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English Translation for Translators

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Holy Bible Aionian Edition ®
English Translation for Translators

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Preface

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The *Holy Bible Aionian Edition* ® is the world's first Bible *un-translation*! What is an *un-translation*? Bibles are translated into each of our languages from the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Koine Greek. Occasionally, the best word translation cannot be found and these words are transliterated letter by letter. Four well known transliterations are *Christ*, *baptism*, *angel*, and *apostle*. The meaning is then preserved more accurately through context and a dictionary. The Aionian Bible un-translates and instead transliterates eleven additional Aionian Glossary words to help us better understand God's love for individuals and all mankind, and the nature of afterlife destinies.

The first three words are *aiōn*, *aiōnios*, and *aïdios*, typically translated as *eternal* and also *world* or *eon*. The Aionian Bible is named after an alternative spelling of *aiōnios*. Consider that researchers question if *aiōn* and *aiōnios* actually mean *eternal*. Translating *aiōn* as *eternal* in Matthew 28:20 makes no sense, as all agree. The Greek word for *eternal* is *aïdios*, used in Romans 1:20 about God and in Jude 6 about demon imprisonment. Yet what about *aiōnios* in John 3:16? Certainly we do not question whether salvation is eternal! However, *aiōnios* means something much more wonderful than infinite time! Ancient Greeks used *aiōn* to mean *eon* or *age*. They also used the adjective *aiōnios* to mean *entirety*, such as *complete* or even *consummate*, but never infinite time. Read Dr. Heleen Keizer and Ramelli and Konstan for proofs. So *aiōnios* is the perfect description of God's Word which has *everything* we need for life and godliness! And the *aiōnios* life promised in John 3:16 is not simply a ticket to eternal life in the future, but the invitation through faith to the *consummate* life beginning now!

The next seven words are *Sheol*, *Hadēs*, *Geenna*, *Tartaroō*, *Abyssos*, and *Limnē Pyr*. These words are often translated as *Hell*, the place of eternal punishment. However, *Hell* is ill-defined when compared with the Hebrew and Greek. For example, *Sheol* is the abode of deceased believers and unbelievers and should never be translated as *Hell*. *Hadēs* is a temporary place of punishment, Revelation 20:13-14. *Geenna* is the Valley of Hinnom, Jerusalem's refuse dump, a temporal judgment for sin. *Tartaroō* is a prison for demons, mentioned once in 2 Peter 2:4. *Abyssos* is a temporary prison for the Beast and Satan. Translators are also inconsistent because *Hell* is used by the King James Version 54 times, the New International Version 14 times, and the World English Bible zero times. Finally, *Limnē Pyr* is the Lake of Fire, yet Matthew 25:41 explains that these fires are prepared for the Devil and his angels. So there is reason to review our conclusions about the destinies of redeemed mankind and fallen angels.

The eleventh word, *eleēsē*, reveals the grand conclusion of grace in Romans 11:32. Take the time to understand these eleven words. The original translation is unaltered and a note is added to 64 Old Testament and 200 New Testament verses. To help parallel study and Strong's Concordance use, apocryphal text is removed and most variant verse numbering is mapped to the English standard. We thank our sources at eBible.org, Crosswire.org, unbound.Biola.edu, Bible4u.net, and NHEB.net. The Aionian Bible is copyrighted with creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0, allowing 100% freedom to copy and print, if respecting source copyrights. Check the Reader's Guide and read online at AionianBible.org, with Android, and TOR network. Why purple? King Jesus' Word is royal… and purple is the color of royalty!

History

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04/15/85 - Aionian Bible conceived as B. and J. pray.
12/18/13 - Aionian Bible announced as J. and J. pray.
06/21/15 - Aionian Bible birthed as G. and J. pray.
01/11/16 - AionianBible.org domain registered.
06/21/16 - 30 translations available in 12 languages.
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07/01/17 - 'The Purple Bible' nickname begins.
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03/06/18 - Aionian Bibles available in print at Amazon.com.
10/20/18 - 70 translations now available in 33 languages.
11/17/18 - 104 translations now available in 57 languages.
03/24/19 - 135 translations now available in 67 languages.
10/28/19 - Aionian Bible nursed as J. and J. pray.
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11/17/21 - Aionian Bible Branded Leather Bible Covers now available.
12/20/21 - Social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.
01/01/22 - 216 translations now available in 99 languages.
01/09/22 - StudyPack resources for Bible translation study.
02/14/22 - Strong's Concordance from Open Scriptures and STEPBible.
02/14/23 - Aionian Bible published on the TOR Network.
12/04/23 - Eleēsē added to the Aionian Glossary.
02/04/24 - 352 translations now available in 135 languages.
05/01/24 - 371 translations now available in 151 languages.

Table of Contents

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis 11
Exodus 54
Leviticus 90
Numbers 115
Deuteronomy 147
Joshua 178
Judges 199
Ruth 220
1 Samuel 223
2 Samuel 251
1 Kings 274
2 Kings 300
1 Chronicles 326
2 Chronicles 350
Ezra 379
Nehemiah 388
Esther 401
Job 408
Psalms 433
Proverbs 491
Ecclesiastes 513
Song of Solomon 520
Isaiah 524
Jeremiah 571
Lamentations 620
Ezekiel 625
Daniel 667
Hosea 680
Joel 688
Amos 691
Obadiah 697
Jonah 698
Micah 700
Nahum 705
Habakkuk 707
Zephaniah 710
Haggai 713
Zechariah 715
Malachi 723

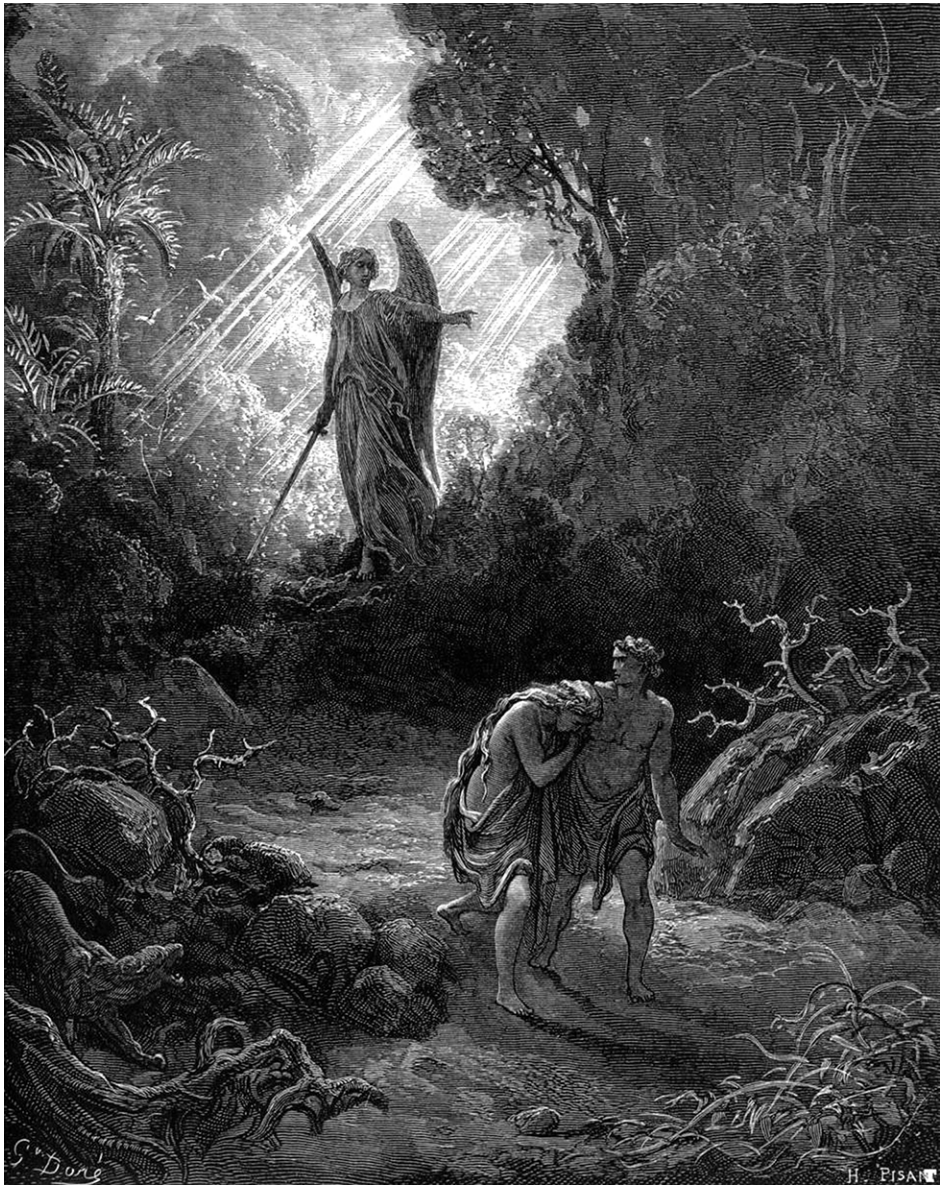
NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew 729
Mark 769
Luke 793
John 832
Acts 860
Romans 900
1 Corinthians 920
2 Corinthians 938
Galatians 952
Ephesians 959
Philippians 965
Colossians 970
1 Thessalonians 975
2 Thessalonians 979
1 Timothy 981
2 Timothy 986
Titus 990
Philemon 993
Hebrews 994
James 1007
1 Peter 1012
2 Peter 1017
1 John 1021
2 John 1026
3 John 1027
Jude 1028
Revelation 1030

APPENDIX

Reader's Guide
Glossary
Maps
Destiny
Illustrations, Doré

OLD TESTAMENT



Adam and Eve Driven Out of the Garden of Eden

"So he drove out the man; and he placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life."

Genesis 3:24

Genesis

1 Long, long ago God created the heavens and the earth. **2** When he began to create the earth, it was shapeless and completely desolate/chaotic. Darkness covered the deep water that surrounded the earth. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the water. **3** God said, "I want light to shine!" And light shone. **4** God was pleased with the light. Then he made the light to shine in some places, and in other places there was still darkness. **5** He gave to the light the name 'day', and he gave to the darkness the name 'night'. After that, there was an evening which was followed by a morning. He called that whole period of time 'the first day'. **6** Then God said, "I command that there be an empty space like a huge dome to separate the water that is above it from the water on the earth that is below it!" **7** And that is what happened. God gave to the space the name 'sky'. **8** Then there was another evening, which was followed by another morning. He called that period of time 'the second day'. **9** Then God said, "I want the water that is below the sky to come together, and dry ground to appear and rise above the water." And that is what happened. **10** God gave to the ground the name 'earth', and he gave to the water that came together the name 'oceans'. God was pleased with the earth and the oceans. **11** Then God said, "I want the earth to produce plants, including plants that will produce seeds and trees that will produce fruit. Each kind of tree will bear its own kind of fruit." **12** Then plants grew on the earth; each kind of plant began to produce its own kind of seed. **13** Then there was another evening which was followed by another morning. God called that period of time 'the third day'. **14** Then God said, "I want a sun, a moon, and many stars to shine in the sky. The sun will shine in the daytime and the moon and stars will shine during the nighttime. By the changes in their appearance they will indicate the various seasons (OR, the times for special celebrations), and will enable people to know when days and years begin. **15** I want them also to be like lights in the sky that will shine on the earth." And that is what happened. **16** God made two of them that were like big lights. The bigger one, the sun, shines during the day and the smaller one, the moon, shines during the night. He also made the stars. **17** God set all of them in the sky to shine on the earth, **18** to rule the day and the night, and to separate the light of the daytime from the darkness of the nighttime. God was pleased with these things he had made. **19** Then there was another evening which was followed by another morning. He called that period of time 'the fourth day'. **20** Then God said, "I want many creatures to live in all the oceans, and I also want birds to fly in the sky above the earth." **21** So God created huge sea creatures and every other kind of creature that moves in the water, and caused them to live in all the oceans. He also created many kinds of birds. God was pleased with all those creatures. **22** God blessed them. He said, "Produce offspring and become very numerous. I want the creatures in the water to live in all the oceans, and birds also to become very numerous." And that is what happened. **23** Then there was another evening that was followed by another morning. He called that period of time 'the fifth day'. **24** Then God said, "I want various kinds of creatures to appear on the earth. There will be many kinds of (livestock/domestic animals), creatures that scurry across the ground, and large wild animals." And that is what happened. **25** God made all kinds of wild animals and (livestock/domestic animals) and all kinds of creatures that scurry across the ground. God was pleased with all these creatures. **26** Then God said, "Now we will make human beings that will be like us in many ways. I want them to rule over the fish in the sea, over the birds, over all the (livestock/domestic animals), and over all the other creatures that scurry across the ground." **27** So God created human beings that were like him in many ways. He made them to be like himself. He created some to be male and some to be female. **28** God blessed them, saying, "Produce many children, who will live all over the earth and rule over it. I want them to rule over the fish and the birds and over all creatures that scurry across the ground." **29** God said to the humans, "Listen! I have given you all the plants that produce seeds, all over the earth, and all the trees that have seeds in their fruit. All these things are for you to eat. **30** I have given all the green plants to all the wild animals and to the birds and to all the creatures that scurry across the ground, to everything that breathes, for them to eat." And that is what happened. **31** God was pleased with everything that he had made. Truly, it was all very good. Then there was another evening, that was followed by another morning. He called that period of time 'the sixth day'.

2 That is the way God created the heavens and the earth. **2** By the time it was the seventh day, God had finished the work of creating everything, so he did not work any more on that day. **3** God blessed each seventh day, and he set those days apart to be special days, because on the seventh day God did not work any more, after finishing all his work of creating everything. **4** That is how God created the heavens and the earth. God, whose name is Yahweh, made the heavens and the earth. **5** At first there were no plants growing, because Yahweh God had not yet caused rain to fall on the ground. Furthermore, there was no one to till the ground for planting crops. **6** Instead, mist rose

up from the ground, so that it watered the surface of the ground. **7** Then Yahweh God took some soil and formed a man. He breathed into the man's nostrils his own breath that gives life, and as a result the man became a living person. **8** Yahweh God made a park/garden in a place named Eden, which was east of the land of Canaan, and he put there the man that he had created. **9** Yahweh God also put there every kind of tree that is beautiful to see and that produced fruit that was good to eat. He also placed in the middle of the park/garden a tree [whose fruit would enable those who ate it] to live forever. He also placed there another tree whose fruit would enable those who ate it to know what actions were good [to do] and what actions were evil [to do]. **10** A river flowed from Eden to provide water for the park/garden. Outside of Eden, the river divided into four rivers. **11** The name of the first river is Pishon. That river flows through all the land of Havilah, where there is gold. **12** That gold (is very pure/has no impurities in it). There is [also a sweet-smelling gum called] bdellium, and valuable stones called onyx. **13** The name of the second river is Gihon. That river flows through all the land of Cain. **14** The name of the third river is Tigris. It flows east of [the city of] Asshur. The name of the fourth river is Euphrates. **15** Yahweh God took the man and put him in Eden park/garden to till/cultivate it and take care of it. **16** But Yahweh said to him, "You must not eat the fruit of the tree that will enable you to know what actions are good to do and what actions are evil to do. If you eat any fruit from that tree, on that day your relationship with me will end. But I will permit you to eat the fruit of any of the other trees in the park/garden." **18** Then Yahweh God said, "It is not good for this man to be alone. So I will make someone who will be a suitable partner for him." **19** Yahweh God had taken some soil and had formed from it all kinds of animals and birds, and he brought them to the man to hear what names he would give them. **20** Then the man gave names to all the kinds of livestock and birds and wild animals, but none of these creatures was a partner that was suitable for the man. **21** So Yahweh God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man was sleeping, Yahweh took out one of the man's ribs. Then he immediately closed the opening in his body [and healed it]. **22** Yahweh then made a woman from the rib that he had taken from the man's body, and he brought her to the man. **23** The man exclaimed, "[Wow]! This is truly (someone like me/what I was looking for!) She is truly from my bones and from my flesh. So I will call her woman, because she was taken from me, a man." **24** [The first woman was taken from the man's body,] so that is why when a man and a woman marry, they must leave their parents. The man will join very closely to his wife, so that the two of them will be as though they are one person. **25** Although the man and his wife were naked, they were not ashamed about that.

3 The snake was more cunning than all the other wild animals that Yahweh God had made. [One day Satan gave to] the snake [the ability to talk to the woman]. The snake said to her, "Did God really say to you, 'Do not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the park/garden'?" **2** The woman replied, "[What God said was], 'Do not eat the fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the park/garden or touch it. If you do that, you will die. But you can eat fruit from any of the other trees.'" **4** The snake said to the woman, "No, you will certainly not die. God said that **5** [only] because he knows that when you eat fruit from that tree, [you will understand new things. It will be as though] your eyes are opened [MET], and you will know what is good [to do] and what is evil [to do], just as God does." **6** The woman saw that the fruit on that tree was good to eat, and it was very beautiful, and she desired it because [she thought] it would make her wise. So she picked some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, and he ate it. **7** Immediately [it was as though] their eyes were opened, and they realized that they were naked, so they were ashamed. So they [picked] some fig leaves and fastened them together to make clothes for themselves. **8** [Late that afternoon], when a cool breeze was blowing, they heard the sound/footsteps of Yahweh as he was walking in the park/garden. So the man and his wife hid themselves among the bushes in the park/garden, [so that Yahweh God would not see them]. **9** But Yahweh God called to the man, saying to him, "Why are you [trying to hide from me]?" **10** The man replied, "I heard the sound of your [footsteps/walking] in the garden, and I was naked, so I was afraid and I hid myself." **11** God said, "How did you find out you were naked [RHQ]? It must be because you ate some of the fruit [from the tree] that I told you, 'Do not eat its fruit.'" [RHQ] **12** The man said, "You gave me this woman to be with me. She is the one who gave me some of the fruit from that tree, and so I ate it." **13** Then Yahweh God said to the woman, "Why did you do such a thing?" The woman replied, "I ate some of the fruit because the snake deceived me." **14** Then Yahweh God said to the snake, "Because you did this, of all the livestock and the wild animals, I will curse/punish you alone. As a result, you [and all other snakes] will scurry across the ground on your bellies, and so what you eat will have dirt [on it] as long as you live. **15** And I will cause you and the woman to act in a hostile way toward each other, and I will cause your brood and her descendants to act hostilely toward each other. You will strike at the heel [of one descendant] of hers, but he will

strike your head." 16 Then Yahweh said to the woman, "You will have great pain when you give birth to children; you will suffer great pain as your children are being born [DOU]. You will greatly desire your husband [to show affection for you], but he will rule over you." 17 Then Yahweh said to the man, "You heeded what your wife said, and you ate some of the fruit [of the tree] concerning which I commanded you saying, 'Do not eat it.' So I will make it difficult [to grow things in] the ground because of what you did. You will have to work hard as long as you live to produce things from the ground to eat. 18 Thornbushes and thistle plants and other weeds will grow [and prevent what you have planted from growing]. And for food, you will have to eat things that just grow in your fields. 19 [All your life] you will sweat as you work hard to produce food to eat. Then you will die [EUP], and your [body will be buried] in the ground. [I made] you from soil, so when you [die and are buried your body will decay] and become soil again." 20 [The man, whose name was] Adam, named his wife Eve, [which means 'living'], because she became the ancestor of all living people. 21 Then Yahweh God [killed some animals and] made clothes from their skins for Adam and his wife. 22 Then Yahweh said, "Look! Those two have become like us because they know what is good [to do] and what is evil [to do]. So now, it will not be good if they reach out and pick and eat [some of the fruit from] the tree [which enables people who eat it] to live [forever]!" 23 So Yahweh God expelled the man and his wife from the garden of Eden. Yahweh God had created Adam from the ground, but now he forced him to till that ground [so that he could grow food to eat]. 24 After Yahweh expelled them, on the east side of the garden he placed (cherubim/creatures with wings) and [an angel holding] a flaming sword which flashed back and forth. He did that in order to block the entrance to the garden, so that people could not go back to the tree that enables people [who eat its fruit] to live [forever].

4 Adam (had sex/slept) with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son whom she named Cain, [which sounds like the word that means 'produce'], because, she said, "By Yahweh's help I have produced a son." Some time later she gave birth to another son, and she named him Abel. 2 [After those boys grew up], Abel (tended/took care of) sheep and goats, and Cain became a farmer. 3 One day Cain harvested some of the crops he had grown and brought them to Yahweh as a gift for him, 4 and Abel took from his flock some of the first lambs that had been born [and killed them] and, as a gift, gave to Yahweh the fatty parts, [which were the best parts]. Yahweh was pleased with Abel and his offering, 5 but he was not pleased with Cain and his offering. So Cain became very angry, and his face looked dejected. 6 Yahweh said to Cain, "(You should not be angry!/Why are you angry?) [RHQ] (You should not scowl like that!/Why do you scowl like that?) [RHQ] 7 If you had done what was right (OR, if you do what is right) [RHQ], I would accept your offering. But if you do not do what is right, [your desire to] sin [is ready to attack you like a wild animal that] [PRS] crouches outside the doorway, [ready to spring on its victim] [MET]. [Your desire to] sin wants to control you, but you must (control/not obey) it." 8 But one day, Cain said to his younger brother Abel, "Let's go for a walk in the fields." [So they went together]. And when they were in the countryside, suddenly Cain attacked Abel and killed him. 9 [Later, even though] Yahweh [knew what Cain had done], he said to Cain, "[Do you know] where Abel, your younger brother, is?" Cain replied, "No, I do not know. (My job is not to guard my younger brother!/Am I supposed to take care of my younger brother?)" [RHQ] 10 Yahweh said, "You have done a terrible thing [RHQ]! So now [it is as though] your younger brother's voice is crying to me from the ground, demanding that his death must be avenged. 11 You have killed your younger brother, and the ground has soaked up his blood. So now I will expel you from this land and curse your efforts to produce crops. 12 You will till the ground to plant crops, but the ground will produce very few [HYP] crops. And you will continually wander around the earth, and not have any place to live permanently." 13 Cain replied, "You are punishing me more then I can endure. 14 You are about to expel me from the ground [that I have been cultivating], and I will no longer be able to come (into your presence/and talk with you). Furthermore, I will be continually wandering around the earth with no place to live permanently, and anyone who sees me will kill me." 15 But Yahweh said to him, "No, that will not happen. I will put a mark on you to warn anyone who sees you that [I will punish him severely if] he kills you. I will punish that person seven times as severely as I am punishing you." Then Yahweh put a mark on Cain's forehead. 16 So Cain left Yahweh and went to live in the land called Nod, [which means 'wandering'], which was east of Eden. 17 Some time later, Cain (had sex/slept) with his wife, and she [became pregnant and] gave birth to a son, whom she named Enoch. Then Cain started to build a city, and he named the city 'Enoch', the same name that his son had. 18 Enoch [grew up and married and] became the father of a son whom he named Irad. When Irad [grew up he] became the father of a son whom he named Mehujael. Mehujael [grew up and] became the father of a son whom he named Methuselah. Methuselah [grew up and] became the father of Lamech. 19 When Lamech [grew up he] married two women. The name

of one was Adah and the other was Zillah. **20** Adah gave birth to [a son she named] Jabal. **21** Later, Jabal was the first person who lived in tents because he traveled from place to place to take care of livestock. His younger brother's name was Jubal. He was the first person who made/played a (lyre/stringed instrument) and a flute. **22** [Lamech's other wife] Zillah gave birth to a son whom she named Tubal-Cain. Later Tubal-Cain became a (blacksmith/one who made tools from bronze and iron). Tubal-Cain had a younger sister whose name was Naamah. **23** One day Lamech said to his two wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen carefully to what I am saying. A young man struck me and wounded me, so I killed him. **24** Yahweh said long ago that he would avenge and punish anyone who killed Cain seven times as much as he punished Cain [for killing his younger brother]. So if anyone [tries to] kill me, I will punish him 77 times as much [as Yahweh punished Cain]." **25** Adam continued to (have sex/sleep) with [EUP] his wife, and she [became pregnant and] gave birth to another son, whom she named Seth, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'given'], because, she said, "God has given me another child to take the place of Abel, since Cain killed him." **26** When Seth grew up, he became the father of a son whom he named Enosh. About that time people began to worship Yahweh [again].

5 Here is a list of the descendants of Adam. When God created humans, he caused them to be like him in many ways. **2** He created one man and one woman. He blessed them, and on the day that he created them, he called them 'human beings'. **3** When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son who [grew up to] be just like him. That was the son he named Seth. **4** After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 more years, and during those years he became the father of other sons and daughters. **5** Adam lived 930 years altogether, and then he died. **6** When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of Enosh. **7** After Enosh was born, Seth lived 807 more years, and became the father of other sons and daughters. **8** Seth lived 912 years altogether, and then he died. **9** When Enosh was 90 years old, he became the father of Kenan. **10** After Kenan was born, Enosh lived 815 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. **11** Enosh lived 905 years altogether, and then he died. **12** When Kenan was 70 years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. **13** After Mahalalel was born, Kenan lived 840 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. **14** Kenan lived 910 years altogether, and then he died. **15** When Mahalalel was 65 years old, he became the father of Jared. **16** After Jared was born, Mahalalel lived 830 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. **17** Mahalalel lived 895 years altogether, and then he died. **18** When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. **19** Jared lived 800 years after Enoch was born, and he became the father of other sons and daughters. **20** Jared lived 962 years altogether, and then he died. **21** When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. **22** Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for 300 years after Methuselah was born, and he became the father of other sons and daughters. **23** Enoch lived 365 years altogether in close fellowship with God. **24** Then one day he disappeared, because God took him away [to be with him in heaven]. **25** When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. **26** Methuselah lived 782 years after Lamech was born, and became the father of other sons and daughters. **27** Methuselah lived 969 years altogether, and then he died. **28** When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son, **29** whom he named Noah, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'relief'], because he said, "He will bring us relief from all the hard work we have been doing to produce food from the ground that Yahweh cursed." **30** Lamech lived 595 years after Noah was born and became the father of other sons and daughters. **31** Lamech lived 777 years altogether, and then he died. **32** When Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of a son whom he named Shem. Later he became the father of another son whom he named Ham, and later he became the father of another son whom he named Japheth.

6 When people began to become very numerous all over the earth, and many daughters were born to them, **2** some of the men who (belonged to/believed in) God saw that some of the women who did not (belong to/believe in) God were very beautiful. So they took whichever ones they chose to become their wives. **3** Then Yahweh said, "[I will] not [allow] my Spirit to keep people alive forever (OR, the breath of life will not remain in people forever). They will die eventually. They will live not more than 120 years before they die (OR, there will be only 120 more years before they die)." **4** There were [giants called] Nephils who lived on the earth at that time and later. During that time [some of the Nephil] men who (belonged to/believed in) God had sex [EUP] with women who did not (belong to/believe in) God, and they gave birth to children. The Nephils were considered to be heroic fighters, and they became famous. **5** Yahweh saw that people on the earth had become very wicked, and that everything they thought about evil things continually. **6** Yahweh was sorry that he had made people. **7** So he said, "I will completely destroy the people I made. I will also destroy all the animals and the creatures that scurry across the ground and the birds. None of them will remain on the earth, because I regret that I made them." **8**

But Yahweh was pleased with Noah. **9** This is why: Noah was a man who always acted in a righteous way. No one who lived at that time could criticize him about anything. Noah lived in close fellowship with God. **10** Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. **11** At that time God considered that everyone else on earth was very wicked, and everywhere on the earth, people [MTY] were acting cruelly and violently toward each other. **12** God was dismayed when he saw how evil people [MTY] were, because everyone (OR, all living creatures) had begun to behave in an evil way. **13** So God said to Noah, "I have decided to destroy everyone, because all over the earth people are acting violently toward each other. So I am about to get rid of them as well as everything else on the earth. **14** [I want you to] make for yourself a large boat from cypress wood. Make rooms inside it. Cover the outside and the inside with tar [to make it (waterproof/so that water cannot get in and sink the boat]). **15** This is the size you must make it: It shall be (150 yards/135 meters) long, (25 yards/22.5 meters) wide, and (15 yards/13.5 meters) high. **16** Make a roof for the boat. Leave a space of about (18 in./.5 meter) between the sides and the roof to let air and light enter (OR, the middle of the roof should be 18 inches higher than the sides). Build the boat with three decks inside, and put a door in one side. **17** Listen carefully! I am about to cause a flood to occur that will destroy every creature that lives beneath the sky. Everything on the earth will die. **18** But I will make an agreement with you(sg): You and your wife, your sons and their wives will enter the boat. **19** And I want to save some of all kinds of creatures. So you must also bring two of all living creatures, a male and a female, into the boat with you, so that their species also may remain alive. **20** Two of every kind of creature will come to [in order that by your putting them in the boat] you will keep them alive. They will include two of each kind of bird and each kind of animal and each kind of creature that scurries across the ground. **21** You must also take some of every kind of food that you and all these animals will need, and store it in the boat." **22** So Noah did everything that God told him to do.

7 Then Yahweh said to Noah, "I have seen that out of everyone who is now living, you alone always act righteously. So you and all your family go into the boat. **2** Take with you seven pairs of every kind of animal that I have said I will accept for sacrifices. Take seven males and seven females. Also take a male and a female from every kind of animal that I have said that I will not accept for sacrifices. **3** Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird from all over the earth to keep them alive. **4** Do this because seven days from now I will cause rain to fall on the earth. It will rain constantly for 40 days and nights. By doing that, I will destroy everything that I have made that is on the earth." **5** Noah did everything that Yahweh told him to do. **6** Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth. **7** Before it started to rain, Noah and his wife and his sons went into the boat to escape from the flood water. **8** Pairs of animals, those that God said that he would accept for sacrifices and those that he would not accept for sacrifices, and pairs of birds and pairs of all the kinds of creatures that move close to the ground, **9** males and females, came to Noah and then went into the boat, just as God told Noah that they would do. **10** Seven days later, it started to rain and a flood began to cover the earth. **11** When Noah was 600 years old, (on the 17th day of the second month [of that year/late in October]), all the water that is under the surface of the earth burst forth, and it began to rain so hard that it was as though a dam [MET] in the sky burst open. **12** Rain fell on the earth constantly for 40 days and nights. **13** On the day that it started to rain, Noah went into the boat with his wife, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth and their wives. **14** They had already put in the boat some of every kind of wild animal and every kind of livestock and every kind of bird and every other creature that has wings. **15** Pairs of all animals came to Noah and entered the boat. **16** There was a male and a female of each animal that came to Noah, just as God had said they would do. After they were all in the boat, God shut the door. **17** It rained for 40 days and nights, and the flood increased. It flooded until the water lifted the boat above the ground. **18** As he water rose higher and higher, the boat floated on the surface of the water. **19** The water rose all over the earth until it covered all the mountains. **20** Even the highest mountains were covered by more than (20 feet/6 meters) of water. **21** As a result, every living creature on the surface of the earth died. That included birds and livestock and wild animals and other creatures that scurry across the ground, and all the people. **22** On the land, (everything that breathed/every living thing) died. **23** God destroyed every living creature: People and animals and creatures that scurry across the ground and birds. Only Noah and those who were in the boat with him remained alive. **24** The flood remained like that on the earth for 150 days.

8 But God (did not forget/thought) about Noah and all the wild animals and all the kinds of livestock that were with him in the boat. So one day God sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the wind caused the water [to begin] to recede. **2** God caused the water that was under the earth to stop bursting forth, and he caused the floodgates of water from the sky to close so that it stopped raining. **3** The water on the earth gradually receded. 150 days after the flood

began, 4 (on the 17th day of the seventh month [of that year/late in March]), the boat came to rest on one of the mountains in the Ararat region. 5 The water continued to recede until, on the first day of the tenth month [of that year], the tops of other mountains became visible. 6 40 days later, Noah opened the window that he had made in the side of the boat, and sent out a raven. 7 The raven flew back and forth [to and from the boat] until the water was completely gone. 8 Then Noah sent out a dove to find out if the water had all receded on the ground. 9 But the dove did not find any place to perch, so it flew back to Noah in the boat, because there was still water all over the surface of the earth. So Noah reached out his hand and took the dove back inside the boat. 10 Noah waited seven more days. Then he sent the dove out of the boat again. 11 This time the dove returned to him in the evening and, [surprisingly], in its beak there was a leaf from an olive tree that the dove had just plucked. Then Noah knew that the water had truly receded from the surface of the ground. 12 Noah waited seven more days. Then he sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him. 13 Noah was now 601 years old. By the first day of the first month [of the Jewish year], the water had completely drained away from the ground. Noah removed the covering on top of the ark, and he was surprised to see that the surface of the ground was drying. 14 By the 27th day of the next month, the ground was completely dry. 15 Then God said to Noah, 16 "Leave the boat, along with your wife and your sons and their wives. 17 Bring out with you all the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that scurry across the ground, in order that they can spread all over the earth and become very numerous." 18 So Noah left the boat, along with his wife and his sons and their wives. 19 And every kind of creature, including all those that scurry across the ground, all the birds, every creature that moves on the earth, left the boat. They left the boat in groups of their own species. 20 Then Noah built a (stone altar/place for offering sacrifices) to Yahweh. Then he took some of the animals that Yahweh had said were acceptable as sacrifices and killed them. Then he burned them whole on the altar. 21 When Yahweh smelled the pleasant odor, he was pleased with the sacrifice. Then he said to himself, "I will never again devastate everything on the earth because of the sinful things people do. Even though everything that people think is evil from the time they are young, I will not destroy all the living creatures again, as I did this time. 22 As long as the earth exists, each year there will be seasons for planting seeds and seasons for harvesting crops. Each year there will be times when it is cold and times when it is hot, summer and winter (OR, rainy season and dry season). Each day there will be daytime and nighttime."

9 Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "I want you to have many children who will live all over the earth. 2 All the wild animals on the earth and all the birds, all the creatures that scurry across the ground, and all the fish, will be very afraid [DOU] of you. I have put them under your control. 3 Just as I previously said you could eat green plants for food, now I am saying you can eat everything that lives and moves. 4 [It is blood that causes creatures to be alive], therefore you must not eat meat that still has blood in it after the animal is killed. [After you have drained the blood out, you may cook it and eat it]. 5 I insist that murderers must be executed. Animals that kill people must also be executed. The reason that everyone who murders someone else must be executed is that 6 I made people to be like myself [in many ways]. So someone who murders another human being must be executed by others, [because he killed someone who is like me]. 7 As for you, I want you to produce many children, in order that they and their descendants may live all over the earth." 8 God also said to Noah and his sons, 9 "Listen carefully. I am now making a solemn promise to you and with your descendants, 10 and with all the living creatures that are with you—including the birds, the livestock, and the wild animals—every living creature on the earth that came out of the boat with you. 11 This is the promise that I am making to you: I will never again destroy all living creatures by a flood, or destroy everything else on the earth by a flood." 12 Then God said to him, "This is the sign to guarantee that I will keep the promise that I am making to you and to all living creatures, a promise that I will keep forever: 13 [From time to time] I will put a rainbow in the sky. It will remind me of my promise that I have made to you and everything on the earth. 14 When I cause rain to fall from the clouds, and a rainbow appears in the sky, 15 it will remind me about the promise that I have made to you and all living creatures, my promise that there will never again be a flood that will destroy all living creatures. 16 Whenever there is a rainbow in the sky, I will see it, and I will think about the promise that I have made to every living creature that is upon the earth, a promise that I will keep forever." 17 Then God said to Noah, "The rainbow will be the sign of the promise that I have made to all the creatures that live on the earth." 18 The sons of Noah who came out of the boat were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham later became the father of Canaan. 19 All the people on the earth are descended from those three sons of Noah. 20 Noah was a farmer. He planted grapevines. 21 [When they later produced grapes, he made wine from the grapes]. One day, when he drank too much of

the wine, he became drunk, and he lay naked in his tent. **22** Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father lying naked in the tent. So he went outside and told his two older brothers what he had seen. **23** Then Shem and Japheth took a large cloth and placed it across their backs, and walked backwards into the tent. They covered their father's naked body with the cloth. Their faces were turned away from their father, so they did not see him naked. **24** When Noah woke up [and was sober again], he found out how wrongfully Ham, his youngest son, had behaved toward him. **25** He said, "I am cursing Ham's youngest son, Canaan, and his descendants. They will be like slaves to their uncles. **26** I will ask God to enlarge the territory that belongs to Japheth, and allow his descendants to live peacefully among the descendants of Shem [MTY]. **27** And I desire that Canaan's descendants will be like slaves of Japheth's descendants." **28** Noah lived 350 more years after the flood. **29** He died when he was 950 years old.

10 (This is/I will now give) a list of the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They had many children after the flood. **2** The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. **3** The sons of Gomer were Askenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. **4** The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. **5** Those sons and their families who were descended from Javan lived on the islands and on the land close to the [Mediterranean] Sea. Their descendants became tribes, each with its own language and clans and territory. **6** The descendants of Ham were Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. **7** The descendants of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. **8** Another one of Cush's descendants was Nimrod. Nimrod was the first person on earth who became a mighty warrior. **9** Yahweh saw that he had become (OR, caused him to become) a great hunter. That is why people say to a great hunter, "Yahweh (sees that you are/has caused you to be) a great hunter like Nimrod." **10** Nimrod became a king who ruled in Babylonia. The first cities over which he ruled were Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh. **11** From there he went [with others] to Assyria and built the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, **12** and Resen. Resen was a large city between Nineveh and Calah. **13** Ham's son, Egypt, became the ancestor of the Lud, Anam, Lehab and Naphtuh, **14** Pathrus, Casluh and Caphtor people-groups. The Philistine people were descended from Casluh. **15** Ham's youngest son, Canaan, became the father of Sidon, who was his eldest son, and Heth, his younger son. **16** Canaan was also the ancestor of the Jebus, Amor, Girgash, **17** Hiv, Ark, Sin, **18** Arved, Zemar and Hamath people-groups. Later the descendants of Canaan dispersed over a large area. **19** Their land extended from Sidon [city] in the north as far south as Gaza [town], and then to the east as far as Gerar [town], and then farther east to Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim [towns], and even as far as Lasha [town]. **20** Those are the descendants of Ham. They became groups that had their own clans, their own languages, and their own land. **21** Shem, the older brother of Japheth, became the father of Eber, and the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber. **22** The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. **23** The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. **24** Arphaxad became the father of Shelah. Shelah became the father of Eber. **25** Eber became the father of two sons. One of them was named Peleg, [which means 'division'], because during the time he lived, people on [MTY] the earth became divided and scattered everywhere. Peleg's younger brother was Joktan. **26** Joktan became the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, **27** Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, **28** Obal, Abimael, Sheba, **29** Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All those people were descended from Joktan. **30** The areas in which they lived extended from Mesha westward to Sephar, which is in the (hill country/area that has a lot of hills). **31** They are descendants of Shem. They became groups that had their own clans, their own languages, and their own land. **32** All those groups descended from the sons of Noah. Each group had its own (genealogy/record of people's ancestors) and each became a separate ethnic group. Those ethnic groups formed after the flood and spread all around the earth.

11 At first, all the people in [MTY] the world spoke the same language [DOU]. **2** As people moved further east, they arrived at a plain in Babylonia region and began to live there. **3** Then they said to each other, "(Hey/Come on), let's form bricks and bake them to make them hard, for building!" So they used bricks instead of stones, and used tar instead of (mortar/a mixture of cement, sand and lime) to hold them together. **4** They said, "Hey, let's build a city for ourselves! We also ought to build a very high tower that reaches up to the sky! In that way we will become famous! If we do not do this, we will be scattered all over the earth!" **5** So they began to build the city and the tower. Then Yahweh looked down and saw the city and the tower that those [puny] men were building. **6** Yahweh said, "These people are one group that all speak the same language. If they have begun to do this now, then (there is nothing that they will decide to do that will be impossible for them/they will be able to do whatever they decide to do) [LIT]! **7** So, okay/now, we will go down there and cause there to be many different languages, so that they will not be able to understand each

other." 8 So Yahweh did that. As a result, the people stopped building the city, and Yahweh caused them to disperse all over the earth. 9 The city was called Babel which means 'confusion', because there Yahweh caused the people to become confused because the people [MTY] spoke [different languages that the others could not understand], not just one language. From there Yahweh caused them to disperse all over the earth. 10 (This is a bigger list/I will now tell you more) of the descendants of Shem: Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of Arpachshad. 11 After Arpachshad was born, Shem lived 500 more years and had more sons and daughters. 12 When Arphachshad was 35 years old, he became the father of Shelah. 13 After Shelah was born, Arpachshad lived 403 more years and became the father of more sons and daughters. 14 When Shelah was 30 years old, he became the father of Eber. 15 After Eber was born, Shelah lived 403 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. 16 When Eber was 34 years old, he became the father of Peleg. 17 After Peleg was born, Eber lived 430 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. 18 When Peleg was 30 years old, he became the father of Reu. 19 After Reu was born, Peleg lived 209 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. 20 When Reu was 32 years old, he became the father of Serug. 21 After Serug was born, Reu lived 207 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. 22 When Serug was 30 years old, he became the father of Nahor. 23 After Nahor was born, Serug lived 200 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. 24 When Nahor was 29 years old, he became the father of Terah. 25 After Terah was born, Nahor lived 119 more years and became the father of other sons and daughters. 26 When Terah was 70 years old, his son Abram was born. Later, two other sons, Nahor and Haran were born. 27 (This is/I will now give) a list of the descendants of Terah: Terah's sons were Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran's son was named Lot. 28 Haran died before his father died. He died in Ur [city] in Chaldea land, where he was born. 29 Abram and Nahor both married. Abram's wife was named Sarai, and Nahor's wife was named Milcah. Milcah and her younger sister Iscah were the daughters of Haran. 30 Sarai was unable to bear any children. 31 Terah decided to leave Ur and go to live in Canaan land. So he took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and Abram's wife Sarai with him. But instead of going to Canaan, they stopped at Haran [town] and lived there. 32 When Terah was 205 years old, he died there in Haran.

12 Then Yahweh said to Abram, "Leave this country where you are now living. Leave your father's clan and his family. Go to a land that I will show you. 2 I will cause your descendants to become a large nation. I will bless you and cause you to become (famous/highly esteemed). What I do for you will be a blessing to others. 3 I will bless those who (bless/ask God to do good things for) you, and I will (curse/ask God to punish) those who do evil things to you. And because of what you do, groups of people all over the earth will receive blessings (OR, people will wish that God will bless others as much as he has blessed you)." 4 So Abram left Haran [town], as Yahweh told him to do. Abram was 75 years old when he left there along with his wife, Sarai, and his nephew, Lot. 5 Abram also took along all the possessions and slaves that they had accumulated/acquired in Haran [town], and they left there and went to Canaan land. 6 In Canaan they traveled as far as Shechem [town] and camped by a huge tree called the tree of Moreh. The Canaan people-group were still living in that land. 7 Then Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, "I will give this land to your descendants." Then Abram built a stone altar to offer a sacrifice to Yahweh because Yahweh had appeared to him. 8 From Shechem, Abram and his family traveled to the hills that were east of Bethel [town]. Bethel [town] was to the west of where they set up their tent, and Ai [town] was further to the east. There he built another stone altar and offered a sacrifice and worshiped Yahweh there. 9 Then they left there and started traveling south to the Negev [Desert]. 10 There was (a famine/very little food to eat) in Canaan, so they went south to live in Egypt for a while. 11 Just as they were about to enter Egypt, Abram said to his wife Sarai, "Listen, I know that you are a very beautiful woman. 12 When the people in Egypt see you, they will say, 'This woman is his wife!' and they will kill me in order to get you, but they will not kill you. 13 So I ask you to tell them that you are my sister, so that because of you telling them that, they will (spare my life/not kill me)." 14 And as soon as they arrived in Egypt, the people in Egypt saw that his wife was indeed very beautiful. 15 When the king's officials saw her, they told the king how beautiful she was. And they took her to the king's palace. 16 The king treated Abram kindly because of Sarai, and he gave Abram many sheep and cattle and donkeys and male and female slaves and camels. 17 But because the king had taken Sarai, Abram's wife, Yahweh caused the king and the others in his household to be inflicted with terrible diseases. 18 When the king realized why that was happening, he summoned Abram and said to him, "Why did you do this to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you lie, saying she is your sister, with

the result that I took her to be my wife? You should not have done that! So now take your wife, leave here and go!" **20** Then the king told his officials/servants to take Abram and his wife and all his possessions out of Egypt.

13 So Abram and Sarai left Egypt, and they took along all his possessions, and Lot went with them to the Negev [Desert]. **2** Abram was very rich. He owned a lot of livestock, silver and gold. **3** They continued traveling from place to place from the Negev [Desert] toward Bethel [town] to the place between Bethel and Ai where they had previously set up their tents, **4** and where Abram had made a stone altar and worshiped Yahweh. **5** Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks of sheep and goats and herds of cattle, and tents. **6** But they had so many animals that they could not all stay in the same area. There was not enough land to provide water and food for all their animals. **7** Furthermore, the descendants of Canaan and Perizzi were also living in that area, and the land really belonged to them. And the men who took care of Abram's animals started quarreling with the men who took care of Lot's animals. **8** So Abram said to Lot, "Since we are close relatives, it is not good for us two to quarrel, or for the men who take care of your animals to quarrel with the men who take care of my animals. **9** There is plenty of land for both of us. So we should separate. You can choose whatever part you want [RHQ]. If you want the area over there, I will stay here. If you want the area here, I will go over there." **10** Lot looked around toward Zoar [town], and saw that there was plenty of water all over the plain near the Jordan [River]. It was like the park/garden in Eden, and like the land in Egypt. [That was before Yahweh destroyed [the cities of] Sodom and Gomorrah which were on that plain.] **11** So Lot chose the land in the plain of the Jordan [River]. He left his uncle, Abram, and moved east. **12** Abram stayed in the Canaan area, and Lot started to live near the cities in the plain of the Jordan [River], and he set up his tents near Sodom [city]. **13** [You need to know that] people who lived there were extremely wicked. **14** After Abram and Lot separated, Yahweh said to Abram, "Look around at this whole area where you are. Look north and south, look east and west. **15** I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you see; I will give it to you forever. **16** I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as particles of dust! [It will be easier] to count the particles of dust than it will be to count your descendants [HYP]. **17** Walk through the land in every direction, because I am going to give it all to you." **18** So Abram [and his men] took down their tents and moved to Hebron and started to live by the huge trees [at the town] Mamre. He placed a stone altar there to [make sacrifices to] Yahweh.

14 In a region to the east, there were four kings [who were friends/allies]. They were King Amraphel of Babylonia, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Chedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim. **2** In an area to the west, there were five other kings. They were King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, the city that is now called Zoar. **3** Those five kings and their armies gathered together in Siddim Valley, which is also called the Dead Sea [Valley], to fight against the four kings and their armies. King Chedorlaomer and his army [conquered the armies of those five kings, and demanded that those kings pay him tribute money each year]. **4** For twelve years he ruled them. But during the thirteenth year they rebelled [and refused to keep giving him tribute money]. **5** The next year, King Chedorlaomer and the other kings that were his allies took their armies and defeated the Repha people-group in Ashteroth-Karnaim and the Zuz people-group in Ham, and the Emi people-group in Shaveh-Kiriathaim. **6** They also defeated the Hor people-group in the hilly area of Seir as far as El-Paran near the desert. **7** Then they turned back and went to Mishpat [city], which is now called Kadesh. They conquered all the land belonging to the Amalek people-group and the Amor people-group who were living in Hazazon-Tamar [town]. **8** Then the armies of the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim and Bela marched out to fight the armies of the other four kings in Siddim Valley. That valley is close to the Salt/Dead Sea. **9** They fought against the armies of Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, Tidal the king of Goiim, Amraphel the king of Shinar, and Arioch the king of Ellasar. The armies of four kings were fighting against the armies of five kings. **10** The Siddim Valley was full of tar pits. So when the armies of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah tried to run away, many of the men fell into the tar pits. The others escaped and ran away to the hills. **11** As [the armies of the five kings] fled, [the armies of the four kings] seized all of the valuable things in Sodom and Gomorrah, including all the food. **12** They also captured Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom at that time. **13** Abram was living near the big trees near Mamre, who belonged to the Amor people-group. Abram had made an agreement with Mamre and his two brothers, Eshcol and Aner, [that they would help each other if there was a war]. **14** One of the men who escaped from the battle told Abram what had happened and that his nephew Lot had been captured and taken away. So Abram summoned 318 men who were his servants, men who had been with

Abram since they were born. They all went together and pursued their enemies as far north as Dan [city]. **15** During the night, Abram divided the men into several groups, and they attacked their enemies from various directions and defeated them. They pursued them as far as Hobah, which was north of Damascus [city]. **16** Abram's men recovered all of the goods that had been taken. They also rescued Lot and all his possessions and also the women and others who had been captured by their enemies. **17** As Abram was returning home after he and his men had defeated the armies of King Chedorlaomer and the other kings who had fought alongside him, the king of Sodom went north to meet him in Shaveh Valley, which people call the King's Valley. **18** The king of Salem [city], whose name was Melchizedek, was also a priest who offered sacrifices to the Supreme God. He brought some bread and wine to Abram. **19** Then he blessed Abram, saying "I ask the Supreme God, the one who created heaven and earth, to bless you. **20** The Supreme God has enabled you to defeat [MTY] your enemies, so we should praise/thank him." Then Abram gave to Melchizedek a tenth part of all the things he had captured. **21** The king of Sodom said to Abram, "You can keep all the goods you recovered. Just let me take back the people from my city whom you rescued." **22** But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have solemnly promised [MTY] to Yahweh, the Supreme God, the one who created heaven and earth, **23** that I will not accept even one thread or a thong of a sandal from anything that belongs to you. As a result, you will never be able to say, 'I caused Abram to become rich.' **24** The only thing I will accept is the food that my men have eaten. But Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre went with me and fought alongside me, so let them also have a share of the goods we brought back." [So the king of Sodom agreed to what he said].

15 Some time later, Abram had a vision in which Yahweh spoke to him and said, "Do not be afraid of (anything/your enemies). I will protect you [MTY], and I will give a great reward." **2** But Abram replied, "Yahweh God, how can you give me what I truly want, because I have no children, and the one who will be like a son and inherit all my possessions is my servant Eliezer from Damascus!" **3** Abram added, "You have not given me any children, so think about this: A servant in my household will inherit all I own!" **4** Yahweh replied, "No! He will not be the one who will inherit it. Instead, you yourself will be the father of the one who will inherit everything you own." **5** Then Yahweh took Abram outside [of his tent] and said, "Look up at the sky! Can you count the stars? No, you cannot count them because there are so many of them, and your descendants will be as numerous as the stars." **6** Abram believed that what Yahweh said would happen. And because of that, Yahweh considered that Abram was righteous. **7** Yahweh also said to him, "I am Yahweh. I am the one who brought you from Ur in Chaldea land. I brought you here to give you this land to possess." **8** But Abram replied, "Yahweh God, how can I know for sure that this land will belong to me?" **9** God said to him, "Bring a three-year-old heifer and a three-year-old goat to me, and a dove and a pigeon." **10** So Abram brought all of them and killed them and cut each of the animals in half. He arranged the halves of each one, side by side. But he did not cut the pigeon and dove in half. **11** Birds that eat dead flesh came down to eat the carcasses, but Abram shooed them away. **12** As the sun was going down, Abram fell sound asleep, and suddenly everything around him became dark and frightening. **13** Then God said to Abram, "I want you to know that your descendants will become foreigners living in a land that does not belong to them. They will become slaves of the owners of that land. The owners of the land will mistreat them for 400 years. **14** But then I will punish the people of that country that made them become slaves, and then your descendants will leave that country, taking many possessions with them. **15** But as for you, you will die [EUP] peacefully when you are very old. **16** After your descendants have been slaves for 400 years, they will return here, and take control of this land and defeat the Amor people-group. Those people will, because those people have not yet sinned enough to deserve to be punished now." **17** When the sun had set and it had become dark, [unexpectedly] a blazing torch and a clay pot containing burning coals from which smoke was rising appeared and went between the halves of the animals. **18** And on that day Yahweh made an agreement with Abram. Yahweh told him, "I will give to your descendants all the land between the river that is on the eastern border of Egypt to the south, and north to the huge Euphrates River. **19** That is the land where the Ken, the Keniz, the Kidmon, **20** the Heth, the Periz, the Repha, **21** the Amor, the Canaan, the Girgash, and the Tebus people-groups live."

16 Up to that time, Abram's wife Sarai had not given birth to any children for Abram. But she had a female slave from Egypt, whose name was Hagar. **2** [So one day] Sarai said to Abram, "Listen to me! Yahweh has not allowed me to become pregnant. So (sleep with/have sex with) [EUP] my slave Hagar. Perhaps she will bear children whom I can consider to be mine." Abram agreed to do what Sarai said. **3** So Abram (slept with/had sex with) Hagar, his wife Sarai's slave from Egypt. This happened ten years after they went to live in Canaan [land]. Sarai gave Hagar to her husband to be his secondary wife. **4** He (slept with/had sex

with) [EUP] Hagar and she became pregnant. When she realized that she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress Sarai. **5** Then Sarai said to Abram, "It is your fault! I put my servant into your arms, so that you could sleep with her [EUP]. Now she realizes that she is pregnant, and she despises me. I think Yahweh will punish you for doing this to me!" **6** So Abram said to Sarai, "[You listen to me]! She is your servant, so act towards her in the way you consider best." Then Sarai started to mistreat her, so she ran away from Sarai. **7** An angel of Yahweh found her as she was near a spring of water in the desert. It was the spring that was alongside the road to Shur. **8** He said to her, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She replied, "I have run away from Sarai, my mistress." **9** The angel said, "Go back to your mistress and be under her authority [MTY]". **10** The angel also said to her, "I will enable you to bear so many descendants that no one will be able to count them!" **11** The angel also said to her, "[Listen to this!] You are pregnant. You will give birth to a son. You must name him Ishmael, [which means 'God hears]', because Yahweh has heard you crying because you feel so miserable. **12** But your son will be as uncontrollable as a wild donkey [MET]. He will oppose everyone, and everyone will oppose him [MTY]. He will live far away from his relatives [SYN]." **13** Then Hagar realized that the angel was really Yahweh, so she said to herself, "(It is difficult to believe that I have really seen the back of Yahweh, the one who sees me!/Have I really seen the back of Yahweh, the one who sees me?)" [RHQ] So she called him 'Yahweh, the one who sees me'. **14** That is why people call the well there 'Beer-Lahai-Roi', [which means, 'The well of the living one who sees us'!] It is still there, between Kadesh and Bered. **15** So Hagar later gave birth to a son for Abram, and she gave to her son the name Ishmael. **16** Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar gave birth to Abram's son Ishmael.

17 When Abram was 99 years old, Yahweh appeared to him again and said to him, "I am God Almighty. I want you to live in a way that I will regard you as someone that cannot be criticized. **2** If you do that, I will make an agreement with you in which I will promise to enable you to have very many descendants." [MTY] **3** Abram prostrated himself with his face on the ground. Then God said to him, **4** "Listen to this agreement that I am making with you: People of many nations will be your descendants. **5** And no longer will your name be Abram. Instead, your name will be Abraham, [which means 'father of many nations,'] because the people of many nations will descend from you. **6** I will enable you to have very many descendants, and I will cause them to become great nations/people-groups, and some of your descendants will become kings. **7** I will make this agreement between me and you and your descendants. It will be an everlasting agreement to be in effect for many generations. This agreement is that I will be your God, and the God of your descendants. **8** I will give to you and to your descendants the land through which you are now traveling, all of the Canaan region. It will be an everlasting possession for your descendants, and I will be the God that they [will worship]." **9** Then God said to Abraham, "Now you must obey [your part of] the agreement that I am making with you, and your descendants must also obey it, for all generations. **10** This is the agreement that I am making, between myself and you and all your descendants: Every male among you must be circumcised. **11** (Cutting the foreskins of/Circumcising) them will be the sign [that you have accepted] the agreement I am making with you. **12** Every male child among you must be circumcised when he is eight days old, in all future generations. That includes baby boys in your household or those born from slaves that have been bought, and baby boys of foreigners who live among you but do not belong to your household. **13** It does not matter whether their parents are members of your household or slaves that have been bought; they must all be circumcised. Your bodies will have this mark to show [you have accepted] this everlasting agreement I am making. **14** You must expel from your community any male who has not been circumcised, because [by not being circumcised] that person has disobeyed my agreement." **15** God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai, your wife, you must not call her Sarai any longer. [Since I changed your name, I will change her name also]. Her name will now be Sarah. **16** I will bless her, and she will surely give birth to a son for you. And I will bless her so much that she will be the ancestor of people of many nations. Kings of some people-groups will be descended from her." **17** Abraham prostrated himself with his face on the ground [to show respect to God]. But then he laughed as he said to himself, "Can a man who is a 100 years old become a father of a son? And since Sarah is 90 years old, how can she bear a child?" **18** Then Abraham said to God, "Perhaps you will let Ishmael receive your blessing [and inherit all I possess]." **19** Then God replied, "[No!] Your wife Sarah will bear a son for you. You must name him Isaac. I will establish my agreement with him, one which will be an everlasting agreement for him and his descendants. **20** As for Ishmael, I have heard what you asked me to do for him. I will bless him so that he also will have many descendants. Among his descendants will be rulers of twelve nations. And I will cause his [descendants] [MTY] to also become a great nation. **21** But Isaac, the son whom Sarah will give birth to at

this time next year, is the one with whom I will establish my agreement." 22 When God finished talking to Abraham, God disappeared from his sight. 23 On that same day, Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the males that were in his household, including the sons of all the slaves he had bought, and circumcised them. He cut off their foreskins, just as God told him to do. 24 Abraham was 99 years old when (he was circumcised/someone circumcised him), 25 and Ishmael was thirteen years old when Abraham circumcised him. 26 On that very day Abraham and his son, Ishmael were circumcised. 27 And all the males in his household, the ones who had been born there and those who had been bought from foreigners, were also circumcised.

18 One day during that year when it was hot, Yahweh appeared to Abraham again near the big trees that belonged to Mamre, while Abraham was sitting in the entrance to his tent. 2 Abraham looked up [MTY] and was surprised to see three men standing near him. [Actually, one was Yahweh, and the other two were angels]. When he saw them, he ran to meet them. He prostrated himself with his face on the ground to show respect, 3 and said [to one of them], "Sir, if you are pleased with me, stay here for a little while [LIT]. 4 Allow my servants to bring a little water and wash your feet, and rest under this tree. 5 Since you have come here to me, allow me to bring you some food [SYN] so that you can feel refreshed before you leave." Yahweh replied, "All right, do as you have said." 6 So Abraham quickly went into the tent and said to Sarah, "Quick, get some of our best flour and make some loaves of bread!" 7 Then he ran to the herd of cattle and selected a calf whose meat would be tender and tasty. He gave it to one of his servants [and told him to] quickly kill it and cook it. 8 When the meat was cooked, Abraham brought some curds and milk and the meat that had been prepared, and set them in front of his visitors. Then he stood near them, under a tree, while they ate. 9 [One of] them asked him, "Where is Sarah, your wife?" He replied, "She is in the tent." 10 Then the leader of the group said, "I will return to you (about this time/in the springtime) next year, and to your amazement, your wife Sarah will have an infant son." It happened that Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind the one who was speaking. 11 Abraham and Sarah were very old, and Sarah was far past the time of when she could bear children. 12 So Sarah laughed to herself, thinking, "My body is worn out, and my husband is old. So how can I have the pleasure [of having a child]?" [RHQ] 13 Yahweh said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? Why was she thinking, 'I am too old, so how can I bear a child?' 14 I am Yahweh! (Is there anything too difficult for me?/There is nothing too difficult for me!) [RHQ] I will return about this time next year in the springtime, and Sarah will have an infant son." 15 Then Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But Yahweh said, "Don't deny it! You did laugh." 16 When the three men got up to leave, they looked down into the valley toward Sodom [city]. Abraham was walking with them to say "goodbye" to them. 17 Yahweh thought to himself, "It is not right for me to prevent Abraham from knowing what I plan to do [RHQ]. 18 Abraham's descendants [MTY] will become a great and powerful nation. And people of [MTY] all nations will be blessed because of what I do for him. 19 I have chosen him in order that he will teach his children and their families to obey me and do what is right and fair, and then I will do for Abraham what I promised." 20 So Yahweh said to Abraham, "I have heard the terrible things that have been said about the people of [MTY] Sodom and Gomorrah. Their sins are very great. 21 So I will go down now, and I will see if all the terrible things that I have heard are true or not true." 22 Then the two men turned and started walking toward Sodom. But Yahweh remained, standing in front of Abraham. 23 Abraham came closer to him and said, "Will you really destroy righteous people along with wicked ones? 24 What will you do if there are only 50 righteous people in the city? Will you really get rid of them all, and not spare the place/city for the sake of the 50 righteous people who are in the city? 25 It would certainly not be right for you to do such a thing, to kill righteous people along with wicked ones, and treat righteous people and wicked people the same way. You could not do that, because you, who are the judge of everyone on the earth, will certainly do what is right [regarding the people of Sodom]!" [RHQ] 26 Yahweh replied, "If I find 50 righteous people in Sodom, I will spare the whole place/city for their sake." 27 Abraham replied, "I should not be bold like this and speak to you, God, because I am as worthless as dust and ashes [MET]. 28 But what will you do if there are only 45 righteous people? Will you destroy everyone in the whole city because there are only 45 and not 50 righteous people?" Yahweh replied, "I will not destroy it if I find that there are 45 righteous people." 29 Abraham continued to speak to him [like this], saying, "What will you do if you find that there are only 40 righteous people there?" Yahweh replied, "I will not destroy them all, for the sake of the 40." 30 Abraham said, "God, please don't be angry now. Let me speak again. What will you do if there are only 30 righteous people?" He replied, "I will not do it if I find that there are 30 there." 31 Abraham said, "I should not be bold and speak to you like this, God. But what will you do if you find that there are only 20 righteous people there?" He replied, "I will not destroy the whole city,

for the sake of those 20." 32 Abraham said, "God, don't be angry now. Just let me speak one time more. What will you do if you find that there are only ten righteous people there?" Yahweh answered, "I will not destroy the city for the sake of those ten." 33 Abraham said no more, and as soon as Yahweh finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.

19 That evening, the two angels arrived in Sodom. Lot was sitting at the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to greet them, and prostrated himself with his face on the ground. 2 He said to them, "Gentlemen, please stay in my house tonight. You can wash your feet, and tomorrow you can continue your journey." But they said, "No, we will just sleep in the city square." 3 But Lot kept insisting strongly that they sleep in his house. So they entered his house with him, and he prepared a meal for them. He baked some bread without yeast, and they ate it. 4 After they finished eating, before they went to bed, the men of Sodom [city], all of them, from the young ones to the old ones, surrounded the house. 5 They called out to Lot, saying, "Where are the men who came to your house this evening? Bring them out, so that we can have sex with them!" [EUP] 6 Lot went outside the house and shut the door behind him, so that they could not go inside. 7 He said to them, "My friends, don't do such an evil thing! 8 Listen to me. I have two daughters who have never had sex with any man. Let me bring them out to you now, and you can do with them whatever pleases you. But don't do anything to these men, because they are guests in my house, [so I must protect them]!" 9 But they replied, "Get out of our way! You are a foreigner; so you have no right to tell us what is right! [If you don't get out of our way], we will do worse things to you than we will do to them!" Then they lunged towards Lot, and tried forcefully to break down the door. 10 But the two angels opened the door carefully, reached out their hands, and pulled Lot to them inside the house. Then they quickly shut the door. 11 Then they caused all the men who were outside the door of the house, young and old, to become blind, so that they could not find the door. 12 Then the two angels said to Lot, "Who else is with you here? If you have sons or sons-in-law or daughters or anyone else in the city who is related to you, take them out of the city, 13 because we are the ones who are going to destroy this place. Yahweh considers that these people are so evil that he sent us to destroy the city." 14 So Lot went and spoke to the men who had pledged to marry his daughters. He said to them, "Hurry! Get out of this city, because Yahweh is about to destroy it!" But his future sons-in-law thought he was joking. 15 As it was about to dawn the next morning, the two angels urged Lot, saying, "Get up quickly! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here with you and leave! If you don't, you will die when [we destroy/Yahweh destroys] the city!" 16 When Lot hesitated, the angels grasped his hand and his wife's hand and the hands of his two daughters. They led them outside the city safely. The angels did that because Yahweh was acting mercifully toward them. 17 When they were outside the city, one of the angels said, "[If you want to remain alive], run away quickly! Don't look back! And don't stop anywhere in the valley! Flee to the hills! If you don't, you will die!" 18 But Lot said to one of the angels, "No, sir, don't make me do that! 19 Please, listen. You have been pleased with me and have been very kind to me and spared my life. But I cannot flee to the mountain. If I try to do that, I will die in this disaster [PRS]. 20 But listen to me. There is a town nearby. Let me run to that small town. Let me go there now. It is a small town, but our lives will be saved if we go there." 21 One of the angels said to Lot, "I will allow you to do what you have requested [MTY]. I will not destroy the little town you are speaking about. 22 But hurry! Run there, because I cannot destroy anything until you arrive there." People later called the name of the town Zoar [which means 'small',] because Lot said it was small. 23 As the sun was rising, Lot and his family arrived in the town which is now called Zoar. 24 Then Yahweh caused fire and [burning] sulfur to fall down on Sodom and Gomorrah like rain. 25 In that way, he destroyed those cities and all the people who were living in those cities. He also destroyed everything in the valley, including all the plants/vegetation. 26 But Lot's wife stopped and looked back [to see what was happening], so she died, and her body [later] became a pillar of salt. 27 That morning, Abraham got up and went to the place where he had stood in front of Yahweh. 28 He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and he [was surprised to] see that all over the valley, smoke was rising, like the smoke of a huge furnace. 29 So, when God destroyed those cities in the valley, he remembered what he had promised Abraham, and he rescued Lot from the disaster that occurred in the cities where Lot had lived. 30 Lot was afraid to stay in Zoar, so he left there and moved with his two daughters to the mountain, and they lived in a cave. 31 One day the older daughter said to (the younger daughter/her sister), "Our father is old, and there is no man in this area who can have sex [EUP] with us, as people all over the earth do. 32 Let's make our father drink wine until he gets drunk. Then we can have sex with him [EUP] [without him knowing it]. In that way [he will cause us to become pregnant] and we can bear children." 33 So that night they caused their father to become drunk. And the older daughter went in and lay in

bed with her father, and he had sex with her, but he was so drunk that he did not know when she lay down with him or when she got up. **34** The next day, his older daughter said to (his younger daughter/her sister), "Listen to me. Last night I slept with our father. Let's cause him to become drunk again tonight! This time you can go and sleep with him. If he has sex with you, you can become pregnant, and that way you can have a child, too." **35** So that night, they caused their father to become drunk with wine again, and then his younger daughter went and slept with him. But again, he was so drunk that he did not know when she lay down with him or when she got up. **36** So Lot caused his two daughters to become pregnant. **37** The older one later gave birth to a son, whom she named Moab. He became the ancestor of the Moab people-group. **38** The younger one also gave birth to a son, whom she named Ben-Ammi. He became the ancestor of the Ammon people-group.

20 Abraham left Mamre and moved southwest to the Negev desert and lived in a place named Gerar, between Kadesh and Shur. **2** While he was there, he told people that Sarah was his sister, not his wife. Then King Abimelech of Gerar sent some of his men to Sarah, and they brought her to him to be his wife. **3** But God appeared to Abimelech in a dream during the night and said to him, "Listen to me! You are going to die because the woman you took is another man's wife." **4** But Abimelech had not had sex [EUP] with her, so he said, "God, since the people of my nation and I am innocent; will you kill me? **5** He told me, 'She is my sister,' and she also said, 'He is my brother.' I did this with pure motives and I [SYN] have not done anything wrong yet." **6** God said to him in another dream, "Yes, I know that your motives were pure. That is why I truly prevented you from sinning against me. I did not allow you to have sex [EUP] with her. **7** Now, return this man's wife to her husband, because he is (a prophet/a man who receives messages from me). He will pray for you, and you will (remain alive/not die). But if you do not return her to him, you will certainly die, and all the members of your household will also certainly die." **8** Early the next morning, Abimelech summoned all his officials, and told them everything that had happened. When they heard that [MTY], his men were very afraid [that God would punish them]. **9** Abimelech then summoned Abraham, and said to him, "You should not have done that to us [RHQ]! Did I do something wrong to you, with the result that you are causing me and the people in [MTY] my kingdom to be guilty of committing a great sin [RHQ]? You have done things to me that (should not be done/you should not have done)!" **10** Abimelech asked Abraham, "What was your reason for doing this?" **11** Abraham replied, "I said that because I thought, 'They certainly do not respect God in this place. If they don't respect God, they will not respect relationships with others. [If I say she is my sister, they will try to pay me a bride price] to get her. But if I say she is my wife, they will kill me to get her.' **12** Besides, she really [can be considered] my sister, because she is the daughter of my father, although she is not the daughter of my mother. She is the daughter of another woman, and I married her. **13** Later, when God told me to move away from my father's household, I said to her, 'This is the way you can show that you love me: Everywhere we go, say about me, "This is my brother."'" **14** So Abimelech brought some sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham. And he returned his wife Sarah to him. **15** And Abimelech said to him, "Look! All my land is here in front of you. Live in whatever place you like!" **16** And he said to Sarah, "Look here, I am giving 1,000 pieces of silver to your brother. This is to insure that no one will [bring up this matter again and] say that I have done something wrong. [EUP, IDM]" **17** Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech's wife and his slave girls so that they could become pregnant. **18** This was because Yahweh had caused it to be impossible for any of the women in Abimelech's household to bear children, because Abimelech had taken Abraham's wife Sarah.

21 Yahweh was very kind to Sarah, just as he said he would be. He did for Sarah exactly what he promised to do. **2** She became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham when he was very old, at the time God promised it would happen. **3** Abraham gave the name 'Isaac' (which means 'he laughs') to the son Sarah gave birth to. **4** Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when his son was eight days old, just as God commanded him to do. **5** Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born. **6** And Sarah said, "[Although I was sad before because I did not have any children], God has now enabled me to laugh, and everyone who hears about what God has done for me will laugh with me." **7** Then she also said, "No one would have said to Abraham that some day Sarah would nurse a child, but I have given birth to a son when Abraham is very old." **8** The baby grew and was weaned [when he was about three years old]. On that day, Abraham prepared a large feast to celebrate. **9** ([One day/During the feast)] Sarah noticed that Hagar's son Ishmael was (making fun of/playing with) Isaac. **10** So she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman from Egypt and her son! I do not want the son of that slave woman to be alone (OR, to be an heir along with) my son, Isaac!" **11** Abraham was very distressed about the matter, because he was concerned about his son [Ishmael]. **12** But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed about

your son, Ishmael, and about your maidservant, Hagar. Do everything that Sarah tells you to do. Listen to her, because Isaac is the one who will be considered the ancestor of the descendants I promised to give you. **13** But I will also cause the son of your maidservant to be the ancestor of the people of a great nation [MTY], because he is also your son." **14** So Abraham got up early the next morning. He got some food ready, put water in a container, and gave them to Hagar. He put them [in a bag] on her shoulder and sent them away. They wandered in the desert near Beersheba [town]. **15** After they had drunk all the water in the container, she put her son under one of the bushes there. **16** Then she went and sat nearby, about (as far as someone can shoot an arrow/100 meters away), because she thought, "I cannot endure seeing my son die!" As she sat there, she began to cry [loudly] [MTY]. **17** [The boy was crying too.] And God heard the boy crying. So he caused one of his angels to call out from heaven to Hagar, saying, "Hagar, are you worried about something? Do not be afraid, because God has heard the boy crying there. **18** Help your son up, and hold his hand as you leave, because I will cause his descendants to become a great nation." **19** Then God showed her a well of water. So she went to the well and filled the container with water, and gave the boy a drink. **20** God helped the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became a good (archer/man who hunts with bow and arrows). **21** He lived in Paran Desert. While e was there, Hagar got a wife for him from Egypt. **22** At that time, [King] Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, said to Abraham, "It is clear that God helps you with everything that you do. **23** So now (solemnly promise/swear) to me here, as God is listening, that you will (not deceive/act fairly to) me and my children and my descendants, in return for my being kind to you. Be kind to me and to all the people here in the country where you are now living." **24** So Abraham promised to do that. **25** [Then] Abraham complained to Abimelech about one of Abraham's wells that Abimelech's servants had seized. **26** But Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done that. You did not tell me previously, and I did not hear about it until today." **27** So Abraham brought some sheep and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a (treaty/peace agreement). **28** Abraham separated seven female lambs from his flock. **29** Abimelech asked Abraham, "What are these seven female lambs that you have separated from the rest of your flock?" **30** Abraham replied, "I want you truly to accept these female lambs from me [SYN], so that it may be a (public witness/proof) that this well belongs to me because I dug it." **31** So Abimelech accepted the animals, and as a result they called that place Beersheba, [which means 'Friendship Agreement Well',] because there the two of them made that agreement. **32** After they made the agreement at Beersheba, Abimelech and his army commander, Phicol, left, and returned to the land of the Philistine people-group. **33** Abraham planted a (tamarisk tree/kind of tree called esel) there, and he worshiped the eternal God there. **34** Abraham lived in the land of the Philistine people-group for a long time.

22 Several years later, God tested Abraham [to find out] whether Abraham [really trusted in him and would obey him]. He called out to Abraham, and Abraham replied, "I'm here." **2** God said, "Your son, Isaac, whom you love very much, is the only son [who is still here with you]. But take him and go together to the Moriah region. Offer him as a sacrifice like a burnt offering, on a hill that I will show you." **3** So Abraham got up early the next morning, put a saddle on his donkey, and took with him two of his servants along with his son, Isaac. He also chopped some wood to kindle a fire for a burnt offering. Then they started traveling to the place God told him about. **4** On the third day of their travels, Abraham looked up and saw in the distance the place where God wanted him to go. **5** Abraham said to his servants, "You two stay here with the donkey while the boy and I go over there. We will worship God there, and then we will come back to you." **6** Then Abraham took the wood to kindle a fire for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, for him to carry. Abraham carried in his hand a [pan containing burning coals to start a] fire, and a knife, and the two of them walked along together. **7** Then Isaac spoke to his father Abraham, saying, "My father!" Abraham replied, "Yes, my son, I'm here!" Isaac said, "Look, we have wood and [coals to light] a fire, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" **8** Abraham replied, "My son, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering." So the two of them continued walking along together. **9** They arrived at the place God had told him about. There, Abraham built a stone altar and arranged the wood on top of it. Then he tied his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. **10** Then Abraham took the knife and reached out to kill his son. **11** But an angel [who was really Yahweh] called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham! Abraham!" Abraham replied, "I'm here!" **12** The angel said, "Do not harm the boy or do anything to injure him, because now I know that you respect and obey God. I know that because you have not refused to sacrifice your son, the only son [who is still with you]." **13** Then Abraham looked up and saw that a ram was nearby, whose horns had been caught in a (thicket/clump of bushes). So Abraham went over and grabbed the ram [and killed it], and sacrificed it on the altar as a burnt offering, instead of his son. **14**

Abraham named that place 'Yahweh will provide'. And to the present day, people say, "On Yahweh's mountain, he will provide." **15** The angel [who was really Yahweh] called out to Abraham from heaven a second time. **16** He said, "I, Yahweh your Lord, am telling you that you did what I told you, and you have not refused to sacrifice your only son [that is with you]. So I say, 'I solemnly swear, with myself as my witness, **17** that some day your descendants will be as numerous as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the seashore. And your descendants will defeat their enemies and capture their cities [SYN].' **18** You obeyed me, so by means of your descendants the people of all the nations on the earth will be blessed." **19** Then Abraham and Isaac returned to where his servants were waiting, and they went back home together to Beersheba, and Abraham stayed there. **20** After these things happened, someone told Abraham, "Your brother Nahor's wife, Milcah, has also given birth to children. She has eight sons." **21** The oldest son was Uz. The next was Buz. After him was Kemuel, the father of Aram. **22** After Kemuel was Kesad, then Hazo, then Pildash, then Jidlaph, then Bethuel, **23** who was the father of Rebekah, [who later became Isaac's wife]. Those were the eight sons of Milcah, wife of Abraham's brother, Nahor. **24** Nahor also had a (concubine/female slave whom he took as a wife), whose name was Beumah. She gave birth to four sons: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

23 When Sarah was 127 years old, **2** she died at Kiriath-Arba [town], which is now called Hebron, in the Canaan region. After Abraham mourned for her, **3** he left the body of his wife and [went and] spoke to some of the descendants of Heth, saying, **4** "I am a foreigner [DOU] living among you, [so I do not own any land here]. Sell me some land here so that I can bury my wife's body." **5** They replied to him, **6** "Sir, you are a powerful prince among us. Choose one of our finest tombs and bury your wife's [body] in it. None of us will refuse to sell land to you for a tomb for your relatives' bodies." **7** Then Abraham stood up and bowed [in respect] in front of the people who owned the land, the descendants of Heth. **8** He said to them, "If you say that you are willing for me to bury my wife's body here, listen to me, and ask Ephron, the son of Zohar for me, **9** to sell to me the cave in the Machpelah area, which is at the end of his field. Ask him to sell it to me for the full price he wants, so that I can have a burial ground among you." **10** Ephron was sitting among the people near the city gate where many [HYP] descendants of Heth had gathered. He heard what Abraham said to them. **11** [So, just to make the customary reply to start the real discussion about a price], Ephron said, "No, sir, listen to me. I will give to you the field and the cave in it, without charge, with the people here as witnesses." **12** Abraham again bowed before the people who lived in the area, **13** and said to Ephron, as all the others were listening, "[No], listen to me. If you are willing, I will pay for the field. You tell me what the price is, and I will give it to you. If you accept it, the field will become mine, and I can bury my wife's body there." **14** Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, **15** "Sir, listen to me. The land is worth 400 pieces of silver. But the price is not important to you and me. Give me the money and bury your wife's body there." **16** Abraham agreed with Ephron about the price, and weighed for Ephron the 400 pieces of silver he had suggested, as everyone was listening, using the standard weights for silver used [in that area] by people who sold things. **17** So Ephron's field in the Machpelah area, near Mamre, and the cave in the field, and all the trees that were in the field inside the boundaries of the land, became Abraham's possession. **18** It became Abraham's property as all the descendants of Heth were listening there at the city gate. **19** After that, Abraham buried his wife Sarah's body in the cave in the field in the Machpelah area near Mamre, which is now called Hebron [city], in the Canaan region. **20** So the field and the cave in it were officially sold to Abraham by the descendants of Heth, to be used as a burial ground.

24 Abraham was now a very old man. Yahweh had blessed Abraham in many ways. **2** One day Abraham said to the chief servant of his household, the man who was in charge of everything Abraham owned, "Put your hand between my thighs to solemnly promise you will do what I tell you. **3** Knowing that Yahweh God [who created] the heavens and the earth is listening, promise that you will not get a wife for my son, Isaac, from the women here in Canaan. **4** Instead, go back to my country and to my relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac from among them." **5** The servant asked him, "If I find a woman among your relatives, what if she is not willing to come back with me to this land? Shall I take your son back there to the country you came from, [so he can find a wife and live there]?" **6** Abraham replied to him, "No! Be certain that you don't take my son there! **7** Yahweh God, who created the heavens, brought me here. He brought me from my father's household, and from the land where my relatives lived. He spoke to me and made a solemn promise to me, saying, 'I will give this land [of Canaan] to your descendants.' He will send an angel who will go there ahead of you, and enable you to get a wife for my son [there and bring her to live here]. **8** But if the woman you find will not come back with you, you are free to disregard the promise you are making. The only thing that you must not do is to take my son to live there!" **9** So the servant put his hand between Abraham's thighs

and made a solemn promise about the matter. **10** Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and loaded them with all kinds of goods that his master gave him to take along. Then he left to go to Aram-Naharaim, [which is in (northern Mesopotamia/Syria)]. He arrived in Nahor city. **11** It was late in the afternoon, at the time when the women go to the well to get water, when he arrived there. He made the camels kneel down near the well, which was outside the city. **12** The servant prayed, "Yahweh God whom my master Abraham worships, enable me to be successful today! Act kindly to my master, Abraham! **13** Listen to me. I am standing near a well of water, and the young women of the city are coming to get water. **14** I am asking you this: 'I will say to some girl, "Please lower your jar so that I may drink some water." If she says, "Drink some, and I will draw some water [from the well] for your camels, too," I will know that she is the woman whom you chose to be a wife for your servant, Isaac, and I will know that you have been kind to my master.'" **15** Before he finished praying, [amazingly], Rebekah arrived there, carrying a jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's younger brother Nahor. **16** She was very beautiful and still a virgin. She went down to the edge of the well, filled her jar with water, and then came back up. **17** Abraham's servant immediately ran to meet her, and said, "Please give me a little water from your jar." **18** She replied, "Drink some, sir!" She lowered her jar from her shoulder to her hands and gave him a drink. **19** After she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will also get some water for your camels, until they have had enough to drink." **20** She quickly emptied the water in her jar into the trough [for giving water to animals], and then ran back to the well, and kept getting water for all the camels. **21** The servant just watched her, without saying anything. He wanted to know if Yahweh had caused his trip to be successful or not. **22** Finally, after the camels finished drinking, the servant took out a gold nose ring that weighed (two ounces/6 grams), and two large gold bracelets for her arms, and gave them to Rebekah [and told her to put them on]. **23** Then he said, "Tell me whose daughter you are. Also, tell me, is there room in your father's house for me and my men to sleep there tonight?" **24** She replied, "My father's name is Bethuel. He is the son of Nahor and his wife Milcah. **25** Yes, we have room where you all can sleep tonight, and we also have plenty of straw and grain to feed the camels." **26** The servant bowed and worshiped Yahweh. **27** He said, "I thank you, Yahweh God, whom my master Abraham worships. You have continued to be kind and faithful to my master. You led me on this journey straight/directly to the house of my master's relatives!" **28** The girl ran and told everyone in her mother's household about what had happened. **29** Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban went quickly to Abraham's servant, who was still by the well. **30** He was surprised to have seen the bracelets on his sister's arms and the nose ring and to have heard Rebekah tell what the man had said to her. So he went out and saw the man standing near the camels, close to the well. **31** He said to the man, "You who have been blessed by Yahweh, come with me! (Why are standing out here?/You should not keep standing out here!) [RHQ] I have prepared a room for you in the house, and a place for the camels to stay." **32** So the servant went to the house, and Laban's servants unloaded the camels, and brought straw and grain for the camels, and water for him and the men with him to wash their feet. **33** They set food in front of him for him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I tell you (what I need to tell you/why I have come)." So Laban said, "Tell us!" **34** So the servant said, "I am Abraham's servant. **35** Yahweh has greatly blessed my master so that he has become very rich. Yahweh has given him many sheep and cattle, a lot of gold and silver, male and female servants, camels and donkeys. **36** My master's wife, Sarah, bore a son for him when she was very old, and my master has given to his son everything he owns. **37** My master made me solemnly promise, saying, 'Do not get a wife for my son from the women here in Canaan. **38** Instead, go back to my father's family, to my own clan, and get from them a wife for my son.' **39** Then I asked my master, 'What shall I do if the woman you show me will not come back with me?' **40** He replied, 'Yahweh, whom I have always obeyed [MTY], will send his angel with you, and he will cause your journey to be successful, with the result that you can get a wife for my son from my clan, from my father's family. **41** But if my clan refuses to allow her to return with you, you will be freed from being cursed because of not obeying me.' **42** "When I came today to the well, I prayed, 'Yahweh God whom my master, Abraham worships, if you are willing, please allow this journey of mine to be successful. **43** Listen to me. I am standing beside a well. A young woman may come to draw water. I will say to her, "Please, give me a little water to drink from your jar." **44** If she says to me, "Certainly, drink some! And I will also draw some water for your camels," that will be the woman whom you have chosen for my master's son!' **45** Before I finished praying, [amazingly], Rebekah approached with her water jar on her shoulder. She went down to the well and got some water. I said to her, 'Please give me a drink!' **46** She quickly lowered her jar and said, 'Drink some! And I will draw water [from the well] for your camels, too.' So I drank some water, and she also got water for the camels.

47 Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor and his wife, Milcah.' I had [a ring and bracelets with me, and] I put the ring in her nose and put the bracelets on her arms. 48 Then I bowed and worshiped Yahweh, and I thanked Yahweh God, the one my master Abraham worships, the one who led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother to be a wife for my master's son. 49 Now, if you are kind and faithful to my master, tell me that you will do what I am asking. If you will not do that, tell me that also, so I may know what to do [MTY]." 50 Laban and Bethuel answered, "It is clear that Yahweh has caused this to happen. So we two cannot say anything more. 51 Rebekah is here in front of you. Take her and go, and let her be a wife for your master's son, just as Yahweh has indicated." 52 When Abraham's servant heard these words, he bowed down to the ground to [thank] Yahweh. 53 Then the servant brought out silver and gold jewelry and clothes, and gave them to Rebekah. And he gave gifts to her brother Laban and to her mother. 54 Then they ate a meal together. The men who were with Abraham's servant also slept there that night. The next morning, the servant said, "Allow me now to return to my master." 55 But her brother and her mother replied, "Let the girl remain with us for about ten days. After that, you may take her and go." 56 But he replied to them, "Yahweh has made my journey successful, so do not detain me. Let me take her back to my master now!" 57 They said, "Let's call Rebekah and ask her what she wants to do." [MTY] 58 So they summoned Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man now?" She replied, "Yes, I will go." 59 So they allowed Rebekah, a woman who had taken care of her when she was very young, Abraham's servant, and the men who had come with him. to go. 60 Before they all left, they [asked God to] bless Rebekah, and said to her, "Our sister, we ask that Yahweh will cause you to have millions of descendants, and allow them to completely defeat [MET] all those that hate them." 61 Then Rebekah and her maid servants got ready and got on their camels and went with Abraham's servant. 62 At that time, Isaac was living in the Negev desert. He had gone there from Beer-Lahai-Roi. 63 One evening he went out into the field to meditate as he walked. He looked up and [was surprised to] see some camels coming. 64 Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got off the camel, 65 and asked the servant, "Who is that man who is approaching?" The servant replied, "That is Isaac, my master, [the man you will be marrying]." So she took her veil and covered her face, which was the custom for a woman who was about to be married. 66 The servant told Isaac everything that had happened. 67 Then Isaac took Rebekah into the tent that belonged to his mother, Sarah, and she became his wife. And he loved her. So Isaac was comforted about his mother's death.

25 [Some time after Sarah died], Abraham married another woman, whose name was Keturah. 2 She later gave birth to six sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. 3 Jokshan became the father of two sons, Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Asshur people-group, the Letush people-group, and the Leum people-group. 4 The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. They were all descendants of Keturah. 5 Abraham declared that after he died, Isaac would inherit everything he owned. 6 But while Abraham was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his (concubines/slaves that he had taken to be his secondary wives), and then he sent them away to live in a land to the east, to keep them far from his son Isaac. 7 Abraham lived until he was 175 years old. 8 He died at a very old age, joining his ancestors who had died previously [DOU]. 9 His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried his body in the cave at Machpelah area, near Mamre, in the field that Abraham had previously bought from Ephron, one of the descendants of Heth. 10 Isaac and Ishmael buried his body there, where Abraham previously buried his wife Sarah. 11 After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac moved to live near Beer-Lahai-Roi. 12 (These are/I will now give a list of) the descendants of Abraham's son, Ishmael, to whom Sarah's female slave, Hagar from Egypt, had given birth. 13 These are their names, in the order in which they were born: Ishmael's oldest son was named Nebaioth. After him were born Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15 Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. 16 The twelve sons of Ishmael became the leaders/chiefs of people-groups that had those names. They each had their own settlement and campsite. 17 Ishmael lived until he was 137 years old. Then he died, [EUP] joining his ancestors who had previously died. 18 His descendants (settled/went to live) in the area between Shur and Havilah, near the border of Egypt as a person travels toward Asshur. All of their camps were close to each other (OR, they all frequently attacked each other). 19 (This is an account of/I will now tell you about) Abraham's son, Isaac. Abraham became the father of Isaac, 20 and when Isaac was 40 years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel. Bethuel was one of the descendants of Aram from Paddan-Aram. Rebekah was the sister of Laban, who belonged to the Aram people-group. 21 Almost 20 years after they were married, Rebekah still had no children. So Isaac prayed to Yahweh concerning his wife, and Yahweh answered his prayer. His wife Rebekah became pregnant. 22 She was carrying twins in her womb,

and they kept jostling each other. So she said, “Why is it [that this is happening to me]?” So she asked Yahweh about it. **23** Yahweh said to her, “The older one of your twins will serve the younger one. The twins will be ancestors of two nations. And those two people-groups will separate from each other.” [CHI] **24** When Rebekah gave birth, it was true! Twin boys were born! **25** The first one born was red, and his body had hair all over it, like a garment made of hair. So they named him Esau, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means ‘hairy’]. **26** Then his brother was born, grasping Esau’s heel. So they named him Jacob, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means ‘heel’]. Isaac was 60 years old when the twins were born. **27** When the boys grew up, Esau became a skilled hunter. He spent a lot of time out in the fields. Jacob was a quiet man who stayed close to the campsite. **28** Isaac liked Esau more, because he enjoyed the taste of the meat of the animals that Esau killed. But Rebekah liked Jacob more. **29** One day while Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came home from the field, very hungry. **30** He said to Jacob, “Give me some of that red stew to eat right now, because I am very hungry!” [That is why Esau’s other name was Edom, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means ‘red]’.] **31** Jacob said, “I will give you some if you sell me (your birthright/the privileges you have because you are the firstborn son).” **32** Esau replied, “Well, I am about to die [from being so hungry]. [If I die now], (my birthright will not benefit me./What good will my birthright be to me?)” [RHQ] **33** Jacob said, “(Swear to/Solemnly promise) me that you are giving me the privileges that you will have from being the firstborn son!” So that is what Esau did. He sold his birthright to Jacob. **34** Then Jacob gave to Esau some bread and some stew made of lentils/beans. Esau ate and drank, and then he got up and left. By doing that, Esau showed that he (was not interested in/did not value) the privileges that would be his because of being the firstborn son.

26 Some time later there was a severe (famine/scarcity of food) there. That was different from the famine that occurred when Abraham was alive. So Isaac went [southeast] to Gerar [town, to talk] to Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people-group. [What happened was this: Isaac considered going to Egypt], **2** but Yahweh appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt! Live in the land where I will tell you to go! **3** Stay in this land for a while, and I will help you and bless you, because it is to you and your descendants that I will give all these lands, and I will do what I solemnly promised to your father. **4** I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as the stars in the sky. I will give to your descendants all these lands, and I will cause your descendants to be a blessing to the people of [MTY] all nations on the earth. **5** I will do that because your father Abraham obeyed me. He obeyed everything that I told him to do, everything that I declared and all the laws that I gave him.” So Isaac [went and asked King Abimelech if he would permit him to live in the Gerar area. The king said, “Okay,”] **6** [so Isaac] stayed there [along with his wife and sons]. **7** When the men in Gerar [town] asked who Rebekah was, Isaac said, “She is my sister.” He said that because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He thought, “Rebekah is very beautiful, so they will want her. [If I say that she is my sister, they know they will have to negotiate about a bride price because I am her older brother; but if I say that she is my wife, no negotiation will be possible]. They will just kill me to get her.” **8** When Isaac had been there a long time, one day Abimelech, the king of the Philistine people-group, looked down from a window [in his palace] and was surprised to see Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah. **9** So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said to him, “Now I realize that she is really your wife! So why did you say, ‘She is my sister’?” Isaac replied to him, “I said that because I thought that someone here might kill me to get her.” **10** Abimelech said, “(You should not have done this to us!/Why did you do this?) [RHQ] One of our people might have (had sex with/slept with) [EUP] your wife, and you would have caused us to be guilty of a great sin!” **11** Then Abimelech commanded all his people, saying, “Do not harm/molest this man or his wife! Anyone who does that will surely be executed!” **12** Isaac planted grain in that land that year, and he harvested a very large crop, because Yahweh blessed him. **13** Isaac continued to acquire more and more possessions, until finally he became very wealthy. **14** He had large herds of sheep and goats and cattle, and many slaves. Because of that, the Philistine people envied him. **15** So all the wells that the servants of his father Abraham had dug during the time when he was alive, the people filled up with dirt. **16** Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “You people have become more numerous than we are, so I want you to get out of our area.” **17** So Isaac [and his family] moved from there. They set up their tents in Gerar Valley [and started to live there]. **18** There were several wells in that area that had been dug when Isaac’s father Abraham was living, but Philistine people had filled them up [with dirt] after Abraham died. Now Isaac and his servants removed the dirt, and Isaac gave the wells the same names that his father had given to them. **19** Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water. **20** But other men who lived in Gerar [Valley] who took care of their animals argued/quarreled with the men who took care of Isaac’s animals, and said, “The water in this well is ours!” So Isaac

named the well Esek, which means 'dispute', because they disputed about who owned it. **21** Then Isaac's servants dug another well, but they quarreled about who owned that one also. So Isaac named it Sitnah, [which means 'opposition]'. **22** They moved on from there and dug another well, but this time no one quarreled about who owned it. So Isaac named it Rehoboth, [which means 'uninhabited place'], saying, "Yahweh has given us an uninhabited place to live in, a place that is not wanted by other people, and we will become very prosperous here." **23** From there Isaac went up to Beersheba. **24** The first night that he was there, Yahweh appeared to him and said, "I am God, whom your father Abraham worshiped. Do not be afraid of anything. I will help you and bless you, and because of what I promised my servant Abraham, I will greatly increase the number of your descendants." **25** So Isaac built a stone altar there [and offered a sacrifice] to worship Yahweh. He [and his servants] set up their tents there, and his servants started to dig a well. **26** [While they were digging the well], King Abimelech came to Isaac from Gerar, along with Ahuzzath, his advisor, and Phicol, the commander of his army. **27** Isaac asked them, "You (acted in a hostile way toward me/treated me like an enemy) before, and sent me away. So why have you come to me now?" **28** One of them answered, "We have seen that Yahweh helps you. So we said to each other, 'We should have an agreement between us and you. We should make a peace treaty with you, **29** stating that you will not harm us, in the same way that we did not molest [EUP] you.' We always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now Yahweh is blessing you." **30** So Isaac made a feast for them, and they all ate and drank. **31** Early the next morning they all (swore/solemnly promised) each other that they would do what they had promised. Then Isaac sent them home peacefully. **32** That day Isaac's servants came to him and told him about the well that they had finished digging. They said, "We found water in the well!" **33** Isaac named the well Shibah, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'oath']. To the present time the town there has the name Beersheba [which means 'Friendship Agreement Well']. **34** When Esau was 40 years old, he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. Both of those women were descendants of Heth, [not from Isaac's clan]. **35** Esau's two wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.

27 When Isaac was old, he became almost blind. One day he summoned Esau, his firstborn/older son, **2** and said to him, "My son?" Esau replied, "Here I am!" **3** Isaac said, "Listen to me. I am very old, and I do not know when I will die. So now take your bow and quiver full of arrows and go out into the countryside, and hunt for a wild animal for me. **4** Kill one and prepare the kind of tasty meat that I like. Then bring it to me so that after I eat it, I can give you a blessing before I die." **5** Rebekah was listening as Isaac said that to his son, Esau. So when Esau left the tent to go to the countryside to hunt for a wild animal in order to kill it and bring it back, **6** Rebekah said to her son, Jacob, "Listen to me. I heard your father talking to your brother, Esau, saying, **7** 'Go and kill some wild animal and bring it here, and prepare the meat in a tasty way, so that I may eat it, and then before I die I can give you my blessing while Yahweh is listening.' **8** So now, my son, do what I am telling you. **9** Go out to the flock and [kill] two nice young goats and bring [the meat] to me. Then I will prepare some tasty food for your father, the way he likes it. **10** Then you can take it to your father, in order that he can eat it, and then, before he dies, he will give his blessing to you, [and not to your older brother]." **11** But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "But my brother Esau's skin has hair all over it, and my skin is not like that! My skin is smooth! **12** What will happen if my father touches me? He will realize that I am tricking him, and as a result (I will be cursed/he will say that God will do bad things to) me, not a blessing!" **13** His mother replied, "If that happens, let the curse be on me. You do what I am telling you. Go and get the goats for me!" **14** So Jacob went and killed two goats and brought them to his mother. Then [with the meat] his mother prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked. **15** Then Rebekah took her older son Esau's clothes that were with her in the tent, and she put them on her younger son Jacob. **16** She also put the skins of the young goats on his hands and the smooth part of his neck. **17** Then she handed him some bread and the tasty food that she had prepared. **18** Jacob took it to his father and said, "My father!" Isaac replied, "I'm here; which of my sons are you?" **19** Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your firstborn son. I did what you told me to do. Sit up and eat some of the meat so that you can then bless me." **20** But Isaac asked his son, "My son, how is it that you were able to find and kill an animal so quickly?" Jacob replied, "Because Yahweh, whom you worship, enabled me to be successful." **21** Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near to me, my son, so that I can touch you and determine whether you are really my son Esau." **22** So Jacob went close to him. Isaac. Isaac touched him and said, "Your voice sounds like Jacob, but your hands feel hairy, like the hands of your older brother, Esau." **23** Isaac did not recognize Jacob, [because he was blind] and because Jacob's hands were now hairy, like those of his older brother, Esau. So Isaac prepared to bless Jacob. **24** But first Isaac asked, "Are you really my son Esau?" Jacob replied, "Yes, I

am." 25 Isaac said, "My son, bring me some of the meat that you have cooked, so that I may eat it and then give you my blessing." So Jacob brought him some, and he ate it. Jacob also brought him some wine, and he drank it. 26 Then Isaac said to him, "My son, come here and kiss me." 27 So Jacob came close to him, and his father kissed him on the cheek. Isaac smelled the clothes Jacob was wearing. They smelled like Esau's clothes. So he said, "Truly, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that Yahweh has blessed. 28 I ask that God will send down to you dew from heaven [to water your fields], and cause you to have abundant crops, good harvests of grain, and grapes for wine. 29 I ask that people of many nations will serve you and bow down to you. I ask that you will rule over your brothers, and that your mother's descendants will also bow down to you. I ask that God will curse/punish those who (curse you/ask God to do bad things to you), and bless those who bless you." 30 After Isaac finished blessing Jacob, Jacob was just leaving the room where his father was, when his older brother, Esau, returned from hunting. 31 Esau cooked some tasty meat and brought it to his father. He said to his father, "My father, please sit up and eat some of the meat that I have cooked, so that you can then give me your blessing!" 32 His father, Isaac, said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am Esau, your firstborn son!" 33 Then Isaac, realizing that it was not Esau who had come earlier, trembled very violently. He said, "Then who is it that brought me some meat from an animal that he had hunted and killed, and I ate it all? He was here just before you came. I blessed him, and I cannot (take back that blessing/declare that those things will not happen to him)." 34 When Esau heard those words of his father, he cried loudly. He was very disappointed. He said to his father, "My father, bless me, too!" 35 But his father said, "Your brother came deceitfully and took your blessing!" 36 Esau said, "It is right [RHQ] that his name is Jacob, which means 'cheat,' because he deceived me two times. The first time he took my rights from being his firstborn son, and this time he took my blessing!" Then he asked, "Do you not have any blessing left for me?" 37 Isaac answered and said to Esau, "I have declared that your younger brother will rule over you, and declared that all his relatives will serve him. And I have said that God will give him plenty of grain and grapes for wine. So, my son, (what can I do for you?/There is nothing more that I can do for you!)" [RHQ] 38 Esau said to his father, "My father, do you have only one blessing? My father, bless me, too!" Then Esau cried very loudly. 39 His father Isaac answered and said to him, "The place where you will live will be far from the fertile soil and from the dew that God sends from heaven [to water the fields]. 40 You will [rob and] kill people [MTY] in order to [get what you need to] live, and you will be as though you are your brother's slave. But when you decide to rebel against him, you will (free yourself from/no longer be under) his control." 41 So, because his father had given a blessing to Jacob, and not to him, Esau hated his younger brother. Esau thought to himself, "After my father dies and we finish mourning for him, I will kill Jacob!" 42 But Rebekah found out what her older son, Esau, was thinking. So she summoned her younger son, Jacob, and said to him, "Listen to me. Your older brother, Esau, is [comforting himself by] planning to kill you, to get revenge because of your deceiving your father. 43 So now, my son, listen carefully to what I am telling you. Escape quickly and go and stay with my brother Laban, in Haran [town]. 44 Stay with him a while, until your older brother is no longer angry. 45 When he forgets what you did to him, I will send a message to you, to tell you to return from there. If Esau kills you, [others will kill him, and] then both my sons would die at the same time!" [RHQ] 46 Rebekah also said to Isaac, "These [foreign] women whom Esau has married, who are descendants of Heth, are making my life miserable. I would prefer to die than to see Jacob marry a woman from the descendants of Heth in this area!"

28 Then Isaac summoned Jacob, and gave him a blessing. He told him, "Do not marry a woman of the Canaan people-group. 2 Instead, go right away to Paddan-Aram [in northwest Mesopotamia], to the house of your mother's father Bethuel. Ask one of the daughters of your mother's brother Laban to marry you. 3 I will pray that God Almighty will bless you, and enable you to [get married and] have many descendants, in order that they will become many people-groups. 4 I also will pray that he will bless you and your descendants by enabling you to possess/seize the land in which you are now living as a foreigner, the land that God promised to give to [my father] Abraham and his descendants." 5 So Isaac sent Jacob to Paddan-Aram, to live with Rebekah's brother Laban, the son of Bethuel, who belonged to the Aram people-group. 6 Esau found out that his father Isaac had blessed Jacob and then sent him to Paddan-Aram. He also found out that when he blessed Isaac, he told him, "Do not marry a woman of the Canaan people-group," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother, and had gone to Paddan-Aram. 8 Esau also realized that his father Isaac did not approve of women from the Canaan people-group. 9 Because of that, Esau went to see his uncle Ishmael, and married Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael. Mahalath was the sister of Nabaioth and the granddaughter of Abraham. 10 Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and started walking along the road to Haran. 11 When he arrived at a

certain place, he stopped there, because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones there and put it under his head to use as a pillow. Then he lay down and slept there. **12** While he was sleeping, he had a dream, in which he [was surprised to] see a stairway. The bottom of the stairway was on the earth and the top was in the sky. Jacob also saw that God's angels were going up and down the stairway. **13** And he [was surprised to] see Yahweh standing at the top of the stairway, saying "I am Yahweh God, whom your grandfather Abraham worshiped, and whom Isaac worships. I will give to you and to your descendants the land on which you are lying. **14** Your descendants will be as numerous as the particles of dirt that are on the earth, and their territory will be very large. It will extend in all directions, to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south. And people of all people-groups on earth will receive blessings because of [what happens to] you and to your descendants. **15** I will help you and protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you; I will continue to do for you all that I have promised to do." **16** [During the night], when Jacob woke up from sleeping, he thought, "Surely Yahweh is in this place, and until now I was not aware of it!" **17** He was afraid, and he said, "This place is very awesome! This is surely the place where God lives, and this is the entrance to heaven!" **18** In the morning Jacob got up and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up on its end to show that the place was a holy place. He poured some olive oil on top of the stone [to dedicate it to God]. **19** He named that place Bethel, [which means 'house of God'.] Previously its name was Luz. **20** Jacob solemnly promised God, saying, "God, if you will help me and protect me while I am taking this journey, and if you give me enough food to eat and clothes to wear, **21** in order that I can later return safely to my father's house, then you, Yahweh, will be the God that I will worship. **22** This stone that I have set up will mark the place where people can worship you. And I will give back to you a tenth of everything that you give to me."

29 Jacob continued on the road [MTY], and he arrived at the land that was east of Canaan. **2** There he [was surprised to] see a well in a field, and three flocks of sheep were lying near the well. It was the well from which shepherds habitually got water for their sheep. There was a large stone covering the top of the well. **3** When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would work together to roll the stone away from the top of the well and get water for the sheep. When they finished doing that, they would put the stone back in its place over the top of the well. **4** [On that day], Jacob asked the shepherds who were sitting there, "Where are you from?" They replied, "We are from Haran." **5** He asked them, "Do you know Laban, the grandson of Nahor?" They replied, "Yes, we know him." **6** Jacob asked them, "Is Laban well?" They replied, "Yes, he is well. Look! Here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep!" **7** Jacob said, "Hey! The sun is still high in the sky. It is not time for the flocks to be gathered for nighttime. Give the sheep some water and then take them back to (graze/eat grass) in the pastures!" **8** They replied, "No, we cannot do that until all the flocks are gathered here and the stone is removed from the top of the well. After that, we will give water to the sheep." **9** While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep. She was the one who took care of her father's sheep. **10** When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, who was his mother's brother, [Jacob was so excited that] he went over and [by himself] rolled away the stone that covered the top of the well, and he got water for his uncle's sheep. **11** Then Jacob kissed Rachel [on the cheek], and he cried loudly [because he was so happy]. **12** Jacob told Rachel that he was one of her father's relatives, the son of her aunt Rebekah. So she ran and told that to her father. **13** As soon as Laban heard that Jacob, his sister's son, was there, he ran to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him [on the cheek]. Then he brought him to his home, and Jacob told him all that had happened to him. **14** Then Laban said to him, "Truly, you are part of my family!" After Jacob had stayed there and worked for Laban for a month, **15** Laban said to him "(You should not work for me for nothing just because you are a relative of mine!/Why should you work for me for nothing just because you are a relative of mine?) [RHQ] Tell me how much you want me to pay you." **16** Well, Laban had two daughters. The older one was named Leah, and the younger one was named Rachel. **17** Leah had pretty eyes, but Rachel had a very attractive figure and was beautiful. **18** Jacob (was in love with/wanted very much to be married to) Rachel, and he said, "I will work for you for seven years. That will be my payment for your letting me marry your younger daughter, Rachel." **19** Laban replied, "It is better for me to let you marry her than for her to marry some other man!" **20** So Jacob worked for Laban for seven years to get Rachel, but to him it seemed like it was only a few days, because he loved her so much. **21** After the seven years were ended, Jacob said to Laban, "Let me marry Rachel now, because the time we agreed upon for me to work for you is ended, and I want to marry her. [EUP]" **22** So Laban gathered together all the people who lived in that area and made a feast. **23** But that evening, instead of taking Rachel to Jacob, Laban took his older daughter, Leah, to him. But because it was already dark, he could not see that it was Leah and not Rachel, and he had sex [EUP] with

her. 24 (Laban had already given his slave girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid/servant.) 25 The next morning, Jacob was shocked to see that it was Leah who was with him! So he went to Laban [and told him] very angrily, "(What you have done to me is disgusting!/What is this that you have done to me?) [RHQ] I worked for you to get Rachel, did I not? So why did you deceive me?" 26 Laban replied, "In this land, it is not our custom to give a younger daughter to be married before we let someone marry our firstborn daughter. 27 After we finish this week of celebration, we will let you marry the younger one also. But in return, you must pay for Rachel by working for me for another seven years." 28 So that is what Jacob did. After the week of celebration was ended, Laban gave him his daughter, Rachel, to be his wife. 29 Laban gave his slave girl, Bilhah, to Rachel to be her maid/servant. 30 Jacob had sex [EUP] with Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than he loved Leah. And Jacob worked for Laban for another seven years. 31 When Yahweh saw that Jacob did not love Leah [very much], he enabled her to become pregnant. But Rachel was not able to become pregnant. 32 Leah gave birth to a son, whom she named Reuben, [which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean 'Look, a son]!' She said, "Yahweh has seen that I was miserable, and because of that he has given me a son. Now, surely my husband will love me for giving birth to a son for him." 33 Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said, "Because Yahweh has heard that my husband doesn't love me, he has given me this son, too." So she named him Simeon, [which means 'someone who hears']. 34 Later she became pregnant again, and gave birth to another son. She said, "Now, finally, my husband will hold me close to him." So she named him Levi, [which means 'hold close']. 35 Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said, "(This time/Now) I will praise Yahweh." So she called his name Judah, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'praise']. After that, she did not give birth to any more children [for several years].

30 Rachel realized that she was not becoming pregnant and giving birth to any children for Jacob. So she became jealous of her older sister, Leah, because Leah had given birth to four sons. She said to Jacob, "Enable me to become pregnant and give birth to children. If you do not do that, I [think I will]!" 2 Jacob became angry with Rachel and said, "(I am not God!/Am I God?) [RHQ] He is the one who has prevented you from becoming pregnant!" 3 Then she said, "Look, here is my female slave, Bilhah. (Sleep with/Have sex with) [EUP] her, so that she may become pregnant and give birth to children for me. In that way it will be as though (I have children/her children are mine)." 4 So she gave him her slave, Bilhah, to be another wife for him, and Jacob had sex [EUP] with her. 5 She became pregnant and bore Jacob a son. 6 Rachel said, "God has (vindicated me/judged my case and has decided that what I have done is right). He has also heard my requests and has given me a son." So she named him Dan, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'he judged']. 7 Later, Rachel's slave Bilhah became pregnant again and gave birth to another son for Jacob. 8 Then Rachel said, "I have had a great struggle to have children like my older sister, but truly I have a son." So she named him Naphtali, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'struggle']. 9 When Leah realized that she was not becoming pregnant and giving birth to any more children, she took her female slave, Zilpah, and gave her to Jacob to be another wife for him. 10 Zilpah soon became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Jacob. 11 Leah said, "I am truly fortunate!" So she named him Gad, [which means 'fortunate']. 12 Later Leah's slave, Zilpah, gave birth to another son for Jacob. 13 Leah said, "Now I am very happy, and people will call me happy." So she named him Asher, [which means 'happy].' 14 When it was time to harvest wheat, Reuben went out into the fields and saw some (mandrakes/plants that women eat to help them to become pregnant). He brought some of them to his mother Leah. But Rachel saw them and said to Leah, "Please give me some of those plants that your son brought to you!" 15 But Leah said to her, "No! (It was bad that you stole my husband!/Is it not bad enough that you stole my husband?) [RHQ] Now (are you going to take my son's mandrake plants?/You want to take my son's mandrake plants also, [so that you can become pregnant]!)" [RHQ] So Rachel said, "All right, Jacob can sleep with you tonight, if you give me some of your son's mandrake plants." [So Leah (agreed/gave her some)]. 16 When Jacob returned from the wheat fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him. She said, "You must sleep with me tonight, because I gave Rachel some of my son's mandrakes [that enable women to become pregnant], to pay her for allowing us to do that." So Jacob slept with her that night. 17 God answered Leah's prayers, and she became pregnant and bore a fifth son to Jacob. 18 Leah said, "God has rewarded me for giving my slave to my husband to be another wife for him." So she named him Issachar, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'reward']. 19 Leah became pregnant again and bore a sixth son for Jacob. 20 Leah said, "God has given me a precious gift. (This time/Now) my husband will honor/respect me, because I have given birth to six sons for him." So she named him Zebulon, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'accepted gift']. 21 Later she gave birth to a

daughter, and named her Dinah. **22** Then God thought about what Rachel wanted. He heard her prayers and enabled her to become pregnant. **23** She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said, "God has caused that no longer will I be ashamed [for not having children]." **24** She named him Joseph, [which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean 'may he give another'] and she said, 'want Yahweh to give me another son.' **25** After Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Now allow me to quit working for you and let me return to my own land. **26** You know the work that I have done for you [for a long time to get my wives]. So let me take my wives and my children, and leave." **27** But Laban said to him, "If you are pleased with me, stay here, because I have found out by performing a magic ritual that Yahweh has blessed me because of what you have done for me. **28** Tell me what you want me to pay you for continuing to work for me, and that is what I will pay you." **29** Jacob replied, "You know how I have worked for you, and you know that your livestock have increased greatly as I have taken care of them. **30** You had only a few animals before I came here. But now you have very many, and Yahweh has caused them to increase greatly in number wherever I have taken them. But now I need to start taking care of the needs of my own family." **31** Laban replied, "What do you want me to give you?" Jacob replied, "I do not want you to pay me anything. But if you will do this one thing for me, I will continue to take care of your flocks and protect them. **32** Allow me to go and look at all of your flocks today and remove from them all the speckled sheep, all the spotted sheep, and every dark-colored lamb, all the goats that are speckled, and all the goats that are spotted, [and keep them for myself]. They will be my wages. **33** In that way, in the future, you will be able to know whether I have been honest regarding what you have paid me. If any of my goats are neither speckled or spotted, or if any of my lambs are not dark-colored, you will know that I have stolen them from you." **34** Laban agreed and said, "Okay, we will do as you have said." **35** But that same day Laban removed all the male goats that had black and white stripes on them or were spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled or spotted, all the goats that were partly white, and all the dark-colored lambs. He separated them and told his sons to take care of them. **36** Then he took these flocks and walked a distance of three days, in order that he could be that far from Jacob. Jacob continued to take care of the rest of Laban's flocks. **37** Then Jacob cut some branches of (poplar, almond, and plane trees/three kinds of trees that had white wood). He peeled strips of bark from the branches, so that where the bark had been peeled off, the branches were light in color. **38** Then he placed the peeled branches in the troughs where they put the water for the animals to drink, so that the branches would be in front of the flocks when they came to drink. **39** The animals also mated in front of the branches, and eventually they gave birth to animals that were speckled, or to animals that were spotted, or to animals that had black and white stripes on them. **40** Furthermore, Jacob separated the female sheep in his flock from the other sheep and goats in Laban's flock. And when his female sheep mated, he made them look toward the animals that belonged to Laban that had black and white stripes on them, and the dark-colored animals. He did that so that the female sheep would give birth to animals that were striped or dark-colored. By doing that, he made bigger flocks for himself, and he kept them separate from Laban's flocks. **41** In addition, whenever the stronger female sheep were ready to mate, Jacob put some of those peeled branches in the troughs in front of them, so that they would mate in front of the branches. **42** But when weak animals were ready to mate, he did not put the branches in their troughs. So the weak ones became part of Laban's flock, and the strong ones became part of Jacob's flock. **43** As a result, Jacob became very rich. He owned many large flocks of sheep and goats, and many male and female slaves, and many camels and donkeys.

31 Someone told Jacob that Laban's sons were complaining and saying, "Jacob has become very rich by taking everything [HYP] that belonged to our father." **2** And Jacob noticed that Laban was not acting friendly toward him as he had done before. **3** Then Yahweh said to Jacob, "Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will help you there." **4** So Jacob sent a message to Rachel and Leah, telling them to come out to the pastures where his flocks of sheep and goats were. **5** When they arrived, he said to them, "I see that your father does not act friendly toward me as he did previously. But God, whom my father worshiped, has helped me. **6** You two know that I have worked very hard for your father, **7** but many times [HYP] he has cheated me by decreasing my wages. But God has not allowed him to harm me. **8** When Laban said, 'The speckled animals are the ones that I will give you to be your wages,' then all the animals gave birth to young ones that were speckled. When he changed and said, 'The ones that have black and white stripes on them will be your wages,' then all the animals gave birth to young ones that were striped. **9** In that way, God has taken away the livestock that belonged to your father and has given them to me. **10** "One time, when the animals were mating, I had a dream. In my dream I [looked up and was surprised to] see that some of the male goats that were mating with the female goats had black and

white stripes on them, some were speckled, and some were spotted. 11 An angel who was sent by God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob!' I replied, 'I am here!' 12 He said to me, 'Look up and you will see that all the male goats that are mating have black and white stripes on them, or are speckled or spotted. This is happening because I have seen all that Laban has done to you. 13 I am God who appeared to you at Bethel, where you set up a stone to show that the place was holy, and you poured [olive] oil on the stone and made a solemn promise to me. So now leave this land immediately, and return to the land where you were born.'" 14 Rachel and Leah replied, "Our father will not give us anything more when he dies [RHQ]. 15 He treats us as though we were foreigners [RHQ]! [Your working for him all these years was like a payment] that you gave him as a price for us, but we will not inherit any of that money that he got as a price for us. He has spent it all! 16 Surely all of the wealth that God took away from our father belongs to us and to our children. So do whatever God has told you to do!" 17 Then Jacob put his children and his wives on camels. 18 He made all his livestock go ahead of him. Besides the livestock, he took along all the other things that he had acquired while living in Paddan-Aram. And they prepared to return to his father Isaac, in the Canaan region. 19 Before they left, while Laban was shearing his sheep, Rachel stole the [small wooden] idols [that were in her father's tent]. 20 Furthermore, Jacob deceived Laban, who belonged to the Aram people-group, by not telling him that they were planning to leave. 21 So Jacob and his family fled with all their possessions, and they crossed the Euphrates River, and then started traveling south toward the hilly Gilead region. 22 On the third day after they left, someone told Laban that Jacob and his family had left. 23 So he took some of his relatives with him and started to pursue Jacob. They continued walking for seven days. 24 Then God appeared to Laban in a dream at night, and said to him, "When you catch up to Jacob, be sure that you do not say anything at all [HYP] to him in an angry manner!" 25 The next day, by the time Laban caught up with Jacob, Jacob and his household had set up their tents in the hilly Gilead region. So Laban and his relatives set up their tents there, too. 26 Then Laban went to Jacob and said to him, "Why have you done this? You have deceived me by carrying away my daughters as though you had captured them in a war [MTY]! 27 Why did you run away and deceive me? Why did you not tell me that you were going to leave, so that we could have rejoiced and sung while people played music on tambourines and harps before I said 'goodbye' to you? 28 (You did not even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye before they left!/Why did you not allow me to kiss my grandchildren and daughters goodbye before they left?) [RHQ] What you have done was foolish! 29 My relatives and I have the power to harm you, but last night the God whom your father worships said to me in a dream, 'Be sure that you do not say anything at all to Jacob in an angry way.' 30 Now, I know you have left because you long to go back home. But why did you steal my [wooden] idols?" 31 Jacob replied to Laban, saying, "I did not tell you that we were planning to leave, because I was afraid. I thought that [if I told you], you would forcefully take your daughters away from me. 32 But if you find anyone here who has your wooden idols, we will execute that person. While our relatives are watching, search for yourself to see if there is anything that belongs to you that is here with me. If you find anything, you can take it!" When Jacob said that, he did not know that Rachel had stolen the wooden idols. 33 Laban went into Jacob's tent, and then into Leah's tent, and then into the tents of the two female slaves and searched for the idols, but he did not find them. After he left their tents, he entered Rachel's tent. 34 But Rachel had previously taken the idols and put them in the saddle of a camel, and she was sitting on the saddle. So when Laban searched all over for them inside Rachel's tent, he did not find them. 35 Rachel said to her father, "Do not be angry with me, sir, but I cannot get up in your presence [to show respect for you], because I am having my monthly menstrual period. [EUP]" So when Laban searched some more, he did not find the [wooden] idols. 36 Then Jacob became angry. He rebuked Laban, saying, "What crime did I commit? For what sin that I committed have you pursued me? 37 Now you have searched through all my possessions, and what did you find from all these possessions that belongs to you? Put it here in front of my relatives and your relatives, so that they can decide who is right, you or me! 38 I was with you for 20 years. In all that time, your sheep and goats have (not miscarried/always given birth to animals safely). I have not [killed and] eaten any rams from your flocks. 39 When one of your animals was attacked and mauled/killed by a wild animal, I did not bring it to you. I replaced the dead animal with a living one of my own animals. Whenever one of your animals was stolen, during the day or during the night, you demanded that I replace it with one of my own animals. 40 I suffered from the heat during the day and from the cold at night. I was often not even able to sleep [PRS]! 41 I lived in your household for 20 years. I worked for you for 14 years to buy your two daughters, and for six more years to buy some of your sheep and goats. During that time, you changed and reduced my wages many times [HYP]. 42 If God, the one whom my grandfather Abraham worshiped and before whom

my father Isaac trembled in fear, had not been with me and helped me, you would have sent me away (with nothing in my hands/owning nothing)! But God saw how much I was suffering and how hard I was working, so last night he told you that what you have done to me was wrong." **43** Laban replied, "These two women are my daughters, and their children are my grandchildren, and the animals are my animals. Everything you see here is mine [HYP]! But what can I do today to keep my daughters or the children they have given birth to [RHQ]? **44** I cannot do anything in order to keep them, so hey, we should make a peace agreement, you and I, and do something that will remind us about our agreement." **45** So Jacob took a [large] stone and set it on its end. **46** Then Jacob said to his relatives, "You also gather some stones." So they gathered some rocks and put them in a heap, and they ate some food there near the heap. **47** Laban gave the heap the Aramaic name Jegar-Sahadutha, [which means 'rock-pile to remind us',] but Jacob gave the rock-pile the Hebrew name Galeed, [which has the same meaning]. **48** Laban said to Jacob, "This pile of rocks we have put here today will help us to remember our agreement." That is why Jacob called it Galeed. **49** They also named the place Mizpah, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'watchtower',] because Laban said, "We will ask Yahweh to watch you and me while we are separated from each other, [so that we do not try to harm each other]. **50** If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take other women to be your wives, even if no one tells me about it, don't forget that God sees what you and I are doing!" **51** Laban also said to Jacob, "You see this large stone and this pile of rocks that we have set up to be between us. **52** Both this pile of rocks and this large stone will remind us, that I will not go past these rocks to harm you, and you will not go past these rocks to harm me. **53** We will ask the God whom [your grandfather] Abraham and [his father] Nahor worshiped to punish [MTY] either one of us, [if we harm the other one]." So Jacob solemnly promised to do what they said in their peace agreement. And he asked God, the one before whom his father Isaac trembled, to listen to what they promised. **54** He offered a sacrifice to God there in the hilly area, and he invited his relatives to eat with him. After they had eaten, they slept there that night. **55** The next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters [goodbye] and asked God to bless them. Then he [and his men] left them and returned home.

32 As Jacob and his family continued traveling, some angels, whom God sent, met him. **2** When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's army camp!" So he named that place Mahanaim, [which means 'two camps']. **3** Jacob told some of the men to go ahead of him to his older brother Esau, who was living in Seir, the land where the descendants of Edom lived. **4** He told them, "This is what I want you to say to Esau: 'I, Jacob, want to be your servant and I want you to be my master. I have been living with our uncle Laban, and I have stayed there until now. **5** I now own many cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, and male and female slaves. Now I am sending this message to you, sir, hoping that you will (be friendly toward me/treat me kindly) when I arrive.' " **6** The messengers went and gave that message to Esau. When they returned to Jacob, they said, "We went to your older brother Esau. Now he is coming to you, and 400 men are coming with him." **7** Jacob was very afraid and worried. So he divided the people who were with him into two groups. He also divided the sheep and goats, the cattle, and the camels, into two groups. **8** He was thinking, "If Esau and his men come and attack us, perhaps one of the groups will be left and will be able to escape." **9** Then Jacob prayed, "O Yahweh God, whom my grandfather Abraham worshiped and my father Isaac worships, you said to me, 'Go back to your own land and to your relatives, and I will (cause good things happen to/do good things for) you.' **10** I am not worthy for you to have been so kind and faithful to me in so many ways, your servant. I had only this walking stick with me when I crossed the Jordan [River on my way to Haran], but now I am so wealthy that there are two large groups of my family and possessions. **11** So now I pray that you will rescue me from [MTY] my [older] brother Esau, because I am afraid that he and his men will come and attack and kill me and the children and their mothers. **12** But do not forget that you have said, 'I will certainly enable you to prosper, and I will cause your descendants to be as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, which are so many that no one can count them.'" **13** Jacob slept there that night. The next morning he selected some animals to give to his brother Esau. **14** He selected 200 female goats and 20 male goats, 200 female sheep and 20 male sheep, **15** 30 female camels and their offspring, 40 cows and ten bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys. **16** He divided them into small herds, and put each herd into the care of one of his servants. He said to his servants, "Go ahead of me, one group at a time, and keep some space between each herd." **17** He said to the servant who was going with the first group, "When my brother Esau meets you, and he asks you, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going, and to whom do these animals in front of you belong?' **18** tell him, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. He has sent them to you as a gift, sir. And he is coming behind us.'" **19** He also said the same thing to the servants who were taking care of

the second and third groups, and to the other herdsmen. He said to them, "When you meet Esau, I want you to say to him the same thing that I told the first servant. **20** And be sure to say 'Jacob, who wants to serve you, is coming behind us.'" Jacob told them to say that because he was thinking, "Perhaps these gifts that I am sending ahead of me will cause him to (act peacefully toward/stop being angry with) me. Then later, when I see him, perhaps he will be kind to me." **21** So the men taking the gifts [PRS] went ahead, but Jacob himself stayed in the camp that night. **22** Some time during that night, Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female slaves, and his eleven sons and his daughter, and he sent them across the ford at the Jabbok River. **23** After he had done that, he sent other slaves, carrying all his possessions, across the river. **24** So Jacob was left there alone. But a man came and wrestled with him until dawn. **25** When the man realized that he was not winning against Jacob, he struck Jacob's hip and caused the thigh bone to pull away from the hip socket. **26** Then the man said, "Let me go, because it will soon be daylight." [Then Jacob realized who he was really wrestling with]. So he replied, "No, if you will not bless me, I will not let you go!" **27** The man said to him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Jacob." **28** The man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob. Your name will be Israel, [which means 'he struggles with God',] because you have struggled with God and with people, and you have won." **29** Jacob said, "Now, please tell me your name!" The man replied, "(Why do you ask me what my name is?/You should not have to ask me what my name is!)" [RHQ] But he blessed Jacob there. **30** So Jacob named the place Peniel, [which means 'God's face',] saying "I looked directly at God, but I did not die because of doing that." **31** The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of what had happened to his hip. **32** The muscle on his hip joint had been injured. So to this present time, because of what happened to Jacob, the Israeli people do not eat the muscle/tendon that is attached to the socket of the hips of animals.

33 [Then Jacob joined the rest of his family]. [Later that day] Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming, and there were 400 men with him. [Jacob was worried because of that], so he separated the children. He put Leah's children with Leah, Rachel's children with Rachel, and the two female slaves' children with their mothers. **2** He put the two female slaves and their children in front. He put Leah and her children next. He put Rachel and Joseph at the rear. **3** He himself went ahead of them all, and as he continued to approach his older brother, he prostrated himself with his face on the ground seven times. **4** But Esau ran to Jacob. He hugged him, put his arms around his neck, and kissed him on the cheek. And they both cried. **5** Then Esau looked up and saw the women and the children. He asked, "Who are these people who are with you?" Jacob replied, "These are the wives and children that God has graciously/kindly given to me." **6** Then the female slaves and their children came near and bowed in front of Esau. **7** Then Leah and her children came and bowed down. Finally Joseph and Rachel came near and bowed down. **8** Esau asked, "What is the meaning of all the animals that I saw?" Jacob replied, "I am giving them to you, sir, so that you will feel good toward me." **9** But Esau replied, "My [younger] brother, I have enough animals! Keep for yourself the animals that you have!" **10** But Jacob said, "No, please, if you feel good toward me, accept these gifts from me. You have greeted me very kindly. Seeing your smiling face assures me [that you have forgiven me]. It is like seeing the face of God! **11** Please accept these gifts that I have brought to you, because God has acted kindly toward me, and I still have plenty of animals!" Jacob kept on urging him to accept the animals, and finally he accepted them. **12** Then Esau said, "Let's continue traveling together, and I will show the road to you." **13** Jacob [had no intention to go with Esau], but he said, "You know, sir, that the children are weak, and that I must take care of the female sheep and cows that are (sucking their mother's milk/nursing their young). If I force them to walk fast for a long distance in just one day, the animals will all die. **14** You go ahead of me. I will lead the animals slowly, but I will walk as fast as the children and animals can walk. I will catch up with you in Seir, [in the land where the descendants of Edom live]." **15** Esau said, "Then allow me to leave with you some of the men who came with me, [to protect you]." But Jacob replied, "(Why do that?/There is no need to do that!) [RHQ] The only thing that I want is for you to act friendly toward me." **16** So on that day Esau left to return to Seir. **17** But [instead of going to Seir], Jacob and his family went to [a place called] Succoth. There he built a house for himself and his family, and built shelters for his livestock. That is the reason they named the place Succoth, [which means 'shelters']. **18** [Some time later,] Jacob and his family left Paddan-Aram [in Mesopotamia], and they traveled safely to the Canaan region. There they set up their tents in a field near Shechem city. **19** One of the leaders of the people in that area was named Hamor. Hamor had several sons. Jacob paid the sons of Hamor 100 pieces of silver for the piece of ground on which they set up their tents. **20** He built a stone altar there, and named it El-Elohe Israel, [which means 'God, the God of Israel].'

34 One day Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah, went
to visit some of the women in that area. **2** Shechem,
one of the sons of Hamor, the ruler of that area who was
descended from the Hiv people-group, saw her. He wanted
her. So he grabbed her and forced her to have sex [EUP]
with him. **3** He [SYN] was very much attracted to her, and
fell in love with her, and he tried to get her to love him. **4** So
Shechem said to his father Hamor, "Please get this girl for
me. I want her to become my wife!" **5** Jacob very soon found
out that his daughter Dinah had been disgraced/defiled.
But his sons were in the fields with his livestock, so he did
nothing about it until they returned home. **6** In the meantime,
Shechem's father Hamor went to talk with Jacob. **7** While
they were still talking, Jacob's sons came in from the field.
When they found out what had happened, they were shocked
and very angry. They said, "Shechem has done something
that is very disgraceful among us Israeli people, something
that never should be done!" **8** But Hamor said to them,
"My son Shechem really likes this girl. Please allow him to
marry her. **9** Let's make an agreement: You will give your
daughters to our young men to be their wives, and we will
give our daughters to your young men to be their wives. **10**
You can live among us, and live anywhere in our land that
you wish. You can buy and sell things (OR, travel around)
and if you find land that you want, then you can buy it." **11**
Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and brothers, "If you
feel good toward me and do what I am asking for, I will give
you whatever you ask for. **12** Tell me what gifts you want and
what bride price you want, and I will give you what you ask
for. I just want you to give the girl to me to be my wife." **13**
But because Shechem had done a shameful thing to their
sister Dinah, the sons of Jacob deceived Shechem and his
father Hamor **14** by saying to them, "No, we cannot do that.
We cannot give our sister to be the wife of a man who is not
circumcised, because that would be a shameful thing for us
to do. **15** We will do that only if you do one thing: You must
become like us by circumcising all the males that are among
you. **16** Then we will give our daughters to your young men
to be your wives, and we will take your daughters to be the
wives of our young men. We will live among you, and we will
become one people-group. **17** But if you will not agree to
being circumcised, we will take our sister and go back to
our land." **18** What they said pleased Hamor and his son
Shechem. **19** Shechem was very much in love with Jacob's
daughter, so he quickly agreed to do what they suggested.
20 Shechem went with Hamor to the meeting place near
the city gate, and they spoke to the city leaders, saying,
21 "These men are friendly toward us. We should let them
live here and travel around (OR, buy and sell things) and
if they find land that they want, they can buy it. There is
plenty of land for them to live here. Our young men can
marry their daughters, and their young men can marry our
daughters. **22** But these men will agree to live among us and
become one people-group with us only if all our males are
circumcised, as they are. **23** But if we do that, just think!
Their livestock and their possessions and their other animals
will become ours [RHQ]! So we should agree to do what
they suggest, and then they will live among us!" **24** Shechem
was the most respected person in his father's household, so
all the men who were there at the city gate agreed to what
Hamor and Shechem suggested. So every male in the city
was circumcised. **25** On the third day after that, when the
men of the city were still sore because of being circumcised,
two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who were Dinah's
brothers, took their swords and entered the city without
anyone opposing them, and killed all the men. **26** They even
killed Hamor and his son Shechem. Then they took Dinah
out of Shechem's house and left the city. **27** Then the other
sons of Jacob went into the city where all those dead bodies
were. They (looted/took everything in) the city to get revenge
for the shameful thing that had been done to their sister. **28**
They took away the people's sheep and goats, their cattle,
their donkeys, and everything else that they wanted from
inside the city and from out in the countryside. **29** They took
away everything that was valuable, even the children and
the women. They seized and took away everything that was
in the houses. **30** Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You
have caused a lot of trouble for me! Now the Canaan people-
group and the Perizzi people-group and everyone else who
lives in this land will (hate me/say my name stinks)! I do not
have many men to fight for us, so if they all gather together
and come to me and attack us, they will destroy us and
all our household!" **31** But they replied, "(Should we have
allowed Shechem to treat our sister like a prostitute?/We
could not just let Shechem treat our sister like a prostitute!)"
[RHQ]

35 [Some time later] God said to Jacob, "Go up to Bethel,
and live there. Build an altar to worship me, God, who
appeared to you when you were fleeing from your older
brother Esau." **2** So Jacob said to his household and to
all the others who were with him, "Get rid of the idols you
brought from Mesopotamia. Also, bathe yourselves and put
on clean clothes. **3** Then we will get ready and go up to
Bethel. There I will make an altar to worship God. He is the
one who helped me at the time when I was greatly distressed
and afraid, and he has been with me wherever I have gone."
4 So they gave to Jacob all the idols that they had brought,
and all their earrings. Jacob buried them in the ground under

the big oak tree that was near Shechem [town]. **5** As they prepared to leave there, God caused the people who lived in the cities around them to be extremely afraid of Jacob's family [PRS], so that they did not pursue and attack them. **6** Jacob and all those who were with him came to Luz, which is now called Bethel, in the Canaan region. **7** There he built an altar. He named the place El-Bethel, [which means 'God of Bethel]', because it was there that God revealed himself to Jacob when he was fleeing from his older brother Esau. **8** Deborah, who had taken care of Isaac's wife Rebekah when Rebekah was a small girl, was now very old. She died and was buried under an oak tree south of Bethel. So they named that place Allon-Bacuth, [which means 'oak of weeping']. **9** After Jacob and his family returned from Paddan-Aram/Mesopotamia, while they were still at Bethel, God appeared to Jacob again and blessed him. **10** God said to him again, "Your name will no longer be Jacob. It will be Israel." So Jacob was then called 'Israel'. **11** Then God said to him, "I am God Almighty. Produce many children. Your descendants will become many nations, and some of your descendants will be kings. **12** The land that I promised to give to [your grandfather] Abraham and [your father] Isaac, I will give to you. I will also give it to your descendants." **13** When God finished talking there with Jacob, he left him. **14** Jacob set up a large stone at the place where God had talked with him. He poured some wine and some [olive] oil on it to dedicate it to God. **15** Jacob named that place Bethel, [which means 'house of God]', because God had spoken to him there. **16** Jacob and his family left Bethel and traveled south toward Ephrath [town]. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to have severe childbirth pains. **17** When her pain was the most severe, the (midwife/woman who helped her to give birth) said to Rachel, "Do not be afraid, because now you have given birth to another son!" **18** But she was dying, and with her last breath she said, "Name him Benoni," [which means 'son of my sorrow]', but his father named him Benjamin, [which means 'son of my right hand]'. **19** After Rachel died, she was buried alongside the road to Ephrath, which is [now called] Bethlehem. **20** Jacob set up a large stone over her grave, and it is still there, showing where Rachel's grave is. **21** Jacob, whose new name was Israel, continued traveling with his family, and he set up his tents on the south side of the watchtower at Eder [town]. **22** While they were living in that area, Jacob's son Reuben had sex [EUP] with Bilhah, one of his father's (concubines/female slaves whom he had taken as a secondary wife). Someone told Jacob about it, and it made him very angry. (I will now give you/Here is) a list of Jacob's twelve sons. **23** The sons of Leah were Reuben, who was Jacob's oldest son, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulon. **24** The sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. **25** The sons of Rachel's female slave Bilhah were Dan and Naphtali. **26** The sons of Leah's female slave Zilpah were Gad and Asher. All those sons of Jacob, except Benjamin, were born while he was living in Paddan-Aram/Mesopotamia. **27** Jacob had returned back home to see his father Isaac at Mamre, which is also named Kiriath-Arba, and which is now named Hebron. Isaac's father Abraham had also lived there. **28** Isaac lived until he was 180 years old. **29** He was very old when he died, joining his ancestors who had died previously. His sons Esau and Jacob buried his body.

36 (Here is/I will now give you) a list of the descendants of Esau, whose other name was Edom. **2** Esau married three women from the Canaan region: Adah, the daughter of Elon from the Heth people-group; Oholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon from the Hiv people-group; **3** and Basemath, who was the daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth. **4** Esau's wife Adah gave birth to Eliphaz. Basemath gave birth to Reuel. **5** Oholibamah gave birth to Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. All these sons of Esau were born while he was living in the Canaan region. **6** Jacob and Esau had very many possessions. The result was that they needed more land for their livestock. The land where they were living was not big enough for both of them. They had too much livestock. So Esau, whose other name was Edom, had taken his wives and sons and daughters and all the other members of his household, his sheep and goats and his other animals, and all the other things he had obtained in Canaan land, and they had moved to an area that was away from Jacob. **8** They went to live in the Seir hilly area. **9** (Here is/I will now give you) another list of the male descendants of Esau. He was the ancestor of the Edom people-group who live in the Seir area. **10** Esau's wife Adah gave birth to Eliphaz, and Esau's wife Basemath gave birth to Reuel. **11** The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. **12** Esau's son Eliphaz also had a (concubine/female slave whom he took as a secondary wife). Her name was Timna. She gave birth to Amalek. Those six men were grandsons of Esau's wife Adah. **13** Reuel's sons were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. They were grandsons of Esau's wife Basemath. **14** Esau's wife Oholibamah, who was the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon, gave birth to three sons: Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. **15** (Here is/I will now give you) a list of the people-groups who were descendants of Esau. His oldest son Eliphaz was the ancestor of the Teman people-group, the Omar people-group, the Zepho people-group,

the Kenaz people-group, 16 the Korah people-group, the Gatam people-group, and the Amalek people-group. They were descendants of Eliphaz and of Esau's wife Adah. They lived in the Edom region. 17 The sons of Esau's son Reuel were ancestors of the Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah people-groups. They were descended from Esau's wife Basemath. They also lived in Edom. 18 The sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, whose mother was Anah, were ancestors of the Jeush, Jalam, and Korah people-groups. 19 That is the list of the sons of Esau, and the people-groups who were their descendants. 20 (This is/I will now give you) a list of the descendants of Seir, who belonged to the Hor people-group, who were the first people-group who lived in the Edom region: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. Those seven men became ancestors of people-groups. Each of the people-groups had the same name as the name of their ancestor. 22 The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman and Lotan's sister was Timna. 23 The sons of Shobal were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. 24 The sons of Zibeon were Aiah and Anah. This Anah was the one who discovered the hot springs in the desert while he was taking care of his father Zibeon's donkeys. 25 Anah had two children—a son named Dishon and a daughter named Oholibamah. 26 Dishon's sons were Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran. 27 Ezer's sons were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. 28 Dishan's sons were Uz and Aran. 29 The people-groups who were descendants of Hor lived in the Seir/Edom region. The names of the people-groups are Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. 31 These are the names of the kings who ruled in Edom before any kings ruled over Israel. 32 Beor's son Bela became the first king in Edom. The city where he lived was named Dinhabah. 33 When Bela died, Zerah's son Jobab/became the king. He was from Bozrah [city]. 34 When Jobab died, Husham became the king. He was from the region where the Teman people-group lived. 35 When Husham died, Bedad's son Hadan became the king. Husham's army fought the army of the Midian people-group in the Moab region and defeated them. The city where Husham lived was Avith. 36 When Hadad died, Samlah became the king. He was from Masrekah [town]. 37 When Samlah died, Shaul became the king. He was from Rehoboth [town] along the [Euphrates] river. 38 When Shaul died, Achbor's son Baal-Hanan became king. 39 When Achbor's son Baal-Hanan died, Hadad became king. The city where he lived was named Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel. She was the daughter of Matred, who was the daughter of Me-Zahab. 40 (Here is/I will now give you) a list of all the people-groups that were descendants of Esau: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, Magdiel, and Iram. They all lived in the Edom region. The land where each people-group lived got the same name as the name of the people-group.

37 Jacob continued to live in the Canaan region where his father had lived previously. 2 (This is/I will now tell you) what happened to Jacob's family. When his son Joseph was 17 years old, he was taking care of the flocks of sheep and goats with some of his older brothers. They were sons of his father's (concubines/female slaves that he had taken to be his secondary wives). Joseph sometimes told his father about bad things that his brothers were doing. 3 Jacob loved Joseph more than he loved any of his other children, because Joseph had been born when Jacob was an old man. Jacob made for Joseph a long pretty robe that had long sleeves. 4 When Joseph's older brothers realized that their father loved him more than he loved any of them, they hated him. They never spoke kindly to him. 5 One night Joseph had a dream. He told his brothers about the dream. 6 He said to them, "Listen to the dream I had! 7 In the dream, we were tying up bundles of wheat in the field. Suddenly my bundle stood up straight, and surprisingly, your bundles gathered around my bundle and bowed down to it!" 8 His brothers said to him, "Do you think that some day you will rule over us? Are you [saying that some day] you are going to be our king?" [RHQ] They hated him even more than before because of what he had told them about his dream. 9 Later he had another dream, and again he told his older brothers about it. He said, "Listen to this! I had another dream. In this dream, the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me!" 10 He also told his father about it. His father rebuked him, saying "What are you suggesting by that dream [RHQ]? Do you think it means that your mother and I and your older brothers will some day bow down to the ground in front of you?" [RHQ] 11 Joseph's older brothers were furious/angry with him, but his father just kept thinking about what the dream meant. 12 One day Joseph's older brothers went to take care of their father's sheep and goats that were eating grass near Shechem. 13 Some time later, Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are taking care of the sheep and goats near Shechem [RHQ]. I am going to send you there to see them." Joseph replied, "Okay." 14 Jacob said, "Go and see if they are doing okay, and if the flocks are doing okay. Then come back and give me a report." So Jacob sent Joseph from [the valley where they were living], the valley where Hebron is located, [to go north] to find his brothers. When Joseph arrived near Shechem [city], 15 while he was wandering around in the fields looking/searching for his brothers, a man saw him

and asked him, “Whom are you looking/searching for?” **16** Joseph replied, “I am looking for my older brothers. Can you tell me where they are taking care of their sheep and goats?” **17** The man replied, “They are not here any more. I heard one of them saying, ‘Let’s take the sheep and goats and go to Dothan [town].’” So Joseph left there and went north, and found his older brothers near Dothan. **18** But they saw him when he was still far away, and they decided to kill him. **19** They said to each other [things like], “Here comes that dreamer!” **20** and “Hey, let’s kill him, and then throw his body into one of the pits/cisterns. Then we will tell people that a ferocious/wild animal attacked and killed him and ate him. And then we will (find out whether his dreams come true/make sure that his dreams do not come true)!” **21** Reuben heard what they were saying, so he tried to persuade them not to kill [MTY] Joseph. He said, “No, we should not kill him. **22** Do not even shed his blood! We can throw him into this pit/cistern in the desert, but we should not harm him [MTY].” He said that, and then left them, planning to rescue Joseph later and take him back to his father. **23** So when Joseph arrived where his older brothers were, they seized him and ripped off his pretty robe with long sleeves. **24** Then they took him and threw him into the pit/cistern. But the pit/cistern was dry; there was no water in it. **25** After they sat down to eat some food, they looked up and saw a (caravan/group [of traders]), descendants of Ishmael, coming from the Gilead area. Their camels were loaded with bags of spices and nice-smelling resins. They were going down to Egypt to sell those things there. **26** Judah said to his [older and younger] brothers, “If we kill our younger brother and hide his body, (what will we gain?/we will not gain anything!) [RHQ] **27** So, instead of harming him, let’s sell him to these men who are descendants of Ishmael. Don’t forget, he is our own younger brother!” So they all agreed to do that. **28** When those traders from the Midian area came near, Joseph’s brothers pulled him up out of the pit/cistern. Then they sold him to the men from Midian for 20 pieces of silver. The traders then took Joseph to Egypt. **29** When Reuben returned to the pit/cistern, he saw that his younger brother was not there. He was so grieved that he tore his clothes. **30** He went back to his [younger] brothers and said, “The boy is not in the pit/cistern! What can I do now?” [RHQ] **31** [Joseph’s brothers did not dare to tell their father what they had done. So, they decided to invent a story about what had happened]. They got Joseph’s robe. Then they killed a goat and dipped the robe in the goat’s blood. **32** They took that pretty robe back to their father and said, “We found this robe! Look at it. Is it your son’s robe?” **33** He recognized it, and he said, “Yes, it is my son’s robe! Some ferocious/wild animal must have attacked and killed him! I am sure that the animal has torn Joseph to pieces!” **34** Jacob was so grieved that he tore his clothes. He put on (sackcloth/clothes that people wear when they are mourning for someone who has died). He mourned/cried for his son for many days. **35** All of his children came to try to comfort him, but he did not pay attention to what they said. He said, “No, I will still be mourning/crying when I die and go to be with my son.” So Joseph’s father continued to cry because of what had happened to his son. **(Sheol h7585)** **36** In the meantime, the men/traders from Midian took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, who was one of the king’s officials. He was the captain of the soldiers who protected the king.

38 At that time, Judah left his older and younger brothers and went down from the hilly area and stayed with a man whose name was Hiram, who lived in Adullam [town]. **2** There he (met/became acquainted with) a woman who was the daughter of a man from Canaan named Shua. He married her. He had sex [EUP] with her, **3** and she became pregnant and later gave birth to a son, whom he named Er. **4** Later she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son whom she named Onan. **5** Many years later, when Judah and his family went to live in Kezib [town], Judah’s wife gave birth to another son, whom she named Shelah. **6** When Judah’s oldest son Er [grew up], Judah got a wife for him, a woman named Tamar. **7** But Er did something that Yahweh considered to be very wicked, so Yahweh caused him to die. **8** Then Judah said to Onan, “Your older brother died without having any sons. So marry his widow and have sex [EUP] with her. That is what our customs require that you should do.” **9** But Onan knew if he did that, any children who would be born would not be considered to be his. So every time he had sex [EUP] with his brother’s widow, he spilled his semen on the ground, so that she would not get pregnant and produce children for his older brother. **10** Yahweh considered that what he did was wicked, so he caused him to die also. **11** Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, “Return to your father’s house, but do not marry anyone else. When my youngest son Shelah grows up, [he can marry you].” But Judah [really did not want Shelah to marry her, because] he was afraid that then Shelah would die too, just as his older brothers had died. So Tamar [obeyed Judah and] went back to live in her father’s house again. **12** Several years later, Judah’s wife, who was the daughter of Shua, died. When the time of mourning for her was finished, Judah decided to go up to Timnah, to the place where his (men were shearing his sheep/sheep were being sheared) His friend Hiram, from Adullam, went with him. **13** Someone said to Tamar,

"Your father-in-law is going to [the fields near the city of] Timnah to help the men who are shearing his sheep." **14** [She realized that now Shelah was grown up, but Judah had not given her to him to be his wife. So] she took off her widow's clothes, and covered her head with a veil, so that people would not (recognize her/know who she was). Then she sat down at the entrance to Enaim [town], which is on the road to Timnah. **15** When Judah came along and saw her, he thought that she was a prostitute, because she had covered her head [like prostitutes often did] (OR, [and sat where prostitutes often sat)]. **16** Judah did not realize that she was his daughter-in-law. So he said to her, "Hey, let me have sex [EUP] with you!" She replied, "What will you give me for allowing you to have sex [EUP] with me?" **17** He replied, "I will send you a young goat from my flock of goats." She asked, "Will you give me something now for me to keep until you send the goat?" **18** He replied, "What do you want me to give to you?" She replied, "Give me the ring that has your name on it that is tied by a cord around your neck, and give me the walking stick that you are holding in your hand." So he gave them to her. Then he had sex [EUP] with her, and she became pregnant. **19** After she left, she took off the veil and put her widow's clothes on again. **20** Judah gave a young goat to his friend from Adullam, for him to take back to the woman, as he had promised. But his friend could not find the woman. **21** So he asked the men who lived there, "Where is the prostitute who was sitting by the road at Enaim?" They replied, "There has never been a prostitute here!" **22** So he went back to Judah and said, "I did not find her. [Furthermore], the men who live in that town said, 'There has never been a prostitute here.'" **23** Judah said, "She can keep the things that I gave to her. If we continued to search for her, people would ridicule us. I tried to send this young goat to her, but you could not find her to give it to her." **24** About three months later, someone told Judah, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has become a prostitute and now she is pregnant!" Judah said, "Drag her outside of the city and kill her by burning her!" **25** But as they were taking her outside of the city, she gave the ring and walking stick to someone, and told him to take them to Judah, and say to him, "The man who owns these things is the one who caused me to become pregnant." She also said to tell him, "Look at this ring, and the cord that is attached to it, and this walking stick. Whose are they?" **26** When the man did that, Judah recognized the ring and the stick. He said, "She is more righteous than I am. I did not tell my son Shelah to marry her, as I promised that I would." And Judah did not have sex [EUP] with her again. **27** When it was time for her to give birth, [she was surprised that] there were twin boys in her womb. **28** As she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand. So the midwife fastened a scarlet thread around his wrist, saying, "This one came out first." **29** But he pulled his hand back inside the womb, and his brother came out first. So she said, "So this is how you break your way out first!" So she named him Perez, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'breaking out].' **30** Then his younger brother, the one who had the scarlet thread around his wrist, came out. And he was named Zerah, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'redness of dawn].'

39 Meanwhile, the descendants of Ishmael took Joseph down to Egypt. There Potiphar bought Joseph from them. Potiphar was an Egyptian who was one of the king's officials and the captain of the king's (palace guards/guards who protected the king). **2** Because Yahweh helped Joseph, he was able to do his work very well, and lived in the house of his Egyptian master. **3** His master saw that Yahweh was helping Joseph and enabling him to be successful in everything that he did. **4** Joseph's master was pleased with him, so he appointed him to be his personal servant. Then he appointed him to be the one who would take care of everything in his household and all of his possessions. **5** From the time Potiphar appointed Joseph to take care of everything in his household and all that he owned, Yahweh blessed the people who lived in Potiphar's house because of Joseph. He also caused Potiphar's crops to grow well. **6** Potiphar allowed Joseph to take care of everything that he owned. Potiphar needed to decide only about the food he ate. He was not concerned about anything else in his house. Joseph was well-built/muscular and handsome. **7** Because of that, after a while, his master's wife started to look fondly at Joseph. So one day she said to him, "Have sex [EUP] with me!" **8** But he refused, saying to his master's wife, "Listen! My master is not concerned about anything in this house. He has appointed me to take care of everything that he owns. **9** No one in this household has more authority than I do. The only thing that he has not allowed me to have is you, because you are his wife! So (how could I do this wicked thing [that you are asking me to do]?/I certainly could not do this wicked thing!) [RHQ] I would be sinning against God if I did that!" **10** She kept on asking Joseph day after day to have sex [EUP] with her, but he refused. He would not even go near her. **11** One day Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the other household servants were in the house. **12** Potiphar's wife grabbed his cloak and said, "Have sex [EUP] with me!" Joseph ran out of the house, but his cloak was still in her hand! **13** When she saw that he had run outside leaving his cloak in her hand, **14** she called the household servants. She said to

them, “Look! This Hebrew man that my husband brought to us is (insulting/trying to do something disgraceful to) us! He came into my room and tried to (rape me/make me have sex [EUP] with him), but I screamed loudly. **15** As soon as he heard me scream loudly, he left his loincloth with me and ran outside!” **16** She kept the loincloth beside her until her husband, Joseph’s master, came home. **17** Then she told him this story: “That Hebrew slave whom you brought here came into my room and tried to rape me! **18** As soon as I screamed loudly, he ran outside, leaving me holding his loincloth!” **19** When Joseph’s master heard this story that his wife told him, saying “This is how your slave treated me,” he was very angry. **20** Joseph’s master took Joseph and put him in prison, the place where all the king’s prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there. **21** But Yahweh was kind to Joseph and helped him, and caused the (prison warden/man who was in charge of the prison) to be pleased with him. **22** So the prison warden put Joseph in charge of all those who were in the prison, and in charge of all the work that was done there. **23** The warden was not concerned with anything that Joseph was taking care of, because Yahweh helped Joseph to do well everything that he did.

40 Some time later, two of the king of Egypt’s officials did things that displeased him. One was his chief (drink-server/man who prepared the wine and served it to the king), and the other was his chief (baker/man who baked bread for the king). **2** The king became angry with both of them. **3** So he had them put in prison, in the house of the captain of the palace guards. That was the place where Joseph was being kept. **4** The two men were in prison for a long time. And during that time the captain of the palace guards appointed Joseph to be their servant, to take care of their needs. **5** One night while the king’s drink-server and his baker were there in the prison, each of them had a dream. Each dream had a different meaning. **6** The next morning, when Joseph came to them, he saw that both of them were dejected/worried. **7** So he asked them, “Why do you look so sad today?” **8** One of them answered, “We both had dreams last night, but there is no one who can tell us the meaning of the dreams.” Joseph said to them, “God is the only one who can [RHQ] tell the meaning of dreams. So tell me what you dreamed, and God will tell me the meaning.” **9** So the king’s chief drink-server told his dream to Joseph. He said, “In my dream I saw a grapevine in front of me. **10** On the vine there were three branches. After the branches budded, they blossomed, and then they produced clusters of grapes. **11** I was holding the king’s cup, so I took the grapes and squeezed the juice into the cup. Then I gave the cup to the king to drink the juice.” **12** [God immediately told Joseph what the dream meant]. So Joseph said to him, “This is the meaning of your dream: The three branches of the vine represent three days. **13** Within three days the king will release you from prison. He will let you do the work that you did before. You will take cups of wine to the king as you did before, when you were his drink-server. **14** But when you are out of prison and everything goes well for you, please do not forget me. **15** People took me away forcefully from the land where my fellow Hebrews live. [I did nothing wrong there], and also while I have been here in Egypt, I have done nothing for which I deserved to be put in prison. So be kind to me and tell the king about me, so that he will release me from this prison!” **16** When the chief baker heard that the meaning of the dream of the king’s drink-server was very favorable, he said to Joseph, “I also had a dream. In the dream I was surprised to see three baskets of bread stacked on my head. **17** In the top basket there were many kinds of baked goods for the king, but birds were eating them from the top basket that was on my head!” **18** God again told Joseph what the dream meant, so he said, “The three baskets also represent three days. **19** Within three days the king will command that your head be cut off. Then your body will be hung on a tree, and vultures will come and eat your flesh.” **20** The third day after that was the (king’s birthday/day they celebrated when the king became one year older). On that day the king invited all his officials to celebrate his birthday. During the celebration, while they were all gathered there, the king summoned his chief drink-server and chief baker from the prison. **21** He said that his chief drink-server could have his previous job again, so that again he took cups of wine to the king. **22** But he commanded that the chief baker should be killed by being hanged, just as Joseph had said would happen when he told the two men the meaning of their dreams. **23** But the chief drink-server did not think about Joseph. He forgot to do what Joseph asked him to do.

41 Two complete years later, the king of Egypt had a dream. In the dream, he was standing alongside the Nile [River]. **2** Suddenly seven healthy fat cows come up out of the river. They started eating the grass that was on the riverbank. **3** Soon seven other cows, unhealthy-looking and thin, came up behind them from the Nile [River]. They stood alongside the fat cows that were on the riverbank. **4** Then the unhealthy thin cows ate the seven healthy fat cows. And then the king woke up. **5** The king went to sleep again, and he had another dream. This time he saw seven heads of grain that were full of kernels of grain and ripe, and all growing on one stalk. **6** After that, the king saw that seven other heads of grain sprouted on that (OR, on another) stalk. They were thin and had been dried up by the hot east wind.

