaching and the laws and the rules given by Moses.”⁹ Manasseh led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray into evil greater than that done by the nations that GOD had destroyed before the Israelites.

¹⁰ GOD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not pay heed,¹¹ so GOD brought against them the officers of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh captive in manacles, bound him in fetters, and led him off to Babylon.¹² In his distress, he entreated the ETERNAL his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors.¹³ He prayed to [God], who granted his prayer, heard his plea, and returned him to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the ETERNAL alone was God.¹⁴ Afterward he built the outer wall of the City of David west of Gihon in the wadi on the way to the Fish Gate, and it encircled Ophel; he raised it very high. He also placed army officers in all the fortified towns of Judah.¹⁵ He removed the foreign gods and the image from the House of GOD, as well as all the altars that he had built on the Mount of the House of GOD and in Jerusalem, and dumped them outside the city.¹⁶ He rebuilt the altar of GOD and offered on it sacrifices of well-being and thanksgiving, and commanded the people of Judah to worship the ETERNAL God of Israel.¹⁷ To be sure, the people continued sacrificing at the shrines, but only to the ETERNAL their God.

¹⁸ The other events of Manasseh’s reign, and his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the ETERNAL God of Israel are found in the chronicles of the kings of Israel.¹⁹ His prayer and how it was granted to him, the whole account of his sin and trespass, and the places in which he built shrines and

installed sacred posts^c and images before he humbled himself are recorded in the words of Hozai.^d²⁰ Manasseh rested with his ancestors and was buried on his palace grounds; his son Amon succeeded him as king.

²¹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. ²² He did what was displeasing to GOD, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the idols that his father Manasseh had made and worshiped them. ²³ He did not humble himself before GOD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; instead, Amon incurred much guilt. ²⁴ His courtiers conspired against him and killed him in his palace. ²⁵ But the people of the land struck down all who had conspired against King Amon; and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his stead.

34 ^aJosiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. ² He did what was pleasing to GOD, following the ways of his forefather David without deviating to the right or to the left. ³ In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his forefather David, and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the shrines, the sacred posts,^b the idols, and the molten images. ⁴ At his bidding, they demolished the altars of the Baals, and he had the incense stands above them cut down; he smashed the sacred posts, the idols, and the images, ground them into dust, and strewed it onto the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵ He burned the bones of priests on their altars and purged Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶ In the towns of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon, as far as Naphtali, [lying] in ruins on every side,⁷ he demolished the altars and the sacred posts and smashed the idols and ground them into dust; and he hewed down all the incense stands throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

⁸ In the eighteenth year of his reign, after purging the land and the House, he commissioned Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz the recorder to repair the House of the ETERNAL his God. ⁹ They came to the high priest

^c 33.19 *sacred posts* See note at 14.2.

^d 33.19 *Hozai* Or “seers.”

^a 34.1–33 Cf. 2 Kings 22; 23.1–20.

^b 34.3 *sacred posts* See note at 14.2.

Hilkiah and delivered to him the silver brought to the House of God, which the Levites, the guards of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.^{c 10} They delivered it into the custody of the overseers who were in charge at the House of GOD, and the overseers who worked in the House of GOD spent it on examining and repairing the House.¹¹ They paid it out to the artisans and the masons to buy quarried stone and wood for the couplings and for making roof-beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had allowed to fall into ruin.¹² Those involved did the work honestly; over them were appointed the Levites Jahath and Obadiah, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of Kohath, to supervise; while other Levites, all the master musicians,¹³ were over the porters, supervising all who worked at each and every task; some of the Levites were scribes and officials and gatekeepers.

¹⁴ As they took out the silver that had been brought to the House of GOD, the priest Hilkiah found a scroll of GOD's Teaching given by Moses.¹⁵ Hilkiah spoke up and said to the scribe Shaphan, "I have found a scroll of the Teaching in the House of GOD"; and Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan.¹⁶ Shaphan brought the scroll to the king and also reported to the king, "All that was entrusted to your servants is being done;¹⁷ they have melted down the silver that was found in the House of GOD and delivered it to those who were in charge, to the overseers."¹⁸ The scribe Shaphan also told the king, "The priest Hilkiah has given me a scroll"; and Shaphan read from it to the king.¹⁹ When the king heard the words of the Teaching, he tore his clothes.²⁰ The king gave orders to Hilkiah, and Ahikam son of Shaphan, and Abdon son of Micah, and the scribe Shaphan, and Asaiah the king's minister, saying,²¹ "Go, inquire of GOD on my behalf and on behalf of those who remain in Israel and Judah concerning the words of the scroll that has been found, for great indeed must be GOD's wrath that has been poured down upon us because our ancestors did not obey the word of GOD and do all that is written in this scroll."