7 Then the thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven ripe
full heads. Then the king woke up. He realized that he had
been dreaming. 8 But the next morning he was worried
about the meaning of the dream. So he summoned all the
magicians and wise men who lived in Egypt. He told them
what he had dreamed, but none of them could tell him the
meaning of the two dreams. 9 Then the chief drink-server
said to the king, "Now I remember something that I should
have told you! I made a mistake by forgetting to tell it to you.
10 One time you were angry with two of us. So you put me
and the chief baker in the prison in the house of the captain
of the palace guards. 11 While we were there, one night each
of us had a dream, and the dreams had different meanings.
12 There was a young Hebrew man there with us. He was a
servant of the captain of the palace guards. We told him
what we had dreamed, and he told us what our dreams
meant. He told each of us the meaning of our dreams. 13
And what happened was exactly the same as the meanings
that he told us: You said I could have my previous job again,
but the other man was killed by being hanged. [The Hebrew
man's name was Joseph]." 14 When the king heard that, he
told some servants to bring Joseph to him, and they quickly
brought Joseph out of the prison. Joseph shaved and put on
better clothes, and then he went and stood in front of the
king. 15 The king said to Joseph, "I had two dreams, and no
one can tell me what they mean. But someone told me that
when you hear someone tell about a dream he has had,
you can tell that person what the dream means." 16 But
Joseph replied to the king, "No, I cannot do that. It is God
who knows the meaning of dreams, but he will enable me to
tell you their meaning, and they will mean something good."
17 The king said to Joseph, "In my first dream I was standing
on the bank of the Nile [River]. 18 Suddenly seven healthy
fat cows came up out of the river, and they started eating
the grass that was on the riverbank. 19 Soon seven other
cows, ugly and thin ones, came up behind them from the
river. I never saw such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt! 20
The thin ugly cows ate the seven fat cows that came up
first. 21 But afterwards, no one would have known that the
thin cows ate them, because they were just as ugly as they
were before. Then I woke up. 22 Then I had another dream.
I saw seven heads of grain. They were full of kernels of
grain and ripe, and they were all growing on one stalk. 23
Then [to my surprise] I saw seven other heads of grain that
sprouted. They were thin and had been dried up by the hot
east wind. 24 The thin heads of grain swallowed the seven
good heads. I told these dreams to the magicians, but none
of them could explain to me what they meant." 25 Then
Joseph said to the king, "Both your dreams have the same
meaning. God is revealing to you in your dreams what he is
about to do. 26 The seven healthy cows represent seven
years. The seven good heads of grain also represent seven
years. The two dreams both have the same meaning. 27
The seven thin ugly cows that came up behind them and the
seven worthless heads of grain that were dried up by the hot
east wind each represent seven years (of famine/when food
will be very scarce). 28 It will happen just as I have told you,
because God has revealed to you what he is about to do. 29
There will be seven years in which there will be plenty of
food throughout the land of Egypt, 30 but after that there will
be seven years (of famine/when food will be very scarce).
Then people will forget all the years when there was plenty
of food, because the famine that will come afterward will ruin
the country. 31 The people will forget how plentiful food was
previously, because the famine will be very terrible. 32 The
reason God gave to you two dreams is that he [wants you to
know] that this will happen, and he will cause it to happen
very soon. 33 "Now I suggest that you should choose a man
who is wise and can make good decisions. I suggest that
you appoint him to direct the affairs of the whole country.
34 You should also appoint supervisors over the country,
in order that they can arrange to collect one-fifth of all the
grain that is harvested during the seven years when food is
plentiful. 35 They should collect this amount of grain during
those seven years that are coming, when there will be plenty
of food. You should supervise them as they store it in the
cities. 36 This grain should be stored so that it can be eaten
during the seven years when there will be a famine here in
Egypt, so that the people in this country will not die from
hunger." 37 The king and his officials thought that this would
be a good plan. 38 So the king said to them, "(Can we find
any other man like Joseph, a man to whom God has given
his Spirit?/It is not likely that we will find another man like
this man, one to whom God has given his Spirit!)" [RHQ] 39
Then the king said to Joseph, "Because God has revealed
all this to you, it seems to me that there is no one who is as
wise as you and who can decide wisely about things. 40 So I
will put you in charge of everything in my palace. All the
people here in Egypt must obey what you command. Only
because I am king [MTY] will I have more authority than
you." 41 Then the king said to Joseph, "I am now putting
you in charge of the whole country of Egypt." 42 The king
took from his finger the ring that had his seal on it, and he
put it on Joseph's finger. He put robes made of fine linen
on him, and he put a gold chain around his neck. 43 Then
he arranged for Joseph to ride around in the chariot [that
showed that he was] the second-most important man in the
country. When Joseph rode in the chariot, men shouted to

the people who were on the road in front of him, "Get off the road!" So the king put Joseph in charge of everything in the country. **44** The king said to Joseph, "I am the king, but no one in the whole land of Egypt will do anything [IDM] if you do not permit them to do it." **45** The king gave Joseph a new name, Zaphenath-Paneah. He also gave him Asenath to be his wife. She was the daughter of Potiphera, who was a priest in a temple in On [city]. Then Joseph became known (OR, traveled) through all the land of Egypt. **46** Joseph was 30 years old when he started to work for the king of Egypt. To do his work, he left the king's palace and traveled throughout Egypt. **47** During the next seven years, the land produced abundant crops, so there was plenty of food. **48** As Joseph supervised them, his helpers collected one-fifth of all the grain that was produced during those years, and stored it in the cities. In each city, he had his helpers store up the grain that was grown in the fields that surrounded that city. **49** Joseph had them store up a huge amount of grain. It looked as plentiful as the sand on the seashore. There was so much grain that after a while they stopped keeping records of how much grain was stored, because there was more grain than they could measure. **50** Before the seven years of famine started, Joseph's wife Asenath gave birth to two sons. **51** Joseph named the first one Manasseh, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'forget]', because, he said, "God has caused me to forget all my troubles and all my father's family." **52** He named his second son Ephraim, [which means 'to have children]', because, he said, "God has given me children here in this land where I have suffered." **53** Finally the seven years in which there was plenty of food ended. **54** Then the seven years of famine started, just as Joseph had predicted. There was also a famine in all the other nearby lands, but although the crops did not grow, there was food everywhere in Egypt, because of the grain they had stored up in the cities. **55** When all the people of [MTY] Egypt had eaten all of their own food and were still hungry, they begged the king for food. So the king told all the people of Egypt, "Go to Joseph, and do what he tells you to do." **56** When the famine was very bad throughout the whole country, Joseph ordered his helpers to open the storehouses. Then they sold the grain in the storehouses to the people of Egypt, because the famine was very severe all over Egypt. **57** And people from many [HYP] nearby countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was very severe everywhere [HYP].

42 When someone told Jacob that there was grain in Egypt that people could buy, he said to his sons, "(Why do you just sit there looking at each other?/Do not just sit there looking at each other!) [RHQ] We need some grain!" **2** He said to them, "Someone told me that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, in order that we will not die!" **3** So Joseph's ten [older] brothers went down to Egypt to buy some grain. **4** But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's [younger] brother, to go with the others, because he was afraid/worried that something terrible might happen to him like what happened to Joseph. **5** So Jacob's other sons went down from Canaan to Egypt to buy grain, and others from there went too, because there was a famine in Canaan also. **6** At that time Joseph was the governor of Egypt. He was the one who sold grain to people who came from all over Egypt and from many other countries [HYP] to buy grain. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, [they were told that it was necessary for them to talk with Joseph. So they went to him and] prostrated themselves before him with their faces to the ground. **7** As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them. But he pretended that he did not know them. He spoke harshly to them, saying, "Where do you come from?" One of them replied, "We have come from Canaan, to buy some grain." **8** Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. **9** And then Joseph remembered what he had dreamed about them many years previously. [But he decided not to tell them yet that he was their younger brother]. He said to them, "You are spies! You have come to find out whether we will be able to defend ourselves [if you attack us]!" **10** One of them replied, "No, sir! We have come to buy grain. **11** We are all sons of one man. We are honest men, not spies." **12** He said to them, "[I do not believe you]. You have come just to see whether we would be able to defend ourselves if we were attacked!" **13** But one of them replied, "No, that is not true! Originally there were twelve of us who were brothers, the sons of one man. Our younger brother is with our father. One [younger] brother has died. [EUP]" **14** Joseph replied, "[You are lying! I think] it is just as I told you. You are spies! **15** But this is how I will determine whether what you are saying is true. I think that as surely as the king lives, you are spies. And you will not leave this place until your youngest brother comes here! **16** Send one of your group to go and get your younger brother and bring him here. I will put the rest of you in prison, in order that I may test what you have said to find out whether what you are telling me is true. If the one who goes does not bring your younger brother here, then, just as surely as the king lives, it will be clear that you are lying and that you are spies." **17** Then Joseph put them all in prison for three days. **18** On the third day, Joseph went to the prison and said to them, "I am a man who fears that God [will punish me if I do not do what I promise]. So do what I tell you, and I will spare your lives. **19** If you are honest men,

let one of your brothers stay here in prison, and the rest of you can take some grain back to your families who are very hungry because of the famine. **20** But if you come back here again, you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that you can prove that what you told me is true, and as a result I will not have you executed." So they agreed to do that. **21** They said to each other, "It is surely because of what we did to our [younger] brother that (we are being punished/God is punishing us)! We saw that he [SYN] was very distressed when he pleaded with us not to harm him. But we did not pay any attention to him, and that is why we are having this trouble!" **22** Reuben said to them, "I told you not to harm the boy [RHQ], but you did not pay attention to what I said! Now we are being (paid back/punished) for killing him [MTY]!" **23** While they were talking with Joseph, they were speaking through (an interpreter/someone who knew their language and the Egyptian language), but when they said these things among themselves, they were speaking in their own language, and they did not know that Joseph could understand their language, and that he could understand what they were saying. **24** [Because of what they said, Joseph realized that they admitted that what they had done to him many years previously was wrong]. He could not keep from crying, [and he did not want them to see him crying], so he left them and went outside the room and began to cry. But then he returned to them and talked to them again. Then he took Simeon, and while they were watching, he told his servants to tie him up. He left Simeon in the prison and told the others that they could go. **25** Joseph told his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain, but he also told them to put the money that each one had paid for the grain in the top of his sack. He also told them to give them food to eat along the way. After the servants did those things for Joseph's older brothers, **26** his older brothers loaded the sacks of grain on their donkeys and left. **27** At the place where they stopped to sleep that night, one of them opened his sack to get some grain for his donkey. He was amazed to see his money in the top of the sack. **28** He exclaimed to his brothers, "Someone has returned my money! Here it is in my sack!" They started shaking with fear, and said to each other, "What is this that God has done to us?" **29** When they returned to their father in Canaan land, they told him all that had happened to them. One of them said, **30** "The man who governs the whole land of Egypt talked very harshly to us. He acted toward us as though we were spying on his country. **31** But we told him, 'We are honest men! We are not spies. **32** Originally there were twelve of us who were brothers, the sons of one father. One has died [EUP], and our youngest brother is with our father in Canaan.' **33** The man who is the governor of the land [did not believe us], so he said to us, 'This is how I will know if you are truly honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me. Then the rest of you can take some grain for your families that are starving from hunger and go. **34** But when you return, bring your youngest brother to me, in order that I will know that you are not spies, but instead, that you are honest men. Then I will release your brother for you. And then you can buy whatever you want in this country.'" **35** As they were emptying their sacks, they were surprised that in each man's sack was his pouch of money! When they and their father saw all the pouches of money, they were frightened. **36** Their father Jacob said to them, "You have caused two of my children to be taken from me! Joseph is dead, and Simeon is gone! And now you want to take Benjamin from me! It is I who am suffering because of all these things that are happening!" **37** Reuben said to his father, "I will be responsible for Benjamin. [I will take him to Egypt and] bring him back to you. Let me take care of him. If I do not bring Benjamin back to you, you may kill both of my sons." **38** But Jacob said, "No, I will not let my son go down there with you. His [older] brother is dead, and he is the only [one of my wife Rachel's] sons who is left! If something harms him while you are traveling, you would cause me, a gray-haired old man, to die because of sorrow." **(Sheol h7585)**

43 The famine in Canaan got worse. **2** Finally, when Jacob and his family had eaten all the grain they had brought from Egypt, Jacob said to them, "Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain for us!" **3** But Judah said to him, "The man who sold us the grain warned us sternly, 'I will not let you see me [SYN] again if you come and your younger brother is not with you.' **4** So, if you will send our younger brother with us, we will go down to Egypt and buy some grain for you. **5** But if you will not send him, we will not go down there, because that man said to us, 'I will not let you see me again if your younger brother is not with you.'" **6** Jacob asked, "Why did you cause me to have this trouble by telling the man that you had a younger brother?" **7** One of them replied, "The man asked about us and about our family. He said, 'Is your father still living? Do you have another brother?' We had to answer his questions. (We could not know that he would say, 'The next time that you come down here, bring your brother with you!'/How could we know that he would say, 'The next time that you come down here, bring your brother with you!')" [RHQ] **8** Then Judah said to his father Jacob, "Send the boy with me, and we will go immediately, in order that we and you and our children may get grain and not die from hunger. **9** I myself will guarantee that he will return. You can require me to do what I am promising [IDM]. If I do not bring him back to you safely, you can say forever

that (I am to blame/it was my fault [that he did not return to you)]. **10** If we had not (wasted so much time/waited so long), by now we could have gone there and returned two times!" **11** Then their father Jacob said to them, "If there is no other way, do this: Put in your sacks some of the best things that are grown in this land, and take them down to the man as a gift. Take some balm/perfume and honey and spices and myrrh/ointment, some pistachio nuts, and almonds. **12** Take twice as much money as you took the previous time, because you must return the silver that someone put in the tops of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake that it was put in your sacks. **13** Take your younger brother and go back to that man. **14** I will pray that God Almighty will cause that man to act mercifully toward you, so that he will let your other brother, as well as Benjamin, come back here with you. But as for me, if my sons are taken from me, then I will not have my sons!" **15** So the men took the gifts that Jacob said that they should take, and twice the amount of money that the grain would cost, and they also took Benjamin. They went down quickly to Egypt, and they stood in front of Joseph. **16** When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the man who (was in charge of/supervised) things in his house, "Take these men to my house. Slaughter an animal and prepare a meal, because I want them to eat with me at noon." [And he told him in what order they were to be seated]. **17** The man did as Joseph said. And he took them to Joseph's house. **18** But they were afraid because he was taking them to Joseph's house. They were thinking, "He is taking us here because of the silver that was put in our sacks the first time that we came here. While we are eating, he will have his servants attack us and seize us and cause us to become his slaves, and also take our donkeys." **19** They went with the man who was in charge of things in Joseph's house. When they arrived at the entrance of the house, **20** one of them said to him, "Please, sir, listen to me. We came down here previously and bought some grain. **21** But at the place where we stopped for the night as we were returning home, we opened our sacks. We were astonished to see that in the top of each of our sacks was the exact amount of silver that we had paid for the grain! So we have brought it back with us. **22** We have also brought more silver with us to buy more grain. We do not know who put the silver in our sacks." **23** The man replied, ["Relax]! Do not worry about it! I received the silver that you brought. Your God, the God your father worships, must have put it in your sacks." And then he brought Simeon to them from the prison. **24** Then he took them into Joseph's house. He gave them water to wash their feet and gave them food for the donkeys. **25** He told them that they were going to eat with Joseph at noon. So the men prepared their gifts to give to Joseph when he arrived. **26** When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts that they had brought into the house. Then they bowed down to the ground in front of him. **27** He asked them if they were (well/in good health), and then he asked, "How is the health of your old father, the one that you told me about? Is he still living?" **28** One of them replied, "Yes, our father, [who is willing to be] your servant, is still alive, and he is well." Then again they bowed down in front of him. **29** Then he saw his [younger] brother Benjamin, his own mother's other son. He asked them, "Is this your youngest brother, the one whom you told me about?" After they said "Yes," he said to Benjamin, "Young man, I pray that God will act kindly toward you." **30** Joseph quickly left the room. He realized that he was about to cry because he (was full of emotion about his younger brother/loved his younger brother so much). He went into his private room and cried there. **31** Then, after he washed the tears from his face, he came out, and controlling his emotions, he said to the servants, "Serve the food!" **32** The people of Egypt considered that it was disgraceful for them to eat with Hebrews, so the servants served food to Joseph by himself, and served the other people of Egypt who ate with him by themselves, and they served Joseph's older brothers and younger brother by themselves. **33** His brothers were astonished to see that their seats were arranged according to their ages, from the oldest to the youngest! **34** And when their portions of food were served to them from Joseph's table, Benjamin's portion was five times as much as anyone else's portion! So they ate food and drank wine with Joseph and became very cheerful.

44 When his brothers were ready to return home, Joseph said to the man who was in charge of things in his house, "Fill the sacks of those men with as much grain as they can carry [on their donkeys]. And put in the top of each man's sack the silver that he paid for the grain. **2** Then put my silver cup in the top of the youngest brother's sack, along with the silver that he paid for the grain." So the servant did what Joseph told him to do. **3** The next morning at dawn the men started on the way home with their donkeys. **4** When they had not gone far from the city, Joseph said to the servant in charge of things in his house, "Pursue those men immediately. When you catch up to them, say to them, 'We did good things for you! Why have you paid us back by doing something bad to us? **5** [You have stolen the cup] that my master drinks from [RHQ]! It is the cup that he uses to find out things that nobody knows! What you did was very wicked!'" **6** The servant [left immediately and] when he caught up with them, he told them what Joseph had told him to say. **7** But one of them replied to him, "Sir, why do

you say such things? We are your servants, and we would never do anything like that! 8 We even brought back to you from Canaan land the silver that we found inside the tops of our sacks! So (we certainly would not steal silver or gold from your master's house!/Why would we steal silver or gold from your master's house?) [RHQ] 9 If you discover that any of us has that cup, you can execute him, and the rest of us will become your slaves." 10 The man replied, "Okay, I will do what you say. But the one who has the cup will not be executed. Instead, he will become my slave, and the rest of you may return home." 11 Each of the men quickly lowered his sack down from the donkey to the ground and opened it. 12 Then the servant started to search for the cup in each sack. He started with the oldest brother's sack and ended with the youngest one's sack. And he found the cup in Benjamin's sack and showed it to them. 13 The brothers tore their clothes [because they were so dismayed]. They loaded the sacks on the donkeys again and returned to the city. 14 When Judah and his [older and younger] brothers entered Joseph's house, Joseph was still there. The servant told Joseph what had happened. Then the brothers threw themselves down on the ground in front of Joseph. 15 He said to them, "Why did you do this? Do you not know that a man like me can find out things that nobody knows?" [RHQ] 16 Judah replied, "Sir, what can we say? How can we prove that we (are innocent/did not steal the cup)? God has (paid us back/punished us) for the sins [we committed many years ago]. So now we will become your slaves—both we and the one in whose sack the cup was found." 17 But Joseph replied, "No, I could never do anything like that. Only the man in whose sack the cup was found will become my slave. The rest of you can return to your father peacefully." 18 Then Judah came near to Joseph and said, "Sir, please let me say something to you. You are equal to the king himself, so you could command that I be executed; but do not be angry with me for speaking to you. 19 You asked us, 'Is your father still living, and do you have another brother?' 20 We answered, 'Our father is alive, but he is an old man. He has a young son who was born after our father became an old man. That son had an [older] brother, who is now dead. So the youngest son is the only one of his mother's sons who is still alive, and his father loves him very much.' 21 Then you said to us, 'The next time you come here, bring your younger brother down to me, so that I can see him.' 22 We said to you, 'No, we cannot do that, because the boy cannot leave his father. If he leaves his father, his father will die from sorrow.' 23 But you told us, 'If your youngest brother does not come back with you, I will not let you see me again!' 24 When we returned to our father, we told him what you said. 25 [Months later] our father said, 'Go back to Egypt and buy some more grain!' 26 But we said, 'We cannot go back by ourselves. We will go only if our youngest brother is with us. We will not be able to see the man who sells grain if our youngest brother is not with us.' 27 Our father replied, 'You know that my wife [Rachel] gave birth to two sons for me. 28 One of them disappeared, and I said, "A wild animal has surely torn him to pieces." And I have not seen him since then. 29 I am an old gray-haired man. If you take this other one from me, too, and something harms him, you would cause me to die because of my sorrow.' **(Sheol h7585)** 30 "So please listen. My father will remain alive only if his youngest son remains alive. 31 If he sees that the boy is not with us when we return to him, he will die. We will cause our gray-haired father to die because of his sorrow. **(Sheol h7585)** 32 I guaranteed/promised to my father that the boy would return safely. I told him, 'You can require me to do what I am promising. If I do not bring him back to you, you can say forever that (I am to blame/it is my fault) [for not bringing him back to you].' 33 "So, please let me remain here as your slave instead of my youngest brother, and let the boy return home with his other older brothers. 34 (I cannot return to my father if the boy is not with me!/How can I return to my father if the boy is not with me?) [RHQ] I do not want to see how miserable/sad my father would become!"

45 Joseph was not able to control his feelings any longer. He did not want to cry in front of his servants, so he said to them loudly, "All of you go outside!" After they went outside, there was no one else there with Joseph when he told his brothers who he was. 2 He cried so loudly that the people of Egypt who were outside heard it, and even the people in the king's palace heard it. 3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is our father still alive?" But his brothers were not able to reply, because they were frightened because of what he said. 4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me!" When they came closer, he said, "I am your brother Joseph! I am the one you sold to traders who brought me here to Egypt! 5 But now, do not be distressed, and do not be angry with yourselves for having sold me to people who brought me here, because it was to save you from dying [because of the famine] that God sent me here ahead of you. 6 There has been a famine in this country for two years, and it will continue for five more years, so that no one will plow ground, and there will be no crops to harvest. 7 But God sent me here ahead of you, to keep you from starving, and to make sure that your descendants will survive. 8 Therefore, it was not you who sent me here; it was God who sent me here! He has caused me to become like a father to the king. I am in charge of everything in his palace

and the governor of everyone in Egypt! **9** Now return to my father quickly, and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: "God has caused me to become the governor over the whole land of Egypt. Come down to me immediately! **10** You can live in the Goshen region. You and your children and your grandchildren, your sheep and goats and cattle, and everything that you own, will be near me. **11** Since there will be five more years of famine, I will make sure that you have food. If you do not come here, you and your family and all of your servants will starve. [EUP]'" **12** "Look closely, and all of you can see, including my brother Benjamin, that it is really I, Joseph, who am speaking to you. **13** Go and tell my father about how greatly I am honored here in Egypt. And tell him about everything else that you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly!" **14** Then he threw his arms around his [younger] brother Benjamin's neck and cried. And Benjamin hugged him and cried. **15** And then as he kissed his older brothers [on their cheeks], he cried. After that, his brothers started to talk with him. **16** Someone went to the palace and told the news that Joseph's brothers had come. The king and all his officials were pleased. **17** The king said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers this: 'Put loads of grain on your animals and return to the Canaan region. **18** Then bring your father and your families back here. I will give you the best land in Egypt, and you will have the best food in the land to eat.' **19** "Also tell this to your brothers: 'Take some carts from Egypt to carry your children and your wives, and get them and your father and come back here quickly. **20** Do not worry about bringing your possessions, because the best things in Egypt will be yours. Because of that, you will not need to bring any of your things from Canaan.'" **21** Jacob's sons did what the king suggested. Joseph gave them carts and food to eat along the way, as the king had ordered. **22** To each of them he gave new clothes, but he gave 300 pieces of silver and five sets of new clothes to Benjamin! **23** And this is what he sent to his father: Ten male donkeys, loaded with some of the best goods that come from Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other food for his father's trip to Egypt. **24** Then he sent his brothers on their way, saying to them "Do not quarrel along the way!" **25** So they left Egypt and came to their father Jacob in Canaan. **26** One of them told him, "Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is the governor over all of Egypt!" Jacob was extremely astonished; he could not believe that it was true. **27** But they told him everything that Joseph had said to them, and Jacob saw the carts that Joseph had sent to carry him and his family and possessions to Egypt. Then their father Jacob's shock ended. **28** He said, "What you have said is enough to convince me! My son Joseph is still alive, and I will go and see him before I die!"

46 So Jacob left [Canaan], taking with him all his family and possessions. When they arrived at Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to God, the one whom his father Isaac worshiped. **2** That night, God called to Jacob in a vision, saying, "Jacob! Jacob!" He replied, "I am here!" **3** God said, "I am God, the one your father worshiped. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, because I will give you many descendants, and they will become a great nation there. **4** I will go down to Egypt with you, and later I will bring [your descendants] back to Canaan again. And Joseph will be with you [MTY] when you die." [IDM] **5** Jacob left Beersheba, and his sons took their father, their wives, and their children, in the carts that the king had sent for them to travel in. **6** So Jacob and all his family went to Egypt. They took with them the livestock and all the other possessions that they had acquired in Canaan. **7** Jacob went to Egypt with all his sons and his daughters and grandsons and granddaughters—his whole family. **8** (Here is/I will now give you) a list of the names of the members of Jacob's family who went with him to Egypt: Reuben, Jacob's oldest son; Reuben's sons Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; Simeon and his sons Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul, who was the son of a Canaan people-group woman; Levi and his sons Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; Judah and his sons, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (his other sons, Er, and Onan, had died in Canaan); Perez and his two sons Hezron and Hamul; Issachar and his sons Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron; Zebulon and his sons Sered, Elon, and Jahleel; (Those were the sons of Jacob and Leah, and their daughter Dinah, who were born in Paddan-Aram/Mesopotamia: There were 33 of them, altogether.) They had Gad and his sons Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli; Asher and his sons Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah; and their sister Serah; Beriah's sons Heber and Malkiel; (Those were the children and grandchildren of Jacob and Zilpah, the slave girl whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah: There were 16 of them, altogether.) Joseph and Benjamin, the sons of Jacob's wife Rachel; (Ephraim and Manasseh were Joseph's two sons. [They did not go down to Egypt] because they were already in Egypt. They were sons of Asenath, the daughter of On, who was the priest in the temple in On [city].) Benjamin and his sons Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard; (Those were the sons and grandsons of Rachel and Jacob: There were 14 people altogether.) Dan and his son Hushim; Naphtali and his sons Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. (Those were the sons and grandsons of Jacob and Bilhah, the slave girl

whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel: There were seven people altogether.) **26** Altogether there were 66 people who were Jacob's descendants who went to Egypt with him. That number does not include his sons' wives. **27** Including Jacob and Joseph and Joseph's two sons who were born in Egypt, there were 70 members of Jacob's family when they were all there in Egypt. **28** Jacob sent Judah to go ahead of the rest of them to talk with Joseph and ask for directions on how to travel to Goshen. Then [Judah returned to the rest of his family and] they all traveled to the Goshen region. When they arrived there, **29** Joseph got his chariot ready and went to Goshen to meet his father. When Joseph arrived, he threw his arms around his father's neck and cried a long time. **30** Jacob said to Joseph, "I have seen you and I know that you are still alive! So now I am ready to die." **31** Then Joseph said to his [older] brothers [and younger brother] and to the rest of his father's family, "I will go to the king and say to him, 'My [older] brothers [and younger brother] and my father and the rest of his family, who were living in Canaan land, have all come to me. **32** The men are all shepherds. They take care of their livestock, and they have brought with them their sheep and goats and cattle, and everything else that they own.' **33** When the king summons you and asks, 'What work do you do?' **34** answer him by saying, 'From the time when we were young, we have taken care of livestock, just as our ancestors did.' If you tell him that, he will let you live in the Goshen region." Joseph told them to say that because the people of Egypt despised all shepherds.

47 Joseph chose five of his [older] brothers to go with him to talk to the king. He introduced his [older] brothers to the king, and then he said, "My father and my [older] brothers [and younger brother] have come from the Canaan region. They have brought all their sheep and goats and cattle and everything else that they own, and they are living now in Goshen region." **3** The king asked the brothers, "What work do you do?" They replied, "We are shepherds, just as our ancestors were." **4** They also said to him, "We have come here to live for a while in this land, because the famine is very severe in Canaan, and our animals have no (pasture/grass to eat) there. So now, please let us live in the Goshen region." **5** The king said to Joseph, "I am happy that your father and your [older] brothers [and younger brother] have come to you. **6** They can live wherever you want in the whole country of Egypt. Give your father and your brothers the best part of the land. They can live in Goshen. And if you know that any of them have any special ability to work with livestock, have them be in charge of my own livestock, too." **7** Then Joseph brought his father Jacob [into the palace] and introduced him to the king. Jacob asked God to bless the king. **8** Then the king asked Jacob, "How old are you?" **9** Jacob replied, "I have been traveling around for 130 years. I have not lived as long as my ancestors, but my life has been full of troubles." **10** Then Jacob again [asked God to] bless the king, and left him. **11** [That is how Joseph enabled his father and older] brothers [and younger brother] to start living in Egypt. As the king had commanded, he gave them property in the best part of the land, in [Goshen, which is now called] Rameses. **12** Joseph also provided food for all his father's family. The amounts that he gave them were according to how many children each of them had. **13** There were no crops growing in the whole region, because the famine was very severe. The people of Egypt and Canaan [MTY] became weak because they did not have enough food to eat. **14** Joseph collected all the money that the people in Egypt and Canaan paid for the grain they were buying from him, and he brought the money to the king's palace. **15** When the people of Egypt and Canaan had spent all their money for grain, they all kept coming to Joseph and saying, "Please give us some food! If you do not give us grain, we will die [RHQ]! We have used all our money to buy food, and we have no money left!" **16** Joseph replied, "Since your money is all gone, bring me your livestock. If you do that, I will give you food in exchange for your livestock." **17** So they brought their livestock to Joseph. He gave them food in exchange for their horses, their sheep and goats, their cattle, and their donkeys. **18** The next year they came to him again and said, "We cannot hide this from you: We have no more money, and now our livestock belongs to you. We have only our bodies and our land to give to you. We have nothing else left. **19** (If you do not give us some food, we will die!/Do you want to watch us die?) [RHQ] If you do not give us seeds, our fields will become useless [IDM]. Buy us and our land in exchange for food. Then we will be the king's slaves, and he will own the land. Give us seeds that we can plant and grow food, in order that we will not die, and in order that our land will not become like a desert." **20** So Joseph bought all the farms in Egypt for the king. The people of Egypt each sold their land to him because the famine was very severe, [and they had no other way to get money to buy food]. So all the farms became the king's farms. **21** As a result, Joseph caused all the people from one border of the country to the other to become the king's slaves. **22** But he did not buy the priests' land, because they received food from the king regularly, so the food that the king gave them was enough for them. That is the reason they did not sell their land to him. **23** Joseph said to the people [who sold themselves and their land to him], "Listen to me! Today I have bought you and your land for the king. So here are seeds for you so that

you can plant them in the ground. 24 But when you harvest the crop, you must give one-fifth of the crop to the king. The rest of the crop you can keep, to be seed to plant in the fields, and to be food for you and your children and for everyone else in your household to eat." 25 They replied, "You have saved our lives! We want you to be pleased with us. And we will be the king's slaves." 26 So Joseph made a law about all the land in Egypt, stating that one-fifth of the crops that are harvested belongs to the king. That law still exists. Only the land that belonged to the priests did not become the king's land. 27 Jacob and his family started to live in Egypt, in the Goshen region. They acquired property there. Many children were born to them there. As a result, their population increased greatly. 28 Jacob lived in Egypt 17 years. Altogether he lived 147 years. 29 When it was almost time for him to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "If I have pleased you, make a solemn promise that you will be kind to me and faithfully do what I am now asking you: When I die, do not bury me here in Egypt. 30 Instead, take my body out of Egypt, and bury it in Canaan where my ancestors are buried." Joseph replied, "I will do that." 31 Jacob said, "(Swear/Solemnly promise) to me that you will do it!" So Joseph swore to do it. Then Jacob turned over in bed, bowed his head, and worshiped God.

48 Some time later, someone told Joseph, "[Hey,] your father is ill." When Joseph heard that, he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to see his father. 2 When someone told Jacob, "Look, your son Joseph has come to see you!" Jacob sat up on the bed, even though it was difficult for him to do that. 3 He said to Joseph, "When I was at Luz in Canaan, God Almighty appeared to me. He blessed me 4 and said to me, 'I am going to enable you to become the father of many children. You will have many descendants, and they will become [the ancestors of] many people-groups. And I will give this land to your descendants to possess forever.' 5 "And now I will consider that your two sons, who were born to you here in Egypt before I came here, will (belong to me/be as though they are my sons). Ephraim and Manasseh will be [as though they were] my sons, and they will inherit my possessions, just like my sons Reuben and Simeon [and the others] will. 6 If you later become the father of any more children, they will not be considered to be my children, but as my grandchildren, and [in Canaan] they will receive as part of what they inherit some of the same land that is in the territory that their brothers [Ephraim and Manasseh] will inherit. 7 Many years ago, as I was returning from Paddan-Aram/Mesopotamia, your mother Rachel died in the Canaan region, while we were still traveling, not far from Ephrath [town]. So I buried her body there alongside the road to Ephrath [which is now called Bethlehem]." 8 When Jacob saw Joseph's sons, he asked, "Who are these boys?" 9 Joseph replied, "They are the sons that God has given to me here in Egypt." Jacob said, "Bring them close to me so that I can bless them." 10 Jacob was almost blind because he was very old. He could not recognize the boys. So Joseph brought his sons close to his father, and Jacob kissed them and hugged them. 11 Jacob said to Joseph, "I did not expect to see you again, but look at this! God has allowed me to see not only you, but he has allowed me to see your children, too!" 12 Joseph took the boys from alongside Jacob's knees. Then he bowed down with his face to the ground. 13 Then Joseph took both of the boys, putting Ephraim on his right side toward Jacob's left hand, and putting Manasseh on his left side toward Jacob's right hand, and brought them close to Jacob. 14 But Jacob [did not do what Joseph wanted him to do. Instead], he reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, even though he was the younger son. He crossed his arms and put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the older son. 15 Then he (blessed/asked God to bless) Joseph and his sons, saying, "My grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac conducted their lives as God desired, and to this very day God has led me and taken care of me as a shepherd leads and cares for his sheep [MET]. 16 The angel whom he sent has kept me from being harmed in any way. I pray that God will bless these boys. I pray that people will never forget about me and about Abraham and Isaac because of what God does for these boys. I pray that they will have many descendants who will live all over the earth." 17 When Joseph saw that his father had placed his right hand on Ephraim's head and not on Manasseh's head, he was distressed/displeased. So he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18 Joseph said to him, "My father, that is not right! The one on whom you put your left hand is my older son. Put your right hand on his head." 19 But his father refused, saying, "I know that, my son, I know what I am doing. Manasseh's descendants will also become a people-group, and they will become important. But his younger brother's descendants will become greater than his will. His descendants will become several nations." 20 So he blessed them both on that day, saying, "The people in Israel will use your names when they bless people. They will say, 'We pray that God will help you as he helped Ephraim and Manasseh.'" In that way, Jacob said that Ephraim would become more important than Manasseh. 21 Then Jacob said to Joseph, "I am about to die. But I know that God will help/protect you. And some day he will take your descendants back to the land of their

ancestors. 22 And it is to you, not to your brothers, that I will give the fertile hill in the Shechem area. I captured that land from the Amor people-group, fighting them with my sword and my bow and arrows."

49 Jacob summoned all his sons, and said to them, 2 "Gather around me in order that I can tell you what will happen in the future. My sons, come and listen to me. I am your father, [Jacob, whom God named] Israel. 3 Reuben, you are my oldest son. You were born when I was young and energetic/strong. You are prouder and stronger than all the rest of my sons. 4 But you were as uncontrollable as a flood [SIM]. So now you will not be my most important son, because you climbed up onto my bed, and had sex with [MTY] my (concubine/slave who had become one of my wives). Your doing that caused me, your father, to have great shame. 5 Simeon and Levi, you have both acted like criminals. You use your swords to act violently. 6 I do not want to be with you when you make evil plans [DOU]. I do not want to join you in your meetings, because you killed people when you became very angry, and you (hamstrung/cut the tendons in the legs of) oxen just to (have fun/see them suffer). 7 God says, 'I will (curse/cause bad things to happen to) them for being very angry, for acting very cruelly when they were very furious. I will scatter their descendants [MTY] throughout Israel land.' 8 Judah, your [older and younger] brothers will praise you. They will bow down before you, because you will thoroughly defeat [MTY] your enemies. 9 Judah is like a young lion [SIM] that has returned to its den satisfied after eating the animals that it has killed. He is like a lion that lies down and stretches out after eating; no one would dare to disturb it [RHQ]. 10 There will always be a ruler [MTY] from the descendants of Judah [MTY]. Each one will hold a scepter/staff to show that he has authority as a king. He will do that until the one to whom the scepter belongs comes, the one to whom the nations will bring tribute and show that they will obey him. 11 The grapevines of Judah's descendants will produce grapes very abundantly. As a result, they will not object to tying their young donkeys to the grapevines in order that the donkeys can eat the leaves of the grapevines. [Wine will be very plentiful, with the result that] they could wash their cloaks in wine that is as red as blood [MET]. 12 Their eyes will be red because of [drinking too much] wine, but their teeth will be very white because of drinking much milk [from the cows]. 13 Zebulun, your descendants will live by the seashore where there will be a safe harbor for ships. Their land will extend north as far as Sidon [city]. 14 Issachar, your descendants will be like strong donkeys that are lying down on the ground between their loads, [so tired that they cannot get up]! 15 They will see that their resting place is good, and that the land pleases them very much. But they will bend their backs to carry heavy loads and be forced to work for others. 16 Dan, although your tribe will be small, their leaders will rule their people just like the leaders of other tribes of Israel will rule their people. 17 Your descendants will be like snakes at the side of a road, like poisonous snakes lying beside a path. They will strike the heels of horses that pass by, causing the riders to fall backwards [as the horses rear up on their hind legs]." 18 Then Jacob prayed, "Yahweh, I am waiting for you to rescue me [from my enemies]." 19 [Then Jacob continued telling his sons what would happen in the future. He said], "Gad, your tribe/descendants will be attacked by a group of bandits, but your tribe/descendants will pursue and attack them [MTY]. 20 Asher, your descendants will eat good-tasting food; they will produce food that is delicious enough for kings to eat. 21 Naphtali, your descendants will be like deer [MET] that are (free to/not tied down and can) run wherever they wish. They will give birth to children who are good-looking like (fawns/baby deer) [MET]. 22 Joseph, you will have many descendants [MET]. Their children will be as many as the fruit on a vine near a spring of water, whose branches extend over a wall. 23 Their enemies will attack them fiercely, and shoot at them with bows and arrows and pursue them. 24 But they will hold their bows steady and their arms will remain strong, because of the power [MTY] of my mighty God, because of Yahweh who guides and provides for me [MET] like a shepherd guides and provides for his sheep. The people of Israel will [ask Yahweh to protect them], [like people hide under] a huge [overhanging] to be protected. 25 God, the one whom I worship, will help your descendants. God Almighty will bless them by sending them rain from the sky and by giving them water from deep/far below the ground. He will give them many cattle and children [MET] (OR, and their cattle will have many offspring). 26 The blessings that I want God to give you are great ones. They are greater than the blessings that come from the eternal mountains, greater than the ones that come from the everlasting hills. Joseph, I pray that these blessings will (be given to you/come upon your head), because you are the leader of your [older] brothers [and younger brother]. 27 Benjamin, your descendants will be like [MET] vicious/fierce wolves: In the morning they will kill their enemies like a wolf devours (its prey/the animals that it has killed), and in the evening they will divide among their warriors the spoils that they seized from their enemies." 28 Those twelve sons are the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. That is what their father said to them as he blessed them, telling to each one words that were appropriate for him. 29 Then Jacob said

to his sons, "I will soon die. Bury my body where some of my ancestors are buried, in the cave that is in the field that was bought from Ephron, who belonged to the Heth people-group. **30** That field is in the Machpelah area, east of Mamre [town], in Canaan. My grandfather Abraham bought it from Ephron to use as a burial place. **31** That is where they buried him and his wife Sarah. That is where they buried my father Isaac and his wife Rebekah. And that is where I buried my wife Leah. **32** That field and the cave in it were bought from the Heth people-group; so that is where I want you to bury me." **33** When Jacob finished giving those instructions to his sons, he lay down on his bed again. Then he died [IDM].

50 Joseph leaned close to his father's face and cried over him and kissed him. **2** Joseph commanded his servants who were morticians to (embalm his father's body/put spices on his father's body) to (preserve it/keep it from decaying), and then wrap it with strips of cloth. **3** So the morticians did that. It took 40 days to embalm Jacob's body, because that is the amount of time that was always required for them to embalm a body. And the people of Egypt mourned for 70 days because of Jacob's death. **4** When the time of mourning was finished, Joseph said to the king's officials, "If you are pleased with me, please take this message to the king: **5** 'When my father was about to die, he told me to solemnly promise that I would bury his body in Canaan, in the tomb that he himself had prepared. So please let me go up to Canaan and bury my father's body. Then I will return.'" **6** After they gave the king the message, he replied, "Tell Joseph, 'Go up and bury your father's body, as you (swore/solemnly promised) that you would do.'" **7** So Joseph went [up to Canaan] to bury his father's body. All of the king's officials, all the king's advisors, and all the elders in Egypt went with him. **8** His own family's small children and their sheep and goats and their cattle stayed in the Goshen region. But all the rest of Joseph's family and his [older] brothers [and younger brother] and his father's family went with him. **9** Men riding in chariots [MTY] and on horses also went along. It was a huge group. **10** They went to the east side of the Jordan [River] and arrived at Atad. There was a place there where people (threshed/beat the grain to separate the wheat from the chaff.) There they mourned loudly for Jacob for a long time. Joseph performed mourning ceremonies for his father for seven days. **11** When the Canaan people-group who lived there saw them mourning like that, they said, "This is a sad mourning place for the people of Egypt!" So they named the place Abel-Mizraim, [which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean 'mourning of the Egyptians].' **12** Then Jacob's sons did for him what their father had commanded. **13** They [crossed the Jordan River and] carried Jacob's body to Canaan. They buried it in the cave in the field at Machpelah, east of Mamre [town]. That was the field that Abraham had bought from Ephron, who was one of the Heth people-group, to use as a burial place. **14** After he had buried his father, Joseph and his [older] brothers [and younger brother] and all the others who had gone up to Canaan with him for the funeral returned to Egypt. **15** After Jacob died, Joseph's brothers became worried. They realized what might happen. They said, "Suppose Joseph hates us and tries to get revenge for all the evil things that we did to him many years ago?" **16** So they sent someone to tell this to Joseph for them: "Before our father died, he told us this: **17** 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive your [older] brothers for the evil thing that they did to you, for their terrible sin against you, because what they did to you was very wrong."' So now we, who are servants of your father's God, ask you, please forgive us for what we did to you." But Joseph just cried when he received their message. **18** Then his [older] brothers themselves came and threw themselves on the ground in front of Joseph, and one of them said, "Please listen. We will just be your servants." **19** But Joseph replied to them, "Do not be afraid! [God is the one who punishes people]; (am I God?/I am not God!) [RHQ] **20** As for you, yes, you wanted to do something very evil to me. But God caused something good to come from it! He wanted to save many people from dying of hunger, and that is what happened! Today they are alive! **21** So I say [again], do not be afraid! I will make sure that you and your children have enough to eat." In that way he reassured them and made made them feel much better. **22** Joseph lived with his father's family in Egypt until he was 110 years old. **23** He lived long enough to see Ephraim's children and grandchildren. The children of Joseph's grandson Machir, who was Manasseh's son, were born before Joseph died, and were adopted by Joseph to be his own children [IDM]. **24** One day Joseph said to his [older] brothers, "I am about to die. But God will certainly (help/take care of) you. And [some day] he will lead your [descendants] up out of this land and take them to Canaan, the land that he solemnly promised to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." **25** Then Joseph said, "When God enables you to do that, you must take my body back to Canaan." He made his older brothers solemnly promise to do that. **26** So Joseph died in Egypt when he was 110 years old. His body was embalmed and put in a coffin there.

Exodus

1 The sons of Jacob who went to Egypt with him along with their families were **2** Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, **3** Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, **4** Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. **5** Altogether there were 70 people [who went with] Jacob. That included his [sons, his grandsons, and two great-grandsons]. [His son] Joseph was already in Egypt. **6** [Eventually] Joseph and his [older and younger] brothers and everyone [else in their family who lived] (in that generation/at that time) died. **7** But Jacob's descendants kept giving birth to many children [IDM]. The number [of his descendants] kept becoming larger and larger. As a result, there were so many of them that they were everywhere in Egypt (OR, that they [became a threat] to the Egyptians). **8** Then [several hundred years later], a new king began to rule [MTY] in Egypt. He did not know [what] Joseph [had done for the people of Egypt long ago]. **9** He said to his people, "Look [at what has happened]! The Israeli people have become so numerous and so powerful that they [now might conquer] us! **10** We must find a way to control them! If we do not do that, their population will continue to grow. Then, if enemies [PRS] attack us, they will join with our enemies and fight against us, and they will escape from [our] land." **11** So [the king and his officials] put supervisors over the Israeli people to cause them to suffer very much by [forcing them] to work very hard. They forced [the Israeli people to] build [two] cities, Pithom and Ramses, in which to store [supplies for the king/government]. **12** But the more cruelly they treated the [Israeli people], the bigger the Israeli [population] grew, and they became more numerous all over [the land]. So the Egyptian people began to be afraid of the Israeli people. **13** They forced the Israeli people to work very hard, **14** and by making them slaves, they made their lives miserable. They [forced them] to [build many buildings with] mortar and bricks. [They also forced them to do] other work in the fields. [In making them do all this work, the Egyptian officials treated them] ruthlessly/cruelly. **15** There were two Hebrew (midwives/women who helped the women when they were giving birth). [Hebrew means the same as Israeli.] The names of the women were Shiphrah and Puah. The king of Egypt said to [those two women], **16** "When you help the Hebrew women when they are giving birth [MTY], if [the baby that is born] is a boy, you must kill it. If [the baby] is a girl, you (may let it live/do not have to kill them)." **17** But the midwives feared/revered God. So they did not do what the king told them to do. They allowed the baby boys to live. **18** So the king summoned the [two] midwives and said to them, "Why are you doing this? Why are you letting the baby boys live?" **19** [One of] the midwives replied to the king, "[You need to realize that] the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women. The Hebrew women are very strong/healthy. They give birth [to their babies] before we can get to them [to help them]." **20** So God acted kindly toward the midwives, and the [Hebrew] people became even more numerous and strong. **21** Furthermore, because the midwives feared/revered God, he enabled them also to give birth to children. **22** Then the king commanded all (the [Egyptian] people/his [advisors]): "You must throw into the Nile [River] every baby boy born that the [Hebrew women] give birth to! But you can allow the baby girls to live."

2 (There was a man who/My father) was descended from [Jacob's son] Levi. He married a woman who was [also] descended from Levi. **2** She became pregnant and gave birth to (a baby boy/me). When she saw that he/I was a good-looking baby, she hid him/me for three months, [because she was not willing to do what the king commanded]. **3** When she was unable to (hide him/me/keep it a secret) any longer, she got a basket made from tall reeds. She covered the basket with tar ([to make it waterproof/so water could not get in]). Then she put him/me in the basket and put the basket in [the water] in the middle of the tall grass at the edge of the Nile [River]. **4** His/My older sister was standing not far away, [watching to see] what would happen to him/me. **5** [Soon] the king's daughter went down to the river to bathe. Her female servants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket amid the tall grass [in the river]. So she sent [one of] her servants to get it. **6** When [the servant brought the basket to her], she opened it, and was surprised to see (a baby that was/me), crying. She felt sorry for him/me, and said, "This [must] be one of the Hebrews' babies." **7** Then (the baby's/my) [older] sister [approached] the king's daughter and said, "Do you want me to go and find someone from among the Hebrew women who will [be able to] nurse the baby for you?" **8** The king's daughter said to her, "[Yes], go [and find one]." So the girl went and summoned (the baby's/my) mother. **9** The king's daughter said to her, "[Please] take this baby and nurse him for me. I will pay you [for doing that]." So (the woman/my mother) took him/me and nursed him/me. **10** ([A few years later]/when (the child/I) grew [older]), she brought him/me to the king's daughter. She adopted him/me [as though I was] her own son. She named him/me Moses, [which sounds like the Hebrew words 'pull out'], because she said "I pulled him out of the water." **11** One day, after Moses/I had grown up, he/I went out [of the palace area] to see his/my people, [the Hebrews]. He/I saw how they were being [forced to work] very hard. He/I [also] saw an Egyptian [man] beating

one of his/my Hebrew people. 12 He/I looked around [to see if anyone was watching]. Seeing no one, he/I killed the Egyptian man and buried his [body] in the sand. 13 The next day he/I returned [to the same place]. He/I was surprised to see two Hebrew men who were fighting [each other]. He/I said to the man who started the fight, "Why are you (you should not be) striking your fellow [Hebrew]." 14 The man replied, "(Who made you our ruler and judge?/No one made you our ruler and judge!) [RHQ] [You have no right to interfere with us] Are you going to kill me just like you killed that Egyptian man [yesterday]?" Then Moses/I was afraid, [because] he/I thought, "[Since that man knows what I did], surely [other people] know, [too]." 15 [And that was correct]. The king heard about what he/I had done [to that Egyptian. So he ordered his soldiers to] execute/kill Moses/me. But he/I fled from the king [and left Egypt. He/I traveled east to] the Midian [region] and started to live there. 16 The man who was the (priest/one who offered the people's gifts to God) for the Midian people, [whose name was Jethro], had seven daughters. [One day] as Moses/I sat down beside a well, those girls came [to the well] and got water, and filled the troughs in order to give water to their father's flock [of sheep]. 17 Some (shepherds/men who took care of other sheep) came and started to chase away the girls. But Moses/I helped/rescued the girls, and got water for their sheep. 18 When the girls returned to their father [Jethro], [whose other name is] Reuel, he asked them, "How is it that you were able to [give water to the sheep and] come home so quickly today?" 19 They replied, "A man from Egypt kept [MTY] other shepherds from sending us away. He also got water for us [from the well] and gave water to the flock [of sheep]." 20 He said to his daughters, "Where is he? (Why did you leave him [out there]?/You should not leave him [out there]!) [RHQ] Invite him [in], so he can have something to eat [MTY]!" 21 [So they did], and Moses/I [accepted and ate with them]. And Moses/I decided to live there. Later Jethro gave him/me his daughter Zipporah [to be his/my wife]. 22 Later she gave birth to a son, and Moses/I named him Gershom, [which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean 'foreigner'], because he/I said, "I am living as a foreigner in [this] land." 23 Many years later the king of Egypt died. The Israeli people [in Egypt] were still groaning because of the [hard work they had to do as] slaves. They called out for [someone to] help them, and God heard them call out [PRS]. 24 He heard them groaning. And he (thought about/did not forget) that he had solemnly promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [to bless their descendants]. 25 God saw how the Israeli people were [being badly treated], and he was concerned about them.

3 Moses/I was taking care of the sheep that belonged to his/my father-in-law Jethro, the priest of the Midian [people]. He/I led the flock across the desert and came to Horeb, [the mountain that was later called Sinai], the (mountain that [had been dedicated to] God/taboo mountain). 2 [One day] Yahweh (appeared/revealed himself) to him/me, [looking like] an angel. The angel appeared in a flame of fire in the middle of a bush [that was burning]. Moses/I looked at it, and he/I was surprised that the bush was burning, but it was not burning up. 3 Moses/I thought, "I will go closer and try to see this strange sight! Why is the bush not burning up?" 4 When Yahweh saw that he/I had come closer, he called to Moses/me from the middle of the bush, saying, "Moses! Moses!" He/I replied, "[Yes], here I am." 5 Yahweh said, "Do not come closer! [Because I am God], the ground on which you are standing is holy/taboo. So take off your sandals [to show respect to me]." 6 Then he said, "I am God, whom your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [worshiped]." So Moses/I covered his/my face, because he/I was afraid [that God would kill him/me] if he/I looked at him. 7 Then Yahweh said, "I have seen how cruelly [they are treating] my people in Egypt. I have heard them (wailing/crying out) [for help] because of what the slave-drivers [are forcing them to do]. I know how my people are suffering. 8 So I have come down [from heaven] to rescue them from the Egyptians [SYN]. I have come to bring them up from that land [to the highlands in Canaan]. I will bring them to a land that is good/fertile and that has plenty of space. It will be very good for raising livestock and growing crops [MTY]. It is the land where the descendants of Canaan, Heth, Amor, Periz, Hiv, and Jebus [live]. 9 Truly I have now heard my Israeli people crying [PRS]. I have seen how the Egyptians oppress them. 10 So you go [back] to Egypt. I am sending you to the king, in order that [he may permit] you to bring my people, the Israeli people, out of Egypt." 11 But Moses/I replied, "I am not a well-known person [RHQ]! (I cannot go to the king and [ask him to permit me] to bring the Israeli people out of Egypt!/How can I go to the king and [ask him to allow me to] bring the Israeli people out of Egypt?)" [RHQ] 12 God replied, "I will be with you. And when you bring [my] people out of Egypt, all of you will worship me [right] here on this mountain. That will prove that I am the one who sent you [to them]." 13 Moses/I said to God, "If I go to the Israeli people and say to them, 'God, the one your ancestors [worshiped], has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?', what shall I say to them?" 14 God replied, "I AM who I AM." And he said, "Tell the Israeli people that the one who is [named] 'I AM' has sent me to you." 15 God also said to Moses/me, "Say this to the Israeli people:

'Yahweh God, the one your ancestors [worshiped], the one that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob [worshiped], has sent me to you.' This name, [Yahweh], will be my name forever. That is the name that [people in] all future generations [must use when they talk about/to] me. **16** Go [to Egypt] and gather together the elders/leaders of the Israeli people, and say to them, 'Yahweh God, the one your ancestors [worshiped], the one Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [worshiped], appeared to me. He said to him/me, "I have been watching closely what the Egyptian people have done to you. **17** I promise that I will rescue you from being oppressed in Egypt, and [I will take you] to the land where the descendants of Canaan, Heth, Amor, Periz, Hiv, and Jebus [live]. It is a land good for raising livestock and growing crops [MTY]."' **18** My people will do what you say. Then you and their leaders must go to the king of Egypt, and you must say to him, 'Yahweh, who is God, the one we Hebrews [worship], has revealed himself to us. So now we ask you to allow us to travel for three days to [a place in] the desert, in order that there we may offer sacrifices to Yahweh, our God.' **19** But I know that the king of Egypt will allow you to go only if he realizes I am [more] powerful [MTY] [than he is]. **20** So I will use my power [MTY] to strike/punish [the people of] Egypt [MTY] by performing many miracles there. Then he will allow you to leave. **21** [When that happens], I will cause the people of Egypt to respect you. [The result will be that] when you leave Egypt, (you will not go empty-handed/they will give you many [valuable] things to take with you). **22** [At that time], each [Israeli] woman will ask her [Egyptian] neighbors and each [Egyptian] woman who is living in her (OR, her neighbor's) house to [give her] some silver and gold jewelry and some [nice] clothes. [Each Egyptian woman will give them some], and you will put them on your sons and daughters [to take with you]. In that way you will (take away/confiscate) the wealth of the Egyptian people."

4 Moses/I replied, "But what if [the Israeli people] (do not believe me/are not convinced) or not do what I tell them? What if they say, 'Yahweh did not appear to you!'" **2** Yahweh said to him/me, "[Look at] that thing you are holding in your hand. What is it?" He/I replied, "A (walking stick/shepherd's stick)." **3** He said, "Throw it down on the ground!" So, he/I threw it on the ground, and it became a snake! And he/I ran/jumped away from it. **4** But Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Reach down and pick it up by its tail!" So he/I reached down and caught it, and [when he/I picked it up], it became a stick in his/my hand [again.] **5** Yahweh said, "[Do the same thing in front of the Israeli people], in order that they may believe that [I], Yahweh God, the one Abraham and Isaac and Jacob worshiped, truly appeared to you." **6** Yahweh spoke to Moses/me again, saying "Put your hand inside your robe [MTY]!" He/I did that. And when he/I took it out again, [surprisingly], his/my hand was white. It had a skin disease [that made it] as white as snow. **7** Then God said, "Put your hand back inside your robe [MTY]!" So he/I did that, and when he/I took it out again, surprisingly, it was normal again, just like the rest of his/my body! **8** God said, "[You can do that in front of the Israeli people, too]. If they do not pay attention to what you say because of [seeing] the first miracle, they will (believe [you/be convinced) when you perform] the second miracle. **9** If they do not believe you or do what you say, even [after you perform] those two miracles, get some water from the Nile [River] and pour it on the ground. [When you do that], the water from the river that you pour on the ground will become blood [MTY] (OR, [red like] blood)." **10** Moses/I replied, "O Yahweh! I am not an eloquent [speaker]! I was not an eloquent speaker before, and I have not become one since you started talking to me! I am not a good speaker [MTY], and I speak very slowly." **11** Then Yahweh said to him/me, "[You seem to forget] who it is that makes people able to speak [RHQ]! Who is it that enables people to be unable to speak or unable to hear, or able to see or not to see? It is I, Yahweh [RHQ]! **12** So start going [to Egypt], and I will help you to speak [MTY], and I will tell you what you should say." **13** But he/I replied, "O, Yahweh, I ask you, please send someone else [instead]!" **14** Then Yahweh became very angry with Moses/me. He said, "[What about] your [older] brother Aaron, who is [also] a descendant of Levi? I know that he is a very good/eloquent speaker. He is actually on his way here [right now], and he will be very happy to see you. **15** You can talk to him and tell him what to say [MTY], and I will help both of you [SYN] to know what to say [MTY]. And I will tell you both what you should do. **16** He will speak for you to the [Israeli] people. He will be (your spokesman/as though he was your mouth) [MET], and you will be to him as though you are [his] god. **17** [Be sure] to take with you the walking/shepherd's stick [that is in your hand], because you will perform miracles with it." **18** Moses/I returned to his/my father-in-law Jethro and said to him, "Please let me go back to Egypt, to see my fellow Israelis there. I want to know if they are still alive." Jethro said to Moses/me, "Go, and may [God give you inner] peace." **19** Yahweh said to Moses/me [before he/I left] Midian, "You can [safely] return to Egypt, because the men who were wanting to kill you [MTY] are [now] dead." **20** So Moses/I took his/my wife and sons and put them on donkeys, and they/we returned to Egypt. And Moses/I took in his/my hand the stick that God [told him/me to take along]. **21** Yahweh said to Moses/me, "When you return to Egypt, be sure to perform all

the miracles that I have given you power [to do], while the king is watching. But I will make him stubborn [IDM], with the result that he will not let the Israeli people leave [Egypt]. **22** Then say to him, 'This is what Yahweh says: "The Israeli [people] [MTY] are [as dear to] me as firstborn sons [MET]. **23** I told you to let my people [MTY] leave [Egypt], in order that they may worship me [in the desert]. If you refuse to let them go, I warn you, I will kill your firstborn son!"'" **24** [One night], as they were camping on the way [to Egypt], Yahweh appeared to Moses/me. He wanted/threatened to kill Moses/me [for disobeying his command that boys/sons be circumcised]. **25** Then [his/my wife] Zipporah took a flint knife and circumcised her son. Then she touched the boy's feet (OR, genitals) with the piece of skin [she had cut off], and she said, "The blood [which flowed when I circumcised you] will protect you [from being harmed by Yahweh] [MET]." **26** She said to him, "You are safe now [MET] because you have been circumcised." So Yahweh did not harm her son. **27** Yahweh said to Aaron, "Go into the desert to meet/see Moses!" So he went [there from Egypt] and met him/me at [Sinai], the mountain dedicated to God, and [greeted him/me by] kissing him/me [on the cheek]. **28** Moses/I told Aaron everything that Yahweh had said to him/me when he told him/me to return to Egypt. He/I also told Aaron about all the miracles that Yahweh told him/me to perform. **29** [So Aaron and Moses/I] returned [to Egypt]. There they/we gathered together all the Israeli elders/leaders. **30** Aaron told them everything that Yahweh had told Moses/me, and Aaron performed [all] the miracles as the people watched. **31** They believed [that what they/we were saying was true]. When they heard that Yahweh had seen how the Israeli people were being cruelly oppressed and that he was going to help them, they bowed down and worshiped [Yahweh].

5 Then Aaron and Moses/I went to the king and [one of them/us] said, "Yahweh God, whom [we] Israeli people [worship], says this [to you]: 'Let my people go to the desert, in order that they may have a feast to [honor] me!'" **2** But the king said, "Who is Yahweh? Why should I pay attention to what he says and let the Israeli [people] [MTY] go? I do not know Yahweh! And furthermore, I will not let the Israeli [people] go!" **3** They/we replied, "Yahweh God, the one we Hebrews [worship], has (revealed himself/appeared) to us [and told us what to tell you]. So we ask you to [please] let us go on a three day journey into the desert. We must offer sacrifices to Yahweh God [there]. [If we do] not do that, he will cause us to die [IDM] from diseases or from attacks [by our enemies] [MTY]." **4** But the king of Egypt said to them/us, "Moses and Aaron, (stop trying to keep the Israeli people from working/why are you preventing the Israeli people from working?) [RHQ] [Tell those slaves] to return to work!" **5** The king also said, "Listen [to me! You] people [who now live] in this land are now [more] numerous, and you want them [to stop working and] rest!" **6** That same day the king commanded the Egyptian slave bosses and the [Israeli] men supervising the slaves, **7** "Do not continue to give the [Israeli] people straw for making bricks, as you have done previously. Make them go [into the fields] and gather straw for themselves. **8** But require them to make the same number of bricks that they did before. Do not decrease the number at all. They (are lazy/do not have enough work to do). That is the reason they are asking me to let them go [into the desert] to offer sacrifices to their god. **9** Force the men to work harder, so that they will not [have time] to listen to lies [from their leaders]!" **10** So the slave bosses and supervisors of the slaves went to where the [Israeli] people were and said to them, "The king has said that he will no longer give you any straw. **11** [So] you yourselves must go and get straw wherever you can find it. But you must still keep working to make the same number of bricks as before." [LIT] **12** So the Israeli people went all over Egypt to find straw. **13** The slave bosses kept telling them insistently, "Finish the work you are required to do each day, [making the same amount of bricks] as you did [before, when we gave you] straw!" **14** [When they were not able to do that], the slave bosses had the [Israeli supervisors] beaten [with sticks], and they asked them, "Why have [all the men you are supervising] not been able to make [the same number] of bricks today/now as [they did] before [RHQ]?" **15** Then the Israeli supervisors went to the king and complained, saying "[Your Majesty], why are you treating us this way? **16** [Now] they are not giving us any straw [for making bricks], but they keep commanding us to make bricks. And now sometimes they beat us. But it is the fault of your own slave bosses [that we cannot make as many bricks as before]!" **17** But the king said, "You are lazy and do not [want to] work! That is why you keep saying, 'Allow us to go [to the desert] and offer sacrifices to Yahweh.' **18** So go and get back to work! [We] are not going to give you any straw, but you must keep making the same number of bricks!" **19** The Israeli supervisors realized that they were in a difficult situation, because they had been told, "We are not going to decrease the number of bricks [you must make] each day." **20** As they left the king's [palace], they met Aaron and Moses/me, who were waiting for them [there]. **21** They said to Aaron and Moses/me, "Yahweh has seen [what] you two [have done] He will punish you [MTY], because you have caused the king and his officials to despise us! You have given them an excuse [MTY] to kill us!" **22** Moses/I left them and prayed to

Yahweh again, saying, "O Yahweh, why have you caused all these evil things to happen to your people [RHQ]? And why did you send me [here] [RHQ]? **23** Ever since I went to the king and told him what you told me to say [MTY], he has treated your people very cruelly, and you have not done anything to help/rescue them!"

6 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Now you will see what I will do to the king [and his people]. I will powerfully [MTY] compel him to let my people go. In fact, by my power [MTY] [I will force] him to expel them from his land!" **2** God also said to Moses/me, "I am Yahweh. **3** I am the one who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and [told them that I] was God Almighty, but I did not [tell] them that my name [was Yahweh]. **4** I also made my solemn agreement with them, promising to give them the Canaan region. That was the area in which they were living as foreigners. **5** Furthermore, I have heard the Israeli people as they were groaning [because of the hard work that] the Egyptians forced them to do as their slaves. I have thought about that solemn promise [that I made]. **6** So tell the Israeli people that [I said this:] 'I am Yahweh. I will free you from the burdens [of heavy work] that the Egyptians [have given you]. I will free you from being their slaves. With my great power [MTY] and by punishing them [MTY] very severely, I will save you. **7** I will cause you to be my own people, and I will be your God, [the one you worship]. You will truly know that I, Yahweh your God, am the one who has freed you from the burdens [of work as slaves] of the Egyptians. **8** And I will bring you to the land that I solemnly promised to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. You will possess it [forever]. I, Yahweh, am [promising this].'" **9** Moses/I told that to the Israeli people, but they did not believe what he/I said. They were very discouraged [IDM] because of the hard work [that they had been forced to do as slaves]. **10** Yahweh said to Moses/me, **11** "Go and tell the king of Egypt [again] that he must allow the Israeli people to leave his land!" **12** But Moses/I said to Yahweh, "Listen [to what I am saying]. [Even] the Israeli people have not paid attention to what I [told them]. But I am a poor speaker. [MET, MTY] So (why should the king pay attention to what I tell him?/the king will certainly not pay attention to what I [tell him]!)" [RHQ] **13** But Yahweh spoke to Aaron and Moses/me and commanded them/us, "Tell the Israeli people and the king of Egypt that I have [commissioned you two] to lead the Israeli people out of Egypt." **14** (Here is/I will now give you) a list of the ancestors of [Moses/me and Aaron]: The sons of Reuben, who was Jacob's oldest son, [were] Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. They were [ancestors of] the clans [that have those same names]. **15** The sons of Simeon [were] Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul. Shaul's mother was a woman from the Canaan people-group. Those men also were [ancestors of] clans [that have those same names]. **16** These are the names of the sons of Levi, in the order in which they were born: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Levi was 137 years old [when he died]. **17** The sons of Gershon [were] Libni and Shimei. They were ancestors of clans that have those names. **18** The sons of Kohath [were] Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. Kohath was 133 years old [when he died]. **19** The sons of Merari [were] Mahli and Mushi. All of those people whose names [I have listed] belonged to tribes/clans descended from Levi, in the order in which they were born. **20** Amram married his father's sister, Jochebed. She was the mother of Aaron and Moses/me. Amram was 137 years old [when he died]. **21** The sons of Izhar were Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. **22** The sons of Uzziel were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri. **23** Aaron married Elisheba. She was the daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon. Elisheba gave birth to [four sons]: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. **24** The sons of Korah [were] Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. They were the ancestors of the Korah people-group. **25** Aaron's son Eleazar married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she gave birth to Phinehas. [That ends the list of] the families and clans that were descended from Levi. **26** Aaron and Moses/I were the ones to whom Yahweh said, "Lead all the families and clans of the Israeli people out of Egypt." **27** They/We were the ones who spoke to the king of Egypt about bringing the Israeli people out of Egypt. **28** On the day that Yahweh spoke to Moses/me in Egypt, **29** he said, "I am Yahweh. You must tell the king everything that I say to you." **30** But Moses/I said to Yahweh, "Listen to me. I am not a good speaker. [MET, MTY] So (the king will certainly not pay attention to what I say/why should the king pay attention to what I tell him?)!" [RHQ]

7 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Listen [carefully]. [Just like I enabled prophet to speak my messages], I will cause the king [to consider that] you are like a god, and that Aaron is like a prophet. **2** You must tell everything I command you [to tell to your older] brother Aaron, and he will tell that to the king. He must tell the king to let the Israeli people leave his land. **3** But I will make the king stubborn [IDM]. As a result, even though I perform many kinds of (miracles/terrifying things) [DOU] [here] in Egypt, **4** the king will not pay any attention to what you say. Then I will punish [MTY] the people of Egypt [MTY] very severely [MTY], and I will lead/bring the tribes of the Israeli people out of Egypt. **5** Then, when I show my great power [MTY] to the Egyptian people and bring the Israeli people out from among them, they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I

say that I will do]." 6 Aaron and Moses/I did what Yahweh told them/us to do. They/We [went and spoke to the king]. 7 At that time, Moses/I was 80 years old, and Aaron was 83 years old. 8 Yahweh said to Moses/me, 9 "If the king says to you, 'Prove [that God sent] you by performing a miracle,' then say to Aaron, 'Throw your stick down in front of the king, in order that it may become a snake.'" 10 So Aaron and Moses/I went to the king and did what Yahweh had commanded [them/us to do]. Aaron threw his stick down in front of the king and his officials, and it became a snake. 11 Then the king summoned his sorcerers and men who performed magic. They did the same thing, using their magic. 12 They all threw down their sticks, and they became snakes. But Aaron's stick, [which had become a snake], swallowed up all their sticks! 13 But the king continued to be stubborn [IDM], just as Yahweh had predicted, and he would not pay attention to [what Aaron and Moses/I said]. 14 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "The king is very stubborn [IDM]. He refuses to allow [my] people to go. 15 So [tomorrow] morning, go to him as he is going down to the [Nile] River [to bathe]. Wait for him at the riverbank. [When he comes out of the water, show] him the stick, the one which became a snake. 16 Say to him, 'Yahweh God, the one [we] Hebrews [worship], sent me to you to tell you to let my people go, in order that they may worship him in the desert. [We told you that], but you have not paid any attention to it. 17 [So now] Yahweh says this: "This is the way you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. Watch this: I am going to strike the water that is in the Nile [River] with the stick that is in my hand. [When I do that], the water will become blood (OR, [red like] blood [MTY]). 18 Then the fish in the Nile [River] will die, and the [water in] the river will stink, and the Egyptians will not be able to drink water from the Nile River."'" 19 Yahweh said to Moses/me, "[When you are talking to the king], say to Aaron, 'Hold your stick out [as though you were holding it] over the water in Egypt—over the rivers, the canals, the ponds, and over the pools of water, in order that [all of it] may become [red like] blood.' When Aaron does that, there will be blood throughout Egypt, even in wooden jars and in stone jars." 20 So Aaron and Moses/I did what Yahweh commanded. As the king and his officials were watching, Aaron lifted up his stick and then struck the water in the Nile [River] with it. And all the water in the river turned [red like] blood. 21 Then all the fish died. And the water stank, with the result that the Egyptians could not drink water from the river. Everywhere in Egypt [the water] became [red like] blood. 22 But the men who performed magic did the same thing using their magic. So the king remained stubborn [IDM], and he would not pay attention to what Aaron and Moses/I said, just as Yahweh had predicted. 23 The king turned and went back to his palace, and he did not think any more about it [IDM]. 24 The Egyptians [HYP] dug [into the ground] near the Nile [River] to get water to drink, because they could not drink the water from the river. 25 (One week/Seven days) passed after Yahweh caused the water in the Nile [River to become red like blood].

8 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Go back to the king and tell him, 'Yahweh says that you must let my people go, in order that they can worship me [in the desert]. 2 But if you refuse to let them go, I will punish you by sending frogs to cover your country. 3 [Not only] will the Nile [River] be full of frogs, [but] the frogs will come up [out of the river] into your palace. They will come into your bedroom and onto your bed. They will be in the houses of your officials and all [the rest of] your people. They will even get into your ovens and your pans for mixing the materials for baking bread. 4 The frogs will jump up on you and your officials and [all the rest of] your people.'" 5 Yahweh [also] said to Moses/me, "Say this to Aaron: 'Hold your stick in your hand and stretch it out [as though you were stretching it] over the river, the canals, and over the pools, and cause frogs to come up [from all this water and] cover the land of Egypt.'" 6 [After Moses/I told that to] Aaron, he stretched out his hand [as though he were stretching it] over all the water in Egypt. And the frogs came up [from the water and] covered Egypt. 7 But the men who performed magic did the same thing, and they caused [more] frogs to come up [from the water onto the land]. 8 Then the king summoned Moses/me and said, "Ask Yahweh to take away these frogs from me and my people. After that happens, I will allow your people to go, in order that they can offer sacrifices to Yahweh." 9 Moses/I said to the king, "I will be glad to pray for you and for your officials and for [the rest of] your people. [I will ask Yahweh] to get rid of the frogs from all your houses. The only frogs left will be [those] in the Nile [River]. Just tell me when I should pray." 10 He replied, "Tomorrow." So Moses/I said, "[I will do] what you say, and then you will know that Yahweh God, the one we [worship, is the only true god], and that there is no other god like him. 11 The frogs will leave you and your officials and all [the rest of] your people. The only ones left will be in the Nile [River]." 12 Aaron and Moses/I left the king. Then Moses/I prayed to Yahweh, [asking him to take away] all the frogs he had [brought to the king's land]. 13 And Yahweh did just what Moses/I [asked him to do]. As a result, all the frogs in the houses, in their courtyards, and in the fields died. 14 The people gathered together all the dead frogs into big piles, and the land stank [from the smell]. 15 But when the king saw that [the problem] was ended, he

became stubborn [IDM] [again]. And just as Yahweh had predicted, he would not pay attention to what Aaron and Moses/we told him. **16** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Tell Aaron to strike the ground with his stick. [When he does that], all the fine particles of ground/dust will become gnats, all over the land of Egypt." **17** So they/we did that. Aaron struck the ground with his stick, and all over Egypt, the fine particles of ground/dirt became gnats. The gnats covered the people and all [their] animals. **18** The men who worked magic tried to cause gnats to appear, but they were unable to do it. So the gnats [stayed] on the Egyptian people and on their animals. **19** The men who worked magic said to the king, "It is God who has done this with his power [MTY]!" But the king continued to be stubborn [IDM], and he would not pay attention to us, just as Yahweh had predicted. **20** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Get up early [tomorrow] morning. [Go down] to the river and wait for the king. [When he comes to bathe] [MTY], say to him, 'This is what Yahweh says to you: "Let my people go, in order that they may worship me [in the desert]. **21** [I warn you that] if you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies to you. They will come down on you and on your officials and on [the rest of] your people. The houses of all you Egyptians will be full of flies. They will [even] cover the ground. **22** But when that happens, I will treat the Goshen region, where my people live, differently. There will be no swarms of flies there. In that way, you will know that I, Yahweh, am doing these things [here] in this land. **23** I will distinguish clearly between [how I act toward] my people and [how I act toward] your people. And this plague is going to happen tomorrow!"'" **24** [Early the next morning, Moses/I told that to the king, but the king would not pay any attention]. So Yahweh did what he said he would do. He sent great swarms of flies into the palace of the king and into the houses of his officials. The whole country of Egypt was ruined by the flies. **25** Then the king summoned Aaron and Moses/me and said, "You Israeli people can go and offer sacrifices to your god, [but you must do it] here in [this] land." **26** But Moses/I replied, "It would not be right [for us] to do that, because we will be offering sacrifices that are very offensive to the Egyptian people. If we offer sacrifices that the Egyptian people think are disgusting, they will kill us by throwing stones at us [RHQ]! **27** No, we need to travel for three days into the desert. There we will offer sacrifices to Yahweh, the God we worship, just as he commands (OR, has commanded) us." **28** So the king said, "I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, your god, in the desert. But you must not go very far. [Now] pray for me!" **29** Moses/I said, "Listen [to me]! After I leave you, I will pray to Yahweh, [asking] that tomorrow [he will cause] the swarms of flies to leave you and your officials and [the rest of] your people. But do not deceive us again by refusing to let our people go to offer sacrifices to Yahweh!" **30** Then Moses/I left the king and prayed to Yahweh. **31** And Yahweh did what Moses/I asked, and he got rid of the swarms of flies from [around] the king and his officials and [the rest of] his people. No flies remained. **32** But the king was stubborn [IDM] this time also, and he did not allow the Israeli people to go.

9 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Go to the king and say to him, 'This is what Yahweh, the God [we] Hebrews [worship], says: "Allow my people to go, in order that they may worship me. **2** If you still keep refusing to let them go [DOU], **3** I warn you that I will punish you with my power [MTY] by sending a terrible disease on all your animals—on your horses, donkeys, camels, on your cattle, and on your flocks [of sheep and goats]. **4** But I, Yahweh, will distinguish between [what I do to] the animals that belong to the Israeli people and [what I do to] your animals. The result will be that no animal that belongs to the Israeli people will die."' **5** [Tell him that] I have determined/decided that tomorrow is the day that I will do this in this land." **6** The next day Yahweh did just what he said [that he would do]. A terrible disease afflicted all of the Egyptians' animals, and many of them [HYP] died. But none of the Israeli people's animals died. **7** The king sent [men to investigate], and they were surprised [to see] that none of the Israeli people's animals had died. But [after they reported that to] the king, he continued to be stubborn [IDM], and he did not let the [Israeli] people go. **8** Then Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, "Take a few handfuls of ashes/soot from (a furnace/an oven where they burn lime), and let Moses throw them up into the air, in front of the king. **9** The [ashes/soot] will spread all over the country of Egypt like fine dust. And the ashes/soot will cause boils to afflict both the Egyptian people and their animals, all over the land." **10** So they/we both got some ashes/soot and [went and] stood in front of the king. Moses/I threw the ashes/soot up into the air. The ashes/soot spread all over, causing boils to afflict the [Egyptian] people and their animals. All the boils became open sores. **11** Even the men who worked magic had boils. The result was that [they were suffering so much that] they were not able to come to Moses/me, because the men who worked magic had boils just like all [the rest of] the Egyptian people. **12** But Yahweh caused the king to [continue to] be stubborn [IDM]. He did not pay any attention to what they/we [said], just as Yahweh had told Moses/me [would happen]. **13** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Get up early [tomorrow] morning. Go and stand in front of the king and tell him that Yahweh God, the one that the Hebrew people [worship], says this: 'Let my people

go, in order that they may worship me [in the desert]. **14** [If you do not let them go], this time I will [punish] with plagues [not only] your officials and the rest of your people, but I will punish you yourself [SYN], in order that you will know there is no [god] like me anywhere in the world. **15** By this time I could have used my power [MTY] to strike you and your people with terrible diseases that would have wiped you all from the earth. **16** But I have let you live. The reason I have let you live is to show you my power, with the result that [people] all over the earth [HYP] will know how great I [MTY] am. **17** You are still acting proudly and refusing to let my people go. **18** So listen [to this]: About this time tomorrow I will cause very heavy hail to fall [in Egypt]. From the time Egypt first became [a country], there has never been a hailstorm [as bad as this one will be]. **19** So you should send [a message to everyone] to put their cattle, and everything else that they own that is [out] in the fields, under shelters. The hail will fall on every person and every animal that is out in the fields and that is not put under a shelter, and they will all die.'" [So Moses/I did what Yahweh said]. **20** Some of the king's officials who heard what Yahweh had said became very afraid. So they put all their animals and their slaves under shelters. **21** But those who did not pay any attention to what Yahweh had said left their slaves and their animals in the fields. **22** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Raise your hand up toward the sky, in order that hail will fall all over the land of Egypt—on the people and on their animals and on all the plants in the fields." **23** So Moses/I lifted his/my stick up toward the sky. And Yahweh sent down hail, all over the land of Egypt. There was also thunder and lightning. **24** While very heavy hail was falling, there was thunder, and lightning struck the ground. There had never been a hailstorm like that since Egypt first became a country. **25** The hail struck everything that was in the fields all over Egypt—every person and every animal. The hail destroyed the plants in the fields and stripped [the leaves off] the trees. **26** Only in the Goshen region, where the Israeli people were [living], was there no hail. **27** Then the king sent [someone] to summon Aaron and Moses/me. [When they/we came to the king], he said to them/us, "This time [I admit that] I have sinned. What Yahweh [has done] is right, and what I and my people [have done] is wrong. **28** (Pray to/Plead with) Yahweh [to cause it to stop]! [We] cannot [endure any more] of this thunder and hail! I will let your people go; they do not have to stay [here in Egypt] any longer." **29** Moses/I replied, "As soon as I go out of this city, I will lift up my hands [and pray] to Yahweh. Then the thunder will cease, and no more hail [will fall]. [This will happen] in order that you will know that Yahweh, [not your gods], controls everything [that happens] on the earth. **30** But as for you and your officials, I know that you do not yet fear Yahweh God." **31** When the hail fell, the flax was ruined because the buds were forming, and the barley was ruined because its grain was ripe. **32** But none of the wheat crops was ruined, because their shoots were still very small. **33** So Moses/I left the king and went outside the city. He/I lifted up his/my hands toward Yahweh [and prayed]. Then the thunder and the hail stopped, and the rain also stopped falling on the land [of Egypt]. **34** But when the king saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had stopped, he sinned again. He and his officials continued to be stubborn [IDM]. **35** So, just as Yahweh had predicted by what he told Moses/me, the king did not allow the Israeli people to leave.

10 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Go to the king [again]. I have made him and his officials stubborn [IDM]. I have done that in order that I would [have a good reason to] perform all these plagues among them, **2** and also in order that you would [be able to] tell your children and your grandchildren how I caused the Egyptians to act very foolishly [when] I performed all these miracles. Then all of you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." **3** So Aaron and Moses/I went into the king's [palace] and said to him, "Yahweh God, whom we Hebrews [worship], says this: 'How long will you stubbornly refuse to do what I tell you [MTY]? Let my people go, in order that they may worship me [in the desert] **4** If you [keep] refusing to let them go, I warn you that tomorrow I will bring (locusts/[large flying insects called] locusts) into your country. **5** [They will completely cover the ground so that] you will not even be able to see the ground. They will eat everything that the hail did not [destroy]. They will eat [everything that is left on] the trees. **6** They will fill your houses, and the houses of all your officials, and the houses of all [the rest of] the Egyptians. [There will be more locusts] than you or your parents or your grandparents have ever seen, from the time your ancestors first came to [this] land until the present time!'" Then he/I turned and [Aaron and] I left the king. **7** The king's officials said to him, "(How long is this man going to continue to bring disasters on us?/We must not let this man continue to cause trouble for us!) [RHQ] Let the [Israeli] men leave, in order that they may worship Yahweh, their god. (Do you not yet understand that [this man] has ruined Egypt?/You ought to realize by now that [this man] has ruined Egypt!)" [RHQ] **8** So they brought Aaron and Moses/me back to the king. He said to them/us, "[All right], you can go and worship Yahweh your god. But who are the ones who will go?" **9** Moses/I replied, "We [all] need to go, everyone, including those who are young and those who are old. We need to take our sons and our daughters and our flocks [of sheep

and goats] and herds [of livestock], because we must have a festival to [honor] Yahweh." **10** [Moses/I really did not intend that the Israelis would ever return to Egypt, and the king knew that also. So] the king replied [sarcastically], "[If you all leave], [it will be clear that] Yahweh has helped you, but I myself will never let you [take] your children [and your wives] when you go! It is clear that you are wickedly planning [not to return]. **11** So no, [I will not let you all go]. [The Israeli] men may go [and worship Yahweh], if that is what you want." Then the king expelled them/us from [his palace]. **12** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Reach out your hand as [though you were stretching it] over the land to welcome the locusts. They will come to the country of Egypt and eat every plant that is [left] in the land, every plant that the hail has not destroyed." **13** So Moses/I held out his/my stick [as though he/I was stretching it] over the whole land of Egypt. Then Yahweh caused a [strong] wind to blow from the east, and it blew over the land all that day and all that night. By the [next] morning, it had brought the locusts. **14** The locusts swarmed all over Egypt. It was larger than any swarm of locusts that had ever [been seen], and there will never be [a swarm of locusts like that] again. **15** They covered the surface of the ground and made it [appear] black. They ate all the plants in the land and everything on the trees that had not been destroyed by the hail. Nothing that was green was left on any plant or on any tree, anywhere in Egypt. **16** The king quickly summoned Aaron and Moses/me and said, "I have sinned against Yahweh, your god, and against you [two]. **17** So now I ask you to forgive me this one time [for having] sinned, and pray to Yahweh your god to stop [these locusts] [MTY] [from causing everything] to die." **18** They/We left the king, and Moses/I prayed to Yahweh. **19** Then Yahweh changed the wind so that it blew [strongly] from the west, and it blew all the locusts into the Red Sea (OR, the Gulf of Suez). There was not one locust left anywhere in the country of Egypt. **20** But Yahweh made the king stubborn [IDM] [again], and he did not let the Israeli people go. **21** Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Reach your hand up toward the sky, in order that there will be darkness over all the land of Egypt, a darkness [so complete] that people will have to grope around [to know where to walk]." **22** So Moses/I reached his/my hand toward the sky, and it became totally dark all over Egypt for three days [and nights]. **23** People could not see each other. No one left his house during that whole time. But there was light in the area where the Israeli people were living. **24** The king summoned Moses/me and said, "All right, you may go and worship Yahweh. [Your wives and] your children may go with you. But your flocks of sheep and goats and your herds of cattle must remain here." **25** But Moses/I replied, "[No], you must let us [take along the sheep and goats, in order] that we may have [some of them] to sacrifice and give as burned offerings to Yahweh, our God. **26** Our livestock must also go with us; we are not going to leave one of them [SYN] behind. We must take them to worship Yahweh. We will not know [which animals to sacrifice] until we get to where we are going." **27** But Yahweh made the king [continue to be] stubborn [IDM], and he would not let [the Israeli] people go. **28** The king said to me, "Get out of here! Make sure that you never come to see me [SYN] again! The day you see me again, [I will have] you executed!" **29** Moses/I replied, "You are correct! You will never see me [SYN] again!"

11 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "I will cause one more disaster to strike the king of Egypt and all his people [MTY]. After that, he will let you leave. In fact, he will expel you all. **2** So now speak to all the [Israeli] people. Tell them to ask all their [Egyptian] neighbors, both men and women, to give them some silver and gold jewelry." **3** Yahweh made the Egyptians highly respect the Israeli people. In particular, the Egyptian officials and all [the rest of] the people considered Moses/me to be a very great man. **4** Then Moses/I [went to the king and] said, "This is what Yahweh says: 'About midnight [tonight] I will go throughout Egypt, **5** and I will cause all the firstborn/oldest [sons] to die. That will include your oldest son, the oldest sons of the slave women who grind grain, [and the oldest sons of everyone else]. I will also kill the oldest males of the Egyptians' livestock. **6** When that happens, people all over Egypt will wail loudly. They have never wailed like that before, and they will never wail like that again. **7** But among the Israeli people [it will be so quiet that] not even a dog will bark! Then you will know for sure that I, Yahweh, distinguish [how I act toward] the Egyptians and [how I act toward] the Israeli people. **8** Then all these officials of yours will come and bow down before me and will say, "Please get out [of Egypt], you and all the Israeli people!'" After that, I will leave Egypt!" [After Moses/I said that], he/I very angrily left the king. **9** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "The king will not pay any attention to what you say. The result will be that I will perform more plagues in the land of Egypt." **10** Aaron and Moses/I performed all these miracles in front of the king, but Yahweh made the king stubborn, and he did not let the Israeli people leave his country.

12 Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me there in Egypt, **2** "[From now on], this month [will be] the first month of the year for you. **3** Tell all the Israeli people that in each family, the man who heads the family must select a lamb or a young goat for his household. **4** If there are not enough people in his family to eat a whole [cooked] lamb, then his

family and the family that lives next door may share one animal. Decide how many lambs you need according to the number of people in each family, and according to how much each person can eat. **5** The lambs or goats that you choose must be males, one-year-old, and they must not have any defects. **6** You must take [special] care of these animals until the 14th day of the month. On that day, all the Israeli people must slaughter the lambs [or goats] in the evening. **7** Then they must take some of the blood [from the lambs or goats], and they must smear it on the doorposts and the (lintels/horizontal beams above the doorways) of the houses in which they will eat the meat. **8** They must roast the animals immediately and eat the meat that night. They must eat it with bread that is baked without yeast and with bitter herbs. **9** You must not eat any of the meat raw, and you must not boil the meat. You must roast it [whole], without cutting off the head or the legs or removing the internal parts. **10** You must eat all the meat that evening; do not let any of the meat remain [to be eaten] the next morning. If any of the meat is left until the next morning, you must [completely] burn it. **11** When you eat it, you must be dressed ready to travel, and you must eat it quickly. You must have your sandals on your feet and your walking stick in your hands. It will be a festival [called] Passover to [honor] me, Yahweh. **12** On that night I will go through all the country of Egypt, and I will kill all the oldest males in Egypt, both humans and animals. [By doing this] I will show that all the gods in Egypt are worthless. [I can do this], because I am Yahweh, [the all-powerful God]. **13** The blood [that you smear on the doorways will be a mark to indicate] the houses in which you [Israelis] live. When I see the blood, I will [ignore and] pass by those houses, and I will not harm you [Israelis who live there], when I punish the Egyptians. **14** [Each year], you must celebrate this festival on this day, to remember [what I], Yahweh, [have done for you]. In all the generations to come, [each year] you must celebrate [this festival]. [It must continue] forever. **15** For seven days you must eat bread that has no yeast in it. On the first day of that week you must get rid of all the yeast that is in your houses. During those seven days, if anyone eats bread that is baked with yeast in it, [you must consider] that person to be no longer an Israeli. **16** On the first day [of that week], you must (have a holy meeting/gather together to [worship] me). You must do the same thing on the seventh day. People must not work on those two days. The only work they may do is to prepare food for you to eat. **17** [Every year] you must keep celebrating this festival of eating bread that has no yeast in it, because it will remind you that it was on this day that I brought all your tribal groups out of Egypt. So [every year], in all the generations to come, you must celebrate this day as a festival. It must continue forever. **18** In the first month of the year, on the 14th day of that month, the only bread you may eat is bread that has no yeast in it. You must keep doing that each day until the 21st day of that month. For those seven days you must not have any yeast in your house. [During that time], if anyone, either an Israeli or a foreigner, eats bread made with yeast, you must consider that person no longer to be an Israeli. **20** In your houses, do not eat anything that has yeast in it during those seven days." **21** Then Moses/I summoned all the leaders of the Israeli people. He/I said to them, "Each family should select a lamb and kill it, [in order that you may eat it to celebrate the festival that will be called] 'Passover'. **22** Let the lamb's blood [drain into] a basin. Get a bunch/sprig of (hyssop/a very leafy plant) and dip it in the blood. Then smear some of the blood on the doorposts and the (lintels/beams above the doorways) [of your houses]. The people in each house must all stay inside the house until the next morning. **23** When Yahweh goes throughout Egypt to kill the [oldest male in each] Egyptian family, he will see the blood on the (lintels/beams of your doorways), and he will [ignore and] pass by those houses. He will not allow the angel who causes people to die to enter your houses and kill [any of] your [oldest sons]. **24** You and your descendants must celebrate this festival forever. **25** And when you arrive in the land that Yahweh will be giving to you as he promised, you must keep celebrating this ritual [every year]. **26** When your children ask you, 'What does this ritual mean?', **27** you must tell them, 'This ritual is [to remember how our ancestors] sacrificed [lambs] on the night that Yahweh's angel passed by the houses of the Israeli people [when they were] in Egypt. He killed the [oldest males/sons in all] the Egyptian houses, but he spared [the sons in] [MTY] our houses.'" After Moses/I told them this, they all bowed their heads and worshiped [Yahweh]. **28** Then the Israeli people did what Yahweh had told Aaron and Moses/me [to tell them to do]. **29** At midnight Yahweh killed all the oldest sons of the Egyptian people, all over Egypt. That included the king's oldest son, the oldest sons of the prisoners in the dungeon/jail, and [the oldest sons of everyone else]. He also killed the oldest males of all the Egyptians' livestock. **30** That night the king, all his officials, and [all the rest of] the Egyptian people awoke [and discovered what had happened]. They wailed loudly all over Egypt, because in every house, someone's son had died. **31** That night the king summoned Aaron and Moses/me and said, "You and all the [other] Israeli people, must leave my country [immediately]! Go and worship Yahweh, as you requested! **32** Take your flocks [of sheep and goats] and

herds [of cattle], and leave! And ask Yahweh to bless me, also!" 33 Then the Israeli people did as Moses/I had told them. They [went to] their Egyptian [neighbors] and asked them for silver and gold jewelry and clothing. 34 Yahweh caused the Egyptian people to greatly respect the [Israeli] people, so they gave them what they asked for. In that way, they carried away the wealth of the Egyptian people. 35 The Egyptians urged the [Israeli] people to leave their country quickly. They said, "[If you do not do that], we will all die!" 36 So the [Israeli] people [prepared to leave at once]. They took the bowls in which they mixed the dough to make bread, and the dough that was in the bowls without any yeast in it, and they wrapped the bowls in their cloaks. They put the bowls on their shoulders [and left]. 37 The Israeli people traveled from Rameses [city] to Succoth [town]. There were about 600,000 men who went, in addition to the women and children. 38 Many other people who were not Israelis went along with them. There were also livestock, the flocks [of sheep and goats] and herds [of cattle]. 39 On their way, they baked bread with the dough that they carried with them when they had been expelled from Egypt. The dough did not have yeast in it, because they were told to leave Egypt so quickly that they did not have enough time to get food ready to take with them, or enough time to mix yeast in the dough. 40 The Israeli people had lived in Egypt 430 years. 41 On the day that those 430 years ended, on that very day, all the tribes of Yahweh's people left Egypt. 42 It was a night when Yahweh (protected/guarded over) them as he brought them out of Egypt. So this same night every year is a night that is dedicated to Yahweh, a night when the Israeli people in every generation [remember how] Yahweh protected our ancestors. 43 Then Yahweh said this to Aaron and Moses/me: "These are my instructions about the Passover ritual: Do not let foreigners eat [the Passover meal]. But any male slaves that you have bought may eat it after you have circumcised them. 45 Do not let people who are living among you temporarily, or servants whom you have hired, eat [the Passover meal]. 46 Each family must eat the Passover meal inside their own house. Do not take any of the food outside the house. And do not break any of the bones of the lamb that is sacrificed. 47 All the Israeli people must celebrate this festival. 48 When someone from another country comes to live with you and wants to celebrate the Passover Festival, circumcise all the males in his household. Then they may eat the Passover meal, and you should treat those people as though they were born as Israelis. But do not allow men who have not been circumcised to eat the Passover meal. 49 These rules apply to people who were born as Israelis and to foreigners who come and live among you." 50 All the Israeli people obeyed Aaron and Moses/me and did what Yahweh had commanded. 51 On that very day Yahweh brought all the tribes of the Israeli people out of Egypt.

13 Yahweh said to Moses/me, 2 "Set apart all the firstborn males in order that they may belong to me. The firstborn males of the Israeli people and of their animals will be mine." 3 Moses/I said to the people, "Do not forget this day! This is the day that you are leaving Egypt. This is the day you [are freed from] being their slaves. Yahweh has brought you out of Egypt by his great power [MTY]. Do not eat any bread that has yeast in it [whenever you celebrate] this day. 4 You are leaving Egypt on this day, which is the first day of the month that is [named] Abib. 5 Later, when Yahweh brings you into the land where the descendants of Canaan, Heth, Amor, Hiv, and Jebus [now live], the land that he solemnly promised to give to you, a land that will be very good for raising livestock and growing crops [MTY], you must celebrate this festival during this month [every year]. 6 For seven days the bread that you eat must not have any yeast in it. On the seventh day there must be a festival to [honor] Yahweh. 7 For seven days do not eat bread that has yeast in it. You should not have any yeast or bread made with yeast anywhere in your land. 8 On the day [the festival starts], you must tell your children, '[We are doing this to remember] what Yahweh did for our ancestors when they left Egypt. 9 This ritual will remind you how Yahweh brought your ancestors out of Egypt with his great power [MTY]. [The ritual will be like something] you tie on your forehead or on your wrist. It will remind you to recite to others what Yahweh has instructed you. 10 So you must celebrate this festival every year at the time [Yahweh] has appointed.' 11 Yahweh will bring you into the land where the descendants of Canaan live, just as he promised you and your ancestors that he would do. When he gives that land to you, 12 you must dedicate to Yahweh the firstborn males of all your animals. These all will belong to Yahweh. 13 You may keep the firstborn male donkeys, but you must buy them back by sacrificing a lamb as a substitute for the donkey. If you do not want to buy back the donkey, you must [kill it by] breaking its neck. You must also buy back every one of your own firstborn sons. 14 In the future, when one of your children asks, 'What does this mean?', you must say to him, 'Yahweh brought our ancestors out of Egypt with his great power [MTY], and freed us from being slaves there. 15 The king of Egypt stubbornly refused to let them leave his country, so Yahweh killed all the firstborn males in Egypt, both the boys and the firstborn of their livestock. That is why we now sacrifice to Yahweh all the firstborn of our livestock,

but we buy back our own firstborn sons.' **16** I repeat that this ritual will remind you about how Yahweh brought our [ancestors] out of Egypt by his great power [MTY]; it will be like something you tie on your wrist or on your forehead [to remind you of that]." **17** When the king [of Egypt] let the [Israeli] people go, God did not lead them to go through the land of the Philistines. That was a shorter way, but God said, "It would be bad if my people change their minds when they realize that they will have to fight [the Philistines to take their land], and then [decide to] return to Egypt." **18** Instead, God led them to go around through the desert toward the Red Sea (OR, the Gulf of Suez). When the Israeli people left Egypt, they were carrying weapons to fight [their enemies]. **19** Moses/I [had them] take along the bones of Joseph with them/us, because Joseph long ago had made the Israeli people promise solemnly that they would do that. He had said to them, "God will enable your descendants to leave Egypt. When that happens, you must carry my bones with you." **20** The Israeli people left Succoth and traveled to Etham, at the edge of the desert, and they set up their tents there. **21** [When they traveled] during the daytime, Yahweh went in front of them in a tall [white] cloud to show them the way. During the night, he went in front of them in a tall cloud that looked like a fire. By doing that, he enabled them to travel in the daytime and also at nighttime. **22** The tall cloud did not leave them. It was always in front of them, as a bright white cloud in the daytime and like a fire at night.

14 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell the Israeli people to turn around and go back and set up their tents in front of Pi-Hahiroth [town]. That town is between Migdol and the sea, across from Baal-Zephon [town]. Set up your tents there, close to the sea. **3** When the king [knows you have done that], he will think, 'The Israeli people are confused. They are wandering around, and the desert blocks their path.' **4** But I will make the king stubborn [again], and he will [take his army and] pursue you. Then my people will praise/thank me for winning a victory over the king and his army. And the Egyptians will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." So [Moses/I told my people that, and] they did what he/I told them to do. **5** When someone told the king that the Israeli people had left [during the night], he and his officials changed their minds and said, "(What have we done?/What we have done was stupid!) [RHQ] The Israeli people will no longer be our slaves!" **6** So the king got his chariot and his army ready. **7** Then he selected 600 of the best chariots, and in each chariot he placed a driver, a soldier, and a commander, and they left. Other chariots, with a driver and a soldier in each of them, also went along. **8** Because Yahweh made the king of Egypt so stubborn that he and his army went to pursue the Israelis, who were leaving triumphantly, **9** the Egyptian army, with all the king's horses and chariots and horsemen, pursued the Israelis. They caught up with them as they were camped near the sea, close to Pi-Hahiroth, in front of Baal-Zephon [town]. **10** When the king's army got near, the Israeli people were surprised to see that the Egyptians were marching toward them. They were terrified; so they cried out to Yahweh [to help them]. **11** Then they said to Moses/me, "Is it because there were no places in Egypt [where we could] be buried that you have brought us here to die in this desert [RHQ]? Look what you have done to us by bringing us out of Egypt [RHQ]! **12** That is what we told you when we were in Egypt! We said, 'Leave us alone, and let us work for the Egyptians [RHQ]!' It would have been better for us to be slaves for the Egyptians than to die here in the desert!" **13** Moses/I replied to the people, "Do not be afraid! Be brave, and see how Yahweh will rescue you! He will save you today, and the result will be that the Egyptians that you are looking at today—you will never see them again! **14** Yahweh will fight for you! Just keep quiet. There is nothing else that you will have to do." **15** Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Tell the people to stop crying out for me [to help them], and tell them to go forward. Lift up your stick and stretch it out toward the sea. The water will divide, so that all you Israeli people can go in the middle of the sea, walking on dry ground. **17** I will make the Egyptians stubborn, so that they will try to follow you. And then as a result of [what I will do to the] king and his army and his chariots and his horsemen, [my people] will praise/thank me. **18** And when I have won a glorious [victory] over the king and his chariots and his horsemen, the [other] Egyptians will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." **19** Then the angel of God, who had been in front of the Israeli people, moved and went behind them. The tall bright cloud that had been in front of them also moved behind them, **20** until it was between the Egyptian army and the Israeli people. The cloud caused the Egyptian army to be in the dark but it gave light for the Israelis. As a result, neither group could come near the other group during the whole night. **21** [That evening], Moses/I stretched out his/my hand toward the sea. Then Yahweh sent a strong wind from the east. It blew all night and pushed the water apart, and it caused the ground between the water to dry up. **22** Then we Israeli people went on the dry land in the middle of the sea. The water was like a wall on each side of us, on the right side and on the left side. **23** Then the Egyptian army pursued them, and went after them into the middle of the sea, with their horses and their chariots and the chariot-drivers. **24** Just

before dawn, Yahweh looked down from the fiery cloud, and then he caused the Egyptian army to panic. **25** He caused the wheels of the chariots to get stuck [in the mud], so that they could hardly move. So the Egyptians said, "Yahweh is fighting for the Israelis and against us; let's get out of here!" **26** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Stretch out your arm toward the sea again. Then the water will come back on the Egyptians and on their chariots and their horsemen." **27** So Moses/I stretched out his/my arm, and as the sun was rising, the water returned to its normal level. The Egyptians tried to escape, but Yahweh hurled them back into the sea. **28** The water returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and the whole Egyptian army that had tried to follow us Israelis into the sea. Every one of the Egyptians drowned. **29** But we Israeli people had already crossed through the sea by walking on dry ground, with the water being [like two] walls, one on the right side and one on the left side. **30** That is the way Yahweh saved the Israeli people from the Egyptian army on that day. The Israeli people saw the Egyptians lying dead, [with their bodies washed up] on the shore. **31** The Israelis saw what Yahweh did to the Egyptians by his great power [MTY], and they were in awe of Yahweh. They trusted in Yahweh and they also trusted Moses/me.

15 Then Moses/I sang this song, and the Israeli people sang with him: "I will sing to Yahweh, because he has triumphed gloriously; He has thrown the horses and their riders into the sea! **2** Yahweh is the one who makes me strong, and he is the one I sing about. He is the one who has saved me. He is (my God/God, the one I worship), and I will praise him. He is the one my father worshiped, and I will tell [others] how great he is. **3** Yahweh is a warrior; Yahweh is his name. **4** He has thrown the king's chariots and his army into the sea; His best officers all drowned in the Red Sea (OR, Gulf of Suez). **5** The [water covered them like] a flood; they sank to the bottom like a stone. **6** O Yahweh, your right arm has awesome power; with that power [MTY], O Yahweh, you have crushed/smashed the enemy into pieces. **7** You have gloriously defeated your enemies. Because you were angry with them, you have [destroyed them] like a fire burns up straw [SIM]. **8** You blew on the sea, and the water piled up high; the water stood up like two walls. In the deepest part of the sea [the water] became thick/solid, [as though] it was frozen. **9** [Our] enemies said, 'We will pursue them and catch up to them. We will draw our swords and strike them. After we defeat them, we will divide up the spoils. We will take [from them] all we want.' **10** But you blew on them with your breath, and then the sea covered them. They sank like lead/rocks in the big waves. **11** Yahweh, among their gods, there is no god like you [RHQ]! You are glorious, completely different from all that you made. (There is no god like you!/What god is like you?) [RHQ] There is no one who can perform all kinds of miracles [DOU] like you do [RHQ]! **12** When you stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed up [our enemies] **13** You faithfully loved the people you rescued; with your power you are leading them to the land that you have set apart. **14** The people of [other] nations will hear [what you have done]; and they will tremble. The people in Philistia will be terrified. **15** The chiefs in Edom will be dismayed. The leaders in Moab will be so afraid, they will shake. All those who live in Canaan will faint. **16** They will be terrified and fearful because of your great strength [MTY]. But they will be as silent as stones until your people march past them, the people you freed from being slaves in Egypt, **17** to go to [Canaan land]. You will enable them to live [MET] on your hill, at the place that you, O Yahweh, have chosen to be your home, in the (holy place/temple) that you yourself will build. **18** O Yahweh, you will rule forever! **19** The Israeli people walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground. But when the king's horses and chariots and horsemen tried to go through the sea, Yahweh caused the water to come back and cover them." **20** Then Miriam, who was Aaron's older sister and a (prophetess/woman who spoke messages that came directly from God), picked up her tambourine, **21** and she sang this song to Yahweh: "Sing to Yahweh, because he has triumphed gloriously [over his enemies]. He has thrown the horses and their riders into the sea." **22** Then Moses/I led the Israeli people away from the Red Sea (OR, Gulf of Suez). They/we went to the desert at Shur. They/We walked for three days, but they/we could not find any water. **23** So they/we [went on and] came to a [place named] Marah. [There was] water [there, but] they/we could not drink it, because it was bitter. That is why they named the place Marah, [which is the Hebrew word that means 'bitter']. **24** The people complained to Moses/me, saying, "What are we going to drink?" **25** So Moses/I prayed earnestly to Yahweh. Then Yahweh showed him/me a tree. So he/I cut off [one of the branches] and threw it into the water, and the water became good to drink. There at Marah, Yahweh gave them various laws to direct their lives. He also tested them there, to determine if they would obey him, **26** by saying, "I am Yahweh, your God. If you will carefully obey me when I speak [to you], and do those things that I know are right, and pay close attention to all the things that I command you, I will keep you from being afflicted by all the diseases that I brought on the Egyptians. Do not forget that I am the one who heals you." **27** [After they/we left Marah], they/we came to a [place named] Elim. There were twelve springs of water and 70 palm trees there. So they/we camped there.

16 They/We left Elim, and all the Israeli people came to
the desert [named] Sin. That is between Elim and Sinai
[Mountain]. That was on the fifteenth day of the second
month after they/we left Egypt. **2** There in the desert, the
Israeli [HYP] people complained to Aaron and Moses/me.
3 They said to them/us, "We wish that Yahweh had killed
us in Egypt! There we had meat to eat, and all the bread
that we wanted. But you have brought us into this desert
in order that we will all starve to death!" **4** Yahweh said to
Moses/me, "Listen to what I am going [to do]. I am going to
send something from the sky that will [take the place of]
bread for all of you. When I do that, the people must go out
of their tents every day and gather just enough to eat on that
day. [When I do that], I will find out whether they will obey
my instructions or not. **5** On the sixth day [after I start doing
that], they will be able to gather twice as much as on the
other days, [and not have to gather any on the seventh day].
Then they can prepare it [to eat it on the 6th and 7th days]."
6 So Aaron and Moses/I said to all the Israeli people, "This
evening you will know that it was Yahweh, [not we], who
brought you out of Egypt. **7** And tomorrow morning you will
see how great Yahweh is, because he has heard what you
have complained about. He is the one whom you have really
complained to, because we are just his servants." [RHQ]
8 Then Moses/I also said, "[From now on, each] evening
Yahweh will give you meat to eat, and [each] morning he
will give you [something that will take the place of] bread,
because he has heard what you have complained about.
Yahweh is the one to whom you have really complained,
not us. We are just his servants." [RHQ] **9** Then Moses/I
said to Aaron, "Tell all the Israeli people, 'Come and stand
here in the presence of Yahweh, because he has heard
what you have been complaining about.'" **10** So Aaron told
them that. And as Aaron was talking to all the Israeli people,
they looked toward the desert, and were surprised to see
the (dazzling light/incredible brightness) of Yahweh in the
cloud [that had been leading them]. **11** Then Yahweh said to
Moses/me, **12** "I have heard what the Israeli people have
been complaining about. So say to them, 'From now on,
each evening, you will have meat to eat. And each morning
you will have something that will take the place of bread. You
will have all you want of it to eat.' Then you will know that I,
Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]."
13 That evening, (quails/small plump birds) appeared, and
[there were so many that] they covered the campsite. The
next morning there was [something like] dew all around the
campsite. **14** When the dew evaporated, on the surface of
the desert there was a thick layer of something that looked
like white flakes. It looked like frost. **15** When the Israeli
people saw it, since they [had never seen it before and]
did not know what it was, they said to each other, "What is
it?" Moses/I replied to them, "It is something Yahweh has
given you to eat, to take the place of bread. **16** This is what
Yahweh has commanded: 'Each of you should gather as
much as you need to eat. Gather two quarts/liters for each
person who lives in your tents.'" **17** So that is what the Israeli
people did. Some gathered more and some gathered less.
18 But when they measured [what they had gathered], those
that had gathered a lot did not have anything left over. And
those that gathered less still had enough to eat. Each person
gathered just what they needed. **19** Moses/I said to them,
"Do not leave any of it to eat tomorrow morning!" **20** But
some of them did not pay any attention to what Moses/I
said. They kept some of it until the next morning. But it
was full of maggots and smelled rotten. And that made
Moses/me angry. **21** Each morning they gathered as much
as they needed. But [later], when the sun got hot, [what was
left on the ground] melted. **22** On the sixth day after they
started gathering it, each person was able to gather four
quarts/liters, which was twice [as much as they gathered on
the other days]. When the leaders of the people came to
Moses/me and told him/me [about that], **23** Moses/I said to
them, "This is what Yahweh has commanded: 'Tomorrow will
be a day for you to rest completely. It will be a day dedicated
to Yahweh. So today, bake or boil what you will [need for
today and for tomorrow]. Whatever is left [this evening],
you should put aside and keep it [to eat] tomorrow.'" **24** So
they did what Moses/I commanded. What was left over,
they kept until the next day. It did not spoil and did not get
maggots in it! **25** [On that day], Moses/I said, "Eat today
[what you have saved from yesterday], because today is a
day dedicated to Yahweh. Today you will not find any of that
food outside. **26** [Every week], you must gather it for six
days; but on the seventh day, which will be a day of rest, you
will not find any." **27** On the seventh day, some of the people
went outside their tents to gather some of that food, but
there was none. **28** Then Yahweh [told Moses/me to say
this to] the people: "How long will you people refuse to do
all the things that I tell you? **29** Listen! Yahweh has given
you a day of rest. So on the sixth day [of each week], he
will be giving you enough of this food for two days. Each of
you should stay in his tent [and do no work] on the seventh
day!" **30** So the people rested on the seventh day. **31** The
Israeli people called this food manna, [which sounds like the
words in their language that mean 'what is it]?' It looked like
small seeds [called] coriander, but it was white, and it tasted
like thin wafers/biscuits made with honey. **32** Moses/I said,
"This is what Yahweh has commanded: 'You must keep two

quarts/liters of it for all future generations, so that they can see the [food that took the place of] bread that I gave to your [ancestors] when I brought them out of Egypt.'" 33 And he/I said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put two quarts of manna in it. Then put it [in a place] where Yahweh can see it. It is to be kept like that for all future generations." 34 [Many years later], as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me, Aaron put the jar in front of the box [that contained the stone slabs on which] the Ten Commandments [were written]. 35 The Israeli people were able to eat manna [every day] for 40 years, until they came to the border of Canaan land. 36 (The standard measure [that they used at that time] held 20 quarts/liters.)

17 Obeying what Yahweh commanded, all the Israeli people moved from the Sin Desert. They/We traveled from one place to another. They/We camped at [a place named] Rephidim, but there was no water there for (the people/us) to drink. 2 So the people complained to Moses/me again, saying, "Give us water to drink!" Moses/I replied to them, "Why are you (criticizing/arguing with) me [RHQ]? And why are you trying to determine whether Yahweh [has the power to provide for you]?" 3 But the people were very thirsty, and they continued to complain to Moses/me. They were saying things like "Why did you bring us out of Egypt?", and "Did you bring us here to cause us and our children and livestock to die (from thirst/because we had no water to drink) [RHQ]?" 4 So Moses/I prayed earnestly to Yahweh. He/I said, "(How shall I deal with these people?/I do not know how to deal with these people!) [RHQ] They are almost ready to [kill me by throwing] stones at me!" 5 Yahweh replied to Moses/me, "Take some of the elders/leaders of the Israeli people with you and [tell the rest of] the people to follow you [to Sinai Mountain]. Take along the stick with which you struck the Nile [River]. 6 Listen carefully: I will stand in front of you on top of a [large] rock at the foot of the mountain. Strike the rock with your stick. [When you do that], water for the people to drink will flow out of the rock." [When they/we arrived at the mountain], Moses/I did that while the Israeli elders were watching, [and water flowed from the rock]. 7 Moses/I gave that place two names [in the Hebrew language:] Massah, [which means 'testing'], and Meribah, [which means 'complaining']. He/I gave it the name Massah because the Israeli people were testing Yahweh, saying "Is Yahweh really among us [and able to help us], or not?", and he/I gave it the name Meribah because they were [continually] complaining. 8 Then the descendants of the Amalek people-group came and fought against the Israeli people at Rephidim. 9 Moses/I said to Joshua, [who was one of our army/Israeli leaders], "Choose some men to go out and fight against the Amalek people-group tomorrow. I will stand on the top of the hill, holding the stick that God told me to carry." 10 So Joshua did what Moses/I told him to do. He took some men to fight against the Amalek people-group. [While they were fighting], Aaron, Hur, and Moses/I went up to the top of the hill [so that they/we could see the whole battle area]. 11 Whenever Moses/I lifted up his/my arms, the Israeli men started to win [the battle]. And whenever he/I lowered his/my arms, the Amalek people-group started to win. 12 But his/my arms became tired. So Aaron and Hur [rolled] a [large] stone for Moses/me to sit on. [While he/I was sitting on it], those two held up his/my arms, [one on one side and the other on the other side]. In that way, they kept his/my arms lifted up, and his/my arms held steady until the sun went down. 13 So Joshua and the men with him completely defeated the Amalek people-group, using their swords [to fight against them]. 14 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Write an account of this battle, and then read it to Joshua. [Also write that some day] I will completely get rid of the Amalek people-group." 15 Then Moses/I built a [stone] altar there and named it 'Yahweh is [like] my flag'. 16 He/I said, "Hold high Yahweh's flag! Yahweh will continue to fight against the Amalek people-group (forever/in all future generations)!"

18 Jethro, who was the priest for the Midian people-group, and who was also Moses'/my father-in-law, heard about all that God had done for the Israeli people. He heard about how Yahweh had brought them out of Egypt. 2 Moses/I had [previously] sent his/my wife Zipporah [back home when he/I was returning to Egypt]. But now Jethro came to him/me, 3 bringing Zipporah and their/our two sons. One son was named Gershom, [which sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'foreigner'], because he/I had said, "I have been a foreigner living in another land." 4 Her other son was named Eliezer, [which sounds like the Hebrew words that mean 'God helps me'], because [he/I] had said "God, whom my father [worshiped], has helped me and saved [me] from being killed [MTY] by the king [of Egypt]." 5 While Moses/I was camped [with the Israeli people] in the desert [near Sinai], God's sacred/holy mountain, Jethro came to him/me, bringing along Moses'/my wife and our [two] sons. 6 Jethro had sent a message to Moses/me, "I, your father-in-law, Jethro, am coming to see you, bringing along your wife and your two sons!" 7 So Moses/I went out of the campsite to meet his/my father-in-law. He/I bowed before him, and kissed him [on the cheek]. (They both/We) asked each other, "Have you been healthy?" Then they/we went into [Moses'/my] tent. 8 Moses/I told Jethro everything that Yahweh had done to the king and all the [other] people in Egypt for the sake of the Israeli people. He/I also told him about the troubles/problems

they/we had experienced on the way, and how Yahweh had helped them/us. 9 Jethro rejoiced when he heard all that Yahweh had done for the Israeli people. 10 He said, "Praise Yahweh, who has rescued you from the powerful [MTY] Egyptian king and his army! 11 Now I realize that Yahweh is greater than all other gods, because he rescued you all from the power [MTY] of the proud Egyptians when [they] were causing you [to suffer]." 12 Then Jethro sacrificed an animal by burning it completely on the altar [as an offering], and he also offered other sacrifices to God. Aaron and the Israeli elders/leaders went with them/us to eat a sacred meal with Jethro. 13 The next day, Moses/I sat down at the place where he/I settled disputes among the people. The people were continually bringing their disputes to Moses/me, from morning until evening. 14 When Jethro saw everything that Moses/I was doing for the people, he said, "(Why are you doing all this for the people?/You should not be doing all this for the people!) [RHQ] Why are you doing this by yourself, and all the people are crowding around you, from morning until evening, [asking you to make decisions for them] [RHQ]?" 15 Moses/I replied, "[I am doing this] because the people keep coming to me to find out what God desires. 16 When they have a dispute about something, they come to me, and they ask me to decide which of them is right. I also tell them all of God's laws and instructions." 17 Jethro said to him/me, "What you are doing is not good [for you or for the people]. 18 You and these people will (wear yourselves out/become exhausted)! This work is too much for one person. You are not able to do it by yourself. 19 Now listen to some good advice [MTY] I will give to you. [If you do what I suggest], God will help you. You should continue to speak to God and tell him about the people's disputes. 20 You should [also] teach the people what God has commanded and instructed you. You should also explain to them how they should conduct their lives, and the things that they should do. 21 But in addition, you should choose some [other men to help you]. Choose men who have reverence for God and who will not accept bribes. Appoint some of them to make decisions [for groups of] ten people, [some for groups of] 50 [people], [some for groups of] 100 [people], [and some for groups of] 1,000 [people]. 22 Allow them to serve permanently to settle disputes for the people. The difficult matters the people can bring to you; but the matters that are not difficult, they can decide themselves. That will make the work easier for you, as they help you do that work. 23 If you do that, and [I think that] God is telling you to do it (OR, if God tells you to do it), you will not become exhausted, and all the people will be able to go home feeling satisfied about the decisions, [with their disputes settled quickly"]. 24 Moses/I accepted what his/my father-in-law [Jethro] suggested. 25 Moses/I chose capable men from among the Israeli people. 26 They were appointed permanently to make decisions about the people's disputes. They brought the difficult cases to Moses/me, but they decided the matters that were not difficult by themselves. 27 Then Moses/I said goodbye to his/my father-in-law, and Jethro returned home.

19 The Israeli people then left Rephidim, and exactly two months after leaving Egypt, they/we came to the desert near Sinai [Mountain]. They/We set up their/our tents at the base of the mountain. 3 Moses/I climbed up the mountain [to talk with] God. Yahweh called to [him/me] from [the top of] the mountain and said, "This is what I want you to say to the Israeli people, the descendants of Jacob: 4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You have seen [what I did for all of you] and how I brought you here to me. It was as though I [lifted you up as] an eagle [carries its young eaglets] on its wings [MET]. 5 So now, if you will do what I tell you and obey all that I command you, you will be my own people. All the people-groups on the earth are mine, but you will be (dearer/more special) to me than all the other people-groups. 6 You will be people over whom I will rule, and you will all (be like priests/represent me to other nations as priests represent me to one nation) [MET], and you will be completely dedicated to me.' That is what you must tell the Israeli people." 7 So Moses/I went [down the mountain] and summoned the elders/leaders of the people. He/I told them everything that Yahweh had told him/me to tell them. 8 The people all said, "We will do everything that Yahweh has told us to do." Then Moses/I [climbed back up the mountain and] reported to Yahweh what the people had said. 9 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "[Listen carefully]: I am going to appear to you from inside a thick cloud. When I am speaking to you, the people will hear it, and they will always trust in you." Then Moses/I went [down the mountain and reported to the people what Yahweh said. Then he/I went back up the mountain and] told Yahweh what the people replied. 10 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Go [back down] to the people [again]. [Tell them to] purify themselves today and tomorrow. [Tell them to] wash their clothes, too. 11 They must do that to be ready on the day after tomorrow. On that day I will come down to Sinai Mountain to where all the people can see me. 12 You must make a boundary around the base of the mountain, and tell them, 'Be sure that you do not climb the mountain or even go near it. Anyone who even touches the base of the mountain must be executed.' 13 Do not let anyone touch any person or any animal that touches the mountain. You must [kill any person or animal that touches the mountain] by throwing stones at it or shooting it [with

arrows]. But when you hear a long [loud] trumpet sound, the people can come close to the [base of the] mountain." **14** So Moses/I went down the mountain [again] and told the people to purify themselves. They did what Moses/I told them to do, and they also washed their clothes. **15** Then Moses/I said to the people, "Be ready on the day after tomorrow. And [you men] must not have sex with [EUP] [your wives] until after then." **16** Two days later, during the morning, there was thunder and lightning, and a very dark cloud on the mountain. A trumpet sounded very loudly, with the result that the people in the camp shook/trembled because they [were very afraid]. **17** Then Moses/I led the people outside the camp to meet with God. They stood at the base of the mountain. **18** All of Sinai Mountain was covered in smoke, because Yahweh had descended on it, surrounded by a fire. The smoke rose up like the smoke from [the chimney of] a furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently. **19** As the sound of the trumpet continued to become louder, Moses/I spoke [to Yahweh], and Yahweh answered [him/me] in [a loud voice that sounded like] thunder. **20** Then Yahweh came down [again] onto the top of Sinai Mountain, and he summoned Moses/me to come up to the top of the mountain. So Moses/I went up. **21** Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Go down again and warn the people not to cross the boundary in order to look [at me]. If they [do] that, many of them will die. **22** Also, the priests who habitually come near me must purify themselves. If they do not do that, I will punish them." **23** Then Moses/I said to Yahweh, "The people will not climb the mountain, because you commanded them, saying, 'Set a boundary around the mountain, to make it sacred/taboo.'" **24** Yahweh replied, "Go down the mountain, and bring Aaron back up with you. But do not allow the priests or other people to cross the boundary to come up to me. If they cross it, I will punish them." **25** So Moses/I went down the mountain [again] and told the people [what Yahweh had said].

20 Then God said this [to the Israeli people:] **2** "I am Yahweh God, the one you [worship]. I am the one who brought you out of Egypt. I am the one who freed you from being slaves [there]. **3** [So] you must worship [only] me; you must not worship any other god. **4** You must not carve/make for yourselves any idol that represents anything in the sky or that is on the ground or that is in the water under the ground/earth. **5** You must not bow down to any idol and worship it, because I am Yahweh God, and I (am very jealous/want you to worship me only). I will punish those who sin and hate me. I will punish not only them, but I will punish (their descendants, down to the third and fourth generation/their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren). **6** But I will steadfastly love thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments (OR, I will love for thousands of generations.) **7** Do not use my name carelessly (OR, for wrong/evil purposes), because I am Yahweh God, the one whom you [should worship], and I will certainly punish those who use my name for wrong/evil purposes [LIT]. **8** Do not forget that the seventh day [of every week] is mine, so dedicate those days to me. **9** There are six days each week for you to do all your work, **10** but the seventh day is a day of rest, a day dedicated to me, Yahweh God, the one whom you [should worship]. On that day you must not do any work. You and your sons and daughters and your male and female slaves must not work. You must not even force your livestock to work, and you must not allow foreigners to work, those who are living in your country. **11** I, Yahweh, created the sky, the earth, the ocean, and everything that is in them, in six days. Then I stopped my work of creating everything, and rested on the seventh day. That is the reason that I, Yahweh, have blessed the rest day and set it apart [to be a sacred/special day]. **12** Honor/Respect your fathers and your mothers, in order that you may live a long time in the land that I, Yahweh God, will give you. **13** Do not murder anyone. **14** Do not (commit adultery/have sex with anyone other than your spouse). **15** Do not steal anything. **16** Do not falsely accuse anyone [of committing a crime]. **17** Do not (covet/desire to have) someone else's house, someone else's wife, someone else's male or female slave, someone else's livestock, someone else's donkeys, or anything else that some other person owns." **18** When the people heard the thunder and saw the lightning, and when they heard the sound of the trumpet and saw the smoke on the mountain, they were afraid and trembled. They stood at a distance, **19** and said to Moses/me, "If you speak to us, we will listen. But do not let God speak any more to us. [We are afraid that] if he speaks [any more] to us, we will die." **20** Moses/I replied, "Do not be afraid! God has come to determine/test [how you will behave]. He wants you to revere him, and to not sin." **21** Then, as the people [watched from] a distance, Moses/I went close to the black cloud where God was. **22** Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Say this to the Israeli people: 'You have heard how I, Yahweh, have spoken to you from heaven. I told you that you must not make any idols of silver or gold [that you will worship instead] of me. **24** Make for me an altar from dirt. Sacrifice on it the animals that you will burn completely. Also sacrifice on it the animals that you will not burn completely, to maintain fellowship with me. Worship me [MTY] in any place that I choose for you to honor/worship me; and if you do that, I will come to you and bless you. **25** If you make for me an altar from stones, do not make it from

stones that you have cut [to make them look nice], because you will make the altar unsuitable for [worshiping] me if you use tools to cut the stones. **26** Do not make an altar that has steps in front of it, because if you do that, [people] could see your naked [buttocks] as you go up the steps.'"

21 "Here are some [other] instructions to give to [the Israeli people]: **2** When/If you buy a Hebrew slave, he is to serve you for [only] six years. In the seventh year you must free him [from being your slave], and he is not required to pay you anything [for setting him free]. **3** If he was not married before he became your slave, and if he marries [someone while he is your slave], his wife is not to be set free [with him]. But if he was married before he became your slave, you must free both him and his wife. **4** If a slave's master gives him a wife, and she gives birth to sons or daughters [while her husband is a slave], only the man is to be freed. His wife and children will continue to be slaves of their master. **5** But when it is time for the slave to be set free, if the slave says, 'I love my master and my wife and my children, and I do not want to be set free,' **6** then his master must take him to [the place where they worship] God (OR, to [the owner's] house). There he must make the slave stand against the door or the doorpost. Then the master will use an (awl/pointed metal rod) to make a hole in the slave's ear. Then [he will fasten a tag to the slave's ear to indicate that] (he will own that slave for the rest of his life/he will own the slave as long as the slave lives). **7** If a man sells his daughter to become a slave, she should not be set free [after six years], as the male slaves are. **8** If the man who bought her wanted her to be his wife, but if [later] he is not pleased with her, he must sell her back to her father. He must not sell her to a foreigner, because that would be breaking the contract/agreement [he made with the girl's father]. **9** If the man who buys her wants her to be a wife for his son, he must then treat her as though she were his own daughter. **10** If the master takes another slave girl to be another wife for himself, he must continue to give the first slave wife the same amount of food and clothing that he gave to her before, and he must continue to have sex [EUP] with her as before. **11** If he does not do all these three things for her, he must free her [from being a slave], and she is not required to pay anything [for being set free]. **12** You must execute anyone who strikes another person with the result that the person who is struck dies. **13** But if the one who struck the other did not intend to kill that person, the one who struck him can escape to a place that I will choose for you, [and he will be safe there]. **14** But if someone gets angry with another person and kills him, even if the murderer runs to the altar, [a place that God designated as a place to be safe], you must execute him. **15** Anyone who strikes his father or mother must surely be executed. **16** Anyone who kidnaps another person, either in order to sell that person or to keep him as a slave, must be executed. **17** Anyone who reviles/curses his father or his mother must be executed. **18** Suppose two people fight, and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist. And suppose the person he strikes does not die but is injured and has to stay in bed [for a while], **19** and later he is able to walk outside using a cane. Then the person who struck him does not have to be punished. However, he must pay the injured person the money he could not earn [while he was recovering], and he must also pay the injured person's medical expenses until that person is well. **20** If someone strikes his male or female slave with a stick, if the slave dies (immediately/as a result) [IDM], the one who struck him must be punished. **21** But if the slave lives for a day or two after he is struck [and then dies], you must not punish the one who struck him. Not having that slave to be able to work for him any longer is enough punishment. **22** Suppose two people are fighting and they hurt a pregnant woman with the result that (she has a miscarriage/her baby is born prematurely and dies). If the woman is not harmed in any other way, the one who injured her must pay a fine. He must pay whatever the woman's husband demands, after a judge approves of the fine. **23** But if the woman is injured in some additional way, the one who injured her must be caused to suffer in exactly the same way [that he caused her to suffer]. If she dies, he must be executed. **24** If her eye is injured or destroyed, or if he knocks out one of her teeth, or her hand or foot is injured, or if she is burned or bruised, the one who injured her must be injured in the same way. **26** If the owner of a slave strikes the eye of his male or female slave and ruins it, he must free that slave because of [what he did to] the slave's eye. **27** If someone knocks out one of his slave's teeth, he must free the slave because of [what he did to] the slave's tooth. **28** If a bull gores a man or woman with the result that the person dies, you [must kill the bull by] throwing stones at it, but you must not punish the owner of the bull. **29** But suppose the bull had attacked people several times before, and its owner had been warned, but he did not keep the bull inside a fence. Then you [must kill the bull by] throwing stones at it, but you must also execute its owner. **30** However, if the owner of the bull is allowed to pay a fine (to save his own life/in order not to be executed), he must pay the full amount that the judges say that he must pay. **31** If someone's bull attacks and gores another person's son or daughter, you must treat the bull's owner according to that same rule. **32** If a bull attacks and gores a male or female slave, its owner

must pay to the slave's owner 30 pieces of silver. Then you must [kill the bull by] throwing stones at it. **33** Suppose someone has a pit/cistern and does not keep it covered, and someone's bull or donkey falls into it [and dies]. **34** Then the owner of the pit/cistern must pay for the animal that died. He must give the money to the animal's owner, but then he can take away the animal that died and [do whatever he wants to with it]. **35** If someone's bull hurts another person's bull with the result that it dies, the owners of both bulls must sell the bull that is living, and they must divide [between them] the money [that they receive] for it. They must also divide [between them the meat of] the animal that died. **36** However, if people know that the bull often attacked other animals previously, and its owner did not keep it inside a fence, then the owner of that bull must give the owner of the bull that died one of his own bulls, but he can take away the animal that died [and do with it whatever he wants to do]."

22 Yahweh also said, "If someone steals a bull or a sheep, and then slaughters it [to sell it or to sacrifice it] or sells its [meat to someone else], he must pay five bulls for the bull [that he stole], and [he must pay] four sheep for the sheep [that he stole]. **2** If a thief is caught while he is breaking into someone else's house [at night], if [the one who catches him] kills the thief, he is not guilty of murdering him. **3** But if that happens during the daytime, [the one who killed the thief] is guilty of murdering him. The thief must pay for what he stole. If he has no [animals with which to pay for the one that he stole], he must be sold to [become someone's else's slave and the money must be used] to pay for what he stole. **4** If the thief still has the animal when he is caught, whether it is a bull or a donkey or a sheep, and it is still alive, the thief must give back [the stolen animal as well as giving] two [additional] animals for each one that he stole. **5** If someone allows his animals to (graze/eat the grass) in his field or in his vineyard, and if they stray away and eat the crops in another person's field, the owner of the animals must pay [the owner of those crops] by giving him the best crops from his own field or vineyard. **6** Suppose someone starts a fire in his own field, and the fire spreads through the grass and starts burning in someone else's field, and the fire burns grain that is growing or grain that is already [cut and] stacked. Then the person who started the fire must pay completely for the damage. **7** Suppose someone gives to another person some money or other valuable goods and asks him to guard them [in his house for a while]. If those things are stolen from that person's house, if the thief is caught, he must pay back twice [as much as he stole]. **8** But if the thief is not caught, the owner of the house [from which the things were stolen] must stand before the judges, so that the judges can determine whether [the owner of the house] was the one who took the other man's goods [and sold them to someone else]. **9** If two people argue about which one of them owns a bull or a donkey or a sheep or some clothing, or something else that has been lost, the two people who each claim/say that the item belongs to them must stand before the judges. The one whom the judges declare is lying must pay back [to the real owner] twice as many bulls or donkeys or sheep or pieces of clothing. **10** Suppose someone gives his donkey or bull or sheep or some other animal to someone else and asks him to take care of it [for a while], and the animal dies or is injured or is stolen while no one is watching. **11** Then the person [who was taking care of the animal] must (swear/solemnly declare), knowing that God is listening, that he did not steal the animal. If he did not steal it the owner of the animal must accept/believe that the other person is telling the truth, and the other person will not have to pay anything back to the owner. **12** But if the animal was stolen [while he was supposed to be taking care of it], the man who promised to take care of it must pay back the owner for the animal. **13** If [he says that] the animal was killed by wild animals, he must bring back the remains of the animal that was killed and show it to the animal's owner. If he does that, he will not have to pay anything for the animal. **14** If someone borrows an animal, and if that animal is hurt or dies when its owner is not there, the one who borrowed it must pay the owner for the animal. **15** But if that happens when the owner of the animal is there, the one who borrowed it will not have to pay back anything. If the man who borrowed it only rented it, the money that he paid to rent it will be enough to pay for the animal [dying or being injured]." **16** "If a man persuades a girl/woman to have sex with him, a girl/woman who (is a virgin/has never had sex with any man) and who is not engaged to be married, he must pay the bride price for her and marry her. **17** But if her father refuses to allow her to marry him, he must pay to the woman's father the amount of money that is equal to the amount of bride price money that men pay for virgins. **18** You must execute any woman who (practices sorcery/is a shaman). **19** You must execute any person who has sex with an animal. **20** You [must offer sacrifices] only to Yahweh. You must execute anyone who offers a sacrifice to any [other] god. **21** You must not mistreat a foreigner [who comes to live among you]. Do not forget that you were previously foreigners in Egypt. **22** You must not mistreat any widow or any orphan. **23** If you mistreat them and they cry out to me [for help], I will hear them. **24** And I will be angry with you, and I will cause you to be killed in a war [MTY]. Your wives will become widows, and your children will no longer

have fathers. 25 If you lend money to any of my people who are poor, do not act like a moneylender and require him to pay interest on the money. 26 If he gives you his cloak to guarantee [that he will pay the money back], you must give the cloak back to him before the sun goes down, 27 because he needs it to keep him warm [during the night]. (That is the only covering that poor people have when they sleep at night./What else will he cover himself with during the night?) [RHQ] [If you do not act mercifully toward him by returning his cloak], when he cries out to me asking for my help, I will help him, because I [always act] mercifully. 28 Do not (revile/speak evil about) me, and do not (curse/ask me to do harmful things to) any ruler of your people. 29 (Do not withhold from/Give) me the best parts of the grain that you harvest and of the olive oil and the wine that you produce. 30 You must dedicate your firstborn sons to me. Similarly, your firstborn [male] cattle and sheep belong to me. After those animals are born, allow them to stay with their mothers for seven days. On the eighth day, offer them to me [as a sacrifice]. 31 You are people who are (completely dedicated to/set apart for) me. [And I detest] the meat of any animal that has been killed by wild animals. Therefore you should not eat such meat. Instead, throw it where the dogs [can eat it]."

23 "Do not tell to others (false rumors/untrue reports) about other people. Do not help someone who is guilty by (testifying falsely/lying) [about what happened]. 2 Do not join a group of people who are planning to do something evil. Do not testify the way the [crowd wants you to], if that will prevent [the judge from deciding the case] justly/fairly. 3 When a poor person is on trial, do not [testify in] his favor [just] because he is poor [and you feel sorry for him]. 4 If you see someone's bull or donkey when it is wandering away [loose], take it back to [its owner, even if the owner] is your enemy. 5 If you see someone's donkey that has fallen down [because of its heavy load], help the owner to get the donkey up again, [even if] he is someone who hates you. Do not just walk away [without helping him]. 6 Decide the cases of poor people who are on trial [as] fairly [as you decide the cases of other people]. 7 Do not accuse people falsely. Do not decide that innocent and righteous [DOU] people should be executed, because I will (punish/not forgive) people who do such an evil thing. 8 Do not accept money that is a bribe, because officials who accept bribes are not able to [MTY] decide what is right to do, and they do not allow innocent people to be treated fairly. 9 Do not mistreat foreigners [who live among you]. You know [how people often treat] foreigners, because the Egyptians [did not treat you well when] you were foreigners there. 10 Plant [seeds] in your ground and gather the harvest for six years. 11 But during the seventh year you must not plant anything. [If things grow without your planting seeds], allow poor people [to harvest and] eat the crops. If there are still crops (left over/that they do not harvest), allow wild animals to eat them. Do the same thing with your grapevines/vineyards and your olive trees. 12 [You may] work for six days [each week], but on the seventh day you must rest [and not work]. And on the seventh day you must allow your work animals and your slaves and the foreigners [who live among you] also [to rest and] be refreshed. 13 Make certain that you obey everything that I have commanded [you to do]. Do not pray to [MTY] other gods. Do not even mention their names." 14 "Every year you must celebrate three festivals to [honor] me. 15 [The first one] is the Festival of Bread That Has No Yeast. Celebrate it in the month [that is named] Abib. That is the month in which you left Egypt. Celebrate it in the way that I commanded you. And always bring [LIT] an offering when you come to worship me. 16 The second one is the Festival of Harvesting. During that festival you must offer to me the first parts/harvest of your crops that grow from the seeds that you planted. The third one is the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters. That will be after you finish harvesting your grain and grapes and fruit. 17 Every year, at each of these times, all the men must gather together to worship me, Yahweh God. 18 When you sacrifice an animal [and offer it] to me, you must not offer bread that has been baked with yeast. [When you] offer sacrifices, [burn] the fat [from the animals on that same day]. Do not allow any fat to remain until the next morning. 19 Each year, when you harvest your crops, bring to the place where you worship me, Yahweh God, the first part of what you harvest. When you kill a (young animal/kid [or lamb or calf)], do not [prepare to eat it by] boiling it in its mother's milk." 20 "Note this: I am going to send an angel ahead of you, to guard you as you travel and to bring you safely to the place that I have prepared [for you]. Pay attention to what he says and obey him. Do not rebel against him, because he will have my authority [MTY] and he will (punish/not forgive) [LIT] you if you rebel against him. 22 But if you pay attention to what he says and if you do all that I tell you [to do], I will fight strongly [DOU] against all of your enemies. 23 My angel will go ahead of you, and will take you to where the Amor and Heth and Periz and Canaan and Hiv and Jebus people-groups live, and I will completely get rid of them. 24 Do not bow down before their gods/idols or worship them. And do not do the things [that they think that their gods want] them to do. Completely destroy their gods/idols, and smash to pieces their sacred stones. 25 You must worship me, Yahweh God. [If you do

that], I will bless your (OR, bless [you by giving you]) food and water, and I will protect you from becoming sick. **26** No women in your land will have (miscarriages/babies that will die after being born prematurely), and no women will be unable to become pregnant. And I will enable you to live a long time. **27** I will cause the people who oppose you to become very afraid of me. I will cause the people whom you fight against to become very confused. And then I will cause them to turn around and run away from you. **28** I will cause your enemies to become terrified. And I will expel the Hiv, Canaan, and Heth people-groups from your land. **29** I will not expel [all of] them in less than one year. If I did that, your land would become deserted, and there would be very many wild animals ([that would attack you/you would not be able to control]). **30** I will expel those people-groups slowly, a few at a time, until the number of your people increases and you are able to live everywhere in the land. **31** I will cause the borders of your land to extend from the (Red Sea/Gulf of Aqaba) [in the southeast] to the Mediterranean Sea [in the northwest], and from the [Sinai] Desert [in the southwest] to the [Euphrates] River [in the northeast of the country]. I will enable you [MTY] to expel the people who live there, so that you will expel them as you occupy more of the country. **32** You must not make any agreement/treaty with those people or with their gods. **33** Do not allow [those people] to live in your land, in order that they do not cause you to sin against me. If you worship their gods, [you will not be able to escape from worshiping them and sinning against me, just like someone caught] in a trap [is unable to escape] [MET]."

24 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Come to me, up [on top of this mountain], you and Aaron and [his sons] Nadab and Abihu. Also [take along] 70 of the Israeli elders/leaders. While you are still some distance [from the top of the mountain], prostrate yourselves [on the ground] and worship me. **2** Moses, [I will allow] you alone to come near to me. The others must not come near, and the [rest of the] people must not come up the mountain." **3** Moses/I went and told the people everything that Yahweh had said and all that he had commanded. The people all replied together, saying, "We will do everything that Yahweh has told us [to do]." **4** Then Moses/I wrote down everything that Yahweh had commanded. Early the next morning Moses/I built a [stone] altar. He/I also set up twelve stones, one for each of the Israeli tribes. **5** He/I also selected some young men. They burned sacrifices to Yahweh and they also sacrificed some cattle [that they did not burn completely], for the purpose of maintaining fellowship with Yahweh. **6** Moses/I took half of the blood of the animals that were slaughtered and put it in bowls. The other half of the blood [he/I] threw/splashed against the altar. **7** Then he/I took the scroll on which he/I had written [everything that Yahweh had commanded in] the agreement that he had made, and he/I read it [aloud], while all the people were listening. Then all the people said, "We will do all that Yahweh has told us to do. We will obey [everything]." **8** Then Moses/I took the blood [that was in the bowls] and threw/splashed it on the people. He/I said, "This is the blood [that (confirms/puts into effect)] the agreement that Yahweh made with you when he gave you all these commands." **9** Then Moses/I, along with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the 70 Israeli elders/leaders, went up [the mountain], **10** and they/we saw God, the one whom the Israeli people worship. Under his feet was something like a pavement [made of expensive blue stones called] sapphires. They were as clear as the sky is [when there are no clouds]. **11** God did not harm [MTY] those Israeli elders/leaders [because of their having seen him]. They saw God, and they ate and drank together! [Then we all went back down the mountain]. **12** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Come up to me [again] on [top of this] mountain. While you are here, I will give you [two] stone slabs on which I have written all the laws [DOU] that I have given to you to instruct/teach [the people]." **13** So Moses/I told the elders, "Stay here [with the other people] until we return! Do not forget that Aaron and Hur will be with you. So if anyone has a dispute [while I am gone], he can go to those two men." Then Moses/I went with his/my servant Joshua [part of the way] up the mountain that [was dedicated to] God. **15** Then Moses/I went the [rest of the way] up the mountain. A cloud covered the mountain. **16** The (glory/brilliant light) of Yahweh came down on the mountain and covered it for six days. On the seventh day, Yahweh called to Moses/me from the middle of the cloud. **17** When the Israeli people [looked at] the top of the mountain, the glory of Yahweh was like a big fire that was burning [there]. **18** Moses/I went into the cloud on top of the mountain. He/I was there for 40 days and nights.

25 Yahweh said to Moses/me, "There [are many things that I want] you to tell to the Israeli people. **2** Tell them that they must give offerings/gifts to me. Receive from the people every offering/gift that they want to give to me. **3** These are the things that they may offer/give: Gold, silver, bronze, **4** blue, purple, and scarlet yarn/wool, fine (linen/white cloth), goats' hair for making [cloth], **5** rams' skins that have been (tanned/dyed red), goatskins, [hard] wood from acacia [trees], **6** olive oil [to burn] in the lamps, spices to [put in] the olive oil for anointing [the priests] and in the sweet-smelling incense, **7** [expensive quartz] stones [called] onyx, and other expensive stones to be fastened [to

the priest's vest] and put on the pouches [that are to be fastened to the vest]. **8** Tell the people to make a big Sacred Tent for me, so that I can live in it among them. **9** They must make the Sacred Tent and all the things that will be used inside it according to the plan/model that I will show you." **10** "[Tell the people to] make a [sacred] chest from acacia wood. It is to be (45 in./110 cm.) long, (27 in./66 cm.) wide, and (27 in./66 cm.) high. **11** Cover it with pure gold inside and outside, and put a gold border around the top of it. **12** [They must] make/cast four rings from gold and fasten them to the legs of the chest. Put two rings on each side of the chest. **13** [They must] make [two] poles from acacia wood, and they must cover them with gold. **14** [They must] put the poles into the rings on the sides of the chest, so that the chest can be carried by the poles. **15** The poles must always be left in the rings; they must not take the poles out [of the rings]. **16** Put inside the chest the [two stone slabs that I will give you, on which] I have written my commandments. **17** [Tell them to] make a lid for the chest from pure gold. [It will be the place where I will] forgive people's sins. It [also] is to be (45 in./110 cm.) long and (27 in./66 cm.) wide. **18** [Tell them to] hammer [huge lump of] gold into the form of two creatures that have wings. **19** One of these is to be put at each end of the chest, but the gold [from which] they [are made] must be joined to the gold from which the lid [is made]. **20** [Tell them to place the] winged creatures so that their wings touch each other and spread out over the lid. **21** Put inside the chest the stone slabs that I will give you. Then fasten the lid onto the top of the chest. **22** I will set times to talk with you there. From above the lid of the chest, between the two winged creatures, I will tell to you all my laws that [you must tell] to the Israeli people." **23** "[Tell them to] make a table from acacia wood. It is to be (36 in./88 cm.) long, (18 in./66 cm.) wide, and (27 in./66 cm.) high. **24** [Tell them to] cover it with pure gold and put a gold border around it. **25** [Tell them to] make a rim all around it, (3 in./7.5 cm.) wide, and put a gold border around the rim. **26** [Tell them to] make/cast four rings from gold and fasten the rings to the four corners of the table, one ring close to each leg [of the table]. **27** The rings should be fastened to the table near the rim. **28** Make two poles from acacia wood and cover them with gold. The poles for carrying the table are to be inserted in the rings. **29** Also [tell them to] make plates, cups, jars, and bowls to be used [when the priests] pour out wine [to offer to me]. They must all be made from pure gold. **30** On the table, in front of the chest, there must always be the loaves of sacred bread [that the priests have offered] to me." **31** "[Tell them to] make a lampstand from pure gold. They must hammer [one large lump of] gold to make its base and its shaft. [The branches of the lampstand], the cups for holding the oil, the flower buds and the [flower] petals [that decorate the branches of the lamp, the base, and the shaft are all to be hammered from] one [big] lump of gold. **32** There are to be six branches on the lampstand, three on each side [of the shaft]. **33** Each of the branches is to have on it three [gold decorations that will look like] almond blossoms. These decorations must also have flower buds and [flower] petals. **34** On the [shaft of the] lampstand there are to be four [gold decorations that also look like] almond blossoms, each one with flower buds and petals. **35** On each side, there is to be one [flower] bud beneath each of the branches. **36** All these buds and branches, along with the shaft, are to be hammered from one large lump of pure gold. **37** Also [tell them to] make seven small cups [for holding oil. One is to be put on top of the shaft and the others are to be put on top of the branches]. Place these cups so that [when the lamps are lit], the light will shine toward the (front of the lampstand/entrance). **38** [Tell them to] make tongs from pure gold, [to remove the burned wicks] and trays [in which to put the burned wicks]. **39** [Tell them to] use (75 pounds/35 kg.) of pure gold to make the lampstand and the tongs and the trays. **40** Make sure that they make these things according to the instructions that I am giving you [here] on [this] mountain."

26 "[Tell the people to] make the Sacred Tent using ten long strips of fine linen. They must take blue, purple, and red thread (OR, weave the strips from blue, purple, and red thread), and [a skilled craftsman] must embroider these strips with [designs that represent] the winged creatures [that are above the chest]. **2** Each strip is to be (14 yards/twelve meters) long and (2 yards/1.8 meters) wide. **3** [Tell them to] sew five strips together to make one set, and sew the other five strips together to make another set. **4** For each set, [they must] make loops of blue [cloth] and fasten them along the outer edge of the strip, at the end of each set. **5** [They must] put 50 loops on the edge of the first set, and 50 loops on the edge of the second set. **6** [Tell them to] make 50 gold clasps/fasteners, to fasten both of the sets together. As a result, the inside of the Sacred Tent will be [as though it was] one piece. **7** Also, [tell them to] make a cover for the Sacred Tent from eleven pieces of cloth made from goats' hair. **8** Each piece of cloth is to be (15 yards/13.5 meters) long and (2 yards/1.8 meters) wide. **9** [Tell them to] sew five of these pieces of cloth together to make one set, and sew the other six pieces of cloth together to make another set. [They] must fold the sixth piece [of cloth] in half to make it double over the front of the Sacred Tent. **10** [Tell them to] make 100 loops [of blue cloth], and to fasten 50 of them to the outer edge of the one set and fasten 50 to the outer

edge of the other set. 11 [Tell them to] make fifty bronze clasps/fasteners and put them in the cloth loops to join the two sets together. As a result, the cover for the Sacred Tent will be [as though it was] one piece. 12 [Let] the extra part of the cover, the part that extends beyond [the linen cloth], hang over the back of the Sacred Tent. 13 The extra half yard/meter of each cover, the part that extends beyond [the linen cloth] on each side, must hang over the two sides of the Sacred Tent, to protect the sides. 14 [Tell them to] make two more covers for the Sacred Tent. One is to be made from rams' skins that have been (tanned/dyed red), and the top cover is to be made from goatskin leather." 15 "[Tell them to] make frames from acacia wood, frames that will be set up [from which to hang the Sacred Tent covers]. 16 Each frame is to be (five yards/four meters) long and (27 in./66 cm.) wide. 17 [They] must make two projections at the bottom of each frame. These will be to fasten the frames to the bases underneath them. They must make these projections at the bottom of each frame. 18 Make 20 frames for the south side of the Sacred Tent. 19 [Tell them to] make 40 silver bases to go underneath them. Two bases will go under each frame. The projections [at the bottom] of each frame are [to be made] to fit into the bases. 20 [Similarly], [tell them to] make twenty frames for the north side of the Sacred Tent. 21 [They] must make 40 silver bases for them also, with two bases to be put under each frame. 22 For the rear of the Sacred Tent, on the west side, [tell them to] make six frames. 23 Also, [tell them to] make two extra frames, one for each corner of the rear of the Sacred Tent, [to provide extra support]. 24 The two corner frames must be joined from the bottom to the top (OR, joined at both the bottom and the top). At the top of each of the two corner frames there must be a gold ring for holding the crossbar. 25 In that way, [for the rear of the Sacred Tent] there will be eight frames, and there will be 16 bases, two under each frame. 26 [Tell them to] make 15 crossbars from acacia wood. 27 Five of them will be for the frames on the north side of the Sacred Tent, five will be for the south side, and five for the frames at the rear of the Sacred Tent, the west side. 28 Tell them to fasten the crossbars on the north, south, and west sides of the Sacred Tent to the middle of the frames. The two long ones must extend from one end of the Sacred Tent to the other, and the crossbar on the west side must extend from one side of the Sacred Tent to the other. 29 [Tell them to] cover the frames with gold, and make gold rings to fasten the crossbars to the frames. The crossbars must [also] be covered with gold. 30 Erect the Sacred Tent in the way that I have shown you [here] on [this] mountain." 31 "[Tell them to] make a curtain from fine linen. A skilled craftsman must embroider it with blue, purple, and red yarn/thread, making [designs to represent] the winged creatures [that are above the chest]. 32 [Tell them to] suspend/hang the curtain from four posts made from acacia wood and covered with gold. Set [each] post in a silver base. 33 [They] must suspend/hang the [top of the] curtain by hooks that are fastened to the roof of the Sacred Tent. Behind the curtain, in the [room called the] Very Holy Place, [they] must put the chest containing the [two stone slabs on which I have written my] commandments. That curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Very Holy Place. 34 On top of the chest in the Very Holy Place [they] must put the lid which will be the place where [blood will be sprinkled to] forgive people's sins. 35 [In the room that is] outside of the Very Holy Place, [they] must put the table [for the sacred] bread on the north side, and put the lampstand on the south side. 36 [Tell them to] make a curtain to [cover] the entrance of the Sacred Tent. They must make it from fine linen, and a skilled weaver must embroider it with blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. 37 To hold up this curtain, [they] must make five posts from acacia wood. [They] must cover them with gold, and fasten gold clasps/fasteners to them. Also [they] must make a bronze base for each of these posts."

27 "Tell them to make an altar from acacia wood. It is to be square, (7-1/2 feet/2.2 meters) on each side, and make it (4-1/2 feet/1.3 meters) high. 2 [They] must make [a projection that looks like] a horn on each of the top corners. The projections must be carved from the same block of wood as the altar. [Tell them to] cover the whole altar with gold. 3 [They must] make pans in which to put the [greasy] ashes [from the animal sacrifices]. Also [they must] make shovels for cleaning out the ashes, basins and forks for turning the meat as it cooks, and buckets for carrying hot coals/ashes. All of these things must be made from bronze. 4 Also [tell them to] make a bronze grating to hold the wood and burning coals. They must fasten to each of the corners of the altar a bronze ring for carrying the altar. 5 [They must] put the grating under the rim that is around the altar. [They must] make it so that it is [inside the altar], halfway down. 6 For [carrying] the altar, [they must] make poles from acacia wood and cover them with bronze. 7 [They must] put the poles through the rings on each side of the altar. The poles are for carrying the altar. 8 The altar will be like a box, made from boards [of acacia wood]. [They must] make it according to these instructions that I am giving you [here] on [this] mountain." 9 "Around the Sacred Tent there is to be a courtyard. To form the courtyard, [tell them to] make curtains of fine linen. On the south side, the curtain is to be (50 yards/44 meters) long. 10 [To support/hang the curtain],

[tell them to] make twenty bronze posts, and one bronze base for each post. To fasten the curtains to the posts, [they must] make silver hooks, and [metal] rods [covered with] silver [to fasten the curtains to the hooks]. **11** [They must] make the same kind of curtains for the north side of the courtyard. **12** On the west side [of the courtyard] they must make a curtain (25 yards/22 meters) long. The curtains are to be supported by ten posts, with a base under [each] post. **13** On the east side, [where the entrance is], the courtyard must also be (25 yards/22 meters) wide. **14** [Tell them to] make a curtain (22-1/2 feet/6.6 meters) wide for each side of the entrance [to the courtyard]. **16** They must make a curtain (30 feet/9 meters) long for the entrance. A skilled weaver must embroider it with blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. It must be (supported by/hung from) four posts, each one with a base under it. **17** All the posts around the courtyard must be connected with metal rods covered with silver. The clasps/fasteners must be made of silver, and the bases must be made of bronze. **18** The whole courtyard, [from the east entrance to the west end], must be (50 yards/44 meters) long, and the curtains that enclose it must be (7-1/2 feet/2.3 meters) high. All the curtains must be made of fine linen, and all the bases [under the posts] must be made of bronze. **19** All the things [that are not made of gold] that are to be used inside the Sacred Tent and in the courtyard, and all the tent pegs to support the Sacred Tent and the curtains, must be made of bronze. **20** "Command the Israeli people that they must bring to you the best kind of olive oil to [burn in] the lamps. [They must bring this oil to you continually], in order that the lamps can burn continually. **21** They must put the lampstand outside of the curtain which is in front of [the sacred chest which contains the stone slabs on which I have written] my commandments. Aaron must take care of the lamps. [After he dies], his descendants must do this work. The lamps are to burn every night, from evening until morning. The Israeli people must obey this regulation throughout all future generations."

28 "Summon your [older] brother Aaron and his sons—Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ([Set them apart/They are the ones whom I have chosen]) from [the rest of] the Israeli people, in order that they can serve me [by being] priests. **2** [Tell the people to] make beautiful clothes for Aaron, clothes that are [suitable for one who] has this dignified and sacred [work]. **3** Talk to all the skilled workmen, those to whom I have given special ability. [Tell them] to make clothes for Aaron, for him to wear when he is (set apart/dedicated) [to become] a priest to serve me. **4** These are the clothes that they are to make: A sacred pouch for Aaron to wear over his chest, a sacred apron, a robe, an embroidered tunic/gown, a (turban/cloth to wrap around his head), and a sash/waistband. These are the clothes that your [older] brother Aaron and his sons must wear as they serve me [by doing the work that] priests do. **5** The skilled workmen must use fine linen and blue, purple, and red yarn/thread to make these clothes." **6** "The skilled workmen must make the sacred apron from fine linen, and skillfully embroider it with blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. **7** It must have two shoulder straps, to join the front part to the back part. **8** A carefully-woven sash, which must be made from the same materials as the sacred apron, must be [sewn] onto the sacred apron. **9** [A skilled workman] must take two [expensive] onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the twelve sons of Jacob. **10** He must engrave the names in the order in which Jacob's sons were born. He must engrave six names on one stone, and the other six names on the other stone. **11** A gem-cutter should engrave these names on the stones. Then he should enclose the stones in (settings/tiny gold frames). **12** Then he should fasten the stones onto the shoulder straps [of the sacred apron], to represent the twelve Israeli tribes. In that way, Aaron will carry the names of the tribes on his shoulders in order that [I], Yahweh, will never forget [my people] (OR, in order that [he will always] remember that [those tribes belong to] Yahweh). **13** The settings for the stones must be made from gold. **14** [Tell them to] make two tiny chains that are braided like cords, and fasten the chains to the settings." **15** "[Tell the skilled workman to] make a sacred pouch for Aaron to wear over his chest. [He will use the things he puts into the pouch] to determine [my answers to the questions he asks]. It must be made of the same materials as the sacred apron, and embroidered in the same way. **16** It is to be square, and the material must be folded double, so that it is (9 in./22 cm.) on each side. **17** [The skilled workman must] fasten four rows of valuable stones onto the pouch. In the first row he must put a [red] ruby, a [yellow] topaz, and a [red] garnet. **18** In the second row he must put a [green] emerald, a [blue] sapphire, and a [clear/white] diamond. **19** In the third row he must put a [red] jacinth, a [white] agate, and a [purple] amethyst. **20** In the fourth row he must put a [yellow] beryl, a [red] carnelian, and a [green] jasper. **21** A gem-cutter should engrave on each of these twelve stones the name of one of the sons of Jacob. These names will represent the twelve Israeli tribes. **22** The two [chains] that are made from pure gold and braided like cords are for [attaching] the sacred pouch [to the sacred apron]. **23** [The workman must] make two gold rings, and attach them to the upper corners of the sacred pouch. **24** [He must make] two gold cords, and fasten one end of each cord to one of the rings.

25 He must fasten the other end of each cord to the two settings [that enclose the stones]. In that way, the sacred pouch will be attached to the shoulder straps of the sacred apron. 26 Then [he must] make two more gold rings, and attach them to the lower corners of the sacred pouch, on the inside edges, next to the sacred apron. 27 [He must] make two more gold rings, and attach them to the lower part of the front of the shoulder straps, near to where [the shoulder straps] are joined [to the sacred apron], just above the carefully-woven sash/waistband. 28 The skilled workman must tie the rings on the sacred pouch to the rings on the sacred apron with a blue cord, so that the sacred pouch is above the sash/waistband and does not come loose from the sacred apron. 29 In that way, Aaron will have the names of the twelve Israeli tribes in the sacred pouch close to his chest when he enters the Holy Place. This will remind him that I, Yahweh, [will never forget my people] (OR, [that he represents my people when he talks to me, Yahweh]). 30 Put into the sacred pouch the two things that the priest will use to determine my answers to the questions he asks. In that way, they will be close to his chest when he enters [the Holy Place to talk] to me. He will use them to find out what is my will for the Israeli people." 31 "[Tell the workmen to] use only blue [cloth] to make the robe that is to be worn underneath the priest's sacred apron. 32 It is to have an opening through which [the priest] can put his head. They must sew a border around this opening, to keep the material from tearing. 33 At the lower edge on the robe, they must fasten [decorations that look like] pomegranate fruit. They must be [woven from] blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. 34 Between each of these decorations, they must fasten a tiny gold bell. 35 When Aaron enters the Holy Place [in the Sacred Tent] to do his work as a priest and when he leaves the Sacred Tent, the bells will ring [as he walks]. As a result, he will not die [because of disobeying my instructions]. 36 "[Tell them to] make a tiny ornament of pure gold, and tell a (skilled workman/gem-cutter) to engrave on it the words, 'Dedicated to Yahweh.' 37 They should fasten this ornament to the front of the turban by a blue cord. 38 Aaron must always wear this on his forehead. In that way, Aaron himself will show [that he accepts] the guilt if the Israeli people offer [their sacrifices] to me in a way that is not correct, and I, Yahweh, will accept their sacrifices. 39 "[Tell them to] weave the long-sleeved tunic/gown from fine linen. Also, they must make from fine linen a turban and a sash/waistband, and embroider [designs on it]. 40 "[Tell them to] make beautiful long-sleeved tunics/gowns, sashes, and caps for Aaron's sons. Make ones that will be suitable for those who have this dignified work. 41 Put these clothes on your [older] brother Aaron and on his sons. Then (set them apart/dedicate them) for this work by anointing them [with olive oil], in order that they may serve me [by being] priests. 42 Also [tell them to] make linen undershorts for them. The undershorts should extend from their waists to their thighs, in order that no one can see their private parts. 43 Aaron and his sons must always wear those undershorts when they enter the Sacred Tent or when they come near to the altar to offer sacrifices in the Holy Place. If they do not obey this command, I will cause them to die. Aaron and all his male descendants must obey this rule forever."

29 "This is what you must do to dedicate Aaron and his sons to serve me [by being] priests: Select one young bull and two rams that do not have any defects. 2 Bake three [kinds of bread] using finely-ground wheat flour, but without yeast: Bake some loaves that do not have any olive oil in them, bake some loaves that have olive oil in the dough, and bake some thin wafers that will be smeared with olive oil [after they are baked]. 3 Put them in a basket and offer them [to me] when you sacrifice the young bull and the two rams. 4 Take Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Sacred Tent, and wash them [ritually]. 5 Then put the special clothes on Aaron—the long-sleeved tunic/gown, the robe that will be worn underneath the sacred apron, the sacred apron, the sacred pouch, and the sash/waistband. 6 Place the turban on his head, and fasten to the turban the ornament that has the words 'Dedicated to Yahweh' engraved on it. 7 Then take the oil and pour some on his head to (dedicate him/set him apart). 8 Then bring his sons and put the long-sleeved tunics/gowns on them. 9 Put the sashes/waistbands around their waists and the caps on their heads. That is the ritual by which you are to (dedicate them/set them apart) to be priests. Aaron and his male descendants must serve me [by being] priests forever. 10 "Then bring the young bull to the entrance of the Sacred Tent. Tell Aaron and his sons to put their hands on the head of the young bull. 11 Then, while they do that, kill the young bull [by slitting its throat], and catch/drain the blood in a bowl. 12 Take some of that blood with your finger and smear it on the projections of the altar. Throw/Splash the rest of the blood against the base of the altar. 13 Take all the fat that covers the inner organs of the young bull, the best part of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat on them, and burn all these on the altar [as an offering to me]. 14 But the meat of the young bull and its hide and intestines must be burned outside the camp. That will be an offering to forgive the guilt of your sins. 15 "Then select one of the rams, and tell Aaron and his sons to put their hands on the head of the ram. 16 Then kill the ram [by slitting its throat]. Catch/Drain some of the blood and splash

it against all four sides of the altar. 17 Then cut the ram into pieces. Wash its inner organs and its rear legs and put those with the head 18 and burn those pieces [completely] on the altar with the rest of the ram. That will be an offering to me, Yahweh, and the smell will please me. 19 "Take the other ram [that was selected for these rituals], and tell Aaron and his sons to put their hands on the ram's head. 20 Then kill the ram by slitting its throat, and drain the blood [into a bowl]. Smear some of the blood on the lobe of the right ears of Aaron and his sons, and on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. Throw/Splash the rest of the blood against the four sides of the altar. 21 Wipe up some of the blood that is on the altar, mix it with some of the oil for anointing, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his clothes, and on his sons and their clothes. By doing that, you will dedicate them and their clothes [to me]. 22 "Also, cut off the ram's fat and its fat tail and the fat that covers the inner organs, the best part of the liver, the two kidneys with the fat on them, and the right thigh. 23 Take also one of each of the kinds of bread [that was baked]—one made with no oil, one with oil, and one thin wafer. 24 Put all these things in the hands of Aaron and his sons. [Then tell them to] lift them up [high] to dedicate them to me. 25 Then take them from their hands and burn them on the altar, on top of the other things [that were placed there]. That [also] will be an offering to me, and its smell will please me. 26 Then take the meat of the ribs of the second ram that was killed, and lift it up [high] as an offering to me. But then this part of the animal will be for you [to eat]. 27 Then take the meat of the ribs, the other thigh of the first ram that was sacrificed to (dedicate/set apart) the priests, and the ram whose other parts were lifted high to show that they were an offering to me; and set the meat of the ribs and thigh apart for Aaron and his sons, for them to eat. 28 In the future, whenever the Israeli people present to me, Yahweh, offerings to maintain fellowship with me, the ribs and the thigh [of animals that they sacrifice] will be for Aaron and his male descendants [to eat]. 29 "After Aaron [dies], the special clothes that he wore will belong to his sons. They are to wear those clothes when they are (set apart/dedicated) [to become priests]. 30 Aaron's son who becomes The Supreme Priest and enters the Sacred Tent and performs rituals in the Holy Place must [stay in the Sacred Tent], wearing these special clothes, for seven days. 31 "Take the meat of the other ram that was sacrificed to (set apart/dedicate) Aaron and his sons, and boil it in the courtyard. 32 After it is cooked, Aaron and his sons must eat it, along with the bread that is left in the basket, at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. 33 They must eat the meat of the ram that was sacrificed to forgive them for [their sins] when they were dedicated to do this work. They are the only ones who are permitted to eat this meat. [Those who are not priests are not allowed to eat it], because it is dedicated to me. 34 If any of this meat or some of the bread is not eaten that night, no one is permitted to eat any of it the next day. It must be completely burned, because it is sacred/dedicated to me. 35 "Those are the rituals that you(sg) must perform during those seven days when you dedicate Aaron and his sons for this work. You must do everything that I have commanded you. 36 Each of those seven days you must also sacrifice a young bull as an offering to me, in order that I may forgive sins. Also, you must make another offering (to make the altar pure in my sight/in order that I will consider the altar to be pure). You must also anoint the altar with olive oil, to (set it apart/dedicate it). 37 Perform these rituals every day for seven days, to (set apart/dedicate) the altar and make it pure. If you do not do that, anyone or anything that touches the altar will become taboo. 38 "You must also sacrifice lambs and burn them on the altar. Each of those [seven] days you must sacrifice two lambs. 39 One lamb must be sacrificed in the morning, and one must be sacrificed in the evening. 40 With the first lamb, also offer (2 pounds/1 kilogram) of finely-ground wheat flour mixed with one quart/liter of the best kind of olive oil, and one quart/liter of wine as an offering. 41 In the evening, when you sacrifice the other lamb, offer the same amounts of flour, olive oil, and wine as you did in the morning. This will be an offering to me, Yahweh, that will be burned, and its smell will please me. 42 You [and your descendants] must continue making these offerings to me, Yahweh, throughout all future generations. You must offer them at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. That is where I will meet with you and speak to you. 43 That is where I will meet with the Israeli people, and the brilliant light of my presence will cause that place to be holy/sacred. 44 I will dedicate the Sacred Tent and the altar. I will also dedicate Aaron and his sons to serve me [by being] priests. 45 I will live among the Israeli people, and I will be their God. 46 They will know that I, Yahweh their God, am the one who brought them out of Egypt in order that I might live among them."

30 "[Tell the skilled workers to] make an altar from acacia wood, for burning incense. 2 It is to be square, (18 in./45 cm.) on each side. It is to be (3 feet/90 cm.) high. [Tell them to] make [a projection that looks like] a horn on each of the top corners. The projections must be carved from the same block of wood that the altar [is made from]. 3 [They must] cover the top and the four sides, including the projections, with pure gold. Put a gold border around the altar, [near the top]. 4 [They must] make two gold rings for

carrying the altar. [They must] attach them to the altar below the border, one on each side of the altar. These rings are for the poles for carrying the altar. **5** [Tell them to] make these [two] poles from acacia wood and cover them with gold. **6** [They must] put this altar outside the curtain that hangs in front of the sacred chest and its lid. That is the place where I will talk with you. **7** Aaron must burn sweet-smelling incense on this altar. He must burn some every morning when he takes care of the lamps, **8** and he must burn some in the evening when he lights the lamps. The incense must be burned continually, throughout all future generations. **9** The priests must not burn on the altar any incense that I have not told you to burn, or burn any animal on it, or any grain offering for me, or pour any wine on it as an offering. **10** One time every year Aaron must perform the ritual for making this altar pure. He must do it by putting on its four projections some of the blood from the animal that was sacrificed (to remove the guilt of the people's sins/so that the people would no longer be guilty for sins). This ritual is to be done by Aaron and his descendants throughout all future generations. This altar must be completely dedicated to me, Yahweh." **11** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **12** "When your [leaders] (take a census of/count) the Israeli people, each man [who is counted] must pay to me a price to save his life. They must do this in order that no disaster will happen to them while the people are being counted. **13** Every man who is counted must pay to me (0.2 ounces/5.7 grams) of silver. They must use the official standard when they weigh the silver. **14** All the men who are at least 20 years old must pay this amount to me when the people are counted. **15** Rich men must not pay more than this amount, and poor men must not pay less than this amount, when they pay this money to save their lives. **16** Your leaders must collect this money from the Israeli people and give it to [those who will] take care of the Sacred Tent. This money is the payment for the lives of those who take care of the Sacred Tent, (to enable me not to forget them/and then I will remember to protect them)." **17** Yahweh [also] said to Moses/me, **18** "[Tell the skilled workers to] make a bronze washbasin and a bronze base for it. [They must] put it between the Sacred Tent and the altar, and fill it with water. **19** Aaron and his sons must ritually wash their hands and their feet with this water **20** before they enter the Sacred Tent and before they come to the altar to sacrifice offerings that will be burned on it. If [they do that], they will not die [because of disobeying my instructions]. **21** They must wash their hands and their feet, in order that they will not die. They and the males descended from them must obey this ritual throughout all generations." **22** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **23** "[Tell the people to] collect some of the finest spices— (12 pounds/6 kg.) of (liquid myrrh/sweet-smelling sap named myrrh), (6 pounds/3 kg.) of sweet-smelling cinnamon, (6 pounds/3 kg.) of a sweet-smelling cane/reed, **24** and (12 pounds/6 kg.) of (cassia/a sweet-smelling bark named cassia). [Be sure] that they use the official standard when they weigh these things. Tell an expert perfumer to mix these with (one gallon/four liters) of olive oil **25** to make sacred oil for anointing. **26** Use this oil for anointing the Sacred Tent, the sacred chest, **27** the table and all the things that are used with it, the lampstand and all the things that are used to take care of it, the altar for [burning] incense, **28** and the altar for offering sacrifices that will be burned, along with its bases and the washbasin and all the things that are used with it. **29** Dedicate them by anointing them, in order that they will be completely holy/sacred. Anyone or anything that touches the altar will become taboo. **30** And anoint Aaron and his sons. [By doing that], you will dedicate them to serve me [by being] priests. **31** And tell the Israeli people, 'This oil will be my sacred anointing oil that must be used throughout all future generations. **32** You must not pour it on the bodies of people who are not priests, and you must not make other oil to be like it by mixing the same amount of those things. This oil is sacred, and you must consider it to be sacred.' **33** I will consider that anyone who makes ointment like this [for any other purpose], and anyone who puts any of this ointment on someone who is not a priest, no longer be allowed to associate with my people." **34** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, "[Tell the people to] take equal parts of several sweet spices—stacte, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense— **35** and tell an expert perfumer to mix them together to make some perfume. Add some salt to keep it pure and make it holy. **36** Beat some of it into a fine powder. Then take some of it into the Sacred Tent and sprinkle it in front of the sacred chest. You must all consider this incense to be very holy. **37** The people must not mix the same spices to make incense for themselves. This incense must be completely dedicated to me, Yahweh. **38** I will consider that anyone who makes incense like this to use it for perfume will no longer be allowed to associate with my people."

31 Yahweh [also] said to Moses/me, "Note that I have chosen Bezalel, the son of Uri and grandson of Hur, from the tribe of Judah, [for special tasks]. **3** I have caused him to be completely controlled/empowered by my Spirit, and I have given him special ability [to make things] and have enabled him to know how to do very skilled work. **4** He can engrave skillful designs in gold, silver, and bronze. **5** He can cut (jewels/valuable stones) and enclose them [in tiny gold settings/frames]. He can carve things from wood

and do other skilled work. 6 Note that I have also appointed
Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, from the tribe of Dan, to
work with him. I have also given special ability to other
men, in order that they can make all the things that I have
commanded you [to be made]. 7 That includes the Sacred
Tent, the sacred chest and its lid, all the other things that will
be inside the Sacred Tent, 8 the table and all the things
that are used with it, the pure gold lampstand and all the
things that are used to take care of it, the altar [for burning]
incense, 9 the altar for offering sacrifices that will be burned
and all the things that will be used with it, the washbasin
and its base, 10 all the beautiful sacred clothes for Aaron
and his sons to wear when they work as priests, 11 the
oil for anointing, and the sweet-smelling incense for the
Holy Place. [The skilled workers] must make all these things
exactly as I have told you to do." 12 Yahweh also said to
Moses/me, 13 "Tell the Israeli people, 'Obey my instructions
regarding the (rest days/Sabbath days). Those days will
remind you [and your descendants], throughout all future
generations, that I, Yahweh, have (set you apart/chosen
you) to be my people. 14 You must obey [my rules about] the
Sabbath days because they are holy/sacred. Those who
treat those days in an irreverent way by working on those
days must be executed [to show that] I no longer consider
them to belong to my people. 15 You may work for six days
[each week], but the seventh day [of each week] is a solemn
day of rest, dedicated to me, Yahweh. Anyone who does
any work on a day of rest is to be executed [because I no
longer want them to be able to associate with my people]. 16
You Israeli people must respect the rest day, and you [and
your descendants] must (celebrate it/keep it holy) throughout
all future generations. [It will remind you] of the agreement
that I have made with you that will last forever. 17 It will
remind you Israeli people and remind me [of that agreement]
because I, Yahweh, created the heavens and the earth in six
days, and on the seventh day I stopped doing that work and
relaxed.'" 18 When Yahweh finished talking with Moses/me
on the top of Sinai Mountain, he gave him/me the two stone
slabs on which he had engraved his commandments with
his own fingers.

32 [(Moses/I) stayed on top of the mountain a long time].
When the people realized that he/I was not returning
quickly, they gathered near Aaron and said to him, "We
do not know what has happened to that man Moses who
brought us here out of Egypt. So quickly, make us ([an idol/a
statue of a god]) who will lead us!" 2 Aaron replied to them,
"All right, [I will do that, but] tell your wives and your sons
and your daughters to take off all their gold earrings and
bring them to me." 3 So the people did that. They took
off all their gold earrings and brought them to Aaron. 4
He took all those gold earrings and melted them in a fire.
He [poured the gold into a mold and] made a statue that
looked like a young bull. The people saw it and said, "This is
the god of us Israeli people! This is the one who brought
us up from the land of Egypt!" 5 When Aaron saw [what
was happening], he built an altar in front of the [statue of
the] young bull. Then he announced, "Tomorrow we will
have a festival to honor Yahweh!" 6 So the people got up
early the next morning and brought animals to kill and burn
as sacrifices on the altar. They also brought sacrifices to
maintain fellowship with Yahweh. Then they sat down to eat
and drink [wine]. Then they got up and started dancing in a
very immoral way. 7 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Go
back down from the mountain, because your people, the
ones that you brought up here from Egypt, have [already]
(become very depraved/wicked)! 8 They have already (left
the road that I showed them/stopped obeying me)! They
have made [a statue of] a young bull from melted gold. They
have worshiped it and offered sacrifices to it. And they are
saying, 'This is the god of us Israeli people! This is the one
who brought us up from Egypt!'" 9 Then Yahweh said to
Moses/me, "I have seen that these people are very stubborn.
10 I am very angry with them, and so I am going to get rid
of them. Do not try to stop me! Then I will cause you and
your descendants to become a great nation." 11 But Moses/I
pleaded with his/my God, Yahweh, and said, "Yahweh, (you
should not be very angry with your people!/why are you
so angry with your people [RHQ]?) These are the people
whom you rescued from Egypt with very great power [MTY,
DOU]! 12 Do not [do anything that would] allow the people
of Egypt to say, 'Their god led them out from our country,
but [he did that] only [because he wanted] to kill them in
the mountains and get rid of them completely [RHQ]!' Stop
being so angry! (Change your mind/Do not do what you
have told me that you will do)! Do not do to your people
this terrible thing [that you have just said that you will do]
13 Think about your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
You solemnly promised them, 'I will enable you to have as
many descendants as there are stars in the sky.' You said to
them, 'I will give to your descendants all the land that I am
promising to give them. It will be their land forever.'" 14 So
Yahweh changed his mind. He did not do to his people the
terrible thing that he said he would do. 15 Moses/I turned
away from God and went down the mountain, carrying in his
hands the two stone slabs on which Yahweh had engraved
his commandments. He had written on both sides of the
slabs. 16 God [himself] had made the slabs, and he was the
one who had engraved the commandments on them. 17

Joshua heard the very loud noise of the people shouting. So when he and I got near the camp, Joshua said, “There is a noise in the camp that sounds like [the noise of] a battle!” **18** But Moses/I replied, [“No], that is not the shouting that people do when they have won a victory or when they have been defeated [in a battle] What I hear is the sound of [loud] singing!” **19** As soon as Moses/I came close to the camp and saw the statue of the young bull and saw the people dancing, he/I became extremely angry. He/I threw the stone tablets that he/I was carrying down onto the ground, there at the base of the mountain. **20** Then he/I took the statue of the young bull that they had made and melted it in the fire. [When it cooled], he/I ground it into [fine] powder. Then he/I mixed the powder with water and forced the Israeli people to drink it. **21** Then he/I said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you, with the result that you have made them commit such a terrible sin?” **22** Aaron replied, “Please do not be angry with me, sir. You know that these people are very determined to do evil things. **23** They said to me, ‘As for that man Moses, the one who brought us up here from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him. So make for us an idol that will lead us!’ **24** So I said to them, ‘Everyone who is wearing [gold earrings] should take them off.’ So they [took them off and] gave them to me. I threw them into the fire, and out came this statue of a young bull!” **25** Moses/I saw that Aaron had allowed the people to become completely out of control and to do things that would make their enemies think the Israeli people were foolish. **26** So he/I stood at the entrance to the camp and shouted, “Everyone who is loyal to Yahweh should come [closer] to me!” So the descendants of Levi gathered around him/me. **27** Then he/I said to them, “Yahweh, the God of us Israeli people, commands that every one of you should fasten your sword to your side, and then go through the camp from this entrance to the other one, and kill some of your relatives and your companions and your neighbors.” **28** The descendants of Levi did what Moses/I told them to do, and they killed 3,000 men on that day. **29** Moses/I said to the descendants of Levi, “Today you have dedicated yourselves to serving Yahweh by (killing/not sparing) [even] your own sons and brothers, and as a result Yahweh will bless you.” **30** The next day, Moses/I said to the people, “You have committed a terrible sin. But I will now climb up the mountain again to talk with Yahweh. Perhaps I can [persuade him] to forgive you for sinning [like this].” **31** So Moses/I went back up the mountain and said to Yahweh, “I am sorry to admit that these people have committed a terrible sin. They have made for themselves a gold idol and have worshiped it. **32** But now I ask you to please forgive them for having sinned. If you will not forgive them, then erase my name from the book in which you have written [the names of your people].” **33** But Yahweh said to Moses/me, “It is [only] those who have sinned against me whose names I will erase from that book. **34** Now you go back down and lead the [Israeli] people to the place that I told you about. Keep in mind that my angel will go in front of you. But, at the time that I determine, I will punish them for their sin.” **35** [Later] Yahweh caused a plague to strike the people because they had told Aaron to make the gold [statue of a] young bull.

33 Yahweh said to Moses/me, “Leave this place and go with the people whom you led out of Egypt. Go to the land that I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. **2** I will send my angel ahead of you all, and I will expel [from that land] the Canaan, Amor, Heth, Periz, Hiv, and Jebus people-groups. **3** You will go to a land that will be very good for raising livestock and growing crops [IDM]. But I will not go with you myself, because [if I did that], I might get rid of you while you are traveling, because you are very stubborn [IDM] people.” **4** Yahweh said to Moses/me, “Tell the Israeli people, ‘You are very stubborn [IDM]. If I would go with you for even a moment, I would completely (get rid of you/wipe you out). Now take off your jewelry [to show that you are sorry for having sinned]. Then I will decide how I will punish you (OR, if I should punish you).’” So when Moses/I told to the people what God said, they started to mourn, and they all took off their jewelry. **6** After the Israeli people left Sinai Mountain, they did not wear jewelry any more. **7** [When the Israeli people traveled], whenever they stopped and set up their tents, Moses/I had them set up a tent outside the camp, far from the camp. I called it ‘the Sacred Tent where God and I talk together’. Everyone who wanted Yahweh to decide something for them would go out of the camp to the Sacred Tent. **8** Whenever Moses/I went out to the Sacred Tent, all the people would stand at the entrances of their tents and watch him/me until he/I had entered the Sacred Tent. **9** When Moses/I entered the Sacred Tent, the tall cloud that looked like a fire would come down and stay at the entrance of the Sacred Tent, and then Yahweh would talk with Moses/me. **10** When the people saw the tall cloud at the entrance of the Sacred Tent, they would all prostrate themselves on the ground and worship Yahweh. **11** Yahweh would speak to Moses/me directly, like someone speaks to his friend. Then Moses/I would return to the camp. But his/my young helper, Joshua, the son of Nun, stayed in the Sacred Tent. **12** Moses/I said to Yahweh, “It is true that you have told me, ‘Lead the people to the land [that I will show you],’ and you have said that you know me well and that you are pleased with me, but you have not

told me whom you will send with me! 13 So now, if you are truly pleased with me, I ask you, tell me the things that you intend/plan to do, in order that I will know you [better] and continue to please you. Also, do not forget that the [Israeli] people are the people whom you chose to belong to you." 14 Yahweh replied, "I will go with you, and I will give you inner peace." 15 Moses/I replied, "If you do not go with me, do not force us to leave this place. 16 The only way that [other] people will know that you are pleased with me and with your people is if you go with us [RHQ]! (If you go with us, [that will show that] we are different from all the other people on the earth./If you do not go with us, what will show that we are different from all the other people on the earth?)" [RHQ] 17 Yahweh replied to Moses/me, "What you have asked is exactly what I will do, because I know you well and I am pleased with you." 18 Then Moses/I said, "Please let me see your glorious presence!" 19 Yahweh replied, "I will let you see how great and glorious I am, and I will tell you clearly that my name is Yahweh. I will act very kindly and be merciful to all those whom I choose. 20 But you are not allowed to see my face, because anyone who sees my face will (die/not continue to stay alive). 21 [But look]! Here is a place close to me where you can stand on a [large] rock. 22 When my glorious presence comes past you, I will put you in a large crevice/opening in the rock, and I will cover your face with my hand until I have passed by. 23 Then I will take my hand away, and you will see my back, but you will not see my face."

34 Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Cut two slabs of stone that will be like the first slabs, the ones that you broke. Then I will engrave on them the words that were on the first slabs. 2 Get ready tomorrow morning, and come up to the top of Sinai Mountain again to talk with me there. 3 Do not allow anyone to come up with you. I do not want anyone [else] to be anywhere on the mountain. Do not allow any sheep or cattle to graze (at the base of/near) the mountain." 4 So Moses/I cut two slabs of stone that were like the first ones. He/I arose early the next morning. He/I took the slabs and carried them in his/my hands up to the top of Sinai Mountain, as Yahweh had commanded. 5 Then Yahweh descended in the [tall] cloud and stood with Moses/me there. He proclaimed that it was he, Yahweh, [who was going to speak to Moses/me]. 6 Then Yahweh passed in front of him/me and proclaimed, "I am Yahweh God. I always act mercifully and kindly [toward people]. I do not get angry quickly. I [truly] love [people] and I do what I promise to do for them, without changing. 7 I love people for thousands of generations. I forgive people for all kinds of sins [TRI]. But I will certainly punish [LIT] those who are guilty. I will punish not only them, but I will punish (their descendants, down to the third and fourth generation/their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren)." 8 Moses/I quickly prostrated himself/myself on the ground and worshiped [Yahweh]. 9 He/I said, "Yahweh, if you are now pleased with me, I ask that you go with us. These people are very stubborn [IDM], but forgive us for all our sins [DOU], and accept us to be people who belong to you [forever]." 10 Yahweh replied, "Note this: I am going to make a solemn agreement [with the Israeli people]. As they are watching, I will perform great miracles. They will be miracles that no one has ever done on the earth in any nation. All the people who are near you will see the great things that I, Yahweh, will do. I will do awesome things for you [all]. 11 [Each Israeli] person must obey what I am commanding you this day. Do not forget that [if you obey me], I will expel the Amor, Canaan, Heth, Periz, Hiv, and Jebus people-groups [from the land]. But be careful that you do not make any [peace] agreements with any of the people who live in the land into which you are going, because if you do that, [you will begin to do the evil things that they do]. It will be [like] falling into a trap. 13 You must tear down their altars, destroy their sacred pillars, and cut down [the poles that they use to worship their female goddess] Asherah. 14 You must worship only me, [and] not worship any other god, because I, Yahweh, cannot endure any rivals. 15 Do not make peace agreements with [any group] that lives in that land. When they worship their gods and offer sacrifices to their gods, and they invite you to join them, do not join them. If [you join them], you will eat the food that they sacrifice to their gods, and [you will not be faithful to me. You will be like people who] commit adultery, [who are not being faithful to their spouses] [MET]. 16 If you take some of their women to be wives for your sons, and these women worship their own gods, they will persuade your sons also to worship their gods. 17 Do not pour melted metal into molds to make statues for you to worship. 18 [Each year], during the month [of/named] Abib, celebrate the Festival of Eating Bread Made Without Yeast. [During that festival], for seven days you must not eat bread made with yeast, as I commanded you, because it was in that month that you left Egypt. 19 Your firstborn sons and the firstborn [male] animals of your cattle and sheep [and goats] belong to me. 20 The firstborn of your [male] donkeys [also belong to me]. But you may buy them back by [offering to me] lambs [in their place]. If you do not do that, you must [kill these animals by] breaking their necks. You must also buy back your firstborn sons. You must bring an offering to me [LIT] each time you come to [worship] me. 21 [Each week] you may work for six days, but on the seventh day you must rest.

[Even] during the times when you plow [the ground] and harvest [your crops], you must rest [on the seventh day]. **22** [Each year] celebrate the Harvest Festival, when you begin to harvest the first crop of wheat, and also celebrate the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters, when you finish harvesting [the grain and fruit]. **23** Three times each year all the men must come to worship me, Yahweh, the God of the Israeli people. **24** I will expel the people-groups that live in the land [where you will be], and I will cause your territory to become very large. As a result, no group will try to conquer your country if you come to worship me each year during those three festivals. **25** When you sacrifice an animal [MTY] to me, do not offer with it bread that is made with yeast. And during the Passover Festival, when you sacrifice lambs, do not keep any of the meat until the next morning. **26** I am Yahweh God. You must bring to my Sacred Tent the first part of the grain that you harvest each year. When you kill a young animal/kid [either a lamb or a calf], do not [prepare to eat it by] boiling it in its mother's milk." **27** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, "Write down the words that I have told you. By giving you these commands, I have made a solemn agreement with you and with the [other] Israeli people." **28** Moses/I was there [on the top of the mountain] with Yahweh for 40 days and nights. During that time he/I did not eat or drink anything [SYN]. He/I engraved on the stone slabs the words of the Ten Commandments, [which were part of Yahweh's] solemn agreement. **29** When Moses/I came back down the mountain, carrying in his/my hand the two stone slabs on which were written the Ten Commandments, his/my face was shining because he/I had been talking with Yahweh, but he/I did not know that his/my face was shining. **30** When Aaron and the [other] Israeli people saw Moses/me, they were amazed/surprised that his/my face was shining. So they were afraid to come near him/me. **31** But Moses/I called to them. Then Aaron and the other Israeli leaders came to him/me, and he/I talked with them. **32** Afterwards, all the other Israeli people came near, and he/I told them all the laws that Yahweh had given to him/me on Sinai Mountain. **33** When Moses/I finished talking to the people, he/I put a veil over his/my face. **34** But whenever Moses/I entered the Sacred Tent to talk with Yahweh, he/I removed the veil. When he/I came back out, he/I would always tell to the Israeli people everything that Yahweh had commanded him/me [to tell them]. **35** The Israeli people would see that Moses'/my face was [still] shining. Then he/I would put the veil back on his/my face again until the next time that he/I went into [the Sacred Tent] to talk with Yahweh.

35 Moses/I gathered all the Israeli people together and said to them, "This is what Yahweh has commanded you to do: **2** [Each week] you may work for six days, but on the seventh day you must rest. It is a sacred day, dedicated to Yahweh. Anyone who does any work on the seventh day must be executed. **3** Do not [even] light a fire in your homes on days of rest." **4** Moses/I also said to all the Israeli people, "This is [also] what Yahweh has commanded: **5** Make offerings to Yahweh. Everyone who wants to should bring to Yahweh an offering. [These are the things that they may offer]: Gold, silver, bronze, **6** fine white linen, blue or purple or red cloth, [cloth made from] goats' hair, **7** rams' skins that are (tanned/dyed red), fine leather made from goatskins, wood from acacia [trees], **8** oil for the lamps, spices to put in the olive oil for anointing and in the sweet-smelling incense, **9** [valuable] onyx stones or [other] valuable stones to fasten onto the [priest's] sacred apron and put on his sacred chest pouch. **10** "All the skilled workers among you should come and make all the things that Yahweh has commanded: **11** The Sacred Tent and its covering, its fasteners and its frames, its crossbars, its posts, its bases, **12** the sacred chest with its poles and its lid, the curtain that will separate the Holy Place from the Very Holy Place, **13** the table with the poles [for carrying it] and all the things that will be used with the table, the sacred bread that will be offered to God, **14** the lampstand for the lamps with all the things that will be used to take care of them, the oil for the lamps, **15** the altar for [burning] incense, and the poles [for carrying that altar], the oil for anointing and the sweet-smelling incense, the curtain for the entrance of the Sacred Tent, **16** the altar for offering [sacrifices that will be completely] burned and its bronze grating, the poles [for carrying] that altar and all the things that will be used with it, the washbasin and its base, **17** the curtains [to surround] the courtyard and the posts and bases [for the posts from which to hang the curtains], the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard, **18** the pegs and ropes for the Sacred Tent and for the courtyard, **19** and the beautiful clothes that Aaron and his sons are to wear when they do their work in the Holy Place." **20** Then all the Israeli people returned [to their tents]. **21** Everyone who wanted to brought an offering to Yahweh. They brought some of the things that would be used to make the Sacred Tent and all the other items that would be used in the rituals, and the materials to make the sacred clothes [for the priests]. **22** All the men and women who wanted to brought gold ornaments, earrings, rings, necklaces, and many other kinds of things made of gold, and they dedicated them to Yahweh. **23** And many [HYP] people who had blue, purple, or red cloth or fine white linen or cloth made from goats' hair or rams' skins that were (tanned/dyed red) or leather made from goatskins brought some of these things. **24** All those who had silver

or bronze brought them as offerings to Yahweh. All those who had some acacia wood that could be used for any of the work brought it. **25** All the women who were skilled to make cloth brought fine linen thread and blue, purple, or red yarn/thread that they had made/spun. **26** And all the women who wanted to made/spun thread from goats' hair. **27** All the leaders brought valuable onyx stones and other valuable stones to be fastened to Aaron's sacred apron and his sacred chest pouch. **28** They also brought spices [to put in the sweet-smelling incense], and they brought olive oil for the lamps and for the oil for anointing and for putting in the sweet-smelling incense. **29** All the Israeli men and women who wanted to brought these things to offer them to Yahweh, for doing the work that he had commanded Moses/me to do. **30** Moses/I said to the Israeli people, "Listen carefully. Yahweh has chosen Bezalel, the son of Uri and grandson of Hur, from the tribe of Judah. **31** Yahweh has enabled his Spirit to completely control Bezalel and has given him ability and enabled him to know how to do very skilled work. **32** He can engrave skillful designs in gold, silver, and bronze. **33** He can cut (jewels/valuable stones) and enclose them [in tiny gold frames]. He can carve things from wood and do other skilled work. **34** Yahweh has also given to him and to Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, from the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach their skills to others. **35** He has given to them the ability to do all kinds of work that is done by craftsmen—those who create artistic things, those who make fine white linen, those who embroider designs using blue or purple or red yarn/thread, and those who make other cloth. They are able to do many [HYP] kinds of skillful work.

36 "Bezalel and Oholiab, and all the other men to whom Yahweh has given ability and enabled them to understand how to do all the work to make the Sacred Tent, must make everything just as Yahweh has commanded." **2** So Moses/I summoned Bezalel and Oholiab and all the other skilled men to whom Yahweh had given special ability and who wanted to do some of the work. **3** Moses/I gave them all the things that the people had brought as offerings to Yahweh for making the Sacred Tent. But the people continued bringing more things every morning. **4** As a result, the skilled men who were doing various things to make the Sacred Tent came to Moses/me **5** and said, "The people are bringing more than we need to do the work that Yahweh has commanded us!" **6** So Moses/I gave the skilled men this message that was proclaimed throughout the camp: "No one should bring anything more as an offering to make the Sacred Tent!" When the people [heard that], they did not bring anything more. **7** What they had already brought was enough to do all the work. [In fact], it was more than was needed! **8** All the most skilled men among the workmen made the Sacred Tent. They made it from ten strips of fine linen, and carefully embroidered it using blue, purple, and red yarn/thread to make figures that resembled the winged creatures. **9** Each strip was (14 yards/twelve meters) long and (2 yards/1.8 meters) wide. **10** They sewed five strips together to make one set, and they sewed the other five strips together to make the other set. **11** For each set, they made loops of blue [cloth] and fastened them on the outer edge of the strip, at the end of each set. **12** They put 50 loops on the edge of the first set, and 50 loops on the edge of the second set. **13** They made 50 gold clasps/fasteners, to fasten both of the sets together. In that way, the inside of the Sacred Tent was [as though it was] one piece. **14** They made a cover for the Sacred Tent from eleven pieces of cloth made from goats' hair. **15** Each piece of cloth was (15 yards/13.5 meters) long and (2 yards/1.8 meters) wide. **16** They sewed five of these pieces of cloth together to make one set, and they sewed the other six pieces of cloth together to make another set. **17** They made 100 loops [of blue cloth]. They fastened 50 of them to the outer edge of the one set and they fastened 50 to the outer edge of the other set. **18** They made 50 bronze clasps/fasteners and joined the two sets together with them. In that way it formed one cover. **19** They made two more covers for the Sacred Tent. They made one from rams' skins that had been (tanned/dyed red), and they made the top cover from goatskin leather. **20** They made frames from acacia wood and set them up [to support the covers for the Sacred Tent]. **21** Each frame was (15 feet/4.5 meters) long and (27 in./66 cm.) wide. **22** They made two projections at the bottom of each frame. These were for fastening the frames to the bases underneath them. Each frame had these projections. **23** The skilled workmen made twenty frames for the south side of the Sacred Tent. **24** They made 40 silver bases to go underneath them. Two bases went under each frame. The projections on each frame fit into these bases. **25** [Similarly], they made 20 frames for the north side of the Sacred Tent. **26** They made 40 silver bases for them also, with two bases for under each frame. **27** For the rear of the Sacred Tent, on the west side, they made six frames. **28** They also made two extra frames, one for each corner of the rear of the Sacred Tent, [to provide extra support]. **29** The two corner frames were joined from the bottom to the top (OR, joined at both the bottom and the top). At the top of each of the two corner frames they fastened a gold ring for holding the crossbar. **30** In that way, [for the rear of the Sacred Tent] there were eight frames, and there were 16 bases, two bases under each frame. **31** The workmen made 15 crossbars from acacia wood. **32** Five of

them were for the frames on the north side of the Sacred Tent, five for the south side, and five for the frames at the rear of the Sacred Tent, the west side. **33** The crossbars on the north, south, and west sides of the Sacred Tent were fastened to the middle of the frames. The two long crossbars extended from one end of the Sacred Tent to the other, and the crossbar on the west side extended from one side of the Sacred Tent to the other side. **34** The workmen covered the frames with gold and fastened gold rings to the poles. The crossbars [were put] into the rings. The crossbars were [also] covered with gold. **35** They made a curtain from fine white linen. Skilled craftsmen embroidered it with blue, purple, and red yarn/thread, making designs [that resembled] the winged creatures. **36** They suspended/hung the curtain from four posts that were made from acacia [wood] and covered with gold. They set [each] post in a silver base. **37** They made a curtain to [cover] the entrance of the Sacred Tent. They made it from fine linen, and a skilled weaver embroidered it with blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. **38** [To support this curtain], they also made five posts from acacia wood and fastened gold clasps/fasteners to them. They completely covered the posts with gold. They also made a bronze base for each of those posts.

37 Then Bezalel made the [sacred] chest from acacia wood. It was (45 in./110 cm.) long, (27 in./66 cm.) wide, and (27 in./66 cm.) high. **2** He covered it with pure gold inside and outside the chest, and he made a gold border around the top of it. **3** He made/cast four rings from gold [and fastened them] to the legs of the chest. He put two rings on each side of the chest. **4** He made [two] poles from acacia wood, and covered them with gold. **5** He put the poles into the rings on the sides of the chest, in order that the chest could be carried [by means of the poles]. **6** He made a lid for the chest. That was [the place where Yahweh would] forgive people's sins. It [also] was (45 in./110 cm.) long and (27 in./66 cm.) wide. **7** He made two winged creatures from hammered gold. **8** One of these was put at each end of the chest. The gold [with which they were made] was joined to the gold from which the lid [was made]. **9** [He placed] the winged creatures facing each other so that their wings touched each other and spread out over the lid. **10** Bezalel made a table from acacia wood. It was (36 in./88 cm.) long, (18 in./44 cm.) wide, and (27 in./66 cm.) high. **11** He covered it with pure gold, and he put a gold border around it. **12** He made a rim all around it, (3 in./7 cm.) wide. He put a gold border around the rim. **13** He made/cast four rings from gold and fastened the rings to the four corners of the table, one ring close to each leg [of the table]. **14** The rings were fastened to the table near the rim. **15** He made two poles from acacia wood and covered them with gold. These poles for carrying the table were then inserted into the rings. **16** He also made from pure gold all the things to be put on the table. He made the plates, the cups, and the jars and bowls to be used [when the priests] poured out wine [as an offering to Yahweh]. **17** [He] made the lampstand from pure gold. Its base and its shaft were hammered from [one large lump of] gold. [The branches of the lampstand], the cups for holding the oil, the flower buds and the petals [that decorated the branches of the lamp, the base, and the shaft were all hammered from] one [big] lump of gold. **18** There were six branches on the lampstand, three on each side [of the shaft]. **19** Each of the branches had on it three [gold decorations that looked like] almond blossoms. These decorations also had flower buds and [flower] petals. **20** On the [shaft of the] lampstand there were four [gold decorations that also looked like] almond blossoms, each one with flower buds and [flower] petals. **21** On each side, beneath and extending from each of the branches, there was one [flower] bud. **22** All these [flower] buds and branches, along with the shaft, were hammered from one large lump of pure gold. **23** Bezalel also made seven small cups [for holding oil. He put one cup on top of the shaft and he put the others on top of the branches]. He made from pure gold the tongs [for removing the burned wicks] and the trays [in which to put the burned wicks]. **24** He used (75 pounds/35 kg.) of pure gold to make the lampstand and all the things that were used to take care of it. **25** From acacia wood, Bezalel made the altar [for burning] incense. It was square, (18 in./45 cm.) on each side. It was (3 ft./90 cm.) high. He made [a projection that looked like] a horn on each of the top corners. The projections were carved from the same block of wood that the altar was made of. **26** He covered the top and the four sides, including the projections, with pure gold. He put a gold border around the altar, [near the top]. **27** He made two gold rings for carrying the altar. Then he attached them to the altar below the border, one on each side of the altar. The poles by means of which the altar was to be carried were to be inserted into those rings. **28** He made those [two] poles from acacia wood and covered them with gold. **29** He also made the sacred oil for anointing and the pure sweet-smelling incense. He mixed the incense together as a skilled perfumer would.

38 [Several men helped] Bezalel to make the altar for burning sacrifices. They made it from acacia wood. It was square, (7-1/2 feet/2.2 meters) on each side, and it was (4-1/2 feet/1.3 meters) high. **2** They made [a projection that looked like] a horn on each of the top corners. The projections were carved from the same block of wood that

the altar [was made of]. They covered the whole altar with bronze. **3** They made the pans in which to put the greasy ashes [from the animal sacrifices]. They also made the shovels for cleaning out the ashes. They made the basins and forks for turning the meat as it cooked, and buckets for carrying hot coals/ashes. All of those things were made from bronze. **4** They also made a bronze grating to hold the wood and burning coals. They put the grating under the rim that went around the altar. [They] made it so that it was [inside the altar], halfway down. **5** They made bronze rings in which to put the poles [for carrying the altar], and fastened one of them to each of the corners of the altar. **6** They made the poles from acacia wood and covered them with bronze. **7** They put the poles through the rings on each side of the altar. The poles were for carrying the altar. **8** The altar was [hollow] like an empty box. It was made from boards [of acacia wood]. They made/cast the washbasin and its base from bronze. The bronze was from the mirrors that belonged to the women who worked at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. **9** [Around the Sacred Tent] Bezalel and his helpers made a courtyard. To form the courtyard, they made curtains of fine white linen. On the south side, the curtain was (150 feet/46 meters) long. **10** [To hang the curtain], they made 20 bronze posts and 20 bronze bases, [one for under each post]. [To fasten the curtains to] the posts, they made silver hooks, and [they made metal] rods [covered with] silver. **11** They made the same kind of curtains, posts, bases, and hooks for the north side of the courtyard. **12** On the west side [of the courtyard], they made a curtain (75 feet/23 meters) long. They also made ten posts on which to hang the curtains, and ten bases, with silver hooks and [metal] rods [covered with] silver. **13** On the east side, [where the entrance is], the courtyard was (75 feet/23 meters) wide. **14** On each side of the entrance, they made a curtain (22-1/2 feet/6.6 meters) wide. On each side they [were hung from] three posts, and one base was under each post. **16** All the curtains around the courtyard were made from fine white linen. **17** All the posts around the courtyard were made of bronze, but the tops were covered with silver. The posts were connected with [metal] rods [covered with] silver. The clasps/fasteners and hooks were made of silver. **18** For the entrance of the courtyard, they made a curtain from fine white linen, and a skilled weaver embroidered it with blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. The curtain was (30 feet/9 meters) long and (7-1/2 feet/2.3 meters) high, just like the other curtains around the courtyard. **19** All the curtains were made of fine white linen. They were supported by four posts, and [under each post] was a base made of bronze. All the posts around the courtyard were connected with [metal] rods [covered with] silver. The clasps/fasteners were made of silver, and the tops of the posts were covered with silver. **20** All the tent pegs to support the Sacred Tent and the curtains around the courtyard were made of bronze. **21** Here is a list of the amounts of metal used to make the Sacred Tent. Moses/I told [some men from] the tribe of Levi to [count all the materials used and] write down the amounts. Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest, supervised those men. **22** Bezalel the son of Uri and grandson of Hur made all the things that Yahweh commanded Moses/me to be made. **23** Bezalel's helper was Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. Oholiab was a skilled engraver who made artistic things. He made fine white linen, and he embroidered designs using blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. He also made other cloth. **24** All the gold that was used to make the Sacred Tent weighed (2,195 pounds/1,000 kg.). They used the official standard when they weighed the gold. **25** All the silver that the people contributed when the leaders (took the census/counted the men) weighed (7,500 pounds/3,400 kg.). They also used the official standard when they weighed the silver. **26** All the men who were at least 20 years old were counted, and they each paid the required amount. That was a total of 603,550 men. **27** They used (75 pounds/34 kg.) of silver for making/casting each of the 100 bases to [put under the posts to support] the curtains of the Sacred Tent. **28** Bezalel [and his helpers] used the (50 pounds/30 kg.) of silver that was not used for the bases to make the rods and the hooks for the posts, and to cover the tops of the posts. **29** The bronze that the people contributed weighed (5,310 pounds/2,425 kg.). **30** With the bronze, Bezalel and his helpers made the bases for under the posts at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. They also made the altar for burning sacrifices, the grating for it and the tools used with it, **31** the bases for the posts [that supported the curtains] that surrounded the courtyard and the bases for the entrance to the courtyard, and the pegs for the Sacred Tent and for [the curtains around] the courtyard.

39 Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other skilled workmen made the beautiful clothes for Aaron to wear while he did his work as a priest in the Holy Place. They made them from blue, purple, and red cloth, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **2** They made the sacred apron from fine white linen and from blue, purple, and red cloth. **3** They hammered some thin sheets of gold and cut them into thin strips which they embroidered into the fine linen and into the blue, purple, and red cloth. **4** The apron had two shoulder straps, to join the front part to the back part at the shoulders. **5** A carefully-woven sash, which was made from the same materials as the sacred apron, was [sewn] onto the sacred apron. This

was made exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **6** They cut two valuable onyx stones and enclosed them in a tiny gold frame, and a skilled gem-cutter engraved on the stones the names of the twelve sons of Jacob. **7** They fastened the stones to the shoulder straps of the sacred apron, to represent the twelve Israeli tribes, exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **8** They made the sacred chest pouch. They made it of the same materials as the sacred apron and embroidered it in the same way. **9** It was square, and the material was folded double, so that it was (9 in./22 cm.) long and (9 in./22 cm.) wide. **10** They fastened four rows of valuable stones onto the pouch. In the first row, they put a [red] ruby, a [yellow] topaz, and a [red] garnet. **11** In the second row, they put a [green] emerald, a [blue] sapphire, and a [clear/white] diamond. **12** In the third row they put a [red] jacinth, a [white] agate, and a [purple] amethyst. **13** In the fourth row, they put a [yellow] beryl, a [red] carnelian, and a [green] jasper. They set each of the stones in tiny gold frames. **14** On each of the twelve stones they engraved the name of one of the sons of Jacob, to represent one of the twelve Israeli tribes. **15** They made two [chains] from pure gold and braided them like cords, to [attach] the sacred pouch [to the sacred apron]. **16** They made two gold rings, and they attached them to the upper corners of the sacred pouch. **17** They fastened one end of each cord to one of the rings. **18** They fastened the other end of each cord to the two (settings/tiny frames) [that enclosed the stones]. Then they attached the sacred pouch to the shoulder straps of the sacred apron. **19** Then they made two more gold rings and attached them to the lower corners of the sacred pouch, on the inside edges, next to the sacred apron. **20** They made two more gold rings and attached them to the lower part of the front of the shoulder straps, near to where [the shoulder straps] were joined [to the sacred apron], just above the carefully-woven sash/waistband. **21** They tied the rings on the sacred pouch to the rings on the sacred apron with a blue cord, so that the sacred pouch was above the sash/waistband and would not come loose from the sacred apron. **22** They made the robe that is to be worn underneath the priest's sacred apron, using only blue [cloth]. **23** It had an opening through which [the priest] would put his head. They sewed a border around this opening, to prevent the material from tearing. **24** At the lower edge on the robe, they fastened [decorations that resembled] pomegranate fruit. The decorations were [woven from] blue, purple, and red yarn/thread. **25** Between each of these decorations, they fastened a tiny bell made from pure gold, so there was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, alternating all around the hem of the robe **26** for [Aaron to wear while] he did his work as a priest. They made all these things exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **27** They wove long-sleeved tunics/gowns from fine white linen, for Aaron and his sons. **28** They also made a turban of fine linen [for Aaron to wear around his head]. They made the caps and the undershorts [for Aaron's sons] from fine linen. **29** They made the embroidered sash/waistband [for Aaron] from fine linen and from blue, purple, and red cloth, and they embroidered designs on it using blue, purple, and red yarn/thread, exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **30** They also made the tiny ornament of pure gold and had a skilled workman engrave on it the words, 'Dedicated to Yahweh'. **31** They fastened this to the front of the turban by a blue cord, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **32** Finally they finished all the work to make the Sacred Tent. They brought to Moses/me all the things that they had made. They had made them exactly as Yahweh had commanded me. **33** They brought to him/me the Sacred Tent and all the things that were used with it: the hooks, the frames, the crossbars, the posts and their bases, **34** the coverings for the Sacred Tent that were made of tanned/dyed rams' skins and goatskins, the curtains, **35** the sacred chest that contained the stone slabs [on which the commandments were written], the poles, the lid for the chest, **36** the table with all the things that were used with it, the sacred bread [that was offered] to God, **37** the lampstand made of pure gold and all its lamps and all the things that were to be used to take care of it, the oil for the lamps, **38** the golden altar [for burning incense], the oil for anointing, the sweet-smelling incense, the curtain for the entrance to the Sacred Tent, **39** the bronze altar [for burning sacrifices] and its bronze grating, the poles [for carrying] it, and all the other things that were used with it, the washbasin and its base, **40** the curtains [that surrounded] the courtyard, the posts and bases that supported them, the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard and its ropes, the tent pegs, and all the other things that would be used in the Sacred Tent, **41** the beautiful sacred clothes for Aaron to wear when he did his work in the Holy Place, and the special clothes for his sons to wear as they did their work as priests. **42** The Israeli people had done all this work exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **43** Then Moses/I saw all the work that they had done. Truly, they had done everything exactly as Yahweh had commanded [that it should be done]. Then Moses/I [asked God to] bless them.

40 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, **2** "On the first day of the first month next year, [tell the people to] set up the Sacred Tent. **3** Put inside it the sacred chest [that contains the stone slabs on which are engraved] the Ten Commandments, and hang the curtain in front of it. **4** Bring

the table into the Sacred Tent, and place on it all the things that are to be used with it. Bring in the lampstand and fasten the lamps to it. **5** Put the gold altar for [burning] incense in front of the sacred chest, and set up the curtain at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. **6** Put the altar for burning sacrifices in front of the Sacred Tent. **7** Put the washbasin between the Sacred Tent and the altar, and fill it with water. **8** Hang the curtains that will surround the courtyard, and hang the curtain at its entrance. **9** Then take the oil for anointing, and anoint the Sacred Tent and everything that is in it, to (set it apart/dedicate it) to me. Then it will be holy/sacred. **10** Also anoint the altar for offering sacrifices that will be completely burned, and all the things that will be used with it, and set it apart. Then it also will be holy/sacred. **11** Also anoint the washbasin and its base, to set it apart. **12** Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Sacred Tent, and wash them [ritually] with water. **13** Then put on Aaron his sacred clothes to (set him apart/dedicate him), in order that he can serve me as a priest. **14** Also bring his sons there. Put their sacred tunics/gowns on them **15** and anoint them just as you anointed their father, in order that they also may serve me by working as priests. By anointing them [and their descendants], you will cause them and their descendants to be priests throughout all coming generations." **16** Moses/I did all these things exactly as Yahweh had commanded him/me. **17** On the first day of the first month of the next year (OR, second year [after they/we left Egypt]), the people set up the Sacred Tent. **18** Following Moses'/my instructions, they set up the Sacred Tent and its bases, set up the frames, attached the crossbars, and put up the posts [for the curtains]. **19** Then they spread out the coverings over the Sacred Tent, exactly as Yahweh had commanded. **20** Then he/I took the two stone slabs [on which the commandments were written] and put them in the sacred chest. He/I put the carrying poles [in the rings] on the chest and put the lid on top of the chest. **21** Then he/I took the chest into [the Very Holy Place inside] the Sacred Tent and hung the curtain. In that way, he/I prevented the people who were outside from seeing the chest. He/I did all this exactly as Yahweh had commanded him/me. **22** He/I set the table inside the Sacred Tent, on the north side, outside the curtain. **23** He/I placed on the table the bread that was offered to Yahweh, exactly as Yahweh had commanded. **24** He/I set the lampstand inside the Sacred Tent, on the south side, opposite the table. **25** Then he/I fastened the lamps to the lampstand in Yahweh's presence, exactly as Yahweh had commanded. **26** He/I set the golden altar for burning incense inside the Sacred Tent, in front of the curtain [that separated the Holy Place from the Very Holy Place], **27** and he/I burned some sweet-smelling incense on it, exactly as Yahweh had commanded him/me. **28** He/I hung the curtain at the entrance to the Sacred Tent. **29** At the entrance to the Sacred Tent, he/I set the altar for offering sacrifices that were to be burned completely. Then he/I offered on it the meat that was to be burned completely and the grain offering, exactly as Yahweh had commanded him/me. **30** He/I set the washbasin between the Sacred Tent and the [bronze] altar, and he/I filled the washbasin with water. **31** Every time Moses/I and Aaron and his sons went into the Sacred Tent or went to the altar, they/we washed their/our hands and feet [ritually], exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **33** Following Moses'/my instructions, they hung the curtains that surrounded the courtyard and the altar, and they hung the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. So Moses/I finished that work. **34** Then the [tall bright] cloud covered the Sacred Tent, and Yahweh's (glory/brilliant light) filled the Sacred Tent. **35** Because that light was very bright, Moses/I was not able to enter the Sacred Tent. **36** From that day, whenever the Israeli people wanted to move to another place, they went only when the bright cloud rose from above the Sacred Tent. **37** If the cloud did not rise, they stayed where they were and did not go on until the cloud rose. **38** Wherever they traveled, the bright cloud that [indicated] Yahweh's [presence] was above the Sacred Tent during the day, and a [bright] fire was inside the cloud at night, with the result that all the Israeli people [MTY] could see it [at any time].

Leviticus

1 While Moses/I was [standing near the entrance] to the Sacred Tent, Yahweh called to him/me from inside the tent. He said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell this to the Israeli people: 'When any of you brings an offering to Yahweh, bring one of your sheep or goats or cattle. **3** 'If what you are offering is a bull that will be completely burned [on the altar], it must not have any defects. You must take it to the entrance to the Sacred Tent, in order that it will be acceptable to Yahweh. **4** You must lay your hands on the head of the bull. When you do that, Yahweh will accept [its death in your place] to forgive/pardon you for the sins that you have committed. **5** You must slaughter the bull in front of Yahweh. Then Aaron's sons, who are priests, will bring the blood and sprinkle it against all sides of the altar near the entrance to the Sacred Tent. **6** You must remove the skin of the animal and cut the animal into pieces. You must wash the inner parts and the legs of the bull. **7** Then Aaron's sons will put wood on the altar and light a fire. **8** Then they will arrange the pieces, including the head and the fat, on the burning wood. **9** Then one of the priests will completely burn all of it on the altar. And the aroma will be pleasing to Yahweh. **10** 'If you are offering a sheep or a goat, it must be a male without any defect. **11** You must slaughter it in front of Yahweh, on the north side of the altar, [and drain all the blood into a bowl]. Then Aaron's sons will sprinkle the blood against all sides of the altar. **12** You must cut the animal into pieces. You must wash the inner parts and the legs of the animal. Then the priests will arrange the pieces, including the head and the fat, on the burning wood. **13** Then one of the priests will take all of it and completely burn all of it on the altar. And the aroma as it burns will be pleasing to Yahweh. **14** 'If what you are offering to Yahweh is a bird, you must offer a dove or a young pigeon. **15** The priest will take it to the altar and wring/twist off its head. Then he will burn the head on the altar. He will drain out the bird's blood onto the side of the altar. **16** Then he will remove the bird's (craw/food-grinding pouch) and what is inside it, and throw it on the east side of the altar, where the ashes are thrown. **17** Then he will grasp the bird's wings and partially tear the bird open. Then he will burn it completely in the fire on the altar. And the aroma will be pleasing to Yahweh.'

2 'If you bring to Yahweh an offering of grain, it must consist of finely-ground flour. You must pour olive oil on it, and put some incense on it, **2** and take it to one of the priests. The priest will take a handful of the flour and the oil with the incense and burn it on the altar. That part will symbolize [that all of the offering truly belongs to Yahweh]. And the aroma will be pleasing to Yahweh. **3** The part of that offering that is not burned will belong to Aaron and his sons. It is a very holy part of the offerings that are given to Yahweh by [burning them] in a fire. **4** 'If you bring an offering that is made from grain, something that is baked in an oven, it must be made from finely-ground flour. You may bring loaves made from flour mixed with olive oil but without yeast, or you may bring wafers with olive oil smeared on them, but also made without yeast. **5** If your offering is cooked (on a griddle/in a shallow pan), it must be made from finely-ground flour mixed with olive oil and without yeast. **6** You must crumble it and pour olive oil on it. That will be your offering made from grain. **7** If your offering that is made from grain is cooked in a pan, it must be made of finely-ground flour mixed with olive oil. **8** Bring to Yahweh your grain offering. Give it to the priest, and he will take it to the altar. **9** He will take a part of it that will symbolize that all the offering belongs to Yahweh. He will burn that part on the altar, and the aroma as it burns will be pleasing to Yahweh. **10** The part that is not burned will belong to Aaron and his sons. It is a very holy part of the offerings given to Yahweh by [burning them] in a fire. **11** 'Every offering that is made from grain and that you bring to Yahweh must be made without yeast, because you must not put any yeast or honey in any offering to Yahweh that is burned [on the altar]. **12** You may bring to Yahweh an offering of the first part of your harvest, but that is not to be burned on the altar to produce an aroma that will be pleasing to Yahweh. **13** Put salt on all your offerings that are made from grain. The salt represents the agreement that your God [made with] you, so be sure that you do not forget to put salt on those offerings. **14** 'If you bring to Yahweh an offering of the first part of your harvest of grain, offer some new grain that has been crushed and roasted in a fire. **15** Put olive oil and incense on it, and that will be your offering made from grain. **16** The priest will take a part of the flour and oil along with the incense. [That will symbolize that all the offering truly belongs to Yahweh]. He will burn that part on the altar, to be an offering given to Yahweh by [burning it] in a fire.'"

3 ["Also tell the people], 'When the offering that you bring to Yahweh is to maintain good fellowship [with him], you may bring a bull or a cow from your herd [of cattle], but what you present to Yahweh must be an animal that has no defects. **2** You must bring the animal to the entrance to the Sacred Tent. You must lay your hands on its head. Then you must slaughter it [and drain some of its blood in a bowl]. Then one of Aaron's sons, one of the priests, will sprinkle the blood against all sides of the altar. **3** From that offering, you must offer to Yahweh, as a sacrifice that will be burned in the fire, all the fat that covers the inner parts of the

animal, or which is attached to them— 4 the kidneys and the fat that is attached to them near the lower back muscle, and the fat that covers the liver. 5 Then one of the priests will burn those things on the altar, along with the other parts of the animal that will be completely burned to be an offering [to Yahweh]. And the aroma while it burns will be pleasing to Yahweh. 6 If that offering to maintain good fellowship with Yahweh is a sheep or a goat, it must also be an animal that has no defects. 7 If you offer a lamb, you must present it to Yahweh [at the entrance to the Sacred Tent]. You must lay your hands on the lamb's head and then slaughter it. ['You must drain some of its blood in a bowl]. 8 Then one of the priests will sprinkle that blood against all sides of the altar. 9 You must dedicate these things to be a sacrifice to Yahweh that is burned: Its fat, the fat tail that you must cut off close to the backbone, and all the fat that covers the inner parts of the lamb or which is attached to them— 10 the kidneys with the fat that is on them near the lower back muscle, and the fat that covers the liver. 11 One of the priests will burn those things on the altar to be an offering to Yahweh; [it will be as though] they will be a special food [given to Yahweh]. 12 'If your offering is a goat, you must take/present it to Yahweh. 13 You must lay your hands on its head. Then you must slaughter it in front of the Sacred Tent. Then one of Aaron's sons will sprinkle the blood against all sides of the altar. 14 From that offering you must dedicate these things to be a sacrifice to Yahweh that is burned: All the fat that covers the inner parts of the animal or which is attached to them, 15 the kidneys with the fat that is on them near the lower back muscle, and the fat that covers the liver. 16 The priest will burn those things on the altar to be an offering to Yahweh; [it will be as though] they will be a special food [given to Yahweh]. And the aroma while it burns will be pleasing to Yahweh. All the fat [of the animals that are sacrificed] belongs to Yahweh. 17 'This is a command that must be obeyed by you and your descendants forever, wherever you live: You must not eat the fat or the blood [of any animal].'"

4 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 2 "Say this to the Israeli people: This is what must be done if someone sins without intending to sin, doing something that is forbidden in any of Yahweh's commands. 3 'If the Supreme [MTY] Priest sins, and that causes all the people to be guilty, he must bring to Yahweh a young bull that has no defects. That will be an offering for the sin that he has committed. 4 He must bring the bull to the entrance to the Sacred Tent. He must lay his hands on its head. Then he must slaughter it in front of Yahweh [and drain some of the blood into a bowl]. 5 Then the Supreme Priest must take some of that blood into the Sacred Tent. 6 He must dip [one of] his fingers into the blood and sprinkle it seven times in the presence of Yahweh, in front of the curtain [that separates the Holy Place from the Very Holy Place]. 7 Then he must put some of the blood on the projections at the corners of the altar where fragrant incense is burned in the Sacred Tent in the presence of Yahweh. The remaining part of the bull's blood [that is still in the bowl], he must pour out at the base of the altar, where sacrifices are burned, at the entrance to the Sacred Tent. 8 From that offering the Supreme Priest must separate these things from the bull that is to be burned: The fat that covers the inner parts of the bull or which is attached to them— 9 the kidneys and the fat that is attached to them near the lower back muscle, and the fat that covers the liver. 10 Then the Supreme Priest must completely burn those things on the altar. That will be just like when the fat is removed from an animal that is sacrificed to maintain good fellowship [with Yahweh]. 11 But all the other parts of the animal—its skin/hide and all its other meat, its head and its legs, its inner parts and the intestines, 12 he must take outside the camp and throw them in a place that is acceptable to Yahweh, where the ashes are thrown, and he must burn them in a fire on the pile of ashes. 13 'If all the Israeli people sin without intending to sin, doing something that is forbidden in any of Yahweh's commands, they will be guilty, even if they do not realize that they have sinned. 14 When they realize that they have committed a sin, together they must bring a young bull to be an offering for their sin, to the front of the Sacred Tent. 15 The elders must lay their hands on the bull's head in the presence of Yahweh and slaughter it [and catch some of the blood in a bowl]. 16 Then the Supreme [MTY] Priest must take some of that blood into the Sacred Tent. 17 'He must dip [one of] his fingers into the blood and sprinkle it seven times in the presence of Yahweh, in front of the curtain [that separates the Holy Place from the Very Holy Place]. 18 Then he must put some of the blood on the projections at the corners of the altar that is in the presence of Yahweh in the Sacred Tent. The remaining part of the bull's blood, he must pour out at the base of the altar where sacrifices are burned, at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. 19 He must remove all the animal's fat and burn it on the altar. 20 He must do with this bull the same things that he did with the bull that was an offering for his own sins, and they will be forgiven {Yahweh will forgive them}. 21 Then the priest must take [the other parts of] the bull outside the camp and burn them, like he does when he himself has sinned. That will be the offering for the sin that all the people have committed, and they will be forgiven. 22 'When one of the leaders sins without intending to sin, doing something that is forbidden in any of the commands of Yahweh his God, he

will be guilty. 23 When he realizes that he has committed a sin, he must bring as his offering a male goat that has no defects. 24 He must lay his hands on the goat's head in the presence of Yahweh and slaughter it at the place where they slaughter {are slaughtered} the animals that will be completely burned [on the altar]. That will be an offering for his sin. 25 Then the priest must put some of the animal's blood [into a bowl] and dip [one of] his fingers in it and put some of the blood on the corners of the projections of the altar. Then he must pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. 26 Then he must burn all the fat on the altar, as was done with the fat of the offering to maintain good fellowship [with Yahweh]. As a result of the priest's doing that, the leader will no longer be guilty for his sin and he will be forgiven. 27 'If one of the Israeli people who is not a priest sins without intending to sin, and does something that is forbidden in any of the commands of Yahweh his God, he will be guilty. 28 When he realizes that he has committed a sin, he must bring as his offering a female goat that has no defects. 29 He must lay his hands on the goat's head and slaughter it at the place where they slaughter the animals that will be completely burned [on the altar, and catch some of the blood in a bowl]. 30 Then the priest must dip [one of] his fingers in the blood, and put some of it on the projections at the corners of the altar. Then he must pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. 31 Then he must remove all the goat's fat, and burn all the fat on the altar, like was done with the fat of the offering to maintain fellowship [with Yahweh]. And the aroma while it burns will be pleasing to Yahweh. As a result of the priest doing that, the person will no longer be guilty for his sin, and he will be forgiven. 32 'If that person brings a lamb to be his offering for sin, he must bring a female lamb that has no defects. 33 He must lay his hands on the lamb's head and slaughter it at the place where they slaughter the animals that will be completely burned [on the altar, and catch some of the blood in a bowl]. 34 Then the priest must dip [one of] his fingers in the blood and put some of it on the projections at the corners of the altar. Then he must pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. 35 Then he must remove all the lamb's fat, and burn all the fat on the altar, like was done with the fat of the offering to maintain fellowship [with Yahweh]. He must burn it on top of the other offerings to Yahweh that are being burned. As a result, the priest will request God to forgive that person for his sin, and he will be forgiven.'"

5 [Yahweh also said to tell the people], "If [a judge] orders any of you to tell [in court] something that you have seen or something that you heard someone say, if you refuse to say what you know is true, you must (pay a penalty/be punished) [MTY] for refusing to tell what you know. 2 If you accidentally touch something which God considers impure [DOU], such as the carcass of a wild animal or the carcass of a bull or cow, or of an animal that scurries across the ground, you must (pay a penalty/be punished). 3 If you touch any human feces, even if you do not intend to do that, when you realize what you have done, you must (pay a penalty/be punished). 4 If you carelessly make a solemn promise [to do something] that is good or that is bad, when you realize what you have done, you must (pay a penalty/be punished). 5 If you are guilty of committing any of those sins, you must confess what you have done. 6 And for a penalty you must bring to Yahweh a female lamb or female goat, to be an offering for the sin that you have committed, and the priest will sacrifice it, and then you will no longer be guilty for your sin. 7 If you [are poor and] cannot afford to bring a lamb, you must bring to Yahweh two doves or two young pigeons. One will be an offering for your sin and one will be an offering that will be completely burned [on the altar]. 8 You must bring them to the priest. First he will offer one of them to be an offering for your sin. He will wring/twist its neck [to kill it], but he must not pull off its head completely. 9 Then he must sprinkle some of the blood against the side of the altar. The remaining blood must be drained out at the base of the altar. That will be an offering for your sin. 10 The priest will then do what I have commanded and offer the other bird to be completely burned [on the altar]. Then you will no longer be guilty for the sin you have committed, and Yahweh will forgive you. 11 However, if you [are very poor and] cannot afford two doves or two young pigeons, you must bring to be an offering for your sin (2 pounds/1 kg.) of fine flour. You must not put olive oil or incense on it, because it is an offering for sin. 12 You must take it to the priest. He will take a handful of it, to symbolize that the whole offering truly belongs to Yahweh, and burn it on the altar, on top of the other offerings. 13 And by doing that, the priest will enable you to no longer be guilty for any of the sins that you have committed, and you will be forgiven. The part of the offering that is not burned will belong to the priest, like was true for the offerings made from grain." 14 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, 15 "When you sin, without intending to, by not giving to Yahweh the things that you are required to give to him, you must pay a penalty by bringing to Yahweh a ram that has no defects. You must determine how much silver it is worth, by using the official standard in the temple. It will be an offering to cause you to no longer be guilty. 16 But you must also make restitution for what you failed to give to Yahweh, adding one-fifth of its value. You must give that to the priest. He will offer the ram as a sacrifice for the sin that

you have committed, and cause you to no longer be guilty; and you will be forgiven. **17** If you sin by doing something that is forbidden by any of Yahweh's commands, even if you do not know that you have disobeyed one of my commands, you are guilty and must pay a penalty [to me]. **18** [When you realize what you have done], you must bring a ram to the Supreme Priest to be an offering in order that you will no longer be guilty. You must bring one that has no defects. He will offer the ram to be a sacrifice to me, and as a result you will no longer be guilty for the sin that you have committed, and you will be forgiven. **19** It is an offering to cause you to no longer be guilty for sinning against me."

6 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **2** "If any one of you you sins against me by deceiving someone—if you refuse to return what someone has lent you, or if you steal something of his, or if you find something and claim that you do not have it, **3** you are guilty. You must return to its owner what you have stolen or what someone has lent you and you have not returned, or what you found that someone else had lost, **4** or whatever you lied about. **5** You must not only return anything like that to its owner, but you must also pay to the owner one-fifth of its value. **6** You must also bring to the Supreme Priest a ram to be an offering to me in order that you will no longer be guilty. The ram that you bring must be one that has no defects, one that has the value that has been officially determined. **7** Then he will offer that ram to be a sacrifice that will cause you to no longer be guilty, and you will be forgiven for the wrong things that you did." **8** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **9** "Tell this to Aaron and his sons: These are the regulations concerning the offerings that will be completely burned [on the altar]: The offering must remain on the altar all during the night, and the fire on the altar must always be kept burning. **10** [The next morning] the priest must put on his linen under-clothes and linen outer clothes. Then he must remove the ashes of the offering from the fire and put them beside the altar. **11** Then he must take off those clothes and put on other clothes, and take the ashes outside the camp, to a place that is acceptable to me. **12** The fire on the altar must always be kept burning; the priest must not allow it to (go out/quit burning). Each morning the priest must put more firewood on the fire. Then he must arrange more offerings on the fire, and burn on the altar the fat of the offerings to be burned to maintain fellowship [with me]. **13** The fire on the altar must be kept burning continually; the priest must not allow it to go out." **14** "These are the regulations concerning the offerings made from grain: Aaron's sons must bring them to me in front of the altar. **15** The priest must take a handful of fine flour mixed with olive oil and incense and burn that on the altar. That handful will signify that the whole offering truly belongs to me. And the aroma while it burns will be pleasing to me. **16** Aaron and his sons may eat the remaining part of the grain offering. But they must eat it in a holy place, in the courtyard of the Sacred Tent. **17** It must not have yeast mixed with it. Like the offerings for sin and the offerings to cause people to no longer be guilty of sin, that offering is very holy. **18** Any male descendants of Aaron are permitted to eat it, because it is forever their regular share of the offerings given to me and burned in the fire [on the altar]. Anyone else who touches those offerings made from grain will be punished by God." **19** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **20** "Tell Aaron and his sons that this is the offering that they must bring to Yahweh on the day that any of them (is ordained/becomes a priest): That person must bring two quarts/liters of fine flour as an offering made from grain. He must bring half of it in the morning and half of it in the evening. **21** He must mix it well with olive oil and bake it in a shallow pan. He must then break it into small pieces to be burned [on the altar]. And the aroma while it burns will be pleasing to Yahweh. **22** I have commanded that the descendants of Aaron who are appointed in turn to become the Supreme Priests after Aaron dies are the ones who must prepare those things. These offerings must be completely burned [on the altar] to be sacrifices to me, Yahweh. **23** Every offering that a priest gives that is made from grain must be completely burned; none of it is to be eaten." **24** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **25** "Tell Aaron and his sons: These are the regulations concerning the offerings that people must bring to me so that I will forgive the people for the sins they have committed: **26** The animals must be slaughtered in my presence in the same place that the animals that are to be completely burned [on the altar] are slaughtered, in the courtyard in front of the Sacred Tent. **27** Any other person who touches any of its meat will be punished by God. And if its blood is splattered on your clothes, you must wash the clothes in a holy place. **28** If the meat is cooked in a clay pot, the pot must be broken [afterwards]. But if it is cooked in a bronze pot, the pot must be scoured [afterwards] and rinsed with water. **29** Any male in a priest's family may eat some of the cooked meat; that meat is very holy. **30** But if the blood of those sin offerings is brought into the Sacred Tent to enable the people to be forgiven for having sinned, the meat of those animals must not be eaten. The meat must be completely burned."

7 "These are the regulations concerning the offerings to be made by people who are guilty of not giving to me the things that are required to be given to me. Those are very sacred offerings. **2** Each animal that is to be offered by such people must be slaughtered in the same place where

the animals that will be completely burned [on the altar] are slaughtered, and their blood must be sprinkled against all sides of the altar. 3 All their fat, the fat tails that are cut close to the backbone, and all the fat that covers the inner parts of the animals or which is attached to them, must be burned [on the altar]. 4 That includes the kidneys with their fat near the lower back muscle, and the protruding lobe that is attached to the liver. 5 The priest must burn them on the altar to be offerings to me, Yahweh. They are an offering for the people to be forgiven for not doing what they were required to do. 6 All the males in the priest's family are permitted to eat its meat, but it must be eaten in a sacred place, because it is very sacred. 7 "The regulation is the same for the offerings [to enable people to be forgiven for the sins they have committed] and the offerings for when they are guilty of not giving to me the things that are required to be given to me. The meat of those offerings belongs to the priest who offers them in order that the people will be forgiven. 8 The priest who slaughters an animal that will be completely burned on the altar is permitted to keep the animal's hide for himself. 9 Offerings of things made from grain that are baked in an oven or cooked in a pan or (in a shallow pan/on a griddle) belong to the priest who makes those offerings [for another person]. 10 And offerings of things made from grain, whether they were mixed with olive oil or not, also belong to the sons of Aaron." 11 These are the regulations concerning the offerings that people make to maintain fellowship [with Yahweh]: 12 "If you bring an offering to thank [Yahweh], along with [the animal that you slaughter] you must offer loaves of bread made with olive oil mixed [with the flour] but without yeast, and wafers that are made without yeast but with olive oil smeared on them, and loaves made from fine flour with olive oil well mixed with the flour. 13 Along with that offering to thank Yahweh, you must bring an offering of loaves made with yeast. 14 You must bring one of each kind for an offering to Yahweh, but they belong to the priest who sprinkles against the altar the blood of the animal that is [slaughtered as an offering] to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. 15 The meat of that offering must be eaten on the day that it is offered; none of it should be left to [be eaten on] the next day. 16 "However, if your offering is the result of a solemn promise that you made to Yahweh, or if it is an offering that you make (voluntarily/without being required to), you are permitted to eat some of the meat on the day it is offered, but anything that is left may be eaten on the next day. 17 But any meat that is left until the third day must be completely burned. 18 If any meat from the offering to maintain fellowship with Yahweh is eaten on the third day, Yahweh will not accept that offering; it will be useless to offer it, because Yahweh will consider that it is worthless. Anyone who eats some of it will have to pay a penalty [to Yahweh]. 19 "Meat that touches something [that God considers to be] impure must not be eaten; it must be completely burned. Anyone who has performed the rituals to become acceptable to God is allowed to eat other meat [which has been offered as a sacrifice]. 20 But if anyone who has not performed those rituals eats some of the meat of the offering to maintain fellowship with Yahweh, meat that belongs to Yahweh, he must no longer be allowed to associate with God's people. 21 If anyone touches something that God considers to be impure and very displeasing to him, whether it is from a human or from an animal, and then he eats any of the meat of the offering to maintain fellowship with Yahweh, meat that belongs to Yahweh, he must no longer be allowed to associate with God's people." 22 Yahweh also said to Moses/me: 23 "Say this to the Israeli people: 'Do not eat any of the fat of cattle or sheep or goats. 24 The fat of an animal that is found dead or that has been killed by a wild animal may be used for other purposes, but you must not eat it. 25 Anyone who eats the fat of an animal from which an offering has been made to Yahweh must no longer be allowed to associate with God's people. 26 And wherever you live, you must not eat the blood of any bird or animal. 27 If anyone eats blood, he must no longer be allowed to associate with God's people.'" 28 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, 29 "Tell the Israeli people this: 'Anyone who brings an offering to maintain fellowship with Yahweh must bring part of it to be a sacrifice to Yahweh. 30 He himself must bring the offering that will be burned in the fire. He must bring the fat along with the breast of the animal and lift it up in front of Yahweh to indicate that it is an offering to him. 31 The Supreme Priest must burn the fat on the altar, but the breast belongs to Aaron and all his sons. 32 You must give to the Supreme Priest the right thigh of the animal that is sacrificed to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. 33 The son of Aaron who offers the blood and the fat of that sacrifice must be given the right thigh of the animal as his share. 34 From the offerings that the Israeli people give to maintain fellowship with Yahweh, he has declared that he has given to Aaron and his sons the breast that is lifted up and the right thigh that is offered; those portions must always be their regular share from the Israeli people.'" 35 Those are the portions of the offerings brought/given to Yahweh and burned in fire that are allotted to Aaron and his sons on the day that they are set apart to serve Yahweh as priests. 36 Yahweh commands that on the day that the priests are appointed [MTY], the Israeli people must always give those portions to the priests. 37 Those are the regulations for the offerings that are to be

completely burned on the altar, the offerings made from grain, the offerings to enable people to become acceptable to God again, the offerings for when people are guilty of not giving to Yahweh the things that are required to be given to him, the offerings given when the priests are appointed, and the offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. **38** They are regulations that Yahweh gave to Moses/me on Sinai Mountain in the Sinai Desert, on the day that he commanded the Israeli people to start bringing their offerings to him.

8 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **2** "Bring Aaron and his sons, and bring their (special clothes/clothes [that they will wear while they do the work of priests)], the oil for anointing them, the bull to be offered to cause them to become forgiven for the sins they have committed, the two rams [to be slaughtered], and the basket containing bread made without yeast. **3** Then gather all the people at the entrance to the Sacred Tent." **4** Moses/I did what Yahweh told him/me to do, and all the people gathered there. **5** Then Moses/I said to the people, "This is what Yahweh has commanded us to do." **6** Then he/I brought Aaron and his sons forward and washed them. **7** He/I put the special tunic/shirt on Aaron, tied the sash/waistband around him, put on him the special robe, and put on him the sacred vest/apron. He/I fastened the sacred vest/apron around him, using the skillfully woven sash. **8** He/I put the sacred pouch on his chest and put into it the two stones for him to use to find out what God wants. **9** Then he/I wrapped the turban around Aaron's head, and fastened on the front of it the gold ornament, the object that showed that he was dedicated to God, like Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **10** Then Moses/I took the olive oil and anointed the sacred tent and everything in it, and dedicated them [to Yahweh]. **11** He/I sprinkled some of the oil on the altar seven times. He/I anointed the altar and all the things used with it, and its huge washbasin and its stand, to dedicate them to Yahweh. **12** He/I poured some of the oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to dedicate him to Yahweh. **13** Then he/I brought forward Aaron's sons. He/I put tunics/shirts on them, tied sashes/waistbands around them, and wrapped turbans around their heads, like Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **14** Then he/I brought the bull for the offering to cause people to be forgiven for the sins that have committed. Then Aaron and his sons put their hands on the bull's head. **15** Then Moses/I slaughtered the bull, [caught some of its blood in a bowl], and with his/my finger put some of that blood on the projections at the corners of the altar, to purify the altar. He/I poured the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. By doing that, he/I caused it to be a suitable place for burning sacrifices for sin. **16** Moses/I took all the fat that covers the inner parts of the animal, including the liver and kidneys, and burned them on the altar. **17** He/I took the rest of the bull, including the hide and intestines, and burned them outside the camp, like Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **18** Then he/I brought the ram for the offering that would be completely burned [on the altar], and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head. **19** Then Moses/I slaughtered the ram and sprinkled its blood on all sides of the altar. **20** He/I cut the ram into pieces and washed the inner parts and hind legs. Then he/I put the head, the fat, and the other parts of the ram on the altar. As it burned, the aroma of the smoke was pleasing to Yahweh. It was an offering to Yahweh that was burned, as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **22** Then he/I brought the other ram, the one for consecrating the priests, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head. **23** Moses/I slaughtered that ram, [drained some of its blood in a bowl], and put some of that blood on the lobes of the right ears, the thumbs of the right hands, and the big toes of the right feet of Aaron and his sons [to indicate that what they listened to and what they did and where they went should be directed by Yahweh]. **25** He/I picked up all the fat of the ram, its fat tail, the fat that covered the inner parts, including the fat that covered the liver and kidneys, and the right thigh of the ram. **26** Then from the basket containing the bread that was made without yeast, the bread which had been dedicated to Yahweh, he/I picked up one loaf of bread [made without olive oil], and one loaf that was [made by mixing the flour] with olive oil, and one wafer. He/I put those on top of the portions of fat, and put them into the hands of Aaron and his sons. Then they lifted them up in the presence of Yahweh [to indicate that it was an offering that belonged to him]. **28** Then Moses/I took those things from their hands and burned them on the altar. That was the offering that was burned to appoint Aaron and his sons as priests. And the aroma while it burned was pleasing to Yahweh. **29** Moses/I also took the breast of the second ram and lifted it up, as Yahweh had commanded. The breast was Moses'/my share of the ram that was sacrificed to dedicate the priests. **30** Then Moses/I took some of the olive oil for anointing [Aaron and his sons], and some of the blood that was on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron and his sons and on their clothes. By doing that, he/I consecrated Aaron and his sons and their clothes. **31** Then Moses/I said to Aaron and his sons, "Boil the meat [of the second ram] at the entrance of the Sacred Tent, and eat it there with the bread that is in the basket, like I told you to do. **32** Burn up any of the meat and bread that remains. **33** The time for you to be set apart as priests will be seven days, so do not leave the entrance of the Sacred Tent for seven days. **34** What we have done today is what

Yahweh commanded to cause that you will be forgiven for your sins. **35** You must stay at the entrance of the Sacred Tent for seven days and seven nights and do what Yahweh requires, in order that you will not die [because of disobeying him. I am telling you that] because that is what Yahweh has commanded me to tell you." **36** So Aaron and his sons did everything that Yahweh told Moses/me to tell them.

9 Eight days later, Moses/I summoned the elders of Israel. **2** Then he/I said to Aaron, "Take a young bull for the offering to enable you leaders to be forgiven for the sins you have committed, and a ram to be completely burned [on the altar], both of them without any defects, and offer them to Yahweh. **3** Then say to the Israeli people, 'Take one male goat for the offering to enable you all to be forgiven for the sins you have committed. Also take a calf and a lamb that have no defects, to be an offering completely burned [on the altar]. **4** Also take an ox and a ram to be an offering to maintain fellowship [with Yahweh], along with an offering of flour mixed with olive oil. Do this because today Yahweh is going to appear to you.'" **5** [After Moses/I told this to the Israeli people, some of them] took the things that Moses/I had commanded them to take, and went to the courtyard in front of the Sacred Tent. Then all the people came near and stood in front of Yahweh. **6** Then Moses/I said, "This is what Yahweh has commanded you to do, in order that his glory will appear to you." **7** Then Moses/I said to Aaron, "Come to the altar and sacrifice the animal that is your offering to enable you to be forgiven for the sins you have committed, and the animal that will be completely burned there. Because of those offerings, God will forgive you and the people for the sins that you have committed [DOU]. Do those things that Yahweh has commanded." **8** So Aaron came close to the altar and slaughtered the calf to be an offering for his sins. **9** His sons brought its blood to him [in a bowl]. He dipped his finger into the blood and put some of it on the projections at the corners of the altar. He poured out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. **10** He/I burned the fat, including that which covered the kidneys and the liver, as Yahweh had commanded him/me. **11** Then Aaron burned [the rest of] the meat and the hide/skin outside the camp. **12** Then Aaron slaughtered the animal that would be completely burned [on the altar]. His sons handed him [the bowl containing] its blood, and he sprinkled the blood on all sides of the altar. **13** Then they handed him the head and the pieces of the animal that would be burned, and he burned them on the altar. **14** He washed the inner parts and the legs of the animal, and burned them on the altar, on top of the other pieces of the animal. **15** Then Aaron brought the animals that would be sacrifices for the Israeli people. He took the goat and slaughtered it to be an offering to enable them to be forgiven for the sins they had committed, like he had done with the goat for his own offering. **16** Then he brought the animal for the offering to be completely burned. He slaughtered it and offered it in the way that Yahweh had commanded him to do. **17** He also brought the offering of grain. He took a handful of it and burned it on the altar, like he had done for the animal that he had slaughtered and completely burned [on the altar] in the morning. **18** Then he slaughtered the ox and the ram, to be an offering for the Israeli people to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. His sons handed him [the bowl containing] the blood, and he sprinkled the blood against all sides of the altar. **19** But he took the fat from the ox and the ram, including their fat tails that were cut close to the backbone, and all the fat that covered the livers and the kidneys. **20** He put them on top of the breasts of those animals and carried them to the altar to be burned. **21** Then, doing what Moses/I had commanded, he lifted up in front of Yahweh the breast and the right thigh of those animals, to signify that those two animals completely belonged to Yahweh. **22** Then Aaron lifted his arms toward the people and [asked Yahweh to] bless them. Then having finished making all those offerings, he stepped down [from the place where the altar was]. **23** Then Aaron and Moses/I entered the Sacred Tent. When they/we later came out, they/we [asked Yahweh to] bless the people. And suddenly the glory/brightness of Yahweh appeared to all the people. **24** A fire from Yahweh appeared and burned up the offering that was to be completely burned and the fat that was on the altar. And when all the people saw that, they shouted joyfully and prostrated themselves on the ground [to worship Yahweh].

10 [Two of] Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, took the pans in which they burned incense. They put some burning coals in them and put incense on top of the coals, but this fire was not acceptable [to Yahweh] because it was not the kind that he had commanded them to burn. **2** So suddenly a fire from Yahweh appeared and burned them up [DOU] in the presence of Yahweh. **3** Then Moses/I said to Aaron, "That is what Yahweh predicted. He said, 'Those priests who come near to me, I will show them that they must (respect me/treat me as being holy); in the presence of all the people I am the one who must be honored.'" But Aaron said nothing. **4** Then Moses/I summoned Mishael and Elzaphan, who were the sons of Aaron's uncle Uzziel, and said to them, "Take [the corpses of] your cousins outside the camp, away from the front of the Sacred Tent." **5** So they carried the corpses, which still had their special gowns on, outside the camp, [and buried them]. **6** Then Moses/I said to Aaron and his [other two] sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "[You are sad because

Nadab and Abihu died, but you must act like you always do]. Do not allow the hair on your [heads] to remain uncombed, and do not tear your clothes. But your relatives and all your fellow Israelis are allowed to mourn for those whom Yahweh destroyed by fire. **7** But you must not leave the entrance of the Sacred Tent [to join those who are mourning], because if you do that, you also will die, and Yahweh will punish [MTY] all the people of Israel. Do not forget that Yahweh has set you apart [MTY] to work for him here, [and he does not want you to become defiled by touching a corpse]." So they did what Moses/I told them to do. **8** Then Yahweh said to Aaron, **9** "You and your [two] sons [who are still alive] must not drink wine or other fermented drinks before you enter the Sacred Tent; if you do that, you will die. That is a command that you and your descendants must obey forever. **10** You must do that in order to learn what things are holy and what things are (not holy/common), and [from the things that are not holy] you must learn what things are acceptable to me and what things are not. **11** And you must teach to the Israeli people all the laws that I gave to the Israeli people by telling them to Moses." **12** Moses/I said to Aaron and his two sons who were still alive, Eleazar and Ithamar, "Take the offering made from grain that is left after a portion of it has been offered to Yahweh to be burned, and eat it alongside the altar. [It should not be eaten elsewhere], because it is very holy. **13** Eat it in a holy place; it is the share for you and your sons from the offerings that were burned; I have commanded that it be your share. **14** But you and your sons and daughters are permitted to eat the breast and the thigh that were lifted up in front of Yahweh. Eat them in any place that is (holy/acceptable to him). They have been given to you and your descendants as your share of the offerings to enable the Israelis to maintain fellowship [with Yahweh]. **15** The thigh and the breast that were lifted up in front of Yahweh must be brought with the portions of fat to be burned, to be lifted up in his presence. They will be the regular share for you and your descendants, as Yahweh has commanded." **16** When Moses/I inquired about the goat that had been sacrificed to enable the people to be forgiven by Yahweh for the sins they had committed, he/I found out that it had been completely burned. So he/I was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar and asked them, **17** "Why did you not eat near the Sacred Tent the meat of the offering for sin? It was very holy, and it was given to you to enable the Israeli people to no longer be guilty for their sins and to be forgiven for their sins. **18** Since its blood was not taken into the holy place inside the Sacred Tent, you should have eaten the [meat of] the goat near the Sacred Tent, as I commanded." **19** Aaron replied to Moses/me, "Today the people brought to Yahweh their offering to be forgiven for the sins they had committed, and the offering to be completely burned, [and surely that pleased Yahweh], but [think about the terrible thing] that happened to my other two sons! Would [RHQ] Yahweh have been pleased if I had eaten some of the offering to cause the people to become acceptable to God?" **20** When Moses/I heard that, he/I was satisfied.

11 Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, **2** "Tell the Israeli people that [this is what Yahweh says]: From all the animals that live on the land, these are the ones that you are permitted to eat: **3** The ones that have hooves that are completely split and that (chew their cuds/bring their food up from their stomachs to chew it again). **4** There are some animals that chew their cuds but do not have split hooves, and some animals that have split hooves but do not chew their cuds. You must not eat any of those animals. [For example], camels chew their cuds but do not have split hooves, so they are unacceptable for you to eat. **5** Rock badgers chew their cuds but do not have split hooves, so they are unacceptable for you to eat. **6** Rabbits chew their cuds but do not have split hooves, so they are unacceptable for you to eat. **7** Pigs have completely split hooves but they do not chew their cuds, so they are unacceptable for you to eat. **8** All of those animals are unacceptable for you, so you must not eat their meat or even touch their carcasses. **9** From all the creatures that live in the oceans and the streams, you are permitted to eat any that have fins and scales. **10** But you must detest [and not eat] those that do not have fins and scales. That includes ones that are very small. **11** You must despise them, and you must not eat their meat, and you must detest their carcasses. **12** You must detest everything that lives in the water that does not have fins and scales. **13** There are some birds that you must detest [and not eat]. They include eagles, bearded vultures, black vultures, **14** kites, any kind of falcon/buzzard, **15** any kind of raven, **16** horned owls, screech owls, seagulls, any kind of hawk, **17** small owls, cormorants, large owls, **18** white owls, desert owls, vultures that eat dead animals, **19** storks, any kind of heron, hoopoes, and bats. **20** You must detest [and not eat] flying insects that [sometimes] walk on the ground [MTY]. **21** But you are permitted to eat creatures with wings that sometimes walk on the ground if they have jointed legs for hopping around. **22** They include locusts, crickets, and grasshoppers. **23** But you must detest [and not eat] other insects with wings that have four legs. **24** 'There are certain creatures that if you touch their carcasses you will become defiled. Anyone who touches their carcasses must not touch other people until that evening. **25** Anyone who picks up one of their carcasses must wash his clothes and

not touch other people until that evening. **26** 'The animals whose carcasses you must not touch are those that have hooves that are not completely divided or animals that do not chew their cuds. Anyone who touches the carcasses of any of those animals becomes (defiled/unacceptable to me). **27** From all the animals that walk on the ground, you must not touch the carcasses of those that have paws to walk on. Anyone who touches one of their carcasses must not touch other people until that evening. **28** Anyone who picks up one of their carcasses must wash his clothes and not touch other people until that evening, because touching their carcasses (defiles you/causes you to become unacceptable to me). **29** 'From all the animals that walk on the ground, these are the ones that (defile you/cause you to become unacceptable to me) [if you touch them]: Moles, rats, any kind of lizard, **30** geckos, skinks, and chameleons. **31** Those creatures that scurry across the ground (defile you/cause you to become unacceptable to me); anyone who touches one of their carcasses must not touch other people until the evening. **32** When one of those creatures dies and falls on something, the thing that it falls on, whatever it is used for, will become (defiled/unacceptable to me), whether it is made of wood or cloth or the hide of some animal or from rough cloth. You must put it in water. Then you must not use it until that evening. **33** If one of them falls into a clay pot, everything in it becomes defiled, and you must break that pot into pieces. **34** If you pour water from that pot on any food, you must not eat that food. And you must not drink any water from that pot. **35** Anything that one of the carcasses of those creatures falls on becomes (defiled/unacceptable to me); even if it falls on an oven or a cooking pot, anything that it falls on must be broken into pieces. It becomes unacceptable to me and you must not use it again. **36** If one of their carcasses falls into a spring or a pit for storing water, the water may still be drunk, but anyone who touches one of those carcasses becomes unacceptable to me. **37** If one of those carcasses falls on seeds that are to be planted, those seeds are still acceptable to be planted. **38** But if water has been put on the seeds and then a carcass falls on them, the seeds must be thrown away. **39** 'If an animal [whose meat] you are permitted to eat dies, anyone who touches its carcass must not touch other people until that evening. **40** Anyone who eats some meat from that carcass must wash his clothes, and then he must not touch anyone until that evening. **41** 'All creatures that scurry across the ground, including those that move on their bellies and those that crawl, are detestable, and they must not be eaten. **43** Do not (defile yourselves/cause you to become unacceptable to me) by [eating] any of those creatures [DOU]. **44** I am Yahweh your God, and I am holy, so you must consecrate yourselves and be holy. You must avoid eating things that cause you to be unacceptable to me. Do not cause yourselves to become unacceptable to me by eating creatures that scurry across the ground. **45** I am Yahweh, the one who freed you from [being slaves in] Egypt, in order to be your God. Therefore, because I am holy, you must be holy. **46** 'Those are the regulations concerning animals and birds, all the living creatures that live in water or scurry across the ground. **47** You must learn what things [I say] are acceptable to me and what things are not, and learn what things you are permitted to eat and what things you are not permitted to eat.'"

12 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell this to the Israeli people: 'If a woman gives birth to a son, she must be avoided for seven days, like she must be avoided when she is menstruating each month. **3** The baby son must be circumcised on the eighth day after he is born. **4** Then the woman must wait 33 days to be purified from her bleeding [during childbirth]. She must not touch anything that is sacred or enter the Sacred Tent area until that time is ended. **5** If a woman gives birth to a daughter, she must be avoided for two weeks, like she must be avoided when she is menstruating each month. Then she must wait 66 days to be purified from the bleeding that occurred [when her baby was born]. **6** 'Then that time for her to be purified is ended, that woman must bring to the priest at the entrance of the Sacred Tent a one-year-old lamb to be completely burned [on the altar], and a dove or a young pigeon [to be sacrificed] to enable her to become acceptable to Yahweh again. **7** The priest will offer them to Yahweh in order that she may be forgiven for any sins she has committed. Then she will be purified from her loss of blood [when the baby was born]. 'Those are the regulations for women who give birth to a son or daughter. **8** If a woman who gives birth to a child cannot afford a lamb, she must bring two doves or two young pigeons. One will be burned completely [on the altar], and one will be an offering to enable her to become acceptable to God again. By doing that, the priest will cause that she will be forgiven for any sins she has committed, and she no longer will need to be avoided.'"

13 Yahweh said this to Aaron and Moses/me: **2** "When someone has on his skin a swelling or a rash or a shiny/bright spot that may become (contagious/a dreaded skin disease), he must be brought to Aaron or to one of his sons who are also priests. **3** The priest must examine that part of the person's skin. If the hair in that area has become white and it appears that the sore is deeper than just on the skin, it is a contagious skin disease. When the priest sees that, he must declare that the person must stay away from

other people [MTY]. 4 If the spot on the person's skin is white
but it does not appear that the sore is deeper than just on the
skin, the priest must tell him to stay away from other people
for seven days. 5 Then the priest must examine the person
again. If the priest sees that the sore has not changed and
has not spread, he must tell the person to stay away from
people for seven more days. 6 Then the priest must examine
him again. If the sore has faded and has not spread, the
priest will allow him to be with other people again; it is only a
rash. After the person washes his clothes, he will be allowed
to be with other people again. 7 But if the sore spreads after
the priest has examined him, he must go to the priest again.
8 The priest will examine him; and if the sore has spread to
more of the skin, it is a contagious skin disease, and the
priest will declare that he must stay away from other people.
9 When anyone has a contagious skin disease, he must be
brought to the priest. 10 The priest must examine him. And if
there is a white swelling in the skin that has caused the hair
in that swelling to become white, and if the flesh in that area
is painful/sensitive, 11 it is a permanent skin disease, and
the priest will declare that he must stay away from other
people. The priest does not need to tell that person that he
must avoid other people, because other people already are
wanting to stay away from him. 12 'If the disease spreads all
over someone's body, and the priest examines that person
and sees that it is covering his skin from his head to his feet,
13 and it has caused all his skin to become white [which will
indicate that the disease has ended], the priest will declare
that the person does not have to stay away from other
people. 14 But if the person has open sores and they are
very painful/sensitive, he has a contagious skin disease, 15
and when the priest sees that, he will declare that the person
must stay away from other people. 16 But if the person's
flesh changes and becomes white, he must go to the priest
again. 17 The priest must examine him again; and if the
sores have become white, the priest will declare that the
person who had been infected is now permitted to be with
other people again. 18 'Then someone has a boil on his skin
and it has healed, 19 but in the place where the boil was a
white swelling or a bright/shiny spot appears, he must go to
the priest. 20 The priest must examine it. And if it seems
to be deeper than just on the skin, and if the hair in that
spot has become white, it is a contagious skin disease that
has appeared where the boil had been. And the priest will
declare that the person must stay away from other people.
21 But when the priest examines it, if there is no white hair in
that spot and it is only on the surface of the skin and has
become less bright/shiny, then the priest will order him to
stay away from other people for seven days. 22 But if it is
spreading, it is contagious and the priest will declare that the
person must stay away from other people. 23 But if that spot
is unchanged and has not spread, it is only a scar from the
boil, and the priest will declare that the person is permitted
to be with other people again. 24 'Then someone has a
burn on his skin and a bright/shiny or white spot appears,
and the flesh in that area is sensitive/painful, 25 the priest
must examine the spot. If the hair in that spot has turned
white and it seems to be deeper than just on the surface of
the skin, it is a contagious skin disease that has appeared
where the burn was, and that person must stay away from
other people. 26 But when the priest examines it and sees
that there is no white hair in that spot and it is only on the
surface of the skin, and has faded, the priest will declare that
the person must stay away from people for seven days. 27
On the seventh day, the priest will examine him again. If the
sore is spreading, it is a contagious skin disease, and the
priest will declare that the person must stay away from other
people. 28 However, if the spot is not changed and has not
spread but has faded, it is only a scar from the burn, and the
priest will declare that the person is permitted to be with
other people again. 29 'If a man or a woman has a sore on
his head or on his chin, 30 the priest must examine it. If it
appears to be deeper than [just on the surface of] the skin,
and the hair in that spot has thinned out and has become
yellowish, it is a contagious skin disease that causes itching.
And the priest will declare that the person must stay away
from other people. 31 But when the priest examines that kind
of sore, if it seems to be only on the surface of the skin and
there is no healthy hair in it, the priest will tell the person
to stay away from other people for seven days. 32 On the
seventh day, the priest will examine the sore again. If it has
not spread and if there is no yellow hair in that spot and if it
appears to be only on the surface of the skin, 33 the person
must shave the hair near the sore but not the hair on the
sore. And the priest will tell him to stay away from other
people for seven more days. 34 On the seventh day, the
priest will examine that spot again. If it has not spread and
it appears to be only on the surface of the skin, the priest
will declare that the person is permitted to be with people
again. The person must wash his clothes, and then he can
be with other people. 35 But if the sore later spreads, 36 the
priest must examine him again. If the itch/sore has spread,
the priest does not need to look for yellow hair, because it
is clear that the person has a contagious skin disease. 37
However, if the priest thinks that the spot has not changed,
and healthy hair is growing in that area, it is clear that the
itch has healed, and the priest will declare that the person is
permitted to be with other people again. 38 'Then a man or a

woman has white spots on the skin, 39 the priest should examine them. But if the spots are dull white, it is only a rash, and [the priest will declare that] the person is permitted to be with other people. 40 'If a man loses the hair on any part of his head, he does not need to stay away from other people. 42 But if he gets a bright/shiny sore on his bald head or on his forehead, he has a contagious skin disease. 43 The priest must examine him. If the swollen sore is a bright spot like [the spot on someone who has] a contagious skin disease, 44 the priest will declare that the man has a contagious skin disease and must not be with other people. 45 'Anyone who has a contagious skin disease must wear torn clothes and not comb his hair. [When he is near other people], he must cover the lower part to his face and call out, "Do not come near me! I have a contagious skin disease!" 46 He is not allowed to be with other people as long as he has the disease. He must live alone, outside the camp.'" 47 "Sometimes a person's clothing gets mildew on it. It may be clothing that is woven from wool or made from linen or from leather. 49 If the contaminated/mildewed part is greenish or reddish, it is a spreading mildew, and it must be shown to the priest. 50 The priest will examine it, and then put it in a separate place by itself for seven days. 51 On the seventh day he must examine it again. If the mildew has spread, it is clear that it is a type of mildew that destroys clothing, and that clothing must not be worn again. 52 The owner must burn completely the item that has the mildew in it, whatever kind of item it is. 53 But when the priest examines it, if the mildew has not spread, 54 he will tell the person [who owns it] to wash it. Then he must put it in a separate place for another seven days. 55 Then the priest will examine it again. If the color of the mildew has not changed, even though it has not spread, that item must not be worn again. It does not matter if the mildew is on the inside of the clothing or on the outside; it must be burned. 56 But when the priest examines it [after it has been washed], if the mildew has faded, he must tear out that part that had the mildew in it. 57 But if the mildew reappears in that item, it is clear that it is spreading, and the whole item must be burned. 58 But after the clothing is washed and the mildew disappears, it must be washed again, and then it can be worn again. 59 Those are the regulations concerning mildew on things made of wool or linen or leather, for deciding whether those things can continue to be worn or not."

14 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, 2 "These are the regulations for anyone who has been healed of a contagious skin disease. 3 The person must be brought to a priest. The priest will take him outside the camp [to where that person has been staying], and examine him. If the skin disease has been healed, 4 the priest will say that someone must bring two living birds that are acceptable to Yahweh, along with some cedar wood, some scarlet/red yarn, and some sprigs of (hyssop/a very leafy plant). 5 Then the priest will command that one of the birds be killed while [it is being held] over a clay pot containing water from a spring. 6 Then the priest will dip the other bird, along with the cedar wood, the scarlet/red yarn and the hyssop, into the blood of the bird that was killed. 7 Then he must sprinkle some of the blood on the person who was healed; he must sprinkle it on him seven times. Then he will declare that the person is permitted to be with other people again. And the priest will release the other bird and allow it to fly away. 8 "Then the person who was healed must wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe. Then he is allowed to return to the camp, but he must stay outside his tent for seven days. 9 On the seventh day, he must again shave off all his hair, including his beard and his eyebrows. Then he must again wash his clothes and bathe, and then he will be allowed to be with other people again. 10 "The next day that person must bring two male lambs and one female lamb that is one year old, all of them with no defects. He must also bring six quarts/liters of fine flour, mixed with olive oil, to be an offering, and (0.6 pint/0.3 liter) of olive oil. 11 The priest who declares that the person's skin disease is ended must bring that person, and his offerings, to me, Yahweh, at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. 12 "Then the priest must take one of the male lambs and lift it up, along with the olive oil, in front of me, to be a guilt offering—[an offering for his being guilty for not giving to me the things that he was required to give me]. 13 Then the priest must slaughter the lamb in the sacred place where the other sacrifices are offered. Like the offering to enable people to be forgiven, this guilt offering is holy, and belongs to the priest. 14 The priest must take some of the blood of that animal and pour it on the lobe/tip of the right ear and on the thumb of the right hand and on the big toe of the right foot of the one who has been healed of the skin disease. 15 Then the priest must take some of the olive oil and pour it in the palm of his own left hand. 16 Then he must dip the forefinger of his right hand into the oil in his palm, and sprinkle it in front of me seven times. 17 Then he must put some of the oil that is still in the palm of his hand on the lobe/tip of the right ear and the thumb of the right hand and on the big toe of the right foot of the person who has been healed of the skin disease. He must put it on top of the blood that he has already put on those places. 18 The remaining oil in his palm must be put on the person's head, [to indicate that I declare that] the person has been forgiven for having sinned. 19 "Then the priest must

slaughter one of the other two animals, to show that the one who has been healed of the skin disease has been forgiven for having sinned, and that he has become acceptable to Yahweh. Then the priest will slaughter the animal that will be completely burned [on the altar]. **20** He will also put on the altar the offering of grain, to indicate that the person has been forgiven for having sinned. Then that person will be allowed to be with other people again. **21** "But if the person who has been healed of a skin disease is poor and cannot afford to bring all those animals, he must take to the priest one male lamb to be lifted up to be an offering for his not giving to me the things that he was required to give me. He must also take two quarts/liters of fine flour mixed with olive oil to be an offering made from grain, (0.6 pint/0.3 liter) of olive oil, **22** and two doves or two young pigeons, one for him to be forgiven for the sins he has committed, and one to be completely burned [on the altar]. **23** "On that same day, that person must take those things to the priest at the entrance of the Sacred Tent, to offer them to Yahweh. **24** The priest will take the lamb for the offering for that person not giving to me the things that he was required to give me, along with the olive oil, and lift them up in front of me. **25** Then the priest will slaughter that lamb [and drain some of the blood in a bowl], and take some of that blood and put it on the lobe/tip of the person's right ear and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. **26** Then the priest will pour some of the oil into the palm of his left hand, **27** and with his right forefinger he must sprinkle some of the oil from his palm there in my presence. **28** He must put some of the oil in his palm on the same places where he put the blood. **29** He must put the rest of the oil that is in his hand on the head of the person who has been healed of a skin disease, to indicate that I have forgiven him for having sinned. **30** Then the priest must sacrifice the doves or the pigeons, whichever that person has brought. **31** One will be an offering for sin and the other will be completely burned on the altar, along with the offering of grain. By doing that, the priest will declare that the person is no longer guilty for having sinned. **32** "Those are the regulations for anyone who has a contagious skin disease and who is poor and cannot afford the usual offerings, in order that he can be with people again." **33** Yahweh also said to Aaron and Moses/me, **34** "I am about to give you Canaan land to belong to your people permanently. When you enter that land, there will be times when I cause/allow mildew to appear inside one of your houses. **35** If that happens, the owner of that house must go to the priest and tell him, 'There is something in my house that looks like mildew.' **36** "Then the priest will say to him, 'Take everything out of the house before I enter the house to examine the mildew. If you do not do that, I will declare that everything in the house is contaminated.' **37** [After the owner takes everything outside of his house], the priest will go in and inspect the house. If the mildew has caused greenish or reddish spots/depressions on the walls that seem to be deeper than only on the surface of the walls, **38** the priest will go outside the house and lock it up for seven days. **39** On the seventh day, he must go into the house and inspect it again. If the mildew on the walls has spread, **40** the priest will tell someone to tear out and throw in the dump outside the town all the stones in the walls that have mildew on them. **41** Then the owner must scrape all the walls inside the house, and everything that is scraped off must be thrown into a dump outside the town. **42** Then the owner must get new/other stones to replace the ones that had mildew on them, and take new clay and plaster [to cover the stones in the walls of] the house. **43** "If the mildew appears again in the house after that is done, **44** the priest must go and examine the house again. If the mildew has spread inside the house, it will be clear that the mildew is the kind that destroys [houses], and no one will be allowed to live in it. **45** It must be completely torn down—the stones, the timber and the plaster—and all those things must be thrown into a dump outside the town. **46** "Anyone who goes into that house while it is locked up will not be allowed to be with other people until sunset of that day. **47** Anyone who sleeps in that house or eats in that house [during that time] must wash his clothes. **48** "But when the priest comes to examine the house after it has been plastered, if the mildew has not spread, he shall declare that people may live in it, because the mildew is gone. **49** But before people are allowed to live in it, the priest must take two small birds and some cedar wood and some red/scarlet yarn and some hyssop. **50** He must kill one of the birds while [holding it] over a clay pot containing water from a spring. **51** Then he must take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the red/scarlet yarn, and the other/living bird, and dip them into the blood of the dead bird, and sprinkle some of that blood on the house seven times. **52** By doing all those things he will cause the house to be acceptable to be lived in again. **53** Then he must release the other bird and allow it to fly away. By doing that, he will [finish the ritual for] causing the house to be acceptable for people to live in it again. **54** "Those are the regulations for contagious diseases, for itching sores, **55** for mildew [DOU] on clothes or in a house, **56** and for swellings, rashes, or bright spots [on sores], **57** to find out whether a person has a contagious disease or not, and whether people will still be permitted to touch their clothing or their house, or not."

15 Yahweh also said to Moses/me and Aaron, **2** "Tell this
to the Israelis: When an infected discharge comes
out of a man's sexual organs [EUP], that fluid should not
be touched. **3** Whether that fluid is blocked or continues
to drip, it causes him to be someone who should not be
touched. **4** "And any bed that such a man lies on should
not be touched, and anything that he sits on should not be
touched. **5** Anyone who touches that person's bed must
wash his clothes and bathe, and no one should touch him
until that evening. **6** Anyone who sits on something that man
has sat on must wash his clothes and bathe, and no one
should touch him until that evening. **7** "Anyone who touches
such a man must wash his clothes and bathe, and no one
should touch him until that evening. **8** "If such a man spits
on someone else, that person who is spit upon should not
be touched. He must wash his clothes, and no one should
touch him until that evening. **9** "Everything that a man who
has such a discharge of fluid sits on while he is riding [a
horse or a donkey] should not be touched, **10** and anyone
who touches the seat or saddle that he was sitting on also
should not be touched until that evening. And anyone who
picks up the seat or saddle must wash his clothes and bathe,
and no one should touch him until that evening. **11** Anyone
whom the man with such a discharge of fluid from his body
touches without first rinsing his hands in water must wash
his clothes and bathe, and no one should touch him until
that evening. **12** "If such a man touches a clay pot, that pot
must be broken into pieces. Anything made from wood that
he touches must be rinsed in water. **13** "If such a man is
healed from his flow of fluid, he must wait for seven days.
Then he must wash his clothes and bathe in water from
a spring. Then he will be able to be with others. **14** On
the eighth/next day, he must take two doves or two young
pigeons and come in front of Yahweh at the entrance of the
Sacred Tent, and give them to the priest. **15** The priest will
sacrifice them. One will be an offering for the man to become
acceptable to God, and the other one will be completely
burned [on the altar]. As a result of the priest doing that,
the man will be forgiven for having sinned. **16** "Then semen
accidentally flows from a man's sexual organs [EUP], he
must bathe his whole body, and no one should touch him
until that evening. **17** Any clothing or leather that has semen
on it must be washed, and no one should touch it until that
evening. **18** When a man has sex with a woman and some
semen spills, both of them must bathe, and no one should
touch them until that evening. **19** "Then a woman has her
monthly menstrual period, no one should touch her for seven
days. If anyone touches her [during that time], no one should
touch the person who touched her until that evening. **20** No
one should touch anything that she lies on or sits on during
that time. **21** Anyone who touches her bed must wash his
clothes and bathe, and no one should touch that person
until that evening. **22** Anyone who touches something that
she has been sitting on, a bed or anything else, must wash
his clothes, and no one should touch that person until that
evening. **24** "If a man has sex with a woman [during that
time] and some of the menstrual blood touches him, no one
should touch him for seven days, and no one should touch
the bed that he lies on. **25** "Then a woman has a vaginal
discharge of blood for (many days/a long time), which is not
her monthly flow of blood, or if her flow of blood continues
after her monthly flow ends, no one should touch her until it
stops. **26** And no one should touch the bed that she lies on or
anything that she sits on while that flow of blood continues,
just like during her monthly menstrual period. **27** Anyone
who touches those things should not touch anyone else; he
must wash his clothes and bathe, and he should not touch
anyone else until that evening. **28** "After a woman's monthly
menstrual flow ends, she must wait seven days before she
touches anyone. **29** On the eighth/next day, she must take
two doves or two pigeons to the priest at the entrance of
the Sacred Tent. **30** The priest will sacrifice one of them
to be an offering to enable her to become acceptable to
Yahweh again, and completely burn the other one [on the
altar]. By doing that he will cause me, Yahweh, to forgive
her for having sinned [DOU]. **31** "You must warn the Israeli
people not to do things that (defile them/cause them to
be unacceptable to me). If they become (unacceptable to
me/defiled), they will cause my Sacred Tent which is among
them to become an unacceptable place to worship me, and
as a result they will die." **32** "Those are the regulations for a
man who has a fluid that flows from his sexual organs or who
should not be touched because some of his semen spills out
while having sex [with a woman], **33** and for any woman
during her monthly menstrual period, and for any man who
has sex with a woman during her menstrual period."

16 After the two sons of Aaron died because they burned
incense to Yahweh [in a manner that was contrary to
what Yahweh commanded], Yahweh spoke to Moses/me. **2**
He said to him/me, "Warn your [older] brother Aaron that he
must not enter the Very Holy Place inside the curtain that is
in the Sacred Tent whenever he wants to, because the cover
of the sacred chest is there. That is the place where the
priest (makes atonement for/requests me to forgive) sins. I
am present in the cloud that is over the cover of the sacred
chest. If Aaron goes in that room when it is not the proper
time, he will die! **3** "When Aaron enters the Sacred Tent
area, he must bring a bull that [will be killed] to become

an offering/sacrifice for sins, and a ram [to be killed] to be an offering that will be completely burned [on the altar]. **4** Then he must bathe his whole body, and put on the linen underwear/undershorts and the linen gown. He must tie the linen sash/waistbands around his waist and wrap the turban around his head. Those are his sacred garments. **5** The Israeli people must then bring to him two male goats [to be killed] as an offering/sacrifice for sin, and a ram to be [killed and] burned completely [on the altar]. **6** "Aaron must offer the bull [to me] to be a sacrifice in order that (I will forgive his sins and the sins of his family/his sins and the sins of his family will be forgiven). **7** Then he must bring the two male goats to me at the entrance to the Sacred Tent. **8** He must (cast lots/throw down stones that have been marked) to determine which goat will be [sacrificed] to me, and which will be the goat that will be set free. **9** Aaron must bring to me the goat that was chosen to be sacrificed. It will be an offering for the people's sins. **10** Aaron must also bring to me the other goat, but it is not to be killed. It will be freed while it is still alive. As a result of Aaron sending it into the desert, the people's sins will be forgiven. **11** "Then Aaron must bring the young bull to me, to be an offering/sacrifice for himself and for his family. He must slaughter that bull to be an offering for their sins, [and he must drain the blood into a basin]. **12** Then he must take some burning coals from the [bronze] altar and put them in the incense burner. Then he must fill his hands with fragrant finely-ground incense. Then he must take the incense and the incense burner inside the curtain into the Very Holy Place [of the Sacred Tent]. **13** There he must put the incense on the burning coals, with the result that a cloud of burning incense will rise up over the lid of the sacred chest. If he obeys these instructions, he will not die [like Korah's two sons did because of offering incense incorrectly] (OR, [because of being in God's presence]). **14** Then he must dip his finger into [the basin] and sprinkle some blood on the lid of the sacred chest, and also sprinkle some blood seven times against the front of the chest. **15** ["Aaron must then go outside the Sacred Tent] and slaughter the goat to be an offering for the sins of the people. Then he must bring its blood into the Very Holy Place behind the curtain. There he must sprinkle [some of] that blood on the lid of the sacred chest and against the front of the chest, like he did with the bull's blood. **16** By doing that, he will purify the Very Holy Place. And he must sprinkle more of the blood on the Sacred Tent, because the tent is in the midst of the camp of the Israeli people who have become unacceptable to me [because of their sins]. **17** When Aaron goes into the Very Holy Place [in the Sacred Tent] to purify it, no one else is permitted to enter [the other part of] the Sacred Tent. Only after Aaron has performed rituals to enable me to forgive him and his family, and all the Israeli people, is any priest permitted to enter the Sacred Tent. **18** "Then Aaron must go outside the tent to purify my altar. He must do this by smearing some of the blood from the bull and some of the blood from the goat on each of the projections at the corners of the altar. **19** Then Aaron must dip his finger into the [basin of] blood and sprinkle some of the blood over the altar seven times. By doing that, he will cleanse it from being unholy [because of the sins] of the Israeli people, and it will become holy again. **20** "When Aaron has finished purifying the Very Holy Place [inside the Sacred Tent] and all of the Sacred Tent and the altar, he must bring the goat that was chosen to be set free. **21** He must put both of his hands on the head of the goat and confess all the sins [DOU] of the Israeli people. By doing that, he will put [the guilt of] their sins on the head of the goat. Then he must give the goat to a man who is chosen, and that man will send the goat out into the desert. **22** [It is as though] the goat will carry away into the desert [the guilt for] the sins of all the people. **23** "When Aaron approaches the Sacred Tent, he must take off the linen clothes that he wore when he [previously] entered the Very Holy Place, and he must leave those clothes there. **24** Then he must bathe in a sacred place, put on his regular/ordinary clothes, and sacrifice the animals that will be burned completely on the altar for his own sins and for the sins of the Israeli people. By doing that he will enable me to forgive him and them. **25** He must also burn on the altar all the fat of the bull and the goat that were sacrificed. **26** "The man who was chosen to send the other goat into the desert and free it there must afterwards wash his clothes and bathe. Then he may return to the camp. **27** The carcasses of the bull and the goat that were slaughtered to be an offering/sacrifice for the people's sins, whose blood was taken inside the Very Holy Place to enable Yahweh to forgive the Israeli people, must be carried outside the camp and burned. The hides/skins of the animals, the inner organs, and the dung must also be burned. **28** The man who burns those things must then wash his clothes and bathe before he returns to the camp. **29** "On (October/the month after the dry season ends), on the day that I have appointed, you all must (fast/abstain from eating food) and not do any work. This is a rule/law that will never end. It must be obeyed by you people who have been Israelis all your lives, and also by foreigners who are living among you. **30** On that day, Aaron will perform rituals to enable me to forgive you all, and then I will cleanse/free you all from [the guilt of] all your sins and you will become acceptable to me. **31** That will be a day for you to rest and not do any work, like the Sabbath days,

and you must (fast/abstain from eating food) all that day. That is a permanent command/law for you all to obey. **32** In future years, [after Aaron has died], this ritual/ceremony to enable me to forgive you all [DOU] will be performed by the Supreme Priest who is anointed [with olive oil] and appointed to serve instead of his ancestor Aaron. He must put on the sacred clothes made of linen **33** and offer sacrifices to purify the Very Holy Place, all of the Sacred Tent, the altar, the priests, and all the Israel people [like Aaron did]. **34** This will be a permanent command/law for you to obey once every year, to enable me to forgive you Israeli people for the sins that you have committed." Moses/I obeyed all those instructions/commands that Yahweh had given to him/me.

17 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **2** "Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the other Israeli people, and say this to them: 'This is what Yahweh has commanded: **3** If you sacrifice an ox or a lamb or a goat, you must bring it [to the priest] at the entrance of the Sacred Tent [area], to present/offer it to me there. **4** If you slaughter it to be a sacrifice anywhere else in the camp or outside the camp, you will be guilty of killing an animal [in an unacceptable place]. As a result you will no longer be allowed to be/associate with my people. **5** That rule is in order that you Israeli people, instead of offering sacrifices in the open fields, will offer them to me by taking them to the priest at the entrance of the Sacred Tent [area], to be offerings to maintain fellowship [with me]. **6** [After the animal is slaughtered], the priest must sprinkle some of its blood against the altar at the entrance of the Sacred Tent, and burn its fat to be an aroma that is pleasing to me. **7** You people must no longer give sacrifices to the demons that resemble goats which you are worshiping. You people must obey this command forever.' **8** "And tell this to the people: 'If any Israeli or any foreigner who is living among them brings an offering that is to be completely burned [on the altar], or any other sacrifice, **9** and does not bring it to the entrance of the Sacred Tent [area] to be a sacrifice to me, that person will no longer be allowed to associate with my people. **10** 'I will reject [IDM] any Israeli or any foreigner who is living among you who eats any blood, and I [will command that he] no longer be allowed to associate with my people. **11** That is because the life of every creature is in its blood; I have declared that it is blood that is to be offered on the altar to enable people to be forgiven for their sins. **12** That is why I say that you Israelis must not eat blood, and the foreigners who live among you must also not eat blood. **13** 'Any Israeli or any foreigner who is living among you who hunts any animal or bird that is permitted for you to eat, must drain out the blood [of the animal or bird that he kills], and cover the blood with dirt. **14** This is because the life of every creature is in its blood. And that is why I have said [DOU] to you Israelis that anyone who eats blood must no longer [be allowed to associate with my people]. **15** 'Anyone in Israel, including foreigners, who eats any of the meat of any creature that is found dead, or that had been killed by wild animals, must wash his clothes and bathe. Then he must not touch anyone until that evening. **16** If he does not do those things, he will be punished for what he did.'"

18 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **2** "Speak to the Israeli people and tell them [that I, Yahweh, say this] this: I am Yahweh, your God. **3** [So you must do what I want you to do]; you must not do the things that the people in Egypt, where you lived previously, do; and you must not do what is done by the people in Canaan, the land to which I am taking you. Do not imitate their behavior. **4** You must obey all of my laws [DOU], because it is I, Yahweh your God, [who am commanding those laws]. **5** If you obey all my laws and decrees, you will continue to remain alive [for a long time]. I, Yahweh, [am the one who is promising that to you]. [These are some of my laws]: **6** "Do not have sex with any of your close relatives. It is I, Yahweh, [who am commanding that]. **7** "Do not disgrace your father by having sex with your mother [DOU]. **8** "Do not have sex with any of your father's [other] wives, because that would disgrace your father. **9** "Do not have sex with your sister or your stepsister; it does not matter whether she was born in your house or somewhere else. **10** "Do not have sex with your granddaughter, because that would disgrace you. **11** "Do not have sex with your half-sister, because she is your sister. **12** "Do not have sex with your father's sister, because she is your father's close relative. **13** "Do not have sex with your mother's sister, because she is your mother's close relative. **14** "Do not disgrace your (uncle/father's brother) by having sex with his wife, because she is your aunt. **15** "Do not have sex with [DOU] your daughter-in-law, because she is your son's wife. **16** "Do not have sex with your brother's wife, because that would disgrace your brother. **17** "Do not have sex with the daughter or granddaughter of any woman whom you have previously had sex with; they are [her] (OR, [your]) close relatives. Having sex with any of them would be a wicked thing to do. **18** "While your wife is still living, do not marry your wife's sister and have sex with her. **19** "Do not have sex with any woman while she is having her monthly menstrual period. **20** "Do not (defile yourself/make yourself unacceptable to me) by having sex with someone else's wife. **21** "Do not give any of your children to be burned to be a sacrifice to the god Molech, because that would show that you do not revere me [MTY], Yahweh, your God. **22** "No man should have sex with

another man; that is detestable. 23 "No one, man or woman, should (defile himself/cause himself to become unacceptable to me) by having sex with an animal; that is a perverse act. 24 "Do not (defile yourselves/cause yourselves to become unacceptable to me) in any of those ways, because doing those things is how the people of the nations that I expelled as you advanced became (unacceptable to me/defiled). 25 They even caused the land to become defiled, so I punished them for their sins, and [it was as though] the land vomited out the people who lived there. 26 You must all obey my laws and decrees. That includes you people who were born here and the foreigners who live among you. 27 All those detestable things were done by the people who lived in this land before you came here, and they caused the land to become defiled. 28 So if you defile the land, I will get rid of [MET] you like I got rid of the people of those nations that were here before you came. 29 "You must not allow people who do any of those detestable things to associate with you who are my people. 30 Obey everything that I command you to do, and do not defile yourselves by practicing any of the detestable customs that were practiced [by the people who were there] before you came. I, Yahweh your God, [am the one who is commanding these things]."

19 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, 2 "Speak to all the people of Israel and tell them this: You must be holy, because I, Yahweh your God, am holy, [and I want you to be like me]. 3 'Each of you must respect your father and your mother. And you must (honor/treat respectfully) the Sabbath days. I am Yahweh, your God, [and that is what I am commanding you to do]. 4 'Do not worship idols or make metal statues of gods for yourselves. I am Yahweh, your God, [and I am the only one you must worship]. 5 'Then you bring an offering to maintain fellowship with me, offer it in a way that will cause me to accept it. 6 The meat should be eaten on the day that you sacrifice it, but you are permitted to eat some of it on the next day. Anything that remains until the third/next day must be completely burned. 7 For any of it to be eaten on the third day is very displeasing to me, and I will not accept that offering. 8 I will punish anyone who eats it [after the second day], because he will not have respected that what I say is holy. And that person must no longer be allowed to associate with my people. 9 'Then you harvest your grain, leave the grain at the very edge of the field, and do not pick up the grain that has fallen on the ground. 10 And when you harvest your grapes, do not go back a second time to try to harvest some more, and do not pick up the grapes that have fallen on the ground. Leave those things for the poor people and for foreigners who are living among you. I, Yahweh your God, [am commanding those things]. 11 'Do not steal anything. 'Do not tell lies. 'Do not deceive each other. 12 'Do not show that you do not respect me by using/saying my name to falsely promise that you will do something. [Do not forget that] I am Yahweh, your God. 13 'Do not cheat anyone or steal from anyone. ['If you have agreed to] pay your workers at the end of the day, [do what you have promised]; do not keep those wages until the next day. 14 'Do not curse deaf people, and do not put things in the path of blind people to cause them to stumble. 15 'Always [LIT] judge people fairly [DOU]. Do not do special favors for either poor people or rich people. 16 'Do not spread false rumors about other people. 'Do not say anything [in court] that would result in some [innocent] person being executed. I, Yahweh, [am commanding this]. 17 'Do not hate anyone. Instead, honestly rebuke those who ought to be rebuked, in order that you also will not be guilty. 18 'Do not try to get revenge against someone or be angry with someone for a long time. Instead, love other people like you love yourself. I, Yahweh your God, [am commanding this]. 19 'Obey my laws. 'Do not allow two different kinds of animals to mate with each other. 'Do not plant two different kinds of seed in the [same] field. 'Do not wear clothing made from two different kinds of material. 20 'If a man has sex with a slave woman who has been promised to marry some other man, but she has not been bought by that man and is still a slave, the man who had sex with her must be punished. But because she is still a slave, she and the man who had sex with her must not be killed. 21 However, that man must bring a ram to [be slaughtered at] the entrance of the Sacred Tent area, to be an offering in order that he no longer be guilty for his sin. 22 The priest will offer that ram to me in order that the man will be forgiven for the sin that he committed, and I will forgive him. 23 'When you enter the land [that I have promised to give to you], and when you plant various kinds of fruit trees, you must not eat any of their fruit for three years [DOU]. 24 In the fourth year all of their fruit must be set aside to belong to me; it must be brought to me to be an offering to praise me. 25 But in the fifth/next year, you will be permitted to eat their fruit. If you do that, your trees will produce much fruit. I, Yahweh your God, [am promising that]. 26 'Do not eat any meat that still has [the animal's] blood in it. 'Do not consult spirits to find out what will happen in the future, and do not practice sorcery. 27 'Do not shave the hair at the sides of your heads [like pagan people do]. 28 'Do not cut your bodies [when you are mourning] for people who have died, and do not put tattoos on your bodies. I, Yahweh your God, [am commanding this]. 29 'Do not disgrace your daughters by forcing them to become prostitutes. If you cause them to become prostitutes, soon the land will be

filled with prostitutes and all other kinds of people's wicked behavior. 30 'Honor my Sabbath days and revere my Sacred Tent, because I, Yahweh, [live there]. 31 'Do not seek advice from those who (consult/talk with) the spirits of dead people [DOU], because if you do that, they will defile you. I, Yahweh your God, [am the one you should consult]. 32 'Stand up when old people [enter the room], and show that you respect them, and also revere me, your God; [that is what] I, Yahweh, [am commanding]. 33 'When foreigners live among you [in your land], do not mistreat them. 34 You must treat them like you treat your fellow-citizens. Love them like you love yourselves, and do not forget that once, when you were foreigners in Egypt, [you were badly mistreated by the people of Egypt]. I, Yahweh your God, [am commanding you to do this]. 35 'When you are measuring things, to see how long they are or how much they weigh or how many there are, 36 use correct [measuring sticks and] scales and weights [on the scales] and measuring baskets and other measuring containers. I Yahweh, your God, who brought you out of Egypt, [am giving you these laws]. 37 'Obey carefully [DOU] all my laws and decrees, because I, Yahweh, [am the one who am commanding them].'"

20 Yahweh also said this to Moses/me: 2 "Tell the Israeli people, '[This is what Yahweh says]: Any Israeli or any foreigner who is living in Israel who sacrifices any of his children to be an offering to the god Molech must be executed. The people of the town must kill him by throwing stones at him. 3 I will reject [IDM] such people and command that they no longer be allowed to associate with my people. 4 If the people of that man's town ignore it when he kills one of his children to offer him as a sacrifice to Molech, and if they do not execute that person, 5 I myself will punish that person and his family, and I will command that he no longer be able to associate with my people. And I will do the same thing to any others who do the same thing that he did to worship Molech. 6 'will reject [IDM] those who go to those who (consult/talk with) the spirits of dead people and fortune-tellers to seek advice from them. I will command that they no longer be allowed to associate with my people. 7 'Set yourselves apart and be holy, because I, Yahweh your God, am holy, [and I want you to be like me]. 8 Obey carefully [DOU] all my laws. I am Yahweh, the one will cause you to be holy. 9 'If anyone curses his father or his mother, he must be executed. He himself will be responsible for his own death [MTY]. 10 'If a man commits adultery with some other man's wife, both of them, the man and the woman, must be executed. 11 'If a man has sex with [EUP] one of his father's wives, he has disgraced his father. So both that man and that woman must be executed, they will be responsible for their own deaths [MTY]. 12 'If a man has sex with [EUP] his daughter-in-law, both of them must be executed. What they have done is very perverse; and they will be responsible for their own deaths [MTY]. 13 'If two men have sex together, they have done something detestable. They must both be executed, they will be responsible for their own deaths [MTY]. 14 'If a man marries both a woman and her mother, that is a wicked thing. All three of them must be burned to death, in order that such a wicked practice will not [continue to be done] among you. 15 'If a man has sex with an animal, he must be executed, and you must also kill that animal. 16 '[Similarly], if a woman has sex with an animal, both the woman and that animal must be killed [DOU]; they are responsible for their own deaths [MTY]. 17 'If a man marries his sister, the daughter of either his mother or his father, and they have sex together, that is disgraceful. They must not be allowed to continue to associate with my people. And because he has disgraced his sister, he must be punished. 18 'If a man has sex with [EUP, DOU] a woman during her monthly menstrual period, they have both revealed why she was bleeding, so both of them must not be allowed to associate with my people any more. 19 'Do not have sex with the sister of either your father or your mother, because that would be disgracing someone who is a close relative. And you and the woman must both be punished. 20 'If a man has sex [EUP] with his aunt, he has dishonored his uncle. I will punish both of them by causing them to die without having any children. 21 'If a man marries his brother's wife [while his brother is still living], that is disgraceful. He has dishonored his brother; and they both will die without having any children. 22 'Obey all my laws/decrees [DOU] carefully, in order that you will not be forced to leave [MET] the land to which I am bringing you. 23 Do not imitate/adopt the customs of the people of the land from which I will expel them as you advance. I hated them because they did all those things. 24 But I said to you, "You will take their land from them; I will give it to you to be yours, a land that is very fertile [IDM]. I am Yahweh your God, who has set you apart from the people of other nations." 25 'So you must distinguish between birds and animals that are unacceptable to me and those that are acceptable to me. Do not defile yourselves by [eating] birds or animals, or anything that scurries across the ground, that I have said are unacceptable for you. 26 You must behave in ways that I consider to be holy, because I, Yahweh, am holy, and I have set you apart from the [ungodly people of other] nations to belong to me. 27 'You must execute any man or woman among you who (consults/talks with) the spirits of dead people or who is a

fortune-teller. Kill them by [throwing] stones at them; but they will be responsible for their own deaths.'"

21 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them, **2** 'You priests must not cause yourselves to become unfit to do my work by [touching] corpses. Priests are permitted to touch only the corpses of close relatives, such as the priest's mother or father or his son or daughter or his brother. **3** Priests are also permitted to touch the corpse of a sister if she is not married, because she has no husband [to bury her body]. **4** Priests must not cause themselves to become unfit to do my work [DOU] by [touching corpses of] people who were married to one of their close relatives. **5** You priests must not shave your heads or shave the edges of your beards or cut your bodies [to show that you are mourning for someone who has died]. **6** You must act in ways that I, your God, consider to be holy, and not disgrace my name/reputation. You are the ones who present to me the offerings that are burned. [It is as though] those offerings are food for me, your God; so you must act in ways that are holy. **7** You priests must not marry women who have been prostitutes or who have been divorced from their husbands, because you priests are (set apart for me/holy). **8** You must consider that you are holy, because you offer food to me, your God. Consider yourselves to be holy because I, Yahweh, [the one who caused you to be priests and] the one who enables you to be holy, am holy. **9** If a priest's daughter disgraces herself by becoming a prostitute, she disgraces her father; and she must be killed by being burned in a fire. **10** The Supreme Priest is the one among his relatives who has been [appointed for that work] by having his head anointed with olive oil. He is also the one who has been appointed to wear the special garments that priests wear. He must not allow the hair on his [head] to remain uncombed, and he must not tear his clothes [when he is mourning for someone]. **11** He must not enter some place where there is a corpse. He must not do that and cause himself to become unfit for his work, even if it is his father or his mother who has died. **12** He must not leave the Sacred Tent [to join those who are mourning], because he would cause himself to become unfit for his work and would also defile/desecrate the Sacred Tent. He must not leave the Sacred Tent [at that time], because by being anointed with olive oil he has been (appointed/set apart) to serve his God [in the Sacred Tent]. I, Yahweh, [am the one who am commanding this]. **13** Women whom you priests marry must be virgins. **14** You priests must not marry widows or prostitutes or divorced women, because if you did that, [if you later have] sons, they would not be acceptable to be priests among your people. You must marry only virgins from among your own people. I am Yahweh, who sets priests apart to be holy.'" **16** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **17** "Say this to Aaron: 'For all future time, none of your descendants who has any defects [on his body] will be allowed to come near [the altar] to offer [sacrifices to me which will be like] [MET] my food: **18** No one who is blind or lame or deformed, or whose [face is] disfigured, **19** no man with a crippled foot or a crippled hand, **20** no man who is a hunchback or a dwarf, no man whose eyes are defective, no man who has a skin disease [DOU] or whose testicles have been damaged is allowed to brings sacrifices. **21** No descendant of Aaron, the [first Supreme] Priest, who has any defect is allowed to come to the altar to offer to me, his God, sacrifices that will be burned. **22** Priests who have defects are permitted to eat the various kinds of holy food offered to me. **23** But because of their defects, they must not go near the curtain [in the Sacred Tent] or near the altar, because if they did that, they would desecrate my Sacred Tent. I am Yahweh, the one who sets those places apart as being holy.'" **24** So Moses/I told this to Aaron and to his sons and to all the Israeli people.

22 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell Aaron and his sons to greatly respect the sacred offerings that the Israeli people bring to me; by doing that you will respect me [MTY], Yahweh. **3** "Tell them that for all future time, if any of their descendants comes near to the sacred offerings that the Israeli people dedicate to me while he is unfit to work for me, that person will no longer be allowed to work for me. I, Yahweh, [am commanding this]. **4** "If any descendant of Aaron has a contagious skin disease or a discharge from his sexual organs, he is not allowed to eat any of the sacred offerings until he is cured. He will also be unfit for his work if he touches anything which has become unacceptable to me because it has touched a corpse, or if he touches anyone who as an emission of semen, **5** or if he touches anything that crawls on the ground, or if he touches any person who causes him to be unfit for his work. **6** Any priest who touches such things must bathe, and he must not touch anyone else until that evening. **7** After the sun sets, he will be permitted to eat some of the sacred offerings that are for him to eat. **8** He must not eat anything that is found dead or that has been killed by wild animals, because if he did that, he would be unfit to work for me. I, Yahweh [am commanding those things]. **9** "The priests must obey my commandments in order that they will not become guilty and die as a result of (despising/not obeying) them. **10** "Anyone who is not a member of a priest's family is not permitted to eat any of a sacred offering, and no one who is visiting the priest or whom the priest has hired is permitted to eat it. **11** But if a priest buys a slave, or if a slave is born in his house, that

slave is permitted to eat such food. 12 If a priest's daughter marries a man who is not a priest, she no longer is permitted to eat the sacred food. 13 But if a priest's daughter who has no children becomes a widow or becomes divorced, if she returns to her father's house to live there like she did when she was young, she may eat the same food that her father eats. But no other person is permitted to eat any of it. 14 "If anyone who is not permitted to eat a sacred offering eats it without realizing that it is sacred, he must pay the priest for the offering, and pay him an extra one-fifth of its value. 15 When the priests bring offerings to me, the sacred offerings that the Israeli people bring to them, they must not treat those offerings as though they are not sacred 16 by allowing those who are not priests to eat any of those offerings. If they did that, they would become guilty and must make a payment. I am Yahweh, the one who causes those offerings to be sacred." 17 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, 18 "Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israeli people and tell them that I command this: 'If any of you Israelis or foreigners who live in Israel brings to me an animal that will be completely burned [on the altar], either as a result of a solemn promise that you made to me or to be an offering that is given voluntarily, 19 it must be an animal that has no defects, in order that it will be accepted by me. 20 Do not bring any animals that have defects, because I will not accept them as an offering from you. 21 [Similarly], when someone brings from his cattle or sheep or goats an offering to maintain fellowship with me, either to fulfill a promise that he made to me or to be a voluntary offering, in order that I will accept it, it must have no defects [DOU] or blemishes. 22 Do not offer to me animals that are blind or injured or maimed/crippled, or any animal that has warts or a festering sore [DOU]. 23 You may present to me to be a voluntary offering an ox or a sheep that is injured or stunted, but it will not be accepted to fulfill a promise made to me. 24 You must not offer to me animals whose testicles are bruised or crushed or torn or cut. You must not injure the testicles of any animal in your land, 25 and you must not accept such animals that are sold/given to you by a foreigner. You must not offer them to me as a sacrifice for me. Such animals will not be accepted by me, because they are deformed or have defects.'" 26 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, 27 "When a calf or lamb or goat is born, it must remain with its mother for seven days. After that, it will be acceptable as an offering to me that will be burned. 28 Do not slaughter a cow or a sheep and its baby on the same day. 29 "Then you sacrifice an animal to thank [me for what I have done], sacrifice it in a way that is acceptable to me. 30 The meat must be eaten on that day; do not leave any of it until the next morning. I, Yahweh, [am the one who am commanding this]. 31 "Obey all my commands [DOU]. I, Yahweh, [am commanding them]; 32 do not dishonor me [MTY] [by disobeying them]. You Israeli people must acknowledge that I, Yahweh, am holy, and I am the one who causes you to be holy. 33 And I am the one who brought you out of Egypt in order to show that that I, Yahweh, am [and will always be] your God."

23 Yahweh said to Moses/me, 2 "Tell the Israeli people about the festivals that I have chosen, the days when you all must gather together [to worship me]." 3 "You may work for six days [each week], but on the seventh day you must not do any work. You must rest. It is a sacred/holy day when you must gather together [to worship me]. Wherever you live, you must rest on that day." 4 "There are festivals that I have established for you. Those will also be sacred/holy days when you must gather together [to worship me]. 5 [The first festival is] (the Passover/when you remember that I spared your ancestors when I killed all the firstborn Egyptian sons). That festival will begin at twilight/dusk/sunset on the chosen day (each spring/in March or April each year), [and end on the following day]. 6 The next day, the Festival of Eating Bread That Has No Yeast will begin. That festival will continue for seven days. During that time, the bread that you eat must be made without yeast. 7 On the first day of that festival, you all must stop your regular work and you must gather together [to worship me]. 8 On each of the seven days, you must present to me [several animals to be] an offering/sacrifice to be completely burned [on the altar]. On the seventh day, you all must again stop your regular work and gather to worship me." 9 Yahweh also told Moses/me 10 to tell the Israeli people [about other festivals]. He said, "When you arrive in the land which I am giving to you, and you harvest your crops [for the first time] there, bring to the priest some of the first grain that you harvest. 11 On the day after the [next] Sabbath/rest day, the priest will lift it up [high to dedicate it] to me, in order that I will accept it as your [gift]. 12 That same day, you must sacrifice to me a one-year-old male lamb that has no defects. You must burn it [on the altar]. 13 You must also burn an offering of grain. That offering must consist of (three quarts/3.5 liters) of good flour mixed with [olive] oil. The smell [of those things burning] will be very pleasing to me. Along with that, you must also offer one quart/liter of wine, which will be a liquid offering. 14 Do not eat any bread or any roasted grain or unroasted grain on that day until after you have brought those offerings to me, your God. You must always obey [LIT] those commands, wherever you live." 15 "Seven weeks after the priest offers that grain to me, 16 on the next/50th day after he offers it, [each family] must bring to me an

offering from the new crop of grain. **17** From your homes, bring two loaves of bread [to the priest]. He will lift them up [high to dedicate them] as an offering to me. Those loaves must be baked from three quarts/liters of good flour that has yeast mixed with it. That bread will be an offering to me from the first wheat that you harvest [each year]. **18** Along with this bread, you must present to me seven one-year-old lambs with no defects, one young bull, and two rams. They must all be completely burned [on the altar]. All those offerings, with the grain offering and the wine offering, will be burned, and the smell [of all those things burning] will be very pleasing to me. **19** Then you must also kill one male goat to be an offering/sacrifice for your sins, and two one-year-old male lambs to be an offering to enable you to maintain fellowship with me. **20** The priest will lift up these offerings [high to dedicate them] to me. He will also offer the loaves of bread that were baked from the first wheat that you harvest. Those offerings are sacred to me, but they are for the priests [to eat]. **21** On that day, you must stop your regular work and gather to worship me. You must always obey those instructions/commands, and you must obey them wherever you live. **22** "When you harvest the grain in your fields, do not harvest the grain along the edges of the fields, and do not pick up the grain that the harvesters drop. Leave that grain for the poor people and for the foreigners who are living among you. [Do not forget that it is] I, Yahweh your God, [who am commanding those things]!" **23** Yahweh also told Moses/me **24** to give these instructions/commands to the Israeli people: "[Each year] in September, on the day that I have chosen, you all must celebrate it by completely resting. You must not do any work on that day. When [the priests] blow their trumpets loudly, you all must gather together to worship me. **25** All of you must not do your regular work on that day. Instead, you must present offerings to me that will be burned [on the altar]." **26** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **27** "You must celebrate a day [on which you request that I] forgive you for the sins that you have committed. That day will be nine days after the festival [when the priests blow] the trumpets. On that day you must (fast/abstain from eating food). You must gather together to worship me and present offerings to me that will be burned [on the altar]. **28** You must not do any work on that day, because it is the day when the priests will offer sacrifices to me to (atone for/ask me to forgive) your sins. **29** You must expel from your group anyone who does not (fast/abstain from eating food) on that day. **30** I will get rid of anyone who does any kind of work on that day. **31** You must not work at all! You must always obey those instructions/commands, and you must obey them wherever you live. **32** That day will be a day of complete rest for all of you, and on that day you must (fast/abstain from eating food) [to show that you are sorry for having sinned]. That day of rest and (fasting/abstaining from eating food) will begin on the evening before the day in which you ask me to forgive you for your sins, and it will end on the evening of the following day." **33** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **34** "Tell the Israeli people that [each year] they must also celebrate a festival of living in temporary shelters. That festival will begin five days after the day in which they request me to forgive them for their sins. It will last for seven days. **35** On the first day of that festival, the people must gather together to worship me, and they must not do any regular work on that day. **36** On each of the seven days of the festival, they must present to me an offering [of animals] that will be burned [on the altar]. On the next day, they must gather again to worship me and present to me another animal that will be burned [on the altar]. That also will be a sacred gathering, and they must not work on that day, either. **37** "[To summarize], those are the festivals that I have appointed. Celebrate those sacred festivals by gathering together to present to me all the various offerings that will be burned [on the altar]—animals that will be burned completely, and offerings of grain, and offerings to enable the Israeli people to maintain fellowship with me, and offerings of wine. Each offering must be brought on the day that I have indicated. **38** (Those festivals must be celebrated/You must celebrate those festivals) in addition to [worshiping on] the (Sabbath days/days of rest). And all those offerings must be given in addition to the offerings that people personally decide to give, and in addition to the offerings that people make to accompany the solemn promises that they have made, or offerings that people make (voluntarily/because they themselves want to). **39** "[Returning to my instructions about] the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters, you must celebrate this festival after you have harvested all the crops. On the first day and on the last day of that festival, you must rest completely. **40** But on the first day, you are permitted to pick fruit from trees. Cut palm fronds/branches and other leafy branches from trees or from bushes that grow by the streams, [and make shelters/huts to live in for that week]. Then rejoice in my presence for those seven days. **41** You must celebrate this festival for seven days every year. You must never stop obeying my commands/instructions for that festival. You must celebrate it in September. **42** During the seven days of that festival, all of you people who have been Israelis your entire lives must live in shelters/huts. **43** That will remind your descendants that their ancestors lived in shelters [for many years] after I rescued them from Egypt. [Do not forget that] I, Yahweh your God, [am the one who is

commanding this]." 44 So Moses/I gave to the Israeli people all those instructions concerning the festivals that Yahweh [wanted them to celebrate] each year.

24 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, 2 "Command the Israeli people to continually bring to you clear oil made from pressed olives to burn in the lamps [in the Sacred Tent], in order that those lamps will burn all the time. 3 Outside the curtain of the Very Holy Place, Aaron must take care of the lamps in my presence continually, in order that they will burn all during the night. That regulation must be obeyed forever. 4 Those lampstands that burn in my presence must be taken care of continually. 5 "Also, [each week] you must take some fine flour and bake twelve [very big] loaves of bread, using about four quarts/liters of flour for each loaf. 6 Put the loaves in two rows, with six loaves in each row, on the table covered with pure gold, in my presence. 7 Along each row, place [in some gold cups] some pure incense to be burned to be an offering to me instead of the bread. 8 New/Fresh loaves of bread must be put [on the table] each Sabbath day, to signify the agreement that will never end, that I have made with you Israeli people. 9 The bread [that is taken off the table] belongs to Aaron and his sons. They must eat it in a holy place, because it is a very holy part of the offerings that are given to me by being burned." 10 There was a man whose mother's name was Shelomith; she was an Israeli whose father was Dibri from the tribe of Dan. And that man's father was from Egypt. One day that man and another Israeli man started to fight inside the camp. And while they were fighting, that man cursed Yahweh [MTY]. 12 So the Israeli people seized him and guarded him until they could find out what Yahweh would reveal to them [that they should do to that man]. 13 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 14 "[Tie up and] take outside the camp the man who has cursed me. There all those who heard what he said must put their hands on his head [to indicate that he is guilty], and then all the people must [kill him by] throwing stones at him. 15 Tell the Israelis, 'If anyone curses me, he must (endure the consequences/be punished). 16 So anyone who curses me [MTY] must be executed. All the people must throw stones at him. It does not matter if he is a foreigner or an Israeli citizen; anyone who curses me must be executed.' 17 "Also, If anyone murders another person, he must be executed. 18 And anyone who kills [another person's] animal must give that person a live animal to replace the one that he killed. 19 And if one person injures another person, the injured person is allowed to injure the person who injured him in the same way: 20 If someone breaks one of another person's bones, that person is allowed to break one of the bones of the person who injured him. If someone gouges out an eye of another person, that person is allowed to gouge out the eye of the person who injured him. If someone knocks out the tooth of another person, that person is allowed to knock out one of his teeth. What is done to the offender must be the same as what he did to the other person. 21 Whoever kills [another person's] animal must give that person a live animal to replace the one that he killed, but anyone who murders another person must be executed. 22 That law applies to you Israelis and and also to the foreigners who live among you; I, Yahweh your God [am the one who has commanded it]." 23 Then Moses/I told the Israelis [what they must do to the man who cursed Yahweh], so they took the man outside the camp and [killed him by] throwing stones at him. They did what Yahweh commanded Moses/me [to tell them to do].

25 Yahweh said to Moses/me on Sinai Mountain, 2 "Tell the Israelis [that I, Yahweh, say this]: When you enter the land that I am about to give you, every seventh year you must honor me by [not planting any seeds. You will be] allowing the ground to rest. 3 For six years you are to plant seeds in your fields and prune your grapevines and harvest the crops. 4 But the seventh/next year you must [dedicate] to me, and allow your fields to rest. Do not plant seeds in your fields or prune your grapevines [during that year]. 5 Do not reap [the grain] that grows in your fields without having been planted, or harvest the grapes that grow [without the vines being pruned]; you must allow the land to rest for that one year. 6 But you are permitted to eat whatever crops grow by themselves during that year without having been planted. You and your male and female servants, and workers whom you have hired, and people who are living among you temporarily are permitted to eat it. 7 Also, [during that year] your livestock and the wild animals in your land are permitted to eat it.' 8 'Also, after every 49 years has ended, you must do this: (On the tenth day of the seventh month/At the end of September) [of the next/50th year], blow trumpets throughout the country, to declare that it will be a day on which you request that I forgive you for the sins that you have committed. 10 Set apart that year, and proclaim that throughout the country, it will be a year of restoring the land and freeing people: All the people [who sold their property] will receive back the property that they previously owned, and slaves must be (freed/allowed to return to [their property and] their families). 11 That year will be a Year of Celebration; [during that year] do not plant anything, and do not harvest [in the usual way] the grain/wheat that grows without having been planted, or the grapes that grow without the vines being pruned. 12 It will be a Year of Celebration, so eat [only] what grows in the fields (by itself/without any work being done to produce

anything). 13 'In that Year of Celebration, everyone must return to their own property. 14 'If you sell some of your land to a fellow Israeli or if you buy some land from one of them, you must treat that person fairly: 15 If you buy land, the price that you will pay will depend on the number of years there will be until the next Year of Celebration. If someone sells land to you, he will charge a price that is determined by the number of years until the next Year of Celebration. 16 If there will be many years before the next Year of Celebration, the price will be higher; if there will be only a few years until the next Year of Celebration, the price will be lower. [You could say that] what he is really selling you is the number of crops [which you can harvest before the next Year of Celebration]. 17 Do not cheat each other; instead, revere me. I, Yahweh your God, [am the one who am commanding this]. 18 'Obey all my laws [DOU] carefully. If you do that, you will continue to live safely in your country [DOU]. 19 And crops will grow well on the land, and you will have plenty to eat. 20 But you may ask, "If we do not plant or harvest our crops during the seventh year, what will we have to eat?" 21 [My answer is that] I will bless you very much during the sixth/previous year, with the result that during that year there will be enough crops to provide food for you for three years! 22 Then, after you plant seed during the eighth/next year [and wait for the crops to grow], you will eat the food grown in the sixth year, and continue to eat it until more food is harvested in the ninth year! 23 'You must not sell any of your land to belong to someone else permanently, because the land [is not yours, it]; is really mine, and you are only living on it temporarily and (farming/taking care of) it for me. 24 Throughout the country that you will possess, you must remember that if someone sells some of his land to you, he is permitted to buy it back from you [if he wants to]. 25 'So, if one of your fellow Israelis becomes poor and sells some of his property [to obtain some money], the person who is most closely related to him is permitted to come and buy that land for him. 26 However, if a man has no one to buy the land for him, and he himself prospers again and saves enough money to buy that land back, 27 he must calculate how many years there will be until the next Year of Celebration. Then he must pay to the man who bought the land the money that he would have earned by continuing to grow crops on that land for those years. 28 But if the original owner does not have any money to buy the land that he sold, it will continue to belong to the man who bought it, until the next Year of Celebration. In that year it must be returned to its original owner, and he will be able to live on it again. 29 'If someone who lives in a city that has a wall around it sells a house there, during the next year he will be permitted to buy it from the man who bought it. 30 If he does not buy it during that year, it will belong permanently to the man who bought it and to his descendants. It must not be returned to the original owner in the Year of Celebration. 31 But houses that are in villages that do not have walls around them are considered to be as though they are in a field. So if someone sells one of those houses, he is permitted to buy it back at any time. And [if he does not buy it], it must be returned to him in the Year of Celebration. 32 'If any descendants of Levi sell their houses in the towns in which they live, they are permitted to buy them back at any time. 33 And because the houses in their towns are on land that [was given to them by] other Israelis, that land will become theirs again in the Year of Celebration [if they do not buy it back before then]. 34 But the pastureland near their towns must not be sold. It must belong to the original owners permanently/forever. 35 'If one of your fellow Israelis becomes poor and is unable to buy what he needs [IDM], others of you must help him like you would help a foreigner who is living among you [DOU] temporarily. 36 [If you lend money to him], do not charge any kind of interest [DOU]. Instead, [show by what you do that you] revere me, your God, and help that man, in order that he will be able to continue to live among you. 37 If you lend him money, do not charge interest; and if you sell food to him, [charge him only what you paid for it]; do not get a profit from it. 38 [Do not forget that] I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of Egypt to be your God and to give you the land of Canaan, [and I did not charge you for doing that]. 39 'If one of your fellow Israelis becomes poor and sells himself to you, do not force him to work like a slave. 40 Treat him like you treat workers that you hire or like someone who is living on your land temporarily. But he must work for you [only] until the Year of Celebration. 41 During that year, you must free him, and he will go back to his family and to the property that his ancestors owned. 42 [It is as though] you Israelis are my slaves/servants, whom I [freed from being slaves] in Egypt. So none of you should be sold to become slaves. 43 And do not treat the Israelis whom you buy cruelly; instead, revere me, your God. 44 'If you want to have slaves, you are permitted to buy them from nearby countries. 45 You are also permitted to buy some of the foreigners who are living among you, and members of their clans that were born in your country. Then you will own them. 46 They will be your slaves for the remaining years of your life, and after you die, it is permitted for your children to own them. But you must not act in brutal ways toward your fellow Israelis. 47 'If a foreigner who is living among you [DOU] becomes rich, and if one of your fellow Israelis becomes poor and sells himself to that foreigner or to a

member of his clan/family, 48 it is permitted for someone to pay for him to be freed. It is permitted for one of his relatives to pay for him to be released: 49 An uncle or a cousin or another relative in his clan may pay for him to be released. Or, if he prospers [and gets enough money], he is permitted to pay for his own release. 50 The man who wants to pay for his own release must count the number of years until the next Year of Celebration. The price he pays to the man who bought him will depend on the pay that would be given to a hired worker for that number of years. 51 If there are a lot of years that remain until the Year of Celebration, he must pay for his release a larger amount of the money. 52 If there are only a few years that remain until the Year of Celebration, he must pay a smaller amount to be released. 53 During the years that he is working for the man who bought him, the man who bought him must treat him like he would treat a hired worker, and all of you must make sure that his owner does not treat him cruelly. 54 'And even if a fellow Israeli who has sold himself to a rich man is not able to pay for himself to be freed by any of these ways, he and his children must be freed in the Year of Celebration, 55 because [it is as though] you Israelis are my slaves/servants, whom I, Yahweh your God, freed from [being slaves in] Egypt.'"