²² Hilkiah and those whom the king [had ordered] went to the prophetess Huldah, wife of Shallum son of Tokhath son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe, who was living in Jerusalem in the Mishneh,^d

^c 34.9 *the inhabitants of Jerusalem* With *kethib* and ancient versions; *qere*, "they returned to Jerusalem."

^d 34.22 *Mishneh* A quarter in Jerusalem; cf. Zeph. 1.10.

and spoke to her accordingly.²³ She responded to them: “Thus said the ETERNAL God of Israel: Say to the one who sent you to Me,²⁴ ‘Thus said GOD: I am going to bring disaster upon this place and its inhabitants—all the curses that are written in the scroll that was read to the king of Judah—²⁵ because they forsook Me and made offerings to other gods in order to vex Me with all the works of their hands; My wrath shall be poured out against this place and not be quenched.’²⁶ But say this to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of GOD: ‘Thus said the ETERNAL God of Israel: As for the words that you have heard,²⁷ since your heart was softened and you humbled yourself before God when you heard My^e words concerning this place and its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me and tore your clothes and wept before Me, I for My part have listened, declares GOD.²⁸ Assuredly, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be laid in your grave in peace; your eyes shall see nothing of the disaster that I will bring upon this place and its inhabitants.’” They reported this back to the king.

²⁹ Then the king sent word and assembled all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.³⁰ The king went up to the House of GOD with the entire citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites—all the people, young and old—and he read to them the entire text of the covenant scroll that was found in the House of GOD.³¹ The king stood in his place and solemnized the covenant before GOD: to follow GOD and to observe God’s commandments, injunctions, and laws with all his heart and soul, to fulfill all the terms of the covenant written in this scroll.³² He obligated all the people of Jerusalem and Benjamin who were present; and the inhabitants of Jerusalem acted in accord with the Covenant of God, God of their ancestors.³³ Josiah removed all the abominations from the whole territory of the Israelites and obliged all who were in Israel to worship the ETERNAL their God. Throughout his reign they did not deviate from following the ETERNAL God of their ancestors.

35

^a Josiah kept the Passover for GOD in Jerusalem; the passover sacrifice was slaughtered on the fourteenth day of the first month.² He reinstated the priests in their shifts and rallied them to the service of

^e 34.27 *My* Heb. 3rd person.

^a 35.1–27 Cf. 2 Kings 23.21–30.

the House of GOD.³He said to the Levites, consecrated to GOD, who taught all Israel, “Put the Holy Ark in the House that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; as you no longer carry it on your shoulders, see now to the service of the ETERNAL your God and Israel—God’s people,⁴and dispose yourselves by clans according to your divisions, as prescribed in the writing of King David of Israel and in the document of his son Solomon,⁵and attend in the Sanctuary, by clan divisions, on your kindred, the people—by clan divisions of the Levites.⁶Having sanctified yourselves, slaughter the passover sacrifice and prepare it for your kindred, according to the word of God given by Moses.”⁷Josiah donated to the people small cattle—lambs and goats, all for passover sacrifices for all present—to the sum of 30,000, and large cattle, 3,000—these from the property of the king.⁸His officers gave a freewill offering to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, the chiefs of the House of God, donated to the priests for passover sacrifices 2,600 [small cattle] and 300 large cattle.⁹Conaniah, Shemaiah, and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, officers of the Levites, donated 5,000 [small cattle] and 500 large cattle to the Levites for passover sacrifices.

¹⁰The service was arranged well: the priests stood at their posts and the Levites in their divisions, by the king’s command.¹¹They slaughtered the passover sacrifice and the priests [received its blood] from them and dashed it, while the Levites flayed the animals.¹²They removed the parts to be burnt, distributing them to divisions of the people by clans, and making the sacrifices to GOD, as prescribed in the scroll of Moses; they did the same for the cattle.¹³They roasted the passover sacrifice in fire, as prescribed, while the sacred offerings they cooked in pots, cauldrons, and pans, and conveyed them with dispatch to all the people.¹⁴Afterward they provided for themselves and the priests, for the Aaronite priests were busy offering the burnt offerings and the fatty parts until nightfall, so the Levites provided both for themselves and for the Aaronite priests.¹⁵The Asaphite singers were at their stations, by command of David and Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, the seer of the king; and the gatekeepers were at each and every gate. They did not have to leave their tasks, because their Levite brothers provided for them.¹⁶The entire service of GOD was arranged well that day, to keep the Passover and to make the burnt offerings on the altar of GOD, according to the command of

King Josiah.¹⁷ All the Israelites present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days.¹⁸ Since the time of the prophet Samuel, no Passover like that one had ever been kept in Israel; none of the kings of Israel had kept a Passover like the one kept by Josiah and the priests and the Levites and all Judah and Israel there present and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.¹⁹ That Passover was kept in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah.