26 [Yahweh also said this to Moses/me on Sinai Mountain]: "Do not make idols or set up statues of false gods or sacred stones [to worship other gods]. And do not put on your property a stone that has been shaped [to resemble a false god] and bow down to [worship] it. [You must worship only] me, Yahweh, your God. 2 "Honor the Sabbath days and revere my Sacred Tent, because I, Yahweh, [live there]. 3 "If you carefully obey all my commands [DOU], 4 I will send rain for you at the proper/right times, in order that crops will grow on your land and there will be plenty of fruit on your trees. 5 You will continue [harvesting and] threshing [grain] until it is time to harvest grapes, and you will continue to harvest grapes until it is time to start planting [things in the following year]. And you will have all the food that you want to eat, and you will live safely in your land. 6 "[If you obey all my laws], there will be peace in your country, and when you lie down [to sleep], nothing will cause you to be afraid. I will get rid of the dangerous animals in your country, and there will no wars [MTY] in your country. 7 You will pursue your enemies and kill them with your swords: 8 Five of you will pursue 100 of them, and 100 of you will pursue 1,000 of them and kill them with your swords. 9 "[If you obey all my laws], I will bless you and cause you to have many children [DOU]. And I will do what I said that I would do in the agreement that I made with you. 10 When you are still eating food from the harvest from the previous year, it will be necessary for you to throw away some of it to make space for the new harvest. 11 I will live among you in my Sacred Tent, and I will never reject you. 12 I will walk among you and continue to be your God, and you will continue to be my people. 13 I am Yahweh your God, the one who brought you out of Egypt in order that you would no longer be slaves of the people of Egypt. [When you were there, you were treated as though you were animals that worked for the people of Egypt, but] [MET] I broke the bars of the (yokes/frames that were put around your necks) and enabled you to walk with your heads up." 14 "But if you will not heed me and obey all these commands, 15 and if you reject [DOU] my decrees and laws, and do not do [DOU] what I commanded you to do in the agreement that I made with you, 16 these are the things that I will do to you: I will suddenly cause there to be disasters that will ruin you. You will have diseases that cannot be cured, and fevers that will cause you to become blind and will slowly kill you. It will be useless for you to plant seeds, because your enemies will eat the crops that grow. 17 I will reject/abandon you [IDM], with the result that you will be defeated by your enemies. Then those who hate you will rule you, and [you will be so terrified that] you will run away even when no one is pursuing you. 18 "If you still will not heed me after all those things happen to you, I will continue to punish you again and again for the sins that you have committed. 19 I will cause you to no longer be stubborn and proud; I will cause [no rain to fall; it will be as though] [MET] the sky is made of iron; and the ground will be [as hard as] brass [MET]. 20 You will uselessly work very hard [to plant seeds], because crops will not grow in the hard soil in your fields, and fruit will not grow on your trees. 21 "If you continue to oppose me and refuse to heed me, I will cause you to experience disasters again and again, like you deserve to experience because of your sins. 22 I will send wild animals to attack you, and they will kill your little children and destroy your cattle. There will be very few of you who will remain alive, with the result that there will be very few [HYP] people walking on the roads in your country. 23 "When you experience those things that I do to punish you, if you still do not pay attention to me, and if you continue to oppose me, 24 I myself will oppose you, and I will punish you for your sins again and again. 25 I will send [foreign] [MTY] to punish you for not doing the things that I commanded you to do in the agreement that I made with you. If you [try to escape from your enemies by] shutting yourselves in your cities [that have walls around them], I will cause you to experience plagues, and I will allow your enemies to capture [IDM] you. 26 When I cut off your food supply, there will be very little flour with which to make bread. As a result, ten women will be able to bake all their

bread in [only] one oven. [When the bread is baked], each woman will divide it [among the members of her family, but there will be very little for each one], and when they have eaten all of it, they will still be hungry. **27** "After all those things happen, if you still do not heed me, if you still oppose me, **28** I will be very angry with you, and I will oppose you, and I myself will punish you for your sins again and again. **29** [You will be extremely hungry, with the result that] you will [kill] your sons and daughters and eat their flesh. **30** I will cause the shrines [where you worship idols] on hilltops to be destroyed. I will smash the altars where you burn incense [to worship your gods], and I will cause your corpses to be piled on the lifeless statues of your gods. And I will detest you. **31** I will cause your cities to become heaps of ruins, and I will cause the buildings that are dedicated to the worship of your gods to be smashed. And I will not be pleased at all with the aroma of your offerings [that are burned on the altar]. **32** I will completely ruin your country, with the result that even your enemies who capture it will be shocked/appalled [when they see it]. **33** I will enable [your enemies to kill you with] their swords, and I will cause the rest of you to be scattered among other nations. Your country will be ruined and your cities will become ruins. **34** After that happens, as long as you are living in your enemies' countries, your land will be allowed to rest, like you should have allowed it to rest every seven years. **35** All the time that your land is desolate, it will be able to rest, like you did not enable it to rest during all the years that you lived there. **36** "As for you people who will remain alive in the countries to which your enemies [will have taken you], I will cause you to become so afraid that when you hear the sound of leaves being blown by the wind, you will run away. You will run like [SIM] you are running from [a man carrying] a sword, and you will fall down, even though no one is pursuing you. **37** You will stumble over each other. So you will not be able to stand and fight your enemies. **38** Many of you will die in the countries that belong to your enemies [DOU]. **39** And those of you who remain alive will slowly die and rot in the countries of your enemies because of your sins and because of the sins of your ancestors. **40** "But your descendants must confess their sins and the sins that their ancestors committed. Their ancestors acted unfaithfully toward me and were hostile to me, with the result that I forced them to go to the countries that belonged to their enemies. But when your descendants humble themselves [SYN] and stop being very stubborn [IDM] and accept being punished for their sins, **42** I will remember the agreement that I made with [your ancestors] Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and [what I promised them about] this land. **43** But [before that happens], you will be forced to leave your land, with the result that the land will be able to rest while it is desolate and while the people are being punished for rejecting my laws and hating my decrees [DOU]. **44** But when that happens, I will still not reject them or hate them and destroy them completely. I will not cancel the agreement that I made with them; for I am still Yahweh their God. **45** I will (remember/never forget) the agreement that I made with your ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt, in order that the people of all nations will know that I, Yahweh, [will continue to] be your God." **46** Those are the decrees, the laws, and the regulations [DOU] that Yahweh established on Sinai Mountain between himself and the Israeli people by [giving them to] Moses/me [to tell to them].

27 Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell the Israeli people [that this is what I am saying to them]: If anyone solemnly promises to dedicate another person to [work solely] for me, the person who is dedicated to me is allowed to be free from having to do that by someone paying [to the priest] a fixed amount of money. The money that is given must be calculated by comparing it with the official pieces of silver in the Sacred Tent. **3** [These are the amounts that must be paid]: 50 pieces of silver for men who are between 20 and 60 years old, **4** 30 pieces of silver for adult women [who are between 20 and 60 years old], **5** 20 pieces of silver for young men who are between five and 20 years old, ten pieces of silver for young women who are between five and 20 years old, **6** five pieces of silver for boys who are between one month and five years old, three pieces of silver for girls who are between one month and five years old, **7** 15 pieces of silver for men who are more than 60 years old, ten pieces of silver for women who are more than 60 years old. **8** 'If anyone who has made such a solemn promise is very poor and unable to pay, to free that person from doing what he had promised, he must take that person to the priest. The priest will set the price [for freeing him] to be what the person who made that solemn promise is able to pay. **9** 'If someone solemnly promises to give an animal that is acceptable to be an offering to me, that animal becomes sacred [and belongs to me]. **10** The person who promised to give it must not give another animal instead of the one that he promised; he must not substitute a bad animal for a good one or even a better one than the one offered. If he would substitute one animal for the other, both animals would belong to me. **11** If the animal that he wishes to dedicate to me is a kind that is unacceptable to be an offering to me, he must take that animal to the priest. **12** The priest will then decide what its value is, according to the animal's good and bad points. Whatever value the priests sets will be the value of the animal, [and that is the price that the priest must pay for the

animal]. 13 If the man who gave the animal later decides that he wants to buy it back, he must pay [to the priest] that price plus an additional 20 percent. 14 '[Similarly], if someone dedicates his house to be a sacred gift to belong to me, the priest will decide how much it is worth, which will depend on whether the house is in good condition. Whatever the priest says that it is worth, that will be its value [and that is the price that the priest must pay for it]. 15 If the man who dedicated his house to me later wants to buy it back, he must pay that price plus an additional 20 percent, and then the house will belong to him again. 16 'If someone dedicates to me some of the property that belongs to him and his family, its value will be determined by the number of bushels of seed that will be needed to plant seeds on that land: Its value will be ten pieces of silver for each bushel of seed. 17 If he dedicates the land during the Year of Celebration, its full value will be that amount. 18 But if he dedicates the field after the Year of Celebration, the priest will count the number of years until the next Year of Celebration, and if there are not many years that remain, the price will be much lower [than the full price]. 19 If the person who dedicated the field later wants to buy it back, he must pay [to the priest] the price that the priest says it is worth, plus an added one-fifth, and then the field will belong to that man again. 20 However, if he does not buy it back, or if it has been sold (OR, the priest has sold it) to someone else, that person will never be permitted to buy it back again. 21 In the Year of Celebration, it will become sacred again, and it will be given to the priest. 22 'If someone dedicates to me some land that he has bought, land which is not part of the land that his family has always owned, 23 the priest will count the number of years until the next Year of Celebration to determine how much it is worth, and the man must pay that amount to the priest on that day, [and then that land will belong to that man again]. 24 But in the Year of Celebration, the land will again be owned by the person from whom he bought it, the person whose family had always owned that land. 25 All the silver that is paid must be compared with the official pieces of silver in the Sacred Tent. 26 'No one is permitted to dedicate to me the firstborn of any cow or sheep, because the firstborn already belongs to me [DOU]. 27 If someone gives to me a kind of animal that is not acceptable to me, that person may later buy it back by paying what it is worth plus an additional 20 percent of its value. If he does not buy it back, it must be sold (OR, the priest must sell it) for its standard price. 28 'However, no slave or animal or family land that someone owns can be sold or bought back after it has been dedicated to me [and no price has been paid for it]. That kind of gift belongs to me permanently/forever. 29 'No person who has [done something that I consider to be very wicked] is permitted to be freed [from being punished]; that person must surely be executed. 30 'One tenth of all the crops and grain or fruit that is produced on anyone's land is sacred and belongs to me. 31 If anyone wants to buy back any of that tenth, he must pay [to the priest] what it is worth plus an additional 20 percent. 32 One of every ten domestic animals belongs to me. When a shepherd counts his animals [MTY] [to decide which ones he will give to me], he must mark every tenth one as belonging to me. 33 When he does that, he must not pick out the good ones for himself or leave the bad ones, or substitute bad ones for good ones. If he substitutes one animal for another, both animals will belong to me, and he will not be permitted to buy them back (OR, the shepherd cannot buy them back).'" 34 Those are the commands that Yahweh gave to Moses/me on Sinai Mountain [to tell to the people].

Numbers

1 In April of the year after the Israeli people left Egypt,
Yahweh spoke to Moses/me while he/I was in the Sacred
Tent, in the Sinai Desert. Yahweh said to him/me, **2** "I want
you and Aaron to determine how many Israeli men are able
to fight in battles. Write down the names of all the men who
are at least 20 years old, and write down the names of their
clans and families. **4** [I have chosen] one man from each of
the tribes to help you to do this. Each one will be a leader of
his clan. **5** Their names are: Elizur, the son of Shedeur, from
the tribe of Reuben; Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai, from
the tribe of Simeon; Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, from
the tribe of Judah; Nethanel, the son of Zuar, from the tribe of
Issachar; Eliab, the son of Helon, from the tribe of Zebulun;
Elishama, the son of Ammihud, from the tribe of Joseph's
son Ephraim; Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur, from the tribe
of Joseph's son Manasseh; Abidan, the son of Gideoni, from
the tribe of Benjamin; Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai,
from the tribe of Dan; Pagiel, the son of Ocran, from the
tribe of Asher; Eliasaph, the son of Deuel, from the tribe of
Gad; Ahira, the son of Enan, from the tribe of Naphtali." **16**
Those were the men whom Yahweh chose from the people.
They were leaders of their tribes. They were the chief men
of the clans of the Israeli people. **17** Aaron and Moses/I
summoned all these leaders, **18** and they gathered all of the
people together on that same day. They listed/wrote down
the names of all the men who were at least 20 years old,
and with their names they wrote the names of their clans
and their family groups **19** just as Moses/I had commanded.
They wrote the names while (the Israelis/we) were there in
the Sinai Desert. **20** This is a list of the number of men who
were at least 20 years old and able to fight in battles, and
the names of their tribes: There were 46,500 men from the
tribe of Reuben (who was Jacob's oldest son); there were
59,300 men from the tribe of Simeon; there were 45,560
men from the tribe of Gad; there were 74,600 men from
the tribe of Judah; there were 54,400 men from the tribe of
Issachar; there were 57,400 men from the tribe of Zebulun;
there were 40,500 men from the tribe of Ephraim; there were
32,200 men from the tribe of Manasseh; there were 35,400
men from the tribe of Benjamin; there were 62,700 men from
the tribe of Dan; there were 41,500 men from the tribe of
Asher; there were 53,400 men from the tribe of Naphtali. **44**
That was the number of men from each tribe that Aaron
and Moses/I and the twelve leaders of the tribes of Israel
listed, along with the names of their clans. **46** The total was
603,550 men. **47** But this number did not include the names
of the men of the tribe of Levi, **48** because Yahweh had
said to Moses/me, **49** "When you (count/write the names
of) the men of the tribes of Israel, do not count the men
in the tribe of Levi. **50** Appoint the male descendants of
Levi to take care of the Sacred Tent and the chest inside
it that contains [the tablets on which are written] the Ten
Commandments. They must also take care of the other
things that are inside the tent. [When you travel], they are
the ones who must carry the tent and all the things that
are inside it, and they must take care of it and set up their
tents around it. **51** Whenever it is time for all of you to move
[to another location], the descendants of Levi are the ones
who must dismantle the tent. And when it is time to stop
traveling, they are the ones who must set up the Sacred
Tent again. Any other person who goes near the Sacred
Tent [to do this work] must be executed. **52** The people of
each Israeli tribe must set up their tents in their own area,
and they must set up a flag/banner that represents their
tribe. **53** But the male descendants of Levi must set up their
tents around the Sacred Tent, in order to protect the other
Israeli people from being punished [MTY] by Yahweh [for
coming close to the Sacred Tent]. The descendants of Levi
are the ones who must stand around the Sacred Tent to
guard it." **54** So the Israeli people did everything just like
Yahweh had commanded Moses/me.

2 Then Yahweh said this to Aaron and Moses/me: **2** "When
the Israelis set up their tents, they should set them up in
areas that surround the Sacred Tent, but not close to it. The
people of each tribe must set up their tents in a different
area. Each tribe must erect in that area a banner of their own
clan and a flag that represents their tribe. **3** The people of
the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun must set up their
tents on the east side of the Sacred Tent, close to their tribal
flags. These are the names of the leaders of those tribes
and the number of soldiers whom they will lead: Nahshon,
the son of Amminadab, will be the leader of the 74,600 men
of the tribe of Judah. **5** Nethanel, the son of Zuar, will be the
leader of the 54,500 men of the tribe of Issachar. **7** Eliab, the
son of Helon, will be the leader of the 57,400 men of the
tribe of Zebulun. **9** So there will be 86,400 troops on the east
side [of the Sacred Tent]. Whenever the Israelis move to
a new location, those three tribes must go in front of the
others. **10** The tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad must set
up their tents on the south side of the Sacred Tent, close to
their tribal flags. These are the names of the leaders of those
tribes and the number of men whom they will lead: Elizur, the
son of Shedeur, will be the leader of the 46,500 men of the
tribe of Reuben. **12** Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai, will
be the leader of the 59,300 men of the tribe of Simeon. **14**
Eliasaph, the son of Deuel, will be the leader of the 45,650

men of the tribe of Gad. 16 So there will be 151,450 troops on the south side of the Sacred Tent. Those three tribes will follow the first group [when the Israelis travel]. 17 Behind that group will walk the descendants of Levi, who will carry the Sacred Tent. The Israelis will march in the same order that they always set up their tents. Each tribe will carry its own flag. 18 The tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin must set up their tents on the west side of the Sacred Tent, close to their tribal flags. These are the names of the leaders of those tribes and number of men whom they will lead: Elishama, the son of Ammihud, will be the leader of the 40,500 men of the tribe of Ephraim. 20 Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur, will be the leader of the 32,200 men of the tribe of Manasseh. 22 Abidan, the son of Gideoni, will be the leader of the 35,400 men of the tribe of Benjamin. 24 So there will be 108,100 troops on the west side of the Sacred Tent. Those three tribes will follow the second group, [behind the descendants of Levi]. 25 The tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali must set up their tents on the north side of the Sacred Tent, close to their tribal flags. These are the names of the leaders of those tribes and the number of men whom they will lead: Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai, will be the leader of the 62,700 men of the tribe of Dan. 27 Pagiel, the son of Ocran, will be the leader of the 41,500 men of the tribe of Asher. 29 Ahira, the son of Enan, will be the leader of the 53,400 men of the tribe of Naphtali. 31 So there will be 157,600 troops on the north side of the Sacred Tent. Those three tribes will be last. They must carry their own flags when the Israelis travel." 32 So there were 603,550 Israeli men who were able to fight who were listed according to their families' ancestors. 33 But just as Yahweh had commanded, the names of the descendants of Levi were not included. 34 The Israelis did everything that Yahweh had told Moses/me. They set up their tents close to their tribal flags, and when they traveled [to a new location, they walked] with their own clans and family groups.

3 These are some of the things that happened to Aaron and Moses/me when Yahweh spoke to Moses/me on Sinai Mountain. 2 Aaron's four sons were Nadab the oldest, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 3 They were appointed [MTY] (OR, Moses/I appointed them) to be priests. 4 But, while Yahweh was watching, Nadab and Abihu died in the Sinai Desert because they burned [incense] in a manner that was different from what Yahweh had commanded. They had no sons, so Eleazar and Ithamar were the [only] sons of Aaron who [were left to be] priests, along with their father Aaron. 5 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 6 "Bring [the men of] the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron, in order that they may assist him. 7 They will serve Aaron and all the other Israeli people, while they do their work inside the Sacred Tent and outside it. 8 They must serve all the Israeli people by taking care of all the things that are inside the Sacred Tent. 9 Appoint them to [help] Aaron and his two sons. I have chosen them from all the Israeli people to do that. 10 Appoint Aaron and his two sons to do the work that priests do. But anyone else who comes close to the Sacred Tent [to do that work] must be executed." 11 Yahweh also told Moses/me, 12 "Note that from all the Israelis, I have chosen the men of the tribe of Levi to take the places of all the firstborn sons of the Israeli people. The male descendants of Levi belong to me, 13 because truly all the firstborn [males] belong to me. That is because on the day that I killed all the firstborn [sons] of the people of Egypt, I [spared] all the firstborn [sons] of the Israelis and set them apart for myself. I also set apart the firstborn [males] of your domestic animals. They belong to me, Yahweh." 14 Yahweh spoke to Moses/me again in the Sinai Desert. He said, 15 "Count the male members of the tribe of Levi. Write down their names and the names of their clans and family groups. Count all the males who are at least one month old." 16 So Moses/I counted them, just as Yahweh commanded. 17 Levi had [three] sons, whose names were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 18 Gershon had [two] sons: Libni and Shimei. The clans that were descended from them had the same names as those [two] sons. 19 Kohath had [four] sons: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. The clans that were descended from them had the same names as those [four] sons. 20 Merari had [two] sons: Mahli and Mushi. The clans that were descended from them had the same names as those [two] sons. Those are the clans that were descended from Levi. 21 The two clans descended from Gershon are those that were descended from [his sons] Libni and Shimei. 22 In those two clans there were 7,500 males who were at least one month old. 23 They were told to set up their tents on the west side of the Sacred Tent. 24 The leader of those two clans was Eliasaph, the son of Lael. 25 Their work was to take care of the Sacred Tent, including the coverings of the tent, the curtain at the entrance of the tent, 26 the (curtains/large pieces of cloth) that formed the walls around the courtyard that is around the tent and around the altar, the curtains that were at the entrance of the courtyard, and the ropes [for fastening the tent]. They also did all the work of taking care of the things outside the Sacred Tent. 27 The clans that were descended from Kohath were those descended from his four sons: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 28 In those four clans there were 8,600 males who were at least one month old. The work of the men of the clans was to take care of [the things that are inside] the Sacred Tent. 29 They set up their tents on the south side

of the Sacred Tent. **30** The leader of those four clans was Elizaphan, the son of Uzziel. **31** The work of the men of those clans was to take care of the sacred chest, the table [on which the priest put the sacred bread], the lampstand, the altars, all the items that the priest used in the Sacred Tent, and the curtain that is inside the tent. Their work was also to take care of the things inside the tent. **32** Aaron's son Eleazar was the leader of all the male descendants of Levi. He supervised all the work that was done at the Sacred Tent. **33** The clans that were descended from Merari were those descended from [his sons] Mahli and Mushi. **34** In those two clans there were 6,200 males who were at least one month old. **35** They were told to set up their tents on the north side of the Sacred Tent. The leader of those two clans was Zuriel, the son of Abihail. **36** The work of the men of those two clans was to take care of the frames that held up the tent, the crossbars, the pillars, and the bases. They also did all the work that was connected with those items. **37** Their work was also to take care of the posts [that held up the curtains that formed the walls of] the courtyard, and all the bases, tent pegs, and ropes [that fastened those curtains]. **38** Aaron and Moses/I and Aaron's sons were told to set up their/our tents in the area in front of the Sacred Tent, on the east side. Their/Our work was to supervise the work that would be done in and around the Sacred Tent, for the benefit of the Israeli people. Only the priests were permitted to do that. [Yahweh declared that] we should execute anyone else who went near the tent [to do the work that the priests do]. **39** When Aaron and Moses/I counted all the males who were at least one month old, who belonged to the clans descended from Levi, the total was 22,000. **40** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Now count all the [other] firstborn males in Israel who are at least one month old, and write down their names. **41** Also, set apart for me the descendants of Levi to be substitutes for the firstborn males of the other Israelis. And set apart for me the livestock of the descendants of Levi to be substitutes for the firstborn livestock of the other Israeli people." **42** So Moses/I did that. He/I counted the firstborn males of all the Israeli people, as Yahweh had commanded. **43** The total of those who were at least one month old was 22,273. **44** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, **45** "Set apart the descendants of Levi to be substitutes for [the firstborn males of] the other Israeli people. The descendants of Levi belong to me, Yahweh. **46** There are 273 more firstborn males of the other Israeli people than of the descendants of Levi. **47** To pay for these 273 males, collect five pieces of silver for each of them. Each of those pieces of silver must weigh the same as each of the silver coins that are stored in the Sacred Tent. Give this silver to Aaron and his sons." **49** So Moses/I did that. He/I collected the silver from those 273 males. **50** The total was 1,365 pieces of silver. Each silver coin weighed the same as each of the silver coins stored in the Sacred Tent. **51** Moses/I gave these silver coins to Aaron and his sons, as Yahweh had commanded.

4 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, **2** "Write down the names of the men who belong to the clans descended from Levi. **3** Write the names of the men who are between 30 and 50 years old. These will be men who will work at the Sacred Tent. **4** "The work of these descendants of Kohath will be [to take care of] the sacred items [that are used when the people worship] at the Sacred Tent. **5** When you Israelis move to another location, Aaron and his sons must enter the tent to take down the curtain that separates the Very Holy Place from the other part of the Sacred Tent. They must cover the sacred chest with that curtain. **6** Then they must cover that with a nice covering made from the skins of goats. Over that they must spread a blue cloth. Then they must insert into the rings on the chest the poles [for carrying it]. **7** "Then they must put a blue cloth over the table on which the priests put the sacred bread. On top of the cloth they must put the bowls [for incense], the pans, the other dishes, the jars for [the wine that will be] offered as a sacrifice, and the sacred bread. **8** Over all of this they must spread a scarlet/red cloth. Finally, they must put on top a nice covering made from the skins of goats. Then they must insert into the [rings at the corners of] the tables the poles [for carrying it]. **9** "Then with another blue cloth they must cover the lampstand, the lamps, the lamp snuffers, the trays, and the special jars of [olive] oil [to burn in the lamps]. **10** They must cover the lampstand and all the other items with a nice covering made from the skins of goats. They must place all these things on a frame for carrying them. **11** "Then they must spread another blue cloth over the gold altar [which is used for burning] incense. Over this they must spread a nice covering made from the skins of goats. Then they must insert into [the rings of] that altar the poles for carrying it. **12** "They must take all the other items that are inside the Sacred Tent and wrap them in a blue cloth, cover that with a nice covering made from the skins of goats, and place all that on a frame for carrying it. **13** "Then they must remove the ashes from the altar [on which they have burned sacrifices]. Then they must cover the altar with a purple cloth. **14** Then they must spread on top of the cloth all the items used at the altar—the pans [for carrying the hot coals], the meat forks, the shovels, the bowls [for containing the blood to sprinkle on the people], and all the other containers. Then they must spread over all those things a nice covering made from the skins of goats.

Then they must insert into [the rings at the sides of] the altar the poles [for carrying it]. **15** "Then Aaron and his sons have finished covering all these sacred things, the Israeli people will be ready to move [to a new location]. The descendants of Kohath must come and carry all the sacred things to [the next place] where you Israelis will set up your tents. But the descendants of Kohath must not touch any of these sacred items, because they will [immediately] die [if they touch them]. They are the ones who will carry these things, [but they must not touch them]. **16** "Aaron's son Eleazar will have the work of taking care of the [olive] oil for the lamps, the nice-smelling incense, the grain which will be burned on the altar each day, and the [olive] oil for anointing [the priests]. Eleazar is the one who will supervise the work that is done at the Sacred Tent and the men who take care of everything that is in it." **17** "Then Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, **18** "When the descendants of Kohath approach the sacred items in the Sacred Tent [to take them to another location], Aaron and his sons must always go in with them and show each of them what work to do and what things to carry. But the descendants of Kohath must not enter the Sacred Tent [at any other time] and look at the things that are in it. If they do that, I will get rid of all the descendants of Kohath." **21** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **22** "Write down the names of all the men who belong to the clans descended from the Gershon [division of the descendants of Levi]. **23** Write the names of the men who are between 30 and 50 years old. They will be men who will also work at the Sacred Tent. **24** "This is the work that they must do and the things that they must carry [when you move to a new location]: **25** They must carry the curtains of the Sacred Tent; they must carry the Sacred Tent and all the things that cover it, including the nice outer covering made from skins of goats, and the curtain which is at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. **26** They must also carry the curtains that form the wall that surrounds the courtyard that surrounds the Sacred Tent and the altar, the curtain that is at the entrance to the courtyard, and the ropes [that fasten the curtains]. They must also do the packing and loading of these things. **27** Aaron and his sons will supervise the work of all the descendants of Gershom. That work includes carrying those things and doing other work that is necessary for moving them. They must tell each of the descendants of Gershom what things they must carry. **28** Those are the tasks that you must give to the men who belong to the clans descended from Gershom. Aaron's son Ithamar is the one who will supervise their work. **29** Count also the men who belong to the clans descended from Levi's son Merari. **30** Write the names of the men who are between 30 and 50 years old. They will be men who will also work at the Sacred Tent. **31** Their work will be to carry the frames that hold up the tent, the crossbars, the posts [that hold up the curtains], and the bases. **32** They must also carry the posts for [the curtains that form the walls of] the courtyard and the bases for the posts, the tent pegs, and the ropes [to fasten the curtains]. Tell each man what things he must carry. **33** Those are the tasks that the descendants of Merari must do at the Sacred Tent. Aaron's son Ithamar is the one who will supervise them." **34** So Aaron and Moses/I and the Israeli leaders counted the descendants of Kohath, writing also the names of their clans and family groups. **35** They/We counted all the men who were between 30 and 50 years old who were able to work at the Sacred Tent. **36** The total was 2,750 men. **37** They were the descendants of Kohath who [were able to] work at the Sacred Tent. Aaron and Moses/I counted them just as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **38** They/We also counted the descendants of Gershon, writing also the names of their clans and family groups. **39** They/We counted all the men who were between 30 and 50 years old who were able to work at the Sacred Tent. **40** The total was 2,630 men. **41** They were the descendants of Gershon who [were able to] work at the Sacred Tent. Aaron and Moses/I counted them as Yahweh had commanded. **42** They/We also counted the descendants of Merari, writing also the names of their clans and family groups. **43** They/We counted all the men who were between 30 and 50 years old who were able to work at the Sacred Tent. **44** The total was 3,200 men. **45** They were the descendants of Merari who [were able to] work. Aaron and Moses/I counted them as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **46** So Aaron and Moses/I and the Israeli leaders counted all the descendants of Levi, writing also the names of their clans and family groups. **47** They/We counted all the men who were between 30 and 50 years old. They were ones who [were able to] work at the Sacred Tent and who carried the tent and everything that was connected with it. **48** The total was 8,580 men. **49** They/We completed the counting [of all the descendants of Levi], as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. And they/we told each man what work he was to do and what things he must carry [when they moved to a new location].

5 Yahweh said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell this to the Israeli people: 'You must send away from your (camp/area where you have your tents) any man or woman who has leprosy and anyone who has a discharge [of some fluid from his body], and anyone who has become unacceptable to God because of [having touched] a corpse. **3** Send them away from there in order that they will not [touch people in the camp area] where I live among you and cause them to

become unacceptable to me.'" 4 So [Moses/I told that to the Israeli people, and] the Israeli people obeyed what Yahweh commanded Moses/me. 5 Yahweh also told Moses/me, 6 "Tell this to the Israeli people: 'If someone (commits a crime against/does something wrong to) another person, [I consider that] that person has done wrong to me. 7 That person must confess that he or she is guilty, and he or she must pay to the person to whom wrong was done [what others consider to be a suitable/proper payment] for what he has done, and he must pay an extra 20 percent. 8 If the person against whom the wrong was done [has died and] there is no relative to whom the money can be paid, then the money belongs to me, and it must be paid to the priest. In addition, the one who did the wrong must give a male sheep to the priest [to sacrifice] in order that (that person's sin may be forgiven/I can forgive that person for his sin). 9 All the sacred offerings that the Israelis bring to the priest belong to the priest. 10 The priest can keep those gifts.'" 11 Yahweh also said this to Moses/me: 12 "Tell this to the Israeli people: 'Suppose a man thinks that his wife has slept with another man, 13 but neither he nor anyone else knows if it is true or not, because no one saw her doing that. 14 But if the woman's husband is jealous, and if he suspects that she has committed adultery, and he wants to know whether that is true or not, 15 he should take his wife to the priest. He must take along as an offering two quarts/liters of barley flour. The priest must not pour [olive] oil or incense on it, because this is an offering that the man has brought because he (is jealous/wants his wife to sleep only with him). It is an offering to find out if she is guilty or not. [Neither olive oil nor incense should be used because are associated with joy and this is not a time for joy.] 16 The priest must tell the woman to stand [in front of the altar] in my presence. 17 He must put some sacred water in a clay jar, and then he must put some dirt from the floor of the Sacred Tent into the water. 18 He must untie/unfasten the woman's hair. Then he must put in her hands the grain that her jealous husband is offering to determine whether she has committed adultery or not. The priest must hold [the bowl that contains] bitter water that will cause (the woman to be cursed/bad things to happen to the woman) [if she is guilty]. 19 The priest must require her to solemnly declare [that she will tell the truth]. Then he must say to her, "Has another man had sex [EUP] with you? Have you faithfully [slept only with your husband] or not? If you have not slept with another man, nothing bad will happen to you if you drink the water. 20 But if you have had sex with another man, [Yahweh will curse you]. 21 Your womb will shrivel up and your stomach will swell up. You will never be able to give birth to children, and as a result, everyone will curse you and avoid you. If you have committed adultery, [when you drink] this water, that is what will happen to you." Then the woman must answer, "[If I am guilty], I will not object if that happens." 23 'Then the priest must write [with ink] on a small scroll these (curses/bad things that will happen to her if she is guilty) [and then wash the ink off into the bitter water]. 24 The priest must take from her the offering of barley flour [that she is holding], and lift it up to dedicate it to me. Then he must put it on the altar 26 and burn part of it as a sacrifice. Then the woman must drink the bitter water. 27 If the woman has committed adultery, the water will cause her to suffer greatly. Her stomach will swell up and her womb will shrink, [and she will be unable to give birth to children]. And then her (relatives/fellow Israelis) will curse her. 28 But if she (is innocent/has not committed adultery), her body will not be harmed, and she will still be able to give birth to children. 29 'That is the ritual that must be performed when a woman who is married has been unfaithful to her husband, 30 or when a man is jealous and suspects that his wife [has had sex with another man]. The priest must tell that woman to stand [at the altar] in my presence and obey these instructions. 31 Even if the woman has not done what the husband suspected, he will not be punished [MTY] for doing something wrong [by bringing his wife to the priest]. But if his wife is guilty, she will suffer as a result.'"

6 Yahweh also said this to Moses/me: 2 "Tell this to the Israeli people: 'If any of you [wants to] make a solemn promise to dedicate himself to belong to me in a special way, [after you obey these instructions], you will be called a Nazir-man, [which means "dedicated man"]. 3 You must not drink any wine or other alcoholic/fermented drink. You must not drink any vinegar made from wine or from any other alcoholic/fermented drink. You must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. 4 You must not eat anything that comes from grapevines, not even the skins or seeds of grapes, during the time that you are a Nazir-man. 5 'Even your hair will be dedicated to me during the time that you area Nazir-man, so you must never allow anyone to cut your hair. Until the time that your solemn promise to dedicate yourself to me is ended, you must allow your hair to grow long. 6 And you must not go near a corpse during the time that you are a Nazir-man. 7 Even if the person who died is your father or your mother or your brother or your sister, you must not cause yourself to become unacceptable to me [by coming close to the corpse]. Your long hair [MTY] shows that you belong to me in a special way, so you must not cut your hair. 8 You are required to keep doing this all the time that you are dedicated to me in this special way. 9 'If

anyone dies very suddenly when he is near you, then your hair that you have dedicated to me is no longer sacred. So you must wait seven days and then shave it all off. Then you must perform a special ritual to cause yourself to become acceptable to me again. **10** The next day you must bring two doves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. **11** 'The priest must [kill the birds and] offer them as sacrifices. One of them will be an offering to enable me to forgive you for the sins you have committed, and the other will be an offering that is burned completely to please me. [After the priest burns them on the altar], I will forgive you for having come close to a corpse, and [when] your hair [grows again it] will be dedicated to me again. **12** The amount of time that you were set apart for me the previous time does not count, because you had become unacceptable to me [by coming close to a corpse] during the time that you were a Nazir-man. So you must again make a solemn promise to dedicate yourself to me for the entire amount of time that you indicated the previous time. And you must also sacrifice a one-year-old lamb for not doing what you were required to do. **13** 'When the time that you promised to dedicate yourself to me is ended, go to the entrance of the Sacred Tent **14** and offer as sacrifices to me three animals that have no defects: Offer a one-year-old ram that will be burned completely, a one-year-old female lamb as a sacrifice to enable me to forgive your sins, and one full-grown ram as a sacrifice to maintain fellowship with me. **15** 'When you bring those animals, you must also bring some wine to offer as a sacrifice. And you must also bring a basket of bread that you have made with very good flour and [olive] oil. But you must not put any yeast in the bread. Also brush/spread some [olive] oil on some thin wafers and bring them to the priest. **16** 'The priest will put the young lamb and the young ram on the altar and completely burn them, in order that I will be pleased and will forgive you for your sins. **17** Then he will kill the full-grown ram as an offering to restore fellowship with me, and he will also burn on the altar some of the bread and the grain and wine. **18** 'After that, you must [stand at] the entrance of the Sacred Tent and shave off your hair. Then you must put that hair in the fire that is under the [animal that has been sacrificed] on the altar to maintain fellowship with me. **19** 'The meat from the ram's shoulder must be boiled. After it is cooked, the priest will take it along with one of the loaves of bread and one wafer which has been brushed with [olive] oil, and he will put them in your hands. **20** Then the priest will [take them back and] lift them up high to dedicate them to me. They now belong to the priest, and he is permitted to eat some of the meat from the ram's shoulder and from its ribs and from one of its thighs, because that meat is his share of the sacrifice. After that, you will no longer be a Nazir-man, and you will again be permitted to drink wine. **21** 'Those are the regulations about the offerings that Nazir-men solemnly promise to bring to me to end their time of being dedicated to me. They must bring these offerings, but if they want to, they may bring additional offerings. And they must do everything that they solemnly promised to do when they dedicated themselves to me.'" **22** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **23** "Tell Aaron and his sons that when they [ask me to] bless the people, they must say, **24** 'I desire that Yahweh will bless you and protect you, **25** and that he will smile at you and act kindly toward you, **26** and that he will be good to you [IDM] and cause things to go well for you.'" **27** Then Yahweh said, "If Aaron and his sons ask me to bless the Israeli people, truly I will bless them."

7 When Moses/I had finished setting up the Sacred Tent, he/I dedicated [MTY] it to Yahweh. He/I also dedicated the things that are inside the tent, and the altar [for burning sacrifices], and all the things that would be used at the altar. **2** Then the leaders of the [twelve] Israeli tribes, the same men who had [helped Aaron and Moses/me to] count the men [who could fight in battles], **3** came to the tent, bringing gifts to Yahweh. They brought six sturdy/large carts and twelve oxen, one ox from each of the leaders and a cart from each of the two leaders. **4** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, **5** "Accept these gifts, in order that the descendants of Levi can use them for carrying the sacred items that are here at the Sacred Tent." **6** So Moses/I took the carts and oxen and gave them to the descendants of Levi. **7** He/I gave two carts and four oxen to the descendants of Gershon for their work, **8** and he/I gave four carts and eight oxen to the descendants of Merari for their work. Aaron's son Ithamar was the supervisor of all their work. **9** But he/I did not give any carts or oxen to the descendants of Kohath, because they took care of the sacred items that were to be carried on their shoulders, [not on carts]. **10** On the day that the altar was dedicated [MTY], the [twelve] leaders brought other gifts to be dedicated and put them in front of the altar. **11** Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Each of the next twelve days one leader should bring his gifts for the dedication of the altar." **12** These are the gifts that each of the leaders brought: —a silver dish that weighed (more than three pounds/1.5 kg.), and a silver bowl that weighed (almost two pounds/800 grams), both of which were full of good flour and mixed with [olive] oil to be offerings of grain; they both were weighed using the standard scales; —a small gold dish that weighed (four ounces/14 grams), filled with incense; —a young bull, a [full-grown] ram, and a one-year-old ram, to be sacrifices to be completely burned on the altar; —a

goat to be sacrificed to [enable me to forgive the people] the sins they have committed; —and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five male goats, and five rams that were one-year-old, to be sacrifices to maintain the people's fellowship with Yahweh. This was the order in which the leaders brought their gifts: on the first day, Nahshon, son of Amminadab from the tribe of Judah brought his gifts; on the next/second day, Nethanel, son of Zuar, from the tribe of Issachar; on the next/third day, Eliab, son of Helon, from the tribe of Zebulun; on the next/fourth day, Elizur, son of Shedeur, from the tribe of Reuben; on the next/fifth day, Shelumiel, son of Jurishhaddai, from the tribe of Simeon; on the next/sixth day, Eliasaph, son of Deuel, from the tribe of Gad; on the next/seventh day, Elishama, son of Ammihud, from the tribe of Ephraim; on the next/eighth day, Gamaliel, son of Pedahzur, from the tribe of Manasseh; on the next/ninth day, Abidan, son of Gideoni, from the tribe of Benjamin; on the next/tenth day, Ahiezer, son of Ammishaddai, from the tribe of Dan; on the next/eleventh day, Pagiel, son of Acran, from the tribe of Asher; on the next/twelfth day, Ahira, son of Enam, from the tribe of Naphtali. **84** When the altar was dedicated to Yahweh, those [twelve] leaders brought these gifts: —twelve silver plates and twelve silver bowls, weighing a total of about (60 pounds/27.6 kg.), each of them being weighed on the scales kept in the Sacred Tent; —twelve gold dishes filled with incense, weighing a total of about (three pounds/1.4 kg.), each being weighed on those same scales; —twelve bulls, twelve [full-grown] rams, and twelve one-year-old rams, to be sacrifices that were completely burned, along with the grain offerings; —twelve goats to be sacrificed [to forgive the people] for the sins [they have committed]; —and 24 bulls, 60 full-grown rams, 60 goats, and 60 rams that were one-year-old, to be sacrifices to maintain the people's fellowship with Yahweh. **89** Whenever Moses/I entered the Sacred Tent to talk with Yahweh, he/I heard Yahweh's voice speaking between the two [images of] creatures with wings that were above the lid of the sacred chest.

8 Yahweh said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell Aaron to put the seven lamps on the lampstand and place them in such a way that they shine toward the front of the lampstand." **3** So [Moses/I told him what Yahweh said], and he did that. **4** The lampstand had been made from gold that had been hammered [from one large lump of gold], from its base to the decorations at the top [that resembled] flowers. The lampstand was made exactly like Yahweh had told Moses/me that it should be made. **5** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **6** "You must cause the descendants of Levi to be acceptable to me by setting them apart from the other Israeli people. **7** Do that by sprinkling them with water [which will symbolize] their being freed/cleansed from [the guilt of] their sins. Then they must shave [off all the hair on] their bodies and wash their clothes. **8** Then they must bring to the Sacred Tent one bull and some grain mixed with [olive] oil. [Those things will be burned] as sacrifices. They must also bring another bull [that will enable me to forgive them] for the sins they have committed. **9** Then you must summon all the Israeli people to come together in front of the Sacred Tent, to [gather around] the descendants of Levi. **10** Then the Israeli people must lay their hands on the descendants of Levi. **11** Aaron must then present them to me to be a gift from the Israeli people, in order that they can work for me [at the Sacred Tent]. **12** "After that, the descendants of Levi must place their hands on the heads of the two bulls. Then the bulls will be [killed and] burned on the altar. One will be an offering to enable me [to forgive them for] sins they have committed, and the other will be completely burned [to please me]. **13** The descendants of Levi must stand [at the altar] in front of Aaron and his sons, and you must then dedicate to me the descendants of Levi. **14** This ritual will show that the descendants of Levi are set apart from the other Israelis and that they belong to me. **15** "After the descendants of Levi have been made acceptable to me, and presented to me like a special offering, they may start to work at the Sacred Tent. **16** They will belong to me. They will work for me as substitutes for the firstborn males of all the Israelis, [who also belong to me]. **17** All the firstborn males in Israel, both the people and the animals, are mine. When I caused all the firstborn sons of the people of Egypt to die, [I (spared/did not kill) the firstborn males of the Israelis]. I set them apart to belong to me. I said that the firstborn males of all their domestic animals would also belong to me. **18** But now I have chosen the descendants of Levi to take the places of the firstborn males of other Israelis. **19** I have appointed the descendants of Levi to help Aaron and his sons at the Sacred Tent, as Aaron and his sons offer the sacrifices so that the Israeli people's sins will be forgiven, and to prevent the Israelis from coming close to the tent with the result that a plague would cause many of them to become sick and die." **20** Aaron and Moses/I and the other Israelis helped the descendants of Levi to do everything that Yahweh had commanded. **21** The descendants of Levi [sprinkled themselves with water to symbolize that] they had been freed/cleansed from [the guilt of] their sins, and they washed their clothes. Then Aaron brought them to [the altar to] present them to Yahweh, and he offered sacrifices to cleanse them from [the guilt of] their sins and cause them to become acceptable to Yahweh. **22** After that, the descendants of Levi started to work at the Sacred Tent to

assist Aaron and his sons. They did that just as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **23** Yahweh also said this to Moses/me: **24** "The descendants of Levi who are between 25 and 50 years old will work at the Sacred Tent. **25** But after they become 50 years old, they must (retire/not do that work any more). **26** They may help the other descendants of Levi to do their work at the Sacred Tent, but they must not do the work themselves. That is what you must tell them about the work they will do."

9 One year after the Israelis left Egypt, during the month of March, while they were in the Sinai Desert, Yahweh said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell the Israeli people that they must celebrate the Passover [Festival again]. **3** They must do it on the fourteenth day of this month, early in the evening, and they must obey all the instructions about it [that I gave you previously]." **4** So Moses/I told the people what Yahweh had said about celebrating the Passover. **5** The people celebrated it, there in the Sinai Desert, in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me. **6** But some of the Israeli people had touched a corpse, and as a result they had become unfit to celebrate the Passover. So they asked Aaron and Moses/me, **7** "It is true that we have touched a corpse. But why should that prevent us from celebrating the Passover Festival and offering sacrifices to Yahweh like everyone else [RHQ]?" **8** Moses/I replied, "Wait here until I go into the Sacred Tent and find out what Yahweh says about it." **9** [So Moses/I went into the tent and asked Yahweh what he/I should tell the people], and this is what Yahweh said: **10** "Tell this to the Israeli people: If any of you or your descendants touch a corpse and as a result become unacceptable to me, or if you are away from home on a long trip [at the time to celebrate the Passover], you will still be permitted to celebrate it. **11** But you must celebrate it exactly one month later, early in the evening of the fourteenth day of that month. Eat the meat of the lamb for the Passover Festival with bread that is baked without yeast and eat bitter herbs. **12** Do not leave any of it until the next morning. And do not break any of the lamb's bones. Obey all the regulations about celebrating the Passover. **13** But if any of you has not done anything that would make you unfit to celebrate the Passover Festival, and you are not away from home on a long trip, and you do not sacrifice to me at the proper time, you will no longer be allowed to associate with my people. (You will be punished/I will punish you). **14** Foreigners who live among you may also celebrate the Passover Festival, if they obey all my commands concerning it." **15** On the day that the Sacred Tent was set up, a cloud covered it. From the time that the sun set until the time that the sun rose [the next day], the cloud resembled a [huge] fire. And that is what happened every day [that we/the Israelis were in the desert]. **17** When the cloud rose up and started to move [to a new location], we/they followed it. When the cloud stopped, we/the Israelis stopped there and set up their tents. **18** We/They traveled when Yahweh, [by causing the cloud to move or stop], signaled to us/them when to move and when to stop. When the cloud stayed over the Sacred Tent, we/the Israelis stayed at that place. **19** Sometimes the cloud stayed over the tent for a long time, so when that happened, we/they did not travel. **20** Sometimes the cloud remained over the tent for only a few days. We/The people stopped and set up our/their tents as Yahweh commanded us/them, and we/they traveled [to a new location] when Yahweh commanded us/them to do that. **21** Sometimes the cloud stayed in one place for only one day. When that happened, when the cloud rose up [into the sky] the next morning, then we/they traveled. Whenever the cloud moved, during the day or during the night, we/they traveled. **22** If the cloud stayed over the Sacred Tent for two days, or for a month, or for a year, during that time we/they stayed where we/they were. But when the cloud rose up [into the sky], we/they started to travel. **23** When Yahweh commanded us/them to [stop and] set up our/their tents, we/they did that. When he told us/them to move, we/they moved. We/They did whatever Yahweh told Moses/me that we/they should do.

10 Yahweh also told Moses/me, **2** "[Tell someone to] make two trumpets by hammering each one from [one lump of] silver. Blow the trumpets to summon the people to come together and also to signal that they must move their tents [to a new location]. **3** If both trumpets are blown, it means that everyone must gather together at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. **4** If only one trumpet is blown, it means that only the [twelve] leaders of the tribes must gather together. **5** If the trumpets are blown loudly, the tribes that are to the east [of the Sacred Tent] should start to travel. **6** When the trumpets are blown loudly the second time, the tribes that are to the south should start to travel. The loud blasts on the trumpet will signal that they should start to travel. **7** When you want only to gather the people together, blow the trumpets, but do not blow them as loudly. **8** "The priests who are descended from Aaron are the ones who should blow the trumpets. That is a regulation that will never be changed. **9** When you fight against enemies who attack you in your own land, tell the priests to blow the trumpets loudly. I, Yahweh, your God, will hear that, and I will rescue you from your enemies. **10** Also tell the priests to blow the trumpets when the people are happy, and at the festivals [each year], and at the times when they celebrate the new moon each

month. Tell them to blow the trumpets when the people bring offerings that will be completely burned, and when they bring offerings to maintain fellowship with me. If they do that, it will help you to remember that I, Yahweh your God, [will help you]." **11** On the twentieth day of May in the second year [after the/we Israelis left Egypt], the cloud rose up from above the Sacred Tent. **12** So we/the Israelis traveled from the Sinai Desert, and we/they continued traveling [north] until the cloud stopped in the Paran Desert. **13** That was the first time we/they moved, obeying the instructions that Yahweh had given to Moses/me to tell them. **14** The group that went first, carrying their flag/banner, was the group from the tribe of Judah. Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, was their leader. **15** The group from the tribe of Issachar [followed them]. Nethanel, the son of Zuar, was their leader. **16** The group from the tribe of Zebulun went next. Eliab, the son of Helon, was their leader. **17** Then they dismantled the Sacred Tent, and the descendants of Gershon and Merari carried it, and they went next. **18** The group from the tribe of Reuben went next, carrying their flag. Elizur, the son of Shedeur, was their leader. **19** The group from the tribe of Simeon was next. Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai, was their leader. **20** The group from the tribe of Gad was next. Eliasaph, the son of Deuel, was their leader. **21** The group descended from Kohath was next. They carried the sacred items from the Sacred Tent. The Sacred Tent itself was set up at the new location before they arrived there. **22** The group from the tribe of Ephraim was next, carrying their flag. Elishama, the son of Ammihud, was their leader. **23** The group from the tribe of Manasseh went next. Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur, was their leader. **24** The group from the tribe of Benjamin, went next. Abidan, the son of Gideoni, was their leader. **25** The ones who went last were the group from the tribe of Dan, carrying their flag. Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai, was their leader. **26** The group from the tribe of Asher went next. Pagiel, the son of Ocran, was their leader. **27** The group from the tribe of Naphtali went last. Ahira, the son of Enan, was their leader. **28** That was the order in which the groups of Israeli tribes traveled. **29** One day Moses/I said to his/my brother-in-law Hobab, the son of Reuel from the Midian people-group, "We are on the way to the place that Yahweh promised to give to us. Come with us, and we will take good care of you, because Yahweh has promised [to do] good things for us Israeli people." **30** But Hobab replied, "No, I will not go with you. I want to return to my own land and to my own family." **31** But Moses/I said, "Please do not leave us. You know the places where we can set up our tents in this desert, and you can guide us. **32** Come with us. We will share with you all the good things that Yahweh gives to us." **33** [So Hobab agreed to go with them]. The Israelis left Sinai Mountain, [which they called] Yahweh's Mountain, and they walked for three days. The [men carrying the] sacred chest went in front of the other people for those three days, and they kept looking for a place to set up their tents. **34** The cloud sent by Yahweh was over them every day. **35** Each morning when the men who were carrying the sacred chest started to walk, Moses/I said, "Yahweh, arise! Scatter your enemies! Cause those who hate you to run away from you!" **36** And each time the men [stopped to] set down the sacred chest, Moses/I said, "Yahweh, stay close to the thousands of us Israelis!"

11 One day the people complained to Yahweh about their troubles. When Yahweh heard what they were saying, he became angry. So he sent a fire which burned among the people at the edge of their camp. **2** Then the people cried out to Moses/me, and he/I prayed to Yahweh. Then the fire stopped burning. **3** So they called that place Taberah, [which means 'burning'], because the fire from Yahweh had burned among them. **4** Then some troublemakers from other people-groups [who were traveling] with the Israelis began to want better food. And [when they started complaining] the Israeli people also started to complain. **5** They said, "We wish we had some meat! **6** We remember the fish that we ate while we were in Egypt, fish that was given to us without (cost/asking us to pay for it). And we had all the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic [that we wanted]. But now we do not have any desire to eat, because all we have to eat is this manna!" **7** The manna resembled small white seeds. **8** [Each morning] the people would go out and gather some [from the surface of the ground]. Then they made flour by grinding it or pounding it with stones. Then they [added water and] boiled it in a pot, or they made flat cakes with it [and baked them]. The cakes tasted like bread that was baked with [olive] oil. **9** Each night the manna came down on their ground where their tents were, like dew [from the sky]. **10** Moses/I heard all the Israeli people complaining as they were standing in the entrances of their tents. Yahweh became very angry, and Moses/I was also very perturbed. **11** He/I [went into the Sacred Tent and] asked Yahweh, "Why have you caused me, your servant, to experience this trouble [RHQ]? Act mercifully to me! What wrong have I done, with the result that you have appointed me to take care of all of these people [RHQ]? **12** (I am not their father./Am I their father?) [RHQ] Why have you told me to take care of them like a woman carries around her baby and (nurses it/gives it her milk) [MET, RHQ]? How can I take them to the land that you promised to give to our ancestors [RHQ]? **13** Where can I get meat to feed all

these people? They keep complaining to me, saying, 'Give us some meat to eat!' **14** I cannot carry all these people's burdens by myself! [They are like a heavy load [MET], and] I cannot carry this very heavy load any more. **15** If you intend to act like this toward me, kill me now. If you are really concerned about me, be kind to me and [kill me to] end my misery [of trying to take care of them]!" **16** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Summon 70 men whom you know are leaders among the Israeli people. Tell them to stand with you in front of the Sacred Tent. **17** I will come down and talk with you there. Then I will take some of [the power of] my Spirit that you have, and I will put [that power] on them also. They will help you to take care of some of the things that the people are concerned about, in order that you will not need to do it alone. **18** "Furthermore, say to the people, 'Make yourselves acceptable to me, and tomorrow you will have meat to eat. You were complaining, and Yahweh heard you when you were saying, "We want some meat to eat. We had better food in Egypt!" Now Yahweh will give you some meat, and you will eat it. **19** You will eat meat not only for one or two days, nor only for five or ten or 20 days. **20** [You will eat meat every day] for one month, and then you will loathe/despise it, and it will cause you to want to vomit. [This will happen] because you have rejected Yahweh who is here among you, and you have wailed in his presence, saying ["We would have had better food to eat] if we had not left Egypt [RHQ]."'" **21** But Moses/I replied to Yahweh, "There are 600,000 men [plus women and children] here with me, so ([why] do you say 'I will give them plenty of meat every day for a month!'?/it does not seem right for you to say 'I will give them plenty of meat every day for a month!') [RHQ] **22** Even if we killed all the sheep and cattle, that would not [RHQ] be enough [to provide meat for all of them] Even if we caught all the fish in the sea [and gave it to them], that would not be enough [RHQ]!" **23** But Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Do you think that I [SYN] have no power? You will now see if I can do what I say I will do." **24** So Moses/I went out [from the Sacred Tent] and told the people what Yahweh had said. Then he/I gathered together the 70 leaders and told them to stand around the Sacred Tent. **25** Then Yahweh came down in the cloud [that was above the tent] and spoke to Moses/me. He took some of [the power of] the Spirit that he had given to Moses/me and gave it to the 70 leaders. By means of the power of the Spirit within them, they (prophesied/spoke messages that Yahweh gave them), but they did that only once. **26** Two of the leaders whom Moses/I appointed, Eldad and Medad, were not there when the rest of them gathered together. They had not left [their tents] to go and stand around the Sacred Tent. But Yahweh's Spirit came on them also, and they started to (prophesy/speak messages from Yahweh). **27** So a young man ran and told Moses/me, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in all their tents!" **28** Joshua, who had helped Moses/me since he was a young man, said, "Sir, tell them to stop doing that!" **29** But Moses/I replied, "(Are you worried that they might injure my reputation/Do you think that I want to be the only one who prophesies) [RHQ]? I wish that all Yahweh's people could (prophesy/speak messages from Yahweh). I wish that Yahweh would give the power of his Spirit to all of them!" **30** Then Moses/I and all the leaders went back to their/our tents. **31** Then Yahweh sent a strong wind from the sea. It blew quail into the area all around the camp for miles in every direction, [and caused the quail to fall onto the ground]. They were piled up on the ground about (3 feet/1 meter) high! **32** So the people went out and gathered up the quail all that day, and all that night, and all of the following day. [It seemed as though] everyone gathered at least 50 bushels! They spread the quail out on the ground all around the camp, [so that the quail would dry out]. **33** [Then they cooked them and started to eat them]. But while they were still eating the meat [MTY], Yahweh [showed that he] was very angry with them. He struck them with a severe plague/sickness, [and many people died]. **34** The people who died and were buried were the ones who had said they wanted to eat meat [like they had formerly eaten in Egypt]. So they called that place Kibroth-Hattaavah, [which means 'graves of those who craved']. **35** From there, the Israelis continued walking [east] until they arrived at Hazeroth [town], where they stopped and stayed [for a long time].

12 [Moses'/My older sister] Miriam and [his/my older brother] Aaron were saying this: "Is Moses the only one to whom Yahweh has spoken messages to tell to us [RHQ]? Does Yahweh not speak messages to us two also?" [They told people that] they were saying that because Moses/I had married a woman who was a descendant of the Cush people-group, [but they were really saying that because they (were jealous/did not want Moses/me to be the only leader of the Israeli people)]. But Yahweh heard what they were saying. **3** [The truth was that] Moses/I was very humble. He/I was more humble than anyone else on the earth [and Moses/I had not appointed himself/myself to be their leader]. **4** So immediately Yahweh spoke to Moses/me and to Aaron and Miriam. He said, "All three of you must go and stand at the Sacred Tent." So they/we did that. **5** Then Yahweh descended to the entrance of the tent in a cloud [that resembled a huge white] pillar. He told Aaron and Miriam to step forward, so they did. **6** Then he said to them, "Listen to me! When a prophet is among you, I

[usually] reveal myself to him by allowing him to see visions, and I speak to him in dreams. 7 But that is not the way I speak to my servant Moses. I trust that he will lead my people [well]. 8 So I talk to him face-to-face. I speak to him (clearly/using words that he will understand easily), not using parables. He has even seen what I look like. So you should be afraid to criticize my servant Moses!" 9 Yahweh was very angry with Miriam and Aaron, and he left. 10 When the cloud rose up from the Sacred Tent, Aaron looked at Miriam, and he saw that her skin was [as white] as snow, because she now had leprosy. 11 Aaron said to Moses/me, "My master, please do not punish us for this sin that we have foolishly committed. 12 Do not allow Miriam to be like a baby that is already dead when it is born, whose flesh is already half decayed!" 13 So Moses/I cried out to Yahweh, saying, "God, I plead with you to heal her!" 14 But Yahweh replied, "If her father had [rebuked her for doing something wrong by] spitting in her face, she would have been ashamed for seven days. [She should be ashamed because of what she has done]. So send her outside the camp for seven days. Then [she will not have leprosy any more, and] she may return to the camp." 15 So they sent her outside the camp for seven days. (The people/We) did not move [to another location] until she returned. 16 But after [she returned], they/we left Hazeroth and moved [north] in the Paran Desert and set up their/our tents there.

13 Yahweh said to Moses/me, 2 "Send some men to Canaan [land] to explore it. That is the land that I will give to you Israelis. Send men who are leaders in their tribes." 3 So Moses/I did what Yahweh commanded him/me. He/I sent out twelve Israeli men who were all leaders of their tribes. He/I sent them from their/our camp at Paran in the desert. 4 These are the names of the men [and the tribes they belonged to:] Shammua, the son of Zaccur, from the tribe of Reuben; 5 Shaphat, the son of Hori, from the tribe of Simeon; 6 Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, from the tribe of Judah; 7 Igal, the son of Joseph, from the tribe of Issachar; 8 Hoshea, the son of Nun, from the tribe of Ephraim; 9 Palti, the son of Raphu, from the tribe of Benjamin; 10 Gaddiel, the son of Sodi, from the tribe of Zebulun; 11 Gaddi, the son of Susi, from the tribe of Manasseh; 12 Ammiel, the son of Gemalli, from the tribe of Dan; 13 Sethur, the son of Michael, from the tribe of Asher; 14 Nahbi, the son of Vophsi, from the tribe of Naphtali; 15 and Geuel, the son of Maki, from the tribe of Gad. 16 Those are the names of the men whom Moses/I sent out to explore Canaan. [Before they left], Moses/I gave Hoshea a new name, Joshua, [which means 'Yahweh is the one who saves].' 17 Before Moses/I sent them to explore Canaan, he/I said to them, "Go through the southern part of Canaan, and then go [north] into the hilly area. 18 See what the land is like. See if the people who live there are strong or weak. See if there are many people or only a few people. 19 Find out what kind of land they live in [RHQ]. Is it good or bad? Find out about the towns in which they live [RHQ]. Do they have walls around them or not? 20 Find out about the soil [RHQ]. Is it (fertile/good for growing crops) or not? Find out if there are trees there [RHQ]. Try to bring back some of the fruit that grows in that land." [He/I said that because] it was the beginning of the time to harvest grapes. 21 So those men went to Canaan. They went [through the entire land], from the Zin desert [in the south] all the way to Rehob [town] near Lebo-Hamath [in the north]. 22 In the south, they went to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, [huge men] descended from Anak, lived. Hebron was a city that was built seven years before Zoan [city] was built in Egypt. 23 In one valley, they cut from a grapevine one cluster of grapes. [Because it was very large, they needed] two men to carry it on a pole. They also picked some pomegranates and some figs [to carry back to their camp]. 24 They called that place Eshcol [which means 'cluster'] because they had cut that [huge] cluster of grapes there. 25 After they explored the land for 40 days, they returned to their camp. 26 They came to Aaron and Moses/me and the rest of the Israeli people in the desert at Paran. They reported to everyone what they had seen. They also showed them the fruit that they had brought back. 27 But this is what they reported to Moses/me: "We arrived in the land that you sent us to explore. It is truly a beautiful land, and it is very fertile [IDM]. Here is some of the fruit. 28 But the people who live there are very strong. Their cities are large and are surrounded by walls. We even saw some of the [huge] descendants of Anak there. 29 The descendants of Amalek live in the southern part [of the land], and the descendants of Heth, Jebus, and Amor live in the hilly area [to the north]. The descendants of Canaan live along the coast of the [Mediterranean] sea and along the Jordan [River]." 30 [When they said that, the people were afraid and started to cry out very loudly]. But Caleb told the people who were standing near Moses/me to be quiet. Then he said, "We should go there and take the land, because we are certainly able to conquer it!" 31 But the men who had gone with him said, "No, we cannot attack [and defeat] those people! They are much stronger than we are!" 32 So those men gave to the Israeli people a bad report about the land that they had explored. They said, "The land that we explored is very large; we cannot conquer it. And all the people whom we saw are very tall. 33 We even saw the descendants of Nephili there. The descendants of Anak [whom we saw there] are descended from the giant

Nephili people. When we saw them, we felt [as small] as grasshoppers [SIM], and they thought that we looked like grasshoppers too!"

14 That night, all the Israeli people cried loudly. **2** The next day they all complained to Aaron and Moses/me. All the men said, "We wish that we had died in Egypt, or in this desert! **3** Why is Yahweh bringing us to this land, where we men will be killed with swords? And our wives and children will be taken away [to be slaves]. [Instead of going to Canaan]. It would be better for us to return to Egypt!" **4** Then [some of] them said to each other, "We should choose a leader who will take us back to Egypt!" **5** Then Aaron and Moses/I bowed down [to pray] in front of all the Israeli people who had gathered there. **6** Joshua and Caleb, two of the men who had explored the land, tore their clothes [because they were very dismayed]. **7** They said to the Israeli people, "The land that we explored is very good. **8** If Yahweh is pleased with us, he will lead us into that very fertile [IDM] land, and he will give it to us. **9** So do not rebel against Yahweh! And do not be afraid of the people in that land! We will (gobble them up/completely destroy them) [MET]! They do not have anyone who will protect them, but Yahweh will be with us [and help us]. So do not be afraid of them!" **10** Then all the Israeli people talked about [killing Caleb and Joshua by] throwing stones at them. But [suddenly] Yahweh's glory appeared to them at the Sacred Tent. **11** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "How long will these people reject me [RHQ]? I am tired of them not believing in what I [can do], in spite of all the miracles I have performed among them [RHQ]! **12** So I will cause a (plague/widespread sickness) to strike them and get rid of them. But I will cause your [descendants] to become a great nation. They will be a nation that is much greater and stronger than these people are." **13** But Moses/I replied to Yahweh, "[Please do not do that, because] the people of Egypt will hear about it! You brought these Israeli people from Egypt by your great power, **14** and the people of Egypt will tell that to the [descendants of Canaan] who live in this land. Yahweh, they have already heard about you. They know that you have (been with/helped) these people and that they have seen you face-to-face. They have heard that your cloud is like a huge pillar that stays over them, and by using that cloud you lead them during the day, and the cloud becomes like a fire at night [to give them light]. **15** If you kill these people all at one time, the people-groups who have heard about your [power] will say, **16** 'Yahweh was not able to bring them into the land that he promised to give to them, so he killed them in the desert.' **17** "So Yahweh, now show that you are very powerful. You said, **18** 'I do not quickly become angry; instead, I love people very much, and I forgive people for having sinned and having disobeyed my laws. But I will always punish [LIT] people who are guilty of doing what is wrong. When parents sin, I will punish them, but I will also punish their children and their grandchildren and their great-grandchildren and their great-great-grandchildren.' **19** So, because you love people like that, forgive these people for the sins that they have committed, just like you have continued to forgive them ever since they left Egypt." **20** Then Yahweh replied, "I have forgiven them, as you requested me to. **21** But, just as certainly as I live and that people all over the world [can see] my (glory/glorious power), [I solemnly declare this:] **22** All these people saw my glory and all the miracles that I performed in Egypt and in the desert, but they disobeyed me, and many times they tested [whether they could continue to do evil things without my punishing them]. **23** Because of that, not one of them will see the land that I promised their ancestors [that I would give to them]. No one who rejected me will see that land. **24** But Caleb, who serves me [well], is different from the others. He obeys me completely. So I will bring him into that land that he has already seen, and his descendants will inherit/possess some of it. **25** So, since the descendants of Amalek and Canaan who are living in the valleys [in Canaan are very strong], when you leave here tomorrow, [instead of traveling toward Canaan], go back along the road through the desert towards the Red Sea." **26** Then Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, **27** "How long will the wicked people of this nation keep complaining about me [RHQ]? I have heard everything that they have grumbled/complained against me. **28** So now tell them this: 'Just as certainly as I, Yahweh, live, I will do exactly what you said would happen. **29** [I will cause] all of you to die here in this desert! Because you grumbled about me, none of you who are more than 20 years old and who were counted when Moses counted everyone **30** will enter the land that I solemnly promised to give to you. Only Caleb and Joshua will enter that land. **31** You said that your children would be taken from you [to become slaves], but I will take them into the land, and they will enjoy living in the land that you (rejected/said that you could not conquer). **32** But as for you [adults], you will die here in this desert. **33** And like shepherds [wander around in the desert as they take care of their sheep], your children will wander around in this desert for 40 years. Because you adults were not loyal/faithful to me, your children will suffer until you all die in the desert. **34** You will suffer for your sins for 40 years. That will be one year for each of the 40 days that the twelve men explored Canaan land. And I will be like an enemy to you.' **35** [This will certainly happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it! I will

do these things to every one in this group who conspired against me. They (conspired against/decided together to reject) me here in the desert, and they will all die right here in this desert!" **36** Then the ten men [who had explored Canaan and] who had urged the people to rebel against Yahweh by giving reports that discouraged the people **37** were immediately struck with a plague/disease that Yahweh sent, and they died. **38** Of the twelve men who had explored Canaan, only Joshua and Caleb remained alive. **39** When Moses/I reported to the Israeli people what Yahweh had said, many of them were very sad. **40** So the people got up early the next morning and started to go toward the hilly area in Canaan. They said, "[We know that] we have sinned, but now we [are ready to] enter the land that Yahweh promised to give to us." **41** But Moses/I said, "Yahweh commanded you [to return to the desert, so] why are you now disobeying him [RHQ]? It will not (succeed/be possible). **42** Do not try to enter the land now! [If you try], your enemies will defeat you, because Yahweh will not (be with/help) you. **43** When you begin to fight the descendants of Amalek and Canaan, they will slaughter you! Yahweh will abandon you, because you have abandoned him." **44** But even though Moses/I did not leave the camp, and the sacred chest that contained the Ten Commandments was not taken from the camp, the people began to go towards the hilly area in Canaan. **45** Then the descendants of Amalek and Canaan who lived in that hilly area came down and attacked them and chased them as far [south] as [the town of] Hormah.

15 Then Yahweh told Moses/me, **2** "Tell this to the Israeli people: When you arrive in the land that I am giving to you, **3** you must offer to me special sacrifices which will be pleasing to me [when the priest burns them on the altar]. Some of them may be offerings that will be completely burned [on the altar]. Some of them may be to indicate that you have made a solemn promise to me. Some of them may be offerings that you yourselves have decided to make. Some of them may be offerings at one of the festivals that you celebrate each year. These offerings may be taken from your herds [of cattle] or from your flocks [of sheep and goats]. **4** When you give these offerings, you must also bring to me a grain offering of two quarts/liters of nice flour mixed with one quart/liter of [olive] oil. **5** When you offer a lamb to be a sacrifice to be completely burned, you must also pour on the altar one quart/liter of wine. **6** 'When you offer a ram to be a sacrifice, you must also bring an offering of four quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with (a third of a gallon/1.3 liters) of [olive] oil. **7** And also pour on the altar (a third of a gallon/1.3 liters) of wine. While they are being burned, the smell will be very pleasing to me. **8** 'Sometimes you will offer a young bull to be completely burned on the altar. Sometimes you will offer a sacrifice to indicate that you have made a solemn promise to me. Sometimes you will offer a sacrifice to maintain fellowship with me. **9** When you offer these sacrifices, you must also offer a grain offering of six quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with two quarts/liters of [olive] oil. **10** Also pour on the altar two quarts/liters of wine to be an offering. While those special gifts are being burned, the smell will be very pleasing to me. **11** Each time someone offers a bull or a ram or a male lamb or a young goat to be a sacrifice, it must be done that way. **12** You must obey these instructions for each animal that you bring to me for an offering. **13** 'All of you people who have been Israelis all of your lives must obey these regulations when you offer sacrifices that will be pleasing to me when they are burned on the altar. **14** If any foreigners visit you or live among you, if they also want to bring a sacrifice that will be pleasing to me when it is burned on the altar, they must obey these same instructions. **15** I consider that those who have always been Israelis and those who are foreigners are equal, and so they must all obey the same instructions. All of your descendants must also continue to obey these instructions. **16** You Israelis and the foreigners who live among you must all obey the same instructions." **17** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **18** "Tell these instructions to the Israeli people: [Yahweh says this]: 'When you arrive in the land to which I am taking you, **19** and you eat the crops that are growing there, you must set some of them aside to be a sacred offering to me. **20** [Each year] set aside some of the first grain that you gather after you have threshed it. Bake a loaf of bread from the first flour that you grind and bring it to me to be a sacred offering. **21** Every year, you and your descendants must continue to make and bring to me [a loaf of bread baked] [MTY] [with flour] from the first part of the grain that you harvest.'" **22** "'There may be times when you Israelis do not obey all these instructions that I have given to Moses to tell you, but not because you intended to disobey them. **23** There may be times when some of your descendants do not obey all these instructions that I have given to Moses to tell to you. **24** If you or they sin [by forgetting to obey these instructions] and none of the Israeli people realize that they were doing that, one young bull as an offering for all the people [must be brought to the priest]. That will be pleasing to me [when it is burned on the altar]. They must also bring to me a grain offering and an offering of wine, and a male goat, to be sacrificed to enable me to forgive them for the sins they have committed. **25** [By offering these sacrifices], the priest will make atonement for all of you Israeli people. Then, as a

result of their bringing to me an offering to be burned [on the altar], (you will be forgiven/I will forgive you), because you sinned without realizing that you were sinning. **26** You Israeli people and the foreigners who are living among you will all be forgiven. **27** If one person commits a sin without realizing that he was sinning, that person must bring to me a female goat to be an offering to enable me to forgive that person for the sins that person has committed. **28** The priest will offer it to be a sacrifice to remove the guilt of that person, and that person will be forgiven. **29** You Israelis and all the foreigners who live among you must obey these same instructions. **30** But those who disobey my commands (deliberately/because they want to), both Israelis and the foreigners who live among you, have sinned against me [by doing that]. So (they must be expelled/you must expel them) from your camp. **31** They have despised my commands and deliberately disobeyed them, so they must be punished for their sin by not being allowed to live among you any more.'" **32** One day, while the Israelis were in the desert, some of them saw a man who was gathering firewood on the Sabbath/rest day. **33** Those who saw him doing that brought him to Aaron and Moses/me and the rest of the Israeli people. **34** They guarded him carefully, because they did not know what to do [to punish] him. **35** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "The man must be executed. All of you must [kill him by throwing] stones at him outside the camp." **36** So they all took the man outside the camp and killed him by throwing stones at him, as Yahweh had commanded Moses/me that they should do. **37** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **38** "Tell this to the Israeli people: You and all your descendants must [twist threads together to] make tassels, and then attach them with blue cords to the bottom edges of your clothes. **39** When you look at the tassels, you will remember all the instructions that I gave to you, and you will obey them, instead of doing what you desire and as a result causing yourselves to become unacceptable to me. **40** Seeing those tassels will help you to remember that you must obey all my commands and that you must be (my holy people/dedicated to me). **41** Do not forget that I am Yahweh, your God. I am the one who brought you out of Egypt in order that you might belong to me. I am Yahweh, your God."

16 One day Korah, who was the son of Izhar and a descendant of Levi's son Kohath, conspired with Dathan and Abiram, who were the sons of Eliab, and On, who was the son of Peleth. Those three men were from the tribe of Reuben. **2** Korah and those other three men incited 250 other people who were leaders among the Israeli people to join them in rebelling against Moses/me. **3** They came together to criticize Aaron and Moses/me. They said to them/us, "You two are using more [authority] than you should! Yahweh has set apart all of us Israeli people, and he is with/helping all of us. So why do you act as though you are more important than the rest of us people who belong to Yahweh [RHQ]?" **4** When Moses/I heard what they were saying, he/I prostrated himself/myself on the ground. **5** Then he/I said to Korah and those [Israeli leaders] who were with Korah, "Tomorrow morning Yahweh will show us whom he has chosen to be his [priest], and who is holy and allowed to come near to him. Yahweh will permit [only] those whom he chooses to come into his presence. **6** So Korah, tomorrow you and those who are with you must prepare your pans to burn incense. **7** Then you must light a fire in them and burn the incense in the presence of Yahweh. Then we will see which one of us Yahweh has chosen to be his holy servant. It is you men who are descendants of Levi who are trying to use more [authority] than you should!" **8** Then Moses/I spoke again to Korah. He/I said, "You men who are descendants of Levi, listen to me! **9** The God of us Israelis has chosen all of you to be close to him in order that you can work for him at his Sacred Tent and serve the people. (Is that unimportant/Does that mean nothing) to you [RHQ]? **10** Yahweh has brought you, [Korah], and your fellow descendants of Levi, near to himself. Now are you demanding to become priests also? **11** It is really Yahweh against whom you and your fellow descendants of Levi are rebelling. Aaron is not the one about whom you are really complaining [RHQ]." **12** Then Moses/I summoned Dathan and Abiram, but [they refused to come]. They [sent a message] saying, "We will not come to you! **13** You brought us out of Egypt, which was a very fertile [IDM] land, in order to cause us to die here in this desert. That was bad. But now you are also trying to boss us [RHQ], and that is worse. **14** You have not given us a new land to live in, a land that has good fields and vineyards. You are only trying to [RHQ] trick these people. So we will not come to you." **15** Then Moses/I became very angry. He/I said to Yahweh, "Do not accept the grain offerings that they have brought. I have not taken anything from them, not even one donkey, and I have never done anything wrong to them, [so they have no reason to complain about me]." **16** Then Moses/I said to Korah, "You and all those who are with you must come here tomorrow and stand in front of Yahweh. Aaron will also be here. **17** You and all the 250 men who are with you must each take a pan in which to burn incense, and put incense in it, to [burn it to be] an offering to Yahweh. Aaron will do the same thing." **18** So [the next day] each of those men got a pan to burn incense. They put in it incense and hot coals to light it, and then they all stood at the entrance of the Sacred Tent

with Aaron and Moses/me. 19 Then Korah summoned all the people who supported him and who were against Moses/me, and they also gathered at the entrance of the tent. Then the glory of Yahweh appeared to all of them/us, 20 and Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, 21 "Get away from all these people, in order that I can get rid of them immediately!" 22 But Aaron and Moses/I prostrated themselves/ourselves on the ground. We pleaded with Yahweh, saying, "God, you are the one who caused all these people to live [MTY]. Only one of these men has sinned; so, (is it right for you to be angry with all the people?/it is not right for you to be angry with all the people!) [RHQ]" 23 Yahweh said to Moses/me, 24 "[Okay], but tell all the people to get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram." 25 So Moses/I stood up and went to the tents of Dathan and Abiram. The Israeli leaders followed him/me. 26 He/I told the people, "Get away from the tents of these wicked men, and do not touch anything that belongs to them! If you touch anything, you will die because of their sins!" 27 So all the people moved away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram came out of their tents with their wives and children and babies, and stood at the entrances of their tents. 28 Then Moses/I said, "I was not the one who decided to do all these things that I have done. It was Yahweh who [chose me and] sent me to do them. And now he will prove that to you. 29 If these men die in a normal way, then it will be clear that Yahweh did not choose me. 30 But if Yahweh does something that has never happened before, if he causes the ground [that is under their feet] to open up and swallow these men [and their families] and all their possessions, and they fall into the opening and are buried while they are still alive, then you will know that these men have insulted Yahweh." (Sheol h7585) 31 As soon as Moses/I said this, the ground split open beneath those men. 32 It swallowed them and their families and all those who were standing there with Korah and all of their possessions. 33 They fell into the opening in the ground while they were still alive, and all their possessions fell into the opening also. They disappeared, and the ground closed back up again. (Sheol h7585) 34 They screamed as they fell, and all the people who were standing nearby heard them scream. The people [were terrified and] cried out as they ran away, saying, "[We do not want] the ground to swallow us also!" 35 And then a fire from Yahweh came down [from the sky] and burned up the 250 men who were burning the incense! 36 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 37 "Tell Aaron's son Eleazar to take the pans that had incense in them away from the fire and to scatter the burning coals. The pans that those men [were carrying] are (holy/dedicated to me) [because they burned incense to me in them]. 38 Those men have now died because of their sin; so [Eleazar must] take their pans and hammer the metal to make it become very thin. He must make a covering for the altar with that metal. Those pans were used to offer incense to me, so they are (holy/dedicated to me). [What happened to] those pans will now warn the Israeli people." 39 So Eleazar the priest collected the 250 pans for burning incense that had been used by the men who died in the fire. He hammered the pans very thin to make a covering for the altar, as Yahweh told Moses/me should be done. 40 That warned the Israeli people that only those who were descendants of Aaron were permitted to burn incense for an offering to Yahweh. If anyone else did that, the same thing that happened to Korah and those who were with him would happen to them. 41 But the following morning, all the Israeli people started to complain against Aaron and Moses/me, saying "You have killed many people who belonged to Yahweh!" 42 When all the people gathered together to protest about what Aaron and Moses/I had done, they looked at the Sacred Tent and saw that the sacred cloud had covered it, and the glory of Yahweh had appeared. 43 Aaron and Moses/I went and stood in front of the Sacred Tent. 44 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 45 "Get away from these people, in order that I can get rid of them immediately [without injuring you two]!" But Aaron and Moses/I prostrated themselves/ourselves on the ground [and prayed]. 46 Moses/I said to Aaron, "Quickly take another pan and put in it some burning/hot coals from the altar. Put incense in the pan, and carry it out among the people to atone for the sins of the people. Yahweh is very angry with them, and [I know that] a (severe plague/bad sickness) has already started among them." 47 So Aaron did what Moses/I told him. He took the burning incense out among the people. The plague had already started to strike the people, but Aaron continued to burn the incense so that God would forgive them for the sins they had committed. 48 He stood between the people who had already died and those who were still alive, and then the plague stopped. 49 But 14,700 people had already died from that plague/sickness, in addition to the people who died with Korah. 50 Then after the plague had ended, Aaron and Moses/I returned to the entrance of the Sacred Tent.

17 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 2 "Tell the Israeli people to bring to you twelve walking sticks. They should bring one from each of the leaders of the twelve tribes. You should carve each leader's name on his stick. 3 There must be one stick for the leader of each tribe, so you must carve Aaron's name on the stick for the tribe of Levi. 4 Put those sticks inside the Sacred Tent, in front of the sacred chest that has in it the tablets on which the

Ten Commandments are written. That is the place where I always talk with you. 5 Buds will sprout on the stick of the man whom I have chosen [to be the priest]. [When the people see that], they will stop their constantly complaining about you [because they will realize that you are the one whom I have chosen]." 6 So Moses/I told the people what Yahweh had said. Then each of the twelve Israeli leaders, including Aaron, brought his walking stick to Moses/me. 7 Moses/I placed the sticks inside the Sacred Tent in front of the sacred chest. 8 The following morning, when he/I went into the tent, he/I saw that Aaron's stick, which represented the tribe of Levi, had sprouted, it had produced leaves and blossoms, and it had also produced almonds that were ripe! 9 Moses/I brought all the sticks out of the Sacred Tent and showed them to the people. Each of the twelve leaders took back his own stick. 10 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Put Aaron's stick in front of the sacred chest, and let it stay there permanently. That will be a warning to people who want to rebel [against me]. Then no more people will die [because of complaining against me]." 11 So Moses/I did what Yahweh had commanded. 12 Then the Israeli people said to Moses/me, "We are going to die! All of us are surely going to die! 13 Everyone who comes close to Yahweh's Sacred Tent dies. Are the rest of us going to die, also?" [RHQ]

18 Yahweh said to Aaron, "You and your sons and the other members of your father's family are the ones (who will be punished/whom I will punish) [if anything bad happens to the things] inside the Sacred Tent. But only you and your sons will be punished if the priests do something bad. 2 Require that those who belong to your tribe, the tribe of Levi, must assist you and your sons while you perform your work at the Sacred Tent. 3 But while they do that work, they must not go near the sacred items inside the tent or near the altar. If they do that, they will die, and you will die, too! 4 They may assist you in doing all the work to take care of the Sacred Tent, but no one else is permitted to come near the place where you are working. 5 "You are the ones who will do the sacred work inside the Sacred Tent and at the altar. If you obey these instructions, I will not become very angry with the Israeli people again. 6 I myself have chosen the descendants of Levi from the other Israelis in order that they may be your special helpers. They are like a gift that I have given you to work at the Sacred Tent. 7 But it is you and your sons, who are the priests, who must perform all the rituals concerning the altar and with what happens inside the Very Holy Place. I am giving to you this work of serving as priests. So anyone else who tries to do that work must be executed." 8 Yahweh also said to Aaron, "I myself have appointed you to take care of all the sacred offerings that the Israeli people bring to me. I have given all these sacred offerings to you and to your sons. You and your descendants will get a share of these offerings permanently. 9 The parts of the offerings that are not completely burned on the altar belong to you. Those parts of the sacred offerings, including the offerings of grain, the offerings for sins and for the people to be forgiven for not giving me what they are required to give, are set apart, and are to be given to you and your sons. 10 You must eat those offerings in a sacred place, [near the Sacred Tent]. You and all of the other males [in your clan] may eat them, but you must consider those offerings to be holy/dedicated to me. 11 "The priests lift up high the sacred offerings while they are standing in front of the altar. All of those offerings that the Israelis offer to me belong to you and your sons and daughters. They will always be your share. All the members of your family who [have performed the rituals to cause them to] be acceptable to me are permitted to eat from these offerings. 12 "am [also] giving to you the first food that people harvest each year and bring to me—the best [olive] oil and new wine and grain. 13 All of the first crops that people harvest and bring to me belong to you. Anyone in your family who has [performed the ritual to] become acceptable to me is permitted to eat that food. 14 "Everything in Israel that is set apart to belong to me also belongs to you. 15 The firstborn males, both humans and domestic animals, that are offered to me, will be yours. But people must buy back their firstborn sons and the firstborn animals that may not be used for sacrifices. 16 They must buy them back when they are one month old. The price that they must pay [for each one] is five pieces of silver. They must weigh the silver on the scales that are in the Sacred Tent. 17 "But they are not permitted to buy back the firstborn cattle or sheep or goats. They are holy and have been set apart for me. [Slaughter them and] sprinkle their blood on the altar. Then completely burn the fat of those animals [on the altar] to be an offering to me. The smell as they burn will be very pleasing to me. 18 The meat from those offerings will be yours, just like the breast and right thigh of animals that are presented to me to maintain fellowship with me as the priest lifts them up high in front of the altar are yours. 19 Anything that the Israeli people present to me as holy/sacred gifts, I am giving to you. They are for you and your sons and daughters [to eat]. They will always be your share. This is an agreement that I am making with you, an agreement that will (last forever/never be changed). I am also making this agreement with your descendants." 20 Yahweh also said to Aaron, "You priests will not receive any of the land or the property like the [other] Israeli people will receive. I am

what you will receive. 21 "Then the Israeli people bring to me a tenth of all [the crops and of their newborn animals], I will give that to you descendants of Levi. That will be your payment for the work you do at the Sacred Tent. 22 The other Israelis must not go near that tent. If they go near it, [I will consider that their doing that is a sin, and] they will die for committing that sin. 23 Only the descendants of Levi are permitted to work at the Sacred Tent, and they will be punished if anything bad happens to it. That is a law that will never be changed. You descendants of Levi will not receive any land among the other Israeli people, 24 because I will give you one tenth of all the [crops and animals] that the Israelis bring to be offerings to me. That is why I said that you will not receive any land like the other Israelis will receive." 25 Yahweh said to Moses/me, 26 "Tell this to the descendants of Levi: 'When you receive one tenth of all [the crops and animals] from the Israeli people, you must give one tenth of all that to me to be a sacred offering. 27 Just like the other Israelis give one tenth of the grain and wine that they produce, 28 you must give to me one tenth of all that you receive from them. That will be your sacred offering to me. You must present it to Aaron. 29 Select the best parts of the things that are given to you to give them to me.' 30 "Also, tell this to the descendants of Levi: 'When you present those best portions of grain and wine as your offering to me, I will consider that those gifts are as though they came from your own grain fields and vineyards. 31 You descendants of Levi and your families are permitted to eat [the rest of] that food, and you may eat it wherever [you want to], because it is your payment for the work that you do at the Sacred Tent. 32 If you give to the priests the best portions of what you receive, you will not be punished [by me] for accepting one tenth of the gifts that the people bring to me. But you must consider those gifts to be sacred/holy. If you sin [by eating those things in ways that are contrary to these regulations that I have given to you], you will be executed.'"

19 Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, 2 "I am now giving to you another regulation. Tell the Israeli people to bring to you one reddish-brown cow that has no defects. It must be an animal that (has never been/no one has ever) used for plowing ground. 3 Give it to Eleazar, the priest. He must take it outside the camp and slaughter it [and drain the blood in a basin]. 4 He must dip one of his fingers in the blood and sprinkle some of it seven times [on the ground] near the Sacred Tent. 5 Then, while Eleazar watches, the cow must be burned completely—its hide, its meat, [the rest of] its blood, and even its dung. 6 Eliezer then must take a stick of cedar wood, a stalk of [a plant named] hyssop, and some scarlet/red yarn, and throw them into the fire where the cow is burning. 7 "Then the priest must wash his clothes and bathe. After doing that, he may return to the camp. But he will be unfit for doing any sacred work until that evening. 8 The man who burns the cow must also wash his clothes and bathe, and he will also be unacceptable to me until that evening. 9 "Then someone who has not become unacceptable to me must gather up the ashes of the cow and put them in a (sacred place/place that is acceptable to me) outside the camp. The ashes must be kept there for the people of Israel to [use when they] mix it with water for the ritual to remove the guilt of sin. 10 The man who gathers up the ashes of the cow must [also] wash his clothes, and he [also] will be unfit to do any more sacred work until that evening. That is a regulation that will never be changed. It must be obeyed by you Israeli people and by any foreigners who live among you. 11 "All those who touch a corpse will be unacceptable to me for seven days. 12 On the third day and on the seventh day [after touching a corpse], in order to become acceptable to me again, [they must have sprinkled on them] some of that water for removing the guilt of their sin. If they do not do that on both of those days, they will continue to be unacceptable to me. 13 All those who touch a corpse, and do not perform in the correct way the ritual to become acceptable to me again, defile Yahweh's Sacred Tent. They will no longer be permitted to live among the Israeli people. The water to remove the guilt of sin was not sprinkled on them, so they continue to be unacceptable to me. 14 "There is another ritual that must be performed when someone dies inside a tent. All those who were inside that tent when that person died or who enter that tent will be unacceptable to me for seven days. 15 Any jars that are inside that tent that are not covered are not permitted to be used. 16 If someone who is out in a field touches the corpse of someone who was murdered, or who died from natural causes, or if someone touches a bone from some human or touches a grave, that person will be unacceptable to me for seven days. 17 "For someone like that to become acceptable to me again, some of the ashes from [the cow] that was burned must be taken and put in a jar. Then some fresh water must be poured over the ashes. 18 Then someone who is still acceptable to me must take a stalk of [a plant named] hyssop and dip it into the water. Then that person must sprinkle some of the water on the tent where that person died, on the things that are in the tent, and on the people who were in the tent. He must also sprinkle some of that water on any person who touched a human bone or who touched a person who died, or who touched a grave. 19 On the third day and on the seventh day after that, the person who is acceptable to me must sprinkle some of that

water on those who have become unacceptable to me. On the seventh day, the people who are performing that ritual to become acceptable to me again must wash their clothes and bathe. If they do that, on that evening they will become acceptable to me again. **20** "If those who have become unacceptable to me do not become acceptable to me again by doing this, they will no longer be permitted to live among the Israeli people, because they have defiled my Sacred Tent. They did not sprinkle on themselves the water that removes the guilt of their sins, so they remain unacceptable to me. **21** That is a law for the Israeli people that will never be changed. Those who sprinkle that water on themselves must then wash their clothes. And anyone who touches that water which removes guilt for sins will remain unacceptable to God until that evening. **22** "If someone touches a thing or a person that has become unacceptable to me, that person will remain unacceptable to me until that evening."

20 In March/April [of the next year], the Israeli people traveled/walked to the Zin Desert and (camped/set up their tents) near Kadesh [town]. While they/we were there, [Moses'/my older sister] Miriam died and was buried there. **2** There was no water for the people to drink there, so they came to Aaron and Moses/me. **3** They complained and said, "We wish that we had died in front of Yahweh's Sacred Tent when our fellow Israelis died! **4** (Did you bring us, who are Yahweh's people, into this desert to die along with our livestock?/You brought us, who are Yahweh's people, into this desert to die along with our livestock!) [RHQ] **5** Why did you bring us from Egypt to this miserable place [RHQ]? There is no grain, there are no figs, no grapes, and no pomegranates here. And there is no water for us to drink!" **6** Aaron and Moses/I turned away from the people and went to the entrance of the Sacred Tent and prostrated themselves/ourselves on the ground. Then Yahweh appeared to them/us with his bright glory, **7** and he said to Moses/me, **8** "You and Aaron must take Aaron's walking stick with you and gather all the people together. While the people are watching, command that water will flow out of that [large] rock over there. Water for the people will flow from it; all they and all their livestock will have enough water to drink." **9** So Moses/I did what Yahweh told him/me to do. He/I took Aaron's walking stick from the place in the Sacred Tent where it was kept. **10** Then Aaron and he/I summoned all the people to gather at the rock. Then Moses/I shouted to them, "All you rebellious people, listen! Is it necessary for us to give you water from this rock?" **11** Then Moses/I raised his/my hand and [instead of speaking to the rock], he/I struck the rock two times with the walking stick. And water gushed/poured out. So all the people and their livestock drank all the water that they wanted. **12** But Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, "You did not believe that I could demonstrate my power to the Israeli people [and give them water without your striking the rock]. So you will not lead them into the land that I am giving to them!" **13** Later this place was called Meribah, [which means 'arguing'], because there the Israeli people argued with Yahweh, and there he showed his power to them [by giving them water]. **14** [While the people were] at Kadesh [town], Moses/I sent messengers to the king of Edom to tell him this: "Your relatives, the Israeli people, are sending you this message. You know the many troubles/hardships that have happened to us. **15** You know that our ancestors went down to Egypt. You know that they stayed there for many years. They suffered because the [rulers of] Egypt caused them to become their slaves [and to work very hard]. **16** "But when they called out to Yahweh, he heard them and sent an angel who brought them out of Egypt. Now we have set up our tents here at Kadesh, a town at the border of your land. **17** Please allow us to travel through your country. We will [be careful to] not walk through your fields and your vineyards. We will not even drink water from your wells. As we travel, we will stay on the king's highway, [the main road that goes from the south to the north], and we will not leave that road until we have crossed the border [of your country in the north]." **18** But the king of Edom refused. He replied, "Stay out of my country! If you try [to enter it], I will [send my army to] attack you!" **19** The Israeli messengers replied, "[If we travel through your country], we will stay on the main road. If we and any of our livestock drink any of your water, we will pay for it. We want only to travel through your country. We do not want anything else." **20** But the king replied, "No! Stay out of our country! We will not [allow you] to travel through our land!" Then he sent the strongest soldiers in his army to prevent the Israelis [from entering his country]. **21** So, because [the king of] Edom refused to allow the Israelis to travel through his country, the Israelis turned [and traveled a different way]. **22** The Israeli people left Kadesh. They went to Hor Mountain, **23** [which is at the border of Edom]. While they were there, Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses/me, **24** "It is time for Aaron to die [EUP]. He will not enter the land that I am giving to you Israelis, because the two of you disobeyed me [when I told you to speak to the rock to cause] the water [to flow] at Meribah. **25** Now you, Moses, take Aaron and his son Eleazar up on Hor Mountain. **26** There you must remove Aaron's robes [that he wears when he does the work of a priest], and put them on his son, Eleazar. Aaron will die up there." **27** So Moses/I did what Yahweh commanded. The three of them/us climbed up Hor Mountain, while all

the Israeli people watched. 28 At the top of the mountain, Moses/I took off the robes that Aaron wore [while he did the work of a priest] and put them on Eleazar. Then Aaron died there on the top of the mountain, and Eleazar and Moses/I went back down. 29 When the Israeli people realized that Aaron had died, they all mourned for him for 30 days.

21 The king of Arad [city] lived in the area where the Canaan people-group lived, in the desert in the southern part of the land. He heard a report that the Israelis were approaching on the road to Atharim [village]. So his army attacked the Israelis and captured some of them. 2 Then the Israelis solemnly vowed: "Yahweh, if you will help us to defeat these people, we will completely destroy all their towns." 3 Yahweh heard what they requested, and he enabled them to defeat the army of the Canaan people-group. The Israeli soldiers killed all the people and destroyed their towns. [Ever since that time], that place has been called Hormah [which means 'destruction']. 4 Then the Israelis left Hor Mountain and traveled on the road towards the Red Sea, in order to go around [the land of] Edom. But the people became impatient along the way, 5 and they began to grumble/complain against God and against Moses/me. They said, "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in this desert [RHQ]? There is nothing to eat here, and nothing to drink. And we detest this lousy [manna] food!" 6 So Yahweh sent poisonous snakes among them. Many of the people were bitten by the snakes and died. 7 Then the people came to Moses/me and cried out, saying, "We [now know that we] have sinned against Yahweh and against you. Pray to Yahweh, asking that he will take away the snakes!" So Moses/I prayed for the people. 8 Then Yahweh told him/me, "Make a model/image of a poisonous snake, and attach it to the top of a pole. If those who are bitten by the snakes look at that model, they will (recover/get well)." 9 So Moses/I made a snake from bronze and attached it to the top of a pole. Then, when those who had been bitten by a snake looked at the bronze snake, they recovered! 10 Then the Israelis traveled to Oboth and (camped/set up their tents) there. 11 Then they left there, and went to Iye-Abarim, in the desert on the eastern border of Moab. 12 From there they traveled to the valley where the Zered riverbed is, and camped there. 13 Then they traveled to the north side of the Arnon [River]. That area is in the desert next to the land where the Amor people-group lived. The Arnon [River] is the boundary between Moab and where the Amor people-group lived. 14 That is why in the book called 'The Book of the Wars of Yahweh' it tells about "Waheb [town] in the Suphah area, and the ravines there; and the Arnon [River] 15 and the ravines there, which extend as far as Ar [village] on the border of Moab." 16 From there, the Israelis traveled to Beer. There was a well there, where Yahweh previously had said to Moses/me, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water." 17 There the Israelis sang this song: "O well, give us water! Sing about this well! 18 Sing about this well which our leaders dug; they dug out [the dirt] with their royal scepters and their walking sticks." Then the Israelis left that desert and went through Mattanah, 19 Nahaliel, and Bamoth [villages]. 20 Then they went to the valley in Moab where Pisgah [Mountain] rises above the desert. 21 Then the Israelis sent messengers to Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group. This was the message [that they/we gave him]: 22 "Allow us to travel through your country. We will stay on the king's highway, [the main road that goes from the south to the north], until we have finished traveling through your land. We will not walk through any field or vineyard, or drink water from your wells." 23 But King Sihon refused. He would not allow them to walk through his land. Instead, he sent his whole army to attack the Israelis in the desert. They attacked the Israelis at Jahaz [village]. 24 But the Israelis completely defeated them and occupied their land, from the Arnon [River in the south] to the Jabbok [River in the north]. They stopped at the border of the land where the Ammon people-group lived, because [the Ammon army was defending] the border strongly. 25 So the Israelis occupied all the cities and towns where the Amor people-group lived, and some of the Israelis began to live in them. They occupied Heshbon [city] and the nearby villages. 26 Heshbon was the capital of the country. It was the city where King Sihon ruled. His army had previously defeated the army of the king of Moab, and then his people had begun to live in all of the land of Moab as far as the Arnon [River in the south]. 27 For that reason, one of the poets wrote long ago, "Come to Heshbon, the city where King Sihon [ruled]. We want the city to be restored/rebuilt. 28 A fire blazed from Heshbon; it burned down Ar [city] in Moab, it destroyed [everything on] the hills along the Arnon [River]. 29 You people of Moab, terrible things have happened to you! You people who [worship your god] Chemosh have been (annihilated/wiped out)! The men who [worshiped] [MET] Chemosh have run away and are now refugees, and the women [who worshiped him] have been captured by [the army of] Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group. 30 But we have defeated [Sihon and] those descendants of Amor, all the way from Heshbon [in the north] to Dibon [city in the south]. We have completely obliterated/destroyed them as far as Nophah and Medeba [towns]." 31 So the Israeli people began to live in the land where the Amor people-group lived. 32 After Moses/I sent some men to explore the area near

Jazer [city], Israeli people began to live in all the towns in that region and expelled the Amor people-group who lived there. 33 Then they turned [north] toward the Bashan region, but King Og of Bashan and all his army attacked them at Edrei [town]. 34 Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Do not be afraid of Og, because I am going to enable your men to defeat him and his army, and to take possession of all his land. You will do to him what you did to Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, who ruled in Heshbon." 35 And that is what happened. We Israelis defeated Og's army, and killed King Og and his sons and all his people. Not a person survived! And then we Israelis began to live in their land.

22 Then the Israelis traveled west to the area of Moab that was in the valley of the Jordan [River], across the river from Jericho [city]. 2 But King Balak, the son of Zippor, who ruled Moab, found out what the Israelis had done to the Amor people-group. 3 [When he saw that] the Israelis were very numerous, he and his people became terrified. 4 So the king of Moab [went to] the leaders of the Midian people-group and said to them, "This huge group [of Israelis] will (wipe out/destroy) everything around them, like an ox devours grass!" Balak was the king of Moab. 5 He sent messengers to [a prophet named] Balaam, who was living in his own area, in Pethor [town], near the [Euphrates] River. He sent this message to request that Balaam would come [to help him]: "A huge group of people has arrived here from Egypt. [It looks like] they are covering the entire land! And they have begun to live close to us. 6 Because they are very powerful/numerous, [we are afraid of them. So] please come and curse them for me. Then my army may be able to defeat them and expel them from the land [where they are now living]. I know that good things will happen to the people whom you bless, and disasters will happen to the people whom you curse." 7 [Balak's messengers, who were] leaders of both the Moab and Midian people-groups, took money with them to pay Balaam in order that he would [come and] curse the Israelis. They went to Balaam and told him what Balak had said. 8 Balaam said, "Stay here tonight. [Tomorrow morning] I will tell you whatever Yahweh tells me that I should say to you." So the leaders from Moab stayed there that night. 9 During the night, God appeared to Balaam and asked him, "(Who are/Tell me about) these men who are staying with you." 10 Balaam replied, "Balak, the king of Moab, sent these men to tell me this: 11 'A huge group of people has come from Egypt, and they have spread all over this area. Please come immediately to curse them. Then I may be able to defeat them and expel them [from this area].'" 12 God replied to Balaam, "Do not go with them! I have blessed those people, so you must not curse them!" 13 The next morning, Balaam got up and told Balak's men, "Go back home. [But go by yourselves, because] Yahweh is not allowing me to go with you." 14 So the men from Moab returned to King Balak and they reported to him, "Balaam refused to come with us." 15 But Balak sent another [group of] leaders to Balaam. It was a group that was larger and they were more important [than the men in the first group]. 16 They went to Balaam and told him this: "This is what King Balak says: 'Please do not allow anything to hinder you from coming here. 17 I will pay you (a lot of money/very well) [if you come], and I will do anything that you ask me to do. Just come and curse these [Israeli] people for me!'" 18 But Balaam answered them, "Even if Balak would give me a palace filled with silver and gold, I would not do anything to disobey Yahweh, (my God/the God whom I [worship]). 19 But stay here one more night, like the other messengers did, and I will find out if Yahweh has anything more to say to me." 20 That night God appeared to Balaam again and said to him, "These men have come to request that you go back with them, so you may go with them, but do only what I tell you [to do]!" 21 So the next morning, Balaam put a saddle on his donkey and he departed [with two of his servants] along with the men from Moab. 22 [Even though God had given Balaam permission to go, he was still angry]. So he sent one of his angels to Balaam. This angel stood in the road to block Balaam's path. As Balaam and the two servants were riding on their donkeys, 23 Balaam's donkey saw the angel. The angel was standing in the road and was holding a sword in his hand, [but Balaam did not see him]. Balaam's donkey turned off the road into a field. So Balaam struck the donkey and forced it to go back onto the road. 24 Then the angel stood in a place where the road was very narrow, between two vineyards, with walls on each side of the road. 25 When the donkey saw the angel standing there, it walked very close to the wall [to try to get past the angel]. As a result, it bashed Balaam's foot against the wall. So Balaam struck the donkey again. 26 Then the angel went further along the road and stood at a place that was extremely narrow, with the result that the donkey could not get past at all. 27 This time, when the donkey saw the angel, it lay down [on the ground] with Balaam sitting on top of it. Balaam became extremely angry, and he struck the donkey again with his walking stick. 28 Then Yahweh enabled the donkey to speak! It said to Balaam, "What bad thing have I done to you that caused you to strike me three times?" 29 Balaam shouted, "I struck you because you have caused me to appear to be foolish! If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!" 30 But the donkey answered, "I am your own donkey [RHQ], the one that you have always ridden! Have I ever done anything like this

previously?" Balaam said, "No." 31 Then Yahweh enabled Balaam to see the angel standing on the road, holding a sword in his hand. Balaam [realized that it was an angel and] prostrated himself on the ground in front of the angel. 32 The angel asked him, '(Why did you strike your donkey three times?/ You should certainly not have struck the donkey three times! [RHQ] I have come to block your path because what you are planning to do is wrong. 33 Three times your donkey saw me and turned away from me. If it had not done that, I would certainly have killed you already, but I would have allowed the donkey to live." 34 Then Balaam said to the angel, "I have sinned. But I did not realize that you were standing there, trying to block my path. So if you do not want me to continue going, I will return home." 35 But the angel replied, "I will allow you to go with these men, but you must say only what I tell you to say!" So Balaam went on with the leaders whom Balak [had sent]. 36 When King Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went to meet him at a Moab town alongside the Arnon [River] that was at the border of his own land. 37 [When he arrived where] Balaam was, he said to him, "I sent you [RHQ] a message saying that you should come immediately [RHQ]! Why did you not come immediately? [Did you think that] I was not able to pay you a lot of money for coming?" 38 Balaam replied, "I have come here now, but I am not able to say anything [that I want to]. I will say only the words that God tells me to say [MTY]." 39 Then Balaam went with Balak to Kiriath-Huzoth [town]. 40 There Balak killed some cattle and sheep as sacrifices, and offered [parts of the meat] to Balaam and the leaders who were with him. 41 [They slept there], and the next morning Balak took Balaam part way up [the mountain] to Bamoth-Baal [village]. From there, they could see some of the Israeli people who were down below.

23 Balaam said to King Balak, "Build seven altars for me here. Then kill seven young bulls and seven rams [for a sacrifice]." 2 So Balak did that. And then he and Balaam each burned a young bull and a ram [as a sacrifice] on each altar. 3 Then Balaam said to Balak, "You stand here close to your burned offerings, and I will go and ask Yahweh if he has something else to tell me. Then I will tell you what he says to me." Then Balaam went by himself to the top of a hill, 4 and God appeared to him there. Balaam said to him, "We have built seven altars, and I have killed and burned a young bull and a ram [as a sacrifice to you] on each altar." 5 Then Yahweh gave Balaam a message to give to King Balak. Then he said, "Go back and tell him what I told you." 6 When Balaam returned to Balak, Balak was standing with the leaders from Moab beside the offerings he had burned [on the altar]. 7 This is the message that Balaam told them: "Balak, the King of Moab, summoned me to come here from Syria; he brought me here from the hills at the eastern side of Syria. He said, 'Come and curse the descendants of Jacob for me, saying that bad things will happen to these Israeli people!' 8 But (how can I curse people whom God has not cursed?/I certainly cannot curse people whom God has not cursed!) [RHQ] (How can I condemn people whom Yahweh has not condemned?/I cannot condemn people whom Yahweh has not condemned!) [RHQ] 9 I have seen them from the tops of the rocky peaks. I see that they are a group of people who live by themselves; they have separated themselves from other nations. 10 (Who can count the descendants of Jacob; they are as numerous as particles of (dust/dirt)?/No one can count the descendants of Jacob; they are as numerous as particles of (dust/dirt)!) [RHQ] (Who can count even a quarter of the Israeli people?/No one can count even a quarter of the Israeli people!) [RHQ] I wish/hope that I will die like righteous people die; I hope that I will die [peacefully] like they will die." 11 Then Balak said, "What have you done to me [RHQ]? I brought you here to curse my enemies, but instead you have (blessed them/asked Yahweh to bless them)!" 12 But Balaam replied, "I can [RHQ] say only what Yahweh tells me to say. I cannot say anything else." 13 Then King Balak told Balaam, "Come with me to another place. There you will see only part of the Israeli people, and you will be able to curse those people for me." 14 So Balak took Balaam to a field on the top of Pisgah [Mountain]. There, again he built seven altars and offered a young bull and a ram [as a sacrifice] on each altar. 15 Then Balaam said to the king, "Stand here close to your burned offerings, while I go and talk with Yahweh." 16 So Balaam did that, and Yahweh appeared to Balaam again and gave him another message. Then he said, "Go back to Balak and tell him that message." 17 So Balaam returned to where the king and the leaders from Moab were standing, next to the altar where Balak had burned the sacrifices. Balak asked him, "What did Yahweh say?" 18 Then Balaam told him this message: "Balak, listen carefully; hear what I have to say, you son of Zippor [DOU]! 19 God is not a human being. Humans lie, but God never lies. He never changes his mind/thoughts, as humans do. Whatever he has said that he will do, he does. 20 He commanded me [to request him] to bless [the Israelis], So he has blessed them, and I cannot change that. 21 Yahweh their God is with/helping them; they have declared that he is their true king. So the descendants of Jacob will not be harmed; they will not have any troubles [DOU]. 22 God brought them out of Egypt [where they were slaves]; he is as strong as a wild ox. 23 When people curse [PRS] the descendants of Jacob, they will not be harmed;

when people work sorcery on them, it will have no power. So now people will say about the descendants of Jacob, 'God has done wonderful things for the Israelis!' 24 They are very strong, like lionesses that are ready to attack [other animals]; they stand firm like lions. The lions refuse to rest until they have [killed and] eaten their prey, and drunk the blood of the animals they slaughtered." 25 Then Balak said to Balaam, "If you will not curse them, then [I certainly] do not [want you to] bless them!" 26 But Balaam replied, "I told you that I must do only what Yahweh tells me to do!" 27 Then King Balak said to Balaam, "Come with me; I will take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God to allow you to curse them from that place." 28 So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor [Mountain] where they could look down [and see the Israelis in] the desert. 29 Balaam again told Balak, "Build me seven altars again and kill seven young bulls and seven rams [for a sacrifice]." 30 So Balak did what Balaam told him to do. He burned a young bull and a ram on each altar as sacrifices.

24 Balaam now realized that Yahweh wanted to bless the Israeli people, [not curse them]. So he did not use magic/divination [like a shaman would do] to find out what Yahweh wanted, as he often did. Instead, he turned toward the desert. 2 He saw the Israeli people camped there [in their tents], with each tribe gathered in its own group. Then the Spirit of God took control of him, 3 and enabled him to give this prophetic message to Balak: "I, Balaam, the son of Beor, am giving this prophecy; I am speaking as a man who sees [what will happen in the future] clearly speaks. 4 I hear this message from God; I see a vision from him who is all-powerful. My eyes are open as I prostrate myself in front of him. 5 You descendants of Jacob, your tents are very beautiful; they are truly lovely! 6 Your tents are spread out [in front of me like groves of palm trees in] valleys, like gardens alongside a river. They are like strong aloe trees/plants that Yahweh has planted, like [strong] cedar trees [that grow] along the rivers. 7 Your water buckets will always be full; the seeds [that you plant] will always have plenty of water [to make them grow]. The Israelis' king will be greater than [King] Agag; the kingdom that he rules will be honored. 8 God brought the Israelis out of Egypt, [leading them along] with his great power [MTY] like a wild ox has. He devastates all the nations that oppose him; he breaks all those people's bones into pieces, and shoots them with his arrows. 9 The Israelis are like lions that crouch and lie down, [ready to pounce on their prey] [SIM]. They are like lionesses [that are resting, but ready to attack]; no one [RHQ] would dare to arouse them! [God] will bless everyone who blesses you Israelis, and he will curse everyone who curses you." 10 Then King Balak was extremely angry with Balaam. He showed with his hands that he was very angry, and he [shouted at Balaam], "I summoned you here to curse my enemies! Instead, you have (blessed/asked God to bless) them three times! 11 So now, get out of here! Go back home! I said that I would pay you a lot of money [if you cursed them], but Yahweh has prevented you from getting any pay!" 12 Balaam said to Balak, "[Do you not remember what] [RHQ] I told the messengers that you sent to me? I said, 13 'Even if Balak would give me a palace filled with silver and gold, I would not disobey Yahweh. I cannot do anything bad or anything that is good [that he does not approve of].' And I told you that I could say only what Yahweh says to me. 14 So yes, I will return to my people, but first, allow me to tell you what will happen to you Moab people in the future." 15 So Balaam said this [to Balak]: "I, Balaam, son of Beor, am again giving a prophecy, speaking as a man who sees [what will happen in the future] clearly speaks. 16 I hear a message from God; I know things that God, who lives in heaven, has [revealed to me]. I see a vision from him who is all-powerful. My eyes are open as I prostrate myself in front of him. 17 The things that I see [in the vision] are not [going to happen] now; I see things [that God will cause to happen] in the future. A man who is [a descendant of] Jacob will appear like a star [MET]; a king who holds a scepter will be one of the Israeli people. He will crush the heads of you people of Moab; he will wipe out the descendants of Seth. 18 The Israelis will occupy Edom, and they will conquer their enemies [who live near] Seir [Mountain]. The Israeli people will be victorious/strong. 19 A ruler who is a descendant of Jacob will come; he will get rid of the people who still live in the city [where Balaam first met Balak]." 20 Then Balaam looked out over where the Amalek people-group [lived], and he prophesied this: "The Amalek people-group were the greatest nation, but they will be wiped out." 21 Then he looked out over the area where the Ken people-group [lived], and he prophesied this: "You [think that] the place where you live is secure/safe like a nest that is made in the cliffs [MET], 22 but you will be wiped out when the army of Assyria conquers you." 23 Balaam ended his prophecies by saying, "Also, (who can (survive/escape) when God does all these things?/no one will be able to (survive/escape) when God does all these things!) [RHQ] 24 Ships will come from Cyprus [Island], and [the men in those ships] will defeat [the armies of] Assyria and Eber. But God will get rid of those men, too." 25 Then Balaam and Balak returned to their homes.

25 While the Israelis were camped at a place called Acacia [Grove], some of the men caused themselves to become unacceptable to God by having sex with some of the women of the Moab [people-group who lived in that

area]. 2 Then those women invited the men to come when the sacrifices were being offered to their gods. The Israeli men [accepted]. They went to the feasts with the women and worshiped the gods of the Moab people-group. 3 By doing that, those Israeli people joined the women in worshiping the god Baal [add] the Moab people-group thought lived on Peor Mountain. That caused Yahweh to become very angry with his people. 4 Yahweh said this to Moses/me: "Seize all the leaders of those men who are doing this and execute them while I am watching. Do that in the daytime. After you do that, I will no longer be angry with the Israeli people." 5 So Moses/I said to the other Israeli leaders, "Each of you must execute your men who have joined [others] in worshiping Baal." 6 [But later], while Moses/I and many [HYP] other people were crying at the entrance of the Sacred Tent, while they/we were watching, one of the Israeli men brought a woman from the Midian people-group into his tent [and started to have sex with her]. 7 When Phinehas, who was the grandson of Aaron, saw that, he grabbed a spear 8 and rushed into the man's tent. He thrust the spear completely through the man's body and into the woman's belly [and killed both of them]. When he did that, the (plague/serious illness) [that had started to strike the Israelis] stopped. 9 But 24,000 people had already died [from that plague]. 10 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 11 "Phinehas has caused me to stop being angry with the Israeli people, by being as eager as I am [to stop this sinful behavior]. I was ready to get rid of all the Israeli people because I was extremely angry, but Phinehas has prevented me from doing that. 12 Now tell him that I am making a special peace agreement with him. 13 In this agreement, I am promising to give to him and to his descendants the right/authority to be priests. I am doing this because [he showed that] he was very eager to honor me, his God, by stopping this sinful behavior. He has caused the Israeli people to become acceptable to me again by causing them to be forgiven for their sin." 14 The Israeli man who was killed with the woman of the Moab people-group was named Zimri. He was the son of Salu, who was the leader of a family from the tribe of Simeon. 15 The woman's name was Cozbi. She was the daughter of Zur, who was the leader of one of the clans of the Midian people-group. 16 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 17 "[Take your men and] attack the Midian people-group and kill them. 18 They have become your enemies, because they tricked you Israeli people and induced/persuaded many of you to worship Baal, and because [one of your men had sex with] Cozbi, who was the daughter of a leader of the Midian people-group. She was killed at the time the plague [started because the people sinned] at Peor [Mountain]."

26 After the plague [ended], Yahweh said to Eleazar and Moses/me, 2 "Count all the people of Israel [again]. Write down the names of all the men who are at least 20 years old who are able to fight [in battles], along with their family names." 3 So while the Israelis were on the plains where the Moab people-group lived, Eleazar and Moses/I told this to the Israeli leaders: 4 "Write down the names of all the Israeli men who are at least 20 years old, as Yahweh has commanded us." [So they did that], and this is a record of all the descendants of Jacob who came out of Egypt [who were still alive]. 5 [They counted] 43,730 men from the tribe of Reuben, Jacob's oldest son. They were in clans descended from Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 8 Pallu's son was Eliab 9 and his grandsons were Nemuel, Dathan and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram were the leaders who joined with Korah to conspire against Aaron and Moses/me and rebelled against Yahweh. 10 But the earth opened up and swallowed them and Korah. Yahweh also sent a fire that burned up 250 men who supported those three men. That was a warning [to all the Israeli people] that they should respect and obey the leaders whom Yahweh had appointed. 11 But the descendants of Korah did not die [on that day]. 12 The Israeli leaders counted 22,200 men from the tribe of Simeon. They were in clans descended from Nemuel, Jamin, Jakin, Zerah, and Shaul. 15 They counted 40,500 men from the tribe of Gad. They were in clans descended from Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ozni, Eri, Arod, and Areli. 19 They counted 76,500 men from the tribe of Judah. They were in clans descended from Shelah, Perez, Zerah, Hezron, and Hamul. Judah's other two sons, Er and Onan, died in Canaan [without having had any children]. 23 They counted 64,300 men from the tribe of Issachar. They were in clans descended from Tola, Puvah, Jashub, and Shimron. 26 They counted 60,500 men from the tribe of Zebulun. They were in clans descended from Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. 28 They counted 52,700 men from the tribe of Manasseh, who was one of the sons of Joseph. They were in clans descended from Machir, from his son Gilead, and from his six grandsons—Jezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Shemida, and Hepher. Hepher's son Zelophehad did not have any sons, but he had five daughters—Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 35 They counted 32,500 men from the tribe of Ephraim, who was Joseph's other son. They were in clans descended from Shuthelah, Becher, Tahan, and Shuthelah's son Eran. 38 They counted 45,600 men from the tribe of Benjamin. They were in clans descended from Bela, Ashbel, Ahiram, Shephupham, and Hupham, and from Bela's two sons—Ard and Naaman. 42 They counted 64,400 men from the tribe of Dan. They were in one clan descended

from Shuham. 44 They counted 53,400 men from the tribe of Asher. They were in clans descended from Imnah, Ishvi, and Beriah, and from Beriah's two sons—Heber and Malkiel. Asher also had a daughter named Serah. 48 They counted 45,400 men from the tribe of Naphtali. They were in clans descended from Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. 51 The total of the Israeli men whom the leaders counted was 601,730. 52 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, 53 "Divide Canaan land among the tribes. Distribute the land according the number of people in each tribe that are on your lists. 54 Decide by (casting lots/throwing stones which are marked) to determine which group will get which area, but give the largest areas to the groups with the most people." 57 The leaders also counted the male descendants of Levi. They were in clans descended from Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 58 These also included people from the clans of Libni, Hebron, Mahli, Mushi, and Korah. All of them were descendants of Levi. Kohath was the ancestor of Amram, 59 whose wife was Jochebed. She also was a descendant of Levi, but she was born in Egypt. She and Amram had two sons, Aaron and Moses/me, and their/our [older] sister Miriam. 60 Aaron's sons were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 61 But Nadab and Abihu died when they burned [incense for a sacrifice] to Yahweh in a way that disobeyed what Yahweh had commanded. 62 The leaders counted 23,000 men from the descendants of Levi who were at least one month old. But these men were not counted when the rest of the Israeli people [were counted], because they were not given any land. 63 Those were the men whom Eleazar and Moses/I said should be counted. They counted the Israeli people on the plains where the Moab people-group lived, on the [east] side of the Jordan River, across from Jericho [city]. 64 None of the men whom they counted were on the lists that were made by Aaron and Moses/me when the Israelis were in the Sinai Desert, 65 because Yahweh had said about them, "They will all die in this desert," [and that is what happened]. The only ones who were still alive were Jephunneh's son Caleb and Nun's son Joshua.

27 One day the five daughters of Zelophehad came [to Moses/me]. They were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 2 They came to the entrance of the Sacred Tent and stood in front of Eleazar, Moses/me, the tribal leaders, and many [EUP] other Israeli people. 3 They said, "Our father died [during the time that we were] in the desert, and he did not have any sons. But he was not among those who supported Korah, who rebelled against Yahweh. He died just because he was a sinner [like everyone else]. 4 (Why should the name of his clan disappear [with the result that we do not receive any land] only because our father had no sons?/It is not right that the name of his clan disappear [with the result that we do not receive any land] only because our father had no sons.) [RHQ] So give us some land like our relatives will be getting!" 5 So Moses/I asked Yahweh [what to do about] their request. 6 And Yahweh replied, 7 "What the daughters of Zelophehad are requesting is right. You must give them some land, just as you are giving to their father's relatives. Give to each of them some of the land that would have been given to their brothers [if they had any]. 8 "Also tell this to the Israeli people: 'If a man who has no sons dies, give the things that his sons would have inherited to his daughters. 9 If the man has no sons or daughters, give to his brothers the things that his sons and daughters would have inherited. 10 If the man had no brothers, give to his father's brothers the things that his sons or daughters or brothers would have inherited. 11 If the man's father has no brothers, give to his closest relative the things that the others would have inherited.' That will be a rule for the Israeli people, because I am giving this as a command to you, Moses, [to tell them]." 12 One day, Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Climb to the top of the Abarim Mountains [east of the Jordan River]. Then look out over the land that I am giving to the Israeli people. 13 After you have seen it, you will die [EUP] just like your [older] brother Aaron did. 14 The reason [that you will die and not enter that land] is that you both disobeyed my instructions/commands in the Zin Desert. When the Israeli people rebelled against me there at Meribah, near Kadesh, [I told you to speak to the rock to cause] water to flow out of it. [But because you struck the rock instead of speaking to it], you did not show the people my holy power." 15 Then Moses/I said this to Yahweh: 16 "Yahweh, you are the God who directs the spirits of all people. So please appoint a new leader for the Israeli people. 17 Appoint someone who will lead your people when they go to fight a battle, so that they will not [just wander around] like sheep that do not have a shepherd." [SIM] 18 Yahweh replied, "Get Joshua, the son of Nun, who has my Spirit within him. Lay your hands on him [to appoint him]. 19 Cause him to stand in front of Eleazar the priest, as all the people are watching, and commission/appoint him to be the new leader of the Israeli people. 20 Give to him some of the authority that you now have, in order that all the Israeli people will [know that they must] obey him. 21 When you all need me to guide you, Joshua will stand in front of Eleazar. Then by (casting lots/throwing marked stones on the ground) Eleazar will find out what they should do." 22 So Moses/I did what Yahweh commanded. He/I presented Joshua to Eleazar and to all the Israeli people. 23 Moses/I laid his/my

hands on him and commissioned/appointed him to do the work that Yahweh told Moses/me to tell him to do.

28 Yahweh said this to Moses/me: **2** "Tell this to the Israeli people: Bring to me the offerings that will be burned [on the altar]. When they are burned, the smell will be very pleasing to me. And tell them that they must bring them at the proper/right time. **3** Tell them that what they must bring to me each day are two male lambs that are one-year-old. They must have no defects. They must be completely burned [on the altar]. **4** They should bring one in the morning and the other early in the evening. **5** They must also bring an offering of grain, consisting of two quarts/liters of finely-ground flour, mixed with a quart of [olive] oil. **6** That is the offering that they must bring every day. They started to bring those offerings [while you were] at Sinai Mountain. When those offerings are burned [on the altar], the smell will be very pleasing to me. **7** When they burn each lamb, they must also pour on the sacred altar one quart/liter of wine. **8** In the evening, when they offer the second lamb, they must also bring the same offerings of grain and wine [as they burned in the morning]. When they are burned, the smell will also be very pleasing to me." **9** "On each (Sabbath/rest day), [you must bring] two male lambs that have no defects. Also bring a grain offering of four quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil and a wine offering of four quarts/liters of wine. **10** Those are the offerings that are to be burned [on the altar] each (Sabbath/rest day). Those are in addition to the offerings of two lambs and wine that you must bring each day." **11** "On the first day of each month, you must bring to me an offering of two young bulls, one male sheep, and seven male lambs that are one-year-old. All of these must be without defects. They must all be burned [completely on the altar]. **12** Also bring with each bull an offering of six quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil. With each male sheep make an offering of four quarts of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil. **13** Also bring an offering of two quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil with each lamb. When all of these are burned [on the altar], the smell will be very pleasing to me. **14** With each bull, also bring two quarts/liters of wine. With each male sheep, bring (1-1/3 quarts/1.2 liters) of wine. With each lamb, bring one quart/liter of wine. These offerings must be brought on the first day of each month and burned completely [on the altar]. **15** In addition to these offerings that you burn, you must bring to me one goat for an offering [to enable me to forgive you for the sins you have committed]." **16** "The Passover Festival must be celebrated to [honor] me [each year] on the fourteenth day of the first month [of each year]. **17** The Festival of Unleavened Bread will start on the next day. For the following seven days, the bread that you eat must be made without yeast. **18** On the first day of that festival, you must gather together to worship me, and you must not do any work. **19** On that day, you must bring to me for an offering that will be completely burned [on the altar] two young bulls, one male sheep, and seven male lambs that are one-year-old. They must all have no defects. **20** With each of these bulls, bring a grain offering of grain, consisting of six quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil. With the male sheep, bring an offering of grain consisting of four quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil. **21** With each of the seven lambs, bring an offering of two quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil. **22** Also bring one goat for a sacrifice to cause you to be forgiven for your sin. **23** Bring these offerings in addition to the offerings that you bring each morning. **24** The smell of the grain that is burned [on the altar] each day for seven days will be very pleasing to me. Bring the grain in addition to the animals and the wine that you burn [on the altar]. **25** On the seventh day of that festival, you must [again] gather together to worship me, and you must not do any work." **26** "On the day of the Harvest Festival, when you bring to me the first grain that you have harvested, you must gather together to worship me. Do not do any work on that day. **27** Bring to me two young bulls, one male sheep, and seven male lambs that are one-year-old. When they are completely burned [on the altar], the smell will be very pleasing to me. **28** Also bring a grain offering of nice flour mixed with [olive] oil. For each bull, bring six quarts/liters, and with each male sheep, bring four quarts/liters, **29** and with each of the lambs bring two quarts/liters. **30** Also sacrifice one male goat to cause you to be forgiven for your sins. **31** Bring these offerings and the offering of wine in addition to the animals and grain that you burn [on the altar] each day. [And remember that] the animals that you sacrifice must have no defects."

29 "[Each year], gather together to worship me on the first day of the seventh month, and do not do any work on that day. On that day [the priests] must blow their trumpets. **2** When the offerings [on the altar on that day] are being completely burned, the smell will be very pleasing to me. The animals that you must bring are one young bull, one male sheep, and seven male lambs that are one-year-old. They must have no defects. **3** With these animals bring an offering of grain consisting of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil. With the bull, bring six quarts/liters. With the male sheep, bring four quarts/liters, **4** and with each of the seven lambs bring two quarts/liters. **5** Also offer one male goat in order that you will be forgiven for your sins. **6** All of those animals are in addition to the animals that are completely

burned [on the altar] each morning and on the first day of each month. The offerings of grain and wine must be made exactly as I have told you to do. When these offerings are burned, the smell will be very pleasing to me." **7** "[Each year], on the tenth day of the seventh month, you must gather together to worship me. Do not eat any food or do any work on that day. **8** When you burn offerings [on the altar] on that day, the smell will be very pleasing to me. The animals that you must bring are one young bull, one male sheep, and seven male lambs that are one-year-old. They must have no defects. **9** With the bull, bring an offering of grain consisting of six quarts/liters of nice flour mixed with [olive] oil. With the male sheep, bring four quarts/liters. **10** With each of the lambs, bring two quarts/liters. **11** Also bring one male goat to [enable me to forgive] you for the sins you have committed, and the animals and grain and wine that you burn [on the altar] each day to enable me to forgive you for the sins you have committed. Those offerings will be in addition to the animals and grain and wine that are completely burned [on the altar] each day." **12** "On the fifteenth day of the seventh month [of each year], you must all gather together to worship me. You must not do any work on that day. You must continue to celebrate for seven days. **13** When the offerings are burned [on the altar], the smell will be very pleasing to me. The animals that you must bring are 13 young bulls, two male sheep, and 14 male lambs that are one-year-old. These animals must have no defects. **14** With each of the 13 bulls, bring a grain offering of six quarts/liters of finely-ground flour mixed with [olive] oil. With each of the male sheep, bring four quarts/liters. **15** With each of the 14 lambs, bring two quarts/liters. **16** Also bring one male goat to be sacrificed [to enable me to forgive you] for your sins, in addition to the offerings of animals and grain and wine that are completely burned [on the altar] each day. **17** "For the next six days of the festival, you must also bring animals to sacrifice. On the second day, bring twelve bulls. On the third/next day, bring eleven bulls. One the fourth/next day, bring ten bulls. On the fifth/next day, bring nine bulls. On the sixth/next day, bring eight bulls. On the seventh/last day, bring seven bulls. But on each of those days, all the other sacrifices and offerings that you bring will remain the same. **35** "On the eighth day of the festival, you must [again] gather together to worship me, and do not do any work on that day. **36** On that day, you must bring to the altar one bull, one full-grown ram, and seven lambs that are one-year-old. These animals must have no defects. They must all be burned on the altar, and their smell will please me. **37** Bring also with the bull and the male sheep and each of the lambs the offerings of grain and wine that (are required/I told you to bring). **38** Also offer one male goat to be sacrificed [to enable me to forgive you] for your sins. These animals will be in addition to the offerings of animals and grain and wine that are completely burned [on the altar] each day. **39** "At your festivals, these are the offerings that you must bring to me: The offerings that will be completely burned [on the altar], the offerings of grain and wine, and the offerings to maintain fellowship with me. Those are in addition to the offerings that you give to me because you promised to do something, and other special offerings that you want to give to me." **40** Then Moses/I told to the Israeli people all the things that Yahweh had commanded him/me.

30 Moses/I spoke with the leaders of the Israeli tribes. He/I told them these commands that Yahweh had given to him/me: **2** "If a man solemnly promises Yahweh that he will do something, he must do what he promised. **3** "If a young woman who is still living with her parents solemnly promises to Yahweh to do something, **4** and if her father hears about what she promised, and if he does not object, she must do what she promised [DOU]. **5** But if her father hears about what she promised and does not allow her to do that, then she does not need to do what she promised. Yahweh will forgive her for not doing what she promised. **6** "If a woman promises Yahweh that she will do something, but then she gets married, **7** if her husband hears about what she promised to do, and he does not object, she must do what she promised [DOU]. **8** But if her husband hears about it and does not allow her to do that, she does not need to do what she promised, and Yahweh will forgive her for not doing what she promised. **9** "If a widow or a woman who has been divorced makes a promise, she must do what she promised. **10** "If a woman who is married promises [DOU] to do something, **11** and if her husband hears about it but does not object, she must do what she promised. **12** But if he hears about it and does not allow her to do that, she does not need to do what she promised, and Yahweh will forgive her for not doing it. **13** A woman's husband may require her to do what she has promised, or he may not allow her to do what she has promised. **14** If he does not object for several days [after he hears about it], she must do what she promised. **15** But if he waits a long time after she has promised to do something and then he tells her that he will not permit her to do it, if she does not do what she promised, [she will not be punished]; her husband is the one whom [Yahweh] will punish." **16** Those are the rules that Yahweh gave to Moses/me for husbands and wives, and for young women who are still living with their parents.

31 Yahweh spoke to Moses/me and said, **2** "Before you die, [tell the] Israeli people that they should (pay back/get revenge on) the Midian people-group for what they did to you." **3** So Moses/I said to the people, "Get some men prepared for battle. Yahweh will enable them to (pay back/get revenge on) the Midian people-group [for what they did to us]. **4** Select 1,000 men from each tribe to fight." **5** So 12,000 men prepared for fighting in the battle, 1,000 from each tribe. **6** When Moses/I sent them to the battle, Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, went with them. He took with him some of the things from the Sacred Tent and the trumpets that would be blown to give the signal [to start the battle]. **7** The Israeli men fought the soldiers from the Midian people-group, as Yahweh had told Moses/me to tell them to do, and they killed every man from the Midian people-group. **8** Among those whom they killed were the five kings of the Midian people-group—Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba. They also killed with a sword Balaam, the son of Beor. **9** They captured all the women and children of the Midian people-group and took away their cattle, their flocks of sheep, and herds of goats, and all their other possessions. **10** Then they burned down all the houses in the towns and villages where the people of the Midian people-group lived, **11** but they took home with them all the women and children and animals and possessions. **12** They brought all these to Eliezer and Moses/me, and to the rest of the Israeli people who were at their/our camp on the plains where the Moab people-group lived, near the Jordan River, across from Jericho. **13** Eleazar and all the leaders of the people and Moses/I went outside the camp to greet/meet with them. **14** But Moses/I was angry with some of the men who had returned from the battle. He/I was angry with the army officers and the men who were commanders of 1,000 men and those who were commanders of 100 men. **15** He/I asked them, "Why did you allow the women to live [RHQ]? **16** They are the ones who did what Balaam suggested and urged/persuaded our people to worship Baal [instead of Yahweh]. As a result, Yahweh caused a plague to strike his people while they were at Peor. **17** So, now you must kill all the boys of the Midian people-group, and also kill all the women who have had sex [EUP] with any man. **18** Spare only the girls who are virgins [EUP]. You can keep them to be your [wives or your slaves]. **19** All of you who have killed someone or touched the corpse of someone who was killed [in the battle] must stay outside the camp for seven days. On the third day and on the seventh day, you must [perform the ritual to] cause you and those whom you have captured to become acceptable to God again. **20** You must also wash your clothes and anything [that you took to the battle] that is made of leather or goat's hair or wood." **21** Then Eleazar said to the soldiers who had returned from the battle, "This is what Yahweh has instructed Moses: **22** You must put into a fire any gold or silver or bronze or iron or tin or lead things [that you brought back from the battle]. **23** Put everything that will not burn into the fire, and then they will be acceptable for you to use. But also sprinkle those things with the water that causes things and people to become acceptable to God. The things that would burn [if you put them] in a fire, sprinkle them with that water. **24** On the seventh day, wash your clothes, and then you will become acceptable to God again. After you do that, you may return to the camp." **25** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **26** "Tell Eleazar and the leaders of the family groups that they must write down a list of all the goods, the women, and the animals that were captured [in the battle]. **27** Then they must divide all those things, half given to the men who fought in the battle and the other half given to the rest of the people. **28** From the men who fought in the battle, take one from every 500 people and from every 500 cattle and donkeys and sheep, to be a tax for me. **29** Take these things to Eleazar to (be my share/belong to me). **30** And from the half that belongs to the ordinary people, take one item from every 50. That includes people, cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, and other animals. Give those things to the descendants of Levi who take care of my Sacred Tent." **31** So Eleazar and Moses/I did what Yahweh commanded. **32** There were 675,000 sheep, 72,000 cattle, 61,000 donkeys, and 32,000 virgins that they had captured from the Midian people-group. **36** The men who fought in the battle took 337,000 sheep [from the battle], **37** and they gave 675 of them to Yahweh. **38** They took 36,000 cattle and gave 72 of them to Yahweh. **39** They took 30,500 donkeys, and they gave 61 of them to Yahweh. **40** They took 16,000 virgins, and they dedicated 32 of them to Yahweh. **41** Moses/I gave to Eleazar all [the animals] that had been given to Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded. **42** Moses/I separated what those who had fought in the battle received from what the other people received. The people had taken 337,500 sheep, 36,000 cattle, 30,500 donkeys, and 16,000 virgins, **47** From what the people received, Moses/I took one from every 50 items and dedicated them to Yahweh. That included animals and people. As Yahweh commanded, he/I gave them all to the descendants of Levi who took care of the Sacred Tent. **48** Then the army officers and those who commanded 1,000 men and those who commanded 100 men came to Moses/me. **49** They said, "We, who are your servants, have counted the soldiers whom we command, and [we found that] none of them (is missing/has been killed). **50** So [to thank Yahweh for that], we have brought to

him a gift of the gold items that we found [after the battle]: Gold arm bands and bracelets and rings and earrings and necklaces. This will enable us to be forgiven for our sins." **51** So Eleazar and Moses/I accepted the gold items that they brought. **52** The total of it weighed about (420 pounds/190 kg.). **53** Each soldier had taken these things for himself. **54** Eleazar and Moses/I accepted these gold items from these commanders and put them in the Sacred Tent to remind the Israeli people about how Yahweh [had helped them defeat the Midian people-group].

32 The people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad had much livestock. They saw that the land near Jazer [city] and the Gilead [region east of the Jordan River] had good [grass] for the animals [to graze on]. **2** So their leaders came to Eleazar and the other leaders of the people and Moses/me. They said, **3** "We have a great amount of livestock. **4** Yahweh has enabled us Israelis to capture some land that is very good for animals [to graze on]—the land near Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon [towns]. **5** If it pleases you, we would like this land to be ours, instead of land on the other side of the Jordan River." **6** Moses/I replied to the leaders of the tribes of Gad and Reuben, "It is not right for [RHQ] your fellow Israelis to go to fight in wars and you stay here! **7** [If you do that], you will cause the other Israelis to be discouraged, with the result that they will not cross [the Jordan River] to the land that Yahweh is giving to them [RHQ]. **8** Your ancestors did the same kind of thing. I sent them from Kadesh-Barnea to see what the land [of Canaan] was like. **9** They went as far as Eshcol Valley, but when they saw [the huge people in] the land, [they returned and] caused the Israeli people to be discouraged, saying 'We should not try to enter the land that Yahweh said that he is giving to us.' **10** So Yahweh became very angry with them, and he solemnly declared this: **11** 'From all the people who came out of Egypt, the only ones who are at least 20 years old who will see the land that I promised to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are Jephunneh's son Caleb and Nun's son Joshua, because they trusted me completely. None of the other people who came out of Egypt will even see that land, because they have not completely believed in my [power].' **13** So Yahweh was angry with the Israeli people, and [as a result] he has caused us to wander in this desert for 40 years. Finally, all the people who had sinned against Yahweh [by refusing to trust him] died, [one by one]. **14** And you are acting like your ancestors did! You sinful Israeli people are going to cause Yahweh to be more angry with you [than he was with our ancestors] **15** If you stop trusting him, he will cause you and all your fellow Israelis to stay longer in the desert, and he will get rid of all of you!" **16** Then the [leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad] said to Moses/me, "First we will build pens for our animals and build cities for our families here. **17** Then our families will live in strong cities with walls around them, and they will be safe from the people who live in this land. Then we will get ready to fight battles. We will help the other Israelis to get land [on the other side of the river]. **18** We will not return to our homes until every Israeli has received some land. **19** We will not take any land on the west side of the Jordan [River]; our land will be here on the east side." **20** So Moses/I told them, "[Okay, I will tell you] what you all must do. You must get ready to fight battles for Yahweh. **21** You all must cross the Jordan [River] carrying your weapons. **22** After Yahweh helps us to take that land [from the people who live there], you will be permitted to return to your homes. You will have done what you have promised Yahweh and the Israeli people that you would do, and you may keep this land to be your own, given to you by Yahweh. **23** "But if you do not do these things, you will be sinning against Yahweh, and he will punish you for [that] sin. **24** Now you can build cities for your families and pens for your animals, but after doing that, you must do what you have promised." **25** The leaders of the tribes of Gad and Reuben replied, "We will do what you have asked us to do [MTY], because you are our leader. **26** Our wives and children and our cattle and sheep and goats will stay here in the cities in the Gilead area, **27** but we will prepare to go to battle. We will take our weapons and go across [the Jordan River] and fight for Yahweh, just as you, our leader, have said." **28** So Moses/I gave instructions about them to Eleazar, Joshua, and the leaders of the Israeli tribes. **29** Moses/I said to them, "If the men from the tribes of Gad and Reuben prepare for battle and cross the Jordan [River] with you, in order to do what Yahweh desires and help you to take that land, give them the Gilead area to belong to them. **30** But if they do not take their weapons and go with you prepared to fight, they will not receive this land. They will need to accept some land in Canaan, like the rest of you will do." **31** The [leaders of the tribes of Gad and Reuben] replied, "We will do what you have said and what Yahweh has said. **32** We will cross the river into Canaan land, and we will do what Yahweh desires and be prepared for battle. But our land will be [here] on the east side of the Jordan [River]." **33** So Moses/I agreed to give that land to the tribes of Gad and Reuben and to half of the tribe of Joseph's son Manasseh. That land was previously the land where Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, ruled, and the land where Og, the king of Bashan [region], ruled, including its cities and surrounding land. **34** The people of the tribe of Gad rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, **35** Atroth-Shophan,

Jazer, Jogbehah, 36 Beth-Nimrah, and Beth-Haran cities.
Those were cities with strong walls around them. And they
also built pens for their sheep. 37 The people of the tribe
of Reuben rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, 38 Nebo,
Baal-Meon, and Sibmah cities. When they rebuilt Nebo and
Baal-Meon, they gave new names to those cities. 39 The
descendants of Manasseh's son Makir went to the Gilead
[region] and compelled the people of the Amor people-group
to leave that area. 40 So Moses/I gave Gilead to the family
of Makir, and they started to live there. 41 Jair, who was also
a descendant of Manasseh, went and captured the small
towns in that region, and he named them the Towns of Jair.
42 A man named Nobah went and captured Kenath [city] and
the nearby towns, and then he put his own name to be the
new name of that area.

33 Here is a list of the places where the/we Israelis went
as Aaron and Moses/I led them/us after they/we left
Egypt. 2 Yahweh commanded Moses/me to write down
the names of the places where they/we went. 3 On the
fifteenth day of the first month [of the year], the day after we
celebrated the (Passover/the time when Yahweh killed all the
firstborn sons of the people of Egypt), they/we left Rameses
[city in Egypt] and marched boldly while the Egyptian army
was coming behind them/us. 4 As they/we left, the people of
Egypt were still burying the bodies of their firstborn sons.
[By killing them], Yahweh showed that the gods that the
people of Egypt worshiped were false gods. 5 After leaving
Rameses, they/we first went to Succoth and set up their/our
tents there. 6 Then they/we left Succoth and went to Etham,
at the edge of the desert, and set up their/our tents there. 7
Then they/we left Etham and returned to Pi-Hahiroth, to the
east of Baal-Zephon, and set up their/our tents near Migdol.
8 Then they/we left Pi-Hahiroth and walked through the [Red]
Sea into the Etham Desert, and set their/our tents at Marah.
9 Then they/we left Marah and went to Elim. There were
twelve springs and 70 palm trees there. They/We set up
our tents there. 10 Then they/we left Elim and went to the
area near the Red Sea and set up their/our tents there. 11
Then they/we left the Red Sea area and went to the area
near the Sin Desert and set up their/our tents there. 12
Then they/we left the Sin Desert and went to Dophkah and
set up their/our tents there. 13 Then they/we left Dophkah
and went to Alush and set up their/our tents there. 14 Then
they/we left Alush and went and set up their/our tents at
Rephidim, where they/we had no water to drink. 15 Then
they/we left Rephidim and went to the Sinai Desert and set
up their/our tents there. 16 Then they/we left the Sinai Desert
and went to Kibroth-Hattaavah and set up their/our tents
there. 17 Then they/we left Kibroth-Hattaavah and went to
Hazeroth and set up their/our tents there. 18 Then they/we
left Hazeroth and went to Rithmah and set up their/our tents
there. 19 Then they/we left Rithmah and went to Rimmon-
Perez and set up their/our tents there. 20 Then they/we left
Rimmon-Perez and went to Libnah and set up their/our tents
there. 21 Then they/we left Libnah and went to Rissah and
set up their/our tents there. 22 Then they/we left Rissah
and set up their/our tents at Kehelathah. 23 Then they/we
left Kehelathah and went to Shepher Mountain and set up
their/our tents there. 24 Then they/we left Shepher and went
to Haradah [Mountain] and set up their/our tents there. 25
Then they/we left Haradah and went to Makheloth and set
up their/our tents there. 26 Then they/we left Makheloth and
went to Tahath and set up their/our tents there. 27 Then
they/we left Tahath and went to Terah and set up their/our
tents there. 28 Then they/we left Terah and went to Mithcah
and set up their/our tents there. 29 Then they/we left Mithcah
and went to Hashmonah and set up their/our tents there. 30
Then they/we left Hashmonah and went to Moseroth and set
up their/our tents there. 31 Then they/we left Moseroth and
went to Bene-Jaakan and set up their/our tents there. 32
Then they/we left Bene-Jaakan and went to Hor-Haggidgad
and set up their/our tents there. 33 Then they/we left Hor-
Haggidgad and went to Jotbathah and set up their/our tents
there. 34 Then they/we left Jotbathah and went to Abronah
and set up their/our tents there. 35 Then they/we left Abronah
and went to Ezion-Geber and set up their/our tents there. 36
Then they/we left Ezion-Geber and went to Zin Desert and
set up their/our tents at Kadesh there. 37 Then they/we left
Kadesh and went to Hor Mountain, at the border of Edom
land and set up their/our tents there. 38 Aaron, the priest,
obeyed Yahweh and climbed up the mountain. There he
died, on the first day of their/our fifth month, 40 years after
the/we Israelis left Egypt. 39 Aaron was 123 years old when
he died. 40 (That was when the king of Arad [city] heard
that the/we Israelis were coming. Arad was in the southern
part of Canaan, where the Canaan people-group lived.) 41
The Israelis left Hor Mountain and went to Zalmonah and
set up their/our tents there. 42 Then they/we left Zalmonah
and went to Punon and set up their/our tents there. 43
Then they/we left Punon and went to Oboth and set up
their/our tents there. 44 Then they/we left Oboth and went to
Iye-Abarim, which was on the border of the Moab region,
and set up their/our tents there. 45 Then they/we left Iye-
Abarim and went to Dibon-Gad and set up their/our tents
there. 46 Then they/we left Dibon-Gad and set up their/our
tents at Almon-Diblathaim. 47 Then they/we left Almon-
Diblathaim and went to the Abarim Mountains, near Nebo
and set up their/our tents there. 48 Then they/we left the

Abarim Mountains and went to the plains of the Moab region, near the Jordan [River], across from Jericho. **49** They/We set up our tents there; their/our tents stretched [for several miles/km.] from Beth-Jeshimoth to Acacia. **50** While we were there on the plains of the Moab [region] near the Jordan [River], across from Jericho, Yahweh spoke to Moses/me. He said, **51** "Tell this to the Israeli people: When you cross the Jordan [River] and enter the Canaan [region], **52** you must force all the people who live there to leave. Destroy all their carved statues and all their idols made of metal. Wreck all the places where they worship [their idols]. **53** Take their land from them and start to live there, because I have given their land to you for you to own. **54** "Divide up the land by throwing (lots/small stones which have been marked) [to decide which group will get which area]. Give the larger areas to the groups that have more people, and give the smaller areas to the groups that have fewer people. Each tribe will receive its own land. **55** If you do not force the people who live there to leave, they will cause you to have much trouble. They will be like sharp hooks in your eyes, and like thorns in your sides. And they will bring trouble to you, in that land where you will be living. **56** And then I will punish you, as I had planned to punish them."

34 Yahweh said to Moses/me, **2** "Tell this to the Israeli people: You will soon enter Canaan land, and it will become yours. These will be the borders of the land: **3** On the south you will receive part of the Zin Desert, near the border of the Edom [region]. On the east side, the border will start at the south end of the Dead Sea. **4** It will extend to a little south of the Scorpion Pass, and extend [west] through [the] Zin [Desert] and south of Kadesh-Barnea. From there it will extend to Hazar Addar and from there to Azmon. **5** From Azmon it will extend [west] to the dry riverbed [at the border] of Egypt and then to the [Mediterranean] Sea. **6** The border on the west will be the Mediterranean Sea. **7** The border on the north will start from the Mediterranean Sea and extend [east] to Hor Mountain. **8** From there it will extend to Lebo-Hamath and then to Zedad. **9** From there the border will extend to Ziphron, and it will end at Hazar-Enan. **10** The border on the east will start at Hazar-Enan and extend [south] to Shepham. **11** From there it will extend east of Ain to Riblah and then along the hills that are east of Galilee Lake. **12** Then the border will extend south along the Jordan [River] and end at the Dead Sea. Those will be the borders around your country." **13** So Moses/I [told all that] to the Israeli people. Then he/I said to them, "That is the land that you will receive. You must throw (lots/stones that have been marked) to decide which area will go to each of the nine and a half tribes, because Yahweh has commanded that it should be divided among them. **14** The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh have already received the land in which they will live. **15** They have received land on the east side of the Jordan [River], across from Jericho." **16** Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, **17** "These are the men who will divide the land: First, Eleazar and Joshua. **18** But one leader [from each of the twelve tribes will help them divide the land]. **19** "From the tribe of Judah, appoint Jephunneh's son Caleb. From the tribe of Simeon appoint Ammihud's son Shemuel. From the tribe of Benjamin appoint Kislon's son Elidad. From the tribe of Dan appoint Jogli's son Bukki. From the tribe of Manasseh appoint Ephod's son Hanniel. From the tribe of Ephraim appoint Shiphtan's son Kemuel. From the tribe of Zebulun appoint Parnach's son Elizaphan. From the tribe of Issachar appoint Azzan's son Paltiel. From the tribe of Asher appoint Shelomi's son Ahihud. From the tribe of Naphtali appoint Ammihud's son Pedahel." **29** Yahweh commanded that all those were the men who should divide the Canaan region among the Israeli people.

35 Yahweh told this to Moses/me [while the Israeli people were] on the plain in the Moab region near the Jordan [River], across from Jericho: **2** "Tell the Israeli people that from the land that they will receive, they must give to the descendants of Levi some cities in which they can live. They must also give them some land around these cities. **3** Those will be for the descendants of Levi to live in, and around the cities will be land for their cattle and flocks of sheep and goats and other animals. **4** "The land that you give them for their animals must extend out for (1,500 feet/450 meters) from the walls of the cities. **5** Also measure (3,000 feet/900 meters) in each direction out from the walls of each city. That additional land will be land for their animals outside the walls of the cities." **6** "Six of the cities that you give to the descendants of Levi will be cities to which people [can run] to be safe. If someone [accidentally] kills someone else, the one who killed that person may run to one of those cities to be safe. **7** You must also give to the descendants of Levi 42 other cities and the land around those cities, for their animals, **8** The Israeli tribes that have the most people must give them more cities than the tribes that have fewer people give. Each tribe must give some of its cities to the descendants of Levi, but the tribes that have more land must give more cities, and the tribes that have less land will give fewer cities." **9** Yahweh also said to Moses/me, **10** "Tell this to the Israeli people: When you cross the Jordan [River] and enter the Canaan [region], **11** you must choose some cities to which people can run to be safe/protected. If someone kills another person (accidentally/without planning to do that), the one who killed that person may run to one of those

cities and be safe. 12 One of the relatives of the person who was killed may think he must avenge his relative's death [by killing the murderer]. But in that city, the killer will be safe [because the people in that city would kill those relatives if they tried to get revenge there]. The man who killed someone accidentally [must] be put on trial in a court. 13 You must set apart six cities to be cities to which someone who killed another person accidentally may run and be safe. 14 There must be three of those cities on the east side of the Jordan [River] and three that will be [on the west side], in the Canaan region. 15 Those six cities will be cities where Israeli people may run to and be safe, and where foreigners and other people who are living among you can also run to and be safe. Any of those people who accidentally kills someone may run to one of those cities [and be safe/protected there]. 16 "But [you must consider that] anyone who kills another person with an iron weapon or with a big rock or with a piece of wood, is a murderer, and the one who killed the other person must be executed. 19 A relative of the person who was murdered must be the one who executes the murderer as soon as he finds him. 20 If someone shoves another person [over a cliff] or throws something at another person 21 or hits that person with his hand/fist and causes that person to die, if he did it because he hated that person, then you must consider that he is a murderer, and must be executed. A relative of the person who was killed must be the one who executes the murderer as soon as he finds him. 22 "But someone might accidentally shove someone else, or accidentally throw something at another person and hit him, not because he hates that person. 23 Or he might drop a rock on someone that he did not see. If the one who does that does not plan to hurt anyone and does not hate the person that was killed, 24 the people of that city must decide whether the relative of the dead person [has the right to get revenge], or whether the one who killed the other person [truly did it (accidentally/without planning to do it)]. 25 [If they decide that the killer planned to kill the other person, they must not allow him to stay in their city. But if they decide that it was done accidentally], they must protect the killer from being killed by the dead person's relative. They must send the killer to one of the cities where he will be safe/protected, and allow him to stay there until the Supreme Priest dies. [After that, the killer may go back to his home, because the dead person's relative no longer has the right to get revenge]. 26 "But [while the Supreme Priest is still living], the person who is in that safe city must not leave that city. 27 If he goes outside the city, and if a relative of the dead person finds him, that relative is permitted to kill that person, [and people will not consider that the relative is guilty of murder.] 28 The killer must stay in that city where he will be safe/protected until the Supreme Priest dies. [He will be safe from revenge after that, because the death of the Supreme Priest will be considered to be a sacrifice to atone for that murder]. After that, the killer may return to his home. 29 "You must always obey those regulations, wherever you live. 30 "If someone [is accused of] killing another person, the one who is accused may be executed only if there are people who saw him do it. There must be more than one witness; no one is permitted to be executed if there was only one (witness/person who saw him do it). 31 "If there is a murderer who truly should be executed, do not [spare his life by] accepting (a ransom/money for him not to be killed). He must be executed. 32 "If someone has run to a city where he will be safe/protected, do not allow him to give you money in order that you will permit him to return to his home before the Supreme Priest dies. 33 "You must execute people who truly murder others. If you did not do that, you would be causing the people who live in the land to become unacceptable to me. Anyone who deliberately kills an innocent person must be executed. 34 I am Yahweh, and I live among you Israelis, so do not spoil/pollute the land by allowing people to murder others without being punished."

36 The family leaders of the clan of Gilead of the tribe of Manasseh went to Moses/me and the other family leaders of the Israeli people. 2 They said to Moses/me, "Yahweh commanded you, our leader, to apportion the land to the Israeli tribes by throwing (lots/stones that have been marked) to decide [which group would get which area]. Yahweh also commanded you to give the land that belonged to our fellow Israeli Zelophehad to his daughters. 3 But if his daughters marry men from the other Israeli tribes, that land will no longer belong to our tribe. People of other tribes will get it. So some of our land will no longer belong to us. 4 When the Year of Celebration comes, [when all the land that has been bought by someone is returned to its original owners], the land that belonged to Zelophehad will belong to the tribes of the men that his daughters marry. So some of our land, the land that we received from our fathers, will be taken from us, [and we will never own it again]." 5 Yahweh told Moses/me what to reply to them, so Moses/I said this to them: "These men from the tribe of Manasseh are right. 6 This is what Yahweh is saying to the daughters of Zelophehad: 'Each of you may marry anyone you want to, but you must marry only someone from your own tribe.' 7 In that way, the land that belongs to Israelis will not be passed from one tribe to another tribe. Each Israeli will keep the land in the tribe that belonged to his ancestors. 8 A woman who inherits her father's land may get married, but she must

marry someone from her own tribe. In that way, every Israeli will keep the land that belonged to his ancestors. **9** The land must not be passed from one tribe to another tribe. Each Israeli tribe must keep the land that it received from its ancestors." **10** Zelophehad's daughters obeyed what Yahweh told Moses/me. **11** The five daughters—Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah and Noah—married their cousins, their father's relatives. **12** The men whom they married were from the tribe of Manasseh, so their land continued to belong to their father's family and tribe. **13** Those were the commands [DOU] that Yahweh gave to Moses/me to tell to the Israelis, while they/we were on the plains of the Moab region, close to the Jordan River, across from Jericho.

Deuteronomy

1 In this book is written what Moses/I said to the Israeli people. He/I told them these things when they/we were in the desert, on the east side of the Jordan [River]. They/We had set up our tents near [a place named] Suph, between Paran [town on the one side of the river] and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab [towns on the other side of the river]. **2** To walk from Sinai [Mountain] to the Kadesh-Barnea [oasis], people usually travel for only eleven days, going by way of the hilly area named Edom. **3** Forty years after (the Israelis/we) left Egypt, in the middle of January, Moses/I told the Israeli people everything that Yahweh had commanded him/me to tell them. **4** This was after they/we had defeated Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, who lived in Heshbon [city], and Og, the king of the Bashan [region] who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei [towns]. **5** Moses/I told them these things while the people were in the Moab region, on the east side of the Jordan [River]. He/I (explained to them/enabled them to understand) God's laws. This is what he/I said to them: **6** "Yahweh our God said to us when we were at Sinai [Mountain], 'You have stayed for a very long time at [the bottom of] this mountain. **7** So now continue traveling. Go to the hilly area where the Amor people-group lives and to the nearby areas—to the Jordan [River] Valley, to the hilly region, to the western (foothills/hills at the bottom of the mountains), to the desert area to the south, to the [Mediterranean] Seacoast, to all of Canaan land, to the Lebanon [Mountains], and [northeast] to the great Euphrates River. **8** Note that I will give that land to you. I, Yahweh, promised to your ancestors Abraham and Isaac and Jacob that I would give it to them and to their descendants. So now go and occupy it.'" **9** Moses/I also said to the people, "When [we were still at Sinai Mountain], I told your ancestors 'It is a very big burden/responsibility for me to govern all of you. So I cannot do it by myself. **10** Yahweh our God has caused us Israelis to now become as numerous as the stars in the sky. **11** And I hope/desire that Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped], will cause us to become 1,000 times as numerous as we are now and that he will bless us just like he promised to do. **12** But I certainly cannot [RHQ] (solve/deal with) all of your complaints/problems. **13** So choose some men from your tribes who are wise and who have good sense and who are respected. Then I will appoint them to be your leaders.' **14** Your ancestors replied, 'What you have suggested is good for us to do.' **15** So I took the wise and respected men [that your ancestors chose] from your tribes, and I appointed them to be your leaders. I appointed some to (rule/have authority) over 1,000 people, some to have authority over 100 people, some to have authority over 50 people, and some to have authority over ten people. I also appointed other officers from throughout your tribes. **16** I instructed/told your leaders, 'Listen to the disputes that occur among your people. Judge each dispute, including disputes between close relatives and quarrels between your people and people from other countries who live among you. **17** You must (be impartial/not favor one person more than another); you must treat poor people and important people equally. You must not worry about what anyone will think [about how you decide matters], because you will decide matters as God [wants you to]. If any quarrel/dispute is very difficult and you are unable to decide it, bring it to me, and I will decide.' **18** At that time I also told you other things that you should do." **19** "Then, just like Yahweh our God commanded us, we left Sinai [Mountain] and went through that huge desert that was very (dangerous/difficult to travel through), on the road to the hilly area where the Amor people-group live. We arrived at Kadesh-Barnea. **20** I said to your ancestors, 'We have now come to the hilly area where the Amor people-group live. This is part of the area that Yahweh our God, the one whom our ancestors [worshiped], is giving to us. **21** Note that Yahweh our God is giving this land to us. So go and occupy it as he commanded. Do not be (at all/even a little bit) afraid.' **22** But all of your ancestors came to me and said, 'Before we go, we should [first] send some men there to explore the land, in order that they can return and tell us which will be the best road to go there and what kind of towns are there.' **23** I thought that it would be good to do that, so I chose twelve men, one man from each tribe. **24** They went up into the hilly area as far as Eshcol Valley, and they explored all that area. **25** They picked some of the fruit that they found there and brought it to us. They reported that the land that Yahweh our God was giving to us is very good/fertile." **26** "But your ancestors refused to go [and conquer that land]. They rebelled against what Yahweh our God had commanded them to do, and they would not go into that land. **27** Your ancestors [stayed] in their tents and complained saying 'Yahweh hates us. So he has brought us here from Egypt just to allow the Amor people-group to destroy us. **28** (Why should we go there?/We do not want to go there.) [RHQ] The men whom we sent there have caused us to become very discouraged/afraid. They have told us that the people there are much stronger and taller than we are and that there are extremely high [HYP] walls around their towns. Also they reported that they saw [giants there that are] descendants of Anak.' **29** Then I said to your ancestors, 'Do not be afraid (at all/even a little bit) [DOU]

of those people! 30 Yahweh our God will go ahead of you, and he will fight for you, just like you saw him do for you in Egypt 31 and in the desert. You saw how he brought you safely here, like a man would carry his son. [SIM]' 32 [I reminded them that] he always went ahead of them while they traveled [in the desert]. He directed them by [a pillar of] fire during the night and a [pillar of] cloud during the day. He showed them places to set up their tents. But in spite of what I said, your ancestors would not trust Yahweh our God. 34 Yahweh heard what they said, and he became angry. He solemnly declared, 35 'Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, will enter the land. He has obeyed me completely. So I will give to him and to his descendants [some of] the land that he explored. He is the only one of all you people who will enter that land. None of these evil people will ever see that good land which I solemnly promised to give to your ancestors.' 37 But because of [what] your ancestors [did], Yahweh was also angry with me. He said to me, 'You also will not enter that land. 38 Joshua, the son of Nun, who is your helper, will enter it. Encourage him, because he is the one who will enable you Israeli people to occupy that land.' 39 Then Yahweh said to all of us, 'You said that your children would be captured by your enemies. Because they are very young, they do not yet know what is good and what is evil. But they are the ones to whom I will give that land, and they will enter it and occupy it. 40 But as for you, turn around and go back into the desert, toward the (Red Sea/Gulf of Aqaba).' 41 Then your ancestors replied, 'We have sinned; we have disobeyed Yahweh. So we will go and attack [the people who live in] that land, just like Yahweh our God commanded us to do.' And each of their men put on his weapons, and they thought that it would be easy to invade the hilly region. 42 But Yahweh said to me, 'Tell them, "Do not go up there and attack those people, because I will not go with you. If you go, your enemies will defeat you."' 43 So I told that to your ancestors, but they would not heed what I said. They [again] rebelled against what Yahweh commanded them to do. Their soldiers proudly/arrogantly marched up into that hilly region. 44 Then the men of the Amor people-group who lived in that region came out [of their towns] and attacked those soldiers. They pursued your ancestors' soldiers like [a swarm of] bees pursues people, and they pursued them [south] from the Edom area and defeated them at Hormah [city]. 45 So your ancestors went back [to Kadesh-Barnea] and cried out to request Yahweh [to help them], but he did not heed them. He did not pay any attention to them [DOU]. 46 So we stayed there at Kadesh-Barnea for a long time."

2 "Then we turned around and went through the desert toward the (Red Sea/Gulf of Aqaba), as Yahweh told us to do, and we wandered in the Edom area for many years. 2 Then Yahweh said to me, 3 'You have been wandering around this hilly area for a long enough time. Now turn [and travel] toward the north. 4 And tell the people that they are about to travel near the land that belongs to the descendants of Esau, who are also descendants of Isaac. They live in the [hilly] Edom region. They will be afraid of you, 5 but do not start to fight against them, because I am not going to give you even a tiny bit [HYP] of their land. I have given that land to the descendants of Esau. 6 [When you travel near their land], buy food and water from them.' 7 Do not forget that Yahweh our God has blessed you in everything that you [SYN] have done. He knows [what has happened to you while] you have wandered in this huge desert. But he has been with you during those 40 years, and as a result you have had everything that you needed [LIT]. 8 So we continued to travel. We avoided going through the hilly area where the descendants of Esau live. We stayed away from the road through the Jordan [River] Valley past Ezion-Geber and Elath [towns], and we turned and traveled northeast toward the desert area where the Moab people-group lives. 9 Yahweh said to me, 'Do not bother/harass the people of Moab, and do not start to fight against them, because I am not going to give you any of their land. [Do not forget that] they are descendants of [Abraham's nephew] Lot, and I have given to them Ar [city, their capital, and the other areas in that country].'" 10 A large group of giants called Emim formerly lived there. They were strong and numerous, and as tall as the giants who were descendants of Anak. 11 They and the descendants of Anak are also called the Repha giants, but the people of Moab call them Emim. 12 The Hor people-group also formerly lived in the Edom area, but the descendants of Esau chased them out. They defeated and killed them and (settled in/occupied) their land, just as the Israeli people later expelled their enemies from the land that Yahweh gave to them. 13 [I also said to the Israeli people], "Then we crossed the Zered Gorge, as Yahweh told us to do. 14 It had been thirty-eight years from the time we first left Kadesh-Barnea until we crossed the Zered Gorge. During those years, all the Israeli (fighting men/soldiers) of that generation had died, as Yahweh had vowed would happen. 15 They died because Yahweh opposed them, until he had gotten rid of all of them. 16 After all the men who had been old enough to fight in wars had died [DOU], 17 Yahweh said to me, 18 'Today you all must cross the border into the Moab region, near Ar, [their capital city]. 19 When you come near the border of the land where the Ammon people-group live, do not bother/harass them or start to fight against them. They are also descendants of Lot, so I am not going

to give you any of the land that I have given to them.'" 20 That region is also called the land of the Repha giants, who formerly lived there. The Ammon people-group call them the Zamzum group. 21 They were a large and powerful group, who were as tall as the descendants of Anak. But Yahweh got rid of them, and the Ammon people-group expelled them and took their land away from them and started to live there. 22 Yahweh had done the same thing for the descendants of Esau who live in the hilly area of Edom. He got rid of the Hor people-group, with the result that the Edom people-group took their land from them and started to live there. They still live there. 23 People who came from Crete [Island] got rid of the Av group [who previously lived in the land close to the Mediterranean Sea], as far south as Gaza. They took their land from them and started to live there. 24 "[After we had gone through the Moab region], Yahweh said to us, 'Now cross the Arnon [River]. I will help you to defeat [IDM] [the army of] Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, who lives in Heshbon [city]. So attack their army and start to take their land from them. 25 Today I will begin to cause everyone, everywhere, to be afraid of you. Everyone who hears about you will tremble and be terrified.' 26 Then I sent messengers to go from the desert to King Sihon at Heshbon. I told them to give this peaceful message to the king: 27 'Please allow us to travel through your land. We [promise that we] will stay on the road; we will not turn off to the right or to the left. 28 We will pay for any food or water that you allow us to buy. We want only to walk through your country, 29 until we cross the Jordan [River] into the land that Yahweh our God is giving to us. Do for us just as the descendants of Esau who live in the Edom area and the Moab people-group did for us when they allowed us to go through their areas.' 30 But King Sihon would not allow us to go through his country. That was because Yahweh our God caused him to be stubborn [IDM]. The result was that Yahweh enabled us to defeat his army and take his land [IDM], which we still live in. 31 Yahweh said to me, 'Listen! I am about to allow you to defeat Sihon's [army] and to take the people's land from them. So start to occupy it!' 32 Then Sihon came out [of the city] with all his army to fight against us at Jahaz [town]. 33 But God enabled us to defeat [DOU] them, and we killed Sihon and his sons and all his soldiers. 34 We captured all their cities and destroyed them all. We killed all the men and women and children; we did not allow any of them to remain alive. 35 We took the valuable things that were in the cities that we captured and also their cattle. 36 Yahweh our God enabled us to capture [IDM] all their towns from Aroer [in the south], which is at the edge of the Arnon River [Valley], to the Gilead [region in the north]. Some of their cities had [walls around them], but we were able to [climb over them]. 37 But we did not go near the area where the Ammon people-group live, or the banks of the Jabbok riverbed, or the towns in the hilly area, or any other place where Yahweh our God told us not to go."

3 "Then we turned [north] and went toward the Bashan region. Og, the king [of that area], and all his soldiers marched [south] to fight against us at Edrei [town]. 2 Yahweh said to me, 'Do not be afraid of him, because I will enable your [army] to defeat [MTY] him and all his army and to capture all their land. Do to him what you did to Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, who ruled in Heshbon [city].' 3 "So Yahweh enabled us to defeat [IDM] King Og and all his army. We killed them all; we did not allow any of them to remain alive. 4 There were 60 cities in that region near Argob, in King Og's kingdom of Bashan. But we captured all of them 5 All those cities had high walls [around them] with gates and bars. We also captured many villages that did not have walls [around them]. 6 We completely destroyed everything, just as we had done [in the area that] King Sihon ruled. We killed all the men, women, and children. 7 But from those cities we took for ourselves all the livestock and other valuable things. 8 "So at that time we took from those two kings of the Amor people-group all the land east of the Jordan [River], from the Arnon [River] gorge [in the south] to Hermon Mountain [in the north]." 9 (That mountain is called Sirion by the people of Sidon [city] and is called Senir by the Amor people-group.) 10 "We captured all the towns on the (plateau/high level land), and all the Gilead [region], and all the Bashan [region] as far east as Edrei and Salecah towns, which also belonged to Og's kingdom." 11 (Og was the last king who was a descendant of the Repha giants. His bed was made of iron. It was almost (14 feet/4 meters) long and (6 feet/2 meters) wide. It is still [RHQ] in Rabbah [city] in the Ammon area.) 12 "From the land that we captured at that time, I allotted to the tribes of Reuben and Gad the land [north] of Aroer [town] near the Arnon [River], and some of the hilly area of the Gilead [region], along with the nearby towns. 13 The other part of the Gilead [region] and all of the Bashan [region], which was the Argob [region] that King Og had ruled, I allotted to half of the tribe of Manasseh." (The entire Bashan [region] is called the land of the Repha giants.) 14 "Jair, from the tribe of Manasseh, conquered all the Bashan area as far [north] as the border of the Geshur and Maacah territories. He gave his own name to the villages there, and they are still called the villages of Jair. 15 The [northern part of the] Gilead [region] I allotted to the Machir [clan, who are descendants of the tribe of Manasseh]. 16 I allotted to the tribes of Reuben and Gad the southern part of

the Gilead [region, extending south] to the Arnon [River]. The middle of the river is the [southern] boundary. The [northern] boundary is the Jabbok River, which is part of the border of the Ammon area. **17** [To the west their territory extended] to the Jordan [River] Valley, from Galilee Lake [in the north] to the Dead Sea [in the south] and to the slopes of Pisgah [Mountain] to the east. **18** At that time, I told you three tribes, 'Yahweh our God is giving you this land [east of the Jordan River], for you to occupy/capture. So now, give your soldiers weapons, and send them [across the Jordan River] ahead of the men from the other Israeli tribes [to help them to conquer/capture the land that has been allotted to them]. **19** But your wives and children and your very numerous cattle must stay in the towns that I have allotted to you. **20** [Your men must help your fellow Israelis] until Yahweh enables them to live there peacefully after they capture all the land that Yahweh our God is giving to them on the west side of the Jordan [River], just like he did for you [here on the east side of the river]. After that, you all may return to this land that I have allotted to you.' **21** And I told Joshua, 'You [SYN] have seen everything that Yahweh our God did to those two kings, [Sihon and Og]. He will do the same thing to the people [who are now] in the land that you will be entering. **22** Do not be afraid of those people, because Yahweh our God is the one who will fight for you all.'" **23** "At that time, I earnestly prayed, saying **24** 'Yahweh our Lord, you have merely begun to show me that you are very great and to show me the powerful things that you can do [MTY]. There is certainly no [RHQ] god in heaven or on earth who can do the powerful things/deeds that you [have done]. **25** So please allow me to cross the Jordan [River] and to see the good/fertile land on the west side, the beautiful hilly area and [the mountains in] Lebanon.' **26** But Yahweh was angry with me because of [what] your ancestors [had made me do], so he would not pay attention to me. Instead, he said, 'That is enough [talk from you]! Do not talk to me about that again! **27** Climb up to the top of Pisgah [Mountain] and look toward the west and to the east, toward the north and to the south. Look at [MTY] it all carefully, because you will not cross the Jordan [River to see the land from there]. **28** But tell Joshua what he must do and encourage him to be strong, because he is the one who will lead the people [across the river in order that they can] occupy/capture the land that you will see [from the top of the mountain].' **29** So we remained in the [Jordan River] Valley close to Beth-Peor [town]."

4 "Now, you Israeli people, obey all the rules and regulations [DOU] that I will teach you. If you do that, you will remain alive and you will enter and occupy/capture the land that Yahweh, the God whom your ancestors [worshiped], is giving to you. **2** Do not add anything to what I command you, and do not take anything away from what I tell you. Obey all the commands of Yahweh our God that I am giving to you. **3** "You have seen what Yahweh did at Baal-Peor [Mountain]. He got rid of all the people who worshiped [the god] Baal there, **4** but you who faithfully [continued to worship] Yahweh our God are still alive today. **5** "Note that I have taught you all the rules and regulations, just like Yahweh our God told me to do. He wants you to obey them [when you are living] in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. **6** Obey them faithfully because, [if you do that], you will show the people of other nations that you are very wise. When they hear about all these laws, they will say, 'The people of this great nation [of Israel] are certainly very wise [DOU]!' **7** Even if other nations are great, there is none [RHQ] of them that has a god who is as near to them as Yahweh our God is to us! Whenever we call out to him [to help us, he answers/helps us] **8** And there is no [RHQ] other nation, even if it is a great nation, that has laws that are as just/fair as the laws that I am telling to you today. **9** "But be very careful! [DOU, IDM] Do not forget what you [SYN] have seen [God do]. Remember those things as long as you are alive. Tell them to your children and your grandchildren. **10** Tell them about the day that your ancestors stood in the presence of Yahweh our God at Sinai [Mountain], when he said to me, 'Gather the people together, in order that they can hear what I say. I want them to learn to have an awesome respect for me as long as they are alive, and I want them to teach their children to do that also.' **11** [Tell them that] your ancestors came near the bottom of the mountain, while the mountain burned with a fire that went up to the sky, and the mountain was covered with dark clouds and black [smoke]. **12** Then Yahweh spoke to your ancestors out of the middle of the fire. Your ancestors heard him speak, but they did not see him. They only heard his voice. **13** And he declared to them his agreement. That agreement contained the Ten Commandments that he wants you to obey. He wrote those on two stone tablets. **14** Yahweh commanded me to teach all the rules and regulations to you, in order that you would obey them in the land that you are about to enter and occupy." **15** "On the day that Yahweh spoke to your ancestors at Sinai [Mountain], he was invisible. So, be careful **16** that you do not sin by making for yourselves any idol [of something that can be seen!] not make an idol that resembles any person, either a man or a woman, **17** or that resembles any animal or any bird **18** or any (reptile/creature that scurries across the ground) or any fish in the deep ocean. **19** And be careful to not look up toward the sky and be tempted to worship anything that you see there—the sun

or the moon or the stars. Yahweh our God has given those to [be a blessing to] all people everywhere, [but you must not worship them]. **20** Yahweh has brought your ancestors out of Egypt, where [they were suffering as though] they were in a blazing furnace, in order that they would be people who belong to him, which is what you are today. **21** "But Yahweh was angry with me because of [what] your ancestors [made me do]. He vowed that I would not cross the Jordan [River] to enter the good/fertile land that he is giving to you. **22** He said that I must die here in this land and never cross the Jordan [River]. But you will go across it, and you will occupy that land. **23** Be sure that you do not forget the agreement that Yahweh our God made with you. He commanded you to not make any kind of idol, because he has forbidden that. **24** [You must not do that] because Yahweh your God will destroy [anyone who worships idols,] like [MET] a fire completely destroys things. He [wants people to worship only him, he] (cannot accept/will punish) people who worship anyone or anything else. **25** "When you have been in the land [of Canaan] for a long time and you have children and grandchildren, do not sin by making an idol that represents anything at all, because Yahweh says that is evil, and if you do that, you will cause him to become angry with you [and punish you]. **26** Today I am requesting everyone who is in heaven and everyone who is on the earth [MTY] to watch what you are doing. [If you disobey what I am telling you], you will soon all die in the land that you will be crossing the Jordan [River] to occupy. You will not live very long there; Yahweh will completely get rid of many [HYP] of you. **27** And [the rest of you], Yahweh will force you to go and live among the people of many other nations. Only a few of you will (survive/remain alive) there. **28** When you are in those nations, you will worship gods that are made of wood and stone, gods made by humans, gods that cannot see anything or hear anything or eat anything or smell anything. **29** But while you are there, if you will try to know Yahweh your God, and if you try with your entire inner being to know him, he will (answer/reveal himself to) you. **30** In the future, after you have been mistreated there and all those bad things happen to you, you will again worship only Yahweh and obey him. **31** Yahweh is a God who acts mercifully. [If you continue to obey him], he will not abandon you or destroy you or forget the agreement that he solemnly made with your ancestors." **32** "Now think about the past, about the time before you were born, about all the time since God first created people here on the earth. You could search everywhere, in heaven and on the earth. (Has anything like this ever happened that is as great as [what Yahweh did for the Israeli people]?/Certainly nothing has ever happened that is as great [as what Yahweh did for the Israeli people].) [RHQ] (Has anyone ever heard of anything like this?/Certainly no one has ever heard of anything like this.) [RHQ] **33** (Has any group ever remained alive after they heard a god speak to them from the middle of a fire, like we did?/Certainly no group has ever remained alive after they heard a god speak to them from the middle of a fire, like we did.) [RHQ] **34** Certainly no other god has ever tried to take a [huge] group of people from one nation [to another location], like he did for us when he brought us out of Egypt. We saw Yahweh our God use great power [MTY, DOU] when he performed many kinds of [DOU] miracles, and sent plagues, and did many other very terrifying things in Egypt for us, [and rescued us when the army of Egypt tried to fight against us]. **35** "Yahweh showed all these things to you, in order that you would know that only he is truly God, and that there is no other God. **36** He allowed your ancestors to hear him speak from heaven in order that he could discipline them. Here on the earth he allowed them to see his great fire [on Sinai Mountain], and he spoke to them from the middle of the fire. **37** Because he loved our ancestors, he chose you Israelis who are their descendants, and by his great power he brought your ancestors out of Egypt. **38** [As they advanced], he expelled the people of nations that were greater and more powerful than they were, in order that he could allow them to capture their land and cause it to become yours, which is [what is happening] now. **39** "So today you should (meditate on/think about) the fact that Yahweh is God, that he is/rules in heaven and also on the earth, and that there is no other god. **40** Obey all the rules and regulations that I am giving to you today, in order that things will go well for you and for your descendants, and that you will live a long time in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, [to belong to you] forever." **41** Then Moses/I set apart three cities that are on the east side of the Jordan [River]. **42** If someone accidentally killed another person, a person who had not been his enemy previously, he could escape to one of those cities. He would be safe/protected in one of those cities [because the people there would protect him]. **43** For the tribe of Reuben, Moses/I set apart Bezer [city] in the (plateau/high level) area. For the tribe of Gad, Moses/I set apart Ramoth [city] in the Gilead [area]. For the tribe of Manasseh, Moses/I set apart Golan [city] in the Bashan [region]. **44** Moses/I gave [God's] laws to the Israeli people. **45** They included all the rules and instructions and commands that Moses/I gave to them, after they/we had come out of Egypt, **46** when they/we were in the valley east of the Jordan [River]. They/We were across from Beth-Peor [town], in the land that [previously] was ruled by Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, who lived in Heshbon [city].

Moses/I and the other Israelis had defeated his [army] when they/we came out of Egypt. **47** They/We captured Sihon's land and the land that Og, the king of the Bashan [region], ruled. They were the two kings who ruled the Amor people-group [in the area] east of the Jordan [River]. **48** Their land extended from Aroer [town in the south] along the Arnon [River], as far [north] as Sirion Mountain, which [most people] call Hermon Mountain. **49** It also included all the area east of the Jordan [River] Valley, all the way south to the Dead Sea and east to the slopes of Pisgah [Mountain].

5 Moses/I summoned all the people of Israel and said to them, "You Israeli people, listen to all the rules and regulations that I am giving to you today. Learn them and be sure to obey them. **2** When we were at Sinai [Mountain], Yahweh our God made an agreement with us. **3** But this agreement was not only for our ancestors. He made it also for us who are alive now. **4** Yahweh spoke with us face-to-face on that mountain, from the middle of the fire. **5** On that day, I stood between your ancestors and Yahweh to tell them what he said, because they were afraid of the fire, and they did not climb up the mountain. This is what Yahweh said: **6** 'I am Yahweh your God, the one you [worship]. I am the one who brought you out of the land of Egypt. I am the one who freed you from being slaves [there]. **7** [You must worship only] me; you must not worship any other god. **8** You must not carve/make for yourselves any idol that represents anything in the sky or anything that is on the ground or anything that swims in the water. **9** You must not bow down to any idol and worship it, because I am Yahweh God, and I (am very jealous/want you to worship me only). I punish those who sin and hate me. I punish not only them, but I will punish (their descendants, down to the third and fourth generation/their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren). **10** But I will steadfastly love (thousands of generations/all the descendants) of those who love me and obey my commandments (OR, I will love for thousands of generations). **11** Do not use/speak my name carelessly (OR, for wrong/evil purposes), because I am Yahweh God, the one whom you [should worship], and I will certainly punish those who use/speak my name for wrong/evil purposes [LIT]. **12** Do not forget that the seventh day [of every week] is mine. Dedicate those days to me just like I, Yahweh your God, am commanding you. **13** There are six days each week for you to do all your work, **14** but the seventh day is a rest day, a day dedicated to me, Yahweh your God. On that day you must not do any work. You and your sons and daughters and your male and female slaves must not work. You must not even force your livestock to work, and you must not tell foreigners to work, those who are living in your country. You must allow your slaves to rest on that day just like you do. **15** Do not forget that you were slaves in Egypt, and that I, Yahweh your God, brought you out from there by my very great power. [DOU, MTY] That is the reason that I am commanding that [all of] you must rest on the seventh/Sabbath day [each week]. **16** Honor/Respect your fathers and your mothers, just like I, Yahweh your God, am commanding you, in order that you may live a long time in the land that I, Yahweh your God, will give you, and in order that things will go well for you there. **17** Do not murder anyone. **18** Do not (commit adultery/have sex with anyone other than your spouse). **19** Do not steal anything. **20** Do not tell lies about anyone [when you are speaking in a court]. **21** Do not (covet/desire to have) someone else's wife, someone else's house, someone else's fields, someone else's male slave or female slave, someone else's livestock, someone else's donkeys, or anything else that another person owns.' **22** Those are the commandments that Yahweh spoke to your ancestors. When they were gathered there at [the bottom of] the mountain, he spoke with a very loud voice from the middle of the fire, and there were dark clouds surrounding the mountain. He spoke only those [ten] commandments, no more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. **23** After your ancestors heard [Yahweh's] voice when he spoke to them out of the darkness, while there was a big fire burning on the mountain, their leaders and elders came to me, **24** and [one of] them said, 'Listen to us! Yahweh our God showed us that he is very great and glorious when we heard him speak [MTY] from the fire. Today we have realized that it is possible for us humans to continue to live even though God has spoken to us. **25** But we are afraid that we will die [RHQ] if we hear Yahweh our God speak [MTY] to us again; his terrible fire will destroy/kill us. **26** (Who has/Certainly no human has) remained alive after hearing the all-powerful God speak [MTY] to them from a fire. **27** [So Moses], you go [up the mountain] and listen to everything that Yahweh our God will say. Then [come back and] tell us everything that he has said, and we will listen to what he has said and obey it.' **28** Yahweh heard your leaders say that, so [when I went back up the mountain], Yahweh said to me, 'I have heard what your leaders have said, and what they have said is right/correct. **29** I surely wish that they would always think like that and revere me and obey all my commandments, in order that things may go well for them and for their descendants forever. **30** So go [down] and tell them to return to their tents. **31** But [then] you [come back up here and] stand near me, and I will give to you all the rules and regulations that I [want them to obey]. Then you can teach them to the people, in order that they will obey

them when they are in the land that I am giving to them.' 32 [So I went back down to the people, and I said to them], 'Be sure that you do everything that Yahweh our God has commanded us to do. Do not disobey any of his laws. 33 Conduct your lives as Yahweh our God has commanded us to do, in order that you may live a long time, and in order that things will go well for you [when you are living] in the land that you will occupy.'"

6 "These are the commandments and rules and regulations that Yahweh our God commanded me to teach to you. He wants you to obey them in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. 2 He wants you to revere him, and he wants you and your descendants to always obey all these rules and regulations that I am giving to you, in order that you may live for a long time. 3 So, you Israeli people, listen to them carefully and obey them. If you do that, things will go well with you, and you will become a nation with a very large population when you are living in that very fertile [IDM] land. That is what Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped], promised [would happen]. 4 "You Israeli people, listen! Only Yahweh is our God. 5 You must love him with all your inner being and with all that you feel and with all that you do. 6 Never forget [IDM] these commands that I am giving to you today. 7 Teach them to your children again and again. Talk about them [all the time]: When you are in your houses and when you are walking outside; talk about them when you are lying down and when you are doing things. 8 [Write them on tiny scrolls and] fasten them to your arms/wrists, and write them on bands that you fasten to your foreheads [to help you to remember them]. 9 Write them on the doorposts and on the gates of your houses. 10 "Yahweh our God vowed to your ancestors Abraham and Isaac and Jacob that he will give you a land that already has in it large and prosperous cities that you did not build. 11 He said that the houses in those cities will already be full of many good things that [others put there]; you did not put them there. There will be wells that others have dug. There will be vineyards and olive trees that others planted. So when Yahweh brings you into that land, and you have all that you want to eat, 12 be sure that you do not forget Yahweh who rescued you from being slaves [in Egypt and gave all these things to you]. 13 "You must revere Yahweh our God, and you must serve only him and say that he should [MTY] punish you if you do not do what you have promised. 14 You must not worship any other gods, the gods that the people-groups who will live near you worship. 15 Yahweh our God, who lives among you, (will not accept/will punish) people who worship anyone or anything else. So if you worship any other god, Yahweh will be very angry with you, and he will get rid of you completely. 16 Do not do sinful things to find out if you can do them without Yahweh our God punishing you, like your ancestors did at Massah. 17 Be sure that you always obey all the laws, the commandments, the rules, and the regulations that he has given to you. 18 Do what Yahweh says is right and good. If you do that, things will go well with you. You will be able to enter and occupy the good/fertile land that Yahweh vowed to give to our ancestors. 19 He will do that by expelling your enemies from that land, just like he promised to do. 20 "In the future, when your children ask you, 'Why did Yahweh our God command us to obey all these rules and regulations?' 21 tell them, 'Our ancestors were slaves of the king in Egypt, but Yahweh brought them out of Egypt by his great power [MTY]. 22 They saw him do many kinds of miracles [DOU] and do terrifying things to the people of Egypt and to the king and his officials. 23 He rescued our ancestors from Egypt and brought them here to give them this land, just like he vowed that he would do. 24 And he commanded us to obey all these laws and to revere him, for our own good and in order that he would protect our nation and enable us to prosper, as he is doing now. 25 Yahweh our God will (approve of us/consider us to be righteous) if we carefully obey everything that he has commanded us to do.'"

7 "Yahweh our God will bring you to the land that you will soon enter and occupy. As you advance, he will expel from that land seven people-groups that are more powerful and more numerous than you are. He will expel the Heth people-group, the Girgash people-group, the Amor people-group, the Canaan people-group, the Periz people-group, the Hiv people-group, and the Jebus people-group. 2 When Yahweh our God enables you to defeat [DOU] them, you must kill all of them. You must not make (an alliance/a peace treaty) with any of them. You must not act mercifully toward them. 3 You must not marry any of them. You must not allow your daughters to marry any of their sons or allow your sons to marry any of their daughters. 4 Because, if you did that, those people would cause your children to stop worshiping Yahweh and to worship other gods. If that happens, Yahweh will be very angry with you and he will get rid of you immediately. 5 This is what you must do to those people: Tear down their (altars/places for sacrificing animals), break apart the stone pillars [that are dedicated to their male god Baal], cut down the [poles that they use when they worship the goddess] Asherah, and burn their [wooden] idols. 6 You must do that because you are a group of people who belong to Yahweh our God. He has chosen you from among all the people-groups in the world to be his own special people. 7 "It was not because you were

more numerous than any other people-group that Yahweh preferred you; you are one of the smallest people-groups on the earth. **8** Instead, it is because Yahweh loved you and because he wanted to do what he vowed to your ancestors. That is the reason that he rescued you by his great power [MTY], and freed you from being slaves [MTY] of the king of Egypt. **9** So do not forget that Yahweh our God is the only/true God. He will do what he agreed to do for you, and he will faithfully love (for 1,000 generations/forever) all those who love him and who obey his commandments. **10** But for those who hate him, he will (pay them back/do to them what they deserve); he will punish them and quickly get rid of them. **11** "So you must be sure to obey all the commandments and rules and regulations that I am giving to you today. **12** If you heed these commands and obey them faithfully, Yahweh our God will do what he has agreed to do for you, and he will faithfully love you, which is what he vowed to your ancestors that he would do. **13** He will love you and bless you. He will enable you to have many children [DOU]. He will bless your fields, with the result that you will have plenty of grain and [grapes to make] wine and plenty of [olive] oil. You will have many cattle and sheep. He will do all these things for you in the land that he promised to your ancestors that he would give to you. **14** He will bless you more than he will bless any other people-group. All of you will be able to have/produce children [LIT]. All of your livestock will be able to produce offspring. **15** And Yahweh will protect you from all illnesses. You will not be afflicted with any of the dreadful diseases that [our ancestors knew about] in Egypt, but all your enemies will be inflicted with those diseases. **16** You must get rid of all the people-groups that Yahweh our God will enable you to conquer. Do not [SYN] act mercifully toward any of them. And do not worship their gods, because if you do that, it would be like falling into a trap [from which you will never be able to escape]. **17** "Do not think to yourselves, 'These people-groups are more numerous/powerful than we are, so we certainly cannot [RHQ] expel them.' **18** Do not be afraid of them. Instead, think about what Yahweh our God did to the king of Egypt and to all the people whom he [ruled]. **19** Do not forget the terrible plagues that your ancestors saw [Yahweh inflict on the people of Egypt], and the many [DOU] miracles [that he performed], and the very powerful [DOU, MTY] way by which he brought your ancestors out [of Egypt]. Yahweh our God will do the same kind of things to the people-groups that you are afraid of now. **20** Furthermore, he will cause them to become terrified, and he will destroy those who remain alive and run away to hide from you. **21** Do not be afraid of those people, because Yahweh our God will be with/among you. He is a great God; he is the one you should be afraid of. **22** He will expel those people-groups gradually. You should not [try to] expel all of them at one time, because if you did that, the number of wild animals would quickly increase, [and you would not be able to get rid of them]. **23** Instead, Yahweh will enable you to defeat your enemies [one people-group at a time]. He will cause them to panic until they are destroyed. **24** He will enable you to defeat [IDM] their kings. After you kill them, their names will be forgotten {people will forget about them}. No people-group will be able to stop you; you will destroy all of them. **25** You must burn the wooden idols [that represent] their gods. Do not desire to take the silver or gold [decorations] that are on those idols, because if you take them for yourselves, they will be like a trap [to cause you to want to worship those idols]. Yahweh hates [the worship of those idols]. **26** You must not bring any of those disgusting idols into your houses, because if you do that, God will curse you like he curses them. You must hate and despise [DOU] those idols, because they are things that [Yahweh] has cursed."

8 "You must faithfully obey all the commandments that I am giving you today. If you do that, you will live [a long time], you will become very numerous, and you will occupy the land that Yahweh solemnly promised your ancestors that he would give [to you]. **2** And do not forget how Yahweh our God led us as we traveled through the desert during these past 40 years. He [caused you to have many problems/difficulties], because he wanted to cause you to realize that you needed to trust him and not yourselves. And he wanted to test you, to find out what you intended to do [IDM], whether you would obey his commandments or not. **3** So he caused you to have/experience difficulties. He allowed you to become hungry. Then he gave you manna [food from heaven], food that you and your ancestors had never eaten before. He did that to teach you that people need food [for their bodies]; but [they also need food for their spirits, which comes from paying attention to] everything that Yahweh says [MTY]. **4** During those 40 years [of walking through the desert], our clothes did not wear out and our feet did not swell [from walking a very long way through the desert]. **5** Do not forget that Yahweh our God disciplines us, like parents discipline their children. **6** "Do obey the commandments of Yahweh our God, and conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and revere him. **7** He is about to bring you into a good/fertile land, which has streams which flow down from the hills and pour/flow out of springs in the valleys. **8** It is a land on which wheat and barley grow, a land where there are fig trees and pomegranates, and a land where there are olive trees and honey. **9** It is a land where there will be

plenty of food for you, where you will (not lack anything/have everything that you need) [LIT], a land which has iron [ore] in its rocks and from which you can dig copper [ore] from its hills. **10** [Every day] you will eat until your stomachs are full, and you will thank Yahweh our God for the fertile/good land that he has given you. **11** But, [when that happens], be sure not to forget Yahweh our God by disobeying his commandments and rules and regulations that I am giving to you today. **12** When your stomachs are full [every day], and when you have built good houses and are living in them, **13** and when the number of your cattle and sheep has greatly increased, and when you have accumulated a large amount of silver and gold, and the amount of all your other possessions has greatly increased, **14** be sure that you do not become proud [IDM] and forget Yahweh our God, who rescued your ancestors from being slaves in Egypt and brought them out from there. **15** Do not forget that he led them [while they traveled] through that huge and terrible desert, where there were poisonous snakes and scorpions. And do not forget that where the ground was very dry and there was no water, he caused water to flow for them out of (solid/very hard) rock. **16** Do not forget that in that desert he gave your ancestors manna to eat, food that they had never eaten before. He [caused them to have/experience many problems/difficulties], because he wanted them to realize that they needed to trust him and not themselves. And he wanted to test them, to find out whether they intended to obey him, in order that when [those difficulties] ended, he would do many good things for them. **17** Be sure that you do not think to yourselves, 'I have acquired all these things by my own power [MTY] and ability.' **18** Do not forget that it is Yahweh our God who has enabled you to become rich. He does this because he faithfully does what he solemnly promised our ancestors that he would do. **19** "solemnly warn you that if you forget Yahweh our God and turn to other gods and start to serve them and worship them, you will certainly be destroyed. **20** If you do not obey Yahweh our God, he will certainly destroy you just like he will destroy the people-groups that you will fight against."

9 "You people of Israel, listen to me! You will soon [HYP] cross the Jordan [River]. In the land that you will enter, there are large cities that have very high walls [around them] that [seem to] [HYP] extend up to the sky. There are people-groups in that land that are more numerous and more powerful than you are. **2** Those people are very tall and strong. [Some of them] are giants who are descendants of Anak. You know about them, and you have heard people say that no one [RHQ] can defeat the descendants of Anak. **3** But I want you to know that Yahweh our God will go ahead of you. He will be like a raging/roaring fire. While you advance, he will defeat and destroy them. As a result, you will quickly be able to expel some of them and kill the others, which is what Yahweh promised that you would do. **4** "After Yahweh our God has expelled them for you, do not say to yourselves, 'It is because we are righteous that Yahweh has enabled us to capture this land.' The truth is that it is because the people in that land are wicked that Yahweh will expel them as you advance. **5** [I say again that] it is not because you are righteous or because you do things that are righteous that you will enter and capture that land. It is because those people-groups are very wicked that Yahweh our God will expel them as you advance, and because he intends to do what he vowed to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would do. **6** I want you to know that it is not because you are righteous that Yahweh our God is giving you this good/fertile land. I say that because [you are not righteous]; you are a very stubborn [IDM] people." **7** "Never forget what your ancestors did in the desert that caused Yahweh our God to become angry. From the day that we left Egypt until the day that we arrived here, you and your ancestors have continually rebelled against him. **8** Even at Sinai [Mountain] your ancestors caused Yahweh to become angry. Because he was very angry, he was ready to get rid of [all of] them. **9** When I climbed the mountain to receive from him the stone tablets on which he had written the Ten Commandments that he was giving to them, I stayed there 40 days and nights, and [during that time] I did not eat or drink anything. **10** Yahweh gave me the two stone tablets on which he had written [the commandments] with his own fingers. They were the words/commandments that he had spoken to your ancestors from the fire on that mountain, when they were gathered together [at the bottom of the mountain]. **11** "At the end of those 40 days and nights, Yahweh gave me those two stone tablets on which he had written those commandments. **12** But then he said to me, 'Go down the mountain immediately, because [the people whom you are leading], the people whom you led out of Egypt, have committed a terrible sin! They have very quickly done what I commanded them not to do. They have made for themselves a metal statue [of a calf to worship].' **13** Then Yahweh said to me, 'I have been watching these people, and I see that they are very stubborn. **14** So do not try to stop me. I am going to destroy all of them, with the result that no one anywhere will remember (their names [MTY]/that they ever existed). Then I will enable you to become [the ancestor of] a nation that will be more numerous and more powerful than they are.' **15** So I turned and went down the mountain, carrying in my hands the two stone tablets on which the Ten

Commandments were [written]. Fire was burning all over the mountain. **16** I looked, and I was shocked to see that your ancestors had committed a [great] sin against Yahweh. They very quickly had begun to do what Yahweh our God had commanded them not to do. They had [requested Aaron to] make for them [a metal image of] a calf [to worship]. **17** So while they were watching, I lifted up those two stone tablets and threw them [on the ground], and they broke into pieces. **18** Then I (prostrated myself/lay) on the ground in Yahweh's presence as I had done before, and I did not eat or drink anything for 40 days and nights. I did that because your ancestors had sinned against Yahweh and caused him to become very angry. **19** I was afraid/worried that because Yahweh was very angry with them, he would get rid of all of them. [But again I prayed that he would not do that], and again he listened to me [and answered my prayer]. **20** Yahweh was also very angry with Aaron [for making that golden calf] and was ready to kill Aaron. But at the same time I prayed for Aaron also, [and Yahweh answered my prayer]. **21** Your ancestors had sinned by [requesting Aaron to] make [a metal statue of] a calf. So I took that statue and [I melted it] in a fire and crushed it and ground it into very tiny pieces [HYP]. Then I threw those tiny pieces into the stream that flowed down the mountain. **22** Your ancestors also caused Yahweh to become very angry [by what they did] at [places which they named] Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth-Hattaavah. **23** And when we were at Kadesh-Barnea, Yahweh said to your ancestors, 'Go up and capture the land that I am about to give to you!' But they rebelled against him. They did not trust him, and they did not obey what he told [MTY] them to do. **24** Your ancestors rebelled against Yahweh from the first day that I knew them, [in Egypt]. **25** So, [as I said], I lay on the ground in Yahweh's presence for 40 days and nights, because Yahweh had said that he would get rid of your ancestors. **26** And I prayed to Yahweh, saying, 'Lord God, these people belong to you; do not destroy them. They are people whom you rescued and brought out of Egypt by your very great power. [DOU, MTY] **27** Do not forget [what you promised to] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Please ignore these stubborn and wicked people and the sin that they have committed. **28** If you do not do that, [and if you get rid of them], the people of Egypt will [hear about it and] say that you were not able to bring them into the land that you promised to give to them. They will say that you took them into the desert only to kill them there because you hated them. **29** [Do not forget that] they are your people. [You chose them to] belong to you. You brought them out [from Egypt] by your very great power [DOU, MTY].'"

10 "Then Yahweh said to me, 'Cut two stone tablets like the first ones. And make a wooden chest to put them in. Then [bring the tablets] up to me on this mountain. **2** I will write on those tablets the same words that I wrote on the first tablets, the ones that you broke. Then you can put them in the chest.' **3** "So I made a chest. I used wood from an acacia tree to make it. Then I cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I went up the mountain carrying the tablets. **4** There Yahweh wrote on the tablets the [same] Ten Commandments [that he had written on the first tablet]. They are the commandments that he told to your ancestors from the middle of the fire on the mountain, when they were gathered [at the bottom of the mountain]. Then Yahweh gave the tablets to me, **5** and I turned and went down the mountain. Then, just as he had commanded, I put them in the chest that I had made. And they are still there." **6** (Then, from the wells that belonged to the people of Jaakan, the Israeli people traveled to Moserah. There Aaron died and was buried, and his son Eleazar took his place and became the Supreme Priest. **7** From there, the Israelis traveled to Gudgodah, and from there to Jotbathah, which was a place that had many streams. **8** At that time, Yahweh (set apart/appointed) the tribe of Levi to carry the chest that contained [the tablets on which were written] the Ten Commandments, and to stand in Yahweh's presence [in the sacred tent], to offer sacrifices, and to pray for Yahweh to bless [the people. They are still doing those things] at the present time. **9** That is the reason that the tribe of Levi did not receive any land like the other tribes did. What they received was the work/privilege of being Yahweh's [priests], which is what he said that they should do.) **10** "I stayed on the mountain 40 days and nights, just like I did the first time. [I prayed to] Yahweh, and he (answered my prayers/did what I requested) again and said that he would not destroy your ancestors. **11** Then Yahweh said to me, 'Continue your journey, going in front of the people, to occupy the land that I vowed your ancestors that I would give to you.'" **12** "Now, you Israeli people, [I will tell you] [RHQ] what Yahweh our God requires/demands that you do. He requires you to revere him, to conduct your lives as he wants you to, to love him, and to serve him wholeheartedly [DOU], **13** and to obey all of his commandments [DOU] which I am giving to you today for your benefit. **14** "Do not forget that Yahweh our God owns even the sky and everything that is in it. He also owns the earth and everything that is on it. **15** But [in spite of owning all those things], Yahweh loved your ancestors, and from all the people-groups [on the earth] he chose us, their descendants, and we are still his people. **16** So you must stop sinning [MET] and stop being stubborn

[IDM]! 17 Yahweh our God is greater than all gods, and he is greater than all rulers. He is very powerful [DOU] and awesome. He (is impartial/does not do things that favor one (group/person) more than others), and he does not accept bribes. 18 He makes sure that orphans and widows are treated fairly. He loves even (foreigners/people from other countries) who live among us Israeli people, and he gives them food and clothes. 19 So you must love those foreigners too, because you were once foreigners when you were living in Egypt. 20 Revere Yahweh our God and worship only him. (Be faithful to/Have a close relationship with) him, and say that he should punish you if you do not do what you promise. 21 He is the one whom you must praise. He is our God, and we have seen the great and amazing things that he has done for us. 22 When our ancestors, [Jacob and his family], went down to Egypt, there were only seventy of them. But now Yahweh our God has caused us to be as numerous as the stars in the sky."

11 "[Because of all that] Yahweh your God [has done for you], you must love him and continually obey all his rules and regulations and commandments. 2 It was you and your ancestors, not your children, whom he disciplined [by causing all of you to have/experience difficulties]. So, starting today, continue to think about how very great and very powerful he is [DOU, MTY]. 3 Think about the various miracles [DOU] that he performed in Egypt. Think about what he did to the king of Egypt and to his country. 4 Think about what he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots. Think about how he caused the Red Sea to flood/cover over them while they were pursuing your ancestors, and how the army of Egypt was completely (wiped out/destroyed). 5 Think about what Yahweh did for your ancestors in the desert before you arrived at this place. 6 Think about what he did to Dathan and Abiram, the two sons of Eliab from the tribe of Reuben. While all of your ancestors were watching, the earth split open, and they fell into the opening [and disappeared], along with their families and their tents, their servants, and their animals. 7 You [SYN] and your ancestors have seen all these miracles that Yahweh performed. 8 So, obey all the commandments that I am giving you today, in order that you will be strong and able to cross the river and occupy the land that you are about to enter, 9 and in order that you will live for a long time in that land, the land that Yahweh solemnly promised your ancestors that he would give to them and to their descendants, a land that is very fertile [IDM]. 10 The land that you are about to enter and occupy is not like the land of Egypt, where your ancestors lived. In Egypt, after they planted seeds, it was necessary for them to work hard [MTY] to water [the plants that grew]. 11 But the land that you are about to enter is a land where there are many hills and valleys, where there is plenty of rain. 12 Yahweh takes care of that land. He [SYN] watches over it every day, from the beginning of each year to the end of each year. 13 Today I am commanding you to love Yahweh our God and to serve him with your entire inner beings. If you do that, 14 each year he will send rain on your land at the (right times/times when it is needed), (in the autumn/at the end of the dry season) and (in the spring/before the next dry season starts). As a result, you will have grain and [grapes to make] wine and [olives to make olive] oil. 15 And he will cause grass to grow in your fields for your livestock [to eat]. You will have all the food that you want. 16 "But I warn you, do not turn away from Yahweh our God and start to worship other gods, 17 because if you do that, Yahweh will become very angry with you. He will prevent any rain from falling. As a result, the crops will not grow, and you will soon die [from hunger] in the good land that Yahweh is about to give to you. 18 So, keep thinking [IDM] about these commands. Write them [on tiny scrolls] and fasten them to your arms/wrists, and write them on bands that you fasten to your foreheads [to help you to remember them]. 19 Teach them to your children again and again. Talk about them [all the time]: When you are in your houses and when you are walking outside; talk about them when you are lying down at night and when you are getting up in the morning. 20 Write them on the doorposts and on the gates of your houses. 21 Do that in order that you and your children will live for a long time in the land that Yahweh promised to our ancestors that he would give to them. That land will belong to you [and your descendants] as long as there is a sky above the earth. 22 "Faithfully continue to obey what I am commanding you to do—to love Yahweh our God, and to conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and to (be faithful to/have a close relationship with) him. 23 If you do that, Yahweh will expel all the people-groups in that land as you advance, people-groups that are more numerous and more powerful than you are. 24 All the ground [in that land] on which you walk will be yours. Your territory will extend from the desert [in the south] to the Lebanon [Mountains in the north], and from the Euphrates River [in the east] to the [Mediterranean] Sea in the west. 25 Yahweh our God will cause all the people in that land to be afraid of you, which is what he promised, with the result that no people-group will be able to stop you. 26 "Listen carefully: Today I am telling you [that Yahweh will either] bless [you or he will] curse you. 27 If you obey the commandments of Yahweh our God that I am giving to you today, he will bless you. 28 If you do not obey them, and if you turn away from him to worship other

gods that you have never known about before, he will curse you. 29 And when Yahweh brings you into the land that you are about to enter and occupy, [some of you must stand on top of] Gerizim Mountain and proclaim what will cause Yahweh to bless you, and [the others must stand on top of] Ebal Mountain and proclaim [what will cause Yahweh to] curse you." 30 (Those two mountains are [RHQ] west of the Jordan [River], west of the Jordan Valley near the huge oak tree at Moreh [village] in the land where the Canaan people-group lives. They live close to the sacred trees near Gilgal.) 31 "You will soon cross the Jordan [River] to occupy the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you. When you enter that land and start to live there, 32 be sure to obey all the rules and regulations that I am giving to you today."

12 "(I will now tell you again/These, [again], are) the rules and regulations that you must faithfully obey in the land that Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped], is giving to you to occupy. You must obey these laws all the time that you are alive. 2 You must destroy all the places where the people-groups that you will expel worship their gods, on the tops of mountains and hills and under big green trees. 3 You must tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars. Completely burn the statues of their goddess Asherah in fires, and chop down their wooden idols, in order that no one will ever worship them [MTY] in those places again. 4 "Do not worship Yahweh like [the people in Canaan worship their gods]. 5 Instead, you must go to the place that Yahweh will choose. It will be in the area where one of your tribes will live. That is where you must go to worship Yahweh. 6 That is the place where you must bring your sacrifices that will be completely burned on the altar, and your other sacrifices, (your tithes/ten percent of all of your crops), other offerings that you decide to give, and the firstborn animals from your cattle and sheep. 7 There, in the presence of Yahweh our God, who has [greatly] blessed you, you and your families will eat the good things that you have worked to produce, and you will be happy. 8 "[When you are in that land], you must not do some of the things that we have been doing. Until now, you have all been worshiping [Yahweh] the way you wanted to, 9 because you have not yet arrived in the land which Yahweh is giving to you, where you will be able to live peacefully. 10 But when you cross the Jordan [River], you will start to live in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you. He will protect you from all your enemies that will surround you, and you will live peacefully/safely. 11 "Yahweh will choose one place where he wants you to worship him. That is the place to which you must bring all the offerings that I command you to bring: The sacrifices that must be completely burned [on the altar], your other sacrifices, other offerings that you yourselves decide to give, (your tithes/ten percent of all your crops), and all the special offerings that you will solemnly promise to give to Yahweh. 12 Rejoice there in the presence of Yahweh, along with your children, your male and female servants, and the descendants of Levi who live in your towns. Do not forget that the descendants of Levi will not have their own land, like you will have. 13 Be sure that you do not offer sacrifices anywhere you want to. 14 You must offer them only in the place that Yahweh will choose for you, in an area that belongs to one of your tribes. That is the only place where he wants you to offer sacrifices that will be completely burned [on the altar], and to do the other things that I am commanding you to do [when you worship him]. 15 "However, you will be permitted to kill and eat the meat of your animals in the places where you live. As often as you want to, you may eat the meat of the animals that Yahweh our God will bless you by giving them to you. Those who have done things that cause them to become unacceptable to God and those who have not done things like that may all eat that meat, just like you would eat the meat of a deer or an antelope. 16 But you must not eat the blood [of any animals]; you must let the blood drain onto the ground [before you cook the meat]. 17 In the places where you live, you must not eat the things that you are offering [to Yahweh]: You must not eat the (tithes/ten percent) of your grain or of your wine, or of your [olive] oil, or the firstborn of your cattle and sheep, or the offerings that you yourselves decide to give to Yahweh, or any other offerings. 18 Instead, you and your children and your male and female servants and the descendants of Levi who live in your towns must go to the place that he has chosen and eat those things there in the presence of Yahweh. And you should rejoice in the presence of Yahweh about everything that you do. 19 Be sure that you take care of the descendants of Levi all during the time that you live in your land. 20 "When Yahweh our God gives you much more land [than you will have when you first occupy it], which is what he has promised to do, and you say 'I would like some meat to eat' because you are craving/wanting some meat, you will be permitted to eat meat whenever you want to. 21 If the place that Yahweh our God chooses to be the place for you to worship him is far [from where you live], you are permitted to kill some of your cattle or sheep that Yahweh has given to you, and you may eat that meat at the places where you live, just like I have told you to do. 22 Those who have done things that cause them to become unacceptable to God, and those who have not done things like that, are all permitted to all eat that meat, just like you would eat the meat of a deer or an antelope. 23 But be sure that you do not eat the blood [of

any animal], because it is the blood that sustains life in living beings, and so you must not eat the life along with the meat. **24** Do not eat the blood; instead, let it drain onto the ground. **25** If you obey this command and do what Yahweh says is right [for you to do], things will go well for you and for your descendants. **26** "But the sacred offerings that Yahweh has told you to give and the other offerings that you yourselves decide to give, you must take to the place that Yahweh will choose. **27** You must offer there the sacrifices that will be completely burned [on Yahweh's altar]. You must also offer there the sacrifices from which you may eat some of meat after you [kill the animals and] drain out the blood and some of it is thrown on the [sides of the] altar. **28** Faithfully obey all these things that I have commanded you. If you do that, things will go well forever for you and your descendants, because you will be doing what Yahweh our God says is right [for you to do] and what pleases him. **29** "When you enter the land that you will occupy, as you advance, Yahweh our God will get rid of the people-groups that live there. **30** After he does that, be sure that you do not [worship the gods] that they have been worshiping, because if you do that, you will be caught in the same trap [that they were caught in] [MET]. Do not ask anyone about those gods, saying, 'Tell me how they worshiped their gods, in order that I can [worship them] also.' **31** Do not try to worship Yahweh our God like they have worshiped their gods, because when they worship them, they do disgusting things, things that Yahweh hates. [The worst thing that they do is] that they sacrifice their own children and burn them [on their altars]. **32** "Be sure to do everything that I have commanded you to do. Do not add anything to these commands, and do not take anything away from them."

13 "Possibly there will be people among you who [say that they] are prophets. They may say that they are able to interpret the meaning of dreams or perform various kinds of miracles [DOU]. **2** They will say those things in order to induce/persuade you to worship gods that you have never known about before. But even if what they predict happens, **3** do not pay attention to what they say. Yahweh our God will be testing you to find out if you love him with all your inner being. **4** You must conduct your lives as Yahweh our God wants you to, and you must revere him, and do what he tells you to do [MTY], and worship only him, and (be faithful to/have a close relationship with) him. **5** "But you must execute anyone who [falsely says that he] is a prophet, or someone who [falsely] says that he can interpret dreams, or who tells you to rebel against Yahweh our God, who rescued your ancestors from being slaves in Egypt. People like that are only wanting to cause you to stop conducting your lives as Yahweh has commanded you to do. Execute them, to get rid of this evil among you. **6** It does not matter if even your brother or your daughter or your wife or some close/dear friend secretly urges you, saying 'Let's worship other gods. They are gods which you or your ancestors have never known about. **7** Some of them may encourage you to worship gods that people-groups that live near you worship, or gods that groups who live far away worship. **8** Do not [SYN] do what they suggest. Do not even listen to them. Do not even be merciful to them, and do not keep secret what they have done. **9** Execute them! You [who are their relative] must be the first one to [throw stones at them to] kill them, and then let everyone else [MTY] throw stones at them, too. **10** Kill such people by throwing stones at them, because they are trying to cause you to stop worshiping Yahweh our God, who rescued your ancestors from being slaves in Egypt. **11** When they are executed, all the Israeli people will hear [what happened], and they will become afraid, and none of them will do such an evil thing again. **12** "When you are living in one of the towns in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, you may hear **13** that some worthless people there among you [IDM] are deceiving the people of their town, saying, 'Let's go and worship other gods,' but they are gods that you have never heard about before. **14** Investigate it thoroughly/carefully. If [you find out that] it is true that such a disgraceful thing has happened, **15** kill all the people in that town. And kill all their livestock, too. Destroy the town completely. **16** Gather all the possessions that belonged to the people who lived there and pile them up in the city plaza. Then burn the town and everything in it, as though it were an offering to Yahweh that would be completely burned [on the altar]. The ruins/ashes must stay there forever; the town must never be rebuilt. **17** None of you Israelis must take for yourselves [IDM] anything that Yahweh has said must be destroyed. But if you do what I say, Yahweh will stop being angry with you, and he will act mercifully toward you. And he will cause you to have many children/descendants, which is what he promised our ancestors that he would do. **18** Yahweh our God will do all those things if you do what he is telling you to do, and if you obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today and do what Yahweh says is right [for you to do]."

14 "We are people who belong to Yahweh our God. So, when people die, do not show that you are grieving by gashing/cutting yourselves or by shaving the hair on your foreheads [like the other people-groups do]. **2** We belong to Yahweh alone. Yahweh chose us from all the other people-groups on the earth to be his special people. **3** "Do not eat anything that [Yahweh] detests. **4** The animals [whose

meat] you are permitted to eat are cattle, sheep, goats, **5** deer, gazelles, wild goats, antelopes, and mountain sheep. **6** Those are animals that have split hoofs and that also (chew their cuds/regurgitate their food [from their stomachs] to chew it again). **7** But there are other animals that chew their cuds that you must not eat. Those are camels, rabbits, and rock badgers. They chew their cuds, but their hooves are not split. So they are not acceptable for you to eat. **8** Do not eat pigs. They are unacceptable for you to eat; their hooves are split, but they do not chew cud. Do not eat the meat of those animals; do not even touch their dead bodies. **9** You are permitted to eat any fish that has scales and fins. **10** But anything else [that lives in the water] that does not have scales and fins, you must not eat, because [if you eat them], you will become unacceptable [to Yahweh]. **11** "You are permitted to eat the flesh of any bird that is acceptable [to Yahweh]. **12** But eagles, vultures, black vultures, **13** buzzards, all kinds of kites, **14** all kinds of crows, **15** ostriches, seagulls, **16** owls, hawks, falcons, **17** pelicans, vultures that eat dead animals, cormorants, **18** storks, herons, hoopoes, and bats, you must not eat. **19** "All insects with wings [and which walk on the ground] are unacceptable [to Yahweh]; do not eat them. **20** But other insects with wings [and which hop along the ground] are acceptable to eat. **21** "Do not eat any animal that has died naturally, [because its blood has not been drained out]. You may allow foreigners who live among you to eat those things or you may sell them to other foreigners. But you belong to Yahweh our God; [and those who belong to him are not permitted to eat the meat of animals whose blood has not been drained out]. "You must not cook a young sheep or goat in its mother's milk." **22** "Once each year you must set apart (a tithe/10 percent) of all the crops that are produced/harvested in your fields. **23** Take those things to the place that Yahweh our God will choose [for you to worship him]. There eat the tithes of your grain, your wine, your [olive] oil, and the meat of the firstborn male animals of your cattle and your sheep. Do this in order that you may learn to always revere Yahweh, [the one who has blessed you by giving you these things]. **24** If the place that Yahweh has chosen [for you to worship him] is very far from your home, with the result that you are not able to take there the tithes [of your crops] with which Yahweh has blessed you, do this: **25** Sell [IDM] the tithes of your crops, wrap the money carefully [in a cloth], and take it with you to the place of worship that Yahweh has chosen. **26** There, [with that money], you may buy whatever you want to—beef or lamb or wine or fermented drinks. And there, in the presence of Yahweh, you and your families should eat [and drink] those things and be happy. **27** But be sure to not neglect/forget [to help] the descendants of Levi who live in your towns, because they will not own any land. **28** "At the end of every three years, bring a tithe of all your crops that have been produced/harvested in that year and store it in your towns. **29** That food is for the descendants of Levi, because they do not have their own land, and for foreigners [who live among you], and for orphans and widows who live in your towns. They are permitted to come [to where the food is stored] and take what they need. Do that in order that Yahweh our God will bless you in everything that you do."

15 "At the end of every seven years, you must (cancel all debts/tell people who owe you money that they do not need to pay it back). **2** Do it like this: Each of you who has lent money to a fellow Israeli must cancel that debt. You must not insist that he pay it back. You must do that because Yahweh has declared that the debts must be canceled [every seven years]. **3** [During that year] you may require foreigners [who live among you] to pay what they owe you, but you must not try to require that any fellow Israeli pay you what he owes you. **4** Yahweh our God will bless you in the land that he is giving to you. If you obey Yahweh our God and obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today, there will not be any poor people among you. **6** Yahweh our God will bless you like he has promised to do, and you will [be able to] lend money to people of other people-groups, but you will not [need to] borrow from any of them. You will control [the finances of] many people-groups, but they will not control your [finances]. **7** "In the towns that Yahweh our God is giving to you, if there are any Israelis who are poor, do not be selfish [IDM] and refuse [IDM] to help them. **8** Instead, be generous [IDM] and lend to them the money that they need. **9** Be sure that you do not say to yourself, 'The year when debts will be canceled is near, [so I do not want to lend anyone any money now, because he will not need to pay it back when that year comes].' It would be evil to even think that. If you act in an unfriendly way toward a needy fellow Israeli, and give him nothing, he will cry out to Yahweh about you, and [Yahweh will say that] you have sinned [by not helping that person]. **10** Give freely to poor people and give generously [IDM]. **11** If you do that, Yahweh will bless you in everything that you do. There will always be some poor people in your land, so I command you to give generously to poor [DOU] people." **12** "If any of your fellow Israeli men or women sell themselves to one of you [to become your slave], you must free them after they have worked for you for six years. When the seventh year comes, you must free them. **13** When you free them, do not allow them to go (empty-handed/without giving them anything). **14** Give to them generously from the things with

which Yahweh has blessed you—sheep, grain, and wine. **15** Do not forget that your ancestors were once slaves in Egypt, and Yahweh our God freed them. That is the reason that I am now commanding you to do this. **16** "But one of your slaves may say, 'I do not want to leave you.' He loves you and your family, because you have treated him well. **17** If he says that, take him to the door of your house and, [while he stands against the doorway], pierce one of his earlobes with (an awl/a sharp pointed tool). That will indicate that he will be your slave for the rest of his life. Do the same thing to any female slave [who does not want to leave you]. **18** "Do not complain when you are required to free your slaves. [Keep in mind that] they served you for six years, and you paid them only half as much as you pay the servants that you hire. [If you free them,] Yahweh our God will bless you in everything that you do." **19** "(Set aside for/Dedicate to) Yahweh our God the firstborn male animals from your cattle and sheep. Do not force them to do any work for you, and do not (shear/cut off) the wool [of the firstborn animals to sell the wool]. **20** You and your family may [kill them and] eat their meat in the presence of Yahweh at the place that Yahweh chooses [for you to worship him]. **21** But if the animals have any defects, if they are lame or blind, or if they have any other serious defect, you must not sacrifice them to Yahweh our God. **22** You may [kill and] eat [the meat of those animals] at your homes. Those who have done things that cause them to become unacceptable to God and those who have not done such things are permitted to eat that meat, just like anyone is permitted to eat the meat of a deer or an antelope. **23** But you must not eat any of the blood; you must drain all the blood on the ground [when you kill those animals]."

16 "[Each year] honor Yahweh our God by celebrating the Passover [Festival] in the month of Abib [in early spring]. It was on a night in that month that Yahweh rescued your ancestors from Egypt. **2** [In order to celebrate that festival], go to the place that Yahweh will choose [for you to worship him], and offer [there one young animal] from your cattle or your sheep to be the Passover sacrifice, to honor Yahweh [MTY]. **3** [When you eat the Passover meal], the bread that you eat must not have yeast in it. You must eat this kind of bread, which will be called the bread of suffering/misery, for seven days. This is to help you to remember all during the time that you are alive that when your ancestors left Egypt, [where they were suffering because they were slaves], they left very quickly. [They did not put in yeast and wait for the dough to swell up]. **4** [During that festival], you must not have any yeast in any house in your land for seven days. Furthermore, the meat [of the animals] that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day [of the Passover Festival must be eaten during that night]; do not allow any of it to remain until the next day. **5** "To honor Yahweh our God, you must offer the Passover sacrifice only at the place that he chooses for you [to worship him]; do not offer that sacrifice in any other town in the land that Yahweh is giving to you. Offer that sacrifice when the sun is setting, at the same time of day that your ancestors [started to] leave Egypt. **7** Boil [the meat] and eat it at the place [of worship] that Yahweh our God chooses. The next morning, you may return to your tents. **8** Each day for six days the bread that you eat must have no yeast in it. On the seventh day, you must all gather to worship Yahweh our God. [It will be a day of rest]; you must not do any work on that day." **9** "[Each year], from the day that you start to harvest your grain, count seven weeks. **10** Then, to honor Yahweh our God, celebrate the Harvest Festival. Do that by bringing to him an offering [of grain]. Yahweh has blessed you [by causing it to grow in your fields during that year]. If you had a big harvest, bring a big offering. If you had a small harvest, bring a small offering. **11** [Each married couple] should be joyful in the presence of Yahweh. Their children, their servants, the descendants of Levi [who are in that town], and the foreigners, orphans, and widows [who are living among you], should also be joyful. Bring those offerings to the place of worship that Yahweh will choose. **12** ["When you celebrate these festivals] by obeying these commands, remember that your ancestors were previously slaves in Egypt." **13** "[Each year], after you have threshed all your grain and pressed [the juice from] all your grapes, you must celebrate the Festival of [Living in Temporary] Shelters for seven days. **14** [Each married couple] along with their children, their servants, the descendants of Levi [who are in that town], and the foreigners, orphans, and widows [who are living among you], should be joyful in the presence of Yahweh. **15** Honor Yahweh our God by celebrating this festival for seven days in the place that Yahweh chooses [for you to worship him]. You should all be joyful, because Yahweh will have blessed your harvest and all the other work that you have done. **16** "So, each year all of you Israeli men must gather [with your families] to worship Yahweh our God at the place that he will choose, [to celebrate three festivals]: The Passover Festival, the Harvest Festival, and the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters. Each of you men must bring [LIT] an offering [for Yahweh to these festivals] **17** in proportion to the blessings that Yahweh has given you [during that year]." **18** "Appoint judges and other officials throughout your tribes, in all the towns [in the land] that Yahweh our God is giving to you. They must judge people fairly/justly. **19** They must not judge unjustly. They must not favor one person more

than another. The judges must not accept bribes, because if a judge accepts a bribe, even if he is wise and honest, it will be very difficult for him to judge fairly [IDM]; [he will do what the person who gave him the bribe wants him to do and declare that] the righteous/innocent people [must be punished]. **20** You must be completely fair and just [DOU], in order that you will enter and occupy the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you." **21** "When you make an altar to worship Yahweh our God, do not put next to it any wooden statue [that represents] the goddess Asherah. **22** And do not set up any [stone] pillar [to worship any idol, because] Yahweh hates them."

17 "Do not sacrifice to Yahweh our God any cattle or sheep or goats that have any defects, because Yahweh hates that kind of gift." **2** "When you are living in any of the towns [in the land] that Yahweh our God is giving to you, suppose you hear that there is some man or woman who sins by disobeying the agreement that Yahweh has made with you. **3** Suppose someone tells you that that person has worshiped and served other gods, or the sun, or the moon, or the stars. **4** If you hear that some person has been doing that, you must investigate it thoroughly. If [you find out that] it is true that this detestable thing has happened in Israel, **5** you must take outside the town the man or woman who has done it. Then you must kill that person by throwing stones at him or her. **6** But you are allowed to execute such people only if at least two witnesses testify that they saw them [doing that]. They must not be executed if there is only one witness. **7** The (witnesses/ones who saw them doing it) must be the first ones to throw stones at them. Then the other people [MTY] [should throw stones at them]. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice among you." **8** "Sometimes it will be very difficult for a judge to decide what really happened. He might be trying to decide whether, when someone injured or killed another person, he did it accidentally or deliberately. Or he might be trying to decide if some person is suing another person unfairly. If in some town it is very difficult to know what really happened, with the result that the judge cannot decide it, you should go to the place that Yahweh our God has chosen for you [to worship him]. **9** There you should present the case to the descendants of Levi who are the priests, and to the judge who is serving at that time, and they should decide what should be done. **10** After they make their decision, you must do what they tell you to do. **11** Accept what they have decided, and do what they say that you should do. Do not try to change in any way what they have decided [IDM]. **12** You must execute anyone who proudly/arrogantly disobeys the judge or the priest who stands there in the presence of Yahweh [and decides what should be done]. By doing that, you will get rid of evil practices among you. **13** Then [after that person is executed], all the people will hear about it, and they will be afraid, and none of them will act that way any more." **14** "[I know that] after you have occupied the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, and you are living there, you will say, 'We should have a king to rule over us, like the kings that other nations around us have.' **15** Yahweh our God will permit you to have a king, but be sure that you appoint someone whom he has chosen. That man must be an Israeli; you must not appoint someone who is a foreigner to be your king. **16** [After he becomes the king], he should not acquire a large number of horses for himself. He should not send people to Egypt to buy horses for him, because Yahweh said to you, 'Never return to Egypt [for anything']! **17** And he must not have a lot of wives, because if he did that, they would turn him [SYN] away from [worshiping only] Yahweh. And he must not acquire a lot of silver and gold. **18** "When he becomes your king, he must [appoint someone to] copy these laws. He must copy them from the scroll that is kept by the priests who are descended from Levi. **19** He must keep this new scroll near him and read from it every day of his life, in order that he may learn to revere Yahweh, and to faithfully obey [DOU] all the rules and regulations [that are written] in these laws. **20** If he does that, he [SYN] will not think that he is (better/more important) than [IDM] his fellow Israelis, and he will completely obey [LIT] Yahweh's commands. As a result, he and his descendants will rule as kings in Israel for many years."

18 "The priests, who are all from the tribe of Levi, will not receive any land in Israel. Instead, they will receive some of the food that other people offer to be burned [on the altar to be sacrificed] to Yahweh and some of the other sacrifices that will be offered to Yahweh. **2** They will not be allotted any land like the other tribes will be. What they will receive is the work/privilege of being Yahweh's [priests], which is what he said that they should have. **3** "When the people bring an ox or a sheep to be sacrificed, they must give to the priests the shoulder, the cheeks/jaws, and the stomach of those animals. **4** You must also give to them the first part of the grain that you [harvest], and the first part of the wine [that you make], and the first part of the [olive] oil [that you make], and the first part of the wool that you shear from your sheep. **5** You must do this because Yahweh our God has chosen the tribe of Levi from all of your tribes, in order that men [from that tribe] would always be the priests who would serve him. **6** "If any man from the tribe of Levi [who has been living] in one of the towns in Israel wants to come from there to the place of worship that Yahweh has chosen, [and start

living there], 7 he is permitted to serve Yahweh there as a priest, just like the other men from the tribe of Levi who have been serving there. 8 He must be given the same amount of food [that the other priests receive]. He is permitted to keep the money [that his relatives give him] for selling some of their possessions. 9 When you enter the land that Yahweh our God is giving you, you must not imitate the disgusting things that the people-groups who are there now do. 10 You must not sacrifice any of your children by burning them [on your altars]. Do not practice (divination/using supernatural power to reveal [what will happen in] the future). Do not do/practice (soothsaying/magic to find out what will happen in the future). Do not (interpret omens/say that because of something that you have seen you know what will happen). Do not practice sorcery/witchcraft. Do not practice (putting spells on people/saying things to cause bad things to happen to others). 11 Do not try to talk with spirits of dead people. Do not do/practice magic. 12 Yahweh hates people who do any of those disgusting things. And as you advance through that land, he is going to expel the people-groups because they do/practice those disgusting things. 13 But you must always avoid doing any of those things. 14 The people-groups that you are about to expel [from the land that you will occupy] (consult/seek advice from) soothsayers and those who practice divination. But as for you, Yahweh our God does not allow you to do that. 15 [Some day] he will send from among you a prophet like me. [He is the one who will tell you what will happen in the future], and he is the one whom you must heed. 16 On the day that your ancestors were gathered at the bottom of Sinai Mountain, they pleaded with me saying, 'We do not want Yahweh to speak [MTY] to us again, and we do not want to see this huge fire [that is burning on the mountain]!' [Your ancestors said that because they were afraid] that they would die [if Yahweh spoke to them again]. 17 Then Yahweh said to me, 'What they have said is true/wise. 18 So I will send from among them a prophet who will be like you. I will tell him what to say, and then he will tell people everything that I tell him to say. 19 He will speak for me. And I will punish anyone who does not heed what he says. 20 But if any other [person says that he is a] prophet [and] dares to speak a message which he falsely says comes from me but which I did not tell him to speak, or if anyone who speaks a message that he says other gods [MTY] have revealed to him, he must be executed [for doing that].' 21 But if you say to yourself, 'How can we know if a message [that someone tells us] does not come from Yahweh?' 22 [The answer is that] when someone speaks a message [about what will happen in the future], a message that he says was revealed by Yahweh, if what he says does not happen, [you will know that] the message did not come from Yahweh. That person has wrongly claimed that it was revealed to him by Yahweh. So you do not need to be afraid of [anything that] he [says]."

19 After Yahweh our God has gotten rid of the people-groups from the land that he is giving to you, and after you have expelled them from their cities and you start to live in their houses, 2 you must divide into three parts the land that he is giving to you. Then choose a city in each part. You must make good roads [in order that people can get to those cities easily]. Someone who kills another person can escape to one of those cities [to be safe/protected]. 4 "This is the rule about someone who has killed another person. If someone (accidentally/without planning to) kills another person who was not his enemy, he may escape to one of those cities and be safe/protected there. 5 For example, if two men go into the forest to cut some wood, if the axe head comes off the handle while one of them is chopping down a tree and the axe head strikes and kills the other man, the man [who was using the axe] will be allowed to run to one of those cities and be safe there, [because the people of that city will protect him]. 6 Because he accidentally killed someone, and because the man was not his enemy, he can try to run to one of those cities. If there were only one city, it may be a long distance to that city. Then if the relative of the man who was killed [MTY], the man who is supposed/expected to get revenge, is very angry, he may be able to catch the other person before he arrives at that city. 7 [To prevent that from happening], you must choose three cities, not only one, [in order that someone can get to one of those cities quickly]. 8 "If you do everything that I am today commanding you to do, and if you love Yahweh our God, and if you conduct your lives as he wants you to do, Yahweh our God will give you much more land than you will have when you first occupy it, which is what he promised to do. He will give you all the land which he promised your ancestors that he would give to you. When he gives you that land, you must select three more cities [to which people may escape]. 10 Do this in order that people who (are innocent/have killed someone else without planning to) will not die, and you will not be guilty for [allowing] them to be executed, in the land that Yahweh is giving to you. 11 "But suppose someone hates his enemy and hides and waits for that person [to come along the road]. Then [when he passes by, suddenly] he attacks him and murders him. If the attacker flees to one of those cities [to be protected there], 12 the elders of the city [where the murdered man lived must not protect the attacker. They]. must send someone to the city to which the other man escaped, and bring him to [MTY]

the relative who is supposed/expected to get revenge, so that he may execute that man. 13 You must not pity those who murder other people! Instead, you must execute them, in order that the people in the land of Israel will not murder [MTY] innocent people, and in order that things will go well for you." 14 "[When you are living] in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, do not move the markers of your neighbors' property boundaries which were placed there long ago." 15 "If someone is accused of committing a crime, one (witness/person who says, 'I saw him do it') is not enough. There must be at least two (witnesses/people who say, 'We saw him do it'). [If there is only one witness], the judge must not believe that what he says is true. 16 "If someone tries to do wrong to another person by falsely accusing him, 17 both of them must go to the place where the people worship, to [talk to] the priests and judges who are serving at that time. 18 The judges must (investigate the case carefully/try to find out which one is telling the truth). If [the judges determine that] one of them has accused the other falsely, 19 that person must be punished in the same way that the other one would have been punished [if the judge decided that he (was guilty/had done what is wrong)]. By punishing such people, you will get rid of this evil practice among you. 20 And/Because when that person is punished, everyone will hear what has happened, and they will be afraid, and no one will dare to act that way any more. 21 You must not pity people who are punished like that. The rule should be that a person who has murdered someone else must be executed; one of a person's eyes must be gouged out if he has gouged out someone else's eye, one tooth of a person who has knocked out the tooth of another person must be knocked out; one hand of a person who has cut off the hand of another person must likewise be cut off; one foot of a person who has cut off the foot of another person must also be cut off."

20 "When your [soldiers] go to fight your enemies, and you see that they have many horses and chariots and that their army is much bigger than yours, do not be afraid of them, because Yahweh our God, who brought your [ancestors safely] out of Egypt, will be with you. 2 When you are ready to start the battle, the Supreme Priest must stand in front of the troops. 3 He must say to them, 'You Israeli men, listen to me! Today you are going to fight against your enemies. Do not be timid or afraid [DOU] or tremble or panic [DOU], 4 because Yahweh our God will go with you. He will fight your enemies for you, and he will enable you to defeat them.' 5 Then the army officers must say to the troops, 'If anyone among you has just built a new house [RHQ] and has not dedicated it [to God], he should go home [and dedicate the house]. If he does not do that, if he dies in the battle, someone else will dedicate the house [and live in it]. 6 If anyone among you has planted a vineyard and has not yet harvested any grapes from it [RHQ], he should go home. If he [stays here and] dies in the battle, someone else will [harvest the grapes and] enjoy [the wine made from them]. 7 If anyone among you has become engaged to marry a woman [but has not married her yet] [RHQ], he should go home. If [he stays here and] dies in the battle, someone else will marry her.' 8 "Then the officers must also say, 'If anyone among you is afraid or timid [RHQ], he should go home, in order that he does not cause his fellow soldiers to also stop being courageous.' 9 And when the officers have finished speaking to the troops, they must appoint commanders [to lead the groups of soldiers]. 10 "When you come near a city [that is far away] to attack it, first tell the people there that if they surrender, you will not attack them. 11 If they open the gates of the city and surrender, they all will become your slaves to work for you. 12 But if they refuse to [surrender] peacefully, and decide instead to fight against you, your troops must surround the city [and break through the walls]. 13 Then, when Yahweh our God enables you to capture [IDM] the city, you must kill all the men in the city. 14 But you are allowed to take for yourselves the women, the children, the livestock, and everything else [that you want to take] from the city. You will be allowed to enjoy all the things that belonged to your enemies; it is Yahweh our God who has given those things to you. 15 You should do that in all the cities that are far from the land in which you will settle. 16 "But in the cities that are in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, you must kill all the people and all the animals [LIT]. 17 You must get rid of them completely. Get rid of the Heth people-group, the Amor people-group, the Canaan people-group, the Periz people-group, the Hiv people-group, and the Jebus people-group; that is what Yahweh our God commanded you to do. 18 If you do not do that, they will teach you to sin against Yahweh our God and do the disgusting things that they do when they worship their gods. 19 "When you surround a city for a long time, trying to capture it, do not cut down the fruit trees [outside the city]. You are allowed to eat the fruit from the trees, but do not get rid of the trees, because they certainly are not [RHQ] your enemies. 20 You are permitted to cut down the other trees and use the wood to make ladders and towers to enable you to [go over the walls and] capture the city."

21 "Suppose someone has been murdered in a field in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, and you do not know who killed that person. 2 [If that happens], your elders and judges must go out to where that person's

corpse was found and measure the distance from there to each of the nearby towns. 3 Then the elders in the town that is closest to where the corpse was found must select a young cow that has never been used for doing work. 4 They must take it to a place near a stream where the ground has never been plowed or planted. They must break its neck there in that valley. 5 The priests must go there also, because Yahweh our God has chosen them from the tribe of Levi to serve him and to be his representatives [MTY] when they bless people. And he has also chosen them to settle disputes in which someone has been injured. 6 The elders from the closest town must wash their hands over the young cow whose neck was broken, 7 and they must say, 'We did not murder this person [MTY], and we did not see who did it. 8 Yahweh, forgive us, your Israeli people whom you rescued [from Egypt]. Do not consider (us to be guilty/that we should be punished because) of murdering someone who (is innocent/had not done something that is wrong). Instead, forgive us.' 9 By doing that, you will be doing what Yahweh considers to be right, and you will not be considered to be guilty for murdering that person." 10 "When you [soldiers] go to fight against your enemies, and Yahweh our God enables you to defeat them [IDM], and (they become your prisoners/you capture them), 11 one of you may see among them a beautiful woman that he likes, and he may want to marry her. 12 He should take her to his home, and there she must shave [all the hair off] her head and cut her fingernails [to signify that now she does not belong to her people-group any more, but instead she is becoming an Israeli]. 13 She must take off the clothes that she was wearing when she was captured, [and put on Israeli clothes]. She must stay in that man's house and mourn for a month because of [leaving] her parents. After that, he will be allowed to marry her. 14 Later, if he no longer is pleased with her, he will be permitted to allow her to leave him. But because she was forced to have sex with him, he will not be allowed to treat her like a slave [and sell her to someone else]." 15 "Suppose that a man has two wives, but he likes one of them and dislikes the other one. And suppose that they both give birth to sons, and the oldest son is the child of the woman that he does not like. 16 On the day when that man decides how he will divide his possessions for his sons to possess [after he dies], he must not favor the son of the wife that he loves by giving him [a bigger share,] the share that the older son should receive. 17 He must give to the older son, the son of the wife whom he does not like, twice as much of his possessions. That son is his firstborn son, and he must be given the share that he should receive because of his being that man's firstborn son." 18 "Suppose there is a boy who is very stubborn and always (rebelling against/disobeying) [his parents], and who will not heed what they say to him. And suppose that they punish him but he still does not pay attention to what they tell him [MTY]. 19 If that happens, his parents must take him to the (gate of/central meeting place in) the city where he lives and have him stand in front of the elders of the city. 20 Then the parents must say to the elders of that city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and always rebelling against us. He will not pay attention to what we tell him [MTY]. He wastes a lot of money (OR, eats too much food) and gets drunk.' 21 Then all the elders of that city must execute him by throwing stones at him. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice among you. And everyone in Israel will hear [about what happened] and they will be afraid [to do what he did]." 22 "If someone is executed for having committed a crime for which he deserves to die, and you hang his corpse on a post, 23 you must not allow his corpse to remain there all night. You must bury it on the day that he died, because [God] has cursed anyone whose corpse is allowed to remain on a post. [You must bury the corpse that day], in order that you do not defile the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you."

22 "If you see some Israeli's ox or sheep that has strayed away, do not act as though you did not see it. Take it back [to its owner]. 2 But if the owner does not live near you, or if you do not know who the owner is, take the animal to your house. [It can stay with you] until the owner comes, searching for it. Then you must give the animal to him. 3 You must do the same thing if you see a donkey, or a piece of clothing, or anything else that someone has lost. Do not refuse to do what you should do. 4 "And if you see a fellow Israeli's donkey or cow that has fallen down on the road, do not act as though you did not see it. Help the owner to lift the animal up [so that it can stand on its feet again]. 5 "Women must not wear men's clothes, and men must not wear women's clothes. Yahweh our God hates people who do things like that. 6 "If you happen to find a bird's nest in a tree or on the ground, and the mother bird is sitting in the nest on its eggs or with the baby birds, do not take the mother bird [and kill it]. 7 You are permitted to take the baby birds, but you must allow the mother bird to fly away. Do this in order that things will go well for you and that you will live for a long time. 8 "If you build a new house, you must put a (railing/low wall) around the edge of the roof. If you do that, and if someone falls off the roof [and dies], (you will not be guilty of causing that person to die/his death [MTY] will not be your fault). 9 "Do not plant any crop in the area where your grapevines are growing. If you do, you are not allowed to harvest the crops that you have planted or to

harvest the grapes [to make wine from them]. 10 "Do not hitch together an ox and a donkey [for plowing your fields]. 11 "Do not wear clothing that is made by weaving together (wool and linen/two different kinds of thread). 12 "[Twist threads together to] make tassels and sew/fasten them on the four bottom corners of your cloak. 13 "Suppose a man marries a young woman and has sex with her and later decides that he does not want her any more, 14 and he says false things about her, and claims that she was not a virgin when he married her. 15 If that happens, the young woman's parents must take the sheet that was on the bed when that man and their daughter were married, which still has bloodstains on it, and show it to the elders of the city at the (gate of/central meeting place in) the city. 16 Then the father of the young woman must say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man to be his wife. But now he says that he doesn't want her any more. 17 And he has falsely said that she was not a virgin when he married her. But look! Here is what proves that my daughter was a virgin! Look at the bloodstains on the sheet where they slept the night that they were married!' And he will show the sheet to the elders. 18 Then the elders of that city must take that man and whip him. 19 They shall require that he pay a fine of 100 pieces of silver and give the money to the father of the young woman, because the man caused an Israeli young woman to be disgraced. Also, that woman must continue to live with him; she is his wife. He is not allowed to divorce her during the rest of his life. 20 "But if what the man said is true, and there is nothing to prove that she was a virgin when he married her, 21 they must take that young woman to the door of her father's house. Then the men of that city must execute her by throwing stones at her. They must do that because she has done something in Israel that is very disgraceful, by having sex with some man [while she was still living] in her father's house. By executing her like that, you will get rid of this evil practice among you. 22 "If a man is caught while he is having sex with another man's wife, both of them must be executed. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice in Israel. 23 "Suppose in some town a man sees a young woman who is engaged/promised to be married to another man, and he is caught having sex with [EUP] her. 24 You must take both of them to the (gate of/central meeting place in) that town. There you must execute them both by throwing stones at them. You must execute the young woman because she did not shout for help even though she was in the town. And the man must be executed because he had sex [EUP] with someone who was already engaged/promised to be married. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil practice among you. 25 "But suppose out in the open countryside a man meets a young woman who is engaged/promised to be married, and he rapes her. If that happens, only that man must be executed. 26 You must not punish the young woman, because she did not do anything for which she deserves to be executed. This case is like when one man attacks another man [in the countryside] and murders him, 27 because the man who raped her saw her when she was in the open countryside, and even though she called out for help, there was no one there who could rescue her. 28 "If a man rapes a young woman who is not engaged/promised to be married, if someone sees him while he is doing that, 29 that man must pay 50 pieces of silver to the young woman's father, and he must marry her, because he forced her to have sex with him. He is not allowed to divorce her for the rest of his life. 30 "man must not disgrace his father by having sex with any of his father's wives."

23 "Any man whose testicles are crushed or whose penis is cut off shall not be (included as one of/allowed to worship with) Yahweh's people. 2 "No (illegitimate person/person whose mother and father were not married), or descendant of that person, extending to the tenth generation, shall be included as one of Yahweh's people. 3 "No one from the Ammon or Moab people-groups shall be (included as one of/allowed to worship with) Yahweh's people, extending to the tenth generation. 4 One reason is that their [leaders] refused to give your ancestors food and water when they were traveling from Egypt [to Canaan]. Another reason is that they wanted to pay Balaam, the son of Beor from Pethor [town] in Mesopotamia, to curse you Israelis. 5 But Yahweh our God did not pay attention to Balaam; instead, he caused Balaam to bless your ancestors, because Yahweh loved them. 6 As long as Israel is a nation, you must not do anything to cause things to go well for those two people-groups or enable them to prosper. 7 "But do not despise anyone from the Edom people-group, because they are [descendants of your ancestor Jacob], just like you are. And do not despise people from Egypt, because [they treated your ancestors well when] they first lived in Egypt. 8 The children and grandchildren of people from Edom and Egypt [who live among you] may be (included among/allowed to worship with) Yahweh's people." 9 "When your soldiers are living in tents at a time of fighting your enemies, they must avoid doing things that would make them unacceptable to God. 10 If any soldier becomes unacceptable to God because semen comes out of his body during the night, [the next morning] he must go outside the camp and stay there during that day. 11 But in the evening of that day, he must bathe himself, and at sunset he is allowed to come back into the camp. 12 "Your soldiers must have a toilet area

outside the camp where you can go [when you need to]. 13 [When you go to fight against your enemies], carry a stick along with your weapons, in order that when you need to defecate [EUP], you can dig a hole with the stick, and then cover up the hole [when you have finished defecating]. 14 You must keep the camp acceptable to Yahweh our God, because he is with you in your camp to protect you and to enable you to defeat your enemies. Do not do anything disgraceful/indecent that would cause Yahweh to abandon you." 15 "If slaves who escape from their masters come to you [and request you to protect them], do not send them back to their masters. 16 Allow them to stay/live among you, in whatever town they choose, and do not mistreat them. 17 "Do not [allow] any Israeli man or woman [to] become a prostitute at the temple. 18 Also, do not allow any people who earned money from being a prostitute to bring any of that money into the temple of Yahweh our God, even if they solemnly promised to pay that money to Yahweh. Yahweh hates those who are prostitutes. 19 "When you lend money or food or anything else to a fellow Israeli, do not charge them interest. 20 You are allowed to charge interest when you lend money to foreigners [who live in your land], but not when you lend money to Israelis. Do this in order that Yahweh our God will bless you in everything that you do in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. 21 "When you vow to give something to Yahweh your God [or to do something for him], do it as soon as you can. Yahweh expects you to do what you promised, and if you do not do it, you will be committing a sin. 22 But if you [SYN] do not vow [to do something], that is not sinful. 23 But if you voluntarily promise to do something, you must do it. 24 "When you walk through someone else's vineyard, you are allowed to [pick and] eat as many grapes as you want, but you must not [cut some from a vine and carry them away] in a container. 25 When you walk [along a path] in someone else's field of grain, you are allowed to pluck/pick some of the grain and eat it, but you must not cut any grain with a sickle [and take it with you]."

24 "Suppose a man marries a woman and later decides that he does not want her because there is something about her that he doesn't like. And suppose he writes on paper that he is divorcing her, and he gives the paper to her [SYN] and sends her away from his house. 2 Then suppose that she goes and marries another man, 3 and that man [later also] decides that he does not like her, and he also writes on paper that he is divorcing her, and he sends her away from his house. Or, suppose that the second husband dies. 4 If either of those things happens, her first husband must not marry her again. He must consider that she has become unacceptable to Yahweh. Yahweh would consider it to be disgusting [if he married her again]. You must not sin [MTY] by doing that in the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you." 5 "When some man has recently become married, he must not [be required to] become a soldier in the army or be required to do any other work [for the government] for one year [after being married]. He should stay happily at home with his wife for that year. 6 "Anyone who lends money to someone else [is allowed to require that person to give him something] to guarantee [that he will pay back the money that he borrowed. But] he must not take from him his (millstone/stone for grinding grain). That would be taking [the millstone that his family needs to grind the grain to make the bread] they need to stay alive. 7 "If someone kidnaps/steals a fellow Israeli to cause that person to become his slave or to sell him [to become someone else's slave], you must execute the person who did that. By doing that, you will get rid of this evil among you. 8 "If you are suffering from (leprosy/a dreaded skin disease), be sure to do everything that the priests, who are from the tribe of Levi, tell you to do. Obey carefully the instructions that I have given to them. 9 Do not forget what Yahweh our God did to Miriam, [when she became a leper], after your ancestors left Egypt. 10 "When you lend something to someone, do not go into his house to take the cloak that he says that he will give you to guarantee [that he will return what he has borrowed]. 11 Stand outside his house, and the man to whom you are lending something will bring the cloak out to you. 12 But if he is poor, do not keep that cloak all night. 13 When the sun sets, take the cloak back to him, in order that he may wear it while he sleeps. If you do that, he will [ask God to] bless you, and Yahweh our God will be pleased with you. 14 "Do not mistreat any servants whom you have hired who are poor and needy [DOU], whether they are Israelis or foreigners who are living in your town. 15 Every day, before sunset, you must pay/give them the money that they have earned. They are poor and they need to get their pay. If you do not pay them right away, they will cry out against you to Yahweh, and he will punish [MTY] you for having sinned like that. 16 "Parents must not be executed for crimes that their children have committed, and children must not be executed for crimes that their parents have committed. People should be executed only for the crimes that they themselves have committed. 17 "You must [LIT] do for foreigners [who live] among you and for orphans what the laws state must be done for them. And [if you lend something to] a widow, do not take her coat from her as a guarantee [that she will return it]. 18 Do not forget that [you had great hardships/troubles when] you were slaves in Egypt, and Yahweh our God rescued you

from there. That is why I am commanding you [to help others who have troubles]. **19** "When you harvest your crops, if you have forgotten [that you left] one bundle in the field, do not go back to get it. [Leave it there] for foreigners, orphans, and widows. If you do that, Yahweh will bless you in everything that you do. **20** And when you have harvested/picked all your olives from the trees once, do not go back [to pick the ones that are still] on the trees. **21** [Similarly], when you pick the grapes in your vineyard, do not go back a second time [to try to find more]. Leave them for the foreigners, orphans, and widows [among you]. **22** Do not forget that [Yahweh was kind to you when] you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I am commanding you [to be kind to those who are needy]."

25 "If [two] Israelis have a dispute and they go to a court, the judge will [probably] decide/declare that one of them (is innocent/did not do any wrong) and the other one is guilty. **2** If the judge says that the guilty person must be punished, he shall command him to lie [with his face] on the ground and be whipped. The number of times he is struck with a whip will depend on [what kind of] crime he committed. **3** It is permitted that he be struck as many as 40 times, but no more than that. If he is struck more than 40 times, he would be humiliated publicly. **4** When your ox is treading/walking on the grain [to separate the chaff from the grain], do not (muzzle it/put a covering on its mouth) [to prevent it from eating some of the grain]. **5** If two brothers live on the same property, and one of them who has no son dies, the man's widow should not marry someone who is not a member of his family. The dead man's brother must marry her and have sex [EUP] with her. It is his duty to do that. **6** If she later gives birth to a son, that son is to be considered [MTY] the son of the man who died, in order that the dead man's name will not disappear from Israel. **7** "But if the dead man's brother does not want to marry that woman, she must stand at the (gate/central meeting place) of the town and say to the [town] elders, 'My husband's brother will not do (his duty/what he is supposed to do). He refuses to [marry me in order that I may give birth to a son who will] prevent my dead husband's name from disappearing in Israel.' **8** Then the elders must summon that man and talk to him. If he still refuses to marry that widow, **9** she must go up to him while the elders are watching, and take off one of his sandals [to symbolize/show that he would not receive any of her property], and spit in his face, and say to him, 'This is what happens to the man who refuses to do what is needed [to allow his dead brother to have a son] in order that our family name does not disappear.' **10** After that happens, that man's family will be known as 'the family of the man whose sandal was pulled off'. **11** When [two] men are fighting with each other, and the one man's wife comes near to help her husband by grabbing hold of the other man's genitals, **12** do not act mercifully toward her; cut off her hand. **13** "[When you are buying or selling things], do not try to cheat people by having two kinds of weights, [one which you use when you buy something and one which you use when you sell something], and two kinds of measuring baskets, [one which you use when you buy something and one which you use when you sell something]. **15** Always use correct weights and correct measuring baskets, in order that Yahweh our God will allow you to live a long time in the land that he is giving to you. **16** Yahweh hates all those who act dishonestly, [and he will punish them]. **17** Continue to remember what the Amalek people-group did to your ancestors when they were coming out of Egypt. **18** They attacked your ancestors as your ancestors were traveling, when they were weak and exhausted. Those people were not afraid of God at all, so they attacked your ancestors from the rear and killed all those who were unable to walk as fast as the others. **19** Therefore, when Yahweh our God has given you the land [that he promised to give you], and when he has enabled you to rest from [fighting] all your enemies around you, kill all the Amalek people-group, with the result that no one will remember them any more. Do not forget [to do this]!"

26 "After you occupy the land that Yahweh our God is giving to you, and you (have settled/are living) there, **2** [each of] you must take some of the first crops that you harvest, put them in a basket, and take them to the place that Yahweh will have chosen for you to worship [MTY] there. **3** Go to the Supreme Priest who is serving at that time and say to him, '[By giving you this first part of my harvest] today, I am declaring to Yahweh our God that I have [picked it in] the land that he vowed to our ancestors to give to us.' **4** Then the priest must take the basket of food from your hand and put it on the altar where sacrifices are offered to Yahweh our God. **5** Then in Yahweh's presence you must say this: 'My ancestor [Jacob] was a man from Aram/Syria who was continually wandering [from one place to another]. He took his family to Egypt. They were a small group [when they went there], but they lived there and their descendants became a very large/populous [DOU] and powerful nation. **6** Then the people of Egypt treated them very harshly [DOU], and they forced them to become their slaves and to work very hard. **7** Then our ancestors cried out to you, Yahweh our God, and you heard them. You saw that they were suffering, and that they were forced to work very hard, and were being oppressed. **8** Then by your great power [MTY] and by performing many kinds of miracles [DOU], and other terrifying things, you brought them out of Egypt. **9** You

brought us to this land and gave it to us, a land that is very fertile [IDM]. **10** So now, Yahweh, I have brought to you the first part of the harvest from the land that I received.' Then you must set the basket down in Yahweh's presence and worship him there. **11** And you must celebrate [by eating a meal together to thank] Yahweh our God for all the good things that he has given to you and to your family. And you must invite the descendants of Levi and the foreigners who are living among you to also rejoice [and eat] with you. **12** Every third year, you must bring to the descendants of Levi and to the foreigners [who are living among you] and the orphans and the widows (a tithe/10 percent) of your crops, in order that in every town they will have plenty to eat. **13** Then you must say to Yahweh, 'I have brought to you, from my house, all of the sacred tithe [from my harvest this year]. I am giving it to the descendants of Levi, to the foreigners, the orphans, and the widows, as you commanded us to do. I have not disobeyed any of your commands [about the tithes], and I have not forgotten any of your commands [about tithes]. **14** [I declare that] I have not eaten any food from the tithe while I was mourning [for someone who died]. And I have not touched any of it while I was unacceptable to you; I have not offered any of it to [spirits of] dead people. Yahweh, I have obeyed you and done everything that you have commanded us [concerning the tithe]. **15** So [please] look down from your holy place in heaven, and bless us, your Israeli people. Also bless this very fertile [IDM] land which you have given to us, which is what you promised our ancestors that you would do.' **16** Today Yahweh our God is commanding you to obey all these rules and regulations. So obey them faithfully, with your entire inner being [DOU]. **17** Today you have declared that Yahweh is your God, and that you will conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and that you will obey all his commands and rules and regulations, and that you will do all that he tells you to do. **18** And today Yahweh has declared that you are his people, which is what he promised that you would be, and he commands you to obey all his commands. **19** If you do that, he will cause you to become greater than any other nation that he has established, and he will enable you to praise him and honor him [DOU]. You will truly belong to Yahweh our God, which is what he has promised."

27 Moses/I, along with the other Israeli leaders, said this to the people: "Obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today. **2** [Soon] you will cross the Jordan [River] and enter the land that Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped], promised to give to you. There, in that very fertile [IDM] land on the [west] side of the Jordan [River], set up some large stones [on Ebal Mountain], and cover them with plaster. Then write on those stones all these laws and teachings/instructions. **5** And build a stone altar there to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, but do not cut those stones with iron tools. **6** The altar that you make to burn sacrifices to Yahweh our God must be made with uncut stones. **7** And there you must sacrifice offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh, and you must eat [your share of those offerings] and rejoice/celebrate in the presence of Yahweh. **8** And, when you write these laws on those stones, you must write them very clearly." **9** Then Moses/I, along with the priests, said to all the Israeli people, "You Israeli people, be quiet and listen [to what I am saying]. Today you have become the people who belong to Yahweh, our God. **10** So, you must do what he tells you, and obey all the rules and regulations that I am giving to you today." **11** On that same day Moses/I said to the Israeli people, **12** "After you have crossed over the Jordan [River], the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin must stand on Gerizim Mountain and [request Yahweh to] bless the people. **13** And the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali must stand on Ebal Mountain and listen to the things that Yahweh will do when he curses the people. **14** The descendants of Levi must shout these words loudly: **15** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who makes an idol of stone, or of wood, or of metal, and secretly sets it up [and worships it]. Yahweh considers that those things, made by humans [SYN], are detestable/disgusting.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **16** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who dishonors his father or his mother.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **17** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who removes someone else's markers of property boundaries.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **18** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who leads a blind person to go (in the wrong direction/where that person does not want to go).' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **19** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who deprives foreigners or orphans or widows of the things that the laws state must be done for them.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **20** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who (shows no respect for/disgraces his father) by having sex with [EUP] any of his father's wives.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **21** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who has sex [EUP] with any animal.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **22** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who has sex with his sister or with his half-sister.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **23** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who has sex with [EUP] his mother-in-

law.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **24** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who secretly murders someone else.' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **25** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who accepts a bribe to murder someone who (is innocent/has not done something that is wrong.)' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).' **26** 'Yahweh will curse anyone who disobeys these laws and refuses to declare that these laws [are good].' And all the people must reply, '(Amen/We want that to happen).'"

28 "If you do what Yahweh our God tells you to do and faithfully obey everything that I am today commanding you to do, he will cause you to become greater than any other nation on the earth. **2** If you obey Yahweh, this is what he will do to bless you: **3** He will bless everything that you do when you are in the cities and he will bless everything that you do when you are [working] in the fields. **4** He will bless you by giving you many children [IDM] and by giving you abundant crops, and plenty of cattle and sheep. **5** He will bless you by causing you to have good harvests with plenty of grain [MTY] to make bread. **6** He will bless you [everywhere]—when you go out [of your houses] and when you come into [your houses]. **7** Yahweh will enable you to defeat [the armies of] your enemies; they will attack you from one direction, but they will run away from you in seven/many directions. **8** Yahweh will bless you [by filling] your barns [with grain], and he will bless all the work that you do; he will bless you in the land that he is giving to you. **9** "If you obey all the commandments that Yahweh our God [has given to you] and if you conduct your lives as he wants you to do, you will continue to be his people, which is what he promised. **10** "When all the people-groups on the earth will realize that you belong to [MTY] Yahweh, and they will be afraid of you. **11** "And Yahweh will cause you to prosper very much. He will give you many children [IDM], many cattle, and abundant crops in the land that he vowed to our ancestors that he would give to you. **12** "When rain is needed, Yahweh will send it from where he stores it in the sky, and he will bless all your work, with the result that you [will be able to] lend money to many other nations, but you will not need to borrow [money from them]. **13** If you faithfully obey all of the commands of Yahweh our God that I am giving you today, Yahweh will cause your nation to be a leader among the nations, not inferior to them; you will always be prosperous and never be needy/poor [IDM]. **14** [Yahweh will do all these things for you] if you do not turn away from [obeying] what I am commanding you today, and if you never worship or serve other gods. **15** But if you do not do what Yahweh our God is telling you to do, and if you do not faithfully obey all his rules and regulations that I am giving to you today, this is what he will do to curse you: **16** He will curse you when you are in the cities and he will curse you when you are [working] in the fields. **17** He will curse you by not allowing you to have good harvests with plenty of grain [MTY] to make bread. **18** He will curse you by giving you only a few children [IDM], by causing you to have poor crops, and by not enabling you to have many cattle and sheep. **19** He will curse you [everywhere]—when you go out [of your houses] and when you come into [your houses]. **20** If you do evil things and reject Yahweh, he will curse you by causing you to (be confused/not know what to do), and to be frustrated in everything that you do, until [your enemies] quickly and completely destroy you {you will be quickly and completely destroyed}. **21** Yahweh will cause you to experience terrible diseases, until not one of you remains alive in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. **22** Yahweh will strike/afflict you with diseases that shrivel your bodies, with fever, with inflammation/swelling. It will be extremely hot, and it will not rain. There will be scorching winds, and [Yahweh will cause] your crops to rot. All these things will strike you until you die. **23** There will be no rain [MET], [with the result that] the ground will be [as hard as] iron [MET]. **24** Instead of sending rain, Yahweh will send strong winds to blow sand and dust over your land, until your land is ruined. **25** Yahweh will enable your enemies to defeat you; your soldiers will attack your enemies from one direction, but they will run away from your enemies in seven/many directions, and when the people of other nations see what is happening to you, they will say that it is horrible. **26** [You will die], and birds and wild animals will come and eat your corpses, and there will not be anyone to scare/shoo them away. **27** Yahweh will cause you to have boils on your skin, like he caused the people of Egypt to have [many years ago]. He will cause you to have tumors, open sores, and your skin will itch, and there will be nothing that will cure those diseases. **28** Yahweh will cause [some of] you to become insane; he will cause some of you to become blind, and he will cause [some of] your minds to become confused. **29** [Because you will not be able to see where you are going], at midday you will (grope/feel your way) around with your hands, like people do in the darkness. You will continually be oppressed and robbed, and no one will help you. **30** Some of you men will be engaged/promised to marry a young woman, but someone else will rape her. You will build houses, but you will never live in them. You will plant grapevines, but you will not eat the grapes; [someone else will eat them]. **31** Your enemies will butcher your cattle while you watch them, and you will not get any of the meat to eat. They will drag away

your donkeys while you watch them do it, and they will not give them back to you. They will take away your sheep; and no one will help you [rescue them]. **32** While you watch, your sons and daughters will be given to foreigners to become their slaves. Every day you will very sadly watch for your children to return, but (you will watch in vain/they will never return). **33** People from a foreign nation will take all the crops that you worked hard to produce, and they will constantly treat you harshly and cruelly [DOU]. **34** The result will be that all these terrible things that you see/experience will cause you to become insane. **35** Yahweh will cause your legs [to be covered with] painful boils that cannot be healed, and you will have boils from the bottoms of your feet to the tops of your heads. **36** Yahweh will cause your king and the rest of you to be taken to another country, to a place in which you and your ancestors have never lived before, and there you will worship and serve gods that are made of wood or stone. **37** When the people-groups in nearby countries see what has happened to you, they will be shocked/horrified; they will make fun [DOU] of you. **38** You will plant plenty of seeds in your fields, but you will reap only a small harvest, because locusts will eat the crops. **39** You will plant grapevines and take care of them, but you will not pick any grapes to make wine, because worms will eat the vines. **40** Olive trees will grow everywhere in your land, but you will not get any olive oil to rub on your skin because the olives will drop [on the ground before they are ripe]. **41** You will have sons and daughters, but they will not stay with you, because they will be captured and taken away. **42** Swarms of locusts/insects will eat your crops and [the leaves of] all your trees. **43** Foreigners who live in your land will become more and more [powerful], and you will become less and less [powerful]. **44** They will [have money to] lend to you, but you will not [have any money to] lend to them. They will be superior [IDM] to you, and you will be inferior to them [IDM]. **45** "You will experience all these disasters, and you will continue to experience them you until you are destroyed, if you do not do what Yahweh your God told you to do, and do not obey all the rules and regulations that he gave to you. **46** "These disasters will warn [DOU] you and your descendants forever [about what happens to groups who disobey Yahweh]. **47** "Because Yahweh blessed you abundantly in many ways, you should have served him very joyfully [DOU], but you did not do that. **48** "Therefore, you will work for the enemies whom Yahweh will send to attack you. You will be hungry and thirsty; you will not have clothes to wear; and you will lack everything else that you need. And Yahweh will cause you to become slaves [MET] and work hard until he gets rid of you. **49** "Yahweh will cause an army from very far away [HYP] to attack you, whose soldiers speak a language that you do not know/understand. They will swoop down on you [quickly] like an eagle [SIM] attacks its prey. **50** They will be fierce looking. They will not act mercifully toward anyone, not even young children and old people. **51** They will [kill and] eat your livestock, and they will eat your crops, and you will (starve/die because you do not have anything to eat). They will not leave for you any grain or wine or [olive] oil or cattle or sheep; and you will all die [from hunger]. **52** Your enemies will surround your towns throughout the land that Yahweh your God is about to give to you, and they will break down the high and strong walls [around your towns], walls which you trusted/thought would protect you. **53** "When your enemies are surrounding [your towns], you will be extremely hungry, with the result that you will eat the flesh of your own sons and daughters that Yahweh your God has given to you. **54** When your enemies have surrounded your towns, even the most gentle and sensitive men among you will want food very desperately, with the result that they will [kill their own children and] eat their flesh, because they will not have anything else to eat. They will not even share any of it with their brothers or wives whom they love very much or with any of their children who are still alive. **56** Even the most gentle and sensitive/kind women among you, who are very refined/rich with the result that they have never had to walk anywhere [HYP], will do the same thing. When your enemies have surrounded your towns, those women will be extremely hungry, with the result that after they give birth to a baby, they will secretly [kill it and] eat its flesh and also eat its afterbirth. And they will not share any of it with their husbands whom they love very much or with any of their other children. **58** "If you do not faithfully obey all of the laws that I am writing, and if you do not revere Yahweh our glorious God [MTY], **59** he will [punish you by] causing you and your descendants to experience great afflictions and plagues which will last for many years. **60** He will cause you to experience the plagues that he sent on the people of Egypt, and you will never be healed. **61** He will also cause you to experience many other sicknesses and diseases that I have not talked about in these laws, until you all will die. **62** You became as numerous as the stars in the sky, but only a few of you will remain alive, if you do not obey Yahweh your God. **63** Yahweh was very happy to do good things for you and to cause you to become very numerous, but now he will be happy to ruin you and get rid of you. [Those of] you [who do not die from these plagues] will be snatched away from the land that you will soon be entering to possess. **64** "Yahweh will scatter you among many people-groups, all over the earth, and in those areas/places you

will serve other gods that are made of wood or stone, gods which you and your ancestors have never known/worshiped. **65** In those places you will be restless. Yahweh will cause you to be constantly worried/anxious, feel hopeless, and discouraged. **66** You will always be afraid that your enemies will kill you. You will be very fearful, all day and all night. **67** Because you will be very fearful/afraid because of the [terrible] things that you see, each morning you will say 'I wish it were evening already!' and each evening you will say 'I wish it were morning already!' **68** Yahweh will send [some of] you back to Egypt in ships, even though he promised that you would never [be forced to] go there again. There in Egypt you will try to sell yourselves to become slaves of your enemies [in order to have food to eat], but no one will buy you. [All those things will happen to you if you do not obey the laws that Yahweh is giving to you]."

29 These are the things that the Israelis were required to do to keep the agreement that Yahweh was making with them. Moses/I commanded them to keep this agreement [when they/we were] in the Moab region [on the east side of the Jordan River]. This was in addition to the agreement that Yahweh had made with them/us at Sinai [Mountain]. **2** Moses/I summoned all the Israeli people and said to them, "You saw [SYN] for yourselves what Yahweh did to the king of Egypt and to his officials and to his entire country. **3** You [SYN] saw all the plagues [that Yahweh caused them to experience], and all the various miracles [DOU] [that Yahweh performed]. **4** But until now, Yahweh has not enabled you to understand [the meaning of] all that you have seen and heard. **5** For 40 years Yahweh has led you while you traveled/walked through the desert. During that time, your clothes and your sandals have not worn out. **6** You did not have bread to eat or wine or other fermented/strong drinks to drink, but Yahweh [took care of you], in order that you would know that he is your God. **7** "And when we came to this place, Sihon, the king who ruled in Heshbon [city], and Og, the king who ruled the Bashan [region], came [with their armies] to attack us, but we defeated them. **8** We took/conquered their land and divided it among the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. **9** "So faithfully keep all of this agreement, in order that you will be successful in everything that you do. **10** Today all of us are standing in the presence of Yahweh our God. The leaders of all our tribes, our elders, our officials, all you Israeli men, **11** your wives, your children, and the foreigners who live among you and cut wood for you and carry water for you, are here. **12** [We are here] today to promise to keep this solemn agreement with Yahweh. **13** [He is making this agreement with you] in order to confirm that you are his people, and that he is your God. This agreement is what he promised you, and which is what he vowed to give to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **14** This agreement is not only with you. **15** He is making this agreement with us [who are here today] and also with our descendants who are not yet born. **16** "You remember [the things that our ancestors suffered] in Egypt, and how they traveled through the land that belonged to other nations [after they came out of Egypt]. **17** In those countries they saw those disgusting idols made of wood and stone and [decorated with] silver and gold. **18** So be sure that no man or woman or family or tribe that is here [today] turns away from Yahweh our God, to worship/serve the gods of those nations. Doing that would be like a root [of a plant that would grow] among you and bear poisonous and bitter fruit [MET]. **19** "Be sure that no one here today who hears this agreement thinks, 'Everything will go well with me, even if I stubbornly do what I want to.' If you are stubborn like that, the result will be that Yahweh will eventually get rid of all of you, both good people and evil people [MET]. **20** Yahweh will not forgive anyone who is [stubborn] like that. Instead, he will be extremely angry [DOU] with that person, and that person will experience all the curses that I have told you about, until Yahweh gets rid of that person and his family [IDM]. **21** From all the tribes of Israel, Yahweh will separate that individual. Yahweh will cause him to experience all the disasters that I have listed in the agreement that states the things that Yahweh will do to curse [those who disobey] the laws [that I have written] in this scroll/book. **22** "In the future, your descendants and people from other countries will see the disasters and the illnesses that Yahweh has caused to happen to you. **23** They will see that all your land has been ruined by burning sulfur and salt. Nothing will have been planted. Not even weeds will grow there. Your land will resemble Sodom and Gomorrah [cities], and Admah and Zeboiim [cities], which Yahweh destroyed when he was very angry [DOU] [with the people who lived there]. **24** And the people from those other nations will ask, 'Why did Yahweh do this to this land? Why was he very angry [with the people who lived here]?' **25** "Then other people will reply, 'It is because they refused to keep the agreement that Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [worshiped], had made with them when he brought them out of Egypt. **26** Instead, they served/worshiped other gods that they had never worshiped before, gods that Yahweh had told them not to worship. **27** So, Yahweh became very angry with the Israeli people in this land, and he caused them to experience all the disasters that their leader warned them about. **28** Yahweh became extremely angry [DOU] with them and took/yanked them [MET] out of their land and

banished them into another land, and they are still there.' 29 "[There are some] things that Yahweh our God has (kept secret/not revealed), but he has revealed his laws to us, and [he expects] us and our descendants to obey them forever."

30 "I have now told you about the ways that Yahweh our God will bless you [if you obey him] and the ways that he will curse you [if you disobey him]. I am saying that you must choose which you want. But when [you choose not to obey his laws], some day you will be living in the countries to which he will scatter you, and you will remember [what I told you]. 2 Then, if you return to Yahweh our God and faithfully [IDM] obey all that I have today commanded you to do, 3 he will be merciful to you. He will bring you back from the nations to which he scattered you, and he will cause you to be prosperous again. 4 Even if you have been scattered to the most distant places on the earth, Yahweh our God will gather you from there and bring you back [to your land]. 5 He will enable you to possess again the land where your ancestors lived. And he will cause you to be more prosperous and more numerous than you are now. 6 Yahweh our God will change [MET] your inner beings, with the result that you will love him more than you love anything else and want to do only what he wants you to do. And then you will continue to live in that land. 7 Yahweh our God will cause your enemies and those who oppressed/persecuted you to experience all the disasters that I have told you about. 8 You will do what Yahweh wants you to do, as you did before, and you will obey all the commands that I have given to you today. 9 Yahweh our God will cause you to be very successful in all that you do. You will have many children [IDM], and a lot of cattle, and you will have abundant crops. He will again be happy to enable you to prosper, just like he was happy to enable your ancestors to prosper. 10 [But he will do those things only] if you do what he has told you to do, and if you obey all his rules and regulations that I have written about [in this scroll], and if you will love him more than you love anything else and want to do only what he wants you to do. 11 The commands that I am giving to you today are not very difficult for you [to obey], and they are not [difficult to know]. 12 They are not in heaven, with the result that you need to say, '(Who will need to go up to heaven for us to bring them [down here to us] in order that we can hear them and obey them?/Someone will need to go up to heaven for us to bring them [down here to us] in order that we can hear them and obey them.)' [RHQ] 13 And they are not on the other side of the sea, with the result that you need to say, '(Who will need to cross the sea for us and bring them back to us, in order that we can hear them and obey them?/Someone will need to cross the sea for us and bring them back to us, in order that we can hear them and obey them.)' [RHQ] 14 [You do not need to do that because] his commands are here with you. You know them [MTY] and you have (memorized them/put them in your minds). So you can [easily] obey them. 15 So listen! Today I am allowing you to choose between [doing what is] evil and [doing what is] good, between what will enable you to live [for a long time] and [what will cause you] to die [while you are still young]. 16 [I say again], if you obey the commands of Yahweh our God that I am giving to you today, and if you love him and conduct your lives as he wants you to do, and if you obey all his rules and regulations, you will prosper and become very numerous, and Yahweh our God will bless you in the land that you are about to enter and possess. 17 But if you turn away [from Yahweh] and refuse to heed what he says, and if you allow yourselves to be led away to worship other gods, 18 I am warning you today that you will [soon] die. You will not live for a long time in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan [River] to enter and possess. 19 I am requesting that [everyone in] heaven and the earth testify to you, that today I am allowing you to choose whether you [want to] live for a long time or to soon die, whether [you want Yahweh to] bless you or to curse you. So choose to live. 20 [Choose to] love Yahweh our God, and to obey him [MTY], and to (be faithful to/have a close relationship with) him. If you do that, you and your descendants will live for a long time in the land that Yahweh solemnly promised to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he would give to them."

31 When Moses/I finished saying all that to the Israeli people, 2 he/I said to them, "Now I am 120 years old. I am no longer able to go everywhere [that you go] (OR, to be your leader). Furthermore, Yahweh has told me that I will not cross the Jordan [River]. 3 But Yahweh our God will go ahead of you. He will [enable you to] destroy the nations that are living there, in order that you can occupy their land. Joshua will be your leader, which is what Yahweh already told me. 4 Yahweh will do to those nations what he did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amor people-group when he destroyed their armies [MTY]. 5 Yahweh will enable you to conquer those nations, but you must [kill all of the people of those nations, which is] what I have commanded you to do. 6 Be brave and confident. Do not be afraid of those people. [Do not forget that] it is Yahweh our God who will go with you. He will always help [LIT] you and never abandon you." 7 Then Moses/I summoned Joshua, and while all the Israeli people were listening, he/I said to him, "Be brave and confident. You are the one who will lead these people into the land that Yahweh promised to our ancestors that he would give to them, and you will enable them to occupy it. 8 It is

Yahweh who will go ahead of you. He will be with you. He will always help [LIT] you. He will never abandon you. So do not be afraid or dismayed." 9 Moses/I wrote down all these laws [on two scrolls] and gave [one scroll] to the priests, who carried the chest containing the Ten Commandments, and [gave the other scroll] to the Israeli elders. 10 Moses/I told them, "At the end of every seven years, at the time that all debts are canceled, [read this to the people] during the Festival of [Living in Temporary] Shelters. 11 Read it to all the Israeli people when they gather at the place that Yahweh chooses for them to worship him. 12 Gather together everyone—men, women, children, even the foreigners [who are living] in your towns—in order that they may hear [these laws] and learn to revere Yahweh our God, and to faithfully obey everything that is written in these laws. 13 [If they do that], your descendants who have never known these laws will hear them and will also learn to revere Yahweh our God, during all the years that they live in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan [River] to occupy." 14 Then Yahweh said to Moses/me, "Listen carefully. You will soon die. Summon Joshua, and you go to the Sacred Tent with him, in order that I may appoint him [to be the new leader]." So Joshua and Moses/I went to the Sacred Tent. 15 There Yahweh appeared to them/us in a pillar of cloud, and that cloud was close to the door of the tent. 16 Yahweh said to Moses/me, "You will soon die [EUP]. Then these people will become unfaithful [MET] to me. They will abandon me and (break/stop obeying) the agreement that I made with them. They will begin to worship the foreign/pagan gods [that are worshiped by the people] of the land that they will enter. 17 When that happens, I will become very angry with them. I will abandon them [DOU] and I will no longer help them [IDM], and I will destroy them {they will be destroyed}. Many terrible things will happen to them, with the result that they will say, '[We are certain that] [RHQ] these things are happening to us because our God is no longer with us.' 18 And because of all the evil things that they will have done, and [especially because] they will have started to worship other gods, I will refuse to help [IDM] them. 19 "So, [I am going to give you] a song. Write it [on a scroll] and teach it to the Israeli people and cause them to memorize it. It will be like a witness that accuses them. 20 I am about to take them into a very fertile [IDM] land, a land that I solemnly promised their ancestors that I would give to them. There they will have plenty to eat, with the result that their [stomachs] will [always] be full and they will become fat. But then they will turn to other gods and start to worship them, and they will despise me and (break/stop obeying) the agreement that I made with them. 21 And they will experience many terrible disasters. After that happens, their descendants will never forget this song, and it will be like a witness [that says, 'Now you know why Yahweh punished your ancestors].' I will soon take them into the land that I vowed that I would give to them; but now, before I do that, I know what they are thinking [that they will do when they are living there]." 22 So on the day that [Yahweh gave Moses/me this song], he/I wrote it down, and he/I taught it to the Israeli people. 23 Then Yahweh (appointed/set apart) Joshua and said to him, "Be brave and confident, because you will lead the Israeli people into the land that I vowed that I would give to them. And I will be with you." 24 Then Moses/I finished writing on a scroll all the laws that Yahweh had told to him/me. 25 Then Moses/I told the descendants of Levi, who were carrying the Sacred Chest that contained the Ten Commandments, 26 "Take this scroll on which these laws [are written], and place it beside the Sacred Chest that contains the agreement that Yahweh our God made with you, in order that it may remain there to testify [about what Yahweh will do] to the people [if they disobey him]. 27 [I say this] because I know that these people are very stubborn [DOU]. They have rebelled against Yahweh all during the time that I have been [with them], and they will rebel much more after I die! 28 So gather all the elders of the tribes and your officials, in order that I can tell them the words [of this song], and request all those who are in heaven and on the earth to be witnesses to testify against these people. 29 I say that because I know that after I die, the people will become very wicked. They will turn away from doing everything that I have commanded them to do. And in the future, because of all the evil things that they will do, they will cause Yahweh to become angry with them. And he will cause them to experience disasters." 30 Then, while all the Israeli people listened, Moses/I sang/recited this entire song to them:

32 "Listen to me, [all you who are in the] heavens, and [all you who are on the] earth, listen to what I say [MTY]. 2 I wish/desire that my teaching will fall on you like rain drops or be like dew on the ground, and be like a gentle rain on the young plants, like showers on the grass. 3 I will praise Yahweh [MTY]. And [all you people should] tell others that our God is very great. 4 He is like a rock [MET] [under which we are protected]; [everything] that he does is perfect and completely just/fair [DOU]. He always does what he says that he will do; he never does anything that is wrong. 5 "But [you Israeli people] have been very unfaithful to him; because of your sins, you no longer [deserve to] be his children. You are extremely wicked and deceitful [DOU]. 6 You foolish and senseless [DOU] people, (is this the way that you should repay Yahweh [for all that he has done for you]?/this is certainly not the way that you should

repay Yahweh [for all that he has done for you].) [RHQ] He is your father; he created you [RHQ]; he caused you to become a nation. **7** "Think about [what happened] long ago; consider what happened to your ancestors. Ask your parents, and they will inform you; ask the older people, and they will tell you. **8** When God, who is greater than any other god, long ago divided the people into groups, he assigned to the nations their land. He determined where each people-group should live and (assigned to/chose for) each people-group a god/angel. **9** But Yahweh decided that we would be his people; he chose [us, the descendants of] Jacob, to belong to him. **10** "He saw [our ancestors] when they were in a desert, wandering in a land (that was desolate/where no people lived). He protected them and took care of them, as every person takes good care of his own eyes. [SIM, IDM] **11** [Yahweh protected his people] just like an eagle encourages its babies [to fly] and flutters over them [MET], spreading its wings and catching them [if they start to fall]. **12** Yahweh was the only one who led them; no other foreign god helped him. **13** "[After they entered the land that Yahweh promised to give to them], Yahweh enabled them to rule the hilly areas; they ate the crops that grew in the fields. They found honey in the rocks, and their olive trees [MTY] grew [even] in stony ground. **14** The cows gave them plenty of curds/yogurt, the goats gave them plenty of milk, they had well-fed sheep and cattle, they had very good wheat, and they made delicious wine from their grapes. **15** "The Israeli people became rich and prosperous, but then they rebelled against God; they abandoned him, the one who created them, the one who powerfully saves them. **16** So he abandoned them because they started to worship other/strange gods. Because of their worshiping disgusting idols, he became angry. **17** They offered sacrifices to gods who were [really] demons, gods that their ancestors had never known; they offered sacrifices to gods that they had recently found out about, gods whom your ancestors had never revered. **18** They forgot [the true] God, the one who protects them [MET], the one who created them and caused them to live. **19** "When Yahweh saw that [they had abandoned him], he became angry, so he rejected [the Israeli people, who are like] his sons and daughters. **20** He said, 'They are very wicked/stubborn people, very unfaithful; so I will no longer help them, and then I will watch and see what happens to them. **21** They made me very angry because of their worshiping idols, which are not really gods; they have caused me to be [jealous [MET] because I want them to worship only me]. So now, in order to cause them to become jealous, I will send [to attack them an army of] a nation of worthless and foolish people. **22** I will be very angry, and I will destroy them like a fire that will burn on the earth and all the way down to the place where dead people are [MET]; that fire will destroy the earth and everything that grows on it, and it will even burn what is down under the mountains. **(Sheol h7585)** **23** I will cause them to experience many disasters; [they will feel as though] [MET] I am shooting all my arrows at them. **24** They will die because of being hungry and because of having hot fevers and because of terrible diseases; I will send wild animals to attack [MTY] them, and poisonous snakes to bite [MTY] them. **25** Outside [their houses, their enemies] will kill them [MTY] with swords, and in their homes, [their enemies will cause] them to be terrified. Their enemies will kill young men and young women, and they will kill infants and old people with gray hair. **26** I wanted to scatter the Israeli people to distant countries in order that no one would ever remember them. **27** But [if I did that], their enemies would wrongly boast that they were the ones who had [gotten rid of my people]; they would say, "We [SYN] are the ones who defeated them; it was not Yahweh who has done all these things."' **28** You Israelis are a nation of people who do not have any sense. None of you is wise. **29** If you were wise, you would understand [why you would be punished]; you would have realized what was going to happen to you. **30** [You would have realized] why 1,000 [of your soldiers] would be defeated by only one [of the enemy soldiers], and why two of your enemies would chase away 10,000 [Israeli soldiers]. [You would realize that this would happen] only if God, the one who always defended you [MET], had allowed your enemies to defeat you, because he had abandoned you. **31** Your enemies know that their gods are not powerful like Yahweh, our God, [so their gods could not have defeated us Israelis]. **32** Your enemies are like [MET] grapevines planted near [the ruins of] Sodom and Gomorrah [cities]; the grapes from those vines are bitter and poisonous; **33** the wine [from those grapes] is like the poison of snakes [DOU]. **34** ["Yahweh says], 'I know [RHQ] [what I have planned to do to the Israeli people and to their enemies], and those plans are so secure [that it as though he locked them up] [MET]. **35** I am the one who will get revenge and pay those enemies back for what they have done [to my people], at the right time for them to be punished [IDM]; they will soon experience disasters, and I will punish/destroy them quickly.' **36** "But Yahweh will see that you who are truly his people, who (are innocent/have not done things that are wrong), and he will be merciful to you. And he will see that you are helpless, and that there are very few of you, slaves or free people, who are still alive. **37** Then Yahweh will ask his people, 'Where are the gods that you thought would protect you [MET]? **38** You gave to those gods the best parts of the

animals that you sacrificed, and you poured out wine for them to drink. So, they should begin to help you; they should be the ones who will protect you! **39** "But now you will realize that I, only I, am God; there is no other god who is [a real] god. I am the one who can kill people and who can cause people to live; I can wound people, and I can heal people, and there is no one who can prevent me from doing those things. **40** I raise my hand toward heaven and solemnly declare that just as sure as I live forever, **41** that when I sharpen my sword, as I [SYN] prepare to punish people, I will get revenge on my enemies; I will pay back those who hate me. **42** I will kill all [of my enemies] with a sword; it will be as though I had arrows that will be covered with their blood. I will kill [MTY] all those whom I capture and cut off their leaders' heads.' **43** "You people of all nations, you as well as his people should praise Yahweh, because Yahweh gets revenge on those who kill the people who serve him; and he cleanses his people's land which has become defiled because of their sins." **44** Joshua and Moses/I recited the words of that song while the Israeli people were listening. **45** When they/we finished reciting to the Israeli people the words of this song, **46** Moses/I said, "Never forget all these commands that I have been giving you today. Teach these laws to your children, in order that they will faithfully obey all of them. **47** These instructions are very important [LIT]. If [you obey] them, you will live a long time in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan [River] to occupy." **48** On that same day, Yahweh said to Moses/me, **49** "Go to the Abarim Mountain range [here] in the Moab region, across from Jericho. Climb Nebo Mountain, and look [toward the west] to see Canaan land, the land that I am about to give to the Israeli people. **50** You will die on that mountain [EUP, DOU], like your [older] brother Aaron died on Hor Mountain. **51** You will die because both of you disobeyed me in the presence of the Israeli people, when you all were at Meribah Springs near Kadesh [town] in the Zin Desert. You did not honor and respect me in the presence of the Israeli people in the way that I deserve because I am God. **52** [When you are on that mountain where I told you to go], you will see in the distance in front of you the land that I am about to give to the Israeli people, but you will not enter it."

33 Before God's prophet Moses died, he [asked God to] bless the Israeli people. **2** This is what he said: "Yahweh came [and spoke] to us at Sinai [Mountain]; he [came like] [MET] the sun rises in the Edom [region] and like his light shone on us when we were [in the desert] near Paran Mountain [after we left Sinai Mountain]. He came with 10,000 angels, and there was a flaming fire at his right side. **3** Yahweh truly loves his people, and protects [MTY] all those who belong to him. So they prostrate themselves in front of him, and they listen to his instructions. **4** I gave them laws to obey, laws that would be the most precious thing that [the descendants of] Jacob owned. **5** So Yahweh became the king of his Israeli people when all the tribes and their leaders were gathered together. **6** [I say this about the tribe of] Reuben: I desire/hope that their tribe will never disappear, but they will never become numerous. **7** "say this about [the tribe of] Judah: Yahweh, listen to them when they call out [for help]; and unite them with the other tribes again. Fight for them, and help them to fight against their enemies. **8** I say this about [the tribe of] Levi: Yahweh, give to those who are dedicated to you the sacred stones [that they will use to find out what you want to be done]; You tested them at a spring in the desert, a spring that they named Massah and also named Meribah [to find out if they would (remain loyal to/continue to obey) you]. **9** The tribe of Levi did what you told them to do and obeyed the agreement that you [made with the Israeli people]; those laws were more important to them [HYP] than their siblings and parents and children. **10** The tribe of Levi will teach the Israeli people [DOU] your rules and regulations, and they are the ones who will burn incense and who will completely burn on the altar the offerings [that the people bring]. **11** Yahweh, bless their work and (accept/be pleased with) all that they do. Crush/Destroy all their enemies; do not enable their enemies to be able to fight against them again. **12** I say this about [the tribe of] Benjamin: They are the tribe that Yahweh loves; he keeps them safe. He protects them continually, and he lives among their hills [MET]. **13** "say this about [the tribes of] Joseph: I desire/hope that Yahweh will bless their land by giving them rain/dew from the sky and water from deep [in the ground], **14** by giving them good fruit [ripened] by the sun and good crops at harvest time. **15** I desire/hope that very nice fruit will grow on trees in their ancient mountains/hills [DOU], **16** and that their land will be have many good crops, blessed by [Yahweh], the one who appeared to me in a burning bush. I desire/hope that Yahweh will bless the tribes of Joseph in all those ways, because he was the leaders of his [older] brothers [when they were in Egypt]. **17** The descendants of Joseph will be as strong as [SIM] a bull; [with their weapons they will wound their enemies, like] [MET] a wild ox [gores other animals] with its horns. They will force other people-groups, all of them, to be exiled to the most distant places on the earth. That is what [the descendants of the two sons of Joseph] will do, the ten thousands [of the tribe] of Ephraim and the thousands [of the tribe] of Manasseh. **18** "say this about [the tribes of] Zebulun [and Issachar]: I desire/hope that the people of Zebulun will

prosper in their travels [across the seas], and that the people of Issachar will prosper while they stay at home [and take care of their cattle and crops]. **19** They will invite people [from the other Israeli tribes] to the mountain [where they worship Yahweh], and they will offer the correct/proper sacrifices to him. They will become rich from [the work that they do on] the seas and from [the things that they make from] (OR, [find in]) the sand [on the beaches]. **20** "say this about [the tribe of] Gad: Praise [Yahweh], the one who made their [territory] large. The people of their tribe [will attack their enemies fiercely] [SIM] like a lion that crouches, waiting to tear off the arm or the scalp [of some animal]. **21** They chose the best part of the land for themselves; [a large share of the land], a share that should be given to a leader was allotted to them. When the leaders of the tribes of Israel [gathered together], they decided that the tribe of Gad should have a large share of the land. The tribe of Gad obeyed the commands of Yahweh and the things that he decided that they should do. **22** "say this about [the tribe] of Dan: The people of the tribe of Dan are like [SIM] a young lion; they leap from [their caves in the] Bashan [region to attack their enemies]. **23** "say this about [the tribe of] Naphtali: [The people of the tribe of] Naphtali have been blessed by Yahweh, who has been very kind to them; their land extends far south from Lake [Galilee]. **24** "say this about [the tribe of] Asher: May Yahweh bless the descendants of Asher more than he will bless the other tribes. May he favor Asher's descendants most of all. I desire/hope that their land will [be filled with olive trees that will] produce a lot of [IDM] [olives to make olive] oil. **25** Their [towns will be protected by high walls with gates that have] bronze and iron bars; I desire/hope that they will be strong and secure/protected all the time that they are alive. **26** "You people of Israel, there is no god like your God, who rides majestically across the sky to help you. **27** God, who lives forever, is the one who (gives you refuge/protects you); [it is as though] he puts his everlasting arms under you [to support you]. He will expel your enemies while you advance; he has told you to destroy all of them. **28** So, you Israeli people will live safely; you descendants of Jacob will not be disturbed by others; in the land where [you will live], there will be plenty of grain and wine, and there will be plenty of rain. **29** You people of Israel, Yahweh (has blessed/is pleased with) you. There is certainly [RHQ] no nation like your nation, whom Yahweh has rescued [from being slaves in Egypt]. [He will be like] [MET] a shield to protect you and like [MET] a sword to enable you to defeat [your enemies]. Your enemies will come to you begging for you [to act mercifully toward them], but you will trample on their backs/necks."

34 Then Moses climbed up from the plains in the Moab [region] to the top of Pisgah Peak on Nebo Mountain, across [the Jordan River] from Jericho. There Yahweh showed him all the land [that the Israelis would occupy]. He showed him the Gilead [region] as far north as Dan [city]; **2** all [the land that the tribe of] Naphtali would occupy; all the land [that the tribes] of Ephraim and Manasseh [had occupied]; all the land [that the tribe of] Judah would occupy as far west as the Mediterranean sea; **3** the desert [area in the south part of Judah]; and the [Jordan] Valley that extends from Jericho [in the north] to Zoar [city in the south]. **4** Then Yahweh said to him, "You have now seen this land that I solemnly promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have allowed you to see it [from a distance], but you will not go there." **5** So Moses, who [always] served Yahweh [faithfully], died there [on that mountain] in the Moab [region], which is what Yahweh said would happen. **6** Yahweh buried Moses' body in a valley in the Moab [region], opposite/near Beth-Peor [town], but no one to this day knows where Yahweh buried him. **7** Moses was 120 years old when he died, but he was still very strong, and he could still see [MTY] very well. **8** The Israeli people mourned for him in the plains of the Moab [region] for 30 days. **9** God caused Joshua to be very wise, because Moses had put his hands on Joshua [to appoint him to be their new leader]. The Israeli people obeyed Joshua, and they obeyed all the commands that Yahweh had given to Moses to tell to the Israeli people. **10** Since the time that Moses [lived], there has never been a prophet in Israel like him. Yahweh spoke to him face-to-face/directly. **11** No other prophet has performed all the kinds of [DOU] miracles that Yahweh sent Moses to perform in front of the king of Egypt, his officials, and all [HYP] the people of Egypt. **12** No other prophet has been able to do all the great and terrifying things that Moses did while all the Israelis watched.

Joshua

1 After Moses, who served Yahweh [well], died, Yahweh said to Nun's son Joshua, who had been Moses' assistant, **2** "[You know that] my servant Moses is [now] dead. So now get ready to lead all these [Israeli] people across the Jordan [River]. Enter the land that I will soon give to you. **3** I will give to you all the land that you walk on, as I promised Moses. **4** That land will extend from the desert [in the south], to the Lebanon [Mountains in the northwest], and to the big Euphrates River [in the northeast], and to the Mediterranean Sea on the west. [It will include] all the land where the descendants of Heth [live]. **5** No group will be able to oppose [and defeat] you during your life. I will help you as I helped Moses. I will always be with [LIT] you; I will never forsake you. **6** "Be strong and courageous, because you are the one who will lead these Israeli people [and enable them] to possess the land that I solemnly promised to their ancestors that I would give them. **7** Just be strong and very courageous. Be sure to obey all the laws that my servant Moses gave to you. In order that you may be successful wherever you go, do not stop obeying any of them [IDM]. **8** Make sure to habitually read [to the people some of] the laws [that God gave Moses]. Meditate on those laws [every] day and [every] night. And be sure to obey all those laws. If you do that, you will be successful in everything that you do [DOU]. **9** Do not forget [RHQ] that I have commanded you to be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, and do not be discouraged, because I, Yahweh, your God, will (be with/help) you wherever you go." **10** Then Joshua commanded the leaders of the people of Israel, **11** "Go throughout the camp and tell the people this: 'Prepare all the food that you will take with you, because the day after tomorrow you will cross this Jordan [River], in order to possess the land that Yahweh, our God, is about to give you.'" **12** But to the [clans that were] descendants of Reuben and Gad, and to the half clan [that were descendants] of Manasseh, Joshua said, **13** "Do not forget what Moses, the servant of Yahweh, commanded you: 'Yahweh, your God, has given you this land in order that you can [live here] safely/peacefully.' **14** Your wives and your children and your livestock may stay [here] in this land on the east side of the Jordan [River], but all your soldiers must cross [the river], ahead of the people of the other tribes. They must take all their weapons with them. You must continue to help your fellow Israelis **15** until they are able to live there safely/peacefully, as Yahweh has enabled you to do. You must help them until after they have conquered all the people in the land that Yahweh, your God, is giving them. After that, your soldiers may return to live in this land that Moses gave to you here on the east side of the Jordan [River]." **16** The people answered Joshua, "We will do everything that you have commanded us to do, and we will go wherever you tell us to go. **17** As we obeyed all that Moses told us to do, we will obey all that you tell us to do. We pray that Yahweh will (be with/help) you as he (was with/helped) Moses. **18** Anyone who (rejects what you say/opposes you) and does not obey what you command [DOU], we will execute. But we want you to be strong and courageous!"

2 Then Joshua [chose] two men from [their camp at] Acacia. He told them, "Go [across the Jordan River] and secretly find out all that you can about the land on that side of the river, especially about Jericho [city]." So the two men crossed [the river and entered Jericho]. They entered the house of a prostitute, whose name was Rahab. They stayed in her house [that night]. **2** But someone [saw them and] told the king of Jericho, "Some Israeli men have come here tonight to spy out the land!" **3** So the king sent some messengers to tell Rahab, "Bring out the men who came and entered your house, [so that we can kill them], because they have come [here] to (spy out/find out all they can about) this land!" **4** She told them that the two men had gone to her house. But she had hidden the two men there. So when the messengers came to her house, she told them, "Two men came here, but I did not know where they had come from. **5** At dusk, just before (guards closed the city gate/the city gates were closed), the two men left. I do not know where they went. So, go quickly and search for them! Perhaps you may catch them!" **6** But [she was lying,] she had taken the two men up to the [flat] roof of her house and had hidden them under the piles of flax that she had laid on the roof. **7** The messengers went out of the city to search for the two men. Immediately, the guards shut the city gate. The messengers went along the road that leads down to the place where people can walk across the Jordan [River], [but they did not find the two men]. **8** Before the two men lay down [to sleep] that night, Rahab went up to the roof **9** and said to them, "We know that Yahweh [is about to] give this land to you Israelis, and as a result all the people living in this land are terrified because of you. **10** We have heard about how Yahweh dried up the water of the Red Sea for you to cross it when you left Egypt. And we have heard how you killed Sihon and Og, the two kings of the tribe of Amor who lived east of the Jordan [River]. You [Israelis] totally destroyed everyone [and everything in their kingdom]. **11** When we heard about those things, we were very dismayed. We no longer have enough courage to fight against you, because we know that Yahweh, the God whom you [worship], is helping you.

[And we know that] he rules everything in heaven and here on earth. 12 So now [I want you to] solemnly promise me, and ask Yahweh to punish you if you do not do what you promise. Solemnly promise me that you will act kindly to me and my family, because I have acted kindly to you. 13 Do something to prove that you will (spare the lives of/not kill) my father and my mother, my brothers and sisters, and all of their families. Promise me that you [Israelis] will not kill us [when you destroy this city]." 14 The two men replied, "We desire that God will cause us to die if we do not do as we say! If you do not tell others what we [are planning to] do, we will act kindly toward you all when Yahweh enables us to possess the land." 15 [One of] the outside walls of the house where Rahab lived was part of the wall [that was around] the city. So she fastened a rope outside the window [that was in that wall], by which the men could climb down the wall. 16 Then she said to them, "When you leave the city, go up into the hills so that the men who are searching for you will not find you. Hide in caves in the hills for three days, until the men who are searching for you return to the city. Then you can return safely to your camp." 17 The two men [gave her a red cord, and] said to her, "This is what you must do; if you do not do this, we will not be required to do what we have vowed to do. 18 You must tie this red cord in the window that has the rope by which we will climb down. You must let the cord hang there. And you must bring your father and your mother and your brothers and all the others in your family inside the house. Then, when our army enters your land, we will see the cord, and we will not kill the people in your house. 19 If anyone in your family goes outside this house into the street, [our soldiers] will kill them, and we will not be guilty [MTY] for doing that. But if anyone who is in this house with you is injured, we will be guilty for causing that. 20 But if you tell anyone what we [are planning to] do, we are not required to do what we have vowed to do." 21 Rahab said, "I agree to do what you say." So they climbed down the rope and left. And she left the red cord tied in the window. 22 When the two men left the city, they went up into the hills. They stayed there for three days, while the men [who had been sent by the king] continued to search for them. They searched all along the road, but they did not find the two men. So they returned to the city. 23 Then the two men started back toward their camp. They went down from the hills, went down to the river, crossed it at the place where people can walk across it, and returned to their camp. They told Joshua everything that had happened to them. 24 They said to Joshua, "We are sure that Yahweh is going to enable us to possess everything that is in that land. The people there are terrified [IDM] because of us."

3 Joshua [and all the other Israelis] got up early [the next] morning. They left [their camp at] Acacia and went [down] to the Jordan [River]. They camped there for two nights. 2 Then the leaders went throughout the camp, 3 telling the people, "You will see some of the priests, who are descendants of Levi, carrying the chest that contains the Ten Commandments that Yahweh our God gave us. When you see them, leave the places where you are camped and follow them. 4 You have not been (here/along this road) before, [so you must follow the priests]. But do not walk close to the chest. Stay (1,000 yards/900 meters) from the chest. [The chest is sacred, so (God will punish you/you will be punished) if you come close to it]." 5 Then Joshua told the people, "Perform the ceremonies needed to make yourselves acceptable to Yahweh, because tomorrow he is going to do things for you that will amaze you!" 6 Then Joshua said to the priests, "Carry the chest and go in front of the [rest of the] people." So they lifted up the chest and went ahead. 7 Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "This is the day that I will begin to show all the Israeli people that you are a great leader. Then they will honor you, and know that I am with/helping you as I (was with/helped) Moses. 8 Tell the priests who are carrying the chest that contains the Ten Commandments, 'When you come to the edge of the Jordan [River], stand in the water.'" 9 Then Joshua said to the Israeli people, "Come close to me in order that you can listen to what Yahweh, your God, is saying." 10 [When they came near], he said to them, "This is how you will know that God, who is all-powerful, is among you, and that he will expel for you the descendants of Canaan, Heth, Hiv, Periz, Girgash, Amor, and Jebus [who are now living in that land]. 11 Keep in mind that Yahweh is the one who rules over all the earth. The chest belongs to him, and it will be carried into the Jordan River ahead of you. 12 So choose twelve men, [one from each] of the tribes of Israel, [and I will tell you later what I want them to do]. 13 As for the priests who are carrying the chest, as soon as they put their feet into the Jordan [River], the water will stop flowing. It will pile up because I will cause it to be blocked upstream." 14 So when the [Israeli] people packed up their tents in order to cross the river, the priests who were carrying the chest containing the Ten Commandments went in front of them. 15 [It was springtime], when people harvest their crops, [and] at that time the river floods over its banks. But as soon as the priests reached the edge of the river and stepped into the water, 16 the water stopped flowing. The water piled up far [upstream], at a town named Adam, near Zarethan. The water stopped flowing down to the Dead Sea. So the people were able to cross the river near Jericho. 17 The priests who

were carrying the chest containing the Ten Commandments that Yahweh [had given them] stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan [riverbed], while the rest of the Israeli people crossed the river [as though they were crossing] dry ground.

4 After all the people of the Israeli nation had finished crossing the Jordan [River], Yahweh said to Joshua, **2** "When you choose the twelve men, one from each tribe, whom I mentioned previously, tell them to pick up [large] stones from the middle of the Jordan riverbed, where the priests are [still] standing. **3** Tell them to carry the stones with you and put them down at the place where you will stay tonight." **4** So Joshua chose twelve men, one from each tribe. He called them together, and said to them, **5** "Go into the middle of the Jordan riverbed, to [where the priests are standing, holding] the chest that Yahweh, your God, gave you. Each of you must pick up a [large] stone, one for each tribe, [and carry it] on your shoulder [to our camp]. **6** [Then pile them up] to be a memorial for you. In the future, when your children ask, 'What do these stones mean?', **7** tell them that the water in the Jordan River was blocked off when the priests were carrying the chest [that contained] the Ten Commandments that Yahweh [gave us]. When the chest was carried into the Jordan [River], the water was blocked off [so that we could cross the riverbed]. These stones will be a memorial for the descendants of us Israeli people forever." **8** So those Israeli men did what Joshua told them to do. They went and picked up twelve [large] stones from the middle of the Jordan [riverbed], one stone for each of the tribes, just as Yahweh had told Joshua. They carried the stones to their camp and put them down. **9** Then Joshua set up twelve [other large] stones [in a pile], in the middle of the Jordan [riverbed], where the priests who carried the chest containing the Ten Commandments were standing. And those stones are still there. **10** The priests who carried the chest remained standing in the middle of the Jordan [riverbed] until the people had finished doing everything that Yahweh had commanded Joshua to tell them to do. Those were the same instructions that Moses had given to Joshua. The Israeli people crossed [the riverbed] quickly. **11** As soon as all of them had crossed, as the people watched, the priests carried the chest [the rest of the way across the river]. **12** The soldiers of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and of half of the soldiers of the tribe of Manasseh, crossed over ahead of the rest of the Israeli people, carrying their weapons, as Moses had commanded. **13** As Yahweh was watching, there were about 40,000 of those soldiers, carrying weapons ready for battle, who crossed the riverbed to the plains near Jericho, [ready] to fight. **14** On that day, all the people of Israel saw that Yahweh had caused Joshua to be a great leader. And they honored Joshua for the rest of his life, just as they had honored Moses. **15** Yahweh said to Joshua, **16** "[Now] tell the priests who are carrying the chest containing the Ten Commandments to come up from the Jordan [riverbed]." **17** So Joshua commanded the priests to do that. **18** Then the priests, carrying the chest containing the Ten Commandments that Yahweh [had given to Moses], came up out of the riverbed. And as soon as they walked up out of the riverbed onto the riverbank, the water of the Jordan [River] flowed again, and flooded [over the river banks] as it had done before. **19** It was on the tenth day of the first month [of that year] that the people crossed over the Jordan [River] and camped at [a place called] Gilgal, on the east side of [the land near] Jericho [city]. **20** The men [who were carrying] the twelve [large] stones from the Jordan [riverbed brought them to] Joshua, [and he] set them up at Gilgal **21** Joshua said to the Israeli people, "In the future, when your children and grandchildren ask, '(What do these stones [mean/Why are these stones here)]?', **22** tell them, 'We Israeli people crossed the Jordan [River as though we were crossing] on dry ground. **23** As we were watching, Yahweh, your God, dried up the river until we had all crossed over. Yahweh, the God whom we worship, did to the Jordan [River] just like he did to the Red Sea, when he caused it to become dry as [our parents] were watching, until they all crossed over it. **24** Yahweh did that in order that all the people-groups of the earth may know that he [MTY] is very powerful, and in order that you may always (be in awe of/revere) Yahweh, your God.'"

5 All the kings of the people-groups to the west of the Jordan River and all the kings of the groups who were descendants of Canaan and who lived close to the [Mediterranean] Sea heard about how Yahweh had dried up the water of the Jordan [River] until all we Israeli people had crossed over. So they became very dismayed. They no longer were courageous enough to fight us. **2** While [they were camped at Gilgal], Yahweh said to Joshua, "[The Israeli males who lived in Egypt were circumcised before they left there. Now] make knives from flint stones and circumcise all the Israeli males [who have been born since then]." **3** So Joshua [made knives and] circumcised the Israeli males at a place that is now called 'Circumcision Hill'. **4** [The reason they did that is that all the men who left Egypt], those who were old enough to be soldiers, died in the desert after they left Egypt. **5** They had been circumcised in Egypt, but the baby boys who had been born while their parents were camping in the desert after they left Egypt had not been circumcised. **6** Our Israeli ancestors traveled around in the

desert for 40 years, and all the men who were old enough to be soldiers had died. [The women had also died]. They had not obeyed Yahweh, so Yahweh said that they would not arrive at the land that he had promised to our ancestors that he would give to us, a land that was very fertile [MTY]. **7** The sons of those who had disobeyed Yahweh were the ones whom Joshua circumcised at Gilgal. They were circumcised because they had not been circumcised [while they were traveling in the desert]. **8** After all the Israeli males had been circumcised, they remained in the camp and rested until their wounds were healed. **9** Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "[Because your forefathers were slaves in Egypt], the Egyptians felt a revulsion toward you. But today I have removed the revulsion the Egyptians have had toward you." Because of that, the people called the place 'Gilgal', [which sounds like the Hebrew word 'removed',] and it still has that name. **10** In the evening of the fourteenth day of that month, while the Israeli people were camped at Gilgal, on the plain near Jericho [city], they celebrated the Passover [Festival]. **11** The next day, they found some barley grain in the fields in that area. So they took that and roasted it and ate it with bread that was made without yeast. **12** The next day, [God] stopped [sending] manna for the Israeli people to eat. After that, they ate food that was grown in Canaan. **13** One day when Joshua came near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him. The man was holding a sword in his hand. Joshua approached him and asked him, "Are you [going to fight] for us or against us?" **14** The man replied, "I am not [planning to fight with you] or [against you]. Instead, I am the commander of Yahweh's army [in heaven], and I have come [down from there to assure you that Yahweh will help you]." Then Joshua bowed down with his face on the ground (to show his respect for/to worship) the man, and said to him, "Tell me what [you want me to do]." **15** The commander of Yahweh's army replied, "Take off your sandals! [I am Yahweh, and] the ground on which you are standing is holy because I am here." So Joshua took off his sandals.

6 Meanwhile, the guards of Jericho shut the gates of the city tightly, because [they were afraid] of the Israeli [army]. No one was allowed to go into the city or go out of it. **2** Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "Listen [to what I say]! I am going to enable your army [SYN] to capture/conquer [MTY] Jericho and its king and its soldiers. **3** So your army must march around the city for six days, once each day. **4** Tell seven priests to march around with them. Each priest must carry a trumpet. Four other priests must carry the sacred chest, and they must walk behind the priests who are carrying the trumpets. On the seventh day, the army must march around the city seven times, and the priests must be blowing the trumpets while they march. **5** [After they have all marched around the city seven times], the priests must blow their trumpets [once], very loudly. When the Israeli people/soldiers hear that, they must shout loudly. Then the wall of the city will collapse, and all the Israeli people/soldiers will go straight into the city." **6** So Joshua summoned the priests and said to them, "Tell four priests to carry the chest [that contains] the Ten Commandments that Yahweh [gave to us]. [Tell] seven [other] priests to carry trumpets and walk in front of them." **7** And Joshua told the soldiers, "Start marching! March around the city, with several soldiers with weapons marching in front. Behind them will march the seven priests with trumpets, and behind them will march the four priests carrying Yahweh's [sacred] chest." **8** After Joshua told that to the army, the seven priests, each carrying a sacred trumpet, started marching, blowing their trumpets. The four priests who were carrying Yahweh's sacred chest followed them. **9** The group of soldiers carrying weapons marched in front of the priests who were blowing their trumpets, and the rest of the soldiers followed [the four men carrying] the chest. While [they were all marching], [the seven priests] were blowing their trumpets. **10** But [the rest of] the people [were silent, because] Joshua had commanded them, "Do not make a war cry. Do not yell or say anything until the day when I tell you to shout. On that day, you must shout [loudly]!" **11** So the men carrying Yahweh's sacred chest and all the others did what Joshua told them to do. They marched around the city once. Then they all returned to their camp and stayed there that night. **12** The next morning, Joshua and the priests got up early, and the four priests carried Yahweh's sacred chest [again]. **13** The seven priests who were carrying trumpets went in front of [the men carrying] the chest. The seven priests were blowing their trumpets as they marched. The group of soldiers carrying weapons went in front of all the others, and the rest of the army followed all the others. All the time, the seven priests were blowing their trumpets. **14** So on that second day they again marched around the city once and then returned to their camp. They did the same thing for six days. **15** On the seventh day, they got up at dawn, and they all marched around the city the same way that they had done before, but this time they marched around the city seven times. **16** As they were marching around the seventh time, when the priests were about to blow the long/loud blast on their trumpets, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout, because Yahweh will enable you to capture the city! **17** Yahweh has declared that you must destroy [IDM] the city and everything in it [to show that it belongs to him]. You must spare only Rahab the prostitute and the others who

are in her house, because she hid the spies whom we sent there. 18 And because Yahweh has declared that everything must be destroyed [IDM], you must not take [EUP] any of the things in the city. If you take anything, you will cause Yahweh to destroy our own camp and cause terrible things to happen to us. 19 But all the silver and gold and articles made from iron and bronze that you find, you must set apart for Yahweh. You must put those things in his treasury." 20 So they did what Joshua told them to do. When the priests blew a long blast on their trumpets, the people/army shouted loudly, and the wall of the city collapsed! Then the Israeli soldiers rushed in and captured the city. 21 They killed [IDM] every living thing in the city—men and women, young people and old people, even cattle and sheep and donkeys. 22 Then Joshua said to the two men (who had spied on/whom he had sent to learn all they could about) the land, "Go to the prostitute's house. Bring her out, along with all her family, just as you promised to her." 23 So those two spies/men went into Rahab's house and brought her out. They also brought out her father and mother and her brothers, and all the rest of her family. Joshua's men spared Rahab the prostitute. They also did not kill all her relatives, because she had hidden and protected the spies/men whom Joshua had sent to Jericho. The two men brought them all out and put them in a place outside the camp of the Israelis. Rahab still lives among us Israeli people. Then the soldiers gathered the articles made from silver, gold, bronze, and iron that they found and they put them all into Yahweh's treasury. But they burned everything else that was in the city. 26 At that time, Joshua warned the people, "Yahweh will curse/punish anyone who tries to rebuild this city, Jericho. When that person lays/builds its foundation, his oldest son will die. And when he finishes building the city wall and sets up its gates, his youngest son will die." 27 Because of what happened that day, it was clear that Yahweh was with/helped Joshua, and Joshua became famous throughout the land.