²⁰ After all this furbishing of the temple by Josiah, King Necho of Egypt came up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him.²¹ [Necho] sent messengers to him, saying, “What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I do not march against you this day but against the kingdom that wars with me, and it is God’s will that I hurry. Refrain, then, from interfering with God—who is with me—that you not be destroyed.”²² But Josiah would not let him alone; instead, he donned [his armor]^b to fight him, heedless of Necho’s words from the mouth of God; and he came to fight in the plain of Megiddo.²³ Archers shot King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, “Get me away from here, for I am badly wounded.”²⁴ His servants carried him out of his chariot and put him in the wagon of his second-in-command, and conveyed him to Jerusalem. There he died, and was buried in the grave of his ancestors, and all Judah and Jerusalem went into mourning over Josiah.²⁵ Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah that all the singers, male and female, recited in their laments for Josiah, as is done to this day; they became customary in Israel and were incorporated into the laments.²⁶ The other events of Josiah’s reign and his faithful deeds, in accord with the Teaching of GOD,²⁷ and his acts, early and late, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

36

^aThe people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king instead of his father in Jerusalem.² Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.³ The king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and laid a fine on the land of 100 silver talents and one gold talent.⁴ The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim; Necho took his brother Joahaz and brought him to Egypt.

^b 35.22 *he donned [his armor]* With Targum.

^a 36.1–13 Cf. 2 Kings 23.28–37; 24.1–20.

⁵Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; he did what was displeasing to the ETERNAL his God. ⁶King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marched against him; he bound him in fetters to convey him to Babylon. ⁷Nebuchadnezzar also brought some vessels of the House of GOD to Babylon, and set them in his palace in Babylon. ⁸The other events of Jehoiakim's reign, and the abominable things he did, and what was found against him, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. His son Jehoiachin succeeded him as king.

⁹Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem; he did what was displeasing to GOD. ¹⁰At the turn of the year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent to have him brought to Babylon with the precious vessels of the House of GOD, and he made his kinsman Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

¹¹Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. ¹²He did what was displeasing to the ETERNAL his God; he did not humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah, who spoke for GOD. ¹³He also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who made him take an oath^b by God; he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart so as not to turn to the ETERNAL God of Israel. ¹⁴All the officers of the priests and the people committed many trespasses, following all the abominable practices of the nations. They polluted the House of GOD that had been consecrated in Jerusalem. ¹⁵The ETERNAL God of their ancestors had sent word to them through messengers daily without fail, having taken pity on the people and on the temple.^c ¹⁶But they mocked the messengers of God and disdained those words and taunted those prophets until GOD's wrath against this people grew beyond remedy. ¹⁷[God] therefore brought the king of the Chaldeans upon them, who killed their youths by the sword in their sanctuary; neither youth nor maiden, elder, or graybeard were spared—all were delivered into his hands. ¹⁸All the vessels of the House of God, large and small, and the treasures of the House of GOD and the treasures of the king and his officers were all brought to Babylon. ¹⁹They burned the House of God and tore down the wall of Jerusalem, burned down all its mansions, and consigned all its precious

^b 36.13 *an oath* A vassal oath; cf. Ezek. 17.11–21.

^c 36.15 *the temple* Lit. "His habitation."

objects to destruction.²⁰ Those who survived the sword he exiled to Babylon, and they became his and his sons' servants till the rise of the Persian kingdom,²¹ in fulfillment of the word of GOD spoken by Jeremiah, until the land paid back its sabbaths; as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, till seventy years were completed.

²² And in the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, when the word of GOD spoken by Jeremiah was fulfilled, GOD roused the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia to issue a proclamation throughout his realm by word of mouth and in writing, as follows:²³ “Thus said King Cyrus of Persia: The ETERNAL God of Heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and has charged me with building a house [of God] in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. May the ETERNAL God be with those of you among this people who wish to go up.”