7 Yahweh had commanded that all the things [that they had captured in Jericho] should be [destroyed to show that they belong] to him. But there was a man from the tribe of Judah named Achan. He was the son of Carmi and grandson of Zabdi and great-grandson of Zerah. He disobeyed [what] Yahweh [had commanded] and took for himself some of those things. So Yahweh was very angry with the Israelis. 2 Joshua told some of his men to go from Jericho to Ai [town], which was east of Bethel [city] and near Beth-Aven [town]. He said to them, "Go to Ai and (spy out the area/see what the area is like)." So the men went. 3 When they returned to Joshua they said, "There are only a few people in Ai. So we do not need to send all of our soldiers to defeat them. Send 2.000 or 3,000 men to attack them. That will be enough." 4 So about 3,000 Israeli men went [to attack Ai]. But the men of Ai defeated them badly. 5 They killed about 36 Israelis and chased the rest of Israeli men from the city gate to the bottom of the hill. When the other Israelis saw that this had happened, they became very discouraged. 6 Joshua and the other Israeli leaders tore their clothes [because they were very sad about being defeated]. They prostrated themselves on the ground in front of [the Sacred Tent in which was] the sacred chest. They stayed there until that evening. They also threw dirt on their heads [to show that they were very sad about what had happened]. 7 Then Joshua prayed and said, "Lord God, you brought us Israelis [safely] across the Jordan River. So why are you now allowing the Amor people-group to defeat us [RHQ]? [This would not have happened] if we had stayed on the other side of the Jordan River! 8 Lord, we Israelis have been defeated by our enemies, so I do not know what to say now [RHQ]. 9 The Canaan people-group and all the other people who are living in this land will hear about this. Then they will surround us and kill all of us! Then what will you do (to defend your reputation [MTY]/to show that you are a powerful God)?" 10 But Yahweh said to Joshua, "Stand up! Stop lying there with your face on the ground [RHQ]! 11 You Israelis have sinned! You have disobeyed the commands that I told you to obey. [One of] your men has taken some of the things that I told you to destroy. He has stolen them and taken them for himself and lied [about it]. 12 That is why you Israelis have been unable to be strong when you went to attack your enemies. That is why you have run away from them. And now you yourselves may be destroyed. If you do not do as I commanded you and destroy everything [that you captured in Jericho] I will not help you any more!" 13 "Now go and tell this to the people: 'Tomorrow you must [perform the rituals that will] cause yourselves to become acceptable to Yahweh again. Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], says that one of you has kept things that he told you to destroy. You will never defeat your enemies until you get rid of those things. 14 'Tomorrow morning you must present yourselves before Yahweh, tribe by tribe. Then Yahweh will indicate to which tribe [the man who took those things belongs]. Then Yahweh will indicate to which clan from that tribe [the guilty man belongs]. Then Yahweh will indicate to which family he belongs. And then he will indicate which person [in that family took those things]. 15 Then the one who has taken some of the things that should have been destroyed will be destroyed in a fire. And everything he owns will be destroyed with him, because he has disobeyed the command that Yahweh gave us and has done something

that is disgraceful to us Israeli people.'" 16 Early the next morning, Joshua told all the Israeli people to stand before the Sacred Tent, tribe by tribe. [When they did that], Yahweh indicated that a man from the tribe of Judah [was the one who had taken the things]. 17 Then the clans of Judah presented themselves, and Yahweh indicated that someone from the clan of Zerah was the guilty one. Then the families of Zerah's clan presented themselves, and Yahweh indicated that someone from the family of Zabdi [was the guilty one]. 18 Then Joshua told the men from that family to present themselves. And Yahweh indicated that Achan was guilty. 19 Then Joshua said to Achan, "Son, tell the truth [IDM]. Confess to Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship, what you have done]. And tell me what you did, and do not try to (conceal anything/prevent me from knowing what you did)." 20 Achan replied, "It is true. I have sinned against Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship]. 21 Among the things [in Jericho] that I saw was a beautiful coat from Babylonia. I also saw 200 pieces of silver and some gold that weighed as much as 50 pieces of silver. I wanted those things very much for myself, so I took them. I buried them all in the ground under my tent. You will find them there. The silver is buried under the other things." 22 So Joshua sent some men [to find those things]. They ran to Achan's tent and found all the things hidden there. 23 The men brought them all out of the tent and took them to Joshua and the rest of the Israeli people. Then they spread/laid them out on the ground, where Yahweh could see them. 24 Then Joshua and the rest of the people led Achan down to the valley. They also took down there the silver, the coat, the gold, Achan's [wife and] sons and daughters, and his cattle and donkeys and sheep, and his tent, and everything else that he owned. 25 Joshua said, "(I do not know why you caused so much trouble for us/You have caused a lot of trouble for us) [RHQ], but now Yahweh will cause trouble for you." Then all the people threw stones at Achan and his family until they all died. Then the people burned their corpses. 26 They piled rocks over [the ashes of] their [corpses], and those rocks are still there. That is why that valley is called Trouble Valley. After that, Yahweh was no longer angry [with the Israeli people].

8 Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid or discouraged [because of what happened at] Ai. Lead all of your soldiers and go there again. I will help you to defeat the king of Ai, his people, and his city, and [enable you to take] his land. 2 Your army will do to the people of Ai and their king like what you did to the people of Jericho and their king. But this time [I will permit you to] take all their possessions and keep them for yourselves. But first, tell some of your soldiers to [hide behind] the city [and] prepare to suddenly attack it." 3 So Joshua led all his army toward Ai. He chose 30,000 of his best fighters/warriors and prepared to send them out during the night. 4 He said to them, "Listen carefully. Some of you must hide on the other side of the city. Do not go far from the city. Just be ready [to attack]. 5 I and the men who are with me will march toward the city [in the morning]. The men in the city will come out to fight us, like they did before. Then we will turn around and start to run away from them. 6 They will think that we are running away from them like we did before. So they will chase us away from the city. While we are running away, 7 [those of you who are hiding come out and] rush into the city and capture it. Yahweh your God will enable you to conquer it. 8 After you capture the city, burn it. Do what Yahweh has commanded us to do. Those are the orders I am giving to you." 9 Then Joshua [prepared to] send some of them to [hide and] wait between Ai and Bethel, which was west of Ai. But Joshua stayed with his other soldiers that night. 10 Early the next morning, Joshua gathered his soldiers together. Then he and the other Israeli leaders led them up to Ai. 11 They all set up their tents close to Ai, just to the north of the city, where all the people of the city could see them. There was a valley between them and the city. 12 Then Joshua chose about 5,000 men and told them to go and hide just west of the city, between Ai and Bethel. 13 So those men did that. The main group of soldiers was north of the city, and the others were hiding west of the city. That night Joshua went down into the valley. 14 When the king of Ai saw the Israeli army, he and his soldiers got up early the next morning and quickly went out of the city to fight them. They went to a place east of the city, but they did not know that some Israeli soldiers were hiding behind the city. 15 Joshua and the Israeli soldiers [who were with him] allowed the army of Ai to push them back. They ran toward the desert. 16 The men in Ai were ordered to chase after Joshua and his men. So they left the city and started to pursue the Israelis. 17 All the men of Ai and the men of Bethel pursued the Israeli army. They did not leave even one man in Ai to defend it. The [gates of the] city were left wide open. 18 Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "[Lift up] your spear [and] point it toward Ai, because I am going to enable your soldiers to capture it!" So Joshua pointed [his spear] toward Ai. 19 When the Israeli men who were hiding saw that, they rushed out from the places where they were hiding and ran into the city. They quickly captured it and set it on fire. 20 When the men of Ai looked back, they saw smoke rising from their city. But they could not escape, because the Israeli troops stopped running away. 21 Joshua and his men saw that the men who

had been hiding had captured the city and were burning it, and they saw the smoke rising. So they turned around and started to attack the men of Ai. **22** Meanwhile, the soldiers who had captured the city came out [and attacked them from the rear]. So the men of Ai were caught between the two groups of Israeli soldiers. None of the men of Ai escaped. The Israelis fought until they killed all of them. Only the king of Ai was still alive. **23** Then they seized the king of Ai and brought him to Joshua. **24** While they were fighting, the Israeli army pursued the men of Ai into the fields and into the desert, and killed all of them. Then they went to Ai and killed everyone who was there. **25** They killed 12,000 men and women. **26** Joshua continued to point his spear [LIT] toward Ai, until all the people in Ai had been killed. **27** The Israeli soldiers took for themselves the animals and the other things that had belonged to the people of Ai, just like Yahweh had told Joshua that they should do. **28** Joshua and his soldiers burned Ai city and caused it to become a pile of ruins. It is still like that today. **29** Joshua hanged the king of Ai on a tree and left his corpse hanging there until the evening. At sunset Joshua told his men to take the king's corpse down from the tree and to throw it on the ground at the city gate. [After they did that], they piled a lot of rocks on top of the corpse, and that pile of rocks is still there. **30** Joshua [told his men to] build on Ebal Mountain an altar for Yahweh, the God [who is worshiped by] the Israeli people. **31** They built it just like Moses, the man who served God [well], had written previously in the laws [that God had given to him]. They made it from stones that had not been cut using iron tools. The Israelis then offered sacrifices to Yahweh that were burned completely on the altar. They also offered sacrifices to restore fellowship with Yahweh. **32** As the Israelis watched, Joshua wrote on stones the laws that [Yahweh had given] to Moses previously. **33** The Israeli leaders, the officials, the judges, and other Israelis were there, standing nearby. Many people who were not Israelis were also there. Half of the people stood [on one side of the valley] below Ebal Mountain, and the other half of the people stood [on the other side of the valley] below Gerizim Mountain. The sacred chest was [in the valley] between the two groups. That was what Moses had previously commanded that the people should do when [Yahweh was about to] bless them. **34** Then Joshua read [to the people] all that [Moses] had written previously. That included what Yahweh had taught them and the ways [that he promised] to bless them [if they obeyed his commands], or to curse them [if they disobeyed them]. **35** All the Israelis gathered together [to listen]—the men, the women, and the children. The (foreigners/people who were not Israelis) who were living among them also listened, while Joshua read all the commands that Moses had written.

9 There were several kings [who ruled in lands that are] on the west side of the Jordan River. They were the kings of the Heth people-group, the Amor people-group, the Canaan people-group, the Periz people-group, the Hiv people-group, and the Jebus people-group. They lived in the hilly area, in the foothills further west, and [on the plains] along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. They heard [about what happened at Ai]. **2** So they all gathered [their armies] to fight Joshua and the Israeli army. **3** When the people who lived in Gibeon [city] heard that Joshua's army had defeated the people of Jericho and Ai, **4** they decided to trick the Israelis. They gathered some old sacks and some old leather wine bags that had been mended after they were cracked, and they put these on the backs of their donkeys. **5** They put on old sandals that had been patched, and wore old ragged clothes. And they took along bread that was dry and moldy. **6** They traveled to where Joshua [and the other Israelis] had set up their tents near Gilgal. They said to Joshua and the other Israeli leaders, "We have traveled from a distant land. We want you to make a peace agreement with us." **7** The Israeli leaders said to those men from [Gilead who were from] the Hiv people-group, "[We do not know if you truly live far from us]. If you live near us, we cannot [RHQ] make a peace agreement with you, [because God has commanded us to get rid of the people that are living near us]." **8** They replied to Joshua, "[If you make a peace agreement with us], we will be your servants." But Joshua answered, "What people-group are you? Where do you come from?" **9** The men from Gibeon answered, "[We want to be] your [. We] have come here from a distant land, because we have heard about the great things that your god has done. We have heard about everything that he did in Egypt [to help you]. **10** We have heard that he [enabled you to] defeat [the armies of] two kings of the Amor people-group, on the east side of the Jordan River—Sihon, the king who ruled in Heshbon [city], and Og, the king who ruled in Ashtaroth in the Bashan [area]. **11** So our leaders and the rest of our people said to us, 'Take some food and go to talk with the Israelis. Tell them, "We want to be your servants. So make a peace agreement with us."' **12** Look at our bread. It was fresh and warm [from having been baked] on the day that we left our area, but now it is dry and moldy. **13** Look at our leather wine bags. They were new when we filled them with wine [before we left], but now they are cracked and old. Our clothes and our sandals are worn out from traveling [on the long road] to come here." **14** The Israeli leaders tasted the bread, but they did not ask Yahweh what to do. **15** So Joshua agreed to

make a peace agreement with the men from Gibeon to not kill them. All the Israeli leaders vowed to do what Joshua said in the agreement. [Then the men from Gibeon returned home]. **16** Three days later the Israelis found out that the men from Gibeon lived nearby. **17** So they went to where the men from Gibeon lived. After traveling [only] three days, they came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-Jearim. **18** But the Israelis did not attack the people of those cities, because they had promised [to live peacefully with them], and Yahweh had heard them promise [to do that]. All the Israeli people grumbled against their leaders [for doing that]. **19** But the leaders answered, "We promised to [live peacefully with them], and Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], heard us promise [to do that]. So now we cannot attack [EUP] them. **20** This is what we will do: We will not kill them. If we kill them, God will be very angry with us [and punish us] because of not doing what we promised to do. **21** So we must allow them to live. But they will cut wood for us, and they will carry water for us." So the Israeli leaders did what they had promised. **22** Then Joshua summoned the men from Gibeon and asked them, "Why did you lie to us? Your land was near to where we had set up our tents, but you told us that you were from a distant land! **23** So now you will become our slaves. You will always be forced to cut wood and carry water for [us Israeli people who worship in] the temple of our God." **24** The men from Gibeon replied, "We lied to you because we were afraid that you would kill us. We heard that Yahweh, your God, declared to his servant Moses that he would enable you to conquer all the people in this land and to kill all the people who lived in it. **25** So now you can decide what you will do with us. Do what you think is right." **26** So Joshua saved the lives of the people of Gibeon by not allowing the Israelis to kill them. **27** Instead, he forced them to become the Israelis' slaves. They cut wood and carried water for the Israelis. They also brought the wood and water [that was needed for] the sacred altar of Yahweh, to whatever place Yahweh decided that they should build one. And the people of Gibeon are still doing that.

10 Later, Adonizedek, the king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua's army had captured Ai [town] and had destroyed everything in the town. He heard that they had done to the people of Ai and to their king the same thing that they had done to the people of Jericho and their king. He also heard that the people of Gibeon [city] had made a peace treaty with the Israeli people, and that the people of Gibeon were now living near the Israelis and being protected by them. **2** Because of that, he and the people whom he ruled became very afraid, because Gibeon was an important city, like the other cities that had kings. And [even though] Gibeon was a larger city than Ai and all its soldiers were good fighters, [they thought Joshua's army might defeat them]. **3** So King Adonizedek sent a message to Hosham the king of Hebron [city], to Piram the king of Jarmuth [city], to Jarmuth the king of Lachish [city], and to Debir the king of Eglon [city]. **4** In the message he said, "Please come up with your armies and help me to attack Gibeon, because the people of Gibeon have made a peace treaty with Joshua and the Israelis." **5** So those five kings who ruled all the groups who were descendants of Amor—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Debir—came up with all of their soldiers and surrounded the city. Then they prepared to attack it. **6** So the people of Gibeon sent a message to Joshua while he was in the camp at Gilgal. They said, "We are your servants. So do not forsake us. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, because the kings of all of the groups descended from Amor and their armies have joined their forces and have come from the hilly area to attack us!" **7** So Joshua and all his army, including the soldiers who were his best fighting men, marched up from Gilgal. **8** Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of those armies! I will enable your army to defeat them [IDM]. None of them will be able to (resist/fight and defeat) your army." **9** Joshua's army marched all night and arrived very early in the morning. **10** They attacked their enemies before anyone knew that they had come. Yahweh caused their enemies to (become very confused/start running in all directions) when they saw the Israeli army. As a result, the Israeli army defeated them very severely at Gibeon [and killed many of them]. The rest of them fled along the road that goes up to Beth-Horon. But the Israeli army pursued them and killed them all along the road that goes to Azekah and Makkedah towns. **11** As they fled in front of the Israeli army, Yahweh threw down huge hailstones from the sky. As a result, more of them died from hailstones falling on them than died as a result of the Israeli army killing them with swords. **12** On the day that Yahweh enabled the Israeli army to defeat the groups who were descendants of Amor, Joshua said to Yahweh while the Israeli people were listening, "Yahweh, cause the sun to stand still over Gibeon, and cause the moon to not move when it is over Aijalon Valley." **13** And that is what happened. The sun stood still, and the moon did not move, until the Israeli army defeated their enemies. That is what has been written in the book that Jashar wrote. The sun stopped while it was in the middle of the sky, and did not (set/go down) for about a whole day. **14** On that day Yahweh did a great miracle that someone asked him to do. There was never a day like that previously, and there has never been a day like that since. Yahweh was certainly fighting for the Israeli people! **15** After Joshua's

army defeated their enemies, they all returned to their camp at Gilgal. 16 While the enemy soldiers were fleeing from Joshua's army, their five kings also fled and hid in a cave at Makkedah [town]. 17 Then someone told Joshua, "We found those five kings, hiding in a cave at Makkedah!" 18 When Joshua heard that, he said, "Roll some very large rocks to the entrance of the cave so that the kings cannot escape, and leave some soldiers there to guard it. 19 But do not stay there! Pursue our enemies! Attack them from behind! Do not allow them to escape to their cities, because Yahweh, our God, will enable you to defeat/kill them. [IDM]" 20 So Joshua's army did what he told them to do. They killed almost all of the enemy soldiers, but a few of them were able to reach their cities and be safe inside the walls of the cities. 21 Then Joshua's army returned to Joshua, who was still in their camp at Makkedah. No one in the land dared to criticize [MTY] the Israelis. 22 Then Joshua said, "Open the entrance of the cave, and bring out to me those five kings!" 23 So the soldiers brought those five kings out of the cave—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. 24 When they brought those kings to Joshua [and forced them to lie on the ground], he summoned all the Israeli soldiers, and then he said to the army commanders, "Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings!" So the commanders did that. 25 Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid of any of our enemies! Never be discouraged! Be strong and courageous. This is what Yahweh will do to all the enemies you will fight!" 26 Then Joshua killed each of the five kings with his sword, and told his soldiers to hang the bodies of the five kings on trees. So they did that, and they left the bodies hanging on the trees until sunset. 27 At sunset, Joshua told them to take the bodies down from the trees and throw them into the cave where they had been hiding. So the soldiers did that, and then they put those large rocks at the entrance of the cave again. Those rocks are still there. 28 That is how Joshua's army attacked and captured Makkedah. They killed the king and everyone else in the town. They did not leave anyone alive. They did to the king of Makkedah the same thing that they had done to the king of Jericho. 29 That same day, Joshua and his Israeli army went [southwest] from Makkedah to Libnah [city] and attacked it. 30 Yahweh enabled the Israelis to conquer [MTY] that city and its king. They killed everyone in the city; they did not (spare anyone/allow anyone to remain alive). They killed the king of Libnah just like they had killed the king of Jericho. 31 Then Joshua and his army went [south] from Libnah to Lachish [city]. They surrounded the city and attacked it. 32 On the second day of the battle, Yahweh enabled the Israelis to conquer [MTY] the city. And like they had done at Libnah, they killed everyone [DOU] in the city. 33 King Horam from Gezer [city and his army] came to help [the soldiers of] Lachish, but Joshua's [army] defeated Horam and his army, and did not allow any of them to remain alive. 34 Then Joshua and his army went [west] from Lachish to Eglon [city]. They surrounded the city and attacked it. 35 On that day, they captured the city and killed [MTY] everyone in it [DOU], just like they had done at Lachish. 36 Then Joshua and his army went [west from Eglon] up [into the hills] to Hebron [city]. They attacked the city 37 and captured it. They killed the king and everyone else, just like they had done at Eglon. They did not allow anyone to remain alive. 38 Then Joshua and his army turned [south] and went to Debir [city] and attacked it. 39 They captured the city and its king, and also captured the nearby towns. Then they killed everyone [DOU]; they did to the people there the same thing that they had done at Hebron and Libnah. 40 That is how Joshua [and his army] conquered the entire southern part of Canaan. They defeated the kings [who ruled] the hilly area, the dry southern area, the [western] foothills, and the [eastern] slopes. They killed everyone [DOU] in those areas; they did not allow anyone to remain alive. 41 Joshua's soldiers captured all the cities from Kadesh-Barnea [city] in the far south to Gaza [city] near the coast, including all the Goshen area, and north to Gibeon [city]. 42 At that one time, Joshua's army conquered all the kings and captured all the territory that they [ruled]. They were able to do that because Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli people [worship], was fighting for them. 43 Then Joshua and his army returned to their camp at Gilgal.

11 When King Jabin of Hazor [city] heard [about all those things that had happened], he sent messages to Jobab, the king of Madon [city], to the king of Shimron [city], and to the king of Acshaph [city], [requesting them to send their armies to come and help him fight against the Israelis]. 2 He also sent messages to the kings in the northern hilly area and to the kings in the Jordan [River] Valley, south of Galilee [Lake] and in the western hills. He sent a message to the king of Naphoth-Dor [in the west] 3 and to the kings of the Canaan people-group in the eastern and western parts of the land. He sent messages to the Amor people-group and the Heth people-group and the Periz people-group and the Jebus people-group who lived in the hilly area. He also sent a message to the Hiv people-group who lived below Hermon [Mountain] in the Mizpah area. 4 So the armies of all those kings gathered together, bringing their horses and chariots. [There seemed to be] [HYP] as many soldiers as grains of sand on the seashore. 5 All of those kings [and their armies] gathered together at Merom Pond, [and they set up

their tents there]. Then they made plans to fight against the Israelis. **6** Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, because at this time tomorrow I will enable your men to defeat them. Your men must also cripple their horses and burn their chariots." **7** So Joshua and his army traveled to Merom Pond and attacked their enemies (by surprise/before they were ready to fight). **8** Yahweh enabled the Israelis to defeat them. They pursued them to Sidon [city in the far north], and to Misrephoth-Maim [in the northwest], and to Mizpah Valley in the northeast. The Israelis fought them until (they were all dead/there were no survivors). **9** Then Joshua and his men did what Yahweh told them to do: They crippled their enemies' horses and burned their chariots. **10** The king of Hazor had ruled the people of all the kingdoms whose armies had fought against the Israelis. So Joshua's army went back to Hazor and captured that city and killed their king. **11** They killed everyone in Hazor; (they did not spare anyone/no one was left alive) [DOU]. Then they burned the city. **12** Joshua's army captured all of those cities and killed all of their kings. They did that like Moses, the man who served Yahweh [well], had commanded them to do. **13** Joshua's men burned Hazor [city], but they did not burn any of the other cities that were built on small hills. **14** The Israelis took for themselves the animals that they found in those cities and everything else [that was valuable] [DOU]. But they killed all the people. **15** [Many years before], Yahweh had told Moses to do that, and then Moses told Joshua to do it. So Joshua did everything that Yahweh had commanded Moses to do. **16** Joshua's [army] defeated all the people who were living in that land. They took control over the hilly area and the area in the southern part of Canaan, all the area of Goshen, the western foothills, and the Jordan [River] Valley. They took control over all the mountains in Israel and all the hills near the mountains. **17** They took control of all the land from Halak Mountain [in the south] up to the Seir [hilly area] as far as Baal-Gaal in Lebanon Valley [in the north], at the bottom of Hermon Mountain. They captured all the kings of those areas and killed them. **18** Joshua's men fought against those groups for many years. **19** There was only one group that made a peace agreement with the Israelis; they were the people of the Hiv people-group who lived in Gibeon. The Israelis captured all the other towns in battles. **20** Yahweh caused the people in all those other groups to be stubborn [IDM], with the result that they fought against the Israeli army, and the Israelis killed them all. They were not merciful to any of them. That is what Yahweh had commanded Moses to do. **21** Joshua's army also fought the Anak people-group who lived in the hills near Hebron, Debir, and Anah [cities]. They also fought against the people who lived in the hilly area of Judah and Israel, and they killed all of those people and destroyed their cities. **22** As a result, there were no descendants of Anak who remained alive in Israel. Only a few remained alive in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod [cities]. **23** Joshua's army took control of all the land, just as Yahweh [long ago] had told Moses to do. Yahweh gave the land to the Israelis, because he had promised to give it to them. Then Joshua divided the land among the Israeli tribes. After that, there was (peace/no more battles) in the land.

12 The Israelis took control of the land that was east of the Jordan River, from the Arnon River gorge [in the south] to Hermon Mountain [in the north], including all the land on the eastern side of the Jordan [River] Valley. That land previously belonged to the two kings whose armies the Israelis defeated. **2** One of them was Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group. He lived in Heshbon [city] and ruled over the area from Aroer [town] along the Arnon River Gorge, north to the Jabbok River. His land started in the middle of the gorge, which was the border between his land and the land of the Ammon people-group. Sihon also ruled over [the southern] half of the Gilead region, **3** and over the land on the eastern side of the Jordan [River] Valley, from Galilee Lake [south] to the Dead Sea. He also ruled over the land [east of the Dead Sea] from Beth-Jeshimoth south to the side of Pisgah Mountain. **4** The other king whom the Israeli army defeated was Og, the king of the Bashan [region]. He was the last of the descendants of [the giant] Rapha. He ruled that land, living alternately in Ashtaroth and Edrei [cities]. **5** He ruled over the area from Hermon Mountain and Salecah [in the north], and over all the Bashan area in the east, and to the borders of the kingdoms of Geshur and Maacah to the west. Og ruled [the northern] half of the Gilead region, as far as the border of the land ruled by King Sihon. **6** Moses, the man who served Yahweh [well], and all the Israeli army defeated the armies of those kings. Then Moses gave that land to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh. **7** Joshua and the Israeli army also defeated kings who ruled over the land on the west side of the Jordan [River]. He gave that land to the Israeli people, dividing it among the other tribes. That land was between Baal-Gad [city] in the Lebanon Valley [in the far north all the way south] to Halak Mountain, which is near the land of the Edom people-group. **8** That land included the mountains, the western hilly area, the Jordan [River] Valley, the [western] slopes of the mountains, the desert [in Judea], and the Negev [desert in the south]. That whole area was the land where the Heth, Amor, Canaan, Periz, Hiv, and Jebus people-groups lived. The Israeli army defeated the armies of the kings of each of these cities: **9**

Jericho, Ai (which was near Bethel), 10 Jerusalem, Hebron, 11 Jarmuth, Lachish, 12 Eglon, Gezer, 13 Debir, Geder, 14 Hormah, Arad, 15 Libnah, Adullam, 16 Makkedah, Bethel, 17 Tappuah, Hepher, 18 Aphek, Lasharon, 19 Madon, Hazor, 20 Shimron Meron, Acshaph, 21 Taanach, Megiddo, 22 Kedesh, Jokneam in the Carmel area, 23 Dor in the Naphoth-Dor area, Goyim in the Gilgal area, 24 and Tirzah. There was a total of 31 kings [that the Israeli army defeated].

13 When Joshua was very old, Yahweh said to him, "Joshua, you are now an old man, but there is still a lot of land [for your army] to capture. 2 Here is a list of the land that remains: The Geshur region and all the area where the Philistia people-group live; 3 the area where the Canaan people-group live, from the Shihor River [in the south] at the [eastern] border of Egypt, to Ekron [city] in the north; the rulers of the five [cities] of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron; the area where the Avva people-group live, 4 which is south of the area where the Canaan people-group live; 5 the area where the Gebal people-group live; and all the Lebanon area east of Baal-Gad [city] at the bottom of Hermon Mountain, as far as Lebo-Hamath. 6 All the people of the Sidon people-group live in the hilly area from Lebanon to Misrephoth-Maim, but I will force them to leave that area before you Israelis arrive there. Be sure to give that area to the Israeli people when you divide the land among them, like I told you to do. 7 Divide all that land among the nine Israeli tribes and half of the tribe of Manasseh, [the tribes that do not have land on the east side of the Jordan River]." 8 Half of the tribe of Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and Gad had already been told what land they would receive, because Moses, the man who served Yahweh [well], had already assigned to them the land on the east side of the Jordan [River]. 9 Their land extended from Aroer [town] at the Arnon River gorge to the town in the middle of the gorge. It included the whole plain from Medeba [town south] to Dibon [town]. 10 All the towns ruled by King Sihon were in that area. The land extended to where the Ammon people-group lived. 11 The Gilead area was also there, and the regions where the people of the Geshur and Maacah people-groups lived, and all of Hermon Mountain and all the Bashan region [south] to Salecah. 12 All the land ruled by Og, the king who ruled the Bashan [region], was in that land. Og was one of the last descendants of Repha; previously he had ruled in Ashtaroth and Edrei [cities], but [the armies of] Moses had defeated their armies and had taken their land from them. 13 But the Israelis did not force the people of the Geshur and Maacah [people-groups] to leave their land, so they still live among the Israeli people. 14 The tribe of Levi was the only tribe that did not get any land. Instead, just like Yahweh promised, they continued to receive [food from] the sacrifices that were given to Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis [worship], the sacrifices that were burned [on the sacred altar]. 15 Moses had allotted land to each clan in the tribe of Reuben. 16 Their land extended from Aroer [town] near the Arnon River gorge to Medeba [town]. That included all of the plain [that is near Medeba] and the town in the middle of the gorge. 17 It also included Heshbon [city] and all the nearby towns on the plain—Dibon, Bamioth-Baal, Beth-Baal-Meon, 18 Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, 19 Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth-Shahar on the hill overlooking the valley, 20 Beth-Peor, the hills in the Pisgah area, and Beth-Jeshimoth. 21 That land included all the towns on the plain and all the area that King Sihon had previously ruled. But [the army of] Moses had defeated him and the rulers of the Midian people-group: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba. The armies of all those rulers fought battles along with the army of Sihon, and they lived in that country. 22 The Israeli army killed many people during those battles, including Balaam, [the prophet] from Beor, who tried to use magic to predict/tell what would happen in the future. 23 The [western] boundary of the land that was allotted to the clans of the tribe of Reuben was the Jordan [River]. 24 Moses also allotted some land to each clan in the tribe of Gad. 25 Their land included the Jazer [area] and all the towns of the Gilead [area]; half of the land where the Ammon people-group lived, as far as Aroer [town which is] near Rabbah [town]; 26 the area from Heshbon [city] to Ramath-Mizpah and Betonim [towns; the area] from Mahanaim [town] to the Debir region; 27 Beth-Haram, Beth-Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon [cities] in the valley; and the other area that King Sihon had ruled on the east side of the Jordan River. That area extended [north] to the southern end of Galilee Lake. 28 All this land, including the towns and villages, was allotted to the tribe of Gad. 29 Moses also had allotted some of the land [on the east side of the Jordan River] to half of the tribe of Manasseh. 30 Their land extended [north] from Mahanaim [city]. It included all the Bashan region, all the land that King Og had ruled, and all the towns in the Jair area in Bashan. Altogether that area included 60 towns. 31 Their area also included half of the Gilead region, and the cities of Ashtaroth and Edrei where King Og had ruled. All that area was allotted to the clans descended from Manasseh's son Makir. 32 Moses had allotted to those tribes the land that was on the plain of the Moab [region], on the east side of the Jordan [River], across from Jericho. 33 But Moses did not allot any land to the tribe of Levi because Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis worship, promised that he himself would always provide for them.

14 Eleazar the Supreme Priest, Joshua, and the leaders of the [twelve] tribes repeated what land would be allotted to each of the Israeli tribes in Canaan. **2** Yahweh had told Moses many years previously in what way he wanted the division of the land to be decided. Moses had already declared that two and a half tribes would be allotted land on the east side of the Jordan [River]. Joseph had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. [Half of the tribe descended from Manasseh was allotted land on the east side of the Jordan, along with the tribes of Reuben and Gad]. The people belonging to the nine and a half other tribes [on the west side of the Jordan River] threw (lots/stones that had been marked) to decide which land each tribe would receive. The tribe of Levi was not allotted any land. They received only towns [that already existed], towns in which to live, and (pastures/fields of grass) for their animals. **6** One day some men from the tribe of Judah went to Joshua while he and all the Israelis were at Gilgal. Among those men was Jephunneh's son Caleb. He said to Joshua, "[I am sure that] you remember what Yahweh said to the prophet Moses about you and me when we were at Kadesh-Barnea. **7** I was 40 years old at that time. Moses sent me [and you and some other men] to explore this land. When we returned, I gave to Moses a true report [IDM] about what we had seen. **8** The other men who went with us [gave a report that] caused the people to be afraid [IDM]. But I fully/completely believed [that] Yahweh [would enable us to take the land from the people who lived there]. **9** So on that day, Moses solemnly promised me, '[Some of] the land on which you walked will become yours. It will belong to your descendants forever. I am giving it to you because you fully trusted in Yahweh, my God.' **10** "Now Yahweh has done for me what he promised. Forty-five years have passed since Moses said that to me during the time that we were wandering around in the desert. And just like Yahweh promised, he has kept me alive and well all during that time. Now I am eighty-five years old. **11** I am as strong today as I was on the day that Moses sent me [to explore this land]. I am as ready to fight now as I was then. **12** So please give me the hilly area that Yahweh promised to give to me at that time long ago. At that time, you heard [me say] that the Amalek people-group lived there. You heard me say that their cities were large, and they had walls around them [to protect them from attacks by their enemies]. But now, Yahweh will help me, and as a result I will force them to leave, just like Yahweh said would happen." **13** So Joshua [asked God to] bless Caleb, and he gave to Caleb [the city of] Hebron. **14** Previously that city was called Kiriath-Arba, because Arba was the greatest man among the Amalek people-group. Hebron still belongs to the descendants of Caleb, because Caleb completely/fully trusted in Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], and obeyed him. After that happened, there was (peace/no battles) in [Canaan] land [for many years].

15 The land that was allotted to the tribe of Judah was divided among its clans. That land extended south along the border of the Edom region, as far as the Zin Desert. **2** The southern border of the land that was allotted to the tribe of Judah started at the south end of the Dead Sea [and extended west]. **3** It extended south of Scorpion Pass to Zin [Desert], and from there west to a place south of Kadesh-Barnea, past Hezron [town], to Addar [town], and from there it turned [northwest] to Karka [town]. **4** From there it continued to Azmon, and from there to the dry riverbed on the border of Egypt, and from there [west] to the [Mediterranean] Sea. That was the southern border. **5** The eastern border of the land of the tribe of Judah was the Dead Sea, and it extended [north] to [where the Jordan River ends at] the Dead Sea. **6** The northern border started where the Jordan River ends at the Dead Sea. It extended [north] to Beth-Hoglah [town], and from there it extended north of Beth-Arabah [town] to the [big] stone [set up by] Reuben's son Bohan. **7** From there the border continued west through Achor Valley to Debir [city]. From there it turned north to Gilgal [city]. Gilgal is north of the road that goes through Adummim Pass, on the south side of the valley. From Gilgal the border extended west to the springs at En-Shemesh, and from there to En-Rogel. **8** From there it extended through Ben-Hinnom Valley, south of the city where the Jebus people-group lived. (That city is now named Jerusalem.) From there the border extended to the top of the hill on the west side of Hinnom Valley, at the northern end of the valley where the Repha [giants] lived. **9** From there the border extended [northwest] to Nephtoah Spring, and from there to the cities near Ephron Mountain. From there the border extended [west] toward Baalah, which is now named Kiriath-Jearim. **10** Then the border extended further west to Seir Mountain. Then it continued [southwest] along the north side of Jearim Mountain, which is also named Kesalon, to Beth-Shemesh [city]. From there it extended [northwest] past Timnah [city], **11** to the hill north of Ekron [city]. From there it extended [west] to Shikkeron [town] and past Baalah Mountain to Jabneel [town], then [northwest] to the [Mediterranean] Sea. **12** The western border of the land that was allotted to the tribe of Judah was the Mediterranean Sea. All the clans of Judah lived inside those borders. **13** Yahweh commanded Joshua to give part of the land for the tribe of Judah to Caleb. So he gave to Caleb Kiriath-Arba [city], which is now named Hebron. (Arba was the ancestor

of the Anak people-group.) 14 Caleb forced the three clans of the Anak people-group to leave Hebron. Those were the Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai clans. 15 Then Caleb left there and went to fight against the people living in Debir [city], which was previously named Kiriath-Sepher. 16 Caleb said, "If someone attacks [the people in] Kiriath-Sepher and captures their city, I will give my daughter Acsah to him to be his wife." 17 Othniel, the son of Caleb's brother Kenaz, captured the city. So Caleb gave his daughter to him. 18 When Caleb's daughter married Othniel, she told him to ask her father to give her a field. Then Acsah went to talk with her father Caleb. As she got down from her donkey, Caleb asked her, "Do you want something?" 19 Acsah replied, "Yes, I want you to do something for me. You have given me some land in the southern part of Canaan, [but there is no water there]. So please give me some [land that has] springs." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs [near Hebron]. 20 [Here is a list of the towns in] the land [that God had promised to] give to the tribe of Judah. Each clan was allotted some of the land. 21 The tribe of Judah was allotted all these towns in the southern [desert area of Canaan], near the border of the Edom [region]: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, 22 Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, 23 Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, 24 Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, 25 Hazor-Hadattah, Kerioth-Hezron (which is also named Hazor), 26 Amam, Shema, Molodah, 27 Hazar-Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-Pelet, 28 Hazar-Shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, 29 Baalah, Iim, Ezem, 30 Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah, 31 Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, 32 Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon. There were 29 towns altogether and their surrounding villages. 33 The tribe of Judah was allotted these towns in the [northern part of the western] foothills: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, 34 Zanoah, En-Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, 35 Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, 36 Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (which is also named Gederothaim). Altogether there were 14 towns and their surrounding villages. 37 [The tribe of Judah was also allotted these towns in the southern part of the western foothills]: Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-Gad, 38 Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, 39 Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, 40 Cabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish, 41 Gederoth, Beth-Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah. There were 16 towns altogether and their surrounding villages. 42 The tribe of Judah was also allotted these towns in [the central part of] the western foothills: Libnah, Ether, Ashan, 43 Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, 44 Keilah, Aczib, and Mareshah. There were nine towns altogether, with their surrounding villages. 45 The tribe of Judah was also allotted these towns [close to the Mediterranean Sea] with their surrounding villages: Ekron and the towns between Ekron and the coast, Ashdod, and Gaza. The area extended south to the dry riverbed on the border of Egypt. 48 The tribe of Judah was also allotted these towns in [the southwest part of] the hilly region: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, 49 Dannah, Kiriath-Sannah (which is now named Debir), 50 Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, 51 Goshen, Holon, and Giloh. There were eleven towns with their surrounding villages. 52 The tribe of Judah was also allotted these towns in [the south-central part of] the hilly region: Arab, Dumah, Eshan, 53 Janim, Beth-Tappuah, Aphekah, 54 Humtah, Kiriath-Arba (which is now named Hebron), and Zior. There were nine towns altogether with their surrounding villages. 55 The tribe of Judah was also allotted these towns [in the southeastern part of the hilly region]: Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, 56 Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, 57 Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah. There were ten towns altogether with their surrounding villages. 58 The tribe of Judah was also allotted these towns [in the central part of the hilly region]: Halhul, Beth-Zur, Gedor, 59 Maarath, Beth-Anoth, and Eltekon. There were six towns altogether with their surrounding villages. 60 The tribe of Judah was also allotted two towns [in the northern part of the hilly region], Rabbah and Kiriath-Baal (which is also named Kiriath-Jearim). 61 The tribe of Judah was also [allotted these towns] in the desert [near the Dead Sea]: Beth-Arabah, Middin, Secacah, 62 Nibshan, Salt city, and En-Gedi. There were six towns altogether with their surrounding villages. 63 [The army of the tribe of] Judah was not able to force the people of the Jebus people-group to leave Jerusalem. So the people of that group are still living among the tribe of Judah.

16 The land that was allotted to [the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh that were descended from] Joseph started at the Jordan [River], east of the springs at Jericho. 2 It extended west from Jericho to the hilly area near Bethel, which is also called Luz. It extended as far as Ataroth, at the border of the land where the Arki people-group lived. 3 From there it extended west to the border of the land where the Japhleti people-group lived, and then it extended west to the area near Lower Beth-Horon. From there it extended west to Gezer [city] and from there to the [Mediterranean] Sea. 4 That is the land that the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were allotted. 5 The border of the land that was allotted to the clans of the tribe of Ephraim started at Ataroth-Addar [city] in the east. It extended to Upper Beth-Horon 6 and from there to the [Mediterranean] Sea. 7 From Michmethath [on the north] it extended east to Taanath and from there on to Janoah. From there it extended [south] to Ataroth [city] and to Naarah [town]. From there it extended to Jericho and from there to the Jordan [River]. 8 The [northern] border extended from Tappuah west to Kanah Ravine, and ended at the [Mediterranean] Sea. That was the land that was allotted

to the tribe of Ephraim. 9 Many of those towns were really within the area allotted to the tribe of Manasseh. 10 The people of the tribe of Ephraim could not force the Canaan people-group to leave Gezer, so the Canaan people-group still live among the people of the tribe of Ephraim, but the Israelis forced the people of the Canaan people-group to become their slaves.

17 [This is a list of] the land that was allotted to the tribe of Manasseh. Manasseh's oldest son was Makir and his grandson was Gilead. Makir's descendants were great warriors, so the lands in the Gilead and Bashan regions were allotted to their clan. 2 Land was also allotted to the other clans of the tribe of Manasseh: The clans of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida. 3 Hepher's son Zelophehad had no sons, but he had five daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 4 They went to Eleazar the Supreme Priest, and to Joshua and to the other Israeli leaders. They said, "[We want you to give us some land, because] Yahweh told Moses that he should give to us some land, just like you gave to the men." So Eleazar did what Yahweh had commanded, and he allotted to them some land, just like he allotted to their uncles. 5 So the tribe of Manasseh eventually had ten sections [of land west of the Jordan River] and [two sections,] Gilead and Bashan, on the east side of the Jordan [River]. 6 So those female descendants of Manasseh also were allotted land [on the west side of the river] just like the men were allotted. The other parts of the Gilead area were allotted to the male descendants of Manasseh. 7 The land allotted to the tribe of Manasseh was between the land where the tribe of Asher lives and Michmethath [town], near Shechem [city]. The border extended south to the Tappuah Spring. 8 The land near the Tappuah area belonged to the tribe of Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah, which was at the border of the land that was allotted to the tribe of Manasseh, was allotted to the tribe of Ephraim. 9 The border [of the land allotted to the tribe of Manasseh] extended south to Kanah Gorge. From there it extended [west] along the north side of the gorge and ended at the [Mediterranean] Sea. 10 The land on the south side of the gorge belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, and the land on the north side belonged to the tribe of Manasseh. The western border of the land allotted to the tribe of Manasseh was the [Mediterranean] Sea. To the north, the border of their land extended from the land allotted to the tribe of Asher [at the northwest] to the land allotted to the tribe of Issachar [at the northeast.] 11 But there are cities inside the area allotted to the tribes of Issachar and Asher. Those cities, along with their surrounding villages, were allotted to people from the tribe of Manasseh. These cities are Beth-Shan, Ibleam, Dor (which is also named Naphoth-Dor,) Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo. 12 The men of the tribe of Manasseh were not able to force the people who lived in those cities to leave, so the people of the Canaan people-group continued to live in those cities. 13 But [years later] when the Israelis became better [warriors], they forced the Canaan people-group to work for them as slaves, although they did not force them to leave the land. 14 The people of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh said to Joshua, "You allotted to us only one area of land, but there are a lot of us. Yahweh has blessed us very much [with the result that our tribe has grown very large]. So why did you give us only a small part of the land [RHQ]?" 15 Joshua replied to them, "[I agree that] you do not have enough land in the hilly area of the tribe of Ephraim. So, since you have a lot of people, I will allot more land to you, in the hilly region. But you will have to [cut down the trees] in the forest [and] make a place for yourselves in the land where the Periz and Repha people-groups live." 16 The people of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh replied, "It is true that the land in the hilly area is not big enough for us, but the Canaan people-group who live in the lowlands, in Beth-Shan and the surrounding villages in that area, and in the Jezreel Valley, have iron chariots, [so we will not be able to defeat them]!" 17 Joshua replied to them, "Your tribe is very numerous and very powerful. So I will allot more land for you in the hilly area, 18 but you will have to cut down the trees in order to make a place for you to live. [It is true that] the Canaan people-group are strong and have iron chariots, but you will be able to force them to leave that valley."

18 The Israeli people captured all the land [that they were able to], but there were still seven tribes that had not been allotted any land. The Israeli people all gathered at Shiloh, and they set up the Sacred Tent there. 3 Joshua said to them, "Why are you waiting a long time to take control of [the rest of] the land that Yahweh, the God whom your ancestors [worshiped], has promised to give to you [RHQ]? 4 Choose three men from each of your seven tribes. Then I will send them to explore [the parts of] the land [which you have not occupied yet. When they finish exploring it], they must write a report, in which they will (make a map/show the boundaries) of the land that each tribe wants to receive. 5 They will divide the remaining land into seven parts. The tribe of Judah will keep its land in the south, and the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh will keep their land in the north. 6 But in their report, the men from the seven tribes should describe the seven parts of the remaining land [that they wish to receive], and bring the report to me. While Yahweh is watching, I will (cast lots/throw marked stones) [to decide

which land should be allotted to each tribe]. 7 But the tribe of Levi will not be allotted any land, because their [reward is that they will be] Yahweh's priests. The tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh have already been allotted their land on the east side of the Jordan [River], just as Moses, the man who served God [well], decided, [so they will not get any more land]." 8 When the men who were chosen [got ready to] leave, Joshua told them, "Go and explore the land. Then write a report of what you have seen, and bring it back to me. Then while Yahweh is watching, I will (cast lots/throw marked stones) here at Shiloh, [to determine what area each tribe will receive]." 9 So the men left and walked through the area. Then they described in a scroll each town that was in the seven parts [into which they had divided] the land. Then they returned to Joshua, who was still at Shiloh. 10 [After Joshua read their report], while Yahweh was watching, he (cast lots/threw marked stones) to choose which land would be allotted to each of the seven Israeli tribes. 11 The first tribe that was allotted land was the tribe of Benjamin. Each clan in that tribe was allotted some of the land that was between the area that was allotted to the tribe of Judah and the area that was allotted to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. 12 The northern border started at the Jordan [River] and extended west along the northern side of Jericho, into the hilly area. From there the border extended west to the desert near Beth-Aven [town]. 13 From there it extended southwest to Luz (which is [now named] Bethel). From there it extended southwest to Ataroth-Addar [town], which is on the hill south of Lower Beth-Horon [city]. 14 At the hill south of Beth-Horon, the border turned and extended south to Kiriath-Baal [town], which is [also named] Kiriath-Jearim. That is a town where people of the tribe of Judah live. That was the western border of the land allotted to the tribe of Benjamin. 15 The southern border of their land started near Kiriath-Jearim and extended west to Nephtoah Springs. 16 From there it extended south to the bottom of the hill, near Ben-Hinnom Valley, on the north side of Repha Valley. The border extended south along the Hinnom Valley, south of the city where the Jebus people-group lived, to En-Rogel. 17 From there the border extended west to En-Shemesh, and continued to Geliloth near Adummim Pass. Then it extended to the great stone of Reuben's son Bohan. 18 From there the border extended to the northern edge of Beth-Arabah [town] and down into the Jordan [River] Valley. 19 From there it extended east to the northern edge of Beth-Hoglah [town] and ended at the north end of the Dead Sea, where the Jordan [River flows into the Dead Sea]. That was the southern boundary [of the land allotted to the tribe of Benjamin]. 20 The Jordan [River] was the eastern boundary of the land allotted to the tribe of Benjamin. Those were the boundaries of the land allotted to them. 21 The cities in the land allotted to the tribe of Benjamin were Jericho, Beth-Hoglah, Emek-Keziz, 22 Beth-Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, 23 Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, 24 Kephar-Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba. Altogether there were fourteen towns and the surrounding villages. 25 The tribe of Benjamin also had the towns of Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, 26 Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah, 27 Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, 28 Zelah, Haeleph, the city where the Jebus people-group lived (which is [now named] Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath. Altogether there were 14 towns and the surrounding villages. All that area was allotted to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin.

19 The second/next tribe that was allotted land was the tribe of Simeon. Each clan in that tribe was allotted some land that was inside the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Judah. 2 Their land included the towns of Beersheba ([which is also named] Sheba), Moladah, 3 Hazar-Shual, Balah, Ezem, 4 Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, 5 Ziklag, Beth-Marcaboth. Hazar-Susah, 6 Beth-Lebaoth, and Sharuhen. Altogether there were 13 towns and the surrounding villages. 7 The land allotted to them also included the four cities of Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan, and their surrounding villages. 8 They were also allotted some very small villages in an area that extended south to Baalath-Beer (which is [also named] Ramah, in the southern desert). That was the land allotted to the clans of the tribe of Simeon. 9 The tribe of Judah had been allotted much more land than they needed, so part of their land was given to the tribe of Simeon. 10 The third/next tribe that was allotted land was the tribe of Zebulun. Each clan of that tribe was allotted some of the land. The southern border started at Sarid [city]. 11 It extended west to Maralah [city] and on to Dabbesheth [city], and on to the brook just north of Jokneam [city]. 12 The border extended east from Sarid to the area near Kisloth-Tabor [city] and on to Daberath [town] and on to Japhia [town]. 13 From there it extended east to Gath-Hepher [city] and Eth-Kazin [town], and north to Rimmon [city]. From there the border extended [west] to Neah [town]. 14 From Neah it extended south to Hannathon [city] and from there to Iphtah-El Valley. 15 Their area included the towns of Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. Altogether there were twelve towns and the surrounding villages. 16 That was the land that was allotted to the clans of the tribe of Zebulun. 17 The fourth/next tribe that was allotted land was the tribe of Issachar. Each of the clans of that tribe was allotted some of the land. 18 Their land included the cities of Jezreel, Kesulloth, Shunem, 19 Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, 20 Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, 21 Remeth,

En-Gannim, En-Haddah, and Beth-Pazzez. **22** The border of the area that was allotted to the tribe of Issachar was close to Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-Shemesh [cities], and ended [in the east] at the Jordan [River]. Altogether there were 16 cities and the surrounding villages. **23** Those cities and villages were in the land allotted to the clans of the tribe of Issachar. **24** The fifth/next tribe that was allotted land was the tribe of Asher. Each of the clans in that tribe was allotted some of the land. **25** Their land included the towns of Helkath, Hali, Beten, Acshaph, **26** Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. The western border started at Carmel [Mountain] and Shihor-Libnath. **27** From there it extended [southeast] to Beth-Dagon [town], and then to [the area that was allotted to the tribe of] Zebulun and Iphtah-El Valley. From there the border extended east and then north to Beth-Emek [town] and Neiel and Cabul [towns]. **28** From there it extended west to Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah [cities], and continued to Sidon, which is a big city. **29** From there the border extended south toward Ramah and to the big city of Tyre that had strong walls around it. From there the border extended [west] to Hosah [town] and ended at the [Mediterranean] Sea. Within their area were the towns of Aczib, **30** Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob. Altogether there were 22 towns and their surrounding villages. **31** Those cities and villages were within the land that was allotted to the clans of the tribe of Asher. **32** The sixth/next tribe that was allotted land was the tribe of Naphtali. Each of the clans in that tribe was allotted some of the land. **33** The border of their land started [in the west] at the [huge] oak tree at Zaanannim, near Heleph [town]. It extended [east] through Adami-Nekeb [city] and Jabneel, and then to Lakkum, and ended at the Jordan [River]. **34** The western boundary extended through Aznoth-Tabor as far as Hukkok [city]. It extended to the borders of [the tribe of] Zebulun at the south, to [the border of the tribe of] Asher on the west, and the Jordan [River] at the east. **35** [Within their land were] several cities with strong walls around them. They were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, **36** Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, **37** Kedesh, Edrei, En-Hazor, **38** Iron, Migdal-El, Horem, Beth-Anath, and Beth-Shemesh. Altogether there were 19 cities and the surrounding villages. **39** Those cities and surrounding villages were in the land that was allotted to the clans of the tribe of Naphtali. **40** The seventh/last tribe that was allotted land was the tribe of Dan. Each of the clans in that tribe was allotted some of the land. **41** Their land included the towns of Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-Shemesh, **42** Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, **43** Elon, Timnah, Ekron, **44** Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, **45** Jehud, Bene-Berak, Gath-Rimmon, **46** Me-Jarkon, Rakkon, and the area near Joppa. **47** But the people of the tribe of Dan were unable to take control of the land that had been allotted to them. So they went [northeast] and fought against the people in Leshem [city]. They defeated and killed all the people who lived there. Then they began to live in Leshem, and changed the name of the city to Dan, the man from whom their tribe descended. **48** All of those towns and surrounding villages were in the land that was allotted to the clans in the tribe of Dan. **49** After the Israeli leaders divided the land among the tribes, they allotted some land to Joshua. **50** They allotted to him Timnath-Serah. Yahweh had said that he could have whatever city he wanted, and that was the city that he chose. It was in the hilly region which was allotted to the tribe of Ephraim. Joshua rebuilt the city and lived there. **51** Those were the areas that were allotted to the various tribes of Israel. Eleazar the Supreme Priest and Joshua and the leaders of each tribe divided up the land while they were all at Shiloh, by (casting lots/throwing marked stones) [to decide which area each tribe would receive]. They did that while Yahweh was watching, at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. In that way they completed dividing up the land.

20 Then Yahweh said to Joshua, **2** "Tell the Israeli people that they should choose some cities to which people [can run] in order to be safe/protected, like I told Moses that they should do. **3** If someone kills another person accidentally, not intending to kill that person, the one who killed that person may run/escape to one of these cities and be safe/protected from someone trying to get revenge for that person's death [MTY]. **4** When the one who killed someone arrives at the gate of one of those cities, he must stop there and tell the leaders of the city what happened. [If they believe him], they must allow him to enter the city, and they must give him a place to live among them. **5** If some relative of the one who was killed comes to that city to get revenge, the leaders of that city must not allow the relative to take the killer, because what happened was accidental. He did not hate that person and as a result deliberately kill him. **6** But the person who killed someone must stay in that city until the city judges put him on trial. [Only if the judges decide that the person who has run/escaped to their city did not deliberately kill the other person will they allow him to stay in that city], and he must stay there until the Supreme Priest dies. Then he may safely go back to his own town, [because the death of the Supreme Priest will be considered to atone/pay for the death of the person who was killed]." **7** So the Israelis chose these cities to be cities to which people could run to be safe/protected: Kedesh in the Galilee district in the hilly area where the tribe of Naphtali lived; Shechem in the hilly area where the tribe of Ephraim lived; Kiriath-Arba (which is [now named] Hebron) in the hilly

area where the tribe of Judah lived; 8 Bezer, on the east side of the Jordan [River] near Jericho, in the flat land in the desert where the tribe of Reuben lived; Ramoth in the Gilead [region] in the land where the tribe of Gad lived; and Golan in the Bashan region where the tribe of Manasseh lived. 9 Any Israeli or any foreigner who lived among us, anyone who killed someone (accidentally/without planning to do it), was allowed to run to one of those cities, and be safe/protected from some relative of the person who died coming there and killing him to get revenge. He could stay in that city until there was a trial there [to decide whether he was telling the truth or not when he said that he did not plan to kill that person].

21 While Eleazar the Supreme Priest and Joshua and the leaders of all the Israeli tribes were at Shiloh, the leaders of the clans of the tribe of Levi went to them and said, "Yahweh commanded Moses that you should give us towns where we can have pasture/fields/grassland for our animals, [but you have not done these things yet]." 3 So the Israeli leaders obeyed this command from Yahweh. They agreed to give towns and pasturelands to the tribe of Levi. 4 [First] they allotted some cities to the Kohath clans, who belonged to the tribe of Levi. To those who were descendants of the first Supreme Priest Aaron, they allotted 13 towns in the areas that had been allotted to the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. 5 To the other members of the Kohath clan they allotted ten cities in the areas that had been allotted to the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the part of the tribe of Manasseh [that lives on the west side of the Jordan River]. 6 The people from the Gershon clans were allotted 13 cities in the areas that had been allotted to the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the part of the tribe of Manasseh that lives on the east side of the Jordan [River]. 7 The people from the Merari clans were allotted twelve cities in the areas that had been allotted to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. 8 So the Israeli leaders gave cities and pastureland to the tribe of Levi, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses that they should do. 9 These are the names of the cities and surrounding pasturelands that were allotted to them, that were in the areas where the tribes of Judah and Simeon lived. 10 First, they allotted cities to the members of the Kohath clans. 11 They allotted to them Kiriath-Arba (which is [now named] Hebron), in the hilly area of Judah. Arba received its name because Arba was the ancestor of [the giants of] the Anak people-group. 12 But the fields and villages surrounding Arba had already been allotted to Caleb. 13 They allotted to them Hebron, which was one of the cities to which people could run/escape to be safe/protected. They also allotted to the Kohath clan the cities of Libnah, 14 Jattir, Eshtemoa, 15 Holon, Debir, 16 Ain, Juttah, and Beth-Shemesh. Altogether they were allotted those nine cities which were located in the areas that had been allotted to the tribes of Judah and Simeon. 17 The Kohath clan was also allotted these four cities: Gibeon, Geba, 18 Anathoth, and Almon. Those cities were in the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Benjamin. 19 Altogether those 13 towns and surrounding pastureland were allotted to the priests who were descended from Aaron. 20 The other members the Kohath clan were allotted four cities and the surrounding pastureland in the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Ephraim. 21 Those cities were Shechem (which was one of the cities to which people could run/escape to be safe/protected), Gezer, 22 Kibzaim, and Beth-Horon. 23 They were also allotted four cities and surrounding pastureland in the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Dan. Those cities were Eltekeh, Gibbethon, 24 Aijalon, and Gath-Rimmon. 25 They were also allotted two towns and surrounding pastureland that had been allotted to [the] part of the tribe of Manasseh [that lived on the west side of the Jordan River]. Those cities were Taanach and Gath-Rimmon. 26 Those were the ten cities and surrounding pastureland that were allotted to the other members of the Kohath clan. 27 They also allotted towns and the surrounding pastureland to the Gershon clans. Those clans were also descended from Levi. They were allotted two cities from the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Manasseh [that is on the east side of the Jordan River]. Those cities were Golan in the Bashan region, which was one of the cities to which people could run/escape to be safe/protected, and Be-Eshtarah. 28 From the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Issachar they were allotted four cities. Those cities were Kishion, Daberath, 29 Jarmuth, and En-Gannim. 30 From the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Asher they were allotted four cities. Those cities were Mishal, Abdon, 31 Helkath, and Rehob. 32 From the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Naphtali they were allotted three cities. Those cities were Kedesh in the Galilee region (it was one of the cities to which people could run/escape to be safe/protected), Hammoth-Dor, and Kartan. 33 So altogether the Gershon clans were allotted 13 cities and the surrounding pasturelands. 34 The other descendants of Levi, the ones who belonged to the Merari clans, were also allotted towns and their surrounding pasturelands. From the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Zebulun they were allotted four cities. They were Jokneam, Kartah, 35 Dimnah, and Nahalal. 36 From the area that had been allotted to the tribe of Reuben they were allotted four cities. They were Bezer, Jahaz, 37 Kedemoth, and Mephaath. 38 From the

area that had been allotted to the tribe of Gad they were allotted four cities. They were Ramoth, which was one of the cities in the Gilead region to which people could run/escape to be safe/protected, Mahanaim, **39** Heshbon, and Jazer. **40** Altogether twelve cities were allotted to the Merari clans. **41** So altogether 48 cities were allotted to the tribe of Levi, **42** and each city had surrounding pastureland. **43** In that way Yahweh allotted to the Israeli people all the land that he had promised to give to their/our ancestors. The Israeli people took control of [most of] those areas and started to live there. **44** Just like he had promised our ancestors, Yahweh allowed them/us to have peace with the enemies that surrounded them/us. Yahweh enabled the Israelis/us to defeat their/our enemies. **45** Yahweh did all the things that he had promised to the Israeli people/us. Everything that he said would happen did happen.

22 Joshua then summoned the leaders of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. **2** He said to them, "You have done everything that Moses, who served Yahweh [well], told you to do. You have also done what I told you to do. **3** For a long time you have helped the other tribes [to defeat their enemies]. You have obeyed everything that Yahweh your God commanded you to do. **4** He promised to give peace to us Israelis, and he has done what he promised. So now you may go back to your homes, to the land that Moses gave to you, on the east side of the Jordan [River]. **5** Moses also commanded you to love Yahweh your God and to obey his commands, and to continue to worship him and serve him by everything that you think and everything that you do." **6** Then Joshua blessed them and said goodbye to them, and they [prepared to] leave and return to their homes [on the east side of the Jordan River]. **7** Moses had given the Bashan region to half the tribe of Manasseh, and land on the west side of the Jordan [River] to the other half of the tribe. Before they left, he [asked God to] bless them. **8** He said, "Go back to your homes and to all the things that you have taken from your enemies—the many animals and silver and gold and [things made of] bronze and iron, and many beautiful clothes. But you should share some of those things with other people of your tribe." **9** So the people of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh left the other Israelis at Shiloh in Canaan land, to return to their homes in the Gilead region. That was the area that belonged to them. It had been allotted to them by Moses as Yahweh had commanded. **10** The people from those three tribes arrived near the western side of the Jordan River, at a town called Geliloth. There they built a large altar. [Then they crossed the Jordan River to the Gilead region]. **11** But the other Israelis who were still at Shiloh heard about the altar that those men had built. **12** They became very angry with the men of those tribes, so they decided to fight them. **13** The Israelis sent Phinehas, who was the son of Eleazar the Supreme Priest, to [talk with] the people of those three tribes. **14** They also sent one leader from each of the ten tribes that were still at Shiloh. Each of them was a leader of his clan. **15** Those leaders went to the Gilead region to talk to the people of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. They said, **16** "All the other Israelis are asking, 'Why have you rebelled against the God whom we Israelis [worship] by building an altar for yourselves? **17** Have you forgotten what happened at Peor, [when some Israelis sinned by worshiping the god that the Moab people-group worship]? Many Israelis became very sick and died because of that sin, and we are still suffering because of their sin. **18** Are you now turning away from obeying Yahweh and refusing to do what he wants? If you do not stop rebelling against Yahweh today, he will be angry with all of us Israelis tomorrow.' **19** "If [you think that Yahweh considers] that your land here is not suitable for worshiping him, come back to our land where Yahweh's Sacred Tent is. We can share our land with you. But do not rebel against Yahweh and against us by building another altar for Yahweh our God. **20** Do you remember what happened when Zerah's son Achan refused to obey [Yahweh's command to destroy everything in Jericho]? That one man disobeyed God's command, but many [HYP] other Israelis were punished. Achan died because of his sin, but other Israelis also died." **21** The [leaders of the] tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh replied, **22** "Yahweh, the Almighty God, knows [why we did that], and we want you to know, too. If we have done something wrong [against Yahweh], you may kill us. **23** If we have disobeyed one of Yahweh's laws, we request that he should punish us. We did not build that new altar to completely burn animals as sacrifices to Yahweh, or to offer on it sacrifices of grain or sacrifices to maintain fellowship with God. **24** "This is the reason that we built that altar: We were afraid/worried that some day your descendants would say that our descendants are not true Israelis. We were afraid that then they would say, 'You are not allowed to worship Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship]. **25** Yahweh caused the Jordan River to be a boundary between us and you people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad. So you are not allowed to worship Yahweh.' We were worried that your descendants would force our descendants to stop worshiping Yahweh. **26** "That is the reason that we decided to build that [new] altar. But it is not an altar for completely burning sacrifices of animals and [burning other] sacrifices.

27 We built that new altar to prove/show to you and to us and to all of our descendants that we worship Yahweh by completely burning animal sacrifices and offerings of grain and offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh [only at the place Yahweh chooses]. We do not want your descendants to say to our descendants, 'You do not belong to Yahweh.' 28 "In the future, if your descendants say that, our descendants can say, 'Look at the altar that our ancestors made! It is exactly like Yahweh's altar [that our ancestors built], but we do not burn sacrifices on it. It only shows that we are Israelis!' 29 We certainly do not want to rebel against Yahweh or stop doing what he desires, by building an altar for completely burning some sacrifices and burning grain offerings and making [other] sacrifices. [We know that] there is only one true altar for Yahweh our God, and it is in front of the Sacred Tent [at Shiloh]." 30 When Phinehas the priest and the other [ten] leaders heard what they said, they were pleased. 31 So Phinehas said to them, "Now we know that Yahweh is with all of us Israelis, and that you were not rebelling against him [when you built that altar]. And we know that Yahweh will not punish us Israelis [because of your having done that]." 32 Then Phinehas and the Israeli leaders left the people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad in the Gilead region, and returned to Canaan. There they told the other Israelis what had happened. 33 They were pleased, and they thanked God. And they did not talk any more about fighting against the people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad and destroying everything in their land. 34 The people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad named their new altar 'A reminder to us all that Yahweh is God'.

23 Yahweh enabled the Israelis to live peacefully [for many years] with the people-groups that were around them. 2 Joshua was now very old. [One day] he summoned the leaders of the tribes of Israel, the leaders of the clans, the judges, and [other] officials. He said to them, "I am now very old. 3 You people have seen what Yahweh our God has done to help you defeat the people-groups [that lived in this land]. Yahweh our God has fought for you. 4 But do not forget that he has given to you all this land, from the Jordan [River in the east] to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, all this land that I have allotted to you. 5 Yahweh our God will compel the people who are still living there to leave. He will push them out as you advance. Then the land will be yours, as Yahweh has promised you. 6 "Be sure that you obey all the laws that are in the book that Moses wrote. Do not disobey any part of it [IDM]. 7 Do not associate with the people who live among us [who are not Israelis and who worship other gods]. Do not mention the names of their gods, and do not use the names of their gods when you promise to do something. Do not serve their gods or worship them. 8 You must continue to do what Yahweh our God wants us to do, as you have been doing. 9 "Yahweh has forced [many] very powerful people-groups to leave as you advanced. No people-group has been able to defeat you. 10 Each of you will be able to cause 1,000 of them to run away, because Yahweh your God will fight for you, just like he promised to do. 11 So be sure that you continue to love Yahweh our God. 12 "If you turn away from doing what Yahweh desires and you associate with the people who are not Israelis, and if you marry them, 13 then you can be sure that Yahweh our God will not help you to expel those people-groups from your land. They will be [like] traps [DOU, MET] [that will catch you]. They will be [like] whips [that strike] your backs, and like thorns [that will scratch] your eyes. As a result, none of you will be left in this good land that Yahweh our God is giving to you. 14 "It is almost time for me to die, like everyone does [EUP]. You know in your hearts [DOU] that Yahweh has done for you [LIT] everything that he promised to do. 15 He has given to you all the good things that he promised. In the same way, the other things that he promised, [things that are not good], will also happen. He said that if you do what is evil, he will get rid of you and send you away from this good land that he has given to you. 16 That will happen if you do not obey the commands that Yahweh our God told you to obey. If you serve other gods and worship them, Yahweh will become very angry with you. Very quickly [he will expel you from] this good land that he has given to you, [and] none of you will be left here."

24 [Many years later], Joshua summoned representatives of all the tribes of Israel. He gathered together the elders, the leaders, the judges, and the other officials at Shechem [city]. He told them to listen to what God wanted to tell them. 2 Joshua said to all of them, "This is what Yahweh, the God we Israeli people worship, is saying: 'Long ago, your ancestors, including Abraham's father Terah and Abraham's younger brother Nahor, lived on the east side of the Euphrates River. 3 But I took your ancestor Abraham from that land east of the Euphrates River, and I led him as he lived in various places in this land of Canaan, and I enabled him to have many descendants. First, I enabled him to have a son, Isaac. 4 When Isaac grew up, I enabled him to have twin sons, Jacob and Esau. I enabled Esau to live in the hilly area in Seir region, but many years later Jacob and his sons and their families went down to live in Egypt. 5 "[Many years later], I sent Moses and his older brother Aaron to help your people, and I caused [the people of] Egypt to suffer very much because of what I did there. Then I enabled your ancestors to leave Egypt. 6 When

I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, they came to the Red Sea. The Egyptian army pursued them, some riding in chariots and others on horses, and they also arrived at the Red Sea. **7** Then [your ancestors] pleaded with me to help them. So he caused (darkness/a very dark cloud) to come between your ancestors and the Egyptian army, so that the Egyptian army could not see your ancestors. I separated the water in the Red Sea so that your ancestors could cross it, but when the Egyptian army tried to cross in the same way to pursue them, I caused the water to come back and cover them, and the Egyptian soldiers all drowned, as your ancestors watched and were amazed [IDM]. But after that, you lived in the desert for many years. **8** "Then I brought your [ancestors] to the area where the groups who were descendants of Amor lived, east of the Jordan River. They fought against you, but I enabled you to defeat them [IDM]. I [enabled you to] destroy them so that you could live in their land [IDM]. **9** Then, Zippor's son Balak, the King of Moab, (decided that his army would fight against/opposed) the Israelis. He summoned Beor's son Balaam and asked him to curse you. **10** But I would not do what Balaam asked, so he (blessed/said that I would do great things for) you four times, and I did not enable the army of Moab to defeat you [IDM]. **11** "Then you all crossed the Jordan River and came to Jericho. The people of Jericho prepared to fight against you, [and the armies of] the descendants of Amor, Periz, Canaan, Heth, Girgash, Hiv, and Jebus [all prepared to do the same thing] but I enabled you to defeat [IDM] them all. **12** I am the one who caused them to panic as you advanced and enabled you to defeat them, as I had enabled you to do earlier to the two kings of the groups who were descendants of Amor. You did not defeat them by using your own bows and arrows and swords; [it was I who defeated them]. **13** So I gave you a land that you had not tilled/planted, and I gave you cities that you did not build. [Now] you live in those [cities] and you eat the grapes from the grapevines that you did not plant, and you eat olives from trees that you did not plant.'" **14** [Then Joshua said to the people], "[Because of all that] Yahweh [has done for you], revere him, and serve/worship him very faithfully. Throw away the idols that your ancestors worshiped on the east/other side of the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve only Yahweh. **15** But if you do not want to serve/worship Yahweh, you should decide today what [gods] you will serve/worship. You should decide whether you will serve/worship the gods that your ancestors who lived on the other/east side of the Euphrates River served, or whether you will serve/worship the gods that the descendants of Amor, who previously lived in the land where you are now living, [serve/worship]. But as for me and my family [MTY], we will serve/worship Yahweh!" **16** The Israeli people answered, "We will never quit [serving/worshiping] Yahweh! We would never [think of] [IDM] serving/worshiping other gods! **17** It was our God, Yahweh, who brought our parents and grandparents up out of Egypt. [He rescued them] from that land where they were slaves. As he rescued them, they saw him perform great miracles. He protected them all the time when they were traveling. He protected them from all the people-groups through whose territory they traveled. **18** As our forefathers advanced, Yahweh expelled the descendants of Amor and the other people-groups who lived in this land. Yahweh is our God, so [we are saying that] we also will serve/worship him." **19** Joshua replied to the people, "[I think that] you are not able to serve/worship Yahweh, because he is a holy God. He will not forgive your sinning and rebelling [against him]. He demands that you serve/worship only him [IDM]. **20** He has been good to you [in the past], but if you turn away from him and serve/worship foreign/other gods, he will turn [against you] and he will cause you to experience disasters. He will punish [IDM] you severely!" **21** But the people replied to Joshua, "No, [we will not turn away from worshiping/serving Yahweh] We will serve/worship Yahweh!" **22** Then Joshua said, "You yourselves are saying that you have decided to serve/worship Yahweh." They replied, "Yes, we are saying that." **23** Then Joshua said, "Since [you have decided] that, you must throw away all the other gods/idols that you have among you. You must also promise that you will wholeheartedly give yourselves to Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [serve/worship]." **24** The people replied, "We will serve/worship Yahweh, our God, and obey him." **25** That day, Joshua established an agreement between the people and Yahweh. He wrote for them all the laws that they were required to obey. **26** He wrote all those laws on a scroll. He called it 'The laws of God'. Then he [told some men to] set up a large stone there at Shechem, under the [large] oak tree near the place where [they worshiped] Yahweh. **27** He said to all the people, "Look! [It is as though] this stone has heard everything that Yahweh said to you [and that you promised Yahweh]. It will serve as a witness against you if you rebel against your God!" **28** Then Joshua sent the people away, and all of them returned to their own areas/homes. **29** Some time after that, Nun's son Joshua, the faithful servant of Yahweh, died. He was 110 years old when he died. **30** The Israeli people buried his body on his own property in Timnath-Serah [town] town. It is north of Gaash Mountain in the hilly area of the tribe who were descendants of Ephraim. **31** The Israeli people served/worshiped Yahweh as long as Joshua was

alive. After Joshua died, they continued serving/worshiping Yahweh while the elders who had experienced everything that Yahweh had done for the Israeli people were still alive.
32 Joseph's bones, which the Israeli people had brought with them from Egypt, were also buried at Shechem. The people buried them in the piece of land that Jacob had bought long ago for 100 pieces of silver from Hamor, the father of Shechem. That piece of land was in the area that was given to the people who were descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph's sons. **33** Eleazar, the Supreme Priest, the son of Aaron, also died. They buried his body at Gibeah, in the area that had been given to Eleazar's son Phinehas, in the hilly area that belonged to the people who were descendants of Ephraim.

Judges

1 After Joshua died, the Israeli people asked Yahweh, "Which [of our tribes] should attack the Canaan people-group first?" **2** Yahweh replied, "I will enable the tribe of Judah to defeat [IDM] the Canaan people-group." **3** The men of Judah went to their fellow Israelis, [the men] from the tribe of Simeon, and said to them, "Come and help us to fight the Canaan people-group [in order that we can take from them] the land [that Yahweh] allotted to us. If you do that, we will go with you [and help you] conquer the people in the land [that Yahweh promised to give to] you." So the men from the tribe of Simeon went with the men of the tribe of Judah. **4** When the men of those two tribes attacked, Yahweh enabled them to defeat 10,000 men of the Canaan people-group and the Periz people-group [DOU] at Bezek [city]. **5** During the battle they found Adoni-Bezek, the leader of the city, **6** but he [tried to] run away. The Israelis pursued him and caught him. Then they cut off his thumbs and his big toes. **7** Adoni-Bezek said, "[My army captured] 70 kings. We cut off their thumbs and big toes. After that, [we forced] those kings to eat scraps that fell from our table. Now God has (paid me back for/done to me like) [what we did to them]." Then the men of Judah took Adoni-Bezek to Jerusalem, and he died there. **8** The army of Judah fought against the men of Jerusalem, and they captured the city. With their swords they killed [the people who lived there] and they burned [the houses in] the city. **9** Later, the men of Judah went down to fight the Canaan people-group who lived in the hilly area, in the desert to the south, and in the foothills [to the west]. **10** The men of Judah also went to fight against the Canaan people-group who lived in Hebron [city], which at that time was named Kiriath-Arba. They defeated [the armies of kings] Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. **11** Then they left that area and went to fight against the people living in Debir [city], which was previously named Kiriath-Sepher. **12** [Before they attacked the city], Caleb said to them, "If one of you attacks and captures Kiriath-Sepher, I will allow him to marry my daughter." **13** Othniel, who was the son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz, captured the city. So Caleb gave his daughter Acsah to him, to become his wife. **14** When Acsah married Othniel, she told him to ask her father to give him a field. [But she decided to ask him herself. She rode to Caleb's house on her donkey], and when she got off the donkey, Caleb [could see that something was troubling her. So he] asked her, "What do you want?" **15** She replied, "I want you to do a favor for me. You have given me some land in the southern desert, [but it is very dry there]. So please also give me some [land that has] springs of water." So Caleb gave her some land on higher ground that had a spring, and some land on lower ground that also had a spring. **16** The people of the Ken people-group who were descendants of Moses' father-in-law left Jericho, which was called 'The City of Palm Trees'. They went with some of the men of Judah to live with them in the southern desert area, near Arad [city]. **17** The men of Judah and their fellow Israelis from the tribe of Simeon defeated the people of the Canaan people-group who lived in Zephath [city]. They completely destroyed the city and gave it a new name, Hormah, [which means 'complete destruction']. **18** The men of Judah also captured Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron [cities] and all the land that is near those cities. **19** Yahweh helped the men of Judah to capture the hilly area, but they could not force the people who were living in the plains to leave, because [those people had better weapons—] had iron chariots. **20** Hebron [city] was given to Caleb because Moses had promised him that he could have that city. And Caleb forced the three clans descended from Anak to leave that area. **21** But the people of the tribe of Benjamin could not force the people of the Jebus people-group to leave Jerusalem. So, since that time the people of the Jebus people-group have lived in Jerusalem with the people of the tribe of Benjamin. **22** The men of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh went to fight against [the men of] Bethel [city], and Yahweh helped them. **23** They sent some spies to [find out everything that they could find out about] Bethel, which was previously called Luz. **24** The spies saw a man who was coming out of the city. They said to him, "If you show us a way to get into the city, we will be kind to you [and we will not kill you]." **25** So the man showed them a way to enter the city. The men of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh entered the city and killed all the people with their swords, but they did not kill the man [who showed them how to get into the city], and they did not kill his family. **26** That man went to the area where the descendants of Heth lived, and built a city. He named the city Luz, and that is still the name of that city. **27** There were people of the Canaan people-group who lived in Beth-Shan, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, and Megiddo [cities] and in the surrounding villages. [The men of] the tribe of Manasseh did not force those people to leave those towns, because the people of the Canaan people-group were determined to stay there. **28** Later, the Israelis became (stronger/more numerous), and they forced the people of the Canaan people-group to work for them [as their slaves], but they did not force all the people of the Canaan people-group to leave their land. **29** [The men of] the tribe of Ephraim did not force the people of the Canaan people-group to leave Gezer [city]. So the people of the Canaan people-group continued to live with

the people of the tribe of Ephraim. **30** [The men of] the tribe of Zebulun did nor compel the people of the Canaan people-group who were living in Kitron and Nahalol [cities] to leave. They stayed there and lived among the people of the tribe of Zebulun, but the people of Zebulun forced them to work for them as their slaves. **31** [The men of] the tribe of Asher did not force the people of the Canaan people-group who lived in Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Aczib, Helbah, Aphek and Rehob [cities] to leave. **32** So the people of the tribe of Asher lived among them. **33** [The men of] the tribe of Naphtali did not compel the people who lived in Beth-Shemesh and Beth-Anath [cities] to leave, so the people in those two cities continued to live there, but the people of the Canaan people-group were forced to work as the slaves of the people of the tribe of Naphtali. **34** The people of the Amor people-group forced the people of the tribe of Dan to live in the hills. They did not allow them to come down [and live] on the plain. **35** The people of the Amor people-group were determined to stay in Heres Mountain and in Aijalon and Shaalbim [cities]. But when the Israelis became (stronger/more numerous), they forced the people of the Amor people-group to work as their slaves. **36** The land where the Amor people-group lived extended from Scorpion Pass [toward the west] beyond Sela [town], up into the hilly area.

2 Yahweh [appeared in the form of] an angel [and] went up from Gilgal to [a place that was later called] Bokim. He said [to the Israeli people], "I brought your [ancestors] up here from Egypt. I led them into this land that I solemnly promised to give to your ancestors. I said to them, 'The agreement that I made with you, as for me, I will never (break it/say that it is ended). **2** But as for you, you must never make a peace agreement with the people who live in this land. You must tear down the altars [where they make sacrifices to idols].' But you have not obeyed me. **3** So now, I am telling you that I will not expel [your enemies] as you advance. They will be like thorns in your sides. And [they] will try to trap you [by making you worship] their idols." **4** After he told that to all the Israelis, the people cried loudly. **5** They called that place Bokim, [which means 'weeping']. There they offered sacrifices to Yahweh. **6** After Joshua sent the Israeli people away, each group went to possess the land that had been allotted to them. **7** They served Yahweh as long as Joshua was alive, and as long as the elders, those who had seen all the great things that Yahweh had done for Israel, were alive. **8** Then Yahweh's servant Joshua died. He was 110 years old when he died. **9** They buried his body in the area he had received [from Moses], at Timnath-Serah, in the area where the descendants of Ephraim lived, north of Gaash Mountain. **10** After all the people died who lived at the same time as Joshua [EUP], a group of people grew up who did not know Yahweh, and did not know what great things he had done for the Israeli people. **11** They did things that Yahweh said were very evil. They worshiped [idols that represented the god] Baal and the goddess Astarte. They worshiped [DOU] the various gods that the people-groups around them worshiped. They stopped worshiping Yahweh, the God their ancestors worshiped, the one who had brought their ancestors out of Egypt. That caused Yahweh to be very angry. **14** So he allowed people from other groups to raid them and steal their crops and animals. They were no longer able to resist their enemies, and Yahweh allowed all their enemies around them to defeat them. **15** Whenever the Israelis went to fight [their enemies], Yahweh [MTY] was opposing them, and allowed their enemies to defeat them, just as he had promised he would do. So the Israelis were greatly distressed. **16** Then Yahweh gave leaders to them. These leaders rescued the Israelis from the people who were raiding them. **17** But the Israelis still would not pay attention to their leaders. Instead, they went to the idols, [acting like] prostitutes [who gave themselves to men who were not their husbands] [MET], and they worshiped those idols. They were not like their ancestors. Their ancestors obeyed what Yahweh commanded, but their descendants quickly stopped behaving as their ancestors had behaved. **18** Whenever Yahweh gave a leader to them, he helped that leader and enabled him to rescue the people from their enemies. He helped them like that as long as that leader was alive. Yahweh pitied them as they groaned because they were being oppressed and caused to suffer. **19** But after that leader died, the people went back to behaving in ways even more evil than their ancestors had behaved. They worshiped other gods and bowed down to them and did all [LIT] the things that they thought those gods wanted them to do. **20** So Yahweh was very angry with the Israeli people. He said, "These people have disobeyed the agreement I made with their ancestors. They have not done what I told them to do. **21** So I will no longer expel the people-groups that Joshua left in this land when he died. **22** I will use them to test the Israeli people to see whether they will do what I want them to do, as their ancestors did." **23** Yahweh had allowed those people-groups to stay in that land. He did not expel them by allowing Joshua [and his men] to defeat them.

3 At that time there were still many people-groups in Canaan. Yahweh left them there to test the Israeli people. But many of the Israelis in Canaan were ones who had not fought in any of the wars in Canaan. So Yahweh also left those people-groups in Canaan so that the descendants of those who had not fought in any of the wars might learn

how to fight. 3 [This is a list of] the people-groups that Yahweh left there: The Philistines and their five leaders, the people living in the area near Sidon [city], the descendants of Canaan, and the descendants of Hiv who were living in the mountains of Lebanon between Baal-Hermon Mountain and Lebo-Hamath. 4 Yahweh left these people-groups there to test the Israelis, to see if they would obey his commands which he had told Moses to give them. 5 The Israelis lived among the Canaan people-group, the Hiv people-group, the Amor people-group, the Periz people-group, the Hiv people-group, and the Jebus people-group. 6 [Moses had told the people not to associate with any of those people]. But the Israelis took daughters of people from those people-groups [to be their own wives], and gave their own daughters to men of those groups, to marry them. And [as a result] they started to worship the gods of those people-groups. 7 The Israelis did things that Yahweh said were very evil. They forgot about Yahweh, their God, and they started to worship [the idols that represented] the god Baal and the goddess Asherah. 8 Yahweh became very angry with the Israelis. So he allowed king Cushan from Mesopotamia to conquer them and rule them for eight years. 9 But when they pleaded to Yahweh [to help them], he gave them a leader to rescue them. He was Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz. 10 Yahweh's Spirit came upon him, and he became their leader. He [led an army that] fought against [the army of] Cushan, and defeated them. 11 After that, there was peace in the land for 40 years, until Othniel died. 12 After that, the Israelis again did things that Yahweh said were very evil. As a result, he allowed the army of King Eglon, who ruled [the] Moab [area], to defeat the Israelis. 13 Eglon persuaded the leaders of the Ammon and Amalek people-groups to join their armies with his army to attack Israel. They captured [Jericho, which was called] 'The City of Palm Trees'. 14 Then King Eglon ruled the Israelis for eighteen years. 15 But then the Israelis again pleaded to Yahweh [to help them]. So he gave them another leader to rescue them. He was Ehud, a left-handed man, the son of Gera, from the descendants of Benjamin. The Israelis sent him to King Eglon to give him their yearly protection money. 16 Ehud had with him a double-edged dagger, about a foot and a half long. He strapped it to his right thigh, under his clothes. 17 He gave the money to King Eglon, who was a very fat man. 18 Then Ehud started to go back home with the men who had carried the money. 19 When they arrived at the stone carvings near Gilgal, [he told the other men to go on, but] he himself turned around and went back [to the king of Moab. When he arrived at the palace], he said to the king, "Your majesty, I have a secret message for you." So the king told all his servants to be quiet, and sent them out of the room. 20 Then, as Eglon was sitting alone in the upstairs room of his summer palace, Ehud came close to him and said, "I have a message for you from God." As the king got up from his chair, 21 Ehud reached with his left hand and pulled the dagger from his right thigh, and plunged it into the king's belly. 22 He thrust it in so far that the handle went into the king's belly, and the blade came out the king's back. Ehud did not pull the dagger out. [He left it there, with] the handle buried in the king's fat. 23 Then Ehud left the room. He went out to the porch. He shut the doors to the room and locked them. 24 After he had gone, King Eglon's servants came back, but they saw that the doors of the room were locked. They said, "The king must be defecating in the inner room." 25 So they waited, but when the king did not open the doors of the room, after a while they were worried. They got a key and unlocked the doors. And they saw that their king was lying on the floor, dead. 26 Meanwhile, Ehud escaped. He passed by the stone carvings and arrived at Seirah, in the hilly area where the descendants of Ephraim lived. 27 There he blew a trumpet [to signal that the people should join him to fight the people of Moab]. So the Israelis went with him from the hills. They went down [toward the Jordan river], with Ehud leading them. 28 He said to the men, "Yahweh is going to allow us to defeat your enemies, the people of Moab. So follow me!" So they followed him down to the river, and they stationed some of their men at the place where people can walk across the river, in order that they could [kill any people from Moab who tried to] cross the river [to escape]. 29 At that time, the Israelis killed about 10,000 people from Moab. They were all strong and capable men, but not one of them escaped. 30 On that day, the Israelis conquered the people of Moab. Then there was peace in their land for 80 years. 31 After Ehud [died], Shamgar became their leader. He rescued the Israelis [from the Philistines. In one battle] he killed 600 Philistines with an (ox goad/sharp wooden pole).

4 After Ehud died, the Israelis again started doing things Yahweh said were very evil. 2 So he allowed the army of Jabin, one of the kings of Canaan land, who ruled in Hazor [city], to conquer the Israelis. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-Haggoyim. 3 Sisera's [army] had 900 chariots. For 20 years he oppressed the Israelis. Then they pleaded to Yahweh to help them. 4 At that time Deborah, who was the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophetess who had become the leader in Israel. 5 She would sit under her palm tree at a place between Ramah and Bethel, in the hilly area where the descendants of Ephraim lived, and people would come to her and ask her to settle disputes between them. 6 One day she summoned Barak,

the son of Abinoam, when he was in Kedesh, in the area where the descendants of Naphtali lived. She said to him, "This is what Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis worship, is commanding you to do: 'Take with you 1,000 men, some from the descendants of Naphtali and some from the descendants of Zebulun, and lead them to Tabor Mountain. **7** Yahweh will lure Sisera, the commander of King Jabin's army, to come with his chariots and his army, to the Kishon River, [a few miles away]. I will enable your men to defeat them there.'" **8** Barak replied, "I will go only if you go with me." **9** She replied, "Okay, I will go with you. But because that is what you have decided to do, Yahweh will enable a woman to defeat Sisera, and the result will be that (you will not be honored/people will not honor you) [for doing that]." **10** So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. There he summoned men from Zebulun and Naphtali. Ten thousand men came to him, and then they went together with Deborah [to Tabor Mountain]. **11** At that time Heber, one of the descendants of the Ken people-group, had moved [with his wife Jael] from the area where that group lived, and set up his tent near the big oak tree at Zaanannim, near Kedesh. Heber was a descendant of Moses' brother-in-law Hobab. **12** Someone told Sisera that Barak had gone up on Tabor Mountain [with an army]. **13** So he gathered his troops with their 900 chariots, and they marched from Harosheth-Haggoyim to the Kishon River. **14** Then Deborah said to Barak, "Get ready! This is the day that Yahweh will enable your [army] to defeat the army of Sisera. Yahweh is going ahead of you!" So Barak led his men as they descended from Tabor Mountain. **15** As they advanced, Yahweh caused Sisera and all his chariots and his army to have great difficulty maneuvering/moving around. So Sisera jumped down from his chariot and ran away. **16** But Barak and his men pursued the other chariots and the enemy soldiers as far as Harosheth-Haggoyim. They killed all of the men in Sisera's army. Not one man survived. **17** But Sisera ran to Jael's tent. He did that because [his boss], King Jabin of Hazor [city], was a good friend of [Jael's husband] Heber. **18** Jael went out to greet Sisera. She said to him, "Sir, come into my tent! Do not be afraid!" So he went into the tent [and lay down], and she covered him with a blanket. **19** He said to her, "I'm thirsty; can you give me some water?" So she opened a leather container of milk, and gave him a drink. Then she covered him with the blanket again. **20** He said to her, "Stand in the entrance of the tent. If someone comes and asks 'Is anyone else here?', say 'No.'" **21** Sisera was very exhausted, so he soon was asleep. While he was sleeping, Jael crept quietly to him, holding a hammer and a tent peg. She pounded the peg into his skull, and all the way through his head into the ground, and he died. **22** When Barak passed by Jael's tent to look for Sisera, she went out to greet him. She said, "Come in, and I will show you the man you are searching for!" So he followed her into the tent, and he saw Sisera lying there, dead, with the tent peg through his head. **23** On that day God enabled the Israelis to defeat [the army of] Jabin, the king of the people of Canaan. **24** From that time, the Israeli people continued to become stronger, and [the army of] King Jabin continued to become weaker. Finally the Israelis were able to completely subdue the people ruled by the king of Canaan.

5 On that day, Deborah sang this song, along with Barak:
2 "When the leaders of the Israeli people really lead them, and the people follow them, [it is time to] praise Yahweh! **3** Listen, you kings! Pay attention, you leaders! I will sing to Yahweh. With this song I will praise Yahweh, the God we Israelis worship. **4** O Yahweh, when you came from Seir, when you marched from that land [better known as] Edom, the earth shook, and rain poured down from the skies. **5** The mountains shook when you came, just like Sinai Mountain shook when you appeared there, because you are Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis worship. **6** "When Shamgar was our leader and when Jael ruled us, [we were afraid to walk on] the main roads; instead, caravans of travelers walked on winding [less traveled] roads [to avoid being molested]. **7** People left their small villages, [and moved into the walled cities] until I, Deborah, became their leader. [I became like] a mother to the Israeli people. **8** When the Israeli people [abandoned Yahweh and] chose new gods, enemies attacked the gates of the cities, and then [they took away] the shields and spears from 40,000 Israeli soldiers. Not one shield or spear was left. **9** I am thankful for the leaders and soldiers who volunteered [to fight]. Praise Yahweh [for them!] **10** "You wealthy people who ride on donkeys, sitting on nice padded saddles, and you people who just walk on the road, you all listen! **11** Listen to the voices of the singers who gather at the places where [the animals drink] water. They tell about how Yahweh acted righteously when he enabled the Israeli warriors to conquer [their enemies]. "Yahweh's people marched down to the gates of our city. **12** The people came to my house and shouted, 'Deborah, wake up! Wake up and start singing!' They also shouted, 'Barak, son of Abinoam, get up, and capture our enemies!' **13** Later, some of the Israeli people came down [from Tabor Mountain] with us, their leaders. These men who belonged to Yahweh came with me to fight their strong enemies. **14** Some came from the tribe descended from Ephraim. They came from land that once belonged to the descendants of Amalek. And men from the tribe descended from Benjamin followed them. Troops from the group descended from Makir also came down, and

officers from the tribe descended from Zebulun came down, carrying staffs. **15** Leaders from the tribes descended from Issachar joined Barak and me. They followed Barak, rushing down into the valley. But men from the tribe descended from Reuben could not decide whether or not to join us. **16** Why did you men stay at your sheep pens, waiting to hear the shepherds whistle for their flocks of sheep to come to the pens? Men in the tribe descended from Reuben could not decide whether they would join us to fight our enemies, or not. **17** Similarly, the men living in the Gilead area stayed at home, east of the Jordan River. And the men from the tribe descended from Dan, why did they stay home? The tribe descended from Asher sat by the seashore. They stayed in their coves. **18** But men from the tribe descended from Zebulun risked (their lives/were ready to die fighting) on the battlefield, and men descended from Naphtali were ready to do that, also. **19** "The kings of Canaan fought us at Taanach, near the springs in Megiddo [Valley]. [But since they did not defeat us], they did not carry away any silver or other treasures from the battle. **20** [It was as though] the stars in the sky fought for us [and as though] those stars in their paths fought against Sisera. **21** The Kishon River swept them away— that river that has been there for ages. I will tell myself to be brave and continue marching on. **22** The hooves of the horses of Sisera's [army] pounded the ground. Those powerful horses kept galloping along. **23** The angel sent by Yahweh said, 'Curse the people of Meroz [town], because they did not come to help Yahweh to defeat the mighty warriors [of Canaan].' **24** "But God is very pleased with Jael, the wife of Heber from the Ken people-group. He is more pleased with her than with all the other women who live in tents. **25** Sisera asked for some water, but Jael gave him some milk. She brought him some yogurt/curds in a bowl that was suitable for kings. **26** Then, [when he was asleep], she reached for a tent peg with her left hand, and she reached for a hammer with her right hand. She hit Sisera hard with it and crushed his head. She pounded the tent peg right through his head. **27** He collapsed and fell dead at her feet. **28** "Sisera's mother looked out from her window. She waited for him to return. She said, 'Why is he taking so long to come home in his chariot? Why don't I hear the sound of the wheels of his chariot?' **29** One wise woman replied to her, and she [kept consoling herself by] repeating those words: **30** 'Perhaps they are dividing up the things and the people they captured after the battle. Each soldier will get one or two women. Sisera will get some beautiful robes, and some beautiful embroidered robes for me.' **31** But [that is not what happened]! Yahweh, I hope that all your enemies will die as Sisera did! And I desire that all those who love you will be as strong as the sun when it rises!

6 Again the Israelis did things that Yahweh said were very evil. So he allowed the people of Midian to conquer them and rule them for seven years. **2** The people of Midian treated the Israelis so cruelly that the Israelis fled to the mountains. There they made places to live in caves and animal dens. **3** Whenever the Israelis planted things in their fields, the people of Midian and Amalek and other groups from the east invaded Israel. **4** They set up tents in the area, and then destroyed the crops as far south as Gaza. They did not leave anything for the Israelis' sheep or cattle or donkeys to eat. **5** They came into Israel with their tents and their livestock like a swarm of locusts. There were [so many of them that] arrived riding on their camels that no one could count them. They stayed and ruined the Israelis' crops. **6** The people of Midian took almost everything the Israelis owned. So finally the Israelis pleaded for Yahweh to help them. **7** When the Israelis pleaded with Yahweh to help them because of [what] the people from Midian [were doing to them], **8** he sent to them a prophet, who said, "Yahweh, the God we Israelis worship, says this: 'Your ancestors were slaves in Egypt. **9** But I rescued them from the leaders of Egypt and from all the others who oppressed them. I expelled their enemies from this land, and gave it to your ancestors. **10** I told you all, "I am Yahweh, your God. You are now in the land where the descendants of Amor live, but you must not worship the gods whom they worship." But you did not pay attention to me.'" **11** One day Yahweh appeared [in the form of] an angel and sat underneath a big oak tree at Ophrah [town]. That tree belonged to Joash, who was from the clan of Abiezer. Joash's son Gideon was threshing wheat in the pit where they pressed [grapes to make] wine. He was threshing the grain there in order to hide it from the people of Midian. **12** Yahweh [went over] to Gideon and said to him, "You mighty warrior, Yahweh is helping you!" **13** Gideon replied, "Sir, if Yahweh is helping us, why have all these [bad things] happened to us? We heard about [RHQ] all the miracles that Yahweh performed for our ancestors. We heard people tell us about how he rescued them from [being slaves in] Egypt. But now Yahweh has abandoned us, and we are ruled by the people from Midian." **14** Then Yahweh turned toward him and said, "I will give you strength to enable you to rescue the Israelis from the people of Midian. I am sending you [to do that]!" **15** Gideon replied, "But Yahweh, how can I rescue the Israelis? My clan is the least significant in the whole tribe descended from Manasseh, and I am the least significant person in my whole family!" **16** Yahweh said to him, "I will help you. So

you will defeat the army of Midian [as easily] as if you were fighting only one man!" 17 Gideon replied, "If you are truly pleased with me, do something which will prove that you who are speaking to me are really Yahweh. 18 But do not go away until I go and bring back an offering to you." Yahweh answered, "Okay, I will stay here until you return." 19 Gideon hurried to his home. He [killed] a young goat [and] cooked [it]. Then he took (a half a bushel/18 liters) of flour and baked some bread without yeast. Then he put the cooked meat in a basket, and put the broth [from the meat] in a pot, and took it to Yahweh, who was sitting under the tree. 20 Then Yahweh said to him, "Put the meat and the bread on this rock. Then pour the broth on top of it." So Gideon did that. 21 Then Yahweh touched the meat and bread with the walking stick that was in his hand. A fire flamed up from the rock and burned up everything that Gideon had brought! And then Yahweh disappeared. 22 When Gideon realized that it was really Yahweh [who had appeared in the form of an angel and talked with him], he exclaimed, "O, Yahweh, I have seen you face-to-face [when you had the form of] an angel! [So I will surely die]!" 23 But Yahweh called to him and said, "Do not be afraid! You will not die [because of seeing me]!" 24 Then Gideon built an altar to [worship] Yahweh there. He named it 'Yahweh gives us peace'. That altar is still there in Ophrah [town], in the land that belongs to the descendants of Abiezer. 25 That night Yahweh said to Gideon, "Take the second-best/oldest bull from your father's herd, the bull that is seven years old. [Kill it]. Then tear down the altar that your father built to [worship] the god Baal. Also cut down the pole for worshipping [the goddess] Astarte that is there beside it. 26 Then build a [stone] altar to worship me, your God Yahweh, here on this hill. Take the wood from the pole you cut down and make a fire [to cook the meat of the bull] as a burnt offering to me." 27 So Gideon and his servants did what Yahweh commanded. But they did it at night, because he was afraid what the other members of his family and the other men in town would do to him if they found out that he had done that. 28 Early the next morning, as soon as the men got up, they saw that the altar to Baal had been torn down, and the pole for worshiping Astarte was gone. They saw that there was a new altar there, and on it was what remained from the bull they had sacrificed. 29 The people asked each other, "Who did this?" After they investigated, someone told them that it was Gideon, the son of Joash, [who had done it]. 30 They went to Joash and said to him, "Bring your son out here! (He must be executed/We must kill him), because he destroyed our god Baal's altar and cut down the pole for our goddess Astarte!" 31 But Joash replied, "Are you trying to defend Baal? Are you trying to argue his case? Anyone who tries to defend Baal should be executed by tomorrow morning! If Baal is truly a god, he ought to be able to defend himself, and to get rid of the person who tore down his altar!" 32 From that time, people called Gideon Jerub-Baal, which means 'Baal should defend himself', because he tore down Baal's altar. 33 Soon after that, the armies of the people of Midian and of Amalek and the people from the east gathered together. They crossed the Jordan River [to attack the Israelis]. They set up their tents in Jezreel Valley. 34 Then Yahweh's Spirit took control of Gideon. He blew a ram's horn to summon the men to prepare to fight. So the men of the clan of Abiezer came to him. 35 He also sent messengers throughout the tribes descended from [the four tribes of] Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali [to tell their soldiers to come], and all of them came. 36 Then Gideon said to God, "If you are truly going to enable me to rescue the Israeli people as you promised, 37 confirm it by doing this: Tonight I will put a dry wool fleece on the ground where I thresh the grain. Tomorrow morning, if the fleece is wet with dew but the ground is dry, then I will know that I am the one you will enable to rescue the people of Israel as you promised." 38 And that is what happened. When Gideon got up the next morning, he picked up the fleece, and squeezed out a whole bowlful of water! 39 Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me, but let me ask you to do one more thing. Tonight I will put the fleece out again. This time, let the fleece remain dry, while the ground is wet with the dew." 40 So that night, God did what Gideon asked him to do. The next morning the fleece was dry, but the ground was covered with dew.

7 The next morning, Gideon and his men got up early and went as far as Harod Spring. The army of Midian was camped north of them, in the valley near Moreh Hill. 2 Yahweh said to Gideon, "You have too many soldiers with you. If I allow all of you to fight the army of Midian, [if your army defeats them], they will boast to me that they defeated their enemies by themselves, [without my help]. 3 So tell the men, 'Whoever among you is timid or afraid may leave us and go home.'" So [after Gideon told that to them], 22,000 of them went home. Only 10,000 men were left there. 4 But Yahweh told Gideon, "There are still too many men! Take them down to the spring, and there I will choose from among them, which ones will go with you and which ones will not go.". 5 When Gideon took the men down to the spring, Yahweh told him, "When they drink, put into one group the ones who scoop the water into their hands, and then lap it up like dogs do. Put into another group the ones who kneel down [and bend over] and drink with their mouths in the

water." 6 So when they drank, only 300 men drank from their hands. All the others drank with their mouths down in the water. 7 Then Yahweh told Gideon, "The 300 men who lapped the water from their hands will be your army! I will enable them to defeat the Midian army. Let all the others go home!" 8 So Gideon's 300 men collected the food and rams' horns from all the other men, and then he sent them home. The men of Midian were camping in the valley below Gideon. 9 That night, Yahweh said to Gideon, "Get up and go down to their camp, [and you will hear something that will convince you that] I will enable your men to defeat them. 10 But if you are afraid to attack them by yourself, take your servant Purah with you. 11 Go down and listen to what some of the Midian soldiers are saying. Then you will be very encouraged, and you will be ready to attack their camp." So Gideon took Purah with him, and they went down to the edge of the enemy camp. 12 The armies of the people of Midian and Amalek and from the east had set up their tents and looked like a swarm of locusts. It seemed that their camels were as impossible to count as the grains of sand on the seashore. 13 Gideon crept closer and heard one man telling a friend about a dream. He said, "I just had a dream, and in the dream I saw a round loaf of barley bread tumble down into our Midian camp. It struck a tent so hard that the tent turned upside down and collapsed!" 14 His friend said, "Your dream can mean only one thing. It means that God will enable Gideon, the man of Israel, to defeat all of the armies that are here with us men from Midian." 15 When Gideon heard the [man tell about his] dream and the meaning of that dream, he thanked God. Then he [and Purah] returned to the Israeli camp, and he shouted to the men, "Get up! Because God is enabling you to defeat the men from Midian!" 16 He divided his men into three groups. He gave each man a ram's horn and an empty clay jar. He also gave each of them a torch [that they lit]. 17 Then he said to them, "Watch me. When we come close to the enemy camp, [spread out to surround the camp]. Then do exactly what I do. 18 As soon as I and the men with me blow our ram's horns, you men in the other two groups surrounding the camp blow your horns and shout, '[We are doing this] for Yahweh and for Gideon!'" 19 A while before midnight, just after a new group of Israeli guards took the places of the previous group, Gideon and the 100 men with him arrived at the edge of the Midian camp. Suddenly they all blew their horns, and broke their jars. 20 Then the men in all three groups blew their horns and smashed their jars. They held the torches high with their left hands, and held up the horns with their right hands and alternatively blew them and shouted, "[We have] swords [to fight] for Yahweh and for Gideon!" 21 Each of Gideon's men stood in his position around the enemy camp. As they watched, all the Midian men started running around and shouting in a panic. 22 While the 300 Israeli men kept blowing their horns, Yahweh caused their enemies to start fighting each other with their swords/daggers. Some of them killed each other. The rest fled. Some fled south to Beth-Shittah. Some fled to Zerarah [village], near Tabbath. 23 Then Gideon sent messages to the soldiers in the areas where the descendants of Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh lived, to tell them to come and pursue the army of Midian. 24 He also sent messengers throughout the hilly area where the descendants of Ephraim lived, saying, "Come down to attack the army of Midian. Come down to the Jordan River, to the place where people can wade across, to prevent enemy troops from crossing it! Station men as far south as Beth-Barah." So the men of Ephraim did what Gideon told them to do. 25 They also captured Oreb and Zeeb, the two generals of the Midian army. They killed Oreb at [the big rock which is now called] the rock of Oreb, and they killed Zeeb at [the place where people crush grapes that is now called] the winepress of Zeeb. Afterwards, the Israelis cut off the heads of Oreb and Zeeb and brought them to Gideon, while he was near the Jordan River.

8 Then the descendants of Ephraim said to Gideon, "Why have you acted toward us like this? When you went out to fight against the people of Midian, why did you not summon us [to help you]?" They rebuked Gideon severely. 2 But Gideon replied, "I have done [RHQ] very little compared with what you have done! My small clan of descendants of Abiezer only started the battle, but [your very large group of] descendants of Ephraim [helped me to finish the task very well. It is like] the final grapes of the harvest being much better than the first grapes that are picked. 3 God enabled you to defeat Oreb and Zeeb, the generals of the army from Midian. That is [RHQ] much more important than what I did!" After Gideon told them that, they no longer resented what he had done. 4 Then Gideon and his 300 men [went east and] crossed the Jordan [River]. Although they were very tired, they continued to pursue their enemies. 5 When they arrived at Succoth [town], Gideon said to the town leaders, "Please give my men some food! They are very tired. We are pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." 6 But the leaders of Succoth replied, "You have not caught [RHQ] Zebah and Zalmunna yet. So why should we give food to your troops [now? Catch them first, and then we will give you food]." 7 Gideon replied, "[Because you said that], after Yahweh enables us to defeat Zebah and Zalmunna, we will return. And then we will make whips from thorns from the desert, and with them we will rip the flesh

off your bones!" 8 From there, Gideon [and his 300 men] went to Peniel and asked for food there, but the people gave him the same answer. 9 So he said to the men of Peniel, "After I defeat those kings, I will return and tear down this tower!" 10 By that time, Zebah and Zalmunna had gone to Karkor [town] with 15,000 troops. They were all that were left of the armies that had come from the east. 120,000 of their men had already been killed. 11 Gideon [and his men] went east along the road on which caravans travel. They went past Nobah and Jogbehah [villages] and arrived at the enemy camp by surprise. 12 Zebah and Zalmunna fled, but Gideon's men pursued them and captured them and all their warriors. 13 After that, Gideon and his men [took Zebah and Zalmunna with them and] started to return, going through Heres Pass. 14 There he captured a young man from Succoth, and demanded that he write down the names of all of the leaders in the town. The young man wrote down seventy-seven names. 15 Then Gideon and his men returned to Succoth and said to those leaders, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna. When we were here before, you made fun of me and said 'You have not [RHQ] caught Zebah and Zalmunna yet! After you catch them, we will give your exhausted men some food.'" 16 Then Gideon's men took the town leaders and whipped them with whips made from briers from the desert, to teach them [that they deserved to be punished for not giving them any food]. 17 Then [they went to] Peniel and tore down the tower, and killed all the men in the town. 18 Then Gideon said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "The men you killed near Tabor [Mountain], what did they look like?" They replied, "They were like you; they all looked like they were sons of a king." 19 Gideon replied, "They were my brothers! Just as surely as Yahweh lives, I would not kill you if you had not killed them." 20 Then he turned to his oldest son, Jether. He said to him, "Kill them!" But Jether was only a boy, and he was afraid, so he did not pull out his dagger [to kill them]. 21 Then Zebah and Zalmunna said to Gideon, "Do not ask a young boy to do the work that a man should do!" So Gideon killed both of them. Then he took the gold ornaments from the necks of their camels. 22 Then a group of Israeli men [came to] Gideon and said to him, "You be our ruler! [We want] you and your son and your grandsons [to] be our rulers, because you rescued us from the Midian army." 23 But Gideon replied, "No, I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you. Yahweh will rule over you." 24 Then he said, "I request only one thing. I request that each of you give me one earring from the things you captured after the battle." [All the men descended from Ishmael wore gold earrings.] 25 They replied, "We will be glad to give earrings to you!" So they spread a cloth [on the ground], and each man threw on it one gold earring that he had taken [from a man he had killed in the battle]. 26 The weight of all the earrings was (43 pounds/19.4 kg.). That did not include other things [that they gave to Gideon]—the other ornaments or the pendants or the clothes that the kings of Midian wore or the gold chains that were on the necks of their camels. 27 Gideon made/decorated a sacred vest from the gold, and later he put it in his hometown, Ophrah. But soon the Israeli people started to worship the vest. So it became like a trap [MET] for the people, [causing them to worship it instead of worshiping only God]. 28 That is how the Israelis defeated the people from Midian. The people of Midian did not become strong enough to attack Israel again. So while Gideon was alive, there was peace in the land for 40 years. 29 Gideon went back home to live there. 30 He had many wives, and they bore him seventy sons. 31 He also had a slave wife in Shechem [town], who bore him a son whom he named Abimelech. 32 Gideon died when he was very old. They buried his body in the grave where his father Joash was buried, at Ophrah, in the land belonging to the descendants of Abiether. 33 But as soon as Gideon died, the Israelis [stopped worshiping God and started worshiping the images of the god Baal, like] [MET] adultresses [leave their husbands and go to sleep with other men]. They made a [statue of a] new god called Baal-Berith. 34 They forgot about Yahweh, the one who had rescued them from all their enemies that surrounded them. 35 And even though Gideon had done many good things for the Israelis, they were not kind to Gideon's family.

9 Gideon's son Abimelech went to [talk with] his mother's brothers in Shechem [city]. He said to them and to all his mother's relatives, 2 "Ask all the leaders of your city: 'Do you [think it would be] good for all 70 of Gideon's sons to rule over you? Or would it be better to have only one of his sons, [me], to rule over you?' And do not forget that I am your relative! [MTY]" 3 So Abimelech's mother's brothers spoke to all the leaders of Shechem about what Abimelech had said. They said to each other, "We should allow Abimelech to rule over us, because he is our relative." 4 So the leaders of Shechem took from the temple of [their god] Baal-Berith (almost 2 pounds/0.8 kg.) of silver and gave it to Abimelech. With that silver he paid some worthless troublemakers to help him, and they went with Abimelech wherever he went. 5 They went to Ophrah, his father's town, and murdered 69 of his 70 brothers, the sons of his father Gideon. They killed all those men on one huge rock. But Gideon's youngest son Jotham hid [from Abimelech and his men], and he escaped. 6 Then all the leaders of Shechem and Beth-Millo gathered under the big sacred tree in Shechem. There they appointed

Abimelech to be their leader. 7 When Jotham heard about that, he climbed up Gerizim Mountain. He stood at the top of the mountain and shouted to the people [down below], "You leaders of Shechem, listen to me, in order that God will listen to you! 8 One day the trees decided to appoint a king to rule over all of them. So they said to the olive tree, 'You be our king!' 9 "But the olive tree said, 'No! [I will not be your king] Men and gods enjoy the oil from my fruit. I will not [RHQ] stop producing [olives from which we make] that oil, in order to rule over you other trees!' 10 "Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come and be our king!' 11 "But the fig tree replied, 'No! I do not want to [RHQ] stop producing my good sweet fruit, and rule over you other trees!' 12 "Then the trees said to the grapevine, 'Come and be our king!' 13 "But the grapevine replied, 'No! [I will not be your king] The new wine [that is made from my grapes] causes people and gods [who drink it] to become very happy. I do not want to stop producing grapes and rule over you other trees!' [RHQ] 14 "Then all the trees said to the thornbush, 'Come and be our king!' 15 "The thornbush replied, 'If you truly want to appoint me to be your king, come into the shade of my [tiny branches]. But if you do not want to do that, I hope/desire that fire will come out from me and burn up all the huge cedar trees in Lebanon [country]!'" 16 "[After] Jotham [finished telling them this parable, he] said, "So now [I ask you], were you being completely honest and sincere when you appointed Abimelech to be your king [RHQ]? And have you treated Gideon and his family [RHQ] fairly? Have you rewarded Gideon by honoring him as he deserved [because of all the good things he did for you]? No! 17 "[Do not forget that] my father fought a battle for you, and he was willing to die for you [if that had been necessary], to save you from the Midian people-group. 18 But now you have rebelled against my father's family, and you have killed 69 of his sons on one huge rock. And you have appointed Abimelech—who is the son of my father's slave girl, [not the son of his wife]—to be the king who will rule you people of Shechem. You have done that only because he is one of your relatives! 19 So, if today you have truly acted fairly and sincerely toward Gideon and his family, I hope/desire that he will cause you to be happy and that you will cause him to be happy. 20 But if what you did was not right, I wish/desire that Abimelech will burn up all of you leaders of Shechem and Beth-Millo with fire! And I also hope/desire that the leaders of Shechem and Beth-Millo will cause fire to burn up Abimelech!" 21 [After] Jotham [finished saying that, he] escaped from them and ran away to Beer [town]. He stayed there because he was afraid that his brother Abimelech [would try to kill him]. 22 Abimelech [became the leader of all the people of Israel. He] ruled them for three years. 23 Then God sent an evil spirit [to cause trouble] between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem, with the result that the leaders of Shechem rebelled against Abimelech. 24 The leaders of Shechem had previously helped Abimelech to kill 69 of Gideon's sons, who were his brothers. So now God sent the evil spirit to punish all of them. 25 The leaders of Shechem (set an ambush/sent men to hide) on the hilltops to ambush Abimelech. Those men robbed everyone who passed by. But someone told Abimelech about it, [so he did not go near them]. 26 There was a man named Gaal, the son of Ebed, who moved into Shechem [city], along with his brothers. Soon the leaders of Shechem started to trust him. 27 They went out [of the city] to their vineyards and picked some grapes. They pressed the grapes [to make juice, and then they made wine]. Then they had a feast in the temple of their god, and they ate [a lot of food] and drank [a lot of wine]. Then they cursed Abimelech. 28 Gaal said, "(Why should [we allow] Abimelech to rule over us?/We should not allow Abimelech to rule over us!) [RHQ] He is only one of Gideon's sons [so he really does not belong to us] [RHQ]! And he appointed Zebul, the governor of our city, to be his deputy! We should (serve/be loyal to) [one of the descendants of] Hamor, [the founder of our city], and let him be our leader, not Abimelech [RHQ]! 29 If you would appoint me to be your leader, I would get rid of Abimelech. I would say to him, 'Get your army ready, [and then come to fight us]!'" 30 When someone told Zebul what Gaal said, he was very angry. 31 He secretly sent some messengers to Abimelech. They told him, "Gaal and his brothers have come here to Shechem, and they are causing [the people of] the city to rebel against you. 32 You and your men should get up during the night and go and hide in the fields outside the city. 33 As soon as the sun rises in the morning, get up and attack the city. When Gaal and his men come out to fight against you, you can do to them whatever you want to." 34 So Abimelech and all the men who were with him got up during the night. They [divided into] four groups, [and] hid [in the fields] near Shechem. 35 [The next morning], Gaal went out and stood at the entrance to the city gate. While he was standing there, Abimelech and his soldiers came out of their hiding places [and started walking toward the city]. 36 When Gaal saw the soldiers, he said to Zebul, "Look! There are people coming down from the hills!" But Zebul said, "You are seeing only the shadows [of trees] on the hills. They [are not people; they] only resemble people." 37 But Gaal [looked] again [and] said, "Look! There are people coming down from the top of the sacred mountain! There is a group of them coming down from where the tree is where people talk with

the spirits of dead people!" **38** Zebul said to Gaal, "Now (what good is your bragging?/your bragging is worthless!) [MTY, RHQ] You said, '(Why should we serve Abimelech/We should not allow Abimelech to rule over us)?' You made fun of these men. So now go out and fight them!" **39** So Gaal led the men of Shechem outside [the city] to fight Abimelech [and his men]. **40** Abimelech and his men pursued them, and they killed many of Gaal's men before they could return [safely] inside the city gate. **41** Abimelech then stayed at Arumah, [about five miles away from Shechem], and Zebul's men forced Gaal and his brothers to leave Shechem. **42** The next day, the people of Shechem [got ready to leave the city and work] in their fields. When someone told Abimelech about that, **43** he divided his men into three groups, and told them to hide in the fields. So they did that. And when they saw the people coming out of the city, they jumped up and attacked them. **44** Abimelech and the men who were with him ran to the city gate. The other two groups ran out to the people in the fields and attacked them. **45** Abimelech and his men fought all day. They captured the city and killed all the people. They tore down all the buildings, and then they threw salt over the ruins [in order that nothing would grow there again]. **46** When the leaders who lived in the tower/fortress outside of Shechem heard what had happened, they ran and hid inside the [fortress, which was also a] temple of [their god] El-Berith. **47** But someone told Abimelech that all the leaders had gathered there. **48** So he and all the men who were with him went up Zalmon Mountain [which is near Shechem]. Abimelech cut some branches of trees with an axe, and put them on his shoulders. Then he said to all the men who were with him, "Quickly, do what I have just done!" **49** So his men all cut branches [then carried them down the mountain], following Abimelech. They went to the fortress and piled the branches against its walls. Then they kindled a fire, and the fire burned down the fortress and killed all the people who were inside. So all the people who were inside the fortress—about 1,000 men and women—died. **50** Then Abimelech and his men went to Thebes [city]. They surrounded it and captured it. **51** But there was a strong tower inside the city. So all the men, women, and leaders of the city ran to the tower. When they were all inside, they locked the door. Then they climbed up to the roof of the tower. **52** Abimelech and his men came to the tower and tried to get in the door, [but they could not]. Then Abimelech prepared to light a fire to burn down the door. **53** But when Abimelech came near the doorway, a woman [who was on the roof] dropped a big grinding stone on his head, and crushed his skull. **54** Abimelech quickly called to the young man who carried Abimelech's weapons, and said, "Pull out your sword and kill me with it! I do not want people to say 'It was a woman who killed Abimelech.'" So the young man thrust his sword into Abimelech, and Abimelech died. **55** When the Israeli soldiers saw that Abimelech was dead, they all returned to their homes. **56** In that way God punished Abimelech for the evil things that he had done to his father and especially for killing all 69 of his brothers. **57** God also punished the men of Shechem for the evil things that they had done. And when those things happened, it fulfilled what Gideon's son Jotham said when he cursed [Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem].

10 After Abimelech died, Tola the son of Puah and grandson of Dodo became the leader to rescue the Israeli people [from their enemies]. He belonged to the tribe of Issachar, but he lived in Shamir [city] in the hilly area where the descendants of Ephraim live. **2** He ruled the Israeli people for 23 years. Then he died and was buried in Shamir. **3** After Tola died, Jair, from [the] Gilead [region], became the Israelis' leader, and he ruled them for 22 years. **4** He had thirty sons, and each of them had his own donkey to ride on. They each controlled a different town in [the] Gilead [region]. That region is still named 'The Towns of Jair'. **5** When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon [city]. **6** Again the Israelis did things that Yahweh said were wrong/evil. They worshiped [the idols of their god] Baal and [their goddess] Astarte. They also worshiped the gods of the Aram, Sidon, Moab, and Ammon people-groups, and the gods of the Philistia people-group. They abandoned Yahweh and stopped worshiping him. **7** So Yahweh was very angry with them, and he allowed the Philistia and Ammon people-groups to defeat [IDM] the Israelis. **8** In that same year, those people started to oppress the Israelis who lived in [the] Gilead [region] on the east side of the Jordan [River]. That was where the Amor people-group also lived. were They caused the Israelis who lived in that region to suffer for 18 years. **9** Then the people of the Ammon people-group crossed the Jordan [River] to fight against the people of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim. They caused the Israelis' lives to be very miserable. **10** So the Israelis cried out to Yahweh, saying "We have sinned against you. We have abandoned you, and we have been worshiping [the idols of their god] Baal." **11** Yahweh answered them, saying, "When the people of Egypt, and the Amor and Ammon and Philistia people-groups **12** and the Sidon and Amalek and Maon people-groups were cruel to you, you cried out to me, and then I rescued you. **13** But now you have abandoned me again, and you have been worshiping other gods. So I will not rescue you again. **14** You have chosen those gods [to be the ones that you worship]. So call to them to help you. Allow them to rescue you when

you have a lot of trouble!" 15 But the Israeli people said to Yahweh, "Truly we have sinned. Punish us in whatever way you wish to, but please rescue us now!" 16 Then the Israelis threw away the [idols of the] gods that belonged to other people-groups, and they worshiped Yahweh again. He saw that they were suffering very much, and he felt sorry [IDM] for them. 17 The Ammon people-group gathered to fight [against the Israelis], and they set up their tents in [the] Gilead [region]. The Israeli men also gathered and set up their tents at Mizpah, [which was a city in Gilead]. 18 The Israeli leaders said, "Who will lead our soldiers to attack the Ammon people-group? The one who will lead us will become the leader of all us who live in this Gilead [region]."

11 [There was a man] from [the] Gilead [region] named Jephthah. He was a great warrior. His father was also named Gilead. But his mother was a prostitute. 2 Gilead's wife gave birth to several sons. When they grew up, they forced Jephthah to leave home, saying to him, "You are the son of a prostitute, [not the son of our mother]. So [when] our father [dies], you will not receive any of his property." 3 So Jephthah ran away from his brothers, and he went to the Tob region. While he was there, some worthless men started to spend a lot of time with him. 4 Some time later, the Ammon people-group started to fight against the Israelis. 5 When that happened [DOU], the leaders of [the] Gilead [region] went to Jephthah to bring him back from the Tob region [to their area]. 6 They said to him, "Come [with us] and lead our army, and [help us to] fight against the men from the Ammon people-group!" 7 But Jephthah replied, "You hated me [RHQ] previously! You forced me to leave my father's house! So why are you coming to me now, [asking me to help you] when you are experiencing trouble?" 8 The leaders from Gilead replied, "[Yes, we are having trouble, and] that is the reason that we have come to you now. If you come with us and [help us to] fight against the Ammon people-group, [after we defeat them, we will appoint] you to be the leader of all us people in [the] Gilead [region]." 9 Jephthah replied, "If I go back to Gilead with you to fight against the Ammon people-group, and if Yahweh helps us to defeat them, will you truly appoint me to be your leader?" 10 They replied, "Yahweh is listening to everything that we say. [So he will punish us] if we do not do everything that you tell us to do." 11 So Jephthah went with them back to [the] Gilead [region], and the people appointed him to be their leader and the commander of their army. And Jephthah solemnly promised to Yahweh there at Mizpah [to serve him well]. 12 Jephthah sent some messengers to the king of the Ammon people-group. They asked the king, "What have we [done to make you angry, with the result] that your army is coming to fight [against the people] in our land?" 13 The king replied, "[We have come to fight against you Israelis because] you took our land when you came here from Egypt. You took all our land east of the Jordan [River], from the Arnon [River in the south] to the Jabbok [River in the north]. So if you now give it back to us, there (will be peace between us/we will not fight against you)." 14 [The messengers returned to Jephthah and told him what the king had said]. So Jephthah sent the messengers to the king again. 15 They said to him, "This is what Jephthah says: 'It is not [true] that we Israelis took the land from the Moab people-group and the Ammon people-group. 16 When the Israeli people came out of Egypt, they walked through the desert to the Red Sea, and then [walked across it and traveled to Kadesh town at the border of the Edom region]. 17 They sent messengers to the king of the Edom people-group, to say to him, "Please allow us Israelis to walk across your land." But the king of the Edom people-group refused. Later we sent the same message to the king of the Moab people-group, but he also refused to allow the Israelis to go through his land. So the Israelis stayed at Kadesh [for a long time]. 18 Then the Israelis went into the desert and walked outside the borders of the Edom and Moab regions. They walked east of the Moab region, east of the Arnon [River, which is the eastern border of the Moab region]. They did not cross that river to enter [the] Moab [region]. 19 'Then the Israelis sent a message to Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, who lived in Heshbon [city]. They asked him, "Will you please allow us Israeli people to cross through your land to arrive at the land to which we [are going]." 20 But Sihon did not trust the Israelis; [he thought that they would steal some of the things in his land]. So he gathered all his troops and they set up their tents at Jahaz [village] and then they attacked the Israelis. 21 But Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], enabled the Israeli army to defeat [IDM] Sihon and his army. Then they (took possession of/started to live in) all the land where the Amor people-group had lived. 22 The Israelis took all the land that belonged to the Amor people-group, from the Arnon [River in the south] to the Jabbok [River in the north], and from the desert [in the east] to the Jordan [River in the west]. 23 'It was Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], who forced the Amor people-group to leave as the Israelis advanced. So do you now think that you can force the Israelis to leave [RHQ]? 24 You take the land that your god Chemosh has given to you. And we will live in the land that Yahweh our God has given to us! 25 (You are no/Are you) better than Zippor's son Balak, who was the king of the Moab people-group? He never [RHQ] quarreled with the Israeli people, and he never started to

fight against us [RHQ]! 26 For 300 years the Israeli people have lived in Heshbon and Aroer [cities in your region], and in the surrounding towns, and in all the cities along the Arnon [River]. Why have you people of the Ammon people-group not taken back those cities during all those years [RHQ]? 27 We have not sinned against you, but you are sinning against me by attacking me [and my army]. I trust that Yahweh, the great judge, will decide whether we Israelis are right, or whether you people of the Ammon people-group are right.'" 28 But the king of the Ammon people-group did not pay attention to that message from Jephthah. 29 Then the Spirit of Yahweh took control of Jephthah. Jephthah went through [the] Gilead [region] and through the area where the tribe of Manasseh lived, [to enlist/gather men for his army]. [He finally gathered them together] in Mizpah [city] in [the] Gilead [region] to fight against the Ammon people-group. 30 There Jephthah made a solemn promise to Yahweh. He said, "If you will enable my army to defeat [IDM] the Ammon people-group, 31 when I return from the battle, I will sacrifice to you the first person who comes out of my house [to greet me]. It will be a sacrifice that will be completely burned [on the altar]." 32 Then Jephthah [and his men] went from Mizpah to attack the Ammon people-group, and Yahweh enabled his army to defeat them. 33 Jephthah and his men killed them, from Aroer [city] all the way to the area around the city of Minnith. They destroyed 20 cities, as far as [the city of] Abel Keramim. So the Israelis [completely] defeated the Ammon people-group. 34 When Jephthah returned to his home in Mizpah, his daughter was the first one to come out of the house to meet him. She was [joyfully] playing a tambourine and dancing. She was his only child; he had no sons and no other daughters. 35 When Jephthah saw his daughter, he tore his clothes [to show that he was very sad about what he was going to do]. He said to her, "My daughter, you have caused me to become very sad [DOU] because I made a solemn promise to Yahweh [to sacrifice the first one who came out of my house], and I must do what I promised." 36 His daughter said, "My father, you made a solemn promise to Yahweh. So you must do to me what you promised, because [you said that you would do that if] Yahweh helped you to defeat our enemies, the Ammon people-group." 37 Then she also said, "But allow me to do one thing. (First/before you do what you promised), allow me to go up into the hilly area and wander around for two months. Since I will never be married [and have children], allow me and my friends to go and cry together." 38 Jephthah replied, "All right, you may go." So she left for two months. She and her friends stayed in the hills and they cried for her because she would never be married. 39 After two months, she returned to her father Jephthah, and he did to her what he had vowed. So his daughter never was married. Because of that, the Israelis now have a custom. 40 Every year the young Israeli women go [into the hills] for four days to remember [and cry about what happened to] the daughter of Jephthah.

12 The men of the tribe of Ephraim summoned their soldiers, and they crossed [the Jordan River] to [the town of] Zaphon [to talk with] Jephthah. They said to him, "(Why did you not ask us for help?/You should have requested us) to help your army fight the Ammon people-group. So we will burn down your house while you are in it." 2 Jephthah replied, "The Ammon people-group were oppressing us greatly. When we were prepared to start to attack them, I requested you to come and help us, but you refused. My men and I defeated the Ammon people-group, but you did not help us. 3 When I saw that you would not help us, I was willing to be killed in the battle against the Ammon people-group. But Yahweh helped us to defeat them. [You did not help us when we requested it before], so (why have you come here today to fight against me?/you should not have come here today to fight against me.)" [RHQ] 4 Then Jephthah summoned the men of [the] Gilead [region] to fight [against the men of the tribe of] Ephraim. The men of the tribe of Ephraim said, "You men from [the] Gilead [region] are men who deserted us. Long ago you left us and moved to the area between our tribe and the tribe of Manasseh." [Because of their saying that], the men of [the] Gilead [region] attacked the men of the tribe of Ephraim. 5 The men of Gilead captured that (ford/place where people can walk across) at the Jordan [River] to go to the land where the tribe of Ephraim live. Whenever one of the soldiers from the tribe of Ephraim came to the ford to try to escape, he would say, "Let me cross the river." Then the men of Gilead would ask him, "Are you from the tribe of Ephraim?" If he said "No," 6 they would say to him, "Say the word 'Shibboleth'." The men of Ephraim could not pronounce that word correctly. So if the person from the tribe of Ephraim said 'Sibboleth', [they would know that he was lying and that he was really from the tribe of Ephraim, and] they would kill him there at the ford. So the men of Gilead killed 42,000 people from the tribe of Ephraim at that time. 7 Jephthah, the man from [the] Gilead [region], was a leader of the Israeli people for six years. Then he died and was buried in a town in [the] Gilead [region]. 8 After Jephthah died, a man named Ibzan, from Bethlehem, became the leader of the Israeli people. 9 He had 30 sons and 30 daughters. He forced all his daughters to marry men who were not in his clan, and brought women from outside his clan to marry his sons. He was the leader of the Israeli people for seven years. 10

When he died, he was buried in Bethlehem. 11 After Ibzan died, a man named Elon, from the tribe of Zebulun, became the leader of the Israeli people. He was their leader for ten years. 12 Then he died and was buried in Aijalon [city] in the area where the tribe of Zebulun lives. 13 After Elon died, a man named Abdon who was the son of Hillel, from Pirathon [city, in the area where the tribe of Ephraim live] became the leader of the Israeli people. 14 He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons. Each of them had his own donkey on which to ride. Abdon was the leader of the Israeli people for eight years. 15 When Abdon died, he was buried in Pirathon, in the hilly area where the descendants of Amalek lived previously, [but now it is the area where the tribe of Ephraim lives].

13 Again the Israeli people did things that Yahweh said were very evil. So Yahweh enabled the people of Philistia to conquer them. They ruled over the Israelis for 40 years. 2 There was a man named Manoah from the descendants of Dan who lived in Zorah [town]. His wife was unable to become pregnant, so they had no children. 3 One day, Yahweh appeared to Manoah's wife in the form of an angel, and said to her, "Even though you have not been able to give birth to any children until now, you will soon become pregnant and give birth to a son. 4 [From now until he is born], you must not drink any wine or other alcoholic/fermented drink, and you must not eat any food that will make you unacceptable to God. 5 After you give birth to your son, you must never allow his hair to be cut. He must be dedicated to God from the day he is born until the day he dies. He is the one who will rescue [many of] the Israeli people from the people of Philistia." 6 The woman ran and told her husband, "A prophet came to me. He looked awesome, like an angel from God. I did not ask where he came from, and he did not tell me his name. 7 But he told me, 'You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. Until then, you must not drink any wine or any alcoholic/fermented drink, and you must not eat any food that would make you unacceptable to God. Your son must be dedicated to God from the day he is born until the day he dies.'" 8 Then Manoah prayed to Yahweh, saying, "O Yahweh, I plead with you, allow that prophet whom you sent to us to come again, and teach us how we should raise the boy who will be born to us." 9 God did what Manoah asked, and Yahweh again appeared to his wife in the form of an angel, while she was out in the field. But again her husband Manoah was not with her. 10 So she quickly ran and said to her husband, "The man who appeared to me a few days ago has come back again!" 11 Manoah ran back with his wife, and asked, "Are you the man who talked with my wife a few days ago?" He replied, "Yes, I am." 12 Manoah asked him, "When what you promised occurs [and my wife gives birth to a son], what rules must he obey, and what work will he do [when he grows up]?" 13 Yahweh replied, "Your wife must obey all the instructions I gave her. 14 [Before the baby is born], she must not eat grapes, or drink wine or any other alcoholic/fermented drink, or eat anything that would make her unacceptable to God." 15 Then Manoah said, "Please stay here until we can kill and cook a young goat for you." 16 Yahweh replied, "I will stay here, but I will not eat anything. However, you may kill an animal and sacrifice it as a burned offering to Yahweh." (Manoah did not realize that the [man he thought was an] angel was really Yahweh.) 17 Then Manoah asked him, "What is your name? When what you have promised happens, we want to honor you." 18 Yahweh replied, "(Why do you ask me my name?/You should not ask me my name.) [RHQ] It is (wonderful/it cannot be understood)." 19 Then Manoah killed a young goat and burned it on a rock, along with a grain offering, as a sacrifice to Yahweh. And Yahweh did an amazing thing while Manoah and his wife watched. 20 Flames from the altar blazed up toward the sky, and Yahweh ascended in the flames. When Manoah and his wife saw that, they prostrated themselves on the ground. 21 Although Yahweh did not appear in the form of an angel to Manoah and his wife again, Manoah realized that the [man they thought was an] angel was really Yahweh. 22 So he said, "Now we will die, because we have seen God!" 23 But his wife said, "No, we will not die, because if Yahweh intended to kill us, he would not have accepted the burned offering and the grain offering. And he would not have appeared to us and told us the wonderful thing that would happen to us, and he would not have performed this miracle." 24 When their son was born, they named him Samson. Yahweh blessed him as he grew up. 25 And while he was in Mahaneh-Dan, which is between Zorah and Eshtaol [towns], Yahweh's Spirit began to control him.

14 One day when Samson was in Timnah [town], he saw a young Philistine woman there. 2 When he returned home, he told his mother and father, "I saw a young Philistine woman in Timnah, and I want you to get her for me so I can marry her." 3 His mother and father objected very strongly. They said, "Is there no woman from our tribe, or from the other Israeli tribes, that you could marry? Why must you go to the heathen Philistines to get a wife?" But Samson told his father, "Get her for me! She is the one I want!" 4 His mother and father did not realize that Yahweh was arranging this. He was preparing a way for [Samson to defeat] the Philistines, who were ruling over Israel at that time. 5 So, as Samson was going down to Timnah, followed by his mother and father, a young lion attacked Samson near the

vineyards close to Timnah. 6 Then Yahweh's Spirit came upon Samson powerfully, with the result that he tore the lion apart with his hands. He did it [as easily] as if it were a young goat. But he did not tell his mother and father about it. 7 When they arrived in Timnah, Samson talked with the young woman, and he liked her very much. [And his father made arrangements for the wedding]. 8 Later, when Samson returned to Timnah for the wedding, he turned off the path to see the carcass of the lion. He discovered that [after other creatures had eaten all the flesh], a swarm of bees [had made a hive in the skeleton and] had made some honey. 9 So he scooped some of the honey into his hands and ate some of it as he was walking along. He also gave some of it to his mother and father, but he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the skeleton of the lion, [because anyone dedicated to God was not to touch any corpse]. 10 As his father was making the final arrangements for the marriage, Samson gave a party [for the young men in that area]. That was the custom for men to do when they were about to be married. 11 Thirty young man were invited to the party. 12 Samson said to them, "Allow me to tell you a riddle. If you tel me the meaning of my riddle during these seven days of the celebration, I will give each of you a linen robe and an extra set of clothes. 13 But if you cannot tell me the meaning, you must each give me a linen robe and an extra set of clothes." They replied, "All right. Tell us your riddle." 14 So he said, "From the thing that eats came something to eat; out of something strong came something sweet." But for three days they could not tell him the meaning of the riddle. 15 On the fourth day, they said to Samson's bride, "Ask your husband to tell you the meaning of the riddle. If you do not do that, we will burn down your father's house, with you inside it! Did you invite us here only to make us poor [by forcing us to buy a lot of clothes for your husband]?" 16 So Samson's wife came to him, crying, and said to him, "You do not really love me. You hate me! You have told a riddle to my friends, but you have not told me the meaning of the riddle!" He replied, "I have not told the meaning of the riddle even to my mother and father, so why should I tell it to you?" 17 She continued to cry every time she was with him, all during the rest of the celebration. Finally, on the seventh day, because she continued to nag him, he told her the meaning of the riddle. Then she told it to the young men. 18 So, before sunset on the seventh day, the young men came to Samson and said to him, "What/Nothing is sweeter than honey [RHQ]. What/Nothing is stronger than a lion [RHQ]!" Samson replied, "[You should not force a heifer to] plow a field [MET]. Similarly, if you had not forced my bride to ask me about the riddle [MET], you would not have known the answer to my riddle!" 19 Then Yahweh's Spirit powerfully took control of Samson. He went down to [the coast at] Ashkelon [town], and killed 30 men. He took their clothes [and went back to Timnah] and gave them to the men who had told him the meaning of the riddle. But he was very angry about what had happened, so he went back home to live with his mother and father. 20 So (Samson's wife was given/the bride's father gave Samson's wife) to the man who who had been Samson's best man at the wedding, [but Samson did not know that].

15 During the time that they harvested wheat, Samson took a young goat to Timnah as a present for his wife. He planned to sleep with [EUP] his wife, but her father would not let him go into [her room]. 2 He said to Samson, "I really thought that you hated her. So I gave her to the man who had been your best man at the wedding, and she married him. But look, her younger sister is [RHQ] more beautiful than she is. You can marry her!" 3 Samson replied, "No! And this time I have a right to get revenge on you Philistines!" 4 Then he went out [into the fields] and caught 300 foxes. He tied their tails together, two-by-two. He fastened torches to each pair of tails. 5 Then he lit the torches and let the foxes run through the fields of the Philistines. The fire [from the torches] burned all the grain to the ground, including the grain that had been cut and piled in bundles. The fire also burned down their grapevines and their olive trees. 6 The Philistines asked, "Who did this?" Someone told them, "Samson did it. He married a woman from Timnah, but then his father-in-law gave her to the man who was Samson's best man at the wedding, and she married him." So the Philistines went [to Timnah] and got the woman and her father, and burned them to death. 7 Samson [found out about that, and he] said to them, "Because you have done this, I will not stop until I get revenge on you!" 8 So he attacked the Philistines furiously, and killed many of them. Then he went [to hide] in a cave in the large rock at a place called Etam. 9 The Philistines [did not know where he was, so they] went up to where the descendants of Judah lived, set up their tents near Lehi [town and then raided the town]. 10 The men there asked the Philistines, "Why have you attacked us?" The Philistines replied, "We have come to capture Samson. We have come to get revenge on him for what he did to us." 11 [Someone there knew where Samson was hiding]. So 3,000 men from Judah went down to get Samson at the cave in the rock where he was hiding. They said to Samson, "Do you not realize that the people of Philistia are ruling over us? Do you not realize what they will do to us?" Samson replied, "The only thing I did was that I got revenge on them for what they did to me." 12 But the men from Judah said to

him, “We have come to tie you up and put you in the hands of the Philistines.” Samson said, “All right, but promise me that you yourselves will not kill me!” **13** They replied, “We will just tie you up and take you to the Philistines. We will not kill you.” So they tied him with two new ropes, and led him away from the cave. **14** When they arrived at Lehi, the Philistines came toward him, shouting [triumphantly]. But Yahweh’s Spirit came upon Samson powerfully. He snapped the ropes on his arms as easily as if they were stalks of burned flax, and the ropes fell off his wrists. **15** Then he saw a donkey’s jawbone lying on the ground. It was fresh, [so it was hard]. He picked it up and killed about 1,000 Philistine men with it. **16** Then Samson wrote this poem: “With the jawbone of a donkey I have made them like a heap of [dead] donkeys. With the jawbone of a donkey I killed 1,000 men.” **17** When he finished killing those men, he threw the jawbone away, and later that place was called Jawbone Hill. **18** Then Samson was very thirsty, so he called out to Yahweh, “You have given me strength to win a great victory. So now must I die because of being thirsty, with the result that those heathen Philistines will take away my body [and mutilate it]?” **19** So God caused water to gush out of a depression in the ground at Lehi. Samson drank from it and soon felt strong again. He named that place ‘The spring of the one who called out’. That spring is still there at Lehi. **20** Samson was the leader of the Israeli people for 20 years, but during that time the Philistines [were the ones who really ruled over the land].

16 One day Samson went to Gaza [city in the Philistia area]. He spent some time with a prostitute. **2** People soon found out that Samson was there, so the men of Gaza gathered together at the city gate and waited all night. They said to themselves, “When it dawns tomorrow morning, we will kill him [when he tries to leave the city].” **3** But Samson did not stay there all night. At midnight, he got up. He went to the city gate, he took hold of its two posts, and he lifted it up out of the ground, with its [connecting cross] bar still attached. He put it on his shoulders and carried it [many miles] uphill to Hebron. **4** Later Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah, [and started to live with her]. She lived in Sorek Valley [in the Philistia area]. **5** The Philistine leaders went to her and said, “Find out from Samson what makes him so strong. And find out how we can subdue him and tie him up securely. If you do that, each of us will give you 1,100 pieces of silver.” **6** So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me what makes you so strong, and tell me how someone can subdue you and tie you up.” **7** Samson said, “If someone ties me with seven new bowstrings, ones that are not dry yet, I will become as weak as other men.” **8** So [after Delilah told that to the Philistine leaders], they brought seven new bowstrings to Delilah. **9** Then she hid the men in one of the rooms in her house. Then [while Samson was sleeping], she tied him up with the bowstrings. Then she called out, “Samson! The Philistines have come here to capture you!” But Samson snapped the bowstrings as easily as though they were strings that had been singed in a fire. So the Philistines did not find out what made Samson so strong. **10** Then Delilah said to Samson, “You have deceived me and lied to me! Now tell me [the truth,] how someone can tie you up securely.” **11** Samson replied, “If someone ties me with new ropes, ones that have never been used, I will be as weak as other men.” **12** So again, [she told the Philistine leaders, and] they [came and] hid in the room as they had done before. And again, while Samson was sleeping, she took the new ropes and tied him up with them. Then she called out, “Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!” But Samson snapped the ropes on his arms as easily as if they were threads. **13** Then Delilah said, “You have deceived me and lied to me [again]! Please tell me how someone can tie you up securely!” Samson replied, “If you weave the seven braids of my hair into the threads you are weaving on the loom, and then fasten those threads with the pin [that makes the threads tight], then I will be as weak as other men.” So again, while Samson was sleeping on her lap, Delilah held the seven braids of his hair, and wove them into the threads on the loom, **14** and she tightened them with the pin. Then she called out, “Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!” But Samson woke up and pulled out the pin, and pulled his hair from the threads on the loom. **15** Then Delilah said to him, “How can you say that you love me when you do not tell me the truth about yourself? You have deceived me three times, and you still have not told me what really makes you so strong!” **16** Day after day she nagged him like that. He thought he would die from her nagging [IDM]. **17** Finally Samson told her the truth. He said, “I have been set apart for God since the day I was born. And because of that, my hair has never been cut. If my hair were shaved off, my strength would be gone, and I would be as weak as other men.” **18** Delilah realized that this time he had told her the truth. So she summoned the Philistine leaders again, saying, “Come back one more time, because Samson has really told me everything [about why he is so strong]”. So the Philistine leaders returned and brought to Delilah the money [that they promised to give her]. **19** Again she lulled Samson to sleep, with his head in her lap. Then she called one of the Philistine men to come and shave off Samson’s hair. As he did that, Samson began to get weaker. And finally his strength was all gone. **20** Then [after she

tied him up], she called out, “Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!” He woke up and thought, “I will do as I did before. I will shake [these ropes] off myself and be free!” But he did not realize that Yahweh had left him. **21** So the Philistine men seized him and gouged out his eyes. Then they took him to Gaza. There they put him in prison and bound him with bronze chains. They made him [turn a millstone to] grind grain [every day]. **22** But his hair started to grow again. **23** [Several months later] the Philistine leaders celebrated a big festival. During the festival they offered sacrifices to their god Dagon. They praised him, saying, “Our god has enabled us to defeat our great enemy Samson!” **24** And when the other people saw Samson, they also praised their god Dagon, saying, “Samson ruined our crops and killed many of our people, but our god has put our enemy into our hands. Our god helped us to capture the one who has killed so many of us!” **25** By that time the people were half-drunk. They shouted, “Bring Samson out of the prison! Bring him here so that he can entertain us!” So they brought Samson from the prison and made fun of him. Then they made him stand in the center of the temple. They made him stand between the two pillars that held up the roof. **26** Samson said to the servant who was leading him by his hand, “Place my hands against the two pillars. I want to rest against them.” **27** At that time the temple was full of men and women. All the Philistine leaders were also there. And there were about 3,000 people on the roof, watching Samson and making fun of him. **28** Then Samson prayed, saying, “Yahweh, my Lord, think about me again! Please give me strength one more time, so that I may get revenge on the Philistines for gouging out my eyes!” **29** Then Samson put his hands on the two center pillars of the temple. He put his right hand on one pillar and his left hand on the other pillar. **30** Then he shouted [to God], “Let me die with the Philistines!”, and he pushed with all his strength. [The pillars collapsed], and the temple crashed down on the Philistine leaders and all the other Philistine people, [and they all died]. So Samson killed more people when he died than he had killed all during his life. **31** Later his brothers and their relatives went down [from Zorah to Gaza] to get his body. They took it back home and buried it between Zorah and Eshtaol, at the place where Samson’s father Manoah was buried. Samson had been Israel’s leader for 20 years.

17 There was a man named Micah who lived in the hilly area where the tribe of Ephraim live. **2** One day he said to his mother, “I heard you curse whoever stole (1,100 pieces/28 pounds/13 kg.) of silver from your house. I am the one who took the silver, and I still have it.” His mother replied, “My son, I pray that Yahweh will bless you [for admitting that you took it].” **3** Micah gave all the silver back to his mother. Then she said [to herself], “I will give [some of] this silver to Yahweh.” And she said to her son, “My son, I want you to make an idol and a statue [from this silver]. So I will give [some of] this silver back to you [for making these things].” **4** So when he gave all the silver to his mother, she took (200 pieces/about 5 pounds/1.6 kg.) of it to a (silversmith/man who made things from silver). With the silver that man made an idol and a statue, [and gave them to Micah]. Micah put them in his house. **5** He had in his house a special (shrine/place for putting sacred things). He made a sacred vest and some small idols [and put them in this shrine along with the big idol and the statue]. Then Micah chose one of his sons to become his priest. **6** At that time, the Israeli people did not have a king. So [Micah and everyone else] did whatever they considered to be the right thing to do. **7** There was a young man who had been living in Bethlehem in the area where the tribe of Judah lives. He [wanted to work as a priest because he] was a member of the tribe of Levi. **8** So he left Bethlehem to find another place to live [and work]. He came to Micah’s house in the hilly area where the tribe of Ephraim live. **9** Micah asked him, “Where are you from?” He replied, “I come from Bethlehem. I am from the tribe of Levi, and I am looking for a place to live [and work as a priest].” **10** Micah said to him, “Stay with me, and you can become like a father [to counsel me], and be my priest. Each year I will give to you ten pieces of silver and some [new] clothes. And I will provide food for you.” **11** So the young man agreed to live with Micah. He became like one of Micah’s own sons. **12** Micah appointed him to be a priest, and he lived in Micah’s house. **13** Then Micah said, “Now I know that Yahweh will do good things for me, because I have a man from the tribe of Levi to be my priest.”

18 At that time the Israelis had no king. Also at that time, the tribe of Dan was still searching for some land where they could live. The other Israeli tribes had [been able to] ([capture/take possession of]) [the] land that had been allotted to them, but the tribe of Dan had not been able to do that. **2** So they chose five soldiers from their clans, men who lived in Zorah and Eshtaol [cities], to go through the land and explore it [and try to find some land where their tribe could live]. They came to Micah’s house in the hilly area where the tribe of Ephraim lived, and they stayed there that night. **3** While they were in his house and they heard the young man who had become Micah’s priest talking, they recognized from (his accent/the way that he talked) [that he was from the southern part of Israel]. So they went to him and asked him, “Who brought you here? What are you doing here? Why did you come here?” **4** He told them the things

that Micah had done for him. And he said, "Micah (has hired me/is paying me to work for him), and I have become his priest." **5** So they said to him, "Please ask God if we will succeed [in what we are trying to do] on this journey." **6** The young man replied, "Things will go well for you. Yahweh will go with you on this journey." **7** [The next day] the five men left. When they came to Laish [city], they saw that the people there lived safely, like the people in Sidon [city] did. The people there thought that they were safe/protected [from any enemies], and they had plenty of [good fertile] land. They lived very far from the people of Sidon, [so the people of Sidon would not be able to help defend/protect them]. They had no other (allies/groups nearby that would help them in battles). **8** When those five men returned to Zorah and Eshtaol, their relatives asked them "What did you find out?" **9** They replied, "We have found some land, and it is very good. We should go and attack the people [who live there]. Why are you staying here and doing nothing [RHQ]? Do not wait any longer! We should go immediately and take possession of that land! **10** When you go there, you will see that there is plenty of land, and it has everything [that we will need]. The people there are not expecting anyone to attack them. Surely God is giving that land to us." **11** So 600 men from the tribe of Dan left Zorah and Eshtaol, carrying their weapons. **12** On their way they set up their tents near Kiriath-Jearim [city] in [the area where the tribe of] Judah [lives]. That is why the area west of Kiriath-Jearim was named 'Camp of Dan', and that is still its name. **13** From there, they went to the hilly area where the tribe of Ephraim lives. And they arrived at Micah's house. **14** The five men who had explored the land near Laish said to their fellow Israelis, "Do you know that in one of these houses there is a sacred vest, several idols, and a statue? [We think that] you know what you should do." [RHQ] **15** So they went to the house where the man from the tribe of Levi lived, which was the house where Micah lived, and they greeted the young man from the tribe of Levi [who had become Micah's priest]. **16** The 600 men of the tribe of Dan stood outside the gate of the house, carrying their weapons. **17** The five men who had explored the land went into Micah's house, and took all the idols, the sacred vest, and the statue. While they did that, the 600 men stood outside the gate, [talking] with the priest. **18** When the priest saw them bringing out the idols and the sacred vest and the statue, he said to them, "What are you doing?" **19** They replied, "Be quiet! Do not say anything! You come with us and be [like] a father to us and a priest for us. Is it better for you to [stay here and] be a priest for the people in the house of one man, or to be a priest for a clan, and a priest for a whole tribe of Israelis?" [RHQ] **20** The priest liked what they were suggesting. So he took the sacred vest and the idols, and he [prepared to] go with the men from the tribe of Dan. **21** They all put their little children and their animals and everything else that they owned in front of them. **22** After they had gone a little distance from Micah's house, Micah [saw what was happening. He] quickly summoned the men who lived near him, and they ran and caught up with the men from the tribe of Dan. **23** They shouted at them. The men of the tribe of Dan turned around and said to Micah, "What is the problem? Why have you gathered these men [to pursue us]?" **24** Micah shouted, "You took the silver idols that were made for me! You also took my priest! I do not have anything left [RHQ]! So why do you ask me, 'What is the problem?'" **25** The men from the tribe of Dan replied, "You should not shout loudly like that! One of our angry men might attack you and kill you and your family!" **26** Then the men from the tribe of Dan continued walking. Micah realized that there was a very large group of them, [so that it would be useless for him to try to fight them]. So he turned around and went home. **27** The men of the tribe of Dan were carrying the things that had been made for Micah, and they also took his priest, and they continued traveling to Laish. They attacked the people who were peacefully living there, and killed them with their swords, and then they burned everything in the city. **28** Laish was far from [the city of] Sidon, [so the people of Sidon could not rescue the people of Laish]. And the people of Laish had no other allies. Laish was in a valley near Beth-Rehob [town]. The people of the tribe of Dan rebuilt the city and started to live there. **29** They gave to the city a [new] name, Dan, in honor of their ancestor Dan, who was one of the sons of Jacob. **30** The people of the tribe of Dan set up [in the city] the idols [that had been made for Micah]. Jonathan, who was the son of Gershom and the grandson of Moses, was appointed to be their priest. His descendants continued to be priests until the Israelis were captured and taken [to Assyria]. **31** After the people of the tribe of Dan set up the idols that had been made for Micah, [they worshiped those idols, even though] the Sacred Tent [where they had been commanded to worship] God, was at Shiloh.

19 At that time the Israeli people had no king. There was a man from the tribe of Levi who lived in a remote place in the hilly area where the tribe of Ephraim lives. He had previously taken as a wife a woman who was a slave. She was from Bethlehem, in the area where the tribe of Judah lives. **2** But she started to sleep with other men also. Then she left him and returned to her father's house in Bethlehem. She stayed there for four months. **3** Then her husband took his servant and two donkeys and went to Bethlehem. He went to ask her to come back to live with him again. When

he arrived at her father's house, she invited him to come in. Her father was happy to see him. **4** The woman's father asked him to stay. So he stayed there for three days. During that time he ate and drank and slept there. **5** On the fourth day, they all got up early in the morning. The man from the tribe of Levi was preparing to leave, but the woman's father said to him, "Eat something before you go." **6** So the two men sat down to eat and drink together. Then the woman's father said to him, "Please stay another night. Relax/Rest and have a joyful time." **7** The man from the tribe of Levi wanted to leave, but the woman's father requested him to stay one more night. So he stayed again that night. **8** On the fifth day, the man got up early and prepared to leave. But the woman's father said to him again, "Have something to eat. Wait until this afternoon, [and then leave]." So the two men ate together. **9** In the afternoon, when the man from the tribe of Levi and his slave wife and his servant got up to leave, the woman's father said, "It will soon be dark. The day is almost over. Stay here tonight and have a good/joyful time. Tomorrow morning you can get up early and leave for your home." **10** But the man from the tribe of Levi did not want to stay for another night. He put saddles on his two donkeys, and started to go with his slave wife [and his servant] toward Jebus [city], which is [now named] Jerusalem. **11** Late in the afternoon, they came near to Jebus. The servant said to his master, "We should stop in this city where the Jebus people-group live, and stay here tonight." **12** But his master said, "No, it would not be good for us to stay here where foreign people live. There are no Israeli people here. We will go on to Gibeah [city]." **13** He said to his servant, "Let's go. It is not far to Gibeah. We can go there, or we can go a bit further to Ramah. We can stay in one of those two cities tonight." **14** So they continued walking. When they came near Gibeah, where people from the tribe of Benjamin live, the sun was setting. **15** They stopped to stay there that night. They went to the public square of that city and sat down. But no one [who passed by] invited them to stay in their house for that night. **16** Finally, in the evening, an old man came by. He had been working in the fields. He was from the hilly area of the tribe of Ephraim, but at that time he was living in Gibeah. **17** He realized that the man from the tribe of Levi was only traveling and did not have a home in that city. So he asked the man, "Where have you come from? And where are you going?" **18** He replied, "We are traveling from Bethlehem to my home in the hilly area where people of the tribe of Ephraim live. I went from there to Bethlehem, but now we are going to [Shiloh] where Yahweh's Sacred tent (OR, my house) is. No one here has invited us to stay in their house tonight. **19** We have straw and food for our donkeys, and bread and wine for me and the young woman and my servant. We do not need anything else." **20** The old man said, "I wish that things will go well for you, but I would like to provide what you need. Do not stay here in the square tonight." **21** Then the old man took them to his house. He gave food to the donkeys. He [gave water to the man and the woman and the servant to] wash their feet. And he gave them something to eat and drink. **22** While they were having a good/joyful time together, some wicked men from that city surrounded the house and started to bang on the door. They shouted to the old man, "Bring out to us the man who has come to your house. We want to have sex with him." **23** The old man went outside and said to them, "Friends, I will not do that. That would be a very evil thing. This man is a guest in my house. You should not do such a terrible/disgraceful/shameful thing! **24** Look, my daughter is here. She is [still] a virgin. And this man's slave wife is here. I will bring them out to you now. You may do to them whatever you wish, but do not do such a terrible/disgraceful/shameful thing to this young man!" **25** But the men did not pay attention to what he said. So the man from the tribe of Levi took his slave wife and sent her to them, outside the house. They raped [EUP] her and abused her all night. Then at dawn, they allowed her to go. **26** She returned to the old man's house, where her husband was staying, but she fell down at the doorway and lay there all night. **27** In the morning, when the man from the tribe of Levi got up, he went outside of the house to continue his journey. He saw his slave wife lying there at the doorway of the house. Her hands were on the doorsill. **28** He said to her, "Get up! Let's go!" But she did not answer, [because she had died]. He put her body on the donkey and traveled to his home. **29** When he arrived home, he took a knife and cut the body of the slave woman into twelve pieces. Then he sent one piece to each area of Israel, [along with a message telling what had happened]. **30** Everyone who saw a piece of the body and the message said, "Nothing like this has ever happened before. Not since our ancestors left Egypt [have we heard of such a terrible thing]. We need to think carefully about it. Someone should decide what we should do."

20 All the Israelis, from Dan [city in the north] to Beersheba [city in the south], and even from [the] Gilead [region on the east side of the Jordan River, heard what had happened. So they] they gathered together at Mizpah, [at the place where they worshiped] Yahweh. **2** The leaders of [eleven of] the tribes of Israel stood in front of the people who gathered there. There were 400,000 men with swords who were there. **3** The people of the tribe of Benjamin heard that the other Israelis had gone up to Mizpah, [but none of the

men from their tribe went to the meeting there]. The Israelis who had come to Mizpah asked about the evil thing that had happened. **4** So the husband of the woman who had been killed replied, "My slave wife and I came to Gibeah [city], wanting to stay there that night. **5** That evening, the men of Gibeah came to attack me. They surrounded the house [where I was staying] and wanted to [have sex with me and then] kill me. They [raped and] abused my slave wife [all night], and she died. **6** I took her body home and cut it into pieces. Then I sent one piece to each area of Israel, [because I wanted you all to know about] this wicked and disgraceful/shameful thing [that] has been done here in Israel. **7** So now, all you Israeli people, speak, and tell me what you think should be done!" **8** All the people stood up, and in unison said, "None of us will go home! Not one of us will return to his house! **9** This is what we must do to [the people of] Gibeah. First, we will (cast lots/throw marked stones) [to determine which group should attack them]. **10** We will choose (one tenth/one from every ten) of the men from all the Israeli tribes. Those men will go and find food for the men who will go to attack the people of Gibeah. Then the other men will go to Gibeah to (pay the people back/punish them) for this terrible thing that they have done [here] in Israel." **11** And all the Israeli people agreed [that the people of Gibeah should be punished]. **12** Then the Israeli men sent messengers throughout the tribe of Benjamin. They demanded, "Do you realize that some of your men have done a very evil thing? **13** Bring those wicked men to us, in order that we can execute them. [By doing that], we will be doing what should be done because of this evil thing that has happened in Israel." But the [people of the] tribe of Benjamin did not pay attention to their fellow Israelis. **14** The men of the tribe of Benjamin left their cities and gathered at Gibeah to fight the [other] Israelis. **15** In that one day the men of the tribe of Benjamin recruited 26,000 soldiers who knew how to fight using swords. They also chose/recruited 700 men from Gibeah. **16** From all those soldiers there were 700 men who were left-handed, and each of them could sling a stone at [a target that was very small and as narrow as] a hair, and the stone always hit the target! **17** There were 400,000 men from the other Israeli tribes who had swords. **18** Those other Israelis went up to Bethel and asked God, "Which tribe should be the first to attack the men from the tribe of Benjamin?" Yahweh answered, "[The men from the tribe of] Judah should go first." **19** The next morning, the Israeli men went and set up their tents near Gibeah. **20** Then they went to fight against [the men from the tribe of] Benjamin, and stood in their positions for fighting a battle, [facing Gibeah]. **21** The men of the tribe of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and fought against them, and they killed 22,000 Israeli men on that day. **22** [Late that afternoon], the [remaining] Israeli men went to the place of worship and cried until the sun set. Then they asked Yahweh, "Should we attack the men of the tribe of Benjamin again, even though they are our fellow Israelis?" Yahweh replied, "Yes, attack them again." So the Israeli men encouraged each other. **24** The next day they again stood in their positions for fighting, just like they had done on the previous day. **25** The men of the tribe of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and attacked the Israelis, and killed 18,000 more of their men. **26** [In the afternoon], all the people of Israel [who had not been killed] again went to Bethel. There they sat down and cried to Yahweh, and they (fasted/abstained from eating food) until it was evening. They brought some offerings which they burned completely [on the altar], and they also brought some offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. **27** At that time, the Sacred Chest that contained the stone tablets on which were written the Ten Commandments was there at Bethel. A priest named Phinehas, the son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron, often stood in front of that chest [and talked with Yahweh]. While he stood there on that day, he asked Yahweh, "Shall we go again to fight against our fellow Israelis from the tribe of Benjamin, or shall we stop fighting against them?" Yahweh answered, "Go again tomorrow, because tomorrow I will enable you to defeat them." **29** So [the next day, 10,000 of] the Israeli men (set up ambushes/went to hide) [in the fields] around Gibeah. **30** The [other] Israeli men went and stood in their positions for fighting a battle just like they had done on the previous days. **31** When the men of the tribe of Benjamin came out of the city to fight against them, the Israeli men retreated away from the city, and the men of the tribe of Benjamin pursued them. The men of the tribe of Benjamin killed many Israelis, like they had done before. They killed about 30 Israelis. They killed some in the fields, and they killed some on the road that went to Bethel and on the road that went to Gibeah. **32** The men of the tribe of Benjamin said, "We are defeating them like we did before!" But then Israeli men did what they had planned. The main group of Israeli men retreated a short distance from the city, to [trick] the men of Gibeah and cause them to pursue the Israeli men along the roads outside the city. **33** The main group of Israeli men left their positions and retreated, and then they stood in their battle positions again at a place named Baal-Tamar. **34** Then [while the men of Gibeah were running out of the city toward them], the other 10,000 Israelis came out from the places where they had been hiding, west of Gibeah. They were men who had come from all parts of Israel. There was a very big battle. But the men of the tribe

of Benjamin did not know that they were about to suffer a disastrous defeat. **35** Yahweh enabled the Israeli men to defeat the men of the tribe of Benjamin. They killed 25,000 of them, even though they all were using swords. [This is what happened]: **36** The main group of Israeli men arranged with the men who would be hiding that they should send up a smoke signal to enable the main group of soldiers to know when they should attack. Then the main group of Israeli men retreated for a short distance, because they knew that the other Israeli men who had been hiding on the other side of Gibeah would attack the people of the tribe of Benjamin by surprise. So [after the main group of Israeli men retreated a little distance], the men who had been hiding rushed out and ran into Gibeah and used their swords to kill everyone in the city. [Then they started to burn the buildings]. **39** By that time, the men of the tribe of Benjamin said, "We are winning the battle, as we did before!" **40** But then smoke [from the burning buildings] began to rise up from the city. The men of the tribe of Benjamin turned around and saw that the whole city was burning. **41** Then the main group of Israeli men [also saw the smoke, and they knew that the smoke signaled that they should] turn around and begin to attack. The men of the tribe of Benjamin were very afraid, because they realized that they were about to suffer a disastrous defeat. **42** So the men of the tribe of Benjamin tried to run away toward the desert to escape from the Israeli men, but they were not able to escape, because the Israeli men who had burned the two cities came out of those cities and killed many of them. **43** They surrounded [some of] the men of the tribe of Benjamin, and pursued the others to the area east of Gibeah. **44** They killed 18,000 strong soldiers of the tribe of Benjamin. **45** Then the rest of the men of the tribe of Benjamin realized that they had been defeated. They ran toward the desert to Rimmon Rock, but the Israeli men killed 5,000 more men of the tribe of Benjamin along the roads. They pursued the rest of them to Gidom, and they killed 2,000 more men of the tribe of Benjamin there. **46** Altogether, there were 25,000 men of the tribe of Benjamin who were killed, all of whom had swords. **47** But 600 men of the tribe of Benjamin ran to Rimmon Rock in the desert. They stayed there for four months. **48** Then the Israeli men went back to the land belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, and killed the people in every city. They also killed all the animals, and destroyed everything else that they found there. And they burned all the cities that they came to.

21 When the Israeli men gathered at Mizpah [before the battle started], they vowed, "None of us will ever allow one of our daughters to marry any man from the tribe of Benjamin!" **2** But now the Israelis went to Bethel and they cried loudly to Yahweh all day, until the sun went down. **3** They kept saying, "Yahweh, God of us Israeli people, [it is as though] one of the tribes of us Israelis does not exist any more! (Why has this happened to us?/It is terrible that this has happened to us!)" [RHQ] **4** Early the next morning the people built an altar. Then they completely burned some sacrifices [on the altar], and also offered other sacrifices to maintain fellowship with God. **5** Then, because they had vowed that anyone who did not meet with them at Mizpah [to help fight the men of the tribe of Benjamin] would be killed, they asked among themselves, "Were there any of the tribes of Israel who did not come to Mizpah to meet with us in the presence of Yahweh?" **6** The Israelis felt sorry for their fellow Israelis from the tribe of Benjamin. They said, "Today one of our Israeli tribes (has disappeared/no longer exists). **7** Yahweh heard us solemnly declare that we would not allow any of our daughters to marry any man from the tribe of Benjamin. What can we do to make certain that the men of the tribe of Benjamin who were not killed will have wives?" **8** Then [one of] them asked, "What group from any of the tribes of Israel did not send any men here to Mizpah?" **9** [They realized that] when the soldiers were counted, there was no one from Jabesh-Gilead [city] who had come there. **10** So all the Israelis decided to send 12,000 very good soldiers to Jabesh-Gilead to kill the people there with their swords, even to kill the married women and children. **11** [They told this to those men]: "This is what you must do: You must kill every man in Jabesh-Gilead. You must also kill every married woman. [But do not kill the unmarried women]." **12** So those soldiers [went to Jabesh-Gilead and killed all the men, married women, and children. But they] found 400 unmarried young women there. So they brought them to their camp at Shiloh, in Canaan, [across the river from the Gilead area that belonged to the tribe of Benjamin]. **13** Then all the Israelis [who had gathered] sent a message to the 600 men who were at Rimmon Rock. They said that they would like to make peace with them. **14** So the men came back from Rimmon Rock. The Israelis gave to them the women from Jabesh-Gilead whom they had not killed. But there were [only 400 women. But there were] not enough women [for those 600 men]. **15** The Israelis [still] felt sorry for the men of the tribe of Benjamin, because Yahweh had (decimated/almost wiped out) one of the Israeli tribes. **16** The Israeli leaders said, "We have killed all the married women of the tribe of Benjamin. Where can we get women to be wives of the men who are still alive? **17** These men must have wives to give birth to children, in order that their families will continue. If that does not happen, all the people of one of the tribes of Israel will die. **18** But we cannot allow our daughters to marry these men, because we vowed that

Yahweh will curse anyone who gives one of his daughters to become a wife of any man of the tribe of Benjamin." **19** Then [one of] them (had an idea/thought of something that they could do). He said, "Every year there is a festival to honor Yahweh at Shiloh, which is north of Bethel and east of the road that extends from Bethel to Shechem, and it is south of Lebonah [city]." **20** So the Israeli leaders told the men of the tribe of Benjamin, "[When it is the time for that festival], go to Shiloh and hide in the vineyards. **21** Keep watching for the young women to come out of the city to dance. [When they come out], all of you should run out of the vineyards. Each of you can seize one of the young women of Shiloh. Then you can all return to your homes [with those women]. **22** If their fathers or brothers come to us and complain [about what you have done], we will say to them, 'Be kind to the men of the tribe of Benjamin. When we fought them, we did not leave any women alive to become their wives, and you did not give those young women to the men from the tribe of Benjamin. [They stole them]. So you will not be guilty, [even though you said that you would not allow any of your daughters to marry one of them].'" **23** So that is what the men of the tribe of Benjamin did. [They went to Shiloh at the time of the festival]. And when the young women were dancing, each man caught one of them and took her away and married her. Then they took their wives back to the land that God had given to them. They rebuilt their cities [that had been burned down], and they lived there. **24** The other Israelis went to their homes in the areas where their tribes and clans lived, the areas that God had allotted to them. **25** At that time, the Israeli people did not have a king. Everyone did what they themselves thought was right.

Ruth

1 During the time before kings ruled Israel, (there was a famine/the people there had nothing to eat). There was a man who lived there whose name was Elimelech. His wife's name was Naomi, and his sons' names were Mahlon and Chilion. They were all from Bethlehem [town], from the Ephrath [clan] in Judah [region]. **2** Because of the famine, they left Bethlehem and went east to [live for a while in] Moab [region]. **3** While they were there, Elimelech died, and Naomi had only her two sons with her. **4** They married women from Moab. One of them was named Orpah, and the other one was named Ruth. But after they had lived in that area for about ten years, **5** Mahlon and Chilion died. So then Naomi had no husband and no sons. **6** One day while Naomi was in Moab, she heard someone say that Yahweh had helped his people in Israel and that now there was plenty of food to eat. So she prepared to return [to Bethlehem]. **7** She left the place where she had been living and started to walk [with her daughters-in-law] along the road back to Judah. **8** Then as the three of them were walking, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Each of you should turn around and go back to your mother's home. You treated [your husbands] kindly [before] they died, and you have treated me kindly. **9** Now I desire that Yahweh will enable each of you to have another husband in whose home you will [feel] secure." Then she kissed both of them, and they cried aloud. **10** They each said, "No, we want to go with you as you return to your relatives." **11** But Naomi said, "No, my daughters, return home. (It will not do any good for you to come with me!/What good will it do for you to come with me?) [RHQ] Do you think I will get married again and have more sons who could become your husbands? **12** Even if I thought I could have another husband, and even if I got married today and became pregnant [EUP] tonight and later gave birth to sons, **13** would you remain single/unmarried until they grew up [and became old enough] for you to marry? No, my daughters, [you would not do that]. Your situations are bad [because your husbands have died, but it is possible that you will each marry again]. My situation is much worse, because Yahweh [SYN] has opposed me, [and now I am too old to get married again]." **14** Then Ruth and Orpah cried again [because of what Naomi said]. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, [and left], but Ruth clung to Naomi. **15** Naomi said to her, "Look! Your sister-in-law is going back to her relatives and to her gods! Go back with her!" **16** But Ruth replied, "No! Don't urge me to leave you! I [want to] go with you. Where you go, I will go. Where you stay, I will stay. Your relatives will be my relatives, and the God you [worship] will be the God I [worship]. **17** Where you die, I will die. Where you are buried, I will be buried. May Yahweh punish me severely if I separate from you. I will be separated from you only [when one of us] dies." **18** When Naomi realized that Ruth was very determined to go with her, she stopped urging her [to return home]. **19** So the two women continued walking until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived there, everyone in town was excited [to see] them. The women [of the town] exclaimed, "(Can this be Naomi?/It is difficult to believe that this is Naomi!)" [RHQ] **20** Naomi said to them, "Don't call me Naomi, [which means 'pleasant']. Instead, call me Mara, [which means 'bitter'], because God Almighty has made my life very unpleasant. **21** When I left here, I [felt] rich, [because I had a family]. But Yahweh has brought me back here and now I [feel] poor, [because I have no family]. Do not call me Naomi [RHQ]. [I feel as though] Yahweh has spoken against (OR, afflicted) me. Almighty [God] has caused me to experience a great tragedy." **22** That [summarizes the account] of Naomi returning home along with her daughter-in-law Ruth, the woman from Moab. And [it happened that] when they arrived in Bethlehem, the barley [grain] harvest was just beginning.

2 There was a man in Bethlehem who belonged to the clan of [Naomi's dead husband], Elimelech. He was rich and well-known/influential. His name was Boaz. **2** [One day] Ruth said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the grain left behind by the workers." Naomi replied, "Go ahead, my daughter." **3** So Ruth went to the fields and began to pick up some of the left-over grain. And it happened that she was working in a field that belonged to Boaz, [the man] from the clan of [her dead father-in-law], Elimelech! **4** Just then, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem. He greeted the men who were harvesting the grain, saying, "I want Yahweh to bless you!" They replied, "We want Yahweh to bless you, [too]!" **5** Then Boaz saw Ruth, and asked the (foreman/man in charge of the other workmen), "Whose [daughter] is that young woman?" **6** The foreman replied, "She is the woman from Moab who returned from there with [her mother-in-law] Naomi. **7** She said to me, 'Please let me walk behind the men who are harvesting the grain and pick up some of the grain they leave behind.' [I gave her permission, and] she went into the field, and she has been working from this morning until now. The only time she did not work was when she rested for a short time in the shelter." **8** So Boaz went over to Ruth and said to her, "Young lady, listen to me. Don't go and pick up grain in another field. Do not go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. **9** Watch where the men are harvesting, and follow along behind the [servant] girls. I will tell the men [who are working] not to touch/molest

you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get some water to drink from the jars that the men have filled." **10** When he said that, she knelt down in front of him [in respect], with her face touching the ground. She exclaimed, "Why are you acting so kindly toward me, by paying attention to me? [I am not even a Jew; I am] a foreigner!" **11** Boaz replied, "People have told me all about what you have done for your mother-in-law. They told me that you left your parents and your homeland, and you came here to live among people whom you did not know before. **12** I hope/desire that Yahweh will repay you for what you have done. You have put yourself in the care of Yahweh, [like a little bird puts itself] under [its mother's] wings [MET]. I desire that he will reward you very greatly." **13** She replied, "Sir, I hope you will continue to act kindly toward me. You have comforted/encouraged me, even though I am lower in status than any of your servant girls." **14** At mealtime, Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Take some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar [and eat it]." Then when she sat down with the men who had been harvesting, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all the grain she wanted, and had some left over. **15** As she stood up to start gathering grain [again], Boaz ordered his workers, "Even if she gathers some grain near the bundles of grain that have been cut, do not scold her. **16** Instead, pull out some stalks of grain from the bundles, and leave them on the ground for her to pick up, and do not rebuke her." **17** So Ruth gathered grain in the field until evening. Then she (threshed/beat with a stick) the barley that she had gathered, [to separate the kernels from the stalks], and the barley filled a large basket. **18** She carried it back to town, and showed to her mother-in-law how much she had gathered. Ruth also showed to her the grain [that was left over after] she had eaten enough from [what Boaz had given her at lunchtime]. **19** Her mother-in-law asked her, "Where did you gather grain today? In whose [field] did you work? [God will] surely bless the man who was kind to you." Then Ruth told her about the man in whose field she had been working. She said, "The name of the man [who owns the field] where I worked today is Boaz." **20** Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "I hope/desire that Yahweh will bless him! He has not stopped acting kindly toward [us, who are still] living, and to [our husbands] who have died." Then she added, "That man is a close relative [of Elimelech]; he is one of those who has a responsibility to help those who are his relatives." **21** Then Ruth said, "He also said to me, 'Stay with my workers until they have finished harvesting all my grain.'" **22** Naomi replied, "My daughter, it will be good for you to go [to his field] with his [servant] girls, because if you go to someone else's field, someone might harm/molest you." **23** So Ruth stayed close to Boaz's [servant] girls [while she was working]. She gathered stalks of grain until the barley harvest and the wheat harvest were finished. During that time she lived with Naomi.

3 One day, Naomi said to Ruth, "My daughter, I think that I should [RHQ] try to arrange for you to have a husband [MTY] who will (take care of/provide for) you. **2** Boaz, the man with whose [servant] girls you have been [gathering grain], is a close relative [of our dead husbands]. Listen [carefully]. Tonight he will be at the ground where [the barley has] been threshed. He will be separating the barley grain from the chaff. **3** Bathe yourself and put on some perfume. Put on your [best] clothes. Then go down to the ground where they have threshed [the grain]. But do not let Boaz know that you are there while he is eating [supper] and drinking. **4** [When he has finished eating], notice where he lies down to sleep. Then [when he is asleep], take the blanket off his feet and lie [close to his feet]. [When he wakes up], he will tell you what to do." **5** Ruth replied, "I will do everything that you have told me [to do]." **6** So she went down to the ground where they had threshed [the barley grain]. There she did everything that her mother-in-law had told her [to do]. **7** When Boaz finished eating [supper] and drinking [wine], he felt happy. Then he went over to the far end of the pile of grain. He lay down [and went to sleep]. Then Ruth approached him quietly. She took the blanket off his feet and lay down [there]. **8** In the middle of the night, he suddenly awoke. He sat up and saw that a woman was lying at his feet. **9** He asked her, "Who are you?" She replied, "I am your servant, Ruth. Since you are the one who has a responsibility to take care of [someone like me whose dead husband was] your close relative, spread the corner of your cloak over my [feet to show that you will marry me]." **10** Boaz replied, "Young lady, I hope that Yahweh will (bless/be kind to) you! You have acted kindly [toward your mother-in-law], and now you are acting even more kindly [toward me by wanting to marry me, instead of wanting to marry a young man]. You have not looked for either a rich young man or a poor young man, [to marry him]. **11** Now, young lady, I will do everything you ask. Don't worry [that people in this town might think I am doing wrong by marrying you because you are a woman from Moab]. All the people in this town know that you are an honorable woman. **12** But [there is one problem]. Although it is true that I am a close relative [of your mother-in-law's dead husband], there is another man who is a closer relative [than I am], and therefore he should be the one to [marry you and] take care of you. **13** You stay here for the rest of this night. Tomorrow morning [I will tell this man about you]. If he says that he will [marry you and] take care

of you, fine, [we will] let him do that. But if he is not willing [to do that], I solemnly promise that as surely as Yahweh lives, I will [marry you and] take care of you. So lie/sleep here until it is morning." **14** So she lay at his feet until morning. But she got up and left before it was light enough that people would be able to recognize her, because Boaz said, "I do not want anyone to know that a woman was here." **15** He also said to her, "Bring to me your cloak and spread it out." When she did that, he poured into it six measures/24 liters/50 pounds of barley, and put in on her back. Then he (OR, she) went back to the town. **16** When Ruth arrived home, her mother-in-law asked her, "My daughter, how did (things go/Boaz act toward you)?" Then Ruth told her everything that Boaz had done for her [and said to her]. **17** She also said [to Naomi], "He gave me all this barley, saying 'I do not want you to return to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'" **18** Then Naomi said, "My daughter, just wait until we see what happens. [I am sure that] Boaz will take care of [LIT] the matter [of your marriage]. [LIT]"

4 [Meanwhile], Boaz went up to the town gate and sat there. [That was the place where people met together to decide important matters]. When the man that Boaz had mentioned came there, the close relative of Ruth and Naomi's dead husbands [who had a responsibility to take care of Naomi and Ruth], Boaz said to him, "My friend, come over here and sit down." So the man went and sat down. **2** Boaz then gathered ten of the elders of the town and asked them to sit down [there also]. After they sat down, **3** he said to the man who had the responsibility to take care of Naomi, "Naomi has returned from Moab [region]. She wants to sell the field that belonged to our relative Elimelech. **4** I thought that I should tell you about that, and suggest that you buy it, while these elders who are sitting here are listening. If you are willing to buy the property, do that. But if you do not want to buy it, tell me, so that I will know. I am suggesting this to you because you are the one who has the first right to buy it, and I am the one who has the second/next right to buy it." The man replied, "I will buy it!" **5** Then Boaz told him, "When you buy the land from Naomi, you will also be taking Ruth, [the woman] who is from Moab, [to be your wife], in order that she may [give birth to a son who will] inherit the property of her dead husband [MTY]." **6** Then the close relative [of Ruth's dead husband] said, "[If that is so], I do not [want to] buy the field, because then my own [children] would not inherit the property; [Ruth's children would inherit it]. You buy the property!" **7** At that time, it was the custom in Israel, when a person bought property that belonged to another person, that the man who was selling the property would take off one of his sandals and give it to the one who was buying the property. That was the way they finalized sales in Israel. **8** So that close relative said to Boaz, "You buy the field yourself!" And he took off [one of] his sandals [and gave it to Boaz]. **9** Then Boaz said to the elders and all the [other] people [who were there], "Today you have all seen that I have bought from Naomi all the property that belonged to [her dead husband] Elimelech and [his dead sons] Mahlon and Chilion. **10** I am also taking Ruth, [the woman] from Moab, Mahlon's widow, to be my wife, in order that she may give birth to a son who will inherit the property of the dead man. In that way, Elimelech's name will continue [LIT] among the members of his family and among all the people of this town. Today you all are witnesses [of what I have done]." **11** All the elders and the [others] who were sitting at the [town] gate [agreed, and one of them] said, "[Yes,] we are witnesses. We hope/desire that Yahweh will enable this woman, who will be coming into your home, to give birth to many children, as Rachel and Leah did. They are the women from whom all [us] people [MTY] of Israel are descended. We hope that you will become rich in the clan of Ephratah, and become famous [MTY] [here] in Bethlehem. **12** We hope/desire that Yahweh will enable you and this young woman to have many descendants. And we hope/desire that your family will be as important as the family of your ancestor Perez, the son of Judah and Tamar." **13** So Boaz took Ruth [home], and she became his wife. He (slept with/had sexual relations with) her [EUP] and Yahweh enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son. **14** The women [of Bethlehem] said to Naomi, "Praise Yahweh! Now he has given [LIT] you a grandson who will be the one who will have the responsibility to take care of you. We hope that he will become famous [MTY] throughout Israel. **15** He will make you feel young again, and he will take care of you when you become old. Your daughter-in-law, who loves you, has given birth to a son, who will (be better to/do more for) you than [if you had] seven sons [of your own]." **16** Then Naomi took the baby and put him on her lap, and took care of him. **17** The women who were living near her said, "[It is as though] Naomi [now] has a son!" And they named him Obed. [Later], Obed became the father of Jesse, and [later] Jesse became the father of [King] David. **18** Here is [a list of] the ancestors of [King David]: Perez's son was Hezron. Hezron's son was Ram. Ram's son was Amminadab. Amminadab's son was Nahshon. Nahshon's son was Salmon. Salmon's son was Boaz. Boaz's son was Obed. Obed's son was Jesse. Jesse's son was [King] David.

1 Samuel

1 There was a man named Elkanah who lived in Ramah [town] in the hilly area where [the tribe of] Ephraim lived. His father was Jeroham, his grandfather was Elihu, and his great-grandfather was Tohu. He belonged to the Zuph clan. **2** He had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had several children, but Hannah had no children. **3** Once every year Elkanah went up [with his family] from Ramah to Shiloh [city]. He went there to worship Yahweh, [the commander] of the armies [of angels], and to offer sacrifices to him. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, [helped their father to do the work as] priests of Yahweh there. **4** Each time Elkanah offered sacrifices there, he gave some of the meat to Peninnah and some to each of her sons and daughters. **5** But even though he loved Hannah very much, he gave her only one special amount of meat because Yahweh had not permitted her to give birth to any children. **6** And his other wife, Peninnah, would ridicule Hannah to make her feel miserable, because Yahweh had not allowed her to bear children. **7** This happened every year. When they went up to the temple of Yahweh [at Shiloh], Peninnah ridiculed Hannah so much that Hannah cried and would not eat. **8** Then Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, (why are you crying?/please quit crying!) [RHQ] (Why are you not eating?/Please eat something!) [RHQ] Why are you so upset/sad? You have me; is that not more important to you than if you had ten sons? (OR, I [love you] more than your sons [would love you], even if you had ten sons.)" **9** One year, after they had finished eating and drinking at Shiloh, Hannah stood up [to pray]. Eli the priest was nearby, sitting on a chair by the doorway of the sacred tent of Yahweh. **10** Hannah was very distressed, and she cried very sorrowfully as she prayed to Yahweh. **11** She made a vow saying, "O Almighty Commander of the armies of angels, if you will look at me and see how miserable I am, and think about me and allow me to give birth to a son, then I will dedicate him to you [to serve you] for the rest of his life. And [to show that he is dedicated to you], (no one will ever [be allowed to] cut his hair/his hair will never be cut)." **12** As she was praying like that to Yahweh, Eli the priest saw Hannah's lips [moving as she was praying]. **13** But Hannah was only praying silently; she was not making any sound. So Eli thought that she was drunk. **14** He said to her, "How long will you continue to get drunk [RHQ]? (Throw away your wine/Quit drinking wine)!" **15** Hannah replied, "Sir, I am not drunk! I have not been drinking wine or any other alcoholic drink. I feel very distressed and I have been telling Yahweh about how I feel. **16** Do not think that I am a worthless/wicked woman! I have been praying like this because I am very distressed [DOU]." **17** Eli replied, "I wish/desire that things will go well for you. I desire that God, the one we Israeli people [worship], will give you what you requested from him." **18** She replied, "I want you to think highly/well about me." Then she returned [to her family] and after she ate something, her face no longer looked sad. **19** Early the next morning, Elkanah and his family got up and worshiped Yahweh [again], and then they returned to their home at Ramah. Elkanah (slept with/had sex with) Hannah. Then Yahweh answered her prayer, **20** and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, [which sounds like the words in the Hebrew language that mean 'heard by God'], because she said "Yahweh [heard me when] I requested from him [a son]." **21** The following year, Elkanah again went up [to Shiloh] with his family to make the kind of sacrifice he made each year, and also to give a special offering to God that he had promised [to give him previously]. **22** But Hannah did not go [with them]. She said to her husband, "After I have weaned the baby, I will take him [to Shiloh and present him] to Yahweh, and he will stay there for the rest of his life." **23** Elkanah said, "Do what seems the best to you. Stay here until you have weaned him. What I desire is that Yahweh will [enable you to] do what you have promised." So Hannah stayed at home and nursed her son until she weaned him. **24** After she weaned him, even though Samuel was very young, she took him to the temple/house of Yahweh at Shiloh. [To offer as a sacrifice], she took along a three-year-old bull, [a sack containing] (20 pounds/9 kg.) of flour, and a container of wine. **25** After the priest had slaughtered the bull [and offered it to Yahweh on the altar], Hannah and Elkanah brought the boy to Eli. **26** Then Hannah said to him, "Sir, (Do you remember me?/I solemnly affirm), I am the woman who prayed as I stood here beside you [several years ago]. **27** I prayed that Yahweh would enable me to give birth to a child, and this is the child whom I requested Yahweh to give me. **28** So now I am presenting him to Yahweh. He will belong to Yahweh as long as he lives." Then Elkanah [and his family] worshiped Yahweh there.

2 Then Hannah prayed, saying, "I rejoice in [what] you, [, have done]. I am strong [MET] because I belong to you. I (laugh at/ridicule) my enemies, because you, Yahweh have rescued me [from being taunted by them]. **2** There is no one who is holy like you, Yahweh. There is no other god like you. There is no one like you, our God, who can protect us [as though you were putting us beneath] a huge rock [where we can hide from danger]. **3** [You people who oppose God], stop boasting! Yahweh is a God who knows [everything], and he will evaluate/judge everyone's actions. So don't speak

so arrogantly! 4 Yahweh, you break the bows/weapons of mighty soldiers, and you give strength to those who stumble [because of being weak]. 5 Many people who previously had plenty to eat, now have to work for other people [to earn money] to buy food, but many who were always hungry are not hungry any more. The woman who did not have any children before, now has given birth to many/seven children, and the woman who had many children before, now is very lonely [because they have all died]. 6 Yahweh, you cause some people to die, and you restore some people who are almost dead. For some people, [it seems that they will soon] go to where the dead people are, but you cause them to become healthy again. **(Sheol h7585)** 7 Yahweh, you cause some people to be poor and you cause some people to be rich, you humble some people and you honor some people. 8 [Sometimes] you lift poor people up so that they are no longer [despondent, sitting in the dust,] or sitting on heaps of ashes; you cause them to sit next to princes; you cause them to sit on chairs/thrones where people who are highly honored sit. Yahweh, you are the one who laid the foundations of the earth, and you have set the whole world on those foundations. 9 You will protect your loyal/faithful people [SYN], but you will cause the wicked to die [EUP] and descend to the dark [place where dead people are]. We do not defeat [our enemies] by our own strength; 10 Yahweh, you will break into pieces those who oppose you. You will cause thunder in the sky to show that you (oppose/are angry with) them. Yahweh, you will judge [people everywhere, even those who live in] the most remote places on the earth. You will give strength to the king whom you will appoint, and give him great power [over his enemies]." 11 Then Elkanah [and his family] returned to Ramah, but Samuel, the little boy, stayed to help Eli the priest serve Yahweh. 12 Eli's two [, who were also priests,] were very wicked. They did not revere (OR, respect/obey) Yahweh. 13 While the people were boiling the meat from their sacrifices [in the huge pot at the temple], one of Eli's sons, [would send his servant to come with a large three-pronged fork in his hand]. 14 [He] would stick the fork into [the meat in] the pot, and whatever meat fastened onto the fork, he would take [and give it] to the priest who sent him. Eli's sons did this to all the Israeli people who came to Shiloh [to offer sacrifices]. 15 Furthermore, before the fat [on the meat] was [cut off and] and burned [as a sacrifice to Yahweh], the servant of the priest would [sometimes] come to the man who was making the sacrifice and say to him, "Give me some meat [now to take] to the priest for him to roast! He wants raw meat; he does not want boiled meat." 16 If the man said to the servant, "Let the priests [cut off and] burn the fat first; then you can take what you want," the servant would reply, "No, give it to me now; if you do not give it to me, I will take it forcefully!" 17 Yahweh considered that the young [sons of Eli] were committing a very great sin, because they were treating very disrespectfully the offerings that were being given to Yahweh. 18 As for Samuel, who was still a very young boy, he continued to do work for Yahweh, wearing a little sacred linen vest [like the Supreme Priest wore]. 19 Each year his mother made a [new] little robe for him and took it to him when she went up [to Shiloh] with her husband to offer a sacrifice. 20 Then Eli would [ask God to] bless Elkanah and his wife, and he would say to Elkanah, "I hope/desire that Yahweh will enable your wife to give birth to other children, to take the place of the one whom she dedicated to Yahweh." Then Elkanah and his family would return home. 21 And Yahweh was very kind to Hannah, and enabled her to give birth to three [other] sons and two daughters. Their son Samuel grew up while he was doing work for Yahweh [in the Sacred Tent]. 22 Eli became very old. He often heard about all the [evil] things that his sons were doing to the Israeli people. He heard that they [sometimes] (slept with/had sex with) the women who worked at the entrance to the tent where [God] spoke to [his people]. 23 He said to them, "(It is terrible that you do such things!/Why do you do such things?) [RHQ] Many people keep telling me about the evil things that you do. 24 My sons, stop it! The reports [about you] that the people who belong to Yahweh tell others are terrible [EUP]! 25 If one person sins against another person, God can (intercede/act as a referee) between them. But if someone sins against Yahweh, no one can [RHQ] (intercede/act as a referee) between them!" But Eli's sons would not listen to what their father said. This was because Yahweh had decided [that someone should] them. 26 The boy Samuel continued to grow up, and the things that he did pleased Yahweh and the people. 27 One day, a prophet came to Eli and told him, "This is what Yahweh has told me: 'When your ancestors were slaves of the king of Egypt, I appeared to Aaron. 28 From all the tribes of the Israeli people, I chose him [and his male descendants] to be priests for me. I appointed them to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to wear a sacred apron [as they worked] for me. And I declared that they could take [and eat some of the meat] that the Israeli people burned [on the altar]. 29 So why do you show disrespect for the sacrifices and offerings that I commanded [the people to bring] to me [RHQ]? You are honoring your sons more than you are honoring me, by allowing them to get fat from eating the best parts of all the sacrifices that the Israeli people bring to me!' 30 "Therefore, this is what Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis

[worship], declares: 'I definitely promised that Aaron and his descendants would continue to serve [IDM] me forever.' But now I declare this: 'It will not continue like that! I will honor those who honor me, but I will despise those who despise me. **31** Listen carefully! There will soon be a time when I will cause all the strong [young men] in your family to die. The result will be that no men in your family will [live long enough to] become old men. **32** You will be distressed and envious as you see the blessings that I will give to [the other people in] Israel. And [I repeat that] no men in your family will ever live long enough to become old men. **33** There is one of your descendants whom I will spare, and not prevent him from serving me as a priest. But he will become blind, and then he will always be sad and grieving. But all your other descendants will die violently. **34** And your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will both die on the same day. And that will prove to you [that all that I have said will come true/happen]. **35** 'have chosen another man to be my priest. He is one who will serve me faithfully: He will do everything I want [DOU] him to do. And I will enable him to have many descendants [IDM] who will be priests and will always serve me by helping the king whom I will choose. **36** All of your descendants who remain alive will have to go to that priest and ask him to give them money and food, and they will each have to say, "Please allow me to help the other priests, in order that I may [earn some money to] buy some food."'"

3 [While he was still a] boy, Samuel was working for Yahweh while Eli supervised him. At that time there were very few messages [that anyone received] from Yahweh, and very few people saw visions [that Yahweh gave them]. **2** By that time Eli's eyes were very weak; he was almost blind. [One night] he was sleeping in his room, **3** and Samuel was sleeping in the sacred tent, where the chest that contained the Ten Commandments was kept. While the sacred lamp was still burning, **4** Yahweh called, "Samuel! Samuel!" Samuel replied, "I'm here!" **5** Then he [got up and] ran to Eli. He said to him, "I am here, because you called me!" But Eli replied, "No, I did not call you. Go back to your bed." So Samuel went and lay down again. **6** Then Yahweh called again, "Samuel!" So Samuel got up again and went to Eli and said, "I am here, because you called me!" But Eli said, "No, my son, I did not call you. Go back and lie down." **7** At that time Samuel did not yet know [that] Yahweh [could speak to him], because Yahweh had not previously revealed anything to him. **8** [After Samuel lay down again], Yahweh called him a third time. So again Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "I am here, because you called me!" Then Eli realized that it was Yahweh who was calling the boy. **9** So he said to Samuel, "Go and lie down again. If someone calls you again, say 'Speak to me, Yahweh, because I am listening!'" So Samuel went and lay down again. **10** Then Yahweh came and stood there and called as he had done the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak to me, because I am listening!" **11** Then Yahweh said to Samuel, "Listen carefully. I am about to do something here in Israel that will shock/horrify [IDM] everyone who hears about it. **12** When that happens, I will punish Eli and his family. I will do to them everything that I said that I would do. **13** His sons have shown great disrespect for me by the disgraceful things they have done, and Eli did not restrain them. So I told him that I would punish his family forever. **14** I solemnly promised to Eli's family, 'You will never be able to avoid the consequences for your sin, even if you give me sacrifices or offerings.'" **15** Samuel lay down again until morning. Then he got up and opened the doors of the Sacred Tent [as usual]. He was afraid to tell Eli about the vision [that Yahweh had given him]. **16** But Eli called him and said, "Samuel, my son!" Samuel answered, "I am here!" **17** Eli asked him, "What was it that Yahweh told you? Do not conceal it! I want God to punish you severely if you do not tell me everything that he said to you." **18** So Samuel told him everything. He did not refuse to tell him anything. Then Eli said, "He is Yahweh. I am willing for him to do what he thinks is best." **19** As Samuel grew up, Yahweh helped him, and caused everything to (come true/happen) that Samuel predicted. **20** So all the people of Israel, from the northern end of the country to the southern end, realized that Samuel was truly a prophet of Yahweh. **21** Yahweh continued to appear to Samuel in Shiloh and give messages to him.

4 And Samuel told to all the people of Israel the messages that God gave him. At that time the Israeli army went to fight against the army of the Philistine people. The Israeli army set up their tents at Ebenezer, and the Philistine army set up their tents at Aphek. **2** The Philistine army attacked the Israeli army, and as the battle continued, the Philistines defeated the Israelis and killed about 4,000 of their soldiers. **3** When the remaining Israeli soldiers returned to their camp, the Israeli elders/leaders said, "Why did Yahweh allow the Philistine army to defeat us today? We should bring the chest that contains the Ten Commandments here from Shiloh, in order that Yahweh will go with us [when we go to the battle again, and] in order that our enemies will not defeat us again!" **4** So the soldiers did that. They sent some men to Shiloh, and those men brought back the chest that contained the Ten Commandments. [They thought that if they did that, Yahweh would help them. They believed that] Yahweh sat on a throne between the statues of winged creatures [that were on top of] the chest that Yahweh Almighty [had given

them]. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, went with them. 5 When the Israeli people saw [the men bringing] the box into their camp, they were so happy that they shouted loudly. They shouted so loudly that they made the ground shake! 6 The Philistines asked, "What are the people in the Hebrew camp shouting about?" Someone told them that they were shouting because the chest that contained the Ten Commandments of Yahweh had been brought to them. 7 Then the Philistines became very afraid. They said, "One of the Israelis' gods has come into their camp [to help them] We are in big trouble now! Nothing like this has happened to us before! 8 (Who can/Can anyone) save us from their powerful gods [RHQ]? They are the gods who struck the people of Egypt with many plagues [before the Israelis left Egypt and traveled] through the desert. 9 You Philistine men, be courageous! Fight very hard! If you do not do that, [they will defeat us, and then] you will become their slaves, just like they have been our slaves previously!" 10 So the Philistine men fought very hard, and they defeated the Israelis. They killed 30,000 Israeli soldiers, and the other Israeli soldiers fled and ran away to their tents. 11 The Philistines captured the sacred chest, and they killed Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. 12 On that same day, one man of the tribe [descended from] Benjamin tore his clothes and threw dirt on his head [to show that he was very sad]. He ran from the place where the armies were fighting, and he arrived at Shiloh late [that afternoon]. 13 Eli was waiting beside the road. [He wanted to hear news about the battle, and] he was also very anxious to know if anything bad had happened to God's sacred chest. When the messenger arrived and told people what had happened, everyone in the town started to cry loudly. 14 Eli asked, "Why are they making all that noise?" The messenger ran over to Eli and told him the news. 15 At that time, Eli was 98 years old, and he was blind. 16 The messenger said to Eli, "I have just come from where the armies were fighting. I left there earlier today." Eli asked, "What happened?" 17 The man replied, "The Philistines defeated our Israeli army. They killed thousands of our soldiers, and the others ran away. The Philistines killed your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. They also captured God's sacred chest." 18 Eli was very old, and he was very fat; and when he heard what had happened to the sacred chest, he fell backward from his chair beside the town gate. His neck was broken and he died. He had led the Israeli people for 40 years before he died. 19 The wife/widow of Eli's son Phinehas was pregnant, and it was almost time for her to give birth to her baby. When she heard that God's sacred chest had been captured and that her husband and her father-in-law were dead, her labor pains suddenly began. She quickly gave birth to a boy. 20 The women who were helping her tried to encourage her by saying to her, "You have given birth to a son!" But she did not pay any attention [DOU] to what they said. 21 She named the boy Ichabod, which means 'no glory', because she said, "[God's] glory has departed from Israel." She said that because God's sacred chest had been captured and because her husband and her father-in-law had died. 22 She said, "[God's] glory has left Israel, because God's sacred chest has been captured!" And then she died.

5 After the army of the Philistia people-group captured God's sacred chest in Ebenezer [town], they took it to Ashdod [which is one of their biggest cities]. 2 They carried it into the temple of [their god] Dagon, and placed it alongside a statue of Dagon. 3 But early the next morning, when the people of Ashdod [went to see it, they saw that] the statue had fallen on its face in front of Yahweh's sacred chest! So they set the statue up in its place again. 4 But the following morning, [they saw that] it had fallen down in front of the sacred chest again. But this time, the statue's head and hands had broken off, and were lying in the doorway. Only its body remained intact/unbroken. 5 That is the reason that since that time, the priests of Dagon and everyone else who enters the temple of Dagon in Ashdod do not step on the doorsill [where the hands and head of Dagon fell]. 6 Then Yahweh [SYN] powerfully caused the people of Ashdod and the people who lived in nearby villages to have (a very great plague/serious illness) of tumors. 7 The men of Ashdod realized why this was happening, and they cried out, "The god of the Israeli people is punishing us and is also punishing our god Dagon. So we cannot allow the sacred chest of the god of the Israelis to remain here!" 8 They summoned the five kings of the Philistia people-group, and asked them, "What should we do with the sacred chest of the god of the Israelis?" The kings replied, "Take the sacred chest to Gath [city]." So they moved it to Gath. 9 But after they took it to Gath, Yahweh powerfully struck the people of that city also, with the result that many men, including young men and old men, got tumors on their skin. Then the people became very afraid. 10 So they took the sacred chest to Ekron [city]. But when the men carried the sacred chest into Ekron, the people there cried out, "Why are you bringing the sacred chest of the God of the Israelis into our city [RHQ]? [By doing that] you will cause us and the rest of our people to die!" 11 The people were terrified/in panic because [they knew that] God was starting to punish them severely. So they summoned the [five] kings of the Philistia people-group again, and [pleaded with them], saying, "Take this sacred chest of the god of the Israelis back to its own place! If you

do not do that quickly, we will all die!" 12 Some of the people in Ekron had already died, and the rest of the people were suffering because of tumors on their skin. So they all cried out to their gods [MTY] [to help them].

6 The people of Philistia kept God's sacred chest in their area for seven months. 2 Then they summoned their priests and their (diviners/men who practice rituals to find out what would happen in the future). They asked them, "What should we do with the sacred chest of Yahweh? Tell us how we should send it back to its own land." 3 Those men replied, "Send with it an offering [to show Yahweh that you know that you are] guilty [for having captured the chest], in order that the plague will stop. If you do that, and then if you are healed, you will know that Yahweh is the one who caused you to experience the plague." 4 The people of Philistia asked, "What kind of offering should we send?" The men replied, "Make five gold models of the tumors on your skin, and five gold models of rats. Make five of each because that is the same number as the number of your kings, and because the plague has struck both you people and your five kings. 5 Make models that represent the rats and the tumors that are ruining your land. Make them in order to honor the god of the Israeli people. If you do that, perhaps he will stop punishing [IDM] you, and your gods, and your land. 6 Do not be [RHQ] stubborn [IDM] like the Egyptians and their king were. [They did not do what the Israelis' god told them to do, so he punished them]. After the Israelis' god finished punishing them very severely, they were glad to allow the Israelis to leave their country [RHQ]. 7 "So you must build a new cart. Then get two cows that have very recently given birth to calves. They must be cows that have never been hitched to a cart [MTY]. Hitch those cows to the new cart, and take the calves away from their mothers. 8 Put the Israelis' god's sacred chest on the cart. Also put in the cart the five gold models of the tumors on your skin and the five gold models of rats. Put them in a small box alongside the sacred chest. They will be an offering to show that you know that you deserved to be punished [for capturing the sacred chest]. Then send [the cows] down the road, [pulling] the cart. 9 [Watch the cart as the cows pull it]. If they pull it to Beth-Shemesh [town] in Israel, we will know that it was the Israelis' god who caused us to experience this plague. But if they do not take it there, we will know that it was not the god [MTY] of the Israelis who has punished us. We will know that it just happened." 10 So the people did what the priests and men who predicted what would happen in the future told them to do. They [made] a cart [and] hitched two cows to it. They took the calves from their mothers. 11 They put in the cart Yahweh's sacred chest and the box with the models of the gold rats and the tumors. 12 Then the cows started walking, and they went straight toward Beth-Shemesh. They stayed on the road, and were mooing all the time. They did not turn to the left or to the right. The five kings of the Philistia area followed the cows until they reached the edge of Beth-Shemesh. 13 At that time, the people of Beth-Shemesh were harvesting wheat in the valley [outside the city]. [When the cows came along the road], they looked up and saw the sacred chest. They were extremely happy to see it. 14 The cows pulled the cart into the field of a man named Joshua, and they stopped alongside a large rock. Several men from the tribe of Levi lifted from the cart the sacred chest and the box containing the gold models of the rats and the tumors, and they put them all on the large rock. Then the people smashed the cart and kindled a fire with the wood [from which the cart had been made]. They slaughtered the cows and burned their bodies/carcasses on the fire to be an offering for Yahweh that would be completely burned. That day the people of Beth-Shemesh offered to Yahweh [many] sacrifices that were completely burned, and [other] sacrifices. 16 The five kings from the Philistia area watched all this, and then they returned to Ekron, that same day. 17 The five gold models of tumors that they sent to be an offering to Yahweh to show that they knew that they deserved to be punished were gifts from [those five kings who were rulers of] Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron [cities]. 18 The models of the five gold rats were gifts from the people of those five cities and the surrounding towns. The large rock at Beth-Shemesh, on which the [men of the tribe of Levi] set the sacred chest, is still there in the field that belonged to Joshua. When people see it, they remember [what happened there]. 19 But seventy men from Beth-Shemesh looked into Yahweh's sacred chest, and because of that, Yahweh caused them to die. Then the people mourned very much because Yahweh punished [IDM] those men like that. 20 They said, "No one [RHQ] can (resist the power of/stand in the presence of) Yahweh, our holy God, [and remain alive]! Where can we send the sacred chest?" 21 They sent messengers to the people of Kiriath-Jearim [city] to tell them, "The people of Philistia have returned Yahweh's sacred chest to us! Come here and take it away!"

7 [When] the men of Kiriath-Jearim [received that message, they] came to Beth-Shemesh and took the sacred chest of Yahweh. They took it to the house of Abinadab, which was on a hillside. They appointed Abinadab's son Eleazar to take care of the chest. 2 The sacred chest stayed in Kiriath-Jearim for a long time—a total of 20 years. During that time all the people of Israel mourned [because it seemed that]

Yahweh [had abandoned them] (OR, [and then they asked] Yahweh [to help them]). **3** Then Samuel said to all the Israeli people, "If you truly [IDM] want to act like Yahweh's people should, you must get rid of your statues of [the goddess] Astarte and the idols/statues of all the other foreign gods. You must decide to serve/worship only Yahweh. If you do that, he will rescue you from [the power of] [MTY] the Philistia people." **4** So the Israelis got rid of all their statues of the gods Baal and Astarte, and they worshiped only Yahweh. **5** Then Samuel told them, "All you Israeli people must gather with me at Mizpah. Then I will pray to Yahweh for you." **6** So they gathered at Mizpah, which was the town where Samuel previously was the leader of the Israeli people. They had a big ceremony there. They drew water [from a well], and poured the water on the ground while Yahweh watched. [To show that they were sorry for having worshiped idols], they did not eat any food on that day, and they confessed that they had sinned against Yahweh. **7** When the kings of the Philistia area heard that the Israeli people had gathered at Mizpah, they led their armies there to attack the Israelis. When the Israelis found out that the Philistia army was approaching them, they became very afraid. **8** They told Samuel, "Pray to Yahweh to rescue us from the Philistia army [MTY], and do not stop pleading!" **9** So Samuel took a very young lamb [and killed it] and offered it to Yahweh to be a sacrifice that was completely burned [on the altar]. Then he prayed and pleaded that Yahweh [would help] the Israelis, and Yahweh did help them. **10** While Samuel was burning the offering, the Philistia army came near to attack the Israelis. But Yahweh caused it to thunder very loudly. The soldiers of the Philistia army became very frightened, and then they (became confused/did not know what to do). So the Israelis were able to defeat them. **11** The Israeli men ran out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistia soldiers almost to Beth-Car [town], and killed many Philistia soldiers while they were trying to run away. **12** After that happened, Samuel took a large stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah [towns]. He named the stone 'Ebenezer', [which means 'stone of help'], because he said "Yahweh has helped us until the present time." **13** So the Philistia people were defeated, and for a long time they did not enter the Israeli land [to attack them] again. During the time that Samuel was alive, Yahweh powerfully protected [MTY] [the Israeli people] from [being attacked by] the Philistia army. **14** The Israeli army was able to capture again the Israeli villages between Ekron and Gath that the Philistia army had captured before. The Israelis were also able to take again the other areas around those cities that the Philistia army had taken [from the Israelis] previously. And there was peace between the Israelis and the Amor people-group. **15** Samuel continued to be the leader of the Israeli people until he died. **16** As long as he was alive, every year he traveled back and forth between Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah [cities]. In those cities he listened to disputes between people and made decisions about them. **17** After he listened to disputes and made decisions in each of those towns, he returned to his home at Ramah, and he would listen to people's disputes there, also, [and make decisions about them]. And he built an altar at Ramah [to offer sacrifices] to Yahweh.

8 When Samuel became old, he appointed his two sons, Joel and Abijah, to lead/rule the people of Israel. **2** They judged people's disputes/cases in Beersheba [town]. **3** But they were not like their father. They wanted only to get a lot of money. They accepted bribes, and they did not make honest decisions about people's disputes/cases. **4** Finally, the Israeli leaders met at Ramah [town to discuss the matter] with Samuel. **5** They said to him, "Listen! You are now old, and your sons are not like you. Appoint a king to rule over us, like the kings that other countries have!" **6** Samuel was very unhappy with them for requesting that, so he prayed to Yahweh about it. **7** Yahweh replied, "Do what they have requested you to do. But ([do not think/the truth is not]) that you are the one whom they are really rejecting. I have been their king, and I am the one they are really rejecting. **8** Ever since I brought them out of Egypt, they have rejected me, and they have worshiped other gods. And now they are also rejecting you in the same way. **9** Do what they are asking you to do. But warn/tell them about how their kings will act toward them!" **10** So Samuel told those people what Yahweh had said. **11** He said, "If a king rules over you, this is what he will do to you: He will force many of your sons to join the army. He will make [some of] them run in front of his chariots [to clear people out of his way]. **12** [Some of] them will be commanders of his soldiers, but others will work for him like slaves. He will force some of them to plow his fields and [then later] harvest his crops. He will force others to make his weapons and equipment for his chariots. **13** The king will take [some of] your daughters [from you and force them] to make perfumes for him and cook food for him and bake [bread for him]. **14** He will take your best fields and vineyards and olive tree groves/orchards, and give them to his own officials. **15** He will take a tenth of your harvests and distribute it among the officers and servants [who work in] his [palace]. **16** He will take from you your male and female servants, your best cattle and donkeys, and force them to work for him. **17** He will take one tenth of your sheep and goats. And you will become his slaves! **18** When that time comes, you will complain loudly to the king, the king that you

yourselves have chosen, but Yahweh will not (pay attention to/help) you." 19 But the people refused to pay attention to what Samuel said. They said, "We do not [care what you say]! We want a king! 20 We want to be like the other nations. We want a king to rule us and to lead our soldiers when they go to fight." 21 When Samuel told Yahweh what the people had said, 22 Yahweh replied, "Do what they are telling you to do. Give them a king!" [So Samuel agreed], and then he sent the people home.

9 There was a rich and influential man whose name was Kish. He belonged to the tribe descended from Benjamin. Kish was the son of Abiel and the grandson of Zeror. He was from the family of Becorath and from the clan of Aphiah. 2 Kish had a son whose name was Saul. He was more handsome than any of the other Israeli men, and he was a head/foot taller than any of the other Israeli men. 3 One day, some of Kish's female donkeys wandered off. So Kish told Saul, "Take one of my servants with you, and go and search for the donkeys!" 4 So Saul did that. He took a servant, and they walked through the hilly area where the descendants of Ephraim lived, and then they went through the areas named Shalishah and Shaalim, and then they went through all the area where the descendants of Benjamin lived, but they could not find the donkeys. 5 Finally, they came to the area of Zuph. Then Saul said to the servant, "Let's go back home. If we do not do that, my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and start worrying about us." 6 But the servant said, "I have another idea [IDM]. There is one of God's prophets who lives in this town. People respect him very much, because everything he predicts comes true. Let's go [talk] to him. Perhaps he can tell us where we can go [to find the donkeys]." 7 Saul replied to the servant, "If we go talk with him, [we should give a gift to him, but] what can we give to him? We have no more food in our sacks. Do we have anything else to give to him?" 8 The servant replied, "Look [at this]! I have a small silver coin. I can give this to him, and then he will tell us where to go [to find the donkeys]." 9 Saul said, "Okay, let's go [talk to him."] So they went to the town where the prophet lived. As they were going up the hill into the town, they met some young women who were coming out of the town to get some water [from a well]. One of them asked the women, "Is the seer in the town [today]?" [They said that because] previously, if people [in Israel] wanted a message from God, they would say, "Let's go to the seer," and people who now are called prophets were at that time called 'those who see [(visions from God/all that God sees)].' 12 The women replied, "Yes, he is in the town. In fact, he is [walking on the road] ahead of you. He has just arrived in the town, because the people are going to offer a sacrifice on the altar where the people gather [to worship God]. 13 If you go quickly, you will [have time to talk to him] before he goes there. The people who have been invited will not start eating until he arrives there and (blesses/asks God to bless) the sacrifice." 14 So Saul and the servant entered the town. As they went through the gates, they saw Samuel as he was coming toward them, on the way to where people were going to offer sacrifices. 15 On the previous day, Yahweh had told Samuel, 16 "At this time tomorrow, I will send to you a man from the land where the descendants of Benjamin live. Pour olive oil on his [head] to [indicate that he will] be the leader of my Israeli people. I have seen that my people are suffering [because the Philistine people are oppressing them], and I have heard my people as they have called out to me [for help]. The man on whose [head] you pour olive oil will rescue my people from the [MTY] Philistine people." 17 When Samuel saw Saul, Yahweh said to him, "This is the man I told you about yesterday! He is the one who will rule my people!" 18 Saul saw Samuel as he was sitting at the town gateway [but he did not know that it was Samuel]. He went over to him and asked him, "Can you tell me, where is the house of the man who sees [(visions from God/all that God sees)]?" 19 Samuel replied, "I am that man. Go ahead of me with your servant to the place where the people make sacrifices. Both of you will eat with me today. Tomorrow morning I will tell you what you are wanting to know, and then I will send you home. 20 Also, do not worry any more about those donkeys that wandered away three days ago. (Someone has found them/They have been found). But [what you need to know is that] it is you and your family that all the Israeli people are wanting!" [RHQ] 21 Saul replied, "I am from the tribe of Benjamin [RHQ]. That is the smallest tribe in Israel [RHQ]! And my family is the least important family in our tribe! So why are you talking to me like this, [about the Israeli people wanting me and my family]?" 22 Then Samuel brought Saul and the servant into the big dining room, and told them to sit at the head [of the table, indicating that he was] honoring them more than he was honoring the 30 people who had been invited. 23 Then Samuel told the cook, "Bring to me the special piece [of meat] that I told you to set aside." 24 So the cook brought the leg and the meat that was on it, and set it in front of Saul, [even though those portions were for only the priest to eat]. Samuel said to Saul, "Start eating it. I told the cook to save this for you, so that you could eat it at this time, when all these people whom I invited are here." So Saul and Samuel ate together. 25 After they finished eating, they returned to the town. Then Samuel took Saul up to the [flat] roof [of his house], and fixed a bed for him. 26 As the sun

was rising the next morning, Samuel called up to Saul, "Get up! It is time for me to send you on the road back home." So Saul got up, and [later] Samuel and Saul left the house together. **27** When they got to the edge of the town, Samuel told Saul to send his servant ahead. After the servant left, Samuel said to Saul, "Stay here for a few minutes, in order that I can give you a message I received from God."

10 Then Samuel took a small jar of olive oil and poured [some of] it on Saul's head. Then he kissed Saul [on the cheek], and told him, "I am doing this because Yahweh has chosen you to be the leader of his Israeli people. **2** [And this will prove it to you]: When you leave me today, when you arrive near Rachel's tomb at Zelzah, in the area where the descendants of Benjamin live, you will meet two men. They will say to you, 'The donkeys have been found, but now your father is worrying about you, and he is asking people, "Have you seen my son?"' **3** When you arrive at the [large] oak tree at Tabor [town], you will see three men coming toward you. They will be on their way to [worship] God at Bethel [town]. One of them will be leading three young goats, one will be carrying three loaves of bread, and one will be carrying a container of wine. **4** They will greet you, and they will offer you two of the loaves of bread. Accept them. **5** When you arrive at the hill [where people worship] God near Gibeah [town], where there is the camp where the Philistine soldiers stay, you will meet a group of prophets who will be coming down from the altar on top of the hill. There will be people in front of them who will be playing [various musical instruments]: a harp, a tambourine, a flute, and a lyre. And all of them will be speaking messages that come directly from God. **6** At that time the Spirit of Yahweh will come upon you, and you also will speak messages that come directly from God. (You will be changed/The Spirit of Yahweh will change you), so that you will become like a different person. **7** After those things occur, do whatever you think is right to do, and God will (be with/help) you. **8** Then go ahead of me, down to Gilgal [city], and wait for me there, for seven days. Then I will join you there, to burn sacrifices and offer other sacrifices to enable you to maintain fellowship with God. When I arrive there, I will tell you what [other] things you should do." **9** As Saul started to leave there, God changed Saul's inner being. And all the things that Samuel had predicted happened on that day. **10** When Saul and his servant arrived at Gibeah, they saw some prophets who were [speaking messages that came directly from God. As the prophets were] approaching Saul and his servant, God's Spirit came upon Saul powerfully, and he also began to speak messages from God. **11** When people who had known Saul previously heard him speaking messages from God as the prophets were doing, they said to each other, "What has happened to this son of Kish? Is he now really one of the (prophets/men who speak messages from God)?" **12** One of the men who lived there replied, "[Saul cannot be a prophet, because] all prophets receive their power to speak messages from God, not from their parents." And that is why, [when people hear about a report of someone prophesying, they think about what happened to Saul and] say, "[We are surprised about that person becoming a prophet, like] we were surprised to hear that Saul had really become one of the prophets." **13** When Saul finished speaking the messages that God gave him, he went to the place where the people offered sacrifices. **14** Later, Saul's uncle [saw him there, and] asked him, "Where did you go?" Saul replied, "We went to look for the donkeys. When we could not find them, we came here to ask Samuel [if he could tell us where they were]." **15** Saul's uncle replied, "What did Samuel tell you?" **16** Saul replied, "He assured us that the donkeys had been found." But he did not tell his uncle what Samuel had said about him becoming the king [of Israel]. **17** [Later] Samuel summoned the people of Israel to gather at Mizpah to [hear a message from] Yahweh. **18** After they arrived, he said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God we Israeli people [worship], says: I brought you Israeli people out of Egypt. I rescued your [ancestors] from the power of the rulers of Egypt and from all the other kings who oppressed them. **19** I am the one who saves you from all your troubles and difficulties. But today you have rejected me, your God, and you have said, 'We don't care! Give us a king!' So [I will do what you want]. Now have [representatives of] your tribes and [of] your clans stand here in the presence of Yahweh.'" **20** When those representatives came near to Samuel, [God indicated that] he had chosen someone from the tribe descended from Benjamin. **21** Then Samuel told representatives of the tribe of Benjamin to come forward, and God indicated that [from that tribe] he had chosen someone from the family of Matri, and then God indicated that [from the family of Matri] he had chosen Saul, the son of Kish. But when they looked for Saul, they could not find him. **22** So they asked Yahweh, "Where is Saul?" Yahweh replied, "He is hiding among the army equipment." **23** So they quickly went there [and found him,] and brought him [in front of all the people]. They could see that [truly] he was a head taller than anyone else. **24** Then Samuel said to all the people there, "This is the man whom Yahweh has chosen to be your king. Among all us Israeli people, there is no one like him!" Then all the people shouted, "We hope that this king will live a long time!" **25** Then Samuel told the people what things the king would force them to do, and all the things the king was required to

do. He wrote all those things on a scroll, and then he put it in a sacred place in the temple. Then Samuel sent all the people home. **26** When Saul returned to his home in Gibeah [town], a group of men decided to continually accompany Saul. They did that because God (motivated them/put it in their minds) to do that. **27** But some worthless men said, "(How can this man save us [from our enemies]?/This man will not be able to save us [from our enemies].)" [RHQ] They despised him, and refused to give him any gifts [to show that they would be loyal to him]. But Saul did not say anything [to rebuke them].

11 About a month later, King Nahash of Ammon [led his army across the Jordan River, and they] surrounded Jabesh [city] in [the] Gilead [region]. But all the men of Jabesh [went and] said to Nahash, "Make an agreement/treaty with us [not to kill us], and then we will let you rule us." **2** Nahash replied, "I will do that if you do one thing. Allow us to gouge out all the right eyes of your people. By doing that we will cause the people [in other countries] to despise all you Israeli people." **3** The leaders of Jabesh replied, "Do not attack us for the next seven days. During that time, we will send messengers throughout Israel [to tell them what you are demanding]. If no one will help us, then we will (surrender to you/allow you to do to us whatever you want)." **4** [Being very confident that his army was very superior, Nahash agreed. So the leaders of Jabesh sent messengers throughout Israel]. When the messengers came to Gibeah, which was [the city] where Saul lived, and they told the people there about the situation, everyone started to cry. **5** At that time, Saul was plowing in the field. When he returned home, he asked, "Why are all the people [crying]?" So they told him what the messengers from Jabesh had reported. **6** Then God's Spirit came powerfully upon Saul, and he became very angry [because of what Nahash wanted to do]. **7** He took two of his oxen [and killed them] and cut them into pieces. Then he sent messengers [carrying those pieces] throughout Israel to tell people this message: "Saul says that [he cut this ox in pieces, and that he] will do the same thing to the oxen of anyone who refuses to come with him and Samuel to fight [the army from Ammon]!" Then Yahweh caused all the people of Israel to be afraid of what Saul might do to them (OR, of what Yahweh might do to them) [if they did not go and help Saul]. So the men all gathered together. **8** When Saul gave them all weapons at Bezek, he saw that there were 300,000 Israeli men there, as well as 30,000 men from the tribe of Judah. **9** So Saul sent messengers back to the people at Jabesh to tell them, "We will rescue/save you by noontime tomorrow." When the people of Jabesh heard that message, they were very joyful/happy. **10** Then the men of Jabesh told [Nahash], "Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and then you can do to us whatever you want to." **11** But before the sun rose the next morning, Saul [and his army arrived. He] divided them into three groups. They rushed into the camp of the soldiers from Ammon, and attacked them. By noontime they had killed most of them, and those who were not killed scattered. Each of them who ran away ran away alone. **12** Then the people [of Jabesh] said to Samuel, "Where are those men who said that they did not want Saul to be our king? Bring them here, and we will kill them!" **13** But Saul replied, "[No], we are not going to execute anyone today, because this is the day that Yahweh has saved us Israeli people. [It is a day to rejoice, not to kill anyone]." **14** Then Samuel said to the people, "Let's all go to Gilgal, and there we will again proclaim [that Saul is] our king." **15** So they went to Gilgal. There, knowing that Yahweh was watching, they proclaimed that Saul was their king. Then they offered sacrifices to enable them to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. And Saul and all the other Israeli people were very happy.

12 Then Samuel said this to all the Israeli people: "I have done everything that you told me to do, and I have given/appointed a king to rule you. **2** My own sons [are grown up and] with you now, but I have appointed Saul [instead of one of them], and he is now your leader. I am now old, and my hair is gray. I have been your leader ever since I was a boy. **3** Now tell me, while Yahweh is listening, and while the king whom he has chosen is listening: whose ox or donkey have I stolen [during all those years]? Whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed/treated badly? From whom have I accepted a bribe, in order that I would ignore [the evil things he had done]? If I have done any of those things, tell me, and I will pay back what I owe." **4** They replied, "[No,] you have never cheated anyone or oppressed anyone or accepted a bribe from anyone." **5** Then Samuel said, "Today Yahweh can testify, and the king whom you chose can testify, that I have not taken a bribe from anyone." They replied, "Yes, Yahweh can say that he knows that is true." **6** Samuel continued by saying, "Yahweh is the one who appointed Moses and Aaron [to lead] our ancestors. He is the one who brought them out of Egypt. [And he is the one who will testify that what I am saying is true]. **7** Now while Yahweh is listening, stand here quietly while I accuse you [and tell you that your requesting a king instead of trusting Yahweh to lead you was wrong]. I will do that by reminding you of all the great miracles that Yahweh performed for you and your ancestors. **8** ["Many years] after Jacob went to Egypt, our ancestors pleaded to Yahweh to help them. So Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron to them, and

they led our ancestors out of Egypt, and eventually they settled in this land. 9 "But our ancestors soon forgot about Yahweh, their God. So he allowed Sisera, the commander of the army from Hazor, to defeat them. He also allowed the Philistines and the army of the king of Moab to fight our ancestors and defeat them. 10 Then our ancestors pleaded with Yahweh again to help them. They admitted, 'Yahweh, we have sinned, and we have forsaken you. We have worshiped [idols that represent the god] Baal and [the goddess] Astarte. But if you rescue us from our enemies, we will worship you only.' 11 So Yahweh sent men such as Gideon, Barak, Jephthah, and me to save you. And as a result, you did not have to worry about any enemies attacking you. 12 "But now, when king Nahash of Ammon came [with his army] to attack you, [you were afraid. So], you [came to me, and] said, 'We want a king to rule us,' even though Yahweh was already your king! 13 So now, look, here is the king whom you have chosen. You asked for a king, and Yahweh has now appointed a king for you. 14 If you will revere Yahweh and if you serve him, and if you listen to what he says and obey what he commands, and if you and the king who rules over you do what Yahweh your God wants you to do, [(things will go well for you all/Yahweh will bless you)]. 15 But if you do not listen to what Yahweh says, if you disobey what he commands, then he will punish [MTY] you all, just as he punished our ancestors. 16 "Now stand here quietly and see the great thing that Yahweh is about to do. 17 You know that [RHQ] [it does not rain at this time of the year], during the time when you harvest wheat. But I will ask Yahweh to send thunder [and lightning] and rain today. When he does that, you will realize that Yahweh considers that you have done a very wicked thing by requesting a king." 18 Then Samuel prayed to Yahweh, and Yahweh caused it to thunder [and lightning] and rain. So all the people became very afraid of Yahweh and of Samuel. 19 They cried out to Samuel, "Pray for us! We have added to our previous sins by requesting a king! Pray to Yahweh, your God, in order that we will not die [because of having done that]!" 20 Samuel replied, "Do not be afraid! You have done this evil thing, but do not turn away from doing the things that Yahweh wants you to do. Instead, serve Yahweh wholeheartedly. 21 Do not abandon [Yahweh] and worship useless idols. They cannot help you or save you [from your enemies], because they are truly useless. 22 Yahweh decided to make us his people. So he will not abandon us people whom he has chosen, because he would injure his own reputation [of being completely faithful] if he did that. 23 But as for me, I have solemnly promised that I will not sin against Yahweh by ceasing to pray for you. And I will continue to teach you what things are good and right [for you to do]. 24 But you must revere Yahweh and serve him wholeheartedly. Never forget all the great things that he has done for you. 25 But if you keep doing wicked things, he will get rid of you and your king!"

13 Saul was no longer a young man when he became the king. He ruled Israel for 42 years. 2 [Several years after he became king], he chose three thousand men from the Israeli army to go with him [to fight the Philistines]. Then he sent the other soldiers back home. Of the men he chose, 2,000 stayed with Saul at Micmash and in the hilly area near Bethel, and 1,000 stayed with [Saul's son] Jonathan at Gibeah, in the area where the descendants of Benjamin lived. 3 Jonathan [and the men who were with him] attacked the Philistine soldiers who were camped at Geba. The [other] Philistines heard about that. [So Saul realized that the army of Philistia would probably come to fight the Israelis again]. So Saul [sent messengers to] blow trumpets throughout Israel [to gather the people together and] proclaim to them, "All you Hebrews need to hear [that now the Philistines will start a war with us]!" 4 The messengers told the rest of the army to gather together with Saul at Gilgal. And all the people in Israel heard the news. People were saying, "Saul's army has attacked the Philistine camp, with the result that now the Philistines hate us Israelis very much." 5 The Philistines gathered together and were given equipment to fight the Israelis. The Philistines had 3,000 chariots, and 6,000 chariot-drivers. Their soldiers [seemed to be as many] as grains of sand on the seashore [HYP]. They went up and set up their tents at Micmash, to the east of Beth-Aven ([which means 'house of wickedness', and really referred to Bethel town]). 6 The Philistines attacked the Israelis very strongly, and the Israeli soldiers realized that they were in a very bad situation. So many of the Israeli soldiers hid in caves and holes in the ground, or among the rocks, or in pits, or in wells. 7 Some of them crossed the Jordan River at a place where it was very shallow. Then they went to the area where the descendants of Gad lived and to [the] Gilead [region]. But Saul stayed at Gilgal. All the soldiers who were with him were shaking [because they were so afraid]. 8 Saul waited seven days, which was the number of days that Samuel had told him to wait for him. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal [during that time], so many of the men in Saul's army began to leave him and run away. 9 So Saul said to the soldiers, "Bring to me an animal to be completely burned [on the altar] and one for the offering to enable us to maintain fellowship [with God]." [So the men did that]. 10 And just as he was finished burning those offerings, Samuel arrived. Saul went to greet him. 11 Samuel [saw what Saul had done, and he] said to Saul, "Why have you

done this?" Saul replied, "I saw that my men were leaving me and running away, and that you did not come here during the time that you said that you would come, and that the Philistine army was gathering together at Micmash. 12 "So I thought, 'The Philistine army is going to attack us here at Gilgal, and I have not yet asked Yahweh to bless/help us.' So I felt it was necessary to offer the burnt offerings [to seek God's blessings]." 13 Samuel replied, "What you did was very foolish! You have not obeyed what Yahweh, your God, commanded [about sacrifices]. If you had obeyed him, God would have allowed you and your descendants to rule [Israel] for a long time. 14 But now [because of what you have done, you will die, and after you die,] none of your descendants will rule. Yahweh is seeking for a man [to be king] who will be just the kind of person that he wants him to be, so that he can appoint him to be the leader of his people. Yahweh will do this because you have not obeyed what he commanded." 15 Then Samuel left Gilgal and went up to Gibeah. Saul stayed at Gilgal with his soldiers. There were only about 600 of them left [who had not run away]. 16 Saul and his son Jonathan and the soldiers who were with them went to Geba [city] in the area of the tribe of Benjamin [and set up their tents there]. The Philistine army set up their tents at Micmash. 17 Three groups of Philistia men soon left the place where their army was staying, and went and (raided the Israeli towns/attacked the Israelis and took their possessions). One group went [north] toward Ophrah [city] in [the] Shual [region]. 18 One group went [west] to Beth-Horon [city]. The third group went toward the [Israeli] border, above Zeboim Valley, near the desert. 19 At that time, there were no men in Israel who (were blacksmiths/could make things from iron). [The people of Philistia would not permit the Israelis to do that, because they were afraid that] they would make iron swords and spears for the Hebrews to fight with. 20 So [whenever the Israelis needed] to sharpen the blades of their plows, or picks, or axes, or sickles, they were forced to take those things to a Philistia man who could sharpen those things. 21 They needed to pay (one fourth of an ounce/8 grams) of silver for sharpening a plow, and (an eighth of an ounce/4 grams) of silver to sharpen an axe, or a sickle, or (an ox goad/a pointed rod to jab an ox to make it walk). 22 So [because the Israelis could not make weapons from iron], on the day that the Israelis fought [against the men of Philistia], Saul and Jonathan were the only Israeli men who had swords. None of the others had a sword; [they had only bows and arrows]. 23 Before the battle started, some Philistia men went to (the pass/a narrow place between two cliffs) outside Micmash to guard it.

14 One day, Jonathan said to the young man who carried his weapons, "Come with me; we will go over to where the Philistia soldiers have put up their tents." [So they went], but Jonathan did not tell his father [what they were going to do]. 2 On that day, Saul and the 600 soldiers who were with him were sitting around a pomegranate tree at a place where the people threshed grain, near Gibeah. 3 Ahijah the priest was also there. He was wearing the sacred vest. Ahijah was the son of Ahitub, who was a brother of Ichabod. Ichabod and Ahitub were the sons of Phinehas, who was the son of Eli, who had been Yahweh's priest at Shiloh. No one knew that Jonathan had left [the Israeli camp]. 4 Jonathan planned that he and the young man would go through a narrow (pass/place between two cliffs) to get to where the Philistia army was. The cliff on one side of the pass was named Bozez, and the other cliff was named Seneh. 5 One cliff faced north toward Micmash, and the cliff on the other side faced south toward Geba [town]. 6 Jonathan said to the young man who carried his weapons, "Come with me. We will go to where those (pagans/people who do not believe in Yahweh) [MTY] have set up their tents. Perhaps Yahweh will help us. It does not matter whether we are only two men or many people; nothing can hinder Yahweh from enabling us to defeat them." 7 The young man who was carrying Jonathan's weapons said, "Do what you think is the best thing for us to do. I will help you." 8 Then Jonathan said, "Okay, come with me. We will cross the valley to where the Philistia army is, and allow them to see us. 9 If they then say to us, 'You two stay there until we come down to you,' we will stay there and not go up to them. 10 But if they say to us, 'Come up here [and fight against] us,' that will show us that Yahweh will enable us to defeat them. Then we will go up and fight them." 11 When the two of them crossed the valley, the Philistia soldiers saw them coming. They said, "Look! The Hebrews are crawling out of the holes in which they have been hiding!" 12 Then the Philistia soldiers who were closest to Jonathan and the young man who carried his weapons said, "Come up here, and we will teach you something [about how to fight] [IDM]!" Jonathan said to the young man who was with him, "Come behind me and climb up, because Yahweh is going to help us to defeat them!" 13 So Jonathan climbed up, using his hands and his feet [because it was very steep]. The young man climbed up following him. As Jonathan climbed, he struck and killed many Philistia soldiers, and the young man who was with him killed many more as he followed behind Jonathan. 14 In that first battle the two of them killed about 20 Philistia soldiers in an area that was about half an acre. 15 Then all the other Philistia soldiers, the ones in the camp and the ones who

had been attacking the Israeli towns, ones who were out in the field much closer, panicked. Then God caused the ground to shake, and they all became terrified/very afraid. **16** Saul's (lookouts/men who were watching to see if enemies were coming) were in Gibeah [town] in the land of the tribe of Benjamin. They saw that the soldiers of the Philistia army were running away in all directions. **17** Saul [realized that some of his soldiers must have attacked the Philistia army. So he] said to the soldiers who were with him, "Check to see if any of our men are not here." So they checked, and they found out that Jonathan and the man who carried his weapons were gone. **18** So Saul said to Ahijah [the Supreme Priest], "Bring the sacred vest here [and find out what we should do]." On that day Ahijah was wearing the sacred vest, going in front of the Israelis. **19** But while Saul was talking to the priest, [he saw that] the Philistia soldiers were becoming more panicked/confused. So Saul said to Ahijah, "Take your hand down [from the sacred vest. Do not waste any more time using the marked stones in the vest to find out what Yahweh wants us to do."] **20** Then Saul gathered his men and they went toward the battle. They found that the Philistia soldiers were so confused that they were striking each other with their swords. **21** Before that, some of the Hebrew men had deserted their army and gone to join with the Philistia army. But now those men [revolted and] joined with Saul and Jonathan and the other Israeli soldiers. **22** Some of the Israeli soldiers had previously run away and hidden in the mountains where the tribe of Ephraim lived. But when they heard that the Philistia soldiers were running away, they [came down and] joined the other Israeli soldiers and pursued the Philistia soldiers. **23** So Yahweh rescued the Israelis on that day. The Israeli soldiers continued to pursue their enemies beyond Beth-Aven [town]. **24** Before Saul's soldiers went to the battle, Saul declared to them solemnly, "I do not want any of you to eat any food before this evening, before we have defeated all our enemies. If anyone eats anything, [Yahweh] will curse/punish him." So none of the Israeli soldiers ate any food, and they became faint/weak because they were very hungry. **25** The Israeli army went into the forest, and they found honeycombs on the ground, but they did not eat any honey. **26** They were afraid to eat any, because they had solemnly promised that they would not eat any food. **27** But Jonathan did not hear what his father commanded [because he had left the camp very early in the morning]. So [when he saw] a honeycomb, he dipped the end of his walking stick into it and ate some honey. After he ate the honey, he felt stronger. **28** But one of the Israeli soldiers saw him and said to him, "Your father solemnly declared to us that [Yahweh] would curse/punish anyone who ate any food today. So now we are [very tired and] weak from being hungry [because we obeyed him]." **29** Jonathan exclaimed, "My father has caused trouble for all of us! See how refreshed/strong I am after eating a little honey! **30** If he had permitted all of us to eat from the food we took from our enemies while we were pursuing them, we would have been able to kill many more of their soldiers!" **31** The Israelis pursued and killed Philistia soldiers all that day, from Micmash [town west] to Aijalon. But they continued to become weaker from being hungry. **32** They had taken [many] sheep and cattle that the Philistia soldiers had abandoned. Now, because they were extremely hungry, they butchered some of those animals and ate the meat without draining the blood from the animals. **33** One of the soldiers told Saul, "Look! The men are sinning against Yahweh by eating meat that still has blood in it!" Saul replied [to the men who were near him], "They have disobeyed Yahweh! Roll a large stone over here!" **34** After they did that, he said to those men, "Go and tell all the soldiers that each of them must bring an ox or a sheep to me, and kill it here on this stone, [and drain the blood] before he eats any of the meat. They should not sin against Yahweh by eating meat [from some animal] without draining its blood." So that night all the soldiers brought animals and slaughtered them there. Then Saul built an altar to [worship] Yahweh. **35** That was the first [time that he built an] altar for Yahweh. **36** Then Saul said [to the Israeli soldiers], "Let's pursue the Philistia soldiers tonight. We can attack them all night. We will not allow any of them to escape alive." The Israeli soldiers answered, "We will do whatever you think is the best thing for us to do." But the priest said, "We should ask Yahweh [what he thinks we should do]." **37** So Saul asked God, "Should we pursue the Philistine soldiers? Will you enable us to defeat them?" But God did not answer Saul that day. **38** Then Saul summoned all the leaders of his army. He said to them, "[I am sure that God has not answered me because] someone has sinned. We must find out what sin someone has committed. **39** Yahweh has rescued us [from the Philistia army]. Just as certain as Yahweh lives, whoever has sinned must be executed. Even if it is my son Jonathan who has sinned, he must be executed." [His men knew who was guilty], but none of them said anything [to Saul]. **40** Then Saul said to all the Israeli soldiers, "You stand on one side. My son Jonathan and I will stand on the other side." His men replied, "Do whatever you think is best." **41** Then Saul prayed to Yahweh, the Israelis' God, "Tell me who is guilty and who is not guilty." Then the priest (cast lots/threw the stones that were marked), and they indicated that it was [either] Jonathan or Saul who was the guilty one,

and that the other men were not guilty. **42** Then Saul said to the priest, "Throw the stones again to indicate which of us two is guilty." So he did, and the stones indicated that Jonathan was the guilty one. **43** Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done [that was wrong]." Jonathan replied, "I ate a little bit of honey. It was only a little bit that was on the end of my stick. Do I [deserve to be] executed [because of doing that]?" **44** Saul replied, "Yes, you must be executed! I hope/wish that God will strike me and kill me if you are not executed for having done that!" **45** But the Israeli soldiers said to Saul, "Jonathan has won a great victory for all us Israelis. Should he be executed for eating some honey [RHQ]? Certainly not! Just as surely as Yahweh lives, we will not allow you to injure him in any manner [IDM], [because] today God helped Jonathan [to kill many soldiers of the Philistia army]!" So [by saying that] the Israeli soldiers rescued Jonathan, and he was not executed. **46** Then Saul ordered his soldiers to stop pursuing the Philistia army, so the Philistia soldiers returned to their homes. **47** After Saul became the ruler/king of the Israeli people, his army fought against their enemies in many areas. They fought against armies of the Moab people-group, the Ammon people-group, the Edom people-group, the kings of Zobah [city/area], and the Philistia people-group. Wherever the Israeli army fought, they defeated their enemies. **48** Saul's army fought bravely and defeated the [very tall] descendants of Amalek. His army rescued the Israelis from those who had (plundered/forcefully taken things from) them. **49** Saul's sons were Jonathan, Ishbosheth, and Malchishua. He also had two daughters, Merab and her younger sister Michal. **50** Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz. The commander of Saul's army was Abner, who was the son of Saul's uncle Ner. **51** Saul's father Kish and Abner's father Ner were both sons of Abiel. **52** All the time that Saul was alive, his army fought against the Philistia army. And whenever Saul saw a young man who was (brave/not afraid to fight) and strong, he forced him to join his army.

15 [One day] Samuel said to Saul, "Yahweh sent me to appoint you to be the king of the Israeli people. So now listen to this message from Yahweh: **2** Yahweh, [the commander] of the armies [of angels] has declared this: 'I am going to punish [the descendants of] Amalek for [attacking] the Israeli people after the Israelis left Egypt. **3** So now go [with your army] and attack the Amalek people-group. Destroy them completely—destroy them and everything that belongs to them—the men and women, their children and infants, their cattle and sheep and camels and donkeys. Do not (spare any of them/allow any of them to remain alive)!'" **4** So Saul summoned the army, and they gathered at Telaim [town]. There were 200,000 soldiers. 10,000 of them were from Judah, [and the others were from the other Israeli tribes]. **5** Then Saul went [with his army] to a town where some of the Amalek people-group lived. [His army prepared to attack them suddenly by] hiding in the valley. **6** Then Saul sent this message to the Ken people-group [who lived in that area]: "You acted kindly toward all our Israeli [ancestors] when they left Egypt. But we are going to kill all of the Amalek people-group, [because they opposed/attacked our ancestors]. So move away from where the Amalek people-group live. [If you do not move away], you will be killed when they are killed." So [when] the Ken people-group [heard that, they immediately] left that area. **7** Then Saul's [army] slaughtered the Amalek people-group, from Havilah [town in the east] to Shur [town in the west]. Shur was at the border [between Israel and] Egypt. **8** Saul's army captured Agag, the king of the Amalek people-group, but they killed everyone else. **9** They not only (spared/did not kill) Agag, but they also took the best sheep and goats and cattle. They took everything that was good. They destroyed only the animals that they considered to be worthless. **10** Then Yahweh said to Samuel, **11** "I am sorry that I appointed Saul to be your king, because he has turned away from me and has not obeyed what I commanded him to do." Samuel was very disturbed/upset [when he heard that], and he cried out to Yahweh all that night. **12** Early the next morning, Samuel got up and went to talk with Saul. But someone told Samuel, "Saul went to Camel [city], where he has set up a monument to honor himself. Now he has left there and gone down to Gilgal." **13** When Samuel arrived [at Gilgal] he approached Saul, and Saul said to him, "I wish/desire that Yahweh will bless you! I have obeyed what Yahweh told me to do." **14** But Samuel replied, "If that is true, why is it that I hear cattle mooing and I hear sheep bleating?" **15** Saul replied, "The soldiers took them from the Amalek people-group. They saved the best sheep and cattle, in order to offer them as sacrifices to Yahweh, your God. But we have completely destroyed all the others." **16** Samuel said to Saul, "Stop [talking]! Allow me to tell you what Yahweh said to me last night." Saul replied, "Tell me [what he said]." **17** Samuel said, "Previously you did not think that you were important. But now you have become [RHQ] the leader of the tribes of Israel. Yahweh appointed you to be their king. **18** And Yahweh sent you to do something [for him]. He said to you, 'Go and get rid of all those sinful people, the Amalek people-group. Attack them and kill all of them.' **19** So why did you not obey Yahweh [RHQ]? Why did your men take the best animals [RHQ]? Why did you do what Yahweh said was evil?" [RHQ] **20** Saul replied to Samuel, "Hey, I did what

Yahweh sent me to do! I brought back King Agag, but we killed everyone else! 21 My men brought back only the best sheep and cattle and other things, in order to sacrifice them to Yahweh your God here at Gilgal." 22 But Samuel replied, "Which [do you think] pleases Yahweh more, animals that are completely burned [on the altar] and other sacrifices, or people obeying him [SYN]? It is better to obey [Yahweh] than [to offer] sacrifices [to him]. It is better to pay attention to what he says than [to burn] the fat of rams, [even though God said they should be sacrificed to him]. 23 To rebel [against God] is as sinful as doing sorcery/black magic, and being stubborn is as sinful as worshiping idols. So, because you disobeyed what Yahweh told you to do, he has declared that you will no longer be king." 24 Then Saul said to Samuel, "[Yes], I have sinned. I disobeyed what you told me to do, which is what Yahweh commanded. I did that because I was (afraid of/worried about) what my men would say [if I did not do what they wanted]. So I did what they demanded. 25 But now, please forgive me for having sinned. And come back with me [to where the people are] in order that I may worship Yahweh." 26 But Samuel replied, "No, I will not go back with you. You have rejected/disobeyed what Yahweh commanded you to do. So he has rejected you, [and declared that you will no longer] be the king of Israel. [So I do not want to talk any more with you]." 27 As Samuel turned to leave, Saul tried to stop him by grabbing the edge of Samuel's robe, and it tore. 28 Samuel said to him, "[You tore my robe! And] today Yahweh has torn away from you the kingdom of Israel! He will appoint someone else to be king, someone who is a better man than you are. 29 And since the one who is the glorious [God] of the Israeli people does not lie, he will not change (his mind/what he has said). Humans sometimes change their minds, but God does not do that, because he is not a human." 30 Then Saul [pleaded again. He] said, "I know that I have sinned. But please honor me in front of the leaders of the Israeli people and in front of all the other Israeli people by coming back [to them] with me in order that I may worship Yahweh your God." 31 So Samuel finally agreed to do that, and they went together back [to where the people were], and Saul worshiped Yahweh there. 32 Then Samuel said, "Bring King Agag to me." So they brought Agag to him. Agag was confidently expecting that they would spare him/not kill him. He was thinking, "Surely I will not have to endure an agonizing death!" 33 But Samuel said to him, "You have killed the sons of many women with your sword, so now your mother will no longer have a son." And Samuel cut Agag into pieces [with his sword], there at Gilgal, in the presence of Yahweh. 34 Then Samuel left there and returned to his home in Ramah, and Saul went to his home in Gibeah. 35 Samuel never saw Saul again, but he was very sad about [what] Saul [had done]. And Yahweh was very sorry that he had appointed Saul to be the king of Israel.

16 Finally, Yahweh said to Samuel, "I have decided that I will not allow Saul to continue to be the king. So you should not [RHQ] keep feeling sad [about what he has done]. Put some olive oil in a small container and go to Bethlehem [to anoint someone with the oil, and appoint him to be king]. I am sending you there to a man named Jesse, because I have chosen one of his sons to be the king [of Israel]." 2 But Samuel said, "I am afraid [RHQ] to do that! If Saul hears about it, he will kill me!" Yahweh said, "Take a (heifer/young female cow) with you, and say to people that you have come to [kill it and] offer it as a sacrifice to me. 3 "Invite Jesse to come to the sacrifice. [When he comes,] I will show you what you should do. And I will show you which of his sons [I have chosen to be the king]. Then you should anoint that one [with the olive oil to be the king]." 4 Samuel did what Yahweh told him to do. He went to Bethlehem. When the town leaders came to him, they trembled, [because they were worried that Samuel had come to rebuke them about something]. One of them asked him, "Have you come [to speak] peacefully [to us]?" 5 Samuel replied, "Yes. I have come peacefully, to make a sacrifice to Yahweh. [Perform the rituals to] make yourselves acceptable to Yahweh, and then come with me to where they will offer the sacrifice." Then Samuel performed the ritual to make Jesse and his sons acceptable to God, and he also invited them to the sacrifice. 6 When they arrived there, Samuel looked at [Jesse's oldest son] Eliab, and thought, "Surely this is the one whom Yahweh has appointed [to be king]!" 7 But Yahweh said to Samuel, "No, he is not the one whom I have chosen. Don't pay attention to his being handsome and very tall, because I have not chosen him. I do not evaluate people as people do. You people evaluate people by their appearance, but I evaluate people by what is in their inner beings." 8 Then Jesse told [his next oldest son] Abinadab to step forward and walk in front of Samuel. [But when he did that], Samuel said, "Yahweh has not chosen this one, either." 9 Then Jesse told [his next oldest son] Shammah to step forward. He stepped forward, but Samuel said, "Yahweh has not chosen this one, either." 10 Similarly, Jesse told his other four sons to walk in front of Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, "Yahweh has not chosen any of these sons of yours." 11 Then Samuel asked Jesse, "Do you have any other sons?" Jesse replied, "My youngest son [is not here]; he is out [in the fields] taking care of the sheep." Samuel said, "Send someone to bring him here! We will not sit down [to eat] until he gets here." 12 So Jesse sent [someone] to

bring [David there. And when David arrived, Samuel saw that] he was handsome and healthy, and had bright eyes. Then Yahweh said, "This is the one [whom I have chosen]; anoint him [to be king]." **13** So as David [stood there] in front of his older brothers, Samuel took the container of oil that he had brought and poured some of it on David's head [to set him apart to serve God. After they all ate, Samuel left] and returned to Ramah. But Yahweh's Spirit came on David powerfully, and stayed with David for the rest of his life. **14** But Yahweh's Spirit left Saul. Instead [of his Spirit staying with Saul], Yahweh sent an evil spirit to Saul to terrify him [repeatedly]. **15** One of his servants said to him, "It is evident that an evil spirit sent by God is terrifying you. **16** So [we suggest that you] allow us, your servants here, to search for a man who plays the harp well. He can play the harp whenever the evil spirit bothers you. Then [you will calm down and] you will be okay again." **17** Saul replied, "[Fine/Okay], find for me a man who can play [the harp] well, and bring him to me." **18** One of his servants said to him, "A man named Jesse, in Bethlehem [town], has a son who plays the harp very well. Furthermore, he is a brave man, and is a capable soldier. He is handsome and he always speaks wisely. And Yahweh always protects him." **19** So Saul sent this message to Jesse: "Send your son David to me, the one who takes care of sheep." **20** [So after they went to] Jesse [and told him that, he agreed. He] got a young goat, a container of wine, a donkey on which he put some loaves of bread, and gave them to David to take to Saul [as a present]. **21** Then David went to Saul and started to work for him. Saul liked David very much, and he became the man who carried Saul's weapons [when Saul went to fight in battles]. **22** Then Saul sent [a messenger] to Jesse to tell him, "I am pleased with David. Please let him stay here and work for me." **23** [Jesse agreed, and after that], whenever the evil spirit whom God sent tormented Saul, David played the harp. Then Saul would become calm, and the evil spirit would leave him.

17 The Philistines gathered their army [to fight the Israeli army]. They gathered together near Socoh, in the area where the descendants of Judah lived. They set up their tents at Ephes-Dammim, which is between Socoh and Azekah. **2** Saul gathered the Israeli army near Elah Valley, and they set up their tents. Then they all took their places, ready to fight the Philistines. **3** So the Philistine and Israeli armies faced each other. They were on two hills, with a valley between them. **4** Then Goliath, from Gath [city], came out from the Philistine camp. He was a champion warrior/soldier. He was (over 9 feet/3 meters) tall. **5** He wore a helmet made of bronze [to protect his head], and he wore a coat made of metal plates [to protect his body]. The coat weighed (125 pounds/56 kg.). **6** He wore bronze guards/protectors on his legs. He had a long bronze dagger fastened on his back. **7** He also had a big spear. It had a cord on it to enable him to throw it better (OR, which was as thick as a weaver's beam). The tip of the spear was made of iron and weighed (15 pounds/almost 7 kg.). A soldier carrying a huge shield walked in front of him. **8** Goliath stood there and shouted to the Israeli army, "Why are you all lined up for battle? I am the great Philistine [soldier], and I think [RHQ] you are [merely] Saul's slaves. Choose one man to fight for all of you, and send him down here to me! **9** If he fights with me and kills me, then my fellow Philistines will all be your slaves. But if I defeat him and kill him, then you Israelis will all be our slaves. **10** I defy/challenge you men of the Israeli army. Send me a man who will fight with me!" **11** When Saul and all the Israeli soldiers heard that, they were extremely terrified [DOU]. **12** David was the son of Jesse. Jesse was from the clan of Ephrath. He lived in Bethlehem, in the area where the descendants of Judah lived. Jesse had eight sons. When Saul [was king], Jesse had already become a very old man [DOU]. **13** Jesse's three oldest sons, Eliab and Abinadab and Shammah, had gone with Saul to fight [the Philistines]. **14** David was Jesse's youngest son. While his three oldest brothers were with Saul, **15** David went back and forth: Sometimes he went to Saul's camp, and sometimes he stayed in Bethlehem to take care of his father's sheep. **16** For 40 days Goliath came out from the Philistine camp and stood there [taunting the Israeli army/telling the Israelis to choose one man to fight with him]. He did it twice each day, once in the morning and once in the evening. **17** [One day], Jesse said to David, "Here is a sack of roasted grain and ten loaves of bread. Take these quickly to your [older] brothers. **18** And here are ten large chunks of cheese. Take them to their commander. And see how things are going with your [older] brothers. Then [if they are okay,] bring back something to show they are all right." **19** His brothers were with Saul and all the other Israeli soldiers, camped alongside Elah Valley, [preparing to] fight the Philistines. **20** So David arranged for another shepherd to take care of the sheep. Early the next morning he took the food and went to the Israeli camp, as Jesse told him to do. He arrived there just as the Israeli soldiers were forming their ranks and going out to the battlefield. As they went, they were shouting a war cry. **21** The Philistine army and the Israeli army stood [on the hillsides], facing each other, ready for the battle. **22** David gave the food to the man who was taking care of the war equipment. [He told him to take care of the food that he brought], and then he went and greeted his older brothers. **23** While he was talking with them, he saw Goliath

coming out from among the Philistine soldiers, shouting [to the Israelis], challenging them [to send a man to fight him]. David heard what Goliath was saying. **24** When all the Israeli soldiers saw Goliath, they were terrified and started to ran away. **25** They were saying to each other, "Look at him coming up toward us! And listen to him as he defies us Israelis! The king says that he will give a big reward to whoever kills this man. He also says that he will give his daughter to that man for him to marry her, and that he will no longer require that man's family to pay taxes." **26** David talked to some of the men who were standing near him. He said, "What will be given to whoever kills this Philistine and frees us Israelis from this shame/disgrace? And who [does] this heathen Philistine [think he] is, defying/ridiculing the army that serves the all-powerful God?" **27** They told him the same thing that the other men had said, about what the king would do for anyone who killed Goliath. **28** But when David's oldest brother Eliab heard David talking to the men, he was angry. He said to David, "Why have you come down here? Is someone taking care of those few sheep that you left in the desert? I know you are just a (smart-aleck/brat)! You just want to watch the battle!" **29** David replied, "Have I done something wrong? I was merely asking a question!" **30** Then he walked over to another man and asked him the same question, but the man gave him the same answer. Each time he asked someone, he received the same answer. **31** Finally, someone told king Saul what David had asked, and Saul sent someone to bring David to him. **32** David told king Saul, "No one should (worry/become a coward) because of that Philistine man. I will go and fight with him!" **33** Saul said to David, "You are only a young man, and he has been a very capable soldier all his life. So you are not able to go and fight with him!" **34** David replied, "I have been taking care of my father's sheep [for many years]. Whenever a lion or a bear came and carried away a lamb, **35** I went after the lion or the bear and attacked it and rescued the lamb from the wild animal's mouth. Then I grabbed the animal by its jaw/throat and struck it and killed it. **36** I have killed both lions and bears. And [I will do] the same to this heathen Philistine, because he has defied/ridiculed the army of the all-powerful God! **37** Yahweh has rescued me from paws of lions and bears, and he will rescue me from this Philistine!" Then Saul said to David, "All right, go [and fight him], and [I hope/desire] that Yahweh will help you!" **38** Then Saul gave to David his own clothes that he always wore in battles, and he gave him a bronze helmet and a coat made of metal plates. **39** David [put these things on. Then he] fastened his sword over them, and tried to walk. But he could not walk, because he was not accustomed to wearing those things. So David said to Saul, "I cannot fight wearing all these things, because I am not accustomed to [wearing] them!" So he took them off. **40** Then he took his walking/shepherd's stick, and he picked up five smooth stones from the brook/stream. He put them in the pouch of his shoulder-bag. Then he put his sling in his hand and started walking toward Goliath. **41** Goliath walked toward David, with the soldier who was carrying his shield walking in front of him. When he got near David, **42** he looked at David closely. He saw that David had a handsome face and healthy body, but that he was only a young man. So he sneered at David. **43** He said to David, "Are you coming to me with a stick because [you think that] I am a dog?" Then he called out to his gods to harm David. **44** He said to David, "Come here to me, and I will [kill you and] give your dead body to the birds and wild animals to eat!" **45** David replied, "You are coming to me with a sword and a dagger and a spear. But I am coming to you (in the name/with the authority) of almighty Yahweh. He is the God whom the army of Israel [worships], and he is the God whom you have defied/ridiculed. **46** Today Yahweh will enable me to defeat you. I will strike you down and cut off your head. And [we Israelis will kill] many Philistine [soldiers and] give their bodies to the birds and wild animals to eat. And everyone in the world will [hear about it and] know that we Israeli people worship an [all-powerful] God. **47** And everyone here will know that Yahweh can rescue people without a sword or a spear. Yahweh always wins his battles, and he will enable us to defeat all of you [Philistines]." **48** As Goliath came closer to attack David, David ran quickly toward him. **49** He put his hand into his shoulder-bag and took out one stone. He [put it in his sling and] hurled it toward Goliath. The stone hit Goliath on the forehead and penetrated his skull, and he fell face down onto the ground. **50** Then David ran and stood over Goliath. He pulled Goliath's sword from its sheath and killed him with it, and then cut off his head. In that way David defeated the Philistine without having his own sword. He used [only] a sling and a stone! When the other Philistines saw that their great warrior was dead, they ran away. **52** The Israeli men shouted and ran after them. They pursued them all the way to Gath and to the gates of Ekron [city]. They struck them as they went, with the result that dead/wounded Philistines were lying on the road all the way from Shaaraim to Gath and Ekron [towns]. **53** When the Israelis returned from chasing the Philistines, they (plundered/took everything from) the Philistine camp. **54** David later took the head of Goliath to Jerusalem, but he kept Goliath's weapons in his own tent. **55** As Saul watched David going toward Goliath, he said to Abner, the commanded of his army, "Abner, whose son is that young man?" Abner replied, "(As sure as you are

alive/Truly) [IDM], I do not know." **56** Then the king said, "Find out whose son he is!" **57** [Later,] as David returned from killing Goliath, Abner took him to Saul. David was carrying Goliath's head. **58** Saul asked him, "Young man, whose son are you?" David replied, "[Sir, perhaps you have forgotten that] I am the son of your servant Jesse, who has served you faithfully, who lives in Bethlehem."

18 After David finished talking with Saul, [he met Saul's son, Jonathan.] Jonathan [immediately] liked David; in fact, he began to love/like him as much as he loved/liked himself. **2** From that day, Saul kept David with him, and did not let him return home. **3** Because Jonathan loved David so much, he made a solemn agreement with David. [They promised each other that they would always be loyal friends]. **4** Jonathan took off his own outer robe and gave it to David. He also gave David his soldier's tunic, his sword, his bow [and arrows], and his belt. **5** [David went wherever Saul sent him. And] whatever Saul told him to do, David did it very successfully. As a result, Saul appointed David to be a commander in the army. All the officers and other men in the army (approved of/were very pleased with) that. **6** But, when the men in the army were returning home after David had killed Goliath, the women came out from many [HYP] towns in Israel to meet/greet King Saul. They were singing and dancing very joyfully, playing tambourines and lyres. **7** As they danced, they sang this song to each other: "Saul has killed 1,000 [enemy soldiers], But David has killed 10,000 [of them]." **8** [When] Saul [heard them singing that, he] did not like it. He became very angry. He said [to himself], "They are saying that David [killed] 10,000 men, but that I [have killed] only 1,000. Soon they will want to make him their king!" [RHQ] **9** From that time, Saul watched David very closely because he was suspicious [that David would try to become king]. **10** The next day, an evil spirit sent by God suddenly took control of Saul. He began to act like a madman, inside his house. David was playing the lyre for him, as he did every day. Saul was holding a spear in his hand, **11** and he hurled it [at David], saying to himself, "I will fasten David to the wall with the spear!" He did that two times, but David jumped aside [both times]. **12** Because [it became evident that] Yahweh had abandoned Saul but [that] he was helping David, Saul was afraid of David. **13** So he appointed David as a commander of 1,000 soldiers and sent David away from him, [hoping that David would be killed in a battle]. But when David led his soldiers [in their battles], **14** he always had great success, because Yahweh was helping him. **15** When Saul heard that David [and his soldiers were] very successful, he became more afraid of David. **16** But all the people of Israel and of Judah loved David, because he led the soldiers very successfully [in the battles]. **17** One day Saul said to David, "I am ready to give you my oldest daughter, Merab, to be your wife. I will do that if you serve me bravely by fighting battles for Yahweh [against the Philistines]". He said that because he thought, "I will not try to get rid of David by myself. I will allow the Philistines to do that." **18** But David said to Saul, "I am not [RHQ] a very important person, and my family is not very important, and my clan is not a very important Israeli clan. So I do not deserve to become your son-in-law." [RHQ] **19** So, when it was time for Merab to be given to David to become his wife, instead, Saul gave her to a man named Adriel, from Meholah [town]. **20** But Saul's other daughter, Michal, fell in love with David. When they told Saul about that, he was pleased. **21** He thought, "I will let Michal marry him, in order that she may trap him, and the Philistines will be able to kill him." So he said to David, ["You can marry Michal]," and by saying that, he indicated for the second time that David would become his son-in-law. **22** Saul told his servants, "Talk to David privately, and say to him, 'Listen, the king is pleased with you, and all of us his servants love you. So now [we think that] you should [marry Michal and] become the king's son-in-law.'" **23** So they told that to David. But David said, "It would be a great honor [RHQ] to become the king's son-in-law. But [I do not think that I should do that, because] I am only a poor and insignificant man." **24** When the servants told Saul what David had said, **25** Saul replied, "Go and say to David, '[In order for] the king [to allow you to marry Michal, he] wants [you to kill] 100 Philistines [and cut off] their foreskins [and bring the foreskins to him to prove that you have killed them]. In that way he will get revenge on his enemies.'" But what Saul wanted was that the Philistines would kill David [while David was trying to kill them]. **26** When the servants told that to David, he was very pleased that he could become the king's son-in-law [by doing that. The king had said how many days he would allow for David to do that]. But before that time ended, **27** David and his men went and killed, [not 100, but] 200 Philistines! He brought their foreskins to Saul, and counted them [while Saul was watching], in order to prove that he had [done what the king required so that he could become Saul's son-in-law. So then Saul was obligated] to allow David to marry his daughter Michal. **28** But when Saul realized that Yahweh was helping David, and that his daughter loved David, **29** he became more afraid of David. So, as long as Saul lived, he was David's enemy. **30** The Philistine armies repeatedly came to fight the Israelis, but every time they fought, David and his soldiers were more successful than any of Saul's other army commanders. As a result, David became very famous.

19 Then Saul urged all his servants and his son Jonathan to kill David. But Jonathan liked David very much. **2** So he warned David, "My father Saul is seeking for a way to kill you. So be careful. Tomorrow morning go and find a place to hide [in the field]. **3** I will ask my father to go out there with me. [While we are out there], I will talk to him about you. Then I will tell you everything that he tells me." [So David did what Jonathan told him to do]. **4** [The next morning], Jonathan spoke with his father, saying many good things about David. He said, "You should never do anything to harm your servant David! He has never done anything to harm you! Everything that he has done has helped you very much. **5** He was in danger of being killed when he fought against [Goliath, the champion of] the Philistia [army. By enabling David to kill him], Yahweh won a great victory for all the people of Israel. You were very happy when you saw that. Why would you want to do anything now to harm David [RHQ]? There is no reason for you to kill him, because he has not done anything wrong!" **6** Saul listened to what Jonathan said. Then Saul said, "I solemnly promise that just as certain as Yahweh lives, I will not kill David." **7** Afterward, Jonathan summoned David and told him what he and Saul had said. Then Jonathan brought David to Saul, and David served Saul as he had done before. **8** One day a war started again, and David [led his soldiers to] fight against the Philistia army. David's [army] attacked them very furiously, with the result that the Philistia army ran away. **9** But one day when sitting in his house, an evil spirit [sent] from Yahweh [suddenly] came upon Saul. While David was playing his harp [for Saul], **10** Saul hurled his spear at David to try to fasten him to the wall. David (dodged/jumped to one side), and the spear did not hit him. The spear stuck in the wall, but that night David escaped. **11** Then Saul sent messengers to David's house. He told them to watch the house and to kill David [while he was leaving the house] the following morning. But David's wife Michal [saw them and] warned him, "To survive, you must run away tonight, because if you do not do that, you will be killed tomorrow!" **12** So she enabled David to climb out through a window, and he ran away and escaped. **13** Then Michal took an idol and put it in the bed. She covered it with some [of David's] clothes, and put some goat's hair on the head of the idol. **14** When the messengers came [to the house the next morning], she told them that David was sick [and could not get out of bed]. **15** [When they reported that to] Saul, he told them to go back to David's house. He said to them, "Bring him to me lying on his bed, in order that I can kill him!" **16** But when those men entered David's house, they saw that there was only an idol in the bed, with goat's hair on its head. **17** [When they reported that to Saul,] Saul [summoned] Michal [and] said to her, "Why did you trick me like that? You allowed my enemy to escape!" Michal replied to Saul, "David told me that if I did not help him escape, he would kill me!" [RHQ] **18** After David had escaped from Saul, he went to Samuel, who was [at his home] at Ramah. He told Samuel everything that Saul had done to [try to kill] him. Then David and Samuel went to Naioth, [which was a section] of [Ramah city], and they stayed there. **19** Someone told Saul that David was in Naioth. **20** So Saul sent some messengers to capture David. [When] those messengers [arrived in Ramah, they] met some men who were proclaiming ecstatic messages, and Samuel was there, as their leader. When Saul's messengers met them, the Spirit of God took control of Saul's men, and they also spoke ecstatically. **21** When Saul heard about that, he sent messengers a third time, but they also started to speak ecstatically. **22** Finally, Saul himself went to Ramah. When he arrived at the well at [a place named] Secu, he asked people there, "Where are Samuel and David?" The people replied, "They are at Naioth in Ramah [city]." **23** While Saul was walking toward Naioth, the Spirit of God also took control of him. [While he walked on], he continued speaking ecstatic messages until he came to Naioth. **24** There he took off his clothes, and he spoke messages from God in front of Samuel. He lay on the ground doing that all day and all night. That is the reason that [when people see someone doing something that is very unexpected, they think about what happened to Saul, and] they say, "We are surprised, like the people were surprised to see Saul [acting like] a prophet?" [RHQ]

20 David ran away from [the] Naioth [section] of Ramah [city]. He went to Jonathan and asked him, "What have I done [to displease your father]? What did I do that was wrong? Why is he trying to kill me?" **2** Jonathan replied, "My father is surely not trying to kill you! He always tells me before he does anything that he is planning. He tells me about important things and unimportant things that he plans to do. (Why would he refuse to tell me [if he were planning to kill me]?/I am sure that he would not refuse to tell me [if he were planning to kill you].) [RHQ] So what you are saying cannot be true." **3** Then David solemnly declared this to Jonathan: "Your father knows very well that you and I are very good friends, so he says to himself, 'I will not tell Jonathan [what I am going to do]. If I tell Jonathan, he will be upset/distressed, [and then he will tell David].' But just as certain as Yahweh lives and you live, I am only one step away from being killed." **4** Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you tell me to do." **5** David replied, "Tomorrow we will celebrate the Festival of the New Moon. I always

eat with the king at that festival. But tomorrow I will hide in the field, and I will stay there for one night. I will stay there until the evening of the day after tomorrow. **6** If your father asks why I am not there at the festival, say to him, 'David requested me to allow him to go to his home in Bethlehem, where his family will offer the sacrifice that they offer [during this festival] every year.' **7** If your father says 'That is okay', then I know I will be safe. But if he becomes extremely angry, you will know that he is determined to harm me. **8** Please be kind to me. Yahweh heard you when you made a solemn agreement with me [that you and I will always be loyal friends]. If I deserve to be punished [MTY], kill me yourself. I do not want [RHQ] you to allow your father to punish [IDM] me." **9** Jonathan replied, "I will never do that! But if I find out that my father is determined to harm/kill you, I will certainly warn you." [RHQ] **10** David asked him, "How will I find out if your father answers you harshly?" **11** Jonathan replied, "Come with me. We will go out into the field." So they went together out into the field. **12** There Jonathan said to David, "I promise this while Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], is listening: At this time the day after tomorrow, I will find out what my father [is thinking about you]. If he is saying good things about you, I will certainly send a message to you to tell that to you [RHQ]. **13** But if he is planning to hurt/kill you, I will enable you to know [IDM] that, and enable you to go away safely. I desire that Yahweh will punish me severely if I do not do that [for you]. I desire/hope that Yahweh will be with you [and help you] like he has helped my father. **14** But while I am still alive, please be kind to me in the same way that Yahweh is kind to me, and do not kill me [when you become king]. **15** But [if I die,] never stop being kind to my family, [even] after Yahweh has gotten rid of all your enemies all over the earth." **16** [David agreed]. So Jonathan made a solemn agreement with David. And he said, "I hope/desire that Yahweh will get rid of all your enemies." **17** And Jonathan requested David to repeat his solemn promise to be his close friend, because Jonathan loved David as much as he loved himself. **18** Then Jonathan said, "Tomorrow we will celebrate the Festival of the New Moon. When you are not sitting at your place when we eat, my father will (miss you/see that you are not there). **19** The day after tomorrow, in the evening, go to the place where you hid before. Wait by the pile of stones. **20** I will come out and shoot three arrows as though I were trying to shoot at a target. [The arrows will hit the ground] close to the pile of stones. **21** Then I will send a boy to bring the arrows back to me. If you hear me say to him, 'They are closer to me', then as surely as Yahweh lives, you will know that everything is fine, [and that Saul will not kill you]. **22** But if I tell him, 'The arrows are farther away', you will know that you must leave immediately, because Yahweh wants you to run away. **23** I hope/desire that Yahweh will watch you and me and enable us to never forget what we have promised each other." **24** So David went and hid in the field. When the Festival of the New Moon started, the king sat down to eat. **25** He sat where he usually sat, close to the wall. Jonathan sat across from him, and Abner [the army commander] sat next to Saul. But no one was sitting in the place where David [usually sat]. **26** On that day, Saul did not say anything about David, because he was thinking, "Something must have happened that caused David to become unacceptable [to worship God]." **27** But the next day, when David was not sitting at the place where he usually sat, Saul asked Jonathan, "Why has that son of Jesse not been here to eat with us yesterday and today?" **28** Jonathan replied, "David earnestly requested me that I permit him to go to Bethlehem. **29** He said, 'Please allow me to go, because our family is going to offer a sacrifice. My [older] brother insisted that I be there. So please allow me to go to be with my [older] brothers.' [I allowed David to go], and that is the reason that he is not here eating with you." **30** Saul was (furious/very angry) with Jonathan. He yelled at him, "You stupid bastard [EUP]! I know that you are being loyal to that son of Jesse. By doing that, you will bring shame to yourself and to your mother. **31** As long as Jesse's son is living, you will never become the king, and you will never rule over a kingdom! So now, summon David, and bring him to me. He must be executed!" **32** Jonathan asked his father, "Why should David be executed? What wrong has he done?" **33** Then Saul threw his spear at Jonathan in order to kill him, [but the spear did not hit him]. So Jonathan knew that his father really wanted to kill David. **34** Jonathan was very angry, and he left the room. On that second day of the festival, he refused to eat anything. He was disgusted about what his father had done, and he was worried about David. **35** The following morning Jonathan went out to the field to give a message to David, like he had agreed that he would do. He took a young boy with him. **36** Jonathan said to the boy, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." The boy started running, and Jonathan shot an arrow ahead of the boy. **37** When the boy ran to the place where the arrow hit the ground, Jonathan called out, "The arrow is further away!" [RHQ] **38** Then he shouted to the boy, "Act quickly; do not wait! Do not stop!" The boy picked up the arrow and brought it back to Jonathan. **39** But the boy did not understand the meaning of what Jonathan had said; only Jonathan and David knew. **40** Then Jonathan gave his bow and arrows to the boy and told him, "Go back to the town." **41** When the boy left, David came out from the south side of the pile of stones

behind which he had been hiding. He went to Jonathan and bowed [in front of Jonathan] three times, with his face touching the ground. Then David and Jonathan kissed each other [on the cheek/neck], and they cried together. But David cried more than Jonathan. **42** Jonathan said to David, "May things go well for you as you go. Yahweh has heard what we solemnly promised to always do for each other, and what we said that our descendants must do for each other." Then David left, and Jonathan went back to the town.

21 David fled from there and went to Nob [city to see] Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech trembled when he saw David [because he was afraid that something bad had happened]. He said to David, "Why are you alone? Why have no men come with you?" **2** David [deceived Ahimelech] by replying, "The king sent me. But he does not want anyone to know anything about what he sent me to do. I have told my men where [they should meet me]. **3** Now [I want to know], do you have any [food here for me to eat] [IDM]? Could you give me five loaves of bread, or whatever [other food] that you can find?" **4** The priest answered David, "There is no ordinary bread here, but I have some of the sacred bread [that was placed before Yahweh]. Your men may eat it if they have not slept with [EUP] women [recently]." **5** David replied, "They have not been near women for many days. I do not allow my men to defile themselves by sleeping with women while they are preparing to fight in battles. They must continue to keep themselves acceptable to God when they are on ordinary trips, and [today they have kept themselves acceptable to God] because now we are doing something very special/important." **6** The only bread that the priest had was the sacred bread that had been placed in Yahweh's presence [in the Sacred tent]. So the priest gave David some of that bread. On that day the priest had taken those loaves from the table and replaced them with (fresh/newly baked) loaves. **7** It happened that Doeg, from the Edom people-group, was there on that day to make himself acceptable to Yahweh, [and he saw what Ahimelech did]. He was one of Saul's officials and the leader of Saul's shepherds. **8** David asked Ahimelech, "Do you have a spear or a sword [that I could use]? The king [appointed us to do] this task [and told us to leave] immediately, so I did not have time to bring any weapons." **9** Ahimelech replied, "I have only the sword that belonged to Goliath [the giant] from the Philistia people-group whom you killed in Elah Valley. It is wrapped in a cloth, and is behind the sacred vest [in the Sacred Tent]. If you want it, take it, because I have no other [weapon] here." David replied, "Truly, there is no other sword that is [as good] as that one! Give it to me." **10** [So Ahimelech gave it to him], and David left there. He [and his men] and went to Gath [city in the Philistia region], to stay with King Achish. **11** But the officers of King Achish [objected to David being there. They] said to King Achish, "This man is [RHQ] David, the king of Israel! He is the one [RHQ] whom [our enemies], the [Israeli] people, [honored by] dancing and singing, 'Saul has killed thousands [of his enemies], but David has killed tens of thousands of them!'" **12** David heard what those men were saying, so he was afraid of [what] King Achish [might do to him]. **13** So he pretended that he was insane. He started scratching on the gates [of the city] and allowing his saliva to run down his beard. **14** Then King Achish said to his men, "Look at this man! He is acting like an insane man! Why have you brought him to me? **15** Have you brought him because I do not have enough insane men here already [RHQ]? I do not want [RHQ] him to come into my house!"

22 David [and his men] left Gath and went [east] to hide in a cave on a hill at Adullam [city]. Soon his [older] brothers and all his other relatives came and stayed with him there. **2** Then other men came there. Some were men who had caused trouble, some were men who owed money, and some were men who were not content [IDM] [with the government]. They continued to come until there were 400 men there, and David was their leader. **3** Later they left there and went [east] to Mizpah [city] in the Moab region. There David requested the king of Moab, "Please allow my father and mother to live here with you until I know what God is going to do for me." **4** [The king gave him permission,] so David's parents stayed with the king of Moab all the time that David and the men who were with him were hiding [in that area]. **5** One day the prophet Gad told David, "Leave (your fortress/this area) and return to Judah." So David and his men went to Hereth forest [in Judah]. **6** One day, someone told Saul that David and his men had arrived in Judah. On that day, Saul was sitting underneath the tamarisk tree on a hill at Gibeah [town]. He was holding his spear, and was surrounded by his army officers. **7** He shouted to them, "You men of the tribe of Benjamin, listen to me! Do you think that the son of Jesse will give all of you fields and vineyards [if he becomes your king]? Will he appoint all of you to become generals and captains [in his army] [RHQ]? **8** Is that why you have all conspired against me [RHQ]? None of you told me when my son [Jonathan] made a solemn agreement with that son of Jesse. None of you feels sorry for me. That son of Jesse was my servant, but now my son is encouraging him to hide in order to (ambush me/attack me suddenly), as he is doing today!" **9** Doeg, a man from the Edom people-group, was standing there with Saul's officers. He said to Saul, "When I was at Nob, I saw that son of Jesse talking to Ahimelech, the priest. **10** Ahimelech asked Yahweh what

David should do. Then Ahimelech gave to David some food and the sword of Goliath, [the giant] from the Philistia people-group." **11** Then Saul summoned Ahimelech and all Ahimelech's relatives who were priests at Nob. So they all came to the king. **12** Saul said to Ahimelech, "You son of Ahitub, listen to me!" Ahimelech answered, "Yes, sir!" **13** Saul said, "Why are you and Jesse's son conspiring to get rid of me? You gave him some bread and a sword. You requested God to tell David what he should do. David has rebelled against me, and right now he is [hiding somewhere], waiting [to attack me]." **14** Ahimelech replied, "[I do not understand why you are saying that, because] David, your son-in-law, the captain of your bodyguards, is very loyal to you. No one is more loyal to you than David! Everyone in your household respects him very much. **15** Furthermore, this was certainly not [RHQ] the first time that I requested God to say what he wanted David to do. And it is not right for you to accuse me or any of my relatives [of trying to get rid of you], because I do not know anything about [anyone wanting to do that]." **16** The king then shouted, "Ahimelech, you and your all your relatives are going to be executed right now!" **17** Then he commanded his bodyguards, "Kill these priests of Yahweh, because they are allies of David, and they are conspiring with David against me! They knew that David was trying to run away from me, but they did not tell me!" But Saul's bodyguards refused to kill Yahweh's priests. **18** Then the king said to Doeg, "You kill them!" So Doeg, the man from the Edom people-group, went out and struck them with his sword. On that day he killed eighty-five men who were wearing the sacred vests [because they were God's priests]. **19** He also went and killed many people in Nob, the city where the priests lived. He killed men, women, children, babies, cattle, donkeys, and sheep there. **20** But Abiathar, Ahimelech's son, escaped. He ran away and joined David [and the men who were with him]. **21** He told David that Saul had commanded [Doeg] to kill Yahweh's priests. **22** Then David said to him, "That man from the Edom people-group, Doeg, was there at Nob on the day [that I was there]. I knew that he would surely tell Saul [what happened]. So it is my fault that your father and all of his family have been killed. **23** You stay with me, and do not be afraid. The man who wants to kill you wants to kill me also, but you will be safe if you stay with me."

23 One day someone told David, "You need to know that the Philistia army is attacking Keilah [town] and they are stealing grain from where men are threshing it." **2** David asked Yahweh, "Should my men and I go to fight against those men from the Philistia people-group?" Yahweh answered, "Yes, go. Attack them, and rescue the people of Keilah." **3** But David's men said to him, "We are afraid [that Saul will attack us] here in Judah. We will be more afraid if we go to Keilah where the Philistia army is!" **4** So David asked Yahweh again [if they should go to Keilah]. Yahweh answered, "Yes, go down to Keilah. I will help you to defeat the men of the Philistia people-group." **5** So David and his men went to Keilah. They fought against the men of the Philistia people-group and captured many of their cattle. David and his men killed many of the Philistia men and rescued the people of Keilah. **6** Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, fled to be with David at Keilah, and he brought the sacred vest with him [to use it to determine what God wanted to be done]. **7** Soon Saul found out that David was at Keilah. So he said, "That is good! God is enabling me to capture him! He has trapped himself in that town, because it has high walls with gates around it." **8** So Saul summoned his army, and they prepared to go down to Keilah to attack David and his men. **9** But David found out that Saul was planning [for his army] to attack him. So he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring [here] the sacred vest." **10** [So when Abiathar brought it,] David prayed, "Yahweh, God of us Israelis, I have heard that Saul is planning to come here [with his army] and destroy Keilah because I am here. **11** Will Saul come down [here to Keilah], as people reported to me? Will the leaders of Keilah enable Saul to capture me? Yahweh, God of us Israelis, please tell me!" Yahweh answered, "Yes, Saul will come down." **12** Then David asked, "Will the leaders of Keilah enable Saul's army to capture me and my men [if we stay here]?" [By means of the stones in the sacred vest], Yahweh replied, "Yes, they will." **13** So David and his 600 men left Keilah. They continued to move from one place to another, [wherever they thought that Saul would not find them]. And when Saul found out that David had escaped from Keilah, he did not go there. **14** David and his men stayed in hiding places in the desert and in the hills of Ziph Desert. Every day Saul [sent men to] search for David, but Yahweh did not allow them to capture David. **15** While David and his men were at [a place named] Horesh in Ziph desert, he found out that Saul was coming there to kill him. **16** But Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh, and encouraged him to continue to trust [God]. **17** Jonathan told him, "Do not be afraid, because my father will not be able to harm [IDM] you. [Some day] you will be the king of Israel, and I will be the second [most important man in Israel]. My father Saul also knows that." **18** Then the two of them repeated their solemn promise that Yahweh [had heard them make previously, that they would always be loyal to each other]. Then Jonathan went home, but David stayed at Horesh. **19** Some people from Ziph went to Saul when

he was at Gibeah, and they told him, "David [and his men] are hiding in our land [RHQ]! They are hiding in places at Horesh on Hakilah Hill, south of [a place named] Jeshimon. **20** So, O king, come down there any time that you want to. It is our duty to capture him and turn him over to you." **21** Saul replied, "I hope/desire that Yahweh will bless you [for telling that to me]. **22** Go back and find out more about him. Find out exactly where he is staying, and find out who has seen him there. People tell me that he is very clever, [so we need to be clever also to be able to capture him]. **23** Find out all the places where he and his men hide. Then come back and tell me everything that you have found out. Then I will [take my army and] go there with you. If David is in any of the clans/caves of Judah, we will search for him [and find him]!" **24** So those people went back to Ziph before Saul went there. At that time David and his men were in Maon Desert, south of Jeshimon. **25** Saul and his soldiers went to search for David, but David heard about that. So he and his men went further [south] to a rocky hill/peak in the Maon Desert. When Saul heard about that, he and his men followed David and his men to the Maon Desert. **26** Saul and his soldiers were walking along one side of the hill/peak, and David and his men were on the other side. David and his men were hurrying to escape from Saul's soldiers, because Saul and his soldiers were coming much closer. **27** But then a messenger came to Saul and said to him, "Come quickly! The Philistia army is attacking the people in our land!" **28** So Saul stopped pursuing David, and he [and his soldiers] went to fight against the Philistia army. That is the reason that people call that place 'Escape Rock'. **29** David and his men also left the Maon Desert and went to places to hide safely at En-Gedi.

24 After Saul [and his soldiers] returned [home] after fighting against the Philistia army, someone reported to Saul that David [and his men] had gone into the desert near En-Gedi. **2** [When] Saul [heard that, he] chose 3,000 men from various areas in Israel, and they went to search for David and his men at a place named Rocks of Wild Goats. **3** At a place where the road was alongside some sheep pens, Saul [left the road and] entered a cave to defecate [EUP]. [He did not know that] David and his men were hiding further inside that same cave! **4** David's men [saw Saul and] whispered to David, "Today is the day that Yahweh spoke about when he said, 'I will enable you to defeat your enemy.' You can do to him whatever you want to!" So David crept toward the entrance of the cave and [with his knife] he cut off a piece of Saul's robe. **5** [And then he returned to his men]. But then David felt guilty for having cut off a piece of Saul's robe. **6** He said to his men, "I should not have done that to the king! I hope/desire that Yahweh will never allow me to attack the one whom God has appointed, because Yahweh is the one who chose him [to be the king]." **7** By saying that, David restrained his men, and did not allow them to kill Saul. **8** After Saul left the cave and started to walk on the road again, David came out of the cave and shouted to Saul, "King Saul!" Saul turned around and looked, and David bowed down with his face touching the ground. **9** Then he said to Saul, "(Why do you pay attention to people when they say 'David wants to harm you'?/You should not pay attention to people when they say 'David wants to harm you'.) [RHQ] **10** Today you can see with your own eyes that [what they say is not true]. Yahweh put you in a place where my men and I could have killed you when you were in this cave. Some of my men told me that I should do that, but I did not do that. I said to them, 'I will not harm my master, because he is the king whom Yahweh appointed.' **11** Your majesty, look at this piece of your robe that is in my hand! I cut it from your robe, but I did not kill you. So now you should be able to understand that I am not planning to do anything evil to you. I have not done anything wrong to you, but you are searching for me to kill me. **12** I hope/desire that Yahweh will judge and decide which of us ([is doing what is right/pleases him]). And I hope/desire that he will punish you for the wrong things that you have done to me. But I will not try to harm you. **13** There is a proverb that has the words, 'Evil things are done by evil people.' But [I am not evil, so] I will not do evil things to you. **14** "You are the king of Israel. So (why are you pursuing me?/you should not be pursuing me.) [RHQ] I am [as harmless as] [MET] a dead dog or a flea. **15** I hope/desire that Yahweh will judge which of us [is doing what (he wants/is right)]. I trust that he will [act like a lawyer and] judge (my case/what I have done), and that he will rescue me from your power [MTY]." **16** When David finished speaking, Saul [called out to him and] asked, "My son David, is that your voice [that I am hearing]?" Then he began to cry loudly. **17** He said, "You are a better man than I am. You have done something very good to me when I tried to do something very bad to you. **18** When Yahweh put me in a place [in that cave] where you could have easily killed me, you did not do that. **19** (Who else would/No one else would) find his enemy and allow his enemy to escape [when he could kill him instead] [RHQ]. I hope/desire that Yahweh will reward you for being kindly to me today. **20** I know that [some day] you will surely become the king, and that your kingdom will prosper as you rule the Israeli people. **21** Now while Yahweh is listening, solemnly promise to me that you will not kill my family and get rid of all my descendants." **22** David solemnly promised Saul that he would not [harm

Saul's family]. Then Saul went back home, and David and his men went back up into the place where they had been hiding.

25 [Soon after that], Samuel died, and all the Israeli people gathered and mourned for him. They buried his body outside his home in Ramah. Then David and his men moved to the Maon Desert. **2** In Maon [town] there was a man who owned land in Carmel, [a nearby village]. He was very rich; he owned 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. **3** His name was Nabal; he was a descendant of Caleb. His wife Abigail was a wise and beautiful woman, but Nabal was very cruel and treated people very unkindly [IDM]. **4** One day while David [and his men] were in the desert, someone told him that Nabal was cutting the wool from his sheep. **5** So David told ten of his men, "Go to Nabal at Carmel and greet him for me. **6** Then tell to him this message from me, 'I wish/desire that things will go well for you and your family and for everything that you possess. **7** 'heard people say that you are cutting the wool from your sheep. Previously, when your shepherds were among us, we did not harm them. All the time that your shepherds were among us at Camel, we did not steal any sheep from them. **8** You can ask your servants if this is true, and they will tell you [that it is true]. We have come here at a time when you are celebrating, so I ask you to please be kind to us and give these men whatever extra food you have, for me, David, and my men to eat.'" **9** When David's men arrived where Nabal was, they gave David's message to him, and they waited [for him to reply]. But Nabal spoke harshly to them. **10** He said to them, "Who [does] this man, this son of Jesse, [think that he] is? [DOU, RHQ] There are many slaves who are running away from their masters at the present time, [and it seems to me that he is just one of them]. **11** I give bread and water to the men who are cutting the wool from my sheep, and I give them meat from animals that I have slaughtered. Why should I take some of those things and give them to a group of outlaws [RHQ]? (Who knows where they have come from?/I do not even know where they have come from.)" [RHQ] **12** Then David's men returned and told him what Nabal had said. **13** When David heard that, he told his men, "[We are going to kill Nabal;] fasten your swords!" So he fastened on his sword and about 400 men fastened on their swords and went with David. There were 200 of his men who stayed with their supplies. **14** One of Nabal's servants [found out what David and his men were planning to do, so he] went to Nabal's wife Abigail and said to her, "David sent some messengers from the desert to greet our master Nabal, but Nabal only yelled at them. **15** All the time that we were in the fields close to them, those men of David were very kind to us. They did not harm us. They did not steal anything from us. **16** They protected us during the daytime and during the night. They were like a wall [MET] around us to protect us while we were taking care of our sheep. **17** So now you should think about it and decide what you can do. [If you do not do something,] terrible things will happen to our master and to all his family. Nabal is an extremely wicked man, with the result that [he will not heed anyone when] that person tries to tell him anything [that he should do]." **18** [When] Abigail [heard that, she] very quickly gathered 200 loaves [of bread], and also got two leather bags full of wine, the meat from five sheep, a bushel of roasted grain, 100 packs of raisins, and 200 packs of dried figs. She put all those things on donkeys. **19** Then she told her servants, "Go ahead of me. I will follow you." But she did not tell her husband [what she was going to do]. **20** David and his men [had left the place where they were staying and were on the road to Nabal's property. They] were coming down a hill when they met Abigail. **21** David had been saying to his men, "It was useless for us to protect that man and all his possessions here in this desert. We did not steal anything that belonged to him, but he has done evil to me in return for our good [things we did for him]. **22** I hope/desire that God will strike me and kill me [IDM] if he or even one of his men [IDM] is still alive tomorrow morning!" **23** When Abigail saw David, she quickly got down from her donkey and bowed before him, with her face touching the ground. **24** Then she prostrated herself at David's feet and said to him, "Sir, I deserve to be punished [for what my husband has done]. Please listen to what I say to you. **25** Please do not pay attention to [IDM] what this worthless man Nabal has said. His name means 'fool', and he surely is a foolish man. But I, who am [willing to be] your servant, did not see the messengers whom you sent to him. **26** Yahweh has prevented you from getting revenge on anyone and killing anyone. I hope/desire that as surely as Yahweh lives and as surely as you live, your enemies will be [cursed] like Nabal will be. **27** I have brought a gift for you and for the men who are with you. **28** Please forgive me if I have done anything wrong to you. Yahweh will surely [reward you by] allowing many of your descendants to become kings of Israel, because you are fighting the battles that Yahweh [wants you to fight]. And [I know that] throughout all your life you have not done anything wrong. **29** Even when those who are trying to kill you pursue you, you are safe, because Yahweh your God takes care of you. You will be [protected as though you were] [MET] a bundle that he has safely tied up. But your enemies will [disappear as fast as stones] that are hurled from a sling. **30** Yahweh has promised to do good things for you, and he will do what he has promised. And he

will cause you to become the ruler of the Israeli people. **31** When that happens, [you will be glad that you did not kill any] people in Nabal's household. You will not think that you deserve to be punished for having taken revenge yourself and killed innocent people. And when Yahweh enables you to successfully [become the king], please do not forget [to be kind to] me." **32** David replied to Abigail, "I praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], because he sent you to [talk with] me. **33** I hope/desire that Yahweh will bless you for being very wise. You have prevented me from taking revenge myself and killing many people [MTY] today. **34** Just as surely as Yahweh the God whom we Israelis [worship] is alive, he has prevented me from harming you. If you had not come quickly to talk to me, neither Nabal nor even one of Nabal's men [IDM] would be still alive tomorrow morning." **35** Then David accepted the gifts that Abigail had brought to him. He said to her, "I hope/desire that things will go well for you. I have heard what you said, and I will do what you have requested." **36** When Abigail returned to Nabal, he was in his house, having a big celebration like kings have. He was very drunk and feeling very happy. So Abigail did not say anything to him that night [about her meeting with David]. **37** The next morning, when he was no longer drunk, she told him everything [that had happened when she talked with David]. [Immediately] (he had a stroke/a blood vessel burst in his brain) and he became paralyzed [MET]. **38** About ten days later Yahweh struck him [again] and he died. **39** After David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Praise Yahweh! Nabal insulted me, but Yahweh (vindicated me/got revenge for me). He has prevented me from [doing anything] wrong. And he has punished Nabal for the wrong that he did." Then David sent [messengers] to Abigail, to ask her if she would become his wife. **40** His servants went to Carmel and said to Abigail, "David sent us to take you to become his wife." **41** Abigail bowed down with her face touching the ground. Then she told [the messengers to tell David], "[I am happy to become your wife]. I will be your servant. And I am willing to wash the feet of your slaves." **42** Abigail quickly got on her donkey and went with David's messengers. Five of her maids went with her. [When she arrived where David was,] she became his wife. **43** David had previously married Ahinoam, a woman from Jezreel [town near Carmel]. So both Abigail and Ahinoam were now David's wives. **44** King Saul's daughter Michal was also David's wife, but Saul had given her to Laish's son Paltiel, who was from Gallim [town].

26 One day [some of] the people of Ziph [town] went to Saul while he was at Gibeah, and they said to him, "David is hiding in a cave on Hakilah hill, across from Jeshimon [town]." **2** So Saul chose 3,000 of the best Israeli soldiers and went with them to Ziph Desert to search for David. **3** Saul and his men set up their tents close to the road on Hakilah hill, east of Jeshimon [town], but David [and his men] stayed in the desert. When David heard that Saul was searching for him, **4** he sent some spies to find out for certain that Saul had come to Hakilah. **5** Then [that evening] David went to the place where Saul had set up his tent. [From a distance] he saw where Saul and his army commander, Abner, were sleeping. Saul was sleeping with all his army [sleeping] around him. **6** David [went back to where his men were and] talked to Ahimelech, who was from the Heth people-group, and Joab's brother Abishai, whose mother was [David's older sister] Zeruiah. He asked them, "Who will go with me down into the camp where Saul is?" Abishai replied, "I will go with you." **7** So that night David and Abishai crept into Saul's camp. They saw that Saul was asleep. His spear was stuck in the ground near his head. Saul was asleep in the middle of the camp. Abner [the army commander] and the other soldiers were sleeping around Saul. **8** Abishai whispered to David, "Today Yahweh has enabled us to kill your enemy! Allow me to fasten Saul to the ground [by thrusting] my spear into him. It will be necessary for me to strike him only once. I will not [need to] strike him twice." **9** But David whispered to Abishai, "No, do not kill Saul. Yahweh has appointed him to be king, so Yahweh will surely [RHQ] punish anyone who kills him. **10** Just as surely as Yahweh lives, he himself will punish Saul. Perhaps Yahweh will strike him when it is Saul's time to die, or perhaps Saul will be killed in a battle. **11** But I hope/desire that Yahweh will prevent me from harming the king whom he has appointed. Let's take Saul's spear and water jug that are near his head. Then let's get out of here!" **12** So David took the spear and the jug, and he and Abishai left. No one saw them or knew what they were doing, and no one woke up, because Yahweh had caused them to be sound asleep. **13** David and Abishai went across the valley and climbed to the top of the hill, a long way from Saul's camp. **14** Then David shouted to Abner, "Abner, can you hear me?" Abner [woke up and] replied "Who are you, [waking up] the king by calling out to him?" **15** David replied, "[I am sure that] you are the greatest man in Israel [IRO, RHQ]! So why did you not guard your master, the king? Someone came into your camp in order to kill your master, the king. **16** You have done a very poor [job of guarding Saul]. So just as surely as Yahweh lives, you and your men should be executed! You have not guarded your master whom Yahweh appointed to be the king. Where are the king's spear and the water jug that were close to his head?" **17** [The shouting woke] Saul [up and he] recognized that it was David's voice. He called out, saying,

"My son David, is that your voice?" David replied, "Yes, your majesty it is my voice." **18** Then David added, "Sir, why are you pursuing me [RHQ]? What wrong have I done [RHQ]? **19** Your majesty, listen to me! If Yahweh has caused you to be angry with me, I should offer a sacrifice [in order to appease him]. But if it is people who have caused you to be angry with me, I hope/desire that Yahweh will curse them. They have forced me to leave the land that Yahweh gave to me. They have told me, 'Go somewhere else and worship other gods!' **20** Now do not force me to die [MTY] far from [where we worship] Yahweh. You, the king of Israel, have come here searching for me. [But I do not want to harm you]! I am [as harmless as] a flea [MET]. You are searching for me like people hunt for a bird in the mountains! [MET]" **21** Then Saul said, "David, my son. I have sinned [by trying to kill you]. So come back home. Today you have considered my life to be very valuable [and so you have not killed me]. So I will not try to harm you. I have made a big mistake and have acted foolishly." **22** David replied, ["will leave] your spear here. Send one of your young men here to get it. **23** Yahweh rewards us for the things that we do that are right and for being loyal [to him]. Even when Yahweh placed me where I could easily have killed you, I refused to do that, because you are the one whom Yahweh has appointed [MTY] to be the king. **24** Just like I considered your life to be valuable [and spared your life] today, I hope/desire that Yahweh will consider my life to be valuable and [spare my life and] save me from all my troubles." **25** Then Saul said to David, "My son David, I pray that Yahweh will bless you. You will do great things very successfully." Then David returned to his men, and Saul went back home.

27 But David thought, "Some day Saul will capture me [if I stay around here]. So the best thing that I can do is to escape and go to the Philistia area. If I do that, Saul will stop searching for me here in Israel, and I will be safe." **2** So David and his 600 men left Israel and went to see Maoch's son Achish, who was king of Gath [city in the Philistia area]. **3** David and his men and their families started to live there in Gath, the city where king Achish lived. David's two wives were with him—Ahinoam from Jezreel, and Nabal's widow Abigail, from Carmel. **4** When someone told Saul that David had run away [and was living] in Gath, he stopped searching for David. **5** [One day] David said to Achish, "If you are pleased with us, give us a place in one of the small villages where we can stay. There is no need [RHQ] for us to stay in the city where you are the king." **6** [Achish liked what David suggested]. So that day Achish gave to David Ziklag [town]. As a result, Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah since that time. **7** David [and his men] lived in the Philistia area for 16 months. **8** [During that time] David and his men raided the people who lived [in the areas] where the Geshur, Girzi, and Amalek people-groups lived. Those people had lived there a long time. That area extended [south] from Telam to the Shur [Desert] and to [the border of] Egypt. **9** Whenever David's men attacked them, they killed all the men and women, and they took all the people's sheep and cattle and donkeys and camels, and even their clothes. Then they would bring those things back home, [and David would go to talk] to Achish. **10** Each time Achish would ask David, "Where did you go raiding today?" David [would lie to him]. Sometimes he would reply that they had gone to the southern part of Judah, and sometimes he would say that they had gone to Jerahmeel, or to the area where the Ken people-group lived. **11** David's men never brought back to Gath any man or woman who was left alive. David thought, "If [we do not kill everyone, some of] them [who are still alive] will go and tell Achish [the truth] about what we really did." David did that all the time that he [and his men] lived in the Philistia area. **12** So Achish believed [what] David [told him], and said to himself, "[Because of what David has done,] his own people, the Israelis, must now hate him very much. So he will have to [stay here and] serve me forever."

28 Some time later, the people of Philistia gathered their army to attack the Israelis [again]. King Achish told David, "I am expecting that you and your men will join with my men to attack [the Israelis]." **2** David replied, "[We will go with you, and then] you will see for yourself what we can do!" Achish said, "Okay, I will appoint you to be my bodyguard permanently." **3** [While Samuel was still alive, Saul did many things that pleased Yahweh. One of the good things that] Saul [did was to] expel from Israel all the people who were fortune-tellers or who talked to the spirits of dead people. But Samuel had died, and all the Israeli people had mourned for him. Then they had buried him in Ramah, his hometown. [After that, Saul did not try to please Yahweh any more]. **4** The army of Philistia gathered and set up their tents at Shunem [city, in the north of Israel]. Saul gathered the Israeli army and set up their tents at Gilboa [in the eastern part of the same valley]. **5** When Saul saw the army of Philistia, he became so afraid that his heart pounded/shook. **6** He prayed to Yahweh, but Yahweh did not answer him. Yahweh did not [tell Saul what he should do by] giving him a dream, or by [having the priest throw] the marked stones [that were in his sacred vest], or by [giving a message about Saul to] any prophet. **7** Then Saul said to his servants, "Find for me a woman who talks to the spirits of dead people, in order that I can ask her [what will happen]." His servants replied, "There is a woman in Endor [town] who does that." **8** So Saul [took

off the clothes that showed that he was the king, and he] put on ordinary clothes (to disguise himself/so that people would not recognize who he was). Then he and two of his men went during the night to talk to that woman. Saul said to her, "I want you to talk to a spirit [of someone who has died]. Cause to appear the person whose name I will [give to you]." **9** But the woman replied, "You surely know what Saul has done. He expelled from this land all the people who talk to spirits of dead people and all fortune-tellers. I think that you are trying to trap me, in order that I will be executed [for doing something that is not permitted]." **10** Saul replied, solemnly asking Yahweh to listen to what he was saying, "Just as surely as Yahweh lives, you will not be punished for doing this." **11** Then the woman said, "Whom do you want me to cause to appear?" Saul replied, "Cause Samuel to appear." **12** [So] the woman [did that. But] when she saw Samuel, she screamed. She said, "You have tricked me [RHQ]! You are Saul! [You will execute me for doing this]!" **13** Saul said to her, "Do not be afraid. What do you see?" The woman said, "I see a god/spirit coming up out of the ground." **14** Saul said, "What does he look like?" The woman replied, "An old man wearing a robe is appearing." Then Saul knew that it was Samuel. So he bowed down with his face touching the ground. **15** Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you bothered/disturbed me by causing me to appear?" Saul said, "I am very worried. The army of Philistia is about to attack my army, and God has abandoned me. He does not answer my questions any more. He does not give me dreams [to tell me what to do] or give messages to prophets [to tell me what to do]. That is the reason that I came to see you. So you tell me what I should do!" **16** Samuel said, "Yahweh has abandoned you and has become your enemy. So why do you ask me [what you should do]? [RHQ] **17** He has done what he told me [previously] that he would do to you. He has torn the kingdom away from you, and he is giving it to someone who is another Israeli—David. **18** You did not obey Yahweh. Yahweh was very angry with the Amalek people-group. You did not [kill all of their animals], with the result that you did not show that he was very angry with them. That is the reason that he has done this to you today. **19** Yahweh will enable the Philistia army to defeat you and all the other Israeli soldiers. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me [in the place where spirits of dead people are]. Yahweh will cause the whole Israeli army to be defeated by the Philistia army." [And after Samuel said that, he disappeared]. **20** Saul immediately fell flat on the ground. He was so afraid because of what Samuel had said that he became paralyzed. He was also very weak because he had not eaten anything all that day and night. **21** The woman saw that he was extremely worried/terrified. She said to him, "Listen to me! I have done what you requested me to do. I could be executed for doing that. **22** So now please pay attention to what I say. Allow me to give you some food, in order that you will [eat it and] get enough strength to go back [to your army]." **23** But Saul refused. He said, "No, I will not eat anything." Then Saul's servants also urged him [to eat something], and finally he heeded what they said. He got up from the ground and sat on the bed. **24** The woman had a fat calf close to her house. She quickly slaughtered it [and cooked it]. She took some flour and mixed it [with olive oil], and baked it without putting in any yeast. **25** She placed the food in front of Saul and his servants, and they ate some of it. Then that night they got up and left.

29 The Philistia army gathered at Aphek [Valley, which is near Shunem]. The Israelis set up their tents at Jezreel [city, which was in the same valley]. **2** The kings of Philistia divided their men into groups; some groups had 100 soldiers and some groups had 1,000 soldiers. David and his men were marching behind, with King Achish. **3** But the Philistia commanders asked, "What are these Hebrews [doing here, marching with us to battle]?" Achish replied, "[Their leader is] David. [He] previously worked for King Saul of Israel, but now he has been living near me for more than a year. During all the time since he left Saul, I have not seen/found that he has any faults." **4** But the Philistia army commanders were angry with Achish [for allowing David's army to be going with them]. They said to him, "Send David [and his men] back to the city that you gave to him! We do not want him to go with us into the battle. [If he goes with us,] we will have an enemy in our own midst! He would please King Saul by killing our own soldiers [RHQ]! **5** [Have you forgotten that] David is the one about whom the Israelis dance and sing, saying, 'Saul has killed 1000 of our enemies, but David has killed 10,000 of them!'?" **6** So Achish summoned David, and said to him, "Just as surely as Yahweh lives, you have been loyal to me. I would like very much for you to fight along with my army. Since the day that you came to me, I have not found/seen that you have any faults. But the other Philistia rulers do not trust you. **7** So all of you go back home, and I hope/desire that things will go well for you. I do not want you(sg) to do anything that the other rulers of Philistia will not be pleased with." **8** David replied, "What wrong have I done? Since the day that I first came to you until today, have I done anything that you think is evil? Your majesty, why will you not allow me to go and fight against your enemies?" **9** Achish replied, "I know that you are as just as good as an angel from God. But the commanders of my army have said, 'We will not allow David [and his men] to go with us into the

battle.' 10 So early tomorrow morning you and your men must leave. Get up as soon as it is light and leave." 11 So David and his men got up early the following morning and returned to the area where the Philistia people lived. And the Philistia army went up to Jezreel.

30 Three days later, when David and his men arrived at Ziklag, [they discovered that] men of the Amalek people-group had raided Ziklag and [towns in] the southern part of Judah. They had destroyed Ziklag and burned down all the buildings. 2 They had captured the women [and the children] and everyone else, and had taken them away. But they had not killed anyone. 3 When David and his men came to Ziklag, they saw that the town had been burned, and that their wives and sons and daughters had been captured and taken away. 4 David and his men cried loudly, until [they were so weak that] they could not cry [any more]. 5 David's two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail, had also been taken away. 6 David's men were threatening to [kill him by] throwing stones at him, because they were very angry because their sons and daughters [had been taken away]. David was very distressed, but Yahweh his God gave him strength. 7 David [did not know what to do, so he] said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring to me the sacred vest." So Abiathar brought it, 8 and David asked Yahweh, "Should I [and my men] pursue the men [who took our families]? Will we [be able to] catch up to them?" Yahweh answered [by means of the stones in Abiathar's sacred pouch], "Yes, pursue them. You will catch up to them, and you will be able to rescue [your families]." 9 So David and the 600 men who were with him left, and they came to the Besor Ravine. Some of his men stayed there [with some of their supplies]. 10 David and 400 men continued to pursue [the men who captured their families]. The other 200 men stayed there at the ravine, because they were so exhausted that they could not cross the ravine. 11 [As David and the 400 men were going], they saw a man from Egypt in a field; so they took him to David. They gave the man some water to drink and some food to eat. 12 They also gave him a piece of fig cake and two clusters/packs of raisins. The man had not had anything to eat or drink for three days and nights, but [after he ate and drank] he felt refreshed. 13 David asked him, "Who is your master? And where do you come from?" He replied, "I am from Egypt. I am a slave of a man from the Amalek people-group. Three days ago my master left me here, because I was sick [and I was not able to go with them]. 14 We had raided the southern part of Judah where the Kereth people-group live, and some other towns in Judah, and the area south [of Hebron city] where the descendants of Caleb live. We also burned Ziklag [town]." 15 David asked him, "Can you lead us to this group of raiders?" He replied, "Yes, [I will do that] if you ask God to listen while you promise that you will not kill me or give me back to my master. If you promise that, I will take you to them." 16 [David agreed to do that,] so the man from Egypt led David [and his men] to where the men from the Amalek people-group were. Those men were lying on the ground, eating and drinking and celebrating because of having captured many things from the Philistia and Judah areas. 17 David [and his men] fought against them from sunset that day until the evening of the following day. Four hundred of them escaped and rode away on camels, but none of the others escaped. 18 David rescued his two wives, and he and his men got back everything else that the men of the Amalek people-group had taken. 19 Nothing was missing. They took all their people back [to Ziklag]—young people and old people, [their wives], their sons and their daughters. They also recovered all the other things that the men of the Amalek people-group had taken from Ziklag. 20 They took with them the sheep and cattle that had been captured, and his men caused those animals to go in front of them, saying, "These are animals that we captured in the battle; they belong to David!" 21 David and his men got back to where the other 200 men were waiting, the men who did not go with David because they were very exhausted. They had stayed at Besor Ravine. [When they saw David and his men coming], they went out to greet them. And David [greeted them and] said to them, "I hope that things are going well with you!" 22 But some of the men who had gone with David, men who were evil and troublemakers, said, "These 200 men did not go with us. So we should not give to them any of the things that we recovered/captured. Each of them should take only his wife and children and go [back to their homes]." 23 David replied, "No, my fellow Israelis, it would not be right to divide up like that the things that Yahweh has allowed us to capture. Yahweh has protected us and enabled us to defeat the enemies who attacked our town. 24 (Who will pay attention to you if you say things like that?/No one will pay attention to you if you say things like that.) [RHQ] The men who stayed here with our supplies will get the same amount that the men who went into the battle will get. They will all receive the same amount." 25 David made that to be a law [DOU] for the Israeli people, and that is still a law in Israel. 26 When David [and all the others] arrived in Ziklag, David sent to his friends who were leaders in Judah some of the things that they had captured from the Amalek people-group. He said to them, "Here is a present for you. These are things that we took from Yahweh's enemies." 27 [Here is a list of the cities and towns to whose leaders David sent gifts:] Bethel, Ramoth in the southern part of Judah,

Jattir, 28 Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, 29 Racal, the cities
where the descendants of Jehrameel lived and the cities
where the Ken people-group lived, 30 Hormah, Bor-Ashan,
Athach, 31 Hebron, and all the other places where David
and his men had gone [when they were hiding from Saul].

31 Later, the Philistines again fought against the Israelis.
The Israelis ran away from them, and (many Israelis
were killed/the Philistines killed many Israelis) on Gilboa
Mountain. 2 The Philistines caught up with Saul and his
three sons, and they killed [all three of] his sons, Jonathan
and Abinadab and Malchishua. 3 The fighting was very fierce
around Saul. When the Philistine (archers/men with bows
and arrows) caught up with Saul, they wounded him badly
[with their arrows]. 4 Saul said to the man who was carrying
his weapons, "Take out your sword and kill me with it, in
order that these heathen Philistines will not be able to thrust
their swords into me and make fun of me [while I am dying]."
But the man who was carrying Saul's weapons was terrified,
and refused to do that. So Saul took his own sword and fell
on it. [The sword pierced his body and he died]. 5 When the
man carrying his weapons saw that Saul was dead, he also
threw himself on his own sword and died. 6 So Saul, three
of his sons, and the man who carried Saul's weapons, all
died on that same day. 7 When the Israeli people on the
north side of the [Jezreel] Valley and on the east side of the
Jordan [River] heard that the Israeli army had run away and
that Saul and his sons had died, they left their towns and ran
away. Then the Philistines came and occupied their towns. 8
The next day, when the Philistines came to take away the
weapons of the dead [Israeli soldiers], they found the bodies
of Saul and his three sons on Gilboa Mountain. 9 They
cut off Saul's head and took his weapons. Then they sent
messengers throughout their land, to proclaim the news,
in the temple where they kept their idols, and to the other
people, [that their army had killed Saul]. 10 They put Saul's
weapons in the temple of [their goddess] Astarte. They also
fastened the bodies of Saul [and his sons] to the wall [that
surrounded] Beth-Shan [city]. 11 When the people who lived
in Jabesh in [the] Gilead [region] heard what the Philistines
had done to Saul's corpse, 12 all their bravest soldiers
walked all night to Beth-Shan. They took the corpses of Saul
and his sons down from the city wall, and they took them
back to Jabesh and burned the corpses there. 13 They took
the bones and buried them under a [big] tamarisk tree. Then
they (fasted/abstained from eating food) for seven days.

2 Samuel

1 After Saul died, David [and the men who were with him] returned to Ziklag [town] after defeating the descendants of Amalek. They stayed in Ziklag for two days. **2** On the third day, unexpectedly a man arrived there who had come from where Saul's army was camped. He had torn his clothes and put dust on his head [to show that he was grieving]. He came to David, and prostrated himself on the ground [in front of David to show respect for him]. **3** David asked him, "Where have you come from?" The man replied, "I escaped from where the Israeli army had been camped." **4** David asked him, "What happened? Tell me [about the battle]!" The man replied, "The Israeli soldiers ran away from the battle. Many of them were killed. And Saul and his son Jonathan (are dead/were also killed)." **5** David said to the young man, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" **6** The young man replied, "It happened that I was on Gilboa Mountain [where the battle occurred], and I saw Saul, leaning on his spear. The [enemy] chariots and their drivers had come very close to Saul. **7** Saul turned around and saw me, and he called out to me. I answered him and said, 'What do you want me to do?' **8** He replied, 'Who are you?' I replied, 'I am a descendant of Amalek.' **9** Then he said to me, 'Come over here and kill me. I am still alive, but I am enduring a lot of pain.' **10** So I went to him and killed him, because I knew that he was wounded very badly and would (not continue to live/soon die). I took the crown that was on his head and the band/bracelet that was on his arm, and I have brought them to you." **11** Then David and all the men who were with him tore their clothes [to show that they were very sad]. **12** They mourned for Saul and his son Jonathan, and they cried and (fasted/abstained from eating food) until it was evening. They also mourned for all the army of Yahweh, and for all the Israeli people, because many of their soldiers had been killed in the battle [MTY]. **13** Then David asked the young man who had told him [about the battle], "Where are you from?" He replied, "My father is a descendant of Amalek, but we live in Israel." **14** David asked him, "(Why were you not afraid [that you would be punished if you] killed Saul, whom Yahweh had appointed [MTY] [to be the king]?/You should have been afraid [that you would be punished if you] killed Saul, whom Yahweh had appointed [MTY] [to be the king].) [RHQ] **15** You yourself said, 'I killed the man whom Yahweh appointed to be the king.' So you have caused yourself to be guilty [MTY] of causing your own death!" Then David summoned one of his soldiers and said to him, "Kill him!" So the soldier killed him by striking him [with a sword]. **17** Then David composed/wrote this sad song about Saul and Jonathan, **18** and he commanded that it be taught to the people of Judah. [The song is called] 'The Bow [and Arrow]' and it has been written in the Book of Jashar: **19** "You Israeli people, your glorious [MTY] leaders have been killed on the mountains! [It is very sad that] those mighty men have died! **20** "Do not tell it [to our enemies in the Philistia area]; do not tell to the people who live in Gath [city] what happened; do not proclaim it in the streets of Ashkelon [city], because if you tell them, [even] the women in that area will be happy; do not allow those (pagan women/women who do not know God) to rejoice. **21** I hope/desire that there will be no rain or dew on the mountains of [the] Gilboa [area] [APO], and that no grain will grow in the fields there, because there the shield of Saul, the mighty [king], fell on the ground. No one rubbed [olive] oil on Saul's shield; **22** instead, it was stained with the blood of those whom he had killed, and the fat of mighty enemy soldiers was smeared on it. Jonathan [PRS] did not retreat carrying his bow [and arrows], and Saul always [defeated his enemies when he fought them] with his sword. [PRS, LIT] **23** "Saul and Jonathan were loved and they pleased many people. They were together [LIT] while they lived and when they died. [In battles] they were swifter than eagles and they were stronger than lions. **24** "You Israeli women, cry about Saul; He provided beautiful scarlet/red clothes for you and he gave you gold ornaments/jewelry to fasten on those clothes. **25** "[It is very sad that] this mighty soldier has died! Jonathan has been killed on the mountains/hills. **26** Jonathan, my dear friend, I grieve for you; you were very dear to me. You loved me in a wonderful manner; it was better than the way that a woman loves [her husband and her children]. **27** "It is very sad that those mighty men have died, and their weapons are now abandoned!

2 Some time after that, David asked Yahweh, "Should I go back to [live in] one of the towns in Judah?" Yahweh replied, "Yes, go up there." Then David asked, "To which town should I go?" Yahweh replied, "To Hebron." **2** So David went up there, taking his two wives, Ahinoam who was from Jezreel [city], and Abigail, the widow of Nabal from Carmel [city]. **3** He also took the men who had been with him, and their families. They all started to live in villages near Hebron. **4** Then the men of Judah came to Hebron, and [one of] them poured olive oil on David's head [to show they were appointing him to be] [MTY] the king of the tribe [MTY] of Judah. When David found out that the people of Jabesh [town] in [the] Gilead [region] had buried Saul's body, **5** he sent messengers to the men of Jabesh to tell them this: "I desire/hope that Yahweh will bless you for having shown, by burying the body of Saul your king, that you were loyal to

him. 6 Now I also desire/hope that Yahweh will faithfully love you and be loyal to you. And I will do good things for you because of what you have done [for Saul]. 7 Now, although Saul your king is dead, be strong and courageous, like the people of Judah, who have appointed me to be their king." 8 [While this was happening], Ner's son Abner, the commander of Saul's army, took Saul's son Ishbosheth and went across [the Jordan River] to Mahanaim [town]. 9 There Abner proclaimed that Ishbosheth was now the king of [the] Gilead [region] and of the tribe of Asher and the region of Jezreel and the tribes of Ephraim and Benjamin. That meant that he was the king of all of the people of Israel. 10 Ishbosheth was 40 years old when he started to rule over the people of Israel. He ruled them for two years. But the tribe of Judah (was loyal to David/wanted David to be their king), 11 and he ruled them for seven and a half years while he was living in Hebron. 12 [One day] Abner and the officials of Isbosheth went from Mahanaim [across the Jordan River] to Gibeon [city]. 13 Joab, whose mother was Zeruiah, and some of David's officials [went from Hebron to Gibeon, and] met at the pool there. They all sat down, the one group on one side of the pool and the other group on the other side. 14 Abner said to Joab, "Let's tell some of our young men to fight each other!" Joab replied, "Okay!" 15 So twelve men from the tribe of Benjamin fought for Ishbosheth, against twelve of David's soldiers. 16 Each of them grabbed the head of the man against whom he was fighting, and thrust his sword into that man's side. The result was that all 24 of them fell down dead. So that area in Gibeon is now called 'Field of Swords'. 17 Then [the others started to fight]. It was a very fierce battle. Abner and the men of Israel were defeated by David's soldiers. 18 Zeruiah's three sons were there [on that day]: Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Asahel was able to run very fast; he could run as fast as a wild gazelle/antelope. 19 Asahel started to pursue Abner. He ran straight toward Abner, without stopping. 20 Abner looked behind him, and said "Is that you, Asahel?" Asahel replied, "Yes!" 21 Abner yelled at him, "Turn to one side or the other, [and pursue someone else]!" But Asahel would not stop pursuing Abner. 22 So Abner yelled at him again, "Stop (chasing after/pursuing) me! (Why should I kill you?/It would not be good for me to kill you!) [RHQ] If I did that, (how could I (face/be reconciled with) your brother Joab?/it would be very difficult for me to (face/be reconciled with) your brother Joab.) [RHQ]" 23 But Asahel refused to stop pursuing Abner. So Abner [suddenly turned and] thrust the butt end of his spear into Asahel's stomach. Because he thrust it very strongly, that end of the spear [went though Asahel's body and] came out at his back, and he fell to the ground, dead. All the other soldiers who came to the place where his body was lying stopped and stood there, [stunned]. 24 But Joab and Abishai continued to pursue Abner. At sunset they came to Ammah Hill, which is east of Giah, along the road to the desert near Gibeon. 25 The men from the tribe of Benjamin gathered around Abner in one group, and stood at the top of a hill. 26 Then Abner called out to Joab, saying "Are we going to continue to fight forever [RHQ]? Do you not realize that [if we continue fighting], the result will be very bad [RHQ]? We are all descendants of Jacob. [So we should stop fighting each other] (How long will it be until you tell your soldiers to stop pursuing us?/Tell your soldiers to stop pursuing us.)" [RHQ] 27 Joab replied, "Just as surely as God lives, if you had not said that, my soldiers would have continued pursuing your men until tomorrow morning!" 28 So Joab blew a trumpet [to signal that they should stop fighting]. So all his men did that. They did not pursue the soldiers of Israel any more, and they stopped fighting. 29 That night Abner and his soldiers went through the Jordan [River] Valley. They crossed the Jordan [River] and marched all the next morning, and they finally arrived at Mahanaim. 30 Joab [and his soldiers] stopped pursuing Abner. And when he gathered all his soldiers together, he found out that in addition to Asahel, only 19 of them had been killed in the battle. 31 But David's soldiers had killed 360 of Abner's men, all from the tribe of Benjamin. 32 [Some of Joab's soldiers] took Asahel's body and buried it in the tomb where his father had been buried, in Bethlehem. Then they marched all during the night, and at dawn they arrived [back home] at Hebron.

3 There was a long war between those who wanted Saul's son to be their king and those who wanted David to be their king. But more and more people began to want David to be the king, while the number of people who wanted Saul's son to be the king continued to become smaller. 2 David's wives gave birth to six sons at Hebron. The oldest was Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam, from Jezreel [city]. 3 The next one was Kileab, whose mother was Abigail, the widow of Nabal, from Carmel [city]. The next one was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, the king of [the] Geshur [region]. 4 The next one was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. The next one was Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital. 5 The youngest one was Ithream, whose mother was Eglah, [another one of] David's wives. Those sons of David were all born in Hebron. 6 While those who wanted Saul's son to rule over them and those who wanted David to rule over them continued to fight against each other, Abner was becoming more influential among those who wanted Saul's son to be the king. 7

When Saul was alive, he had as one of his wives a slave woman named Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. [But one day Abner had sexual relations with her]. So Ishbosheth said to Abner, "Why have you had sexual relations with [EUP] my father's slave wife?" **8** Abner became very angry about what Ishbosheth said to him. He said to Ishbosheth, "(Do you think that I am a [worthless] dog [MET] from Judah?/You are treating me as though I am a [worthless] dog [MET] from Judah.) [RHQ] From the beginning, I have been loyal to Saul your father, to his brothers, and to his friends. And I have prevented you from being defeated by David's army. So now (why are you criticizing me about [what I have done with] some woman?/you should not be criticizing me about [what I have done with] some woman.) [RHQ] **9** Yahweh solemnly promised that he would not allow Saul and his descendants to continue to rule. He promised that he would cause David to rule over all the tribes of Israel and Judah, from Dan [city] far in the north to Beersheba [city] far in the south. So I hope/desire that God will punish me severely [HYP] if I do not enable that to happen!" **11** Ishbosheth was very afraid of Abner, so he did not say anything in reply to Abner. **12** Then Abner sent messengers to David [when he was at Hebron], to say to him, "[Either you or I] should be [RHQ] the ruler of this entire nation, [but not Isbosheth. However,] if you make an agreement with me, I will help you by encouraging all the people of Israel to (be want you to be their king/start to support) you." **13** David sent back this reply: "Good! I am willing to make an agreement with you. But before that happens, there is one thing that you must do. When you come to see me, you must bring my wife Michal, Saul's daughter." **14** Then David sent messengers to Ishbosheth, to say to him, "I [had to kill] 100 men from Philistia [and cut off] their foreskins to give to Saul to pay for Michal [to be my wife]. So now give her back to me!" **15** So Ishbosheth sent some men to take Michal from her husband Palti. But [when they took her,] her husband followed them all the way to Bahurim [town], crying as he went. **16** Then Abner [turned and] said to him, "Go back [home]!", so he did. **17** Abner went to the Israeli leaders and talked with them. He said, "For a long time you have wanted David to be your king. **18** So now you have an opportunity to do that. Keep in mind that Yahweh promised this: 'With the help of David, who serves me [well], I will rescue my people from the people of Philistia, and from the power [MTY] of all their other enemies'." **19** Abner also spoke to the people of the tribe of Benjamin. Then he went to Hebron, to tell David what all the people of Israel and the people of the tribe of Benjamin had agreed to do. **20** When Abner came with 20 of his soldiers to see David at Hebron, David made a feast for all of them. **21** Afterwards, Abner said to David, "Sir/Your majesty, I will now go and encourage all the people of Israel to accept you to be their king, as you have desired." Then Abner left, peacefully. **22** Soon after that, Joab and some of David's other soldiers returned [to Hebron] after raiding [one of their enemies' villages], bringing with them a lot of things that they had captured. But Abner was not there at Hebron, because David had sent him safely home. **23** When Joab and the soldiers who were with him arrived, someone told him that Abner had come there and talked with the king, and that the king allowed to go home safely. **24** So Joab went to the king and said, "Why have you done that? Listen to me! Abner [is your enemy, but] when he came to you, you allowed him [RHQ] to leave! **25** Do you not know that he came to you to deceive you and to find out everything that you are doing, and all the places that you go to?" **26** After Joab left David, he sent some messengers to get Abner. They found him at Sirah Well, and brought him back to Hebron, but David did not know that they had done that. **27** So when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab met him at the city gate, and took him aside as though he wanted to speak with him privately. Then he stabbed Abner in the stomach [with his knife/sword]. In that way he murdered Abner because Abner had killed [MTY] Joab's brother Asahel. **28** Later, after David heard what had happened, he said, "Yahweh knows that I and the people of my kingdom are not at all (responsible for/guilty of) murdering [MTY] Abner. **29** I hope/desire that Joab and all his family will be punished [MTY] for doing that! I hope/desire that there will always be someone in his family who has sores, or someone who is a leper, or some man who is forced to do women's work, or someone who is killed in a battle, or someone who does not have enough food to eat!" **30** That is how Joab and his brother Abishai murdered Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon. **31** Then David said to Joab and to all Joab's soldiers, "Tear your clothes and put on coarse cloth [to show that you are sad], and mourn for Abner!" And [at the funeral], King David walked behind [the men who were carrying] the coffin. **32** They buried Abner's body at Hebron. And at the grave, the king cried loudly, and all the other people also cried. **33** David sang this sad song to lament for Abner: "It is not right that [RHQ] Abner died like outlaws die! **34** No one tied his hands or put chains on his feet, [like they do to criminals]. No, he was murdered by wicked men!" **35** Then many [HYP] people came to David to tell him to eat some food before sunset, but David refused. He said, "I hope/desire that God will punish me severely [HYP] if I eat any food before the sun goes down!" **36** All the people saw what David did, and they were pleased. Truly, everything

that the king did pleased the people. 37 So all the people realized that the king had not wanted Abner to be killed. 38 The king said to his officials, "(Do you not realize that a leader and a great man has died today in Israel?/You should realize that a leader and a great man has died today in Israel.) [RHQ] 39 Even though Yahweh appointed me to be the king, today I feel weak. These two sons of Zeruiah, [Joab and Abishai], are very violent; I cannot control them. So I hope/desire that Yahweh will punish them severely in return for this wicked thing that they have done!"

4 When Saul's son Ishbosheth heard that Abner had been killed at Hebron, [he realized that he might also be killed]. He became discouraged, and all the Israeli people (trembled/became afraid). 2 Ishbosheth had two officers who were leaders of groups that raided other villages. [They were brothers;] their names were Baanah and Rechab, sons of Rimmon from Beeroth [town] in the tribe of Benjamin. Beeroth is in the area that had [been assigned to] the tribe of Benjamin. 3 But the people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim [town], and they still live there. 4 Saul's son Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth. When Mephibosheth was five years old, Saul and Jonathan died in the battle. When people brought that news from Jezreel, Mephibosheth's nursemaid picked him up and ran away. She ran very fast, with the result that she dropped him, and his legs became crippled. 5 One day, Rechab and Baanah left [their home] to go to Ishbosheth's house. They arrived there about noontime, when Ishbosheth was taking his midday nap. 6 The woman who was the doorkeeper was sifting wheat. While doing that, she became sleepy, and fell asleep. So Rechab and his brother Baanah were able to creep in quietly. 7 They entered Ishbosheth's bedroom, where he was sleeping. They killed him [with their swords] and cut off his head. They carried his head and walked all night through the Jordan [River] Valley. 8 They took the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron. They said to him, "Here is the head of Ishbosheth, the son of your enemy Saul, who tried to kill you. Your majesty, today Yahweh has allowed you to get revenge on Saul and his descendants!" 9 But David replied to them, "Yahweh is the one who has rescued me from all my troubles. And just as surely as Yahweh lives, what I am now saying is also true. 10 When a messenger came to Ziklag and told me 'Saul is dead!' and he thought that the news that he was bringing to me was good news, I seized him and [commanded one of my soldiers to] kill him. That was the reward I gave to him for his news! 11 So because you two evil men murdered a man who is (innocent/has done nothing wrong) when he was sleeping on his bed in his own house, I will do something worse to you. I will surely [RHQ] get revenge on you two for murdering [MTY] him, and (wipe you/cause you to disappear) from the earth!" 12 Then, following David's orders, his soldiers killed the two men, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hung their bodies (OR, their hands and feet) [on a pole] near the pool at Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried it [respectfully] in the tomb of Abner, there at Hebron.

5 Then [the leaders of] all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said to him, "Listen, we have the same ancestors [IDM] that you do. 2 In the past, when Saul was our king, it was you who led our Israeli soldiers [in our battles]. You are the one to whom Yahweh promised, 'You will be the leader [MET] of my people; you will be their king.'" 3 So while Yahweh was listening, all those leaders of the people of Israel declared there at Hebron [that David would be their king]. And David made a sacred agreement with them. They anointed him [with olive oil to set him apart] to be the king of the Israeli people. 4 David was 30 years old when he became their king. He ruled them for 40 years. 5 In Hebron he ruled over the tribe of Judah for seven and a half years, and in Jerusalem he ruled over all the people of Judah and Israel for 33 years. 6 [One day] King David and his soldiers went to Jerusalem to fight against the Jebus people-group who lived there. The people there thought that David's army would not be able to capture the city, so they sent a message to David, saying "Your army will never be able to get inside our city! Even the blind and crippled people will be able to chase you away!" 7 But David's army captured the fortress on Zion [Hill], [and later it was known as] David's City. 8 On that day, David said [to his soldiers], "Those who want to get rid of the Jebus people-group should go through the water tunnel [to enter the city]. Then they can attack those people whom I [SYN] detest—[and we will find out if any] blind and crippled people [will be able to stop them]!" That is why people say, "Blind and crippled people cannot enter Yahweh's temple." 9 [After] David [and his soldiers captured] the city with its strong walls around it, he lived there, and they named it 'David's City'. David [and his soldiers] built the city around the fortress, starting where the [land was (filled in/terraces) on the east side of the hill]. 10 David continued to become more and more powerful/influential, because the Almighty Commander of the armies of angels was with/helping him. 11 [One day] Hiram, the king of Tyre [city], sent ambassadors/messengers to David [to talk about making agreements between their countries]. Hiram agreed to provide cedar trees [to make lumber], and also that he would send carpenters and masons, to build a palace for David. 12 His doing that caused David to realize that Yahweh truly had appointed him to be the king of Israel, and that Yahweh was going to cause his kingdom

to prosper, because Yahweh loved the Israeli people, whom [he had chosen to] belong to him. 13 After David moved from Hebron to Jerusalem, he took more slave women to be his second-class wives, and he also married other women. [All of those women] gave birth to more sons and daughters. 14 The names of the sons who were born in Jerusalem were Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 15 Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, 16 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet. 17 When the Philistia people heard that David had been appointed to be the king of Israel, their army went up [toward Jerusalem] to try to capture David. But David heard that they were coming, so he went down to another fortified place. 18 The [army of] Philistia arrived at Rephaim Valley [southwest of Jerusalem] and spread all over the valley. 19 David asked Yahweh, "Should [my men and] I attack the Philistia army? Will you enable us to defeat them [IDM]?" Yahweh replied, "Yes, attack them, because I will certainly enable your army to defeat them. [IDM]" 20 So David [and his army] went to [where the Philistia army was], and there they defeated them. Then David said, "Yahweh has burst through my enemies like a flood." [SIM] So that place is called 'Lord of Bursting-through'. 21 The Philistia men left their idols there; so David and his soldiers took them away. 22 Then the Philistia [army] returned to Rephaim Valley and spread all over the valley. 23 So again David asked Yahweh [if his army should attack them]. But Yahweh replied, "Do not attack them [from here]. Tell your men to go around them and attack them from the other side, near the balsam trees. 24 When you hear something in the tops of the balsam trees that sounds like [an army] marching, attack them, because I will have gone ahead of you [to enable your army] to defeat their army." 25 So David did what Yahweh told him to do, and his [army] defeated the Philistia army from Geba [city] all the way [west] to Gezer [city].

6 Then David chose 30,000 Israeli men and gathered them together. 2 He led them to the place in Judah [formerly] called Baalah, [now called Kiriath-Jearim]. They went in order to bring from there [to Jerusalem] the sacred chest, which had the name of Yahweh, the leader of the armies of [the angels in] heaven, written on it, and which had the [statues of the] winged creatures on top of it. Between those statues was where Yahweh spoke messages about ruling his people [MTY]. 3 The sacred chest was in the house of Abinadab, on top of a hill. They went there, and they put the chest on a new cart. Uzzah and Ahio, the two sons of Abinadab, were guiding [the oxen that were pulling the cart]. 4 Uzzah walked alongside the cart, and Ahio walked in front of it. 5 David and all the Israeli men were celebrating in God's presence, singing with all their strength and [playing] lyres and harps, and beating tambourines, and clashing castanets and cymbals. 6 But when they came to the place where Nacon threshed grain, the oxen stumbled. So Uzzah put his hand on the sacred chest to (steady it/prevent it from falling [off the cart]). 7 Yahweh immediately became very angry with Uzzah, and he killed him right there alongside the sacred chest, because he had touched the chest, [and Yahweh had commanded that only the descendants of Levi who help the priests should touch the sacred chest]. 8 David was angry because Yahweh had punished Uzzah. So ever since that time, that place has been called 'The Punishment of Uzzah'. 9 David was [also] afraid of [what else] Yahweh [would do to punish them], so he said, "(How can I take the sacred chest with me [to Jerusalem]?/I am afraid to take the sacred chest with me [to Jerusalem].)" [RHQ] 10 So he did not want to take the sacred chest to Jerusalem. Instead, they took it to another place; they took it to the house of Obed-Edom, from Gath [city]. 11 They left the sacred chest in the house of Obed-Edom for three months, and [during that time] Yahweh blessed Obed-Edom and his family. 12 Later, people told David, "Yahweh has blessed Obed-Edom and his family because [he is taking care] of the sacred chest!" When David heard that, he [and some other men] went to Obed-Edom's house, and very joyfully brought the sacred chest from there to Jerusalem. 13 [This time, descendants of Levi] were carrying the sacred chest, but when they had walked only six steps, they stopped, and there David killed a bull and a fat calf, and offered them to Yahweh for a sacrifice. 14 David was wearing [only] a linen cloth wrapped around his waist, and was dancing very energetically to honor Yahweh. 15 David and the Israeli men took the sacred chest up [to Jerusalem], shouting [loudly] and blowing trumpets. 16 While they were carrying the sacred chest into the city, [David's wife] Michal, who was Saul's daughter, looked out the window [of her house]. She saw King David leaping and dancing to honor Yahweh. So she was disgusted with him. 17 They brought the sacred chest into the tent that David had erected for it. Then David gave to Yahweh offerings to be completely burned [on an altar], and other offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. 18 When David had finished offering those sacrifices, he asked Yahweh, the Commander of the armies [of the angels], to bless the people. 19 He also distributed food to all the people. To each Israeli man and woman he gave a loaf of bread, some meat, and a raisin cake. Then all the people returned to their homes. 20 When David went home to [ask Yahweh to] bless his family, his wife Michal came out to meet him. She said to him, "Maybe you, the king of Israel, [think that you] [IRO] were honoring yourself today, but really,

you acted like a fool, uncovering yourself while the female servants of your officials were watching!" 21 David replied to Michal, "[I was doing that] to honor Yahweh, who chose me instead of your father and other members of his family, to be the king of the Israeli people, the people who belong to Yahweh. And I will [continue to] dance to honor Yahweh! 22 [Even though you think that what I did] was disgraceful, I will continue to do it even more. You may despise me [because of what I did], but the women whom you were talking about will honor me!" 23 [As a result,] Saul's daughter Michal never gave birth to any children.

7 After [King] David began to live in his palace, Yahweh protected him from all his enemies. 2 One day he said to the prophet Nathan, "[It is not right that] I am here, living in a [beautiful] house made of cedar [wood], but the chest that contains God's Ten Commandments is kept in a tent!" 3 Then Nathan said to the king, "Yahweh is helping/directing you, so do [regarding that chest] whatever you are thinking." 4 But that night, Yahweh said to Nathan, 5 "Go and tell my servant, David, that this is what [I], Yahweh, am saying to him: 'You are not the one [RHQ] who should build a temple for me to live in. 6 I have not lived in any building from the day that I brought the Israeli people up from Egypt until now. Instead, I have been living in a tent, moving from one place to another [when the Israelis] moved to other places. 7 Wherever I went with all the Israelis [as they traveled], I never said [RHQ] to any of their leaders whom I appointed to lead them, "Why have you not built me a temple made of cedar [wood]?"' 8 So this is what you should say to my servant David: 'The Almighty Commander of the armies of angels says that he took you from a pasture where you were taking care of sheep, [and appointed you] to become the ruler of my Israeli people. 9 I have (been with/helped) you wherever you have gone. I have gotten rid of all your enemies as you advanced. I will enable you to become very famous, as well-known as the names of all the greatest men [who have ever lived] on the earth. 10 Formerly, during the time that I appointed leaders for my Israeli people, many violent groups oppressed the Israelis. But this will not happen any more. I have chosen a place where my Israeli people can live [peacefully] and no one will disturb them any more. I will give them rest from [being attacked by] their enemies. And I will defeat all your enemies. I declare to you that I, Yahweh, will enable your descendants to rule after you [die]. 12 When your life ends [EUP] and you go to be with your ancestors, I will appoint one of your sons to be king, and I will enable his kingdom to (be strong/resist all their enemies). 13 He is the one who will arrange for a temple to be built for me [MTY], and I will cause his [descendants] to be kings [MTY] [of Israel] forever. 14 I will be [like] a father to him, and [it will be as though] he [is] a son to me [MET]. When he does something that is wrong, I will punish him as fathers punish their sons. 15 But I will not stop faithfully loving him as I stopped loving Saul, whom I removed from being king before you became king. 16 Your descendants will rule the kingdom [of Israel] forever. Their rule will never end. [DOU]'" 17 So Nathan told David everything that Yahweh had told him. 18 Then David went into [the Sacred Tent] and sat in the presence of Yahweh, and prayed this: "Yahweh, my God, I am not worthy [RHQ] [for you to have done all these things] for me, and my family is not worthy, either. 19 "And now, O Yahweh my God, in addition to everything else, you have spoken about what will happen to my descendants in the future for many generations. 20 "Yahweh God, what more can I, David, say to you [for honoring me]? Although you know very well [what I am like], Yahweh my God, you have done things for me as though I was the most important man [on the earth]! 21 For my sake and because it is what you wanted to do, you have done all these great things for me. 22 "Yahweh my God, you are great. There is no one like you. Only you are God, just as we have always heard. 23 And there is no other nation in the world like Israel. Israel is the only nation on the earth whose people you went out to rescue [RHQ]. By the great and awesome things that you did, you have become famous/well-known throughout the world. As your people advanced [through this land], you expelled other people-groups [who were here in Canaan], who worshiped other gods. 24 And you caused us Israeli people to be your people forever, and you, Yahweh, have become our God! 25 "And now, Yahweh my God, [I pray that you will] cause the things that you promised to me about my descendants to be fulfilled forever, and [that you will] do the things that you said [that you would do]. 26 When that happens, you will become famous forever, and people will exclaim, 'The Almighty Commander of the armies of angels is the God who rules Israel.' And you will cause that forever there will be descendants of mine who will rule. 27 "Yahweh Almighty, the God whom we Israeli people [worship], you have revealed to me that you will make some of my descendants kings. For that reason, I have been brave enough to pray like this to you. 28 So now, O Yahweh Almighty, because you are God, we can trust that you will do what you promise. You have promised these good things to me. 29 So now I ask you that if it pleases you, you will bless my descendants, in order that they may continue [to rule] forever. Yahweh God, you have promised these things, and [so I know that] you will keep blessing my descendants forever."

8 Some time later, David's army attacked the Philistia [army] and defeated them. They took control over the entire Philistia area. **2** David's army also defeated the army of the Moab people-group. David forced their soldiers to lie down on the ground [close to each other]. His men killed two out of every three of them. The [other] Moab people [were forced to] accept David as their ruler, and they were forced to give to him [every year the] payment/tax [that he demanded]. **3** David's army also defeated [the army of] Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, who ruled [the state of] Zobah [in Syria]. That happened when David went to rule again over the area at [the upper part of] the Euphrates River. **4** David's army captured 1,700 of Hadadezer's soldiers who rode on horses, and 20,000 of his other soldiers. They also crippled/hamstrung most of the horses that pulled the chariots, but they left/spared enough horses to [pull] 100 chariots. **5** When [the army of] Syria came from Damascus [city] to help King Hadadezer's [army], David's soldiers killed 22,000 of them. **6** Then David stationed (groups of his soldiers/army camps) in their area, and the people of Syria were forced to accept David as their ruler, and to give to David's government [every year] the payment/tax that he demanded. And Yahweh enabled David's [army] to win victories wherever they went. **7** David's soldiers took the gold shields that were carried by Hadadezer's officials, and brought them to Jerusalem. **8** They also brought [to Jerusalem] a lot of bronze [that they found] in Betah and Berothai, two cities that King Hadadezer [had previously] ruled. **9** When Toi, the king of the Hamath [city in Syria], heard that David's [army] had defeated the entire army of King Hadadezer, **10** he sent his son Joram to greet King David and to (congratulate him/say that he was happy) about his army defeating Hadadezer's army, which Toi's [army] had fought many times. Joram brought to David many items/gifts made from gold, silver, and bronze. **11** King David dedicated all those items to Yahweh. He also dedicated the silver and gold which his army had taken from the nations that they had conquered. **12** They had taken items from the Edom people-group and the Moab people-group, from the Ammon people-group, from the Philistia people, and from [the descendants of] Amalek, as well as from the people that Hadadezer [previously] ruled. **13** When David returned [after defeating the armies of Syria], he became more famous because his army killed 18,000 soldiers from the Edom people-group in the Salt Valley [near the Dead Sea]. **14** David stationed (groups of his soldiers/army camps) throughout the Edom area, and forced the people there to accept him as their king. Yahweh enabled David's [army] to win battles wherever they went. **15** David ruled over all the Israeli people, and he always did for them what was fair and just. **16** Joab was the army commander; Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was the man who reported to the people everything that David decided that they should do; **17** Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; Seraiah was the official secretary; **18** Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was the commander of (David's bodyguards/the men who protected the king); and David's sons were priests (OR, his administrators/advisors).

9 One day David asked, "Is there anyone who is a descendant of Saul to whom I can be kind?" He asked this because he wanted to honor Jonathan. **2** [They told him that] there was [in Jerusalem] a man named Ziba who had been a servant of Saul's family. So [David sent messengers to summon Ziba. When he arrived], the king asked him, "Are you Ziba?" He replied, "Yes, your majesty, I am." **3** The king asked him, "Is there anyone in Saul's family to whom I can be kind, [as I promised Jonathan that I would do]?" Ziba replied, "Yes, there is one son of Jonathan who is still [alive]. His feet are crippled." **4** The king asked him, "Where is he?" Ziba replied, "He is [living] in the house of Machir, son of Ammiel, in Lo-Debar [city east of the Jordan River]." **5** So King David sent [messengers] to bring Mephibosheth [to Jerusalem]. **6** When Mephibosheth came to David, he knelt down with his face on the ground, to show respect. Then David said, "Mephibosheth!" He replied, "Yes, your majesty, how may I serve you?" **7** David said to him, "Do not be afraid; I will be kind to you because Jonathan your father [was my loyal friend]. I will give back to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul. And [I want] you to always eat with me at my house [MTY]." **8** Mephibosheth bowed [in front of David again] and said, "Sir, I am [as worthless as] [MET] a dead dog; I do not deserve [RHQ] that you be kind to me!" **9** Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba and said to him, "Saul was your master; now I am giving to Mephibosheth everything that belonged to Saul and his family. **10** You and your 15 sons and your 20 servants must till/plow the land for Mephibosheth's [family], and [plant crops] and harvest them, in order that they will have food to eat. But Mephibosheth will eat food with me at my house." **11** Ziba replied to the king, "Your majesty, I will do everything that you have commanded me to do." So [after that], Mephibosheth always ate at the king's table, as though he were one of the king's sons. **12** Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica. All of Ziba's family became servants of Mephibosheth. **13** And Mephibosheth, who was still crippled in both of his feet, started to live in Jerusalem, and he always ate (at the king's table/with the king).

10 Some time later, the king of the Ammon people-group died, and his son Hanun became their king. **2** David thought, "Nahash was kind to me, so I will be kind to his son." So David sent some officials there, to tell Hanun that David was sorry that Hanun's father [had died]. When those messengers arrived in the land where the Ammon people-group lived, **3** the leaders of the Ammon people-group said to Hanun, "Do you think that it is to honor your father that King David has sent these men to say that he is sorry that your father died [RHQ]? [We think that] he has sent them here to look around the city to determine how his [army] can conquer us!" **4** Hanun [believed what they said; so he commanded some soldiers to] seize David's officials and [insult them by] shaving off one side of each man's beard, and [by] cutting off the lower part of their robes, [with the result that their buttocks could be seen], and then they sent them away. **5** The men were very humiliated/ashamed, [so they did not want to return home]. When David found out about what had happened to his officials, he sent someone to tell them, "Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown again, and then return home." **6** Then [the leaders of] the Ammon people-group realized that they had greatly insulted [IDM] David [IDM]. So they sent some men to hire/pay some soldiers [from other nearby areas to help defend them]. They hired 20,000 soldiers from [the] Beth-Rehob and Zobah [regions northeast of Israel], and 12,000 soldiers from [the] Tob [region], and 1,000 soldiers from [the army of] the king of Maacah [region]. **7** When David heard about that, he sent Joab with all of the army [that Joab commanded], to fight against them. **8** The soldiers of the Ammon people-group marched out and (stood in their positions/arranged themselves for battle) at the entrance [to their capital city, Rabbah]. The other soldiers from Syria and Tob and Maacah stood by themselves (in their positions/arranged themselves for battle) in the nearby fields. **9** Joab saw that there were groups of enemy soldiers in front of his troops and behind his troops. So he chose some of the best Israeli soldiers, and put them in positions to fight against the soldiers of Syria. **10** He appointed his [older] brother Abishai to be the commander of all the other soldiers, and he told them to (stand in their positions/arrange themselves) in front of [the army of] the Ammon people-group. **11** Then Joab said, "If the soldiers from Syria are too strong for us to defeat them, your men must come and help us. But if the soldiers from the Ammon people-group are too strong for you to defeat, we will come and help your men. **12** We must be strong, and fight hard [IDM] to [defend] our people and the cities [(that belong to/where we worship)] our God. I will pray/request that Yahweh do what he considers to be good." **13** So Joab and his army [advanced to] attack the army of Syria, and the soldiers from Syria ran away from them. **14** And when [the soldiers of] the Ammon people-group saw that the soldiers from Syria were running away, they also started to run away from Abishai and his army, and they retreated back inside the city. So Joab's [army] stopped fighting against [the army of] the Ammon people-group, and Joab [and his army] returned to Jerusalem. **15** After [the leaders of] the army of Syria saw that the Israeli army had defeated them, they gathered all their troops together. **16** [Their king,] Hadadezer, summoned the soldiers of Syria who lived on the east side of the [Euphrates] River. They gathered at Helam [city]. Their commander was Shobach. **17** When David heard about that, he gathered all the Israeli soldiers, and they crossed the Jordan [River] and marched to Helam. There, the army of Syria (took their positions/arranged themselves for battle), and the battle started. **18** But the soldiers of Syria ran away from the Israeli soldiers. David [and his army] killed 700 of their chariot-drivers and 40,000 other soldiers. They also wounded Shobach, their commander, and he died there. **19** When all the kings who had been ruled by Hadadezer realized that they had been defeated by the Israeli [army], they made peace with the Israelis and agreed to accept David as their king. So [the army of] Syria was afraid to help [the army of] the Ammon people-group any more.

11 [In that region], kings usually went [with their armies] to fight [their enemies] in the springtime. But the following year, in the springtime, David [did not do that. Instead, he] stayed in Jerusalem, and he sent [his commander] Joab [to lead the army]. So Joab went with the other officers and the rest of the Israeli army. They [crossed the Jordan River and] defeated the army of the Ammon people-group. Then they surrounded [their capital city,] Rabbah. **2** Late one afternoon, after David got up from taking a nap, he walked around on the [flat] roof of his palace. He saw a woman who was bathing [in the courtyard of her house]. The woman was very beautiful. **3** David sent a messenger to find out who she was. [The messenger returned] and said, "She is [RHQ] Bathsheba. She is the daughter of Eliam, and her husband is Uriah, from the Heth people-group." **4** Then David sent more messengers to get her. They brought her to David, and he (slept/had sex) [EUP] with her. (She had just finished performing the rituals to make herself pure [after her monthly menstrual period].) Then Bathsheba went back home. **5** [After some time], she realized that she was pregnant. So she sent a messenger to tell David [that she was pregnant]. **6** Then David sent a message to Joab. He said, "Send Uriah, from the Heth people-group, to me." So Joab did that. He sent Uriah to David. **7** When he arrived, David asked if Joab

was well, and if other soldiers were well, and how the war was progressing. 8 Then David, [hoping that Uriah would go home and sleep with his wife,] said to Uriah, "Okay, go home and relax for a while. [IDM]" So Uriah left, and David gave someone a gift [of some food] to take to Uriah's house. 9 But Uriah did not go home. Instead, he slept at the palace entrance with the king's palace guards. 10 When someone told David that Uriah did not go to his house [that night], David [summoned him again and] said to him, "Why didn't you go home [to be with your wife last night], after having been away for a long time?" [RHQ] 11 Uriah replied, "The soldiers of Judah and Israel are camping in the open fields, and even our commander Joab is sleeping in a tent, and the sacred chest is with them. (How could I/It would not be right for me to) go home, eat and drink, and sleep with my wife [RHQ]. I solemnly declare [IDM] that I will never do such a thing!" 12 Then David said to Uriah, "Stay here today. I will let you return [to the battle] tomorrow." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and that night. 13 The next day, David invited him [to a meal]. So Uriah had a meal with David, and David made him drink a lot of wine so that he would get drunk, [hoping that if he was drunk, he would sleep with his wife]. But that night, Uriah again did not go home. Instead, he slept on his cot with the king's servants. 14 [Someone reported that to] David, [so] the next morning he wrote a letter to Joab, and gave it to Uriah to take to Joab. 15 In the letter, he wrote, "Put Uriah in the front line, where the fighting is the (worst/most severe). Then command the soldiers to pull back from him, in order that he will be killed [by our enemies]." 16 [So after] Joab [got the letter], as his army was surrounding the city, he sent Uriah to a place where he knew that their enemies' strongest and best soldiers would be fighting. 17 The men from the city came out and fought with Joab's soldiers. They killed some of David's officers, including Uriah. 18 Then Joab sent a messenger to David to tell him about the fighting. 19 He said to the messenger, "Tell David the news about the battle. After you finish telling that to him, 20 if David is angry [because so many officers were killed], he may ask you, 'Why did your soldiers go so close to the city to fight [RHQ]? Did you not know that they would shoot [arrows at you while they were standing on top] of the city wall [RHQ]? 21 Do you not remember how Abimelech, the son of Gideon, was killed? A woman [who lived] in Thebez threw a huge (millstone/stone for grinding grain) on him from [the top of] tower, and he died. So why did your troops go near to the city wall?' If the king asks this, then tell him, 'Your officer Uriah also was killed.'" 22 So the messenger went and told David everything that Joab told him to say. 23 The messenger said to David, "Our enemies were very brave, and came out of the city to fight us in the fields. [They were defeating us] but we forced them back to the city gate. 24 Then their archers shot arrows at us from [the top of] the city wall. They killed some of your officers. They killed your officer Uriah, too." 25 David said to the messenger, "Go back to Joab and say to him, 'Do not be distressed [about what happened], because no one ever knows who will be killed in a battle.' Tell him that the next time his troops should attack the city more strongly, and capture it." 26 When Uriah's wife [Bathsheba] heard that her husband had died, she mourned for him. 27 When her time of mourning was ended, David sent messengers to bring her to the palace. Thus, she became David's wife. She later gave birth to a son. But Yahweh was very displeased with what David had done.

12 Yahweh [told the prophet Nathan what David had done, and he] sent Nathan to tell [this story to] David: "[I heard about] two men [who] were living in a certain city. One was rich and the other was poor. 2 The rich man owned a lot of cattle and sheep. 3 But the poor man had only one little female lamb, which he had bought. He raised the lamb, and it grew up with his children. He would give the lamb some of his own food and let it drink from his cup. He let the lamb sleep in his arms. The lamb was like a daughter to him. 4 [One day] a visitor came to [visit] the rich man. The rich man did not want to take one of his own animals [and kill it] to prepare a meal for the visitor. So instead, he stole the poor man's lamb [and killed it] and prepared a meal for his visitor." 5 [When] David [heard that, he] was very angry about [what] the rich man [had done]. He said to Nathan, "I solemnly declare that the man who did that should be executed! 6 But before he is executed, he should pay back to the poor man four lambs for doing this, and for not having pity [on the poor man]." 7 Nathan said to David, "You are the man [I have been talking about]! And this is what Yahweh, the God we Israelis [worship], says to you: 'I appointed you to be king of Israel, after having rescued you from Saul. 8 I gave you his palace and his wives. I caused you to become the king to rule Israel and Judah. If [you had told me that] you were not content with what I gave you, I would have given you twice as much! 9 So why have you despised my commandment [about not committing adultery]? You have done what I consider to be very evil! You have arranged for Uriah to be killed in a battle by the Ammon people-group's soldiers, and you have taken his wife to be your wife! 10 You have despised me, and have taken Uriah's wife to be your wife. So for many generations some of your descendants will die violently. [MTY, PRS] 11 I solemnly declare to you that I will cause someone from your own family to bring trouble to

you. I will take your wives and give them to him, and he will have sexual relations with them in the daytime, where everyone can see it, and you will know all about it. **12** What you did, you did secretly, but what I will cause to happen, everyone in Israel will be able to see it [or know about it]. [IDM]'" **13** David replied, "I have sinned against Yahweh." Nathan said to David, "Yahweh has forgiven you for your sin: You will not die [because of this sin]. **14** But, you have shown contempt for Yahweh by doing this. So, your baby will die." **15** Then Nathan went home. Then Yahweh caused the baby t o become very sick, the one that Uriah's wife had given birth to. **16** So David prayed to God that the child [would not die]. He (fasted/abstained from food), and he went into [the room where he slept] and lay all night on the floor. **17** [The next morning] his advisors stood around him and urged him to get up. But he would not get up, and he would not eat any food with them. **18** One week later the baby died. David's servants were afraid to tell that to David. They said [to each other], "Hey, while the baby was still alive, we talked to him, but he would not answer us. Now, if we tell him that the baby is dead [RHQ], he may do something to harm himself!" **19** But when David saw that his servants were whispering something to each other, he realized that the baby must be dead. So he asked them, "Is the baby dead?" They replied, "Yes, he is dead." **20** Then David got up from the floor. He bathed himself, put lotions on his body, and put on other clothes, Then he went into Yahweh's Sacred Tent and worshiped Yahweh. Then he went home. He asked his servants for some food. They gave him some, and he ate it. **21** Then his servants said to him, "We do not understand [RHQ] why you have done this! While the baby was still alive, you cried for him and refused to eat anything. But now that the baby has died, [you are not crying any more!] You got up and ate some food!" **22** David replied, "While the baby was still alive, I fasted and cried. I thought, 'Who knows? Yahweh may be merciful to me and not allow the baby to die'. **23** But now the baby is dead. So (there is no reason for me to (fast/abstain from eating food) any more./why should I (fast/abstain from eating food) any more?) [RHQ] (Can I bring him back to me?/I certainly cannot bring him back to me!) [RHQ] [Some day] I will go to where he is, but he will not return to me." **24** Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba. Then he (slept/had sexual relations) with her, and she [became pregnant again and] gave birth to another son. David named that son Solomon. Yahweh loved that little boy. **25** He told the prophet Nathan to tell David to name the baby boy Jedediah [which means 'loved by Yahweh',] because Yahweh loved him. **26** (Meanwhile/While all that was happening), Joab's [soldiers] attacked Rabbah, [the capital city] of the Ammon people-group; and they captured the king's fortress. **27** Then Joab sent messengers to David, to tell him this: "My troops are attacking Rabbah, and we have captured the city's water supply. **28** Now gather your troops and come and surround the city and capture it. If you do not do that, my troops will capture the city and it will then be named 'the City of Joab'." **29** So David gathered all his troops. They went [with David] to Rabbah and attacked it and captured it. **30** Then David took the crown from the head of the king of Rabbah (OR, from the head of [Milcom] the god of Rabbah) and put it on his own head. It [was very heavy; it] weighed (75 pounds/34 kg.), and it had many very valuable stones fastened to it. His soldiers also took many other valuable things from the city. **31** Then they brought the people of Rabbah out of the city and forced them to [work for them] using saws and iron picks and axes. David's troops also forced them to make bricks. David's soldiers did this in all the towns of the Ammon people-group. Then David and all of his army returned to Jerusalem.

13 David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister named Tamar. Another of David's sons, Amnon, was attracted to Tamar. **2** He wanted [to have sex with] [EUP] his half-sister very much, with the result that he made himself sick [thinking about her all the time]. But it was not possible for Amnon to get her, because she was a virgin, [so they kept men away from her]. **3** But Amnon had a friend named Jonadab, who was the son of David's brother Shimeah. Jonadab was a very crafty/shrewd man. **4** [One day] Jonadab said to Amnon, "You are the king's son, but every day I see that [RHQ] you seem very depressed/sad. What is your problem?" Amnon replied, "I (am in love/want to sleep) [EUP] with Tamar, my half-brother Absalom's sister." **5** Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed, and pretend that you are sick. When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Allow my half-sister Tamar to come and give me some food to eat. She can prepare the food while I am watching her. Then she can serve it to me herself.'" **6** So Amnon lay down, and pretended that he was sick. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, "[I am sick;] please allow my half-sister Tamar to come and make a couple scones/dumplings for me while I am watching, and then she can serve them to me." **7** So David sent a message to Tamar in the palace, saying "Amnon [is sick and he wants you to] go to his house and prepare some food for him." **8** So Tamar went to Amnon's house, where he was lying in bed. She took some dough and kneaded it, and formed it into some scones/dumplings while he was watching her. Then she baked them. **9** She took them out of the pan and put them [on a plate] in front of him, but he refused to eat them. Then he said to everyone

else in the room, "All the rest of you, leave me now!" So all the others left his [room]. **10** Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into my room and serve it to me." So Tamar took into his room the scones/dumplings that she had made. **11** But when she brought them close for him to eat them, he grabbed her and said to her, "Come to bed with me!" **12** She replied, "No, do not force me to do such a disgraceful thing! We never do things like that in Israel! That would be awful/terrible! **13** As for me, if I did that, I would not be able to [RHQ] endure being disgraced by having done that. And as for you, everyone in Israel would condemn you for having done such a disgraceful deed. So I plead with you, talk to the king. I am sure that he will allow me to marry you." **14** But he would not listen to her. He was stronger than she was, so he forced her to have sex with him. **15** Then Amnon hated her very much. He hated her much more than he had desired her. He said to her, "Get up and get out of here!" **16** But she said to him, "No! It would be very wrong for you to send me away. It would be worse than what you just did to me!" But he would not listen to her. **17** He summoned his personal servant and said to him, "Take this woman outside, away from me, and lock the door [so that she cannot come in again]!" **18** So the servant put her outside and locked the door. Tamar was wearing a long robe with long sleeves, which was the clothing that was usually worn by the unmarried daughters of the king at that time. **19** But Tamar tore the long robe that she was wearing, and put ashes on her head [to show that she was very sad]. Then she put her hands on her head [to show that she was grieving], and she went away, crying. **20** Her brother Absalom [saw her and] said to her, "Has your half-brother Amnon [DOU] forced you to have sex with him [EUP]? Please, my sister, do not tell anyone, and do not become depressed/sad." So Tamar went to live in Absalom's house, and she was very sad and lonely. **21** When King David heard about all that, he became very angry. **22** And Absalom hated Amnon, because he had raped his sister, so he would not speak to Amnon about anything. **23** Two years later, Absalom's servants were shearing sheep at Baal-Hazor, which is near [a town named] Ephraim. [When they finished shearing the sheep, they celebrated], and Absalom invited all the king's sons [to come and celebrate]. **24** Absalom went to the king and said to him, "Sir, my servants have been shearing my sheep. Please come with your officials [to celebrate] with us!" **25** But the king replied, "No, my son, it would not be good for all of us to go, because it would cause you to do a lot of work and spend a lot of money for food." Absalom continued urging him, but the king would not go. Instead, he said that he hoped/desired that God would bless them [while they celebrated]. **26** Then Absalom said, "If you will not go, please allow my half-brother Amnon to go with us." But the king replied, "Why [do you want] him to go with you?" **27** But Absalom continued to insist, so finally the king permitted Amnon and all David's other sons to go with Absalom. **28** [So they all went. And at the celebration], Absalom commanded his servants, "Notice when Amnon has become a bit drunk from the wine. Then when I signal to you, kill him. Do not be afraid; you will be doing this [only] because I told you [RHQ] to do it. So be courageous and do it!" **29** So Absalom's servants did what Absalom told them to do. [They killed Amnon]. All the rest of David's sons [saw what happened and] fled, riding on their mules. **30** While they were on their way home, someone [went quickly and] reported to David, "Absalom has killed all of your other sons; none of them is still alive!" **31** The king stood up, tore his clothes [because he was extremely sad], and then he threw himself down on the ground. All the servants who were there also tore their clothes. **32** But Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, said, "Your Majesty, [I am sure that] they have not killed all your sons. [I am sure that] only Amnon is dead, because Absalom has determined to do this ever since the day that Amnon raped [EUP] his half-sister Tamar. **33** So, your majesty, do not believe the report that all your sons are dead. [I am sure that] only Amnon is dead." **34** In the meantime, Absalom ran away. Just then, the soldier/sentry [who was standing on the city wall] saw a large crowd of people coming down the hill along the road from Horonaim. [He ran and told the king what he had seen]. **35** Jonadab said to the king, "Aha! What I told you is true. Your other sons [are alive and] have come!" **36** And as soon as he said that, David's sons came in. They all started crying, and David and all his officials also cried very much. **37** But Absalom had fled. He went to stay with the king of [the] Geshur [region], who was Talmai the son of Ammihud. Absalom stayed there for three years. David mourned for his son Amnon for a long time, **39** but after that, he desired very much to see Absalom, because he was no longer grieving about Amnon being dead.

14 Joab realized that the king yearned [IDM] to see Absalom. **2** So Joab sent someone to Tekoa [town] to bring back a woman who was very clever. [When she arrived,] Joab said to her, "Pretend that you are grieving because someone has died. Put on clothes that show that you are mourning. Do not put any lotion/ointment on your body. Act as if you are a woman who has been mourning for a long time. **3** And go to the king, and tell him what I tell you to say." Then Joab told her what to say [MTY] [to the king]. **4** So the woman from Tekoa went to the king. She prostrated

herself in front of him and then bowed down to him, and said, “Your Majesty, help me!” **5** The king replied, “What is your problem?” She replied, “Please, sir, I am a widow. My husband died [some time ago]. **6** I had two sons. But one day they quarreled with each other out in the fields. There was no one to separate them, and one of them struck the other one and killed him. **7** Now, all my family oppose me. They are insisting that I allow them to kill my son who is still alive [MTY], in order that they may get revenge for his killing his brother. But if they do that, I will not have any son to inherit [my husband’s possessions]. That would be like [MET] extinguishing the last coals of a fire, and my husband would not have a son to preserve our family’s name. [DOU]” **8** Then the king said to the woman, “Go back home; I will take care of this matter for you.” **9** The woman from Tekoa replied to the king, “Your Majesty, if you are criticized [for helping me], my family and I will accept the blame. You and the royal family will (be innocent/not have done what is wrong).” **10** The king said to her, “If anyone says anything [to threaten you/cause you trouble] you, bring that person to me, and [I will make sure that] he will never cause you trouble again.” **11** Then the woman said, “Your Majesty, please pray that Yahweh your God will not allow my relative, who [wants to get] revenge on my son for killing [MTY] his brother, to be able to do that.” David replied, “As surely as Yahweh lives, your son will not be harmed at all. [IDM]” **12** Then the woman said, “Your Majesty, please allow me to say one more thing to you.” He replied, “Speak!” **13** The woman said, “Why have you done this bad thing to God’s people? You have not allowed your son Absalom to return home. By saying what you have just said, you have certainly declared [RHQ] that what you have done is wrong. **14** We all die; we are like [SIM] water that cannot be picked up after it is spilled on the ground. But God does not just cause us to die; he creates ways to bring us back when we become separated from him. **15** “Now, Your Majesty, I have come to you because others have threatened me. So I said to myself, ‘I will go and talk to the king, and perhaps he will do what I request him to do. **16** Perhaps he will listen to me, and save me from the man who is trying to kill my son. If my son is killed, it would result in us disappearing from the land that God gave to us.’ **17** “And I thought, ‘What the king says will comfort/encourage me, because the king is like [SIM] an angel of God. He knows what is good and what is evil.’ I pray/desire that Yahweh our God will (be with/direct) you.” **18** Then the king said to the woman, “I will now ask you a question. Answer it, and tell me the truth. [LIT]” The woman replied, “Your majesty, ask your question.” **19** The king said, “Was Joab the one who told you to do this?” She replied, “Yes, Your Majesty, as surely as you live, I cannot avoid telling you what is true. Yes, indeed, it was Joab who told me to come here, and who told me what to say. **20** He did it in order to cause you to think differently about this matter. Your Majesty, you are as wise as God’s angels, and [it seems that] you know everything [that happens] on the earth, [so you know why Joab sent me here].” **21** Then the king [summoned] Joab [and] said to him, “Listen! I have decided to do [what you want]. So go and get that young man Absalom and bring him back [to Jerusalem].” **22** Joab prostrated himself on the ground, and then he bowed down before the king, and [asked God to] bless him. Then Joab said, “Your Majesty, today I know that you are pleased with me, because you have agreed to do what I requested.” **23** Then Joab got up and went to Geshur, and got Absalom and brought him back to Jerusalem. **24** But the king said/commanded that Absalom would not be permitted to live in the palace. He said, “I do not want him to come to see me.” So Absalom lived in his own house, and did not go to [talk to] the king. **25** Absalom was very handsome. He looked perfect, from the bottom of his feet to the top of his head. In all of Israel there was no one whom people admired more than Absalom. **26** His hair was very thick, and he cut it only once each year, when it became too heavy for him. Using the standard weights, he would weigh the hair [that he cut off], and it always weighed about five pounds. **27** Absalom had three sons and one daughter named Tamar. She was a very beautiful woman. **28** [After] Absalom [returned to] Jerusalem, he lived there two years, and during that time he never [was allowed to] see the king. **29** So he sent [a messenger] to Joab to ask him to come [and talk to him], but Joab refused to come. So Absalom sent [a message to him] a second time, but he still would not come. **30** Then Absalom said to his servants, “You know that Joab’s field is next to mine, and that he has barley [growing] there. Go and light a fire there [to burn his barley].” So Absalom’s servants [went there and] lit a fire, [and all his barley burned]. **31** Joab [knew who had done it, so he] went to Absalom’s house and said to him, “Why have your servants burned [the barley in] my field?” **32** Absalom replied, “Because [you did not come to me when] I sent messages to you [requesting that you come]. I wanted to request that you go to the king to say to him, ‘Absalom (wants to know what good it did/says that is was useless) [RHQ] for him [RHQ] to leave Geshur and come here. [He thinks that] it would have been better for him to have stayed there. [He wants you to] allow him to talk to you. And if you think that he has done something that is wrong, you can [command that] he be executed.’” **33** So Joab went to the king, and told him [what Absalom had said]. Then the king [summoned Absalom], and he came to

the king and knelt down in front of him with his face touching the ground. Then the king kissed Absalom [to show that he was pleased to see him].

15 Some time later, Absalom acquired a chariot and horses [to pull it]. He [hired] 50 men to run in front of him [to honor him while he was riding around Jerusalem in the chariot]. **2** Furthermore, he always rose early [each morning] and stood by the city gate. Whenever someone came there with a dispute/quarrel that he wanted the king to decide, Absalom would call out to him, asking "What city are you from?" When the person told him what [city and] tribe he was from, **3** Absalom would say to him, "Listen, [I am sure that] what you are saying/claiming is right. But there is no one whom the king has appointed/authorized to listen to [people like] you." **4** Absalom would then add, "I wish that I were a judge in this land. If I were a judge, anyone who had a dispute could come to me, and I would decide it fairly/justly." **5** And whenever anyone came near to Absalom to bow respectfully in front of him, Absalom would reach out and embrace him and kiss him. **6** Absalom did this to everyone in Israel who came to the king because of having a dispute with someone. In that way, Absalom persuaded all the Israeli people to be more pleased with him [IDM] [than they were pleased with David]. **7** Four years later, Absalom [went to] the king and said, "Please allow me to go to Hebron [city], in order that I can do what I promised Yahweh that I would do. **8** When I was living in Geshur, in Syria, I promised Yahweh that if he brought me back to Jerusalem, I would worship him [in Hebron]." **9** The king replied, "You may go." So Absalom went to Hebron. **10** But [while he was there,] he secretly sent messengers to all the tribes in Israel, to tell them, "When you hear the sound of the trumpets [being blown], shout 'Absalom has become the king at Hebron!'" **11** Absalom had taken with him to Hebron 200 men from Jerusalem, but they did not know [what Absalom was planning to do]. **12** While Absalom was offering sacrifices [at Hebron], he sent a message to Ahithophel, from Giloh [town], requesting him to come. Ahithophel was one of the king's advisors. So the number of people who joined Absalom and who were ready to rebel [against David] became larger. **13** Soon a messenger came to David and said to him, "All [HYP] the Israeli people [SYN] are joining Absalom to rebel against you!" **14** So David said to all his officials, "We must leave immediately if we want to escape from Absalom! We must go quickly, before he [and his men] arrive. If we do not do that, they will kill us and everyone else in the city!" **15** The king's officials said, "Okay, your majesty, we are ready to do whatever you decide." **16** So the king left ten of his slave wives there to take care of the palace, but all the other people in his palace went with him. **17** When they all were leaving [the city], they stopped at the last house. **18** The king and his officials stood there while his bodyguards went by in front of him. 600 soldiers from Gath [city] also walked by in front of him. **19** Then David said to Ittai, [the leader of the soldiers] from Gath, "(Why are you going with us?/You should not be going with us.) [RHQ] Go back and stay with [Absalom] the [new] king. You are not an Israeli; you are living away from your own land. **20** You have lived here [in Israel] for only a short time [HYP]. And we do not even know where we will be going. So it is not right [RHQ] for me to force you to wander around with us. And take your troops with you. And I hope/wish that Yahweh will faithfully love and be loyal to you." **21** But Ittai replied, "Your Majesty, as surely as you live, wherever you go, I will go; I will stay with you, whether they kill me or allow me to live." **22** David replied to Ittai, "Okay, march with us!" So Ittai and all his troops and their families went [with David]. **23** All the people [along the road] cried when they saw them walking by. The king and all the others crossed the Kidron Valley and then they all went [up the hill] toward the desert. **24** Abiathar and Zadok, [the priests,] were walking with them. The descendants of Levi [who helped the priests] also went with them, carrying the sacred chest that contained the Ten Commandments. But they set it on the ground until all the others had left the city. **25** Then the king said to Zadok, "You and Abiathar take the sacred chest back into the city. If Yahweh is pleased with me, he will some day allow me to return to see it and the place where it is kept. **26** But if he says that he is not pleased with me, then I am willing for him to do to me whatever he thinks is good." **27** He also said to Zadok, "Listen [to what I suggest]. You and Abiathar return to the city peacefully/safely, and take your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan with you. **28** I will wait in the desert at the place where people can walk across the river, until you send a message to me." **29** So Zadok and Abiathar carried the sacred chest back to Jerusalem, and they stayed there. **30** David [and those with him] went up Olive [Tree] Hill. David was crying while he walked. He was walking barefoot and had something covering his head [to show that he was sorrowful]. All those who were going with him also covered their heads and were crying while they walked. **31** Someone told David that Ahithophel had joined with those who were rebelling against David. So David prayed, "Yahweh, cause whatever Ahithophel suggests to Absalom [that he should do to be considered] to be foolish!" **32** When they arrived at the top of the hill, where there was a place where the people worshiped [God], suddenly Hushai, from the Arki people-group, met David. He had torn his clothes and put dirt on his

head [to show that he was very sad]. 33 David said to him, "If you go with me, you will not be able to help me. 34 But if you return to the city, [you can help me by] saying to Absalom, 'Your Majesty, I will serve you as faithfully as I served your father.' If you do that [and stay near Absalom], you will be able to oppose any advice that Ahithophel gives to Absalom. 35 Zadok and Abiathar the priests are already there [RHQ]. Whatever you hear people say in the king's palace, tell it to Zadok and Abiathar. 36 Keep in mind that Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan are also there. You can tell them whatever you find out, and send them to report it to me." 37 So David's friend Hushai returned to the city, at the same time that Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

16 When David [and the others] had gone a little way past the top of the hill, Mephibosheth's servant Ziba met him. He had with him two donkeys that were carrying 200 loaves of bread, 100 bunches/clusters of raisins, 100 bunches of fresh fruit, and a leather bag full of wine. 2 The king said to Ziba, "What are these for?" Ziba replied, "The donkeys are for your family to ride on, the bread and the fruit are for your soldiers to eat, and the wine is for them to drink when they become exhausted in the desert." 3 The king said, "Where is Mephibosheth, the grandson of your [former] master [Saul]?" Ziba [deceived David by] saying, "He stayed in Jerusalem, because he thinks that now the Israeli people will allow him to rule the kingdom that his grandfather Saul ruled." 4 The king said to Ziba, "Okay, everything that belonged to Mephibosheth is now yours." Ziba replied, "Your Majesty, I will humbly serve you; and I desire/hope that you will always be pleased with me." 5 When King David [and those with him] arrived at Bahurim [town], a man named Shimei met him. Shimei, whose father was Gera, was one of Saul's relatives. Shimei was cursing David as he approached. 6 Then he threw stones at David and his officials, even though the officials and David's bodyguards surrounded David. 7 Shimei cursed David and said to him, "Get out of here, you murderer, you scoundrel! 8 Yahweh is (getting revenge on/punishing) you all for murdering [MTY] many people in Saul's family. And now he is giving Saul's kingdom to your son Absalom. You murderer, you are being paid back for the many people that you have killed/murdered [MTY]!" 9 Then Abishai said to the king, "Your Majesty, this man is [as worthless as] [MET] a dead dog! (Why should he be allowed to curse you?/He should not be allowed to curse you.) [RHQ] Allow me to go over there and cut off his head!" 10 But the king replied, "You two sons of Zeruiah, (do not tell me what to do/this does not concern you) [RHQ]. If he is cursing me because Yahweh told him to do that, certainly no one should say '(Why are you doing that?/You should not be doing that.) [RHQ]'" 11 Then David said to Abishai and to all his officials, "You know that my own son is trying to kill me. So [it is not surprising that] this man from the tribe of Benjamin is also trying to kill me. So ignore him, and allow him to curse me, because [perhaps he thinks that] Yahweh told him to do that. 12 Perhaps Yahweh will see that I am having all this trouble, and [some day he will repay me by] (blessing/doing good things for) me in return for this man cursing me today." 13 Then David and those who were with him walked along the road, and Shimei continued walking along the hillside near him. While he walked along, he cursed David and threw stones and dirt at him. 14 When David and those who were with him arrived at the Jordan [River], they were very tired. So they rested there. 15 While that was happening, Absalom and all the Israeli people who were with him had arrived in Jerusalem. Ahithophel had also arrived there. 16 When David's friend Hushai came to Absalom, he said to Absalom, "I desire/hope that the king will live a long time! May you live for many years!" 17 Absalom said to Hushai, "You have been loyal [RHQ] to your friend [David for a long time]. So why did you not go with him [instead of coming to me]?" 18 Hushai replied, "I will serve the one whom Yahweh and these people and all the other people of Israel have chosen [to be their king]. So I will stay with you. 19 You are my master [King David's] son; if I do not serve you, what other man should I serve [RHQ]? I will serve you as I served your father." 20 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "What do you advise that we should do?" 21 Ahithophel replied, "Your father left some of his slave wives in the palace to take care of it. Have sex [EUP] with them. When everyone in Israel hears that you have done that, they will realize that you are acting very contemptuously toward your father. Then all those who are with you will be very encouraged." 22 So they set up a tent for Absalom on the roof [of the palace]. And Absalom went into the tent and had sex [EUP] with his father's slave wives, [one by one,] and everyone [HYP] could see [him going into the tent]. 23 In those days, people accepted what Ahithophel recommended as though he were speaking the words of God. So just as David had always accepted what Ahithophel said, now Absalom did also.

17 Then Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Allow me to choose 12,000 men, and I will leave [with them] tonight to pursue David. 2 We will attack him while he is tired and discouraged, and cause him to be very frightened. All the soldiers who are with him will run away. We will kill only the king. 3 Then we will bring back all his soldiers to you, like [SIM] a (bride/woman comes to her husband when she is married). You are wanting to kill only one man; so the other

people will not be harmed." 4 Absalom and all the Israeli leaders [who were with him] thought that what Ahithophel said would be good to do. 5 But Absalom said, "Summon Hushai also, and we will hear what he suggests." 6 So when Hushai arrived, Absalom told him what Ahithophel had suggested. Then he asked Hushai, "What do you think we should do? If you do not think that we should do what Ahithophel suggests, tell us [what you think that we should do]." 7 Hushai replied, "This time what Ahithophel has suggested is not good advice. 8 You know that your father and the men who are with him are strong soldiers, and that now they are very angry, like [SIM] a mother bear whose cubs have been stolen from her. Furthermore, your father knows how to fight because he has fought in many battles. He will not stay with his troops during the night. 9 Right now he is probably already hiding in one of the pits, or in some other place. [If his soldiers start to attack your soldiers, and] if they kill some of them, whoever hears about that will say 'Many of the soldiers with Absalom have been killed!' 10 Then your other soldiers, even if they are as fearless [SIM, IDM] as lions, they will become very afraid. Do not forget that everyone in Israel knows that your father is a great/strong soldier, and that the soldiers who are with him are also very brave/courageous. 11 "So what I suggest is that you summon all the Israeli soldiers, from Dan [in the far north] to Beersheba [in the far south]. They will be as many as the grains of sand on the seashore [HYP]. And then you yourself lead us into the battle. 12 We will find [your father], wherever he is, and we will attack him [from all sides], like [SIM] dew covers all the ground. And neither he nor any of the soldiers who are with him will survive. 13 If he escapes into some city, all our soldiers will bring ropes and pull that city down into the valley. As a result, not one stone will be left there [on top of the hill where that city was]!" 14 Absalom and all the other Israeli men [who were with him] said, "What Hushai suggests is better than what Ahithophel suggested." The reason that happened was that Yahweh had determined that if they would accept the good advice that Ahithophel had given them, [they would have been able to defeat/kill David]. But [as a result of their doing what Hushai suggested], Yahweh would cause a disaster to happen to Absalom. 15 Then Hushai told the two priests, Zadok and Abiathar, what both he and Ahithophel had suggested to Absalom and the Israeli leaders. 16 Then he said to them, "Send [a message] quickly to David. Tell him to not stay at the place where people walk across the river, near the desert. Instead, he and his soldiers must cross [the Jordan River] immediately, in order that they will not be killed/wiped out." 17 [The priest's two sons,] Jonathan and Ahimaaz, were waiting at En-Rogel [Spring], outside Jerusalem. They did not [dare to] enter the city, because if someone saw them, [he would report it to Absalom]. [While they were at En-Rogel,] a female servant [of the two priests] would frequently go to them and report to them [what was happening], and then they would go and report it to King David. 18 But a young man saw them, and went and reported it to Absalom. [They found out what the young man had done,] so both of them left quickly and went to stay in the house of a man in Bahurim. That man had a well in his courtyard; so the two men went down into the well [to hide]. 19 The man's wife took a cloth/mat and covered the well, and scattered grain on top of it in order that no one would know [that two men were hiding inside it]. 20 Some of Absalom's soldiers [found out where the two men had gone. So they] went to the house, and asked the woman, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" She replied, "They crossed the river." So the soldiers [crossed the river and] searched for them. But they could not find them, so they returned to Jerusalem. 21 After they had gone, the two men came out of the well and went and reported to King David [what had happened and] what Ahithophel had suggested. Then they said to him, "Cross the river quickly!" 22 So David and all his soldiers quickly started to cross the Jordan [River], and by dawn they had all crossed to the other side. 23 When Ahithophel realized that Absalom was not going to do what he suggested, he put a saddle on his donkey and returned to his own town. He gave [to his family] instructions about his possessions, and then he hanged himself [because he knew that Absalom would be defeated and that he would be considered a traitor and be killed]. His body was buried in the tomb where his ancestors [had been buried]. 24 David [and his soldiers] arrived at Mahanaim. And Absalom [and all his Israeli soldiers] also crossed the Jordan [River]. 25 Absalom had appointed [his cousin] Amasa to be the commander of his army, instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Jether, a descendant of Ishmael. Amasa's mother was Abigail, the daughter of Nahash and the sister of Joab's mother Zeruiah. 26 Absalom and his Israeli soldiers set up their tents in [the] Gilead [region]. 27 When David [and his soldiers] arrived at Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah [city] in the Ammon area, and Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo-Debar [city], and Barzillai from Rogelim [town] in [the] Gilead [region] 28 brought sleeping mats, bowls, clay pots, barley, wheat flour, parched grain, beans, and lentils to them. 29 They brought honey and curds, sheep, and some cream/cheese for David and his soldiers to eat. They knew that David and his soldiers would be hungry and tired and thirsty [from marching] in the desert.

18 David arranged his soldiers for the battle. He divided them into groups, and appointed a commander for each 100 soldiers and a commander for each 1,000 soldiers. **2** He sent them out in three groups. Joab commanded one group, Joab's brother Abishai commanded a second group, and Ittai from Gath commanded the third group. David said to them, "I myself will go with you [to the battle]." **3** But his soldiers said, "No, we will not allow you to go with us. If they force us all to run away, they will not be concerned about that happening. Or if they kill half of us, that will also not be what they want. To them, [killing] you is more important than [killing] 10,000 of us. So it will be better that you [stay here] in the city and send help to us." **4** The king replied, "Okay, I will do whatever seems best to you." So he stood at the gate [and watched] while his soldiers marched out, group by group. **5** [While they were leaving,] the king commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, "For my sake, do not harm my son Absalom!" And all the troops heard it when David gave that order about Absalom to those three commanders. **6** So the army went out to fight against the Israeli soldiers [who were with Absalom]. They fought the battle in the forest [where people from the tribe] of Ephraim [lived]. **7** David's soldiers defeated Absalom's soldiers. They killed 20,000 of them! **8** The battle was fought {They fought the battle} all over that area, and the number of men who died because of [dangerous things in] the forest [PRS] was greater than the number of men who were killed (in the battle/by swords). **9** During the battle, Absalom suddenly came near [some of] David's soldiers. Absalom was riding on his mule; and when the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak tree, Absalom's head/hair was caught in the branches. The mule kept going, but Absalom was left dangling in the air. **10** One of David's soldiers saw what happened, and went and told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree!" **11** Joab said to the man, "What? You say that you saw him hanging there, so why did you not kill him immediately [RHQ]? [If you had killed him,] I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt!" **12** The man replied to Joab, "Even if you gave me 1,000 pieces of silver, I would not have done anything to harm [IDM] the king's son. We all heard the king command you and Abishai and Ittai, 'For my sake, do not harm my son Absalom!' **13** If I had disobeyed the king and killed Absalom, the king would have heard about it, because the king hears about everything, and even you would not have defended me!" **14** Joab said, "I am not going to waste time talking to you!" Then he took three spears [and went to where Absalom was], and thrust them into Absalom's chest/heart while he was still alive, dangling from the oak tree. **15** Then ten young men who carried weapons for Joab surrounded Absalom and [finished] killing him. **16** Then Joab blew his trumpet [to signal that they should not fight any more], and his soldiers returned from pursuing those Israeli soldiers. **17** They took Absalom's body and threw it into a huge pit in the forest, and covered it with a huge pile of stones. Then all the remaining Israeli soldiers [who had been with Absalom] fled to their own towns. **18** Absalom had no sons to preserve his [family] name. So, while Absalom was alive, he built a monument to himself in the King's Valley [near Jerusalem, in order that people would remember him]. He put his name on the monument, and people still call it Absalom's monument. **19** [After Absalom had been killed,] Zadok's son Ahimaaz said to Joab, "Allow me to run to the king to tell him the good news that Yahweh has rescued him from the power of his enemies!" **20** But Joab said to him, "No, I will not allow you to take news to the king today. Some other day I will allow you to take some news, but not today. [If you took news today it would not be good news for the king,] because his son is dead." **21** Then Joab said to David's servant who was from Ethiopia, "You go and tell the king what you have seen." So the man from Ethiopia bowed in front of Joab, and started to run. **22** Then Ahimaaz said again to Joab, "Even though [that man from Ethiopia is running], allow me to run behind him." Joab replied, "My boy/son, why do you want to do that? You will not receive any reward for your news!" **23** But Ahimaaz replied, "That does not matter, I want to go." So Joab said, "Okay, go." So Ahimaaz ran along [another] road through the Jordan Valley and arrived [where David was] before the man from Ethiopia arrived. **24** David was sitting between the outer gate and the inner gate [of the city]. The watchman/lookout went up on top of the city wall and stood on the roof over the gates. He looked out and saw one man running alone. **25** The watchman called down and reported it to the king. The king said, "If he is alone, [that indicates/means that] he is bringing [good] news." The man who was running continued to come closer. **26** Then the watchman saw another man running. So he called down to the gatekeeper, "Look! There is another man running!" And the king said, "He also is bringing [some good] news." **27** The watchman said, "I think the first man [must be Ahimaaz, because he] is running like Ahimaaz runs." The king said, "He is a good man, and [I am sure] he is coming with good news." **28** [When] Ahimaaz [reached the king, he] called out "I hope/desire that things will go well with you!" Then he prostrated himself on the ground in front of the king and said, "Your Majesty, praise Yahweh our God, who has rescued you from the men who were rebelling against you!" **29** The king said, "Is the young man Absalom safe/all right?" Ahimaaz [did not want to answer that question, so he]

replied, “When Joab sent me, I saw that there was a lot of confusion, but I do not know what it was about.” **30** Then the king said, “Stand aside.” So Ahimaaz stepped aside and stood there. **31** Suddenly the man from Ethiopia arrived, and said, “Your Majesty, I have good news for you! Yahweh has enabled your soldiers to defeat all those who rebelled against you!” **32** The king said to him, “Is the young man Absalom safe/all right?” And the man from Ethiopia replied, “Sir, I wish/desire that what happened to him would happen to all of your enemies and to all those who rebel against you!” **33** The king [realized that he meant that Absalom was dead, so he] became (extremely distressed/overcome with grief), and he went up to the room above the gateway and cried. While he was going up, he kept crying out, “O, my son Absalom! My son! O, my son Absalom, I desire/wish that I had died instead of you!”

19 Someone told Joab that the king was crying and mourning because Absalom had died. **2** All of David’s soldiers became sad. Instead of rejoicing about defeating [the soldiers who had fought with Absalom], they were sad because they heard that the king was mourning because Absalom [was dead]. **3** The soldiers returned to the city quietly, like [SIM] soldiers do when they are ashamed because they ran away from battle. **4** The king covered his face [with his hands] and kept crying loudly, “O, my son Absalom! O, Absalom, my son! My son!” **5** Then Joab entered the room where the king was, and said to the king, “Today you have caused your soldiers to be ashamed! You have humiliated the men who saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and your ordinary wives and your slave wives! **6** [It seems that] you love those who hate you and [that] you hate those who love you. You have caused it to be clear today that your commanders and your officers are not at all important to you. I think that if Absalom were still alive and we were all dead today, you would be happy. **7** So, now go and thank your soldiers [for what they did]. Because I solemnly declare that if you do not do that, none of them will still be with you by tomorrow morning and that would be worse [for you] than all the disasters/troubles that you have experienced since you were a boy.” **8** So the king got up and went and sat near the city gate. And all the people were told, “Hey, the king is sitting at the gate!” So they all came and gathered around him. Meanwhile, all the Israeli troops [who had been with Absalom] had returned to their homes. **9** Then all the people throughout the tribes of Israel started to quarrel among themselves. They said to each other, “King David rescued us from the people of Philistia and from our other enemies. But now he has fled from Absalom and left Israel! **10** We appointed [MTY] Absalom to be our king, but he died in the battle [against David’s soldiers]. So (why does someone not try to bring King David back?/surely someone should try to bring King David back.)” [RHQ] **11** King David [found out what the people were saying. So he] sent the two priests, Zadok and Abiathar, to say to the leaders of Judah, “The king says that he has heard that all the Israeli people [want him to be king again]. And he says, ‘(Why should you be the last ones to bring me back to my palace?/It is not right that you be the last ones to bring me back to my palace.) [RHQ] **12** You are my relatives; we have the same ancestor [IDM]. So (why should you be the last ones to bring me back?/you should certainly not be the last ones to bring me back.) [RHQ]’” **13** And say to Amasa, “You are one of my relatives. I hope/desire that God strike me dead [IDM] if I do not appoint you to be, from now on, the commander of my army instead of Joab.” **14** [By sending that message to them,] David convinced all the people of Judah [IDM] [that they should (be loyal to him/accept him as their king]). So they sent a message to the king, saying “We want you and all your officials to return here.” **15** So the king [and his officials started back toward Jerusalem]. When they reached the Jordan [River], the people of Judah came there to Gilgal to meet the king, and to bring him across the river. **16** Shimei, the man from the tribe of Benjamin, also came down quickly [to the river] with the people of Judah to meet King David. **17** There were 1,000 men from the tribe of Benjamin who came with him. And Ziba, who had been the servant of Saul, also hurried down to the Jordan [River], bringing 20 of his servants with him. They all came to the king, **18** and then they all [prepared to] take the king and all his family across the river, at the place where they could walk across it. They wanted to do whatever the king wanted them to do. As the king was about to cross the river, Shimei came to him and prostrated himself in front of the king. **19** He said to the king, “Your Majesty, please forgive me. Please do not keep thinking about the terrible thing that I did on the day that you left Jerusalem. Do not think about it any more. **20** Because I know that I have sinned. Look, I have come today, the first one from the northern tribes to come here to greet you today, Your Majesty.” **21** But Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, said, “He cursed the one that Yahweh appointed [MTY] to be the king! So (should he not be executed for doing that?/he certainly should be executed for doing that.)” [RHQ] **22** But David said, “You sons of Zeruiah, what am I going to do with you? (OR, you are not the ones who should decide [what to do to him]). [It is as though] you have become my enemies today. I know that I am the one who has now become the king of Israel, [so I say that] certainly no one [RHQ] in Israel should be executed today.” **23** Then the king

said to Shimei, "I solemnly promise that I will not execute you." **24** Then Miphibosheth, Saul's grandson, came down [to the river] to greet the king. He had not washed his feet or trimmed his beard or washed his clothes, from the time that the king left Jerusalem until the day that he returned. **25** When he arrived from Jerusalem to greet the king, the king said to him, "Mephibosheth, why did you not go with me?" **26** He replied, "Your Majesty, [you know that] I am crippled. [When I heard that you were leaving Jerusalem,] I said to my servant [Ziba], 'Put a saddle on my donkey in order that I can ride on it and go with the king.' But he deceived me [and left without me]. **27** And he lied to you about me. But, Your Majesty, you are [as wise] as God's angel. So do whatever seems right to you. **28** All of my grandfather's family expected/deserved that we would be executed. But [you did not execute me;] you allowed me to eat food with you at your table! So I certainly do not have [RHQ] the right to request you for anything more." **29** The king replied, "You certainly do not need to say any more. I have decided that you and Ziba will divide [equally] the land [that belonged to your grandfather Saul]." **30** Mephibosheth replied to the king, "Your Majesty, [I am content that] you have returned safely. So allow him to take all the land." **31** Barzillai, the man from [the] Gilead [region], had come down to the Jordan [River] from [his town of] Rogelim, to escort the king across the river. **32** Barzillai was a very old man, 80 years old. He was a very wealthy man, and he had provided food for the king [and his soldiers] while they were at Mahanaim. **33** The king said to Barzillai, "Come with me to Jerusalem, and I will take care of you." **34** But Barzillai replied, "I certainly do not have [RHQ] many more years to live. So (why should I go with you to Jerusalem?/there is certainly no reason for me to go with you to Jerusalem.) [RHQ] **35** I am now 80 years old. I do not [RHQ] know what is enjoyable and what is not enjoyable. I cannot [RHQ] enjoy what I eat and what I drink. I cannot [RHQ] hear the voices of men and women as they sing. So (why should I be another burden to you?/I do not want to be another burden to you.) [RHQ] **36** I will cross the Jordan [River] with you and go a little further, and that will be all the reward that I need [for helping you]. **37** Then please allow me to return to my home, because that is where I want to die, near my parents' grave. But here is [my son] Chimham. Your Majesty, allow him to go with you [and serve you], and do for him whatever seems good to you!" **38** The king replied, "Okay, he will cross [the river] with me, and I will do for him whatever seems good to you. And I will do for you whatever you want me to do." **39** Then King David and all the others crossed the Jordan [River]. He kissed Barzillai and [asked God to] bless him. Then Barzillai returned to his home. **40** [After they crossed the river,] Chimham went with the king, and all the army of Judah and half the army of the other Israeli tribes escorted/accompanied the king to Gilgal. **41** Then all the soldiers from the other Israeli tribes came to the king and said, "(Why is it that our relatives, the men from Judah, took you away from us and wanted to be the only ones to escort you and your family across the river, along with all your men?/It is not right that our relatives, the men from Judah, took you away from us and wanted to be the only ones to escort you and your family across the river, along with all your men.) [RHQ] [Why did you not request us to do that]?" [RHQ] **42** The soldiers from Judah replied, "We did it because the king is from Judah. So (why are you angry about that?/you should not be angry about that.) [RHQ] The king has never paid for our food, and he has never given us any gifts." **43** The men of the other Israeli tribes replied, "[There are ten tribes in Israel, and only one in Judah. So] it is ten times more right for us to say that David [is our king] than it is for you to say that. So why are you despising us [RHQ]? We were certainly [RHQ] the first ones to talk about bringing David back [to Jerusalem to be our king again]." But the men of Judah spoke more harshly than the men from the other tribes of Israel did.

20 There was a man there [at Gilgal] named Sheba. He was a man who always caused trouble. He was from the tribe of Benjamin and was the son of Bichri. He blew a trumpet and called out, "We have nothing to do with [DOU] David, that son of Jesse! So, men of Israel, let's go to our homes!" **2** So all the men from the other Israeli tribes deserted David and went with Sheba, but the men of Judah stayed with David. They wanted him to be their king, and went with him from near the Jordan [River] up to Jerusalem. **3** When David arrived at the palace in Jerusalem, he took the ten slave wives whom he had left there to take care of the palace and put them in another house. He put a guard at that house, and he provided for them what they needed, but he never had sexual relations [EUP] with them again. So they remained shut up in their house until they died. It was as though they were widows. **4** [One day] the king said to Amasa, "Summon the soldiers of Judah to come here within three days, and you be here also." **5** So Amasa went to summon them, but he did not return within the time that David told him to. **6** So David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba will harm us more than Absalom did. So you take my soldiers and pursue him. If you do not do that, he and his soldiers may occupy/capture some of the (fortified towns/towns that have walls around them), and escape from us. [IDM]" **7** So Abishai [and Joab] and the king's bodyguards and the other soldiers left Jerusalem, to pursue Sheba. **8** When they

arrived at the huge rock in [the] Gibeah [region], Amasa met them. Joab was wearing a soldier's uniform. He had a dagger/long knife fastened to his belt. When he came close [to Amasa, he allowed] the dagger [to] fall on the ground. **9** Joab said to Amasa, "Are things going well with you, my friend?" Then Joab grabbed Amasa's beard with his right hand, in order to kiss him. **10** But Amasa did not see that Joab was holding [another] dagger in his [other] hand. And Joab stabbed it into Amasa's belly, and his insides spilled out onto the ground. Amasa died [immediately]; Joab did not need to stab him again. Then Joab and his brother Abishai continued to pursue Sheba. **11** One of Joab's soldiers stood alongside Amasa's body and called out, "Everyone who wants Joab [to be our commander] and who wants David [to be our king], go with Joab!" **12** Amasa's body was lying on the road. It was covered with blood. The soldier of Joab [who had called out] saw that many others of Joab's soldiers were stopping [to see it], so he dragged Amasa's body off the road into a field, and threw a cloth/blanket over the body. **13** After the body had been taken off the road, all the soldiers went with Joab to pursue Sheba. **14** Sheba went through all the tribes of Israel, and arrived at Abel-Beth-Maacah [town in the northern part of Israel]. There, all the members of [his father] Bichri's clan gathered, and went with Sheba into the town. **15** The soldiers who were with Joab [found out that Sheba had gone there, so they] went there and surrounded the town. They built a dirt ramp up against the town wall. They also pounded against the wall [with heavy poles], to cause it to collapse. **16** Then a wise woman who was in that town [stood on the top of the wall and] shouted down, "Listen to me! Tell Joab to come here, because I want to talk to him!" **17** So [after they told Joab], he came there, and the woman said, "Are you Joab?" He replied, "Yes, I am." She said to him, "Listen to what I say." He replied, "I am listening." **18** She said, "Long ago people used to say, 'Go to Abel [town] to get good advice about your problems.' And that is what people did. **19** We are peaceful and loyal Israelis. Our people here are important and respected [IDM]. So (why are you trying to destroy a town that belongs to Yahweh?/you should not be trying to destroy a town that belongs to Yahweh.)" [RHQ] **20** Job replied, "I would certainly never want to ruin or destroy your town! **21** That is not what we want to do. But Bichri's son Sheba, a man from the hilly area in the tribe of Ephraim, is rebelling against King David. Put this man into our hands, and then we will (go away from/not attack) this town." The woman replied to Joab, "Okay, what we will do is, we will [cut off] his head [and] throw it over the wall to you." **22** Then this wise woman went to the elders of the town and told them what she had said to Joab. So they cut off Sheba's head and threw it over the wall to Joab. Then Joab blew his trumpet [to signal that the battle was ended], and all his soldiers left the town and returned to their homes. And Joab returned to Jerusalem and told the king [what had happened]. **23** Joab was the commander of the entire Israeli army. Jehoiada's son Benaiah was the commander of David's bodyguards; **24** Adoram supervised the men who were forced to work [for the king]; Ahilud's son Jehoshaphat was the man who reported [to the people everything that David decided]; **25** Sheva was the official secretary; Zadok and Abiathar were the priests; **26** and Ira from Jair [town] was also one of David's priests.

21 During the time that David [ruled], there was a famine [in Israel] for three years. David prayed to Yahweh about it. And Yahweh said, "[In order for the famine to end], Saul's family needs to be punished [MTY] because Saul killed many people from Gibeon [city]." **2** The people of Gibeon were not Israelis; they were a small group of the Amor people-group whom the Israelis had solemnly promised to protect. But Saul had tried to kill all of them because he (was very zealous/wanted very much) to enable the people of Judah and Israel [to be the only ones living in that land]. So the king summoned the leaders of Gibeon **3** and said to them, "What shall I do for you? How can I make amends/up for what was done to your people, in order that you will bless us who belong to Yahweh?" **4** They replied, "You cannot settle our quarrel with Saul and his family by giving us silver or gold. And we do not have the right to kill any Israelis." So David asked, "Then/So what do you say that I should do for you?" **5** They replied, "Saul [wanted to] get rid of us. He wanted to annihilate/kill all of us, in order that none of us would live anywhere in Israel. **6** Hand over to us seven of Saul's descendants. We will hang them where Yahweh is worshiped in Gibeon, our town, the town where Saul, whom Yahweh previously chose to be king, lived." The king replied, "Okay, I will hand them over to you." **7** The king did not hand over to them Saul's grandson Mephibosheth, because of what he and [Mephibosheth's father] Jonathan had solemnly promised to each other. **8** Instead, he took Armoni and another man named Mephibosheth, the two sons that Saul's slave wife Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, had given birth to, and the five sons that Saul's daughter Merab had given birth to. Merab's husband was Adriel, the son of a man named Barzillai from Meholah [town]. **9** David handed those men over to the men from Gibeon. Then they hanged those seven men on a hill where they worshiped Yahweh. They were all killed during the time of the year that the people started to harvest the barley. **10** Then Rizpah took coarse cloth made from goats' hair, and spread it on the rock

[where the corpses lay]. She stayed there from the time that people started to harvest the barley until the rains started. She did not allow any birds to come near the corpses during the day, and she did not allow any animals to come near during the night. 11 When someone told David what Rizpah had done, 12 he went with some of his servants to Jabesh in [the] Gilead [region] and got the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan. The people of Jabesh had stolen their bones from the (plaza/public square) in Beth-Shan [city], where the men from Philistia had hanged them previously, on the day that they had killed Saul and Jonathan on Gilboa [Mountain]. 13 David and his men took the bones of Saul and Jonathan, and they also took the bones of the seven men [from Gibeon] whom the men from Philistia had hanged. 14 They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan in Zela [town] in the land of [the tribe of] Benjamin. Doing all that the king commanded, they buried their bones in the tomb where Saul's father Kish [was buried]. After that, [because] God [saw that Saul's family had been punished to pay for Saul's murder of many people from Gibeon, he] answered the Israelis' prayers for their land, and caused the famine to end. 15 The army of Philistia again started to fight against the army of Israel. And David and his soldiers went to fight the Philistines. During the battle, David became weary. 16 One of the Philistia men thought that he could kill David. His name was Ishbi-Benob. He was a descendant of [a group of] giants. He carried a bronze spear that weighed about (7-1/2 pounds/3-1/2 kg.), and he also had a new sword. 17 But Abishai came to help David, and attacked the giant and killed him. Then David's soldiers forced him to promise that he would not go with them into a battle again. They said to him, "[If you die, and none of your descendants become king, that would be like] [MET] extinguishing the last light in Israel." 18 Some time after that, there was a battle with the army of Philistia near Gob [village]. During the battle, Sibbecai, from [the] Hushah [clan], killed Saph, one of the descendants of the Rapha giants. 19 [Later] there was another battle with the army of Philistia at Gob. During that battle, Elhanan, the son of Jaare-Oregim from Bethlehem, killed [the brother of] Goliath from Gath [city]; Goliath's spear shaft/handle was (very thick, like the bar on a weaver's loom/over two inches thick). 20 Later there was another battle near Gath. There was a (huge man/giant) there who liked to fight [in battles]. He had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. He was descended from [the] Rapha [giants]. 21 But when he (made fun of/ridiculed) the men in the Israeli [army], Jonathan, the son of David's [older] brother Shimeah, killed him. 22 Those four men were some of the descendants of the Rapha giants who had lived in Gath, who were killed [MTY] by David and his soldiers.

22 After Yahweh had rescued David from Saul and his other enemies, David sang a song to Yahweh. 2 [This is what] he sang: Yahweh, you are like a [huge overhanging] rock [under which I can hide] [MET]; you are like my fortress, and you rescue me. 3 Yahweh, you protect me; you are like a shield; you are the powerful one [MET] who saves me; you are like a place where I (find refuge/am safe). You save me from those who act violently toward me. 4 I call out to you, Yahweh; you deserve to be praised, and you rescue me from my enemies. 5 "almost died [PRS]; it was like [MET] a huge wave had crashed over me, and almost destroyed me like a flood. 6 I thought that I would die; it was as though death wrapped ropes around me; it was as though I was in a trap where I would surely die. [PRS, MET] **(Sheol h7585)** 7 But when I was (very distressed/in great trouble), I called out to you, Yahweh; I cried out to you, my God. And from your temple you heard me; you listened when I called to you to help me. 8 "Then [it was as though] the earth quaked and shook; [it was as though] the foundations that ([held up/supported]) the sky trembled, because you were angry. 9 [It was as though] smoke poured out of your nostrils and burning coals and fire that burns everything came out of your mouth. 10 You tore open the sky and came down; there was a thick dark [cloud] under your feet. 11 You rode [through the sky] on a winged creature; the wind enabled you to travel [swiftly] [MET], like a bird. 12 The darkness surrounded you, like a blanket; thick clouds that were full of water also surrounded you. 13 Out of the lightning in front of you fire from burning coals flamed. 14 Then, Yahweh, you spoke like thunder from the sky; it was your voice, God, you who are greater than all other gods, that was heard. 15 When you sent flashes of lightning, [it was as though] [MET] you shot your arrows and scattered your enemies. 16 Then the bottom of the ocean was uncovered; the foundations of the world could be seen when you rebuked [your enemies] with a snort from your nostrils. 17 "Yahweh, you reached down from heaven and lifted me up; you pulled me up from the deep water. 18 You rescued me from my strong enemies, from those who hated me; [I could not defeat them because] they were very strong. 19 They attacked me when I was experiencing troubles/difficulties, but Yahweh, you protected me. 20 You brought me to a place where I was safe; you rescued me because you were pleased with me. 21 "Yahweh, you rewarded me because I do what is right; you did good things for me because I (was innocent/had not done things that are wrong). 22 Yahweh, I have obeyed your laws; I have not turned away from you, my God. 23 All of your regulations

were in my mind, and I did not turn away from [obeying] all your statutes. **24** You know that I have not done anything that is evil; I have kept myself from doing things for which I should be punished. **25** So you have rewarded me in return for my doing what is right, because [you know that] I (am innocent of doing/have not done) wrong things. **26** "Yahweh, you are faithful/loyal to those who always trust in you; you always do what is good to those whose behavior is always good. **27** You act sincerely toward those whose inner beings are pure, but you are hostile to those who are perverse/wicked. **28** You rescue those who are humble, but you watch [MTY] those who are proud and humiliate them. **29** Yahweh, you are [like] [MET] a lamp that causes it to become light when I am in the dark. **30** With your strength/help I can run through a line of enemy soldiers and I can climb over the wall [that surrounds their city]. **31** "My God whom I worship, everything that you do is perfect; you always do what you promise that you will do. You are like a shield [MET] to all those who request you to protect them. **32** Yahweh, you are [RHQ] the only one who is God; only you are like a huge rock [MET] [under which we are protected/safe]. **33** God, you [whom I worship] are a strong refuge for me; you keep me safe on the roads that I [walk on]. **34** [When I walk] in the mountains, you enable me to walk safely, without stumbling [MET] like a deer runs. **35** You teach me [how to fight] in a battle in order that I can shoot arrows well from a very strong bow. **36** [It is as though] [MET] you have given me a shield by which you have saved/rescued me, and you have answered my prayers and caused me to become famous/great. **37** You have not allowed [my enemies] to capture me [IDM], and I have not fallen down [during battles]. **38** "pursued my enemies and defeated them; I did not stop [fighting them] until they were all killed. **39** I struck them down; I stabbed them with my sword; they fell down at my feet and did not stand up again. **40** You have given me strength for fighting battles and caused those who were attacking me to fall down, and I trampled on them. **41** You caused my enemies to turn and run away from me; I destroyed those who hated me. **42** They (looked for/wanted) someone to rescue them, but no one did. They cried out to you, Yahweh, [for help,] but you did not answer them. **43** I crushed them, and as a result they became like [SIM] tiny particles of dust. I trampled them, and they became like [SIM] mud in the streets. **44** "You rescued me from those who tried to rebel [against me], and you appointed me to rule many nations; people whom I did not know previously are now (under my authority/my slaves). **45** Foreigners humbly bowed down in front of me; as soon as they heard about me, they obeyed me. **46** They became afraid, and they came to me, trembling, from the places where they were hiding. **47** "Yahweh, you are alive! I praise you! You are like [MET] a [huge overhanging] rock under which I am safe/protected! You are the one who rescues me [MET]. Everyone should exalt/honor/praise you. **48** You enable me to conquer my enemies; you cause people of [other] nations to be (under my authority/my slaves). **49** You delivered me from my enemies; you caused me to be honored more than they were; you rescued me from men who [always] acted violently. **50** Because of all that, I exalt you among many people-groups and I sing to praise you. **51** You enable me, whom you appointed to be king, to powerfully conquer [my enemies]; you faithfully love me, David, and you will love my descendants forever.

23 David, the son of Jesse, was a man whom [God caused to] become great. He was appointed to become king by the God whom Jacob [worshiped]. He wrote beautiful songs for the Israeli people. This is the last song that he wrote: **2** "The Spirit of Yahweh tells me what to say; the message that I speak [MTY] comes from him. **3** God, the one whom we Israeli [people worship], has spoken; the one who protects us Israeli people said to me, 'Kings who rule people justly have an awesome respect for me, God. **4** They are like the sun that shines at dawn and causes the grass to [sprout/sparkle] after the rain ends.' **5** And truly, that is how God will surely bless my family [RHQ] because he made an agreement with me that will endure forever, an agreement in which he promises that no part of it will ever be changed. He will surely cause me to prosper [RHQ], and he will always help me, and that is all that I desire. **6** But [he will get rid of] godless/evil people like [SIM] people throw away thorns that [injure people if they try to] pick them up with their hands. **7** Someone [who wants to get rid of thornbushes] does not grab them; he uses an iron [shovel] or a spear [to dig them out] and then he burns them completely. **8** These are the names of David's three greatest warriors. The first was Esh-Baal, [whose other name was Jashobeam], from the Hachmon clan (OR, the son of Hachmon). He was the leader of the three men. One time he fought against 800 enemies and killed them all with his spear. **9** The second/next one of the three greatest warriors was Eleazar, who was the son of Dodo from the clan of Ahoh. One day he was with David when they defied/challenged the soldiers of Philistia who had gathered for the battle. The [other] Israeli soldiers retreated, **10** but Eleazar stood there and fought the soldiers of Philistia until his arm became very tired, with the result that [his hand cramped and] he could not stop gripping his sword. Yahweh won a great victory on that day. And afterwards the [other] Israeli soldiers returned [to where Eleazar was], and stripped off the [armor from the men whom he had] killed. **11**

The third one of the greatest warriors was Shammah, the son of Agee from [the clan/town of] Harar. One time the Philistia soldiers gathered at Lehi [town], where there was a field full of lentils/peas [that they wanted to steal]. The other Israeli soldiers ran away from the Philistia troops, **12** but Shammah stood there in the field and did not let the Philistia soldiers [steal the crops], and killed them. Yahweh won a great victory on that day. **13** Altogether there were 30 special warriors among David's soldiers. Once, when it was almost time to harvest [the crops], three of those 30 men went down to Adullam Cave, where David was [staying]. A group of men from the Philistia army had set up their tents in Rephaim Valley [near Jerusalem]. **14** David [and his soldiers] were in the cave [because it was safe there], and [another] group of Philistia soldiers was occupying Bethlehem. **15** [One day] David very much wanted [some water] to drink, and said "I wish that someone would bring me some water from the well near the gate at Bethlehem!" **16** So his three greatest warriors forced their way through the camp of Philistia soldiers and drew some water from the well, and brought it to David. But he would not drink it. Instead, he poured it out [on the ground] as an offering to Yahweh. **17** He said, "Yahweh, it would certainly not be right for me to drink this water! That would be like [RHQ] drinking the blood of these men who were willing/ready to die for me!" So he refused to drink it. That was one of the things that those three great warriors did. **18** Abishai, Joab's [younger] brother, was the leader of the 30 [greatest warriors]. [One day] he fought against 300 men and killed them all with his spear. As a result, he also became famous. **19** He was the most famous of the thirty greatest warriors, and he became their leader/commander, but he was not one of the three greatest warriors. **20** Jehoiada's son Benaiah, from Kabzeel [town], also did great deeds. He killed two of the best warriors from the Moab people-group. Also, he went down into a pit on a day when snow was falling, and killed a lion there. **21** He also killed a huge soldier from Egypt who carried a spear. Benaiah [had only] his club, but he attacked the giant with it. Then he snatched the spear from the man's hand and killed him with his own spear. **22** Those are [some of] the things that Benaiah did. As a result, he became famous, like the three greatest warriors were. **23** He was more honored than the other members of the group of thirty great warriors, but not as famous as the three greatest warriors. David appointed him to be the commander of his bodyguards. **24** [These are the names of the great warriors]: Asahel, the brother of Joab; Elhanan, the son of Dodo, from Bethlehem; **25** Shammah and Elika, from [the] Harod [clan]; **26** Helez, from Pelet [city]; Ira, the son of Ikkesh, from Tekoa [town]; **27** Abiezer, from Anathoth [city]; Mebunnai [whose other name was Sibbecai], from Hushah's [clan]; **28** Zalmon [whose other name was Ilai], from Ahoh's [clan]; Maharai, from Netophah [town]; **29** Heleb, the son of Baanah, also from Netophah [town]; Ittai, the son of Ribai, from Gibeah [town] in [the land that belonged to] the tribe of Benjamin; **30** Benaiah, from Pirathon [town]; Hiddai, from the valleys near Gaash [Mountain]; **31** Abi-Albon, from the clan of Arabah; Azmaveth, from Bahurim [town]; **32** Eliahba, from Shaalbon [town]; The sons of Jashen; Jonathan; **33** Shammah, from Harar [town/clan]; Ahiam the son of Sharar, from Harar [town/clan]; **34** Eliphelet, the son of Ahasbai, from Maacah [town]; Eliam, the son of Ahithophel, from Gilo [town]; **35** Hezro, from Carmel [city]; Paarai, from Arba [city]; **36** Igal, the son of Nathan, from Zobah [city]; Bani, from the tribe of Gad; **37** Zelek, from the Ammon people-group; Naharai, the man who carried Joab's weapons, from Beeroth [town]; **38** Ira and Gareb, from Jattir [town]; **39** Uriah, [Bathsheba's husband], from the Heth people-group. Altogether, there were 37 famous soldiers, [but some of them had died and their names were not included].

24 Yahweh was angry with the Israeli people again, so he incited David to cause trouble for them. He said to David, "Send [some men] to count the people of Israel and Judah." **2** So the king said to Joab, the commander of his army, "Go [with your officers] through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan [city in the far north] to Beersheba [town in the far south], and count the people, in order that I may know how many people [there are who are able to be soldiers in the army]." **3** But Joab replied to the king, "Your Majesty, I wish/desire that Yahweh our God will cause there to be 100 times as many people [in Israel] as there are now, and I wish/desire that you would see that happen [before you die]. But why do you want us to do this?" **4** But the king commanded Joab and his officers to do it. So they left the king and went out to count the people of Israel. **5** They crossed the Jordan [River] and set up their tents south of Aroer [town], in the middle of the valley, in the territory [that was given to the tribe] of Gad. From there they went [north] to Jazer [city] **6** Then they went [north] to [the] Gilead [region] and to Kadesh [city], in the land where the Heth people-group lived. Then they went to Dan [city in the far north of Israel], and then further west, to Sidon [city near the Mediterranean Sea]. **7** Then they went [south] to Tyre, a city with high walls around it, and to all the cities where the Hiv and Canaan people-groups live. Then they went [east] to Beersheba, in the southern part of Judah. **8** After nine months and 20 days, when they had finished going throughout the land [and counting the people], they returned

to Jerusalem. **9** They reported to the king the number of people that they had counted. There were 800,000 men in Israel and 500,000 men in Judah who were able to become soldiers in the army [MTY]. **10** But after David's men had counted the people, David regretted [IDM] that he had told them to do that. [One night] he said to Yahweh, "I have committed a very big sin. Please forgive me, because what I have done is very foolish." **11** When David got up the next morning, Yahweh gave a message to the prophet Gad. He said to him, **12** "Go and tell this to David: 'I am allowing you to choose one of three things [to punish you]. I will do whichever one you choose.'" **13** So Gad went to David and told him [what Yahweh had said]. He said to David, "You can choose whether there will be three years of famine in your land, or three months of your [army] running away from your enemies, or three days when there will be a (plague/very severe illness) in your land. You think about it and choose [which one you want, and tell me], and I will return to Yahweh and tell him what your answer is." **14** David said to Gad, "All those are very terrible things for me to choose between! But allow Yahweh to punish [MTY] me, because he is very merciful. Do not allow humans to punish me, [because they will not be merciful]." **15** So Yahweh sent a plague on the Israeli people. It started that morning and did not stop until the time that he had chosen/set. All over the land, from Dan to Beersheba, there were 70,000 Israelis who died [because of the plague]. **16** When [Yahweh's] angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy [the people by this plague], Yahweh changed his mind about punishing [any more] people. He said to the angel who was killing them [with the plague], "Stop what you are doing [IDM]! That is enough!" [When he said that,] the angel was standing at the ground where Araunah, from the Jebus people-group, threshed grain. **17** When David saw the angel who was causing the people to become sick and die, he said to Yahweh, "Truly, I am the one who has committed the sin. I have done a very wicked thing, but these people are [as innocent as] sheep [MET]. They have certainly not [RHQ] done anything [that is wrong]. So you should punish [IDM] me and my family, [not these people]!" **18** That day Gad came to David and said to him, "Go up to the place where Araunah threshes grain, and build an altar to [worship] Yahweh there." **19** So David did what Gad told him to do, which was what Yahweh had commanded, [and he went up there]. **20** When Araunah looked down and saw the king and his officials coming toward him, he prostrated himself on the ground in front of the king, with his face touching the ground. **21** Araunah said, "Your Majesty, why have you come to me?" David replied, "[I have come] to buy this ground where you thresh grain, in order to build an altar to Yahweh [and offer sacrifices on it], in order that he will stop the plague." **22** Araunah replied to David, "Your Majesty, offer to Yahweh whatever you wish/want. Here, take my oxen to use for the offering that will be completely burned on the altar. And here, take their yokes and the boards [that I use] for the threshing, [and use them] for the wood that you will burn. **23** I, Araunah, am giving all this to you, the king." Then he said, "I desire/hope that Yahweh our God will accept your offering." **24** But the king said to Araunah, "No, [I will not take these things as a gift.] I will pay you for it. I will not take sacrifices that have cost me nothing, and offer them to Yahweh to be completely burned on the altar." So he paid 50 pieces of silver to Araunah for the oxen and the ground. **25** Then David built an altar to Yahweh, and he offered [the oxen] to be completely burned on the altar, and he also offered sacrifices to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. Then, Yahweh answered David's prayers, and he caused the plague in Israel to end.

1 Kings

1 When King David was very old [IDM, DOU], even though his servants put many blankets on top of him, he was unable to become warm. **2** So they said to him, "Your Majesty, allow us to search for a young virgin who can stay with you and take care of you. She can sleep close to you and enable you to become warm." **3** [The king gave them permission,] so they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful young woman. They found a woman named Abishag, from Shunem [town], and brought her to the king. **4** She was [truly] very beautiful. She took care of [DOU] the king, but the king did not have sexual relations with her. **5** [After Absalom died], David's oldest surviving son was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. He was a very handsome/good-looking man. But David had never rebuked him about anything he did. [After Absalom died, Adonijah thought that he would become king]. So he started to boast, saying "I will become king [now]." Then he provided for himself some chariots, and men to drive them, and horses [to pull them], and 50 men to run [as his bodyguards] in front of those chariots [wherever he went]. **7** One day he conferred with Joab, [David's army commander], and Abiathar the priest, and they promised/agreed to help/support Adonijah. **8** But Zadok, who was also a priest, Benaiah [who had supervised David's bodyguards], Nathan the prophet, Shimei and Rei, and David's most capable soldiers refused to help/support Adonijah. **9** One day Adonijah went to Snake Rock near En-Rogel [Spring, which is near Jerusalem], to sacrifice some sheep and oxen and fattened cattle. He invited most of his brothers, King David's other sons, to come. He also invited all of the king's officials from Judah to come to the celebration. **10** But he did not invite Nathan or Benaiah or the king's most capable soldiers or his [younger/half]-brother Solomon. **11** Nathan [found out what they were doing, so he went to] Solomon's mother Bathsheba [and] asked her, "Have you not heard that Haggith's son Adonijah is declared himself to be the king? And King David does not know about it! **12** So if you want to save yourself and your son Solomon from being killed, allow me to tell you what you should do. **13** Go immediately to King David. Say to him, 'Your Majesty, you solemnly promised me [RHQ] that my son Solomon would become the king after you [die], and that he would sit on your throne [and rule]. So why is it that Adonijah [has said that he] is now the king?' **14** Then, while you are still talking to the king, I will come in and tell him that what you are saying to him [about Adonijah] is true." **15** So Bathsheba went to see the king in his bedroom. He was very old, and Abishag was taking care of him. **16** Bathsheba bowed very low in front of the king, and the king asked her, "What do you want?" **17** She replied, "Your Majesty, you solemnly promised me, knowing that Yahweh our God [was listening] [IDM], that my son Solomon would become king after you [die], and that he would sit on your throne [and rule]. **18** But now, believe it or not, Adonijah has become king, and you do not know anything about it. **19** He has sacrificed a lot of oxen and fattened cattle and sheep, and he has invited all of your other sons to the celebration. He has also invited Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of your army, but he did not invite your son Solomon. **20** Your Majesty, all the people [SYN] of Israel are expecting you to tell them who is the one who will become king after you are no longer the king. **21** If you do not do that, what will happen is that after you die [EUP] people will consider that my son Solomon and I are rebelling, [and they will execute us because we did not help Adonijah to become king]." **22** While she was still talking to the king, Nathan came [to the palace]. **23** The king's servants/advisors told David, "Nathan the prophet has come." So [Bathsheba left, and] Nathan went into where the king was and knelt down, with his face on the ground. **24** Then Nathan said, "Your Majesty, have you declared that Adonijah will become king after you are no longer the king? **25** [I say that] because today he has gone down [to En-Rogel Spring] and has sacrificed a lot of oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep. And he has invited all of your other sons, Joab the army commander, and Abiathar the priest. They are all eating and drinking with him and saying 'We hope/desire that King Adonijah will live a long time!' **26** But he did not invite me or Zadok the priest or Benaiah or Solomon. **27** Did you, as the king, say that they should do this without telling your other officials who you want to become king [MTY] after you are no longer the king?" **28** Then [after Nathan left the room,] King David said [to one of his servants], "Tell Bathsheba to come in here again." So [he went and told her, and] she came in and stood in front of the king. **29** Then the king said, "Yahweh has rescued me from all my troubles. I promised you, with Yahweh the God whom we Israelis [worship] listening, that your son Solomon would be king after I am no longer the king. Today, as surely as Yahweh lives, [I solemnly declare that] I will do what I promised." **31** Bathsheba knelt down with her face on the ground and said, "Your Majesty, I hope/desire that you will live for many more years [HYP]!" **32** Then King David said, "Summon Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah." [So someone went and summoned them.] When they came in, **33** he said to them, "Put my son Solomon on my mule. Take him with my officials down to Gihon [Spring]. **34** There, you two, Zadok and Nathan, should anoint him, [with olive oil to appoint him

to be] the king of Israel. Then you must blow trumpets, and [all the people there must] shout, 'We hope/desire that King Solomon will live for many years!' **35** Then follow him back here, and he will come and sit on my throne. He will then become king instead of me. I have appointed him to be the ruler of [all the people of] Israel and of Judah." **36** Benaiah replied, "We will do that! We hope/wish that Yahweh, who is your God [and our God], will cause it to happen! **37** King David, Yahweh has helped you; we hope/wish that he will also help Solomon and enable him to become a greater king than you have been." **38** So Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, and the two groups of men who were the king's bodyguards went and put Solomon on King David's mule and escorted him down to Gihon [Spring]. **39** There Zadok took the container of [olive] oil from the Sacred Tent and (anointed/poured some oil on) Solomon. Then the trumpets were blown, and all the people shouted, "We hope/wish that King Solomon will live for many years!" **40** Then all the people followed him back up [to the city], shouting joyfully and playing flutes. They shouted very loudly, with the result that the ground shook. **41** When Adonijah and all (his guests/the people whom he had invited) were finishing eating at their celebration, they heard the noise. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpets, he asked, "What is causing all that noise in the city?" **42** While he was still speaking, Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest, arrived. Adonijah said, "Come in! You are a man whom we can trust, so you must be bringing us good news!" **43** Jonathan replied, "No, [I do not have good news]! His Majesty, King David, has caused Solomon to be the king! **44** He sent Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, and his own group of bodyguards to go with Solomon. They put Solomon on King David's mule. **45** They [went down to] Gihon [Spring], and there Zadok and Nathan anointed him to become the king. Now they have returned from there to the city, shouting joyfully. That is why there is that great/loud noise that you are hearing. **46** So Solomon is now our king [MTY]. **47** Furthermore, the palace officials came to His Majesty, King David, to tell him that they approved of what he had done. They said, 'We wish/hope that our God will enable Solomon [MTY] to become more famous than you have been and enable him to be a better king than you have been.' When they said that, the king, lying on his bed, bowed his head to worship [Yahweh]. **48** Then he said, 'I praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], because he has allowed one of my sons to become the king today, and has permitted me to see it happen.'" **49** Then all of Adonijah's guests (trembled/were afraid), so they all immediately got up and left and scattered. **50** Adonijah was afraid of what Solomon [would do], so he went [to the Sacred Tent] and grabbed the projections at the corners of the altar, [because he knew that no one would kill him there]. **51** But someone told Solomon, "Hey/Listen, Adonijah is afraid of you, so he [has gone to the Sacred Tent and] is holding on to the corners of the altar. He is saying, '[Before I leave,] I want King Solomon to solemnly promise that he will not command that I be executed.'" **52** Solomon replied, "If he proves that he is loyal to me, I will not harm him at all [IDM]. But if he does anything that is wrong, he will be executed." **53** So King Solomon sent [some men to Adonijah], and they brought him back from the altar. He came to Solomon and bowed down in front of him. Then Solomon said to him, "Go home."

2 When David [knew that he] was about to die, he gave these final instructions to his son Solomon: **2** "I am about to die [EUP], like everyone else on earth does. Be courageous and conduct yourself as an adult should. **3** Do what Yahweh our God tells you to do. Conduct yourself as he wants you to do. Obey all of his laws and commands and precepts and instructions that are written in the laws that Moses [gave us]. Do this in order that you will prosper in all that you do and wherever you go. **4** If you continually do that, Yahweh will do what he promised me: He said, 'If your descendants do what I tell them to do, and faithfully obey my commands with all their inner beings, they will always be [LIT] the ones who will rule [MTY] Israel.' **5** "There is something else [that I want you to do]. You know what Joab did to me. He killed my two army commanders, Abner and Amasa. He murdered them violently [MTY] during a time of peace, pretending that it was a time of war. Those two men (were innocent/had not done what was wrong). But Joab [killed them and] their blood to stain his belt and his sandals. **6** Because you are wise, do to him what you think is best [for you to do], but do not allow him to become old [MTY] and then die [IDM] peacefully. **(Sheol h7585)** **7** "But be kind to the sons of Barzillai, the man from [the] Gilead [region], and be sure that they always have enough food to eat [MTY]. Do that because Barzillai helped me when I was running away from your older brother Absalom. **8** Also, [you remember] Gera's son Shimei from Bahurim [town] in the area where the descendants of Benjamin live. [You know what he did to me]. He cursed me terribly on the day I [left Jerusalem and] went to Mahanaim [town]. But when he later came down to see me at the Jordan [River], I solemnly promised, while Yahweh listened [MTY], that I would not cause him to be executed. **9** But now you must [LIT] surely punish him. You are a wise man, so you will know what you should do to him. He is an old man [MTY], but be sure that he [loses/sheds] a lot of blood when you kill him [MTY]." **(Sheol h7585)** **10** Then David died [EUP] and was buried in [that part of Jerusalem

which was called] 'The City of David'. 11 David had been the king of Israel for 40 years: He ruled for seven years in Hebron and for 33 years in Jerusalem. 12 Solomon became the ruler/king [MTY] to take the place of his father David and took control of all of the kingdom. 13 [One day] Adonijah came to Solomon's mother Bathsheba. She said to him, "Have you come because you want things to go well?" He replied, "Yes." 14 But then he said, "I have something to ask you to do." She said, "Tell me [what you want me to do]." 15 He said, "You know that all the Israeli people expected me to be their king [because I am David's oldest surviving son]. But that did not happen. Instead, my [younger] brother became king, because that is what Yahweh wanted. 16 Now I have one thing that I ask you to do. Please do not refuse to do it." She replied, "Tell me [what you want me to do]." 17 He said, "Please ask King Solomon to give to me Abishag, the woman from Shunem [town], to be my wife. [I am sure that] he will not refuse." 18 Bathsheba replied, "Okay, I will speak to the king for you." 19 So Bathsheba went to King Solomon, to tell him what Adonijah wanted. The king got up [from his throne] and went to greet her and bowed down to her. Then he sat on his throne again and asked someone to bring a chair for her. So she sat down at the king's right side. 20 Then she said, "I have one small thing which I want you to do; please do not say that you will not do it." The king replied, "Mother, what do you want? I will not refuse you." 21 She said, "Allow Abishag to be given to your [older] brother Adonijah to be his wife." 22 The king replied [angrily], "What? Are you requesting me to give Abishag to Adonijah? [Does he want me] to allow him to rule the kingdom, too? Because he is my older brother, [does he think that he should be the king]? Does he think that Abiathar should be the priest [instead of Zadok], and that Joab [should be the army commander instead of Benaiah] because they supported him [when he tried to become the king]?" 23 Then Solomon solemnly promised, requesting Yahweh to listen, "I wish God would strike me and kill me if I do not cause Adonijah to be executed for requesting this! 24 Yahweh has appointed me to be the king and placed me here to rule [MTY] as my father David did. He has promised that my descendants [MTY] will be the kings of Israel. So just as surely as Yahweh lives, I solemnly promise that Adonijah will be executed today!" 25 So King Solomon gave orders to Benaiah to [go and] kill Adonijah, and Benaiah did that. 26 Then Solomon said to Abiathar the priest, "Go to Anathoth [town], to your land there. You deserve to be killed, but I will not execute you now, because you were the one who [supervised the men who] carried Yahweh's Sacred Chest for David my father, and you endured all the troubles that my father endured." 27 So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being the priest of Yahweh. By doing that he caused to happen what Yahweh had said [many years previously] at Shiloh, [that some day he would get rid] of the descendants [MTY] of Eli. 28 Joab had not supported Absalom [when he tried to become the king], but he had supported Adonijah. So when Joab heard what had happened, he ran to the Sacred Tent, and he grasped the projections on the corners of the altar, [because he knew that no one would kill him there]. 29 When someone told Solomon that Joab had run to the Sacred Tent and was standing alongside the altar, Solomon told Benaiah, "Go and execute Joab." 30 So Benaiah went to the Sacred Tent and said to Joab, "The king commands you to come out!" But Joab replied, "No, I will die here." So Benaiah went back to the king and reported [what he had said to Joab, and] what Joab had replied. 31 The king replied to him, "Do what he has requested. Kill him and bury his body. If you do that, my descendants [MTY] and I will no longer be punished for what Joab did when he killed [MTY] two men who (were innocent/had not done anything that is wrong). 32 But Yahweh will punish [MTY] Joab for attacking and killing Abner, the commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa, the commander of the army of Judah, two men who were more righteous and better [DOU] men than he is. My father David did not even know that Joab [was planning to murder them]. 33 Joab and his descendants will be punished [IDM] forever for his murdering Abner and Amasa. But things will forever go well for David's descendants [MTY] who rule [MTY] as King David did." 34 So Benaiah went [into the Sacred Tent] and killed Joab. Joab was buried on his property in the desert [part of Judah]. 35 Then the king appointed Benaiah to be the commander of the army instead of Joab, and he appointed Zadok to be the priest instead of Abiathar. 36 Then the king sent [a messenger] to summon Shimei, and the king said to him, "Build a house for yourself here in Jerusalem. Remain there and do not leave the city to go anywhere. 37 Be sure that the day that you leave Jerusalem and go across the Kidron Brook, you will be executed, and it will be (your own fault/what you deserve)." 38 Shimei replied, "Your Majesty, what you say is good. I will do what you have said." So Shimei remained in Jerusalem for several years. 39 But three years later, two of Shimei's slaves ran away. They went to stay with Maacah's son Achish, the king of Gath [city]. When someone told Shimei that they were in Gath, 40 he put a saddle on his donkey and [got on it and] went to Gath. He found his slaves staying with King Achish and brought them back home. 41 But someone told King Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had returned. 42 So the king sent [a soldier] to summon Shimei and said to him,

"I told you to solemnly promise, knowing that Yahweh [MTY] was listening, that you must not leave Jerusalem. I told you [RHQ], 'Be sure that if you ever leave Jerusalem, you will be executed.' And you replied [RHQ] to me, 'What you have said is good; I will do what you have said.' **43** So why did you not do what you solemnly promised to Yahweh? Why did you disobey what I commanded you?" **44** The king also said to Shimei, "You know all the evil things that you did to my father David. So Yahweh will now punish you for the evil things that you did. **45** But Yahweh will bless me, and he will enable David's descendants [MTY] to rule forever." **46** Then the king gave an order to Benaiah, and he went and killed Shimei. So Solomon was completely in control of the kingdom.

3 Solomon went to see the king of Egypt. Solomon [made an agreement with him to] marry his daughter. They also made an alliance/agreement [that their armies would not attack each other]. Then Solomon brought the king's daughter to live in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. [She lived there] until Solomon's workers had finished building his house and the temple of Yahweh and the wall around Jerusalem. **2** [At that time] the temple of Yahweh had not yet been built, so the Israeli people were still offering sacrifices at many other places of worship. **3** Solomon loved Yahweh, and he obeyed all the instructions that his father David had given him. But he also offered sacrifices and burned incense at various altars. **4** One day the king went to Gibeon [city] to offer a sacrifice there, because that was where the most famous/important altar was. In previous years he had offered hundreds of sacrifices on that altar. **5** That night, Yahweh appeared to him in a dream. He asked Solomon, "What would you like me to give to you?" **6** Solomon replied, "You always greatly and faithfully loved my father David, who served you [well]. You did that because he (was faithful to/faithfully obeyed) you and acted righteously and honestly toward you. And you have showed how greatly and faithfully you loved him by giving to him me, his son, and now I am ruling [MTY] as he did [before he died]. **7** "Now, Yahweh my God, you have appointed me to be the king like my father was. But I am [very young, like] a little child [MET]. I do not know how to lead/rule my people at all [IDM]. **8** I am here among the people whom you have chosen. They are a very large group of people; there are very, very many of them, with the result that no one can count them [DOU]. **9** So please enable me to think clearly, in order that I may rule your people [well]. Enable me to know what is good and what is evil. [If you do not do that,] I will never [RHQ] be able to rule this great group of people who belong to you." **10** Yahweh was very pleased that Solomon had requested that. **11** God said to him, "You did not request that you live for many years or that you become very rich or that you be able to kill all your enemies. Instead, you have requested that I enable you to be wise, in order that you will be able to know [and to do] what is right [while you govern these people]. **12** So, I will certainly do what you requested. I will enable you to be very wise [DOU]. The result will be that no one who has lived before you or who will live after you will be as [wise as] you are. **13** I will also give you things that you did not request: I will enable you to become very rich and honored, as long as you live. You will be richer and more honored than any other king. **14** If you conduct your life [IDM] as I want you to, and if you obey all my laws and commandments, as your father David did, I will enable you to live for many years." **15** Then Solomon awoke, and he realized that [God had spoken to him in] a dream. Then he went to Jerusalem and stood in front of [the Sacred Tent where] the Sacred Chest [was], and he offered many sacrifices that were completely burned [on the altar] and offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. Then he made a feast for all his officials. **16** One day two prostitutes came and stood in front of King Solomon. **17** One of them said, "Your Majesty, this woman and I live in the same house. I gave birth to a baby while she was there in the house. **18** Three days after my baby was born, this woman also gave birth to a baby. Only the two of us were in the house; there was no one else there. **19** "But one night this woman's baby died because she [accidentally] rolled on top of her baby [while sleeping and smothered it]. **20** So she got up at midnight and took my baby boy who was lying beside me while I was sleeping. She carried him to her bed and brought her dead baby and put it in my bed. **21** When I awoke the next morning and was ready to nurse my baby, I saw that it was dead. But when I looked at it closely in the morning light, I saw that it was not my baby!" **22** But the other woman said, "That is not true! The baby that is alive is mine, and the baby that is dead is yours!" Then the first woman said, "No, the dead baby is yours, and the one that is alive is mine!" And they continued to argue in front of the king. **23** Then the king said, "Both of you are saying, 'My baby is the one that is alive and the one that is dead is yours.'" **24** So he said to one of his servants, "Bring me a sword." So the servant brought a sword to the king. **25** Then the king said to the servant, "Cut the baby that is alive into two parts. Give one part to each of the women." **26** But the woman whose baby was alive loved her baby very much, so she said to the king, "No, Your Majesty! Do not allow him to kill the baby! Give her the child that is alive!" But the other woman said to the king, "No, cut it in half. Then it will not be her baby or my baby." **27** Then the king said to the servant, "Do not kill the baby.

Give the baby to the woman who said 'Do not cut the baby in half,' because she is truly the baby's mother." **28** All the Israeli people heard about what the king had decided, and they revered him. They realized that God had truly enabled him to be very wise, to judge people's matters fairly.

4 Solomon was the king who ruled all of Israel, **2** and these were his most important officials: Zadok's son Azariah was the priest. **3** Shisha's sons Elihoreph and Ahijah were the [official] secretaries. Ahilud's son Jehoshaphat was the one who announced to the people the king's decisions. **4** Benaiah was the commander of the army. Zadok and Abiathar were also priests. **5** Nathan's son Azariah was the administrator of the governors. Another of Nathan's sons, Zabud, was a priest and the king's chief advisor. **6** Ahishar supervised the servants who worked in the palace. Abda's son Adoniram supervised the men who were forced to do work [for the government]. **7** Solomon appointed twelve men, one to govern [each of the regions] in Israel. They also were required to provide food for the king and all the others who lived and worked in the palace. Each man was required to provide from his own region the food for one month each year. **8** Their names were: Ben-Hur, for the hilly area of the tribe of Ephraim. **9** Ben-Deker, for Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-Shemesh, and Elon-Bethhanan [cities]; **10** Ben-Hesed, for Arubboth and Socoh [towns] and the area near Hepher [town]; **11** Ben-Abinadab, who was married to Solomon's daughter Taphath, for all the Dor district; **12** Ahilud's son Baana, for Taanach and Megiddo [towns], and all the region near Zarethan [city], and from Beth-Shan [city] south of Jezreel as far as Abel-Meholah [town] and Jokmeam [city]; **13** Ben-Geber, for Ramoth [city] in [the] Gilead [region], and for the villages in Gilead that belonged to Jair, who was a descendant of Manasseh, and the Argob area in [the] Bashan [region]. There were 60 large towns in that region altogether, each town with a wall around it and bronze bars across the gates. **14** Iddo's son Ahinadab, for Mahanaim [city east of the Jordan River]; **15** Ahimaaz, who had married Solomon's daughter Basemath, for [the territory of the tribe of] Naphtali; **16** Hushai's son Baana, for [the territory of the tribe of] Asher and for Aloth [town]; **17** Paruah's son Jehoshaphat, for [the territory of the tribe of] Issachar; **18** Ela's son Shimei, for [the territory of the tribe of] Benjamin; **19** Uri's son Geber, for the Gilead region, the land that Sihon the king of the Amor people-group [formerly ruled], and the Bashan [area], which was the area that Og [formerly ruled]. [In addition to all those], Solomon appointed one governor for the [territory of the] tribe of Judah. **20** There were as many people in Judah and Israel as there are grains of sand [HYP] on the seashore. They [had plenty to] eat and drink and they were happy. **21** Solomon's kingdom extended from the Euphrates [River in the northeast] to the Philistia area [in the west] and to the border of Egypt [in the south]. The [conquered] people in those areas paid taxes and were under Solomon's control for the rest of his life. **22** [To feed the people in his palace and his guests] Solomon needed people to bring to him every day 150 bushels of fine flour and 300 bushels of wheat, **23** ten cattle that were kept in stalls/barns, 20 cattle that were kept in pastures, 100 sheep, and (deer and gazelles and roebucks/three kinds of deer), and poultry. **24** Solomon ruled over all the area west of the Euphrates [River], from Tiphsah [city in the northeast] to Gaza [city in the southwest]. He ruled over all the kings in that area. And there was peace between his [government] and the [governments of] nearby countries. **25** All during the years that Solomon ruled, the people of Judah and Israel lived safely. Each family had its own grapevines and fig trees. **26** Solomon had 4,000 stalls for the horses [that pulled] his chariots and 12,000 men who rode on horses (OR, in the chariots). **27** His twelve governors supplied the food that King Solomon needed for himself and for all those who ate in the palace. Each governor supplied food for one month each year. They provided everything [LIT] that Solomon required. **28** They also brought [stalks of] barley and wheat for the fast horses [that pulled the chariots] and for the [other work] horses. They brought it to the places where the horses were kept. **29** God enabled Solomon to be extremely wise and to have great insight/understanding. He understood about more things than the number of grains of sand on the seashore [HYP]. **30** He was wiser than all the wise men in Arabia and Mesopotamia and all the wise men in Egypt. **31** Ethan from Ezrah and Heman and Calcol and Darda and the sons of Mahol were [considered to be] very wise, but Solomon was wiser than all of them. People in all the nearby countries heard about Solomon. **32** He composed/wrote 3,000 (proverbs/wise sayings) and more than 1,000 songs. **33** He talked about various kinds of plants, from the [huge] cedar trees in Lebanon to the [tiny] hyssop plants that grow in cracks in walls. He also talked about wild animals and birds and reptiles and fish. **34** People came from all over the world to hear the wise things that Solomon said. Many kings sent men to listen to him [and then return and tell them what Solomon said].

5 Hiram, the king of Tyre [city], had always been a close friend of King David. When he heard that Solomon had been appointed to become the king after his father was no longer king, he sent some messengers to Solomon [to congratulate him]. **2** Solomon [gave those messengers] this message to take back to Hiram: **3** "You know that my

father David [led his soldiers to] fight many wars against his enemies in the nearby countries. So he could not [arrange to] build a temple in which we [MTY] could worship Yahweh our God, until after Yahweh enabled [the Israeli army] to defeat [IDM] all his enemies. **4** But now Yahweh our God has enabled us to have peace with all the surrounding countries. [(There is no danger that/We do not need to worry that)] we will be attacked. **5** Yahweh promised my father David, 'Your son, whom I will enable to be king after you are no longer king, will build a temple for me [MTY].' Because of that, I have decided to build a temple in which we can worship [MTY] Yahweh our God. **6** "So [I am requesting that] you command your workers to cut cedar trees for me. My men will work with them, and I will pay your workers whatever you decide. [But] my men [cannot do the work alone,] because they do not know how to cut down trees like your workers from Sidon [city] do." **7** When Hiram heard the message from Solomon, he was very happy and said, "I praise Yahweh today for giving David a very wise son to rule that great nation!" **8** He sent this message back to Solomon: "I have heard the message that you sent to me, and I am ready to do what you ask. I will provide cedar and cypress logs. **9** My workers will bring the logs down from [the] Lebanon [mountains] to the [Mediterranean] sea. Then they will [tie them together to] make rafts to float them [in the water] along the coast to the place that you indicate. Then my workers will untie the logs, and your workers will take them from there. What I want you to do is to supply food for the people who work in my palace." **10** So Hiram [arranged for his workers to] supply all the cedar and cypress logs that Solomon wanted. **11** Each year Solomon gave Hiram 100,000 bushels of wheat and 110,000 gallons of pure [olive] oil to feed the people who worked in his palace. **12** Yahweh enabled Solomon to be wise, just like he had promised. Solomon and Hiram made a treaty/agreement that there would be peace between their [two governments/countries]. **13** King Solomon forced 30,000 men from all over Israel to become his workers. **14** Adoniram was their boss. Solomon divided the men into three groups. Each month 10,000 of them went to Lebanon and worked for a month there, and then they came back home for two months. **15** Solomon also forced 80,000 men to cut stones in the hilly area and 70,000 men to haul the stones [to Jerusalem]. **16** And he also assigned 3,600 men to supervise their work. **17** The king also commanded his workers to cut huge blocks of stones from the quarries and to smooth the sides of the stones. Those huge stones were for the foundation of the temple. **18** Solomon's workers and Hiram's workers and men from Gebal/Byblos [city] shaped the stones and prepared the timber to build the temple.

6 480 years after the Israeli people left Egypt, during the fourth year that Solomon ruled Israel, early in May, Solomon's workers began to build the temple. **2** Inside, [the main part of] the temple was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high. **3** The entrance room was 15 feet long and 30 feet wide, just as wide as the main part of the temple. **4** There were windows in [the walls of] the temple. The windows were narrower on the outside than on the inside. **5** Against the two sides and against the back of the temple walls, they built a structure/building that had rooms in it. [This structure had three levels/stories and each was 7-1/2 feet high]. **6** [Each room in] the lowest level/story was 7-1/2 feet wide. [Each room in] the middle level/story was nine feet wide. [The rooms in] the top level/story were 10-1/2 feet wide. The wall of the temple at the top level/story was thinner than the wall at the middle level/story, and the wall of the middle level/story was thinner than the wall at the bottom level/story. The result was that the rooms could be supported by the wall underneath them, and did not require wooden beams to support them. **7** The huge stones for [the foundation of] the temple were cut and shaped at the quarry [to become very smooth]. The result was that while the workers were building the temple there was no noise, because they did not use hammers or chisels or any other iron tools there. **8** The entrance to the bottom level/story [of that attached structure] was on the south side of the temple. There were stairs from the bottom level/story to the middle and top level/story. **9** So Solomon's [workers] finished building the [framework of the] temple. They made the ceiling from cedar beams and boards. **10** They built the structure that had three levels/stories, that was against the walls of the temple. Each level/story was 7-1/2 feet high, and was joined to the temple with cedar beams. **11** Then Yahweh said this to Solomon: **12** "[I want to tell you] about this temple that you are building. If you continually obey all my statutes and laws and commands, I will do for you what I promised to your father David. **13** I will live among the Israeli people, [in this temple,] and I will never abandon them." **14** Solomon's [workers] finished building the temple. **15** On the inside, they lined/covered the walls with cedar boards. They lined/covered them from the floor to the ceiling. They made the floor from cypress boards. **16** Inside the back part of the temple they built an inner room, called the Very Holy Place. It was 30 feet long. All the walls of this room were lined with cedar boards. **17** In front of the Very Holy Place there was a room that was 60 feet long. **18** The cedar [boards on the walls] inside the temple were decorated with carvings of

gourds and flowers. [The walls were] completely covered with cedar boards, with the result that the stones [of the walls behind them] could not be seen. **19** At the back of the temple they made the Very Holy Place, where the Sacred Chest would be put. **20** That room was 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 30 feet high. They covered the walls with [very thin sheets of] pure gold. [For burning incense] they also made an altar of cedar [boards]. **21** Solomon told them to cover the other walls inside the temple with [very thin sheets of] pure gold and to fasten gold chains across the entrance to the Very Holy Place. **22** They covered all the walls of the temple and the altar that was outside the Very Holy Place with [very thin sheets of] gold. **23** Inside the Very Holy Place, they made from olive tree wood [large statues of] two creatures with wings. Each one was 15 feet tall. **24** They each were the same size and had the same shape. They each had two wings [which were spread out]. Each wing was 7-1/2 feet long, with the result that the distance between the outer ends of the two wings was 15 feet. **27** They put those statues next to each other in the Very Holy Place so that the wing of the one touched the one wing of the other in the center of the room, and the outer wings touched the walls. **28** They covered the statues with [very thin sheets of] gold. **29** [Solomon told them to] decorate the walls of the main room and the Very Holy Place by carving representations of winged creatures and palm trees and flowers. **30** They also covered the floor of both rooms with [very thin sheets of] gold. **31** They made a set of doors from olive tree wood, and placed them at the entrance to the Very Holy Place. The doorposts joined at the top to form a pointed arch. **32** The doors were decorated by carving on them representations of winged creatures, palm trees, and flowers. All of these things were covered with [very thin sheets of] gold. **33** They made a rectangular door frame from olive tree wood, and put it [between the entrance room and] the main room. **34** They made two folding doors from cypress wood [and fastened them to the door frame]. **35** The doors were also decorated with wood carvings of winged creatures, palm trees, and flowers, and they were also covered evenly with [very thin sheets of] gold. **36** They built a courtyard in front of the temple. The walls around the courtyard were made of cedar and stone; to make the walls, between each layer of cedar beams they put down two layers of stone. **37** They laid the foundation of the temple of Yahweh in early May, in the fourth year [that Solomon ruled]. **38** In the eleventh year [that he ruled], in the middle of October, they finished building the temple and all of its parts, doing exactly what Solomon told them to do. It required seven years to build it.

7 They also built a palace for Solomon, but it required 13 years to build it. **2** One of the buildings they constructed was [a] large [ceremonial hall]. It was called the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon. It was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It was supported/held up by four rows of pillars of [wood from] cedar [trees]. There were 15 pillars in each row. There were cedar beams across each row. **3** [To support the roof] there were cedar beams that connected the rows of pillars. **4** On each of the two side walls there were three rows of windows. **5** All the windows and doorways had rectangular frames. The windows along the long wall on one side faced the windows on the other side. **6** They also built another building called the Hall of Pillars. It was 75 feet long and 45 feet wide. It had a covered porch [whose roof was] supported by pillars. **7** Then they made a building called the Hall of the Throne. It was also called the Hall of Judgment. That was where Solomon decided/judged concerning people's disputes. The walls were covered with cedar boards, from the floor to the rafters. **8** In the courtyard behind the Hall of Judgment they built a house for Solomon to live in that was made like the other buildings. They also built the same kind of house for his wife, who was the daughter of the king of Egypt. **9** All of those buildings and the walls around the palace courtyard were made from costly blocks of stone, from the foundations up to the eaves. The stones were cut [at the quarry], according to the sizes that were needed, and the sides of the stones were shaped by cutting/smoothing them with saws. **10** The foundations were also made from huge blocks of stone [that were prepared at the quarry]. Some of them were twelve feet long and some were fifteen feet long. **11** On top of the foundation stones were other blocks of stone that were cut according to the sizes they needed, and cedar beams. **12** The palace courtyard, the inner courtyard in front of the temple, and the entrance room of the temple had walls made by putting down three layers of cut stones between each layer of cedar beams. **13** There was a man who lived in Tyre [city] whose name was Huram. He knew how to make very nice things from bronze. His father had also lived in Tyre and had also been very skilled at making things from bronze, but Huram's father was no longer living. His mother was from the tribe of Naphtali. Huram was very wise and intelligent and was very skilled at making things from bronze. Solomon invited him to come [to Jerusalem and supervise] all the work of making things from bronze, and Huram agreed. **15** He made two bronze pillars. Each one was 27 feet tall and 18 feet around. Each was hollow, and the walls of the pillars were 3 in./7.4 cm. thick. **16** He also made two bronze caps to be put on top of the pillars. Each cap was 7-1/2 feet tall. **17** Then he made

bronze wreaths of chains to decorate the top part of each pillar. **18** He also made bronze [figures that resembled] pomegranates. He put two rows of pomegranates over the top parts of each pillar. **19** The top part over each pillar was shaped like a lily. Each [lily leaf] was six feet tall. **20** These top parts were placed on a bowl-shaped section around which was draped the wreaths of chains. He made 200 [figures that represented] pomegranates and put them in two rows around the top/head of each pillar. **21** His [helpers] set up the pillars in front of the entrance of the temple. The pillar on the south side was named Jakin, and the pillar on the north side was named Boaz. **22** The bronze top parts that were shaped like lilies were placed on top of the pillars. So Huram and his helpers finished making the bronze pillars. **23** Huram also constructed a very large round bronze tank that was made of metal and cast [in a clay mold]. It was 7-1/2 ft./2.3 meters high, 30 feet/9 meters across/wide, and 45 feet/13.5 meters around it. **24** Around the outer edge of the rim of the tank were two rows of gourds that were made of bronze. [But] the gourds [were not cast separately; they] were cast in the same mold as the rest of the tank. For each foot of length around the rim of the tank there were six [figures of] gourds. **25** Huram [also cast] twelve [bronze statues of] oxen. He placed them to face outward. He placed three of them to face north, three to face west, three to face south, and three to face east. His helpers put the bronze tank on the backs of [the statues of] the oxen. **26** The sides [of the tank] were 3 in./8 cm. thick. The rim was like the rim of a cup. It [curved outward,] like the petals of a lily. [When the tank was full,] it held about 10,000 gallons [of water]. **27** Huram also made ten bronze carts. Each was six feet long and six feet wide and 4-1/2 feet tall. **28** [On the sides of the carts] there were panels which were set in frames. **29** On those panels were [bronze figures of] lions, bulls, and winged creatures. Below and above the lions and bulls there were decorations of bronze wreaths. **30** Each cart had four bronze wheels and two axles made of bronze. At the top corners of each cart were bronze supports to hold up a basin. On these supports were also decorations of bronze wreaths. **31** On top of each cart, [under each basin,] was a frame [that resembled] a circular collar. The top of each circular frame was 18 inches above the top of the cart, and the bottom of it was nine inches below the top of the cart. There were also decorations of bronze wreaths on the frame engraved within square panels. **32** The wheels were 27 inches high. They were below the panels. The wheels were connected to axles that had been cast in the same mold as the rest of the cart. **33** The wheels of the carts were like the wheels of chariots. The axles, the rims, the spokes, and the hubs were all cast [from bronze]. **34** At the top corners of each cart there were handles. These were cast in the same mold as the rest of the cart. **35** There was a nine-inch bronze band around the top of each cart. There were braces attached to the corners of each cart. The bands and the braces were cast in the same mold as the rest of the cart. **36** The braces and the panels [on the sides of the carts] were also decorated with [figures of] winged creatures, lions, and palm trees, whenever there was space for them, and there were bronze wreaths all around them. **37** That is how Huram made the ten carts. They [were all cast in the same mold, so they] were all alike: They all were the same size and had the same shape. **38** Huram also made ten bronze basins, one for each cart. Each basin was six feet across and held 200 gallons [of water]. **39** Huram placed five of the carts on the south side of the temple and five on the north side. He put the big tank at the southeast corner. **40** Huram also made pots, shovels [for carrying ashes], and bowls [for carrying the blood of the animals that would be sacrificed]. He completed all the work that King Solomon requested him to do for the temple. [This is a list of the bronze things he made]: **41** the two pillars; the two top parts to be put over the pillars; the two wreaths of chains to decorate the tops of the pillars; **42** the 400 [figures of] pomegranates, in two rows, with 100 in each row, that were placed over the top parts of the pillars; **43** the ten carts; the ten basins; **44** the big tank; the twelve [statues of] oxen on whose backs the tank was placed; **45** the pots, shovels [for the ashes of the altar], and bowls. Huram [and his workers] made all these things for King Solomon and put them outside the temple. They were all made of polished bronze. **46** They made them by pouring melted bronze into the clay molds that Huram had set up near the Jordan [River] Valley, between [the cities of] Succoth and Zarethan. **47** Solomon did not [tell his workers to] weigh those bronze objects, because there were many items. So no one ever knew what they weighed. **48** Solomon's [workers] also made all the gold items for the temple: the altar; the table on which the priests put the sacred bread placed before God; **49** the ten lampstands [that were put] in front of the Very Holy Place, five on the south side and five on the north side; the [decorations that resembled] flowers; the lamps; the tongs [to grasp the hot coals]; **50** the cups, the gold lamp wick snuffers, the small lamp bowls, the dishes for incense, the pans [for carrying the hot coals], and the hinges for the doors at the entrance to the Very Holy Place and for the doors at the entrance [to the main room] of the temple. Those things were all made of gold. **51** So Solomon's [workers] finished all the work for the temple. Then they placed in the temple storerooms all the

things that his father David had dedicated to Yahweh—all the silver and gold, and the other valuable items.

8 Solomon then summoned to Jerusalem all the elders of Israel, all the leaders of the tribes, and the leaders of the clans. He wanted them to join in bringing Yahweh's Sacred Chest from Zion [Hill to the temple], where it was in the part of the city called 'The City of David'. **2** So all the Israeli leaders came to King Solomon during the Festival of [Living in Temporary] Shelters, in October. **3** When they had all arrived, the priests lifted up the Sacred Chest **4** and brought it to the temple. The descendants of Levi [who assisted the priests] helped them to carry to the temple the Sacred Tent and all the sacred things that had been in the tent. **5** Then King Solomon and many of the Israeli people who had gathered in front of Yahweh's Sacred Chest sacrificed a huge amount of sheep and oxen. No one was able to count the sacrifices [because there were so many]. **6** The the priests then brought the Sacred Chest into the Very Holy Place in the temple, and they placed it under the wings of the [statues of the] winged creatures. **7** The wings of those statues spread out over the Sacred Chest and over the poles by which it was carried. **8** The poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen [by people who were standing] at the entrance to the Most Holy Place, but they could not be seen [by people standing] outside the temple. Those poles are still there. **9** The only things that were in the Sacred Chest were the two stone tablets that Moses had put there at Sinai [Mountain], where Yahweh made an agreement with the people after they left Egypt. **10** When the priests came out of the temple, [suddenly] it was filled with a cloud. **11** It was the glory/radiance of Yahweh that filled the temple, with the result that the priests were not able to continue their work. **12** Then Solomon prayed this: "Yahweh, you have placed the sun in the sky, but you have decided that you would live in very dark [clouds]. **13** I have built for you a magnificent temple, a place for you to live in forever." **14** Then, while all the people stood there, the king turned around and faced them, and he [asked God to] bless them. **15** He said, "Praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis belong! By his own power he has done what he promised to give to my father David. What he promised was this: **16** 'From the time that I brought my people out of Egypt, I have never chosen any city in Israel in which a temple should be built for my people to worship me there. But I chose you, David, to rule my people." **17** [Then Solomon said], "My father David wanted to build a temple in order that we Israeli people could worship Yahweh our God there. **18** But Yahweh said to him, 'You have wanted to build a temple for me, and what you wanted to do was good. **19** However, you are not the one [who I want] to build it. It is one of your sons, who [I want to] build a temple for me.' **20** And now Yahweh has done what he promised to do. I have become the king of Israel to succeed my father, and I am ruling my people, like Yahweh promised. I have [arranged for] this temple [to be] built for us Israelis to worship Yahweh, the God, to whom we Israelis belong. **21** I have also provided a place [in the temple] for the Sacred Chest in which are the two stone tablets [on which are engraved the Ten Commandments of] the agreement that Yahweh made with our ancestors when he brought them out of Egypt." **22** Then Solomon stood in front of the altar which was facing the Israeli people who had gathered there. He spread out his arms toward heaven, **23** and he prayed, "Yahweh, the God whom we Israeli people [belong to/worship], there is no god like you up in heaven or down here on the earth. You solemnly promised that you would faithfully love us. And that is what you have done for us who earnestly do what you want us to do. **24** You have done the things that you promised my father David, who served you [very well], that you would do. Truly, you promised to do these things for him, and today we see that by your power you have done them. **25** So now, Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [belong to/worship], please do the things that you promised my father that you would do. You told him that there would always be some of his descendants who would rule Israel, if they would conduct their lives as he did. **26** So now, God of us Israeli people, cause what you promised to do for my father David, who served you [well], to happen. **27** But God, you cannot really live on the earth. There is surely not enough space for you in the sky, or even in the heaven. So there is surely not enough space for you to live in this temple that my workers have built. **28** But Yahweh, my God, please listen to me while I am praying to you this day, **29** Please keep protecting this temple night and day. This is the place about which you have said, 'I will always be there.' I request that you listen to me whenever I turn toward this temple and pray. **30** I request that when I pray to you and your people pray to you while they turn toward this place, that in your home in heaven you will hear us and forgive us [for the sins that we have committed]. **31** If someone is accused of doing something wrong to another person, and they bring him to your altar outside this holy temple, and if he says, 'I did not do that; may God punish me if I am not telling the truth,' **32** then you listen from heaven, and decide who is telling the truth. Then punish the person who is guilty as he deserves to be punished, and declare that the other person is innocent. **33** And when your Israeli people are defeated by their enemies [in a battle] because they have sinned against you, [and if they are forced to go to some

distant country,] if they turn away from their sinful behavior and turn toward this temple and admit that you [have justly punished them], and if they plead [that you will forgive them], **34** listen to them from heaven, and forgive your Israeli people for the sins that they [have committed], and bring them back to this land that you gave to our ancestors. **35** And when you do not allow any rain to fall on the land because your people have sinned against you, if they turn toward this temple and admit that you [have justly punished them], if they turn away from their sinful behavior and [humbly] pray to you, **36** listen to them from heaven, and forgive your Israeli people for the sins [that they have committed]. Teach them the right way to conduct their lives. Then send rain on this land that you have given to your people to belong to them [permanently]. **37** And when the people of this land experience famines, or if there is a plague/illness that causes many people to become sick, or if [their crops are destroyed by] very hot winds or [by] mildew or [by] locusts or grasshoppers, or when their enemies surround any of their cities [in order to attack them], if any of those bad things happen to them, **38** when your Israeli people earnestly plead with you knowing that they are suffering because they [have sinned], and if they stretch out their arms toward this temple and pray, **39** listen to them from your home in heaven, and forgive them, and help them. You are the only one who knows what people are thinking, so act toward everyone as they deserve, **40** in order that your people may then have an awesome respect for you, all the years that they live in this land that you gave to our ancestors. **41** There will be some foreigners who do not belong to your Israeli people who have come here from countries far away because they have heard that you are very great and that you perform great miracles. If they come here to this temple to worship you and pray, **43** in your home in heaven, listen to their prayers, and do for them what they request you to do. Do that so that all the people-groups in the world will know about you and revere you, like we your Israeli people do. And then they will know that this temple that I have [caused to be] built to honor you, is where you [should be worshiped]. **44** And if you send your people to go to fight against their enemies, if they pray to you, wherever they are, if they turn toward this city that you have chosen and toward this temple that I have caused to be built for you, **45** listen in heaven to their prayers; listen to what they plead for you to do, and assist them. **46** [It is true that] everyone sins. So, if your people sin against you, and you become angry with them, you may allow their enemies to defeat them and capture them and take them away to their enemies' country, even to countries that are far away. **47** If that happens, while they are in those countries to which they were forced to go, if they sincerely repent and plead with you there saying 'We have sinned and have done things that are very wicked,' **48** if they very sincerely repent, and turn toward this land that you gave to our ancestors, and toward this city that you have chosen [to be the place where we should worship you], and toward this temple that I have [caused to be] built for you, and if they pray, **49** then from your home in heaven listen to them while they plead [for your help], and assist them. **50** Forgive them for all the sins that they [have committed] against you, and cause their enemies to be kind to them. **51** Do not forget that the Israelis are your people; they are your special possession; you brought [our ancestors] out of Egypt where [they were greatly suffering as though] they were in a blazing furnace. **52** I request that you always listen to your Israeli people and to me, their king, and heed their prayers whenever they call out to you [to help them]. **53** You chose them from all the other people-groups in the world to belong to you, which is what you told Moses to tell them when you brought our ancestors out of Egypt." **54** After Solomon had finished praying and pleading to Yahweh [for his help], he stood up in front of the altar where he had been kneeling. He lifted up his arms. **55** Then he [asked God to] bless all the Israeli people. [He prayed] loudly, saying, **56** "Praise Yahweh, who has given us his people peace, like he promised that he would do. He has done every one of the good things that he promised to Moses, the man who served him [very well]. **57** I pray that our God will be with us like he was with our ancestors, and that he will never abandon us. **58** I pray that he will cause us to loyally serve him, to conduct our lives as he wants us to, and to obey all his commandments and statutes and laws that he gave to our ancestors. **59** I pray that Yahweh our God will never forget these words that I have prayed, pleading for his help; I pray that he will think about them by day and by night. I pray that he will always help [us] Israeli people and me, giving us the things that we need day by day. **60** If he does that, all the people-groups in the world will know that he is the only one who is God, and that there is no other one who is God. **61** I pray that you, [his people,] will always be fully committed to Yahweh, and that you will obey all his statutes and commands, like you are doing now." **62** Then the king and all the Israeli people who were there offered sacrifices to Yahweh. **63** They sacrificed 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. Then the king and all the people dedicated the temple. **64** On that day, the king also dedicated/set apart the middle part of the courtyard that was in front of the temple. Then he offered sacrifices that would be completely burned [in the courtyard], the offerings of grain and the fat of the animals that were sacrificed to maintain

fellowship with Yahweh. They sacrificed them there because the bronze altar was not big enough for all those sacrifices to be burned on it [that day]. **65** Then Solomon and all the Israeli people celebrated the Festival of [Living in Temporary] Shelters for seven days. There was a huge crowd of people there, some of whom had come from [distant places like] Hamath [in the far north] and the border of Egypt [in the far south]. **66** On the eighth day, Solomon sent the people to their homes. They all praised him and went home happy because of all the things that Yahweh had done to bless [King] David and his Israeli people.

9 After Solomon's [workers] had finished building the temple and his palace and everything else that Solomon wanted them to build, **2** Yahweh appeared to him [in a dream] a second time, like he had appeared to him at [the city of] Gibeon. **3** Yahweh said to him, "I heard what you prayed and what you pleaded for me to do. I have set apart/dedicated this temple which your [workers] have built to be the place where people will worship me forever. I will always watch over it and protect it. **4** "And as for you, if you conduct your life as I want you to, like your father David did, and if you very sincerely obey all the statutes and laws that I have commanded you to obey, **5** I will do what I promised your father that I would do: I promised him that Israel would always be ruled by his descendants. **6** "But if you or your descendants turn away from me and disobey the commands and decrees that I have given to you, and if you start to worship other gods, **7** I will remove my Israeli people from the land that I have given to them. I will also abandon this temple that I have set apart/dedicated to be the place where people should worship me. Then people everywhere will despise [the people of] Israel and make fun of them. **8** This temple will become a heap of ruins. Everyone who passes by will be astonished [when they see it], and they will be shocked and say, 'Why has Yahweh done this to this land and to this temple?' **9** And other people will reply, 'It happened because the Israeli people abandoned Yahweh their God, the one who brought their ancestors out of Egypt. They started to accept and worship other gods. And that is why Yahweh has caused them to experience all these disasters.'" **10** Solomon's [workers] labored for 20 years to build the temple and the palace. **11** Hiram, the king of Tyre had [arranged for his workers to] give Solomon all the cedar and pine [logs] and all the gold that he needed [for this work]. After it was all finished, King Solomon gave to Hiram 20 cities in the Galilee region. **12** But when Hiram went from Tyre [to Galilee] to see the cities that Solomon had given to him, he was not pleased with them. **13** He said to Solomon, "My friend, those cities that you gave me are worthless!" So, that area is still called 'Worthless'. **14** Hiram paid Solomon only five tons of gold [for those cities]. **15** This is a record of the work that King Solomon forced men to do. He forced them to build the temple and his palace and the terraces/landfills [on the east side of the city], and the wall around Jerusalem, and [to rebuild the cities of] Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer. **16** [The reason they needed to rebuild Gezer was that the army of] the king of Egypt had attacked Gezer and captured it. Then they had burned [the houses in] the city and killed all the people of the Canaan people-group who lived there. The king of Egypt gave that city to his daughter as a gift when she married Solomon. **17** So Solomon's workers also rebuilt Gezer, and they also rebuilt Lower Beth-Horon [city]. **18** They also rebuilt Baalath and Tamar [towns] in the desert in [the southern part of] Judah. **19** They also built cities where they kept the supplies for Solomon, the places where his horses and chariots were kept. They also built everything else that Solomon wanted them to build, in Jerusalem and in Lebanon, and in other places in the area over which he ruled. **20** There were many people who belonged to the Amor people-group, the Heth people-group, the Periz people-group, the Hiv people-group, and the Jebus people-group who were not killed when the Israelis captured their land. **21** [Their descendants still lived in Israel]. It was those people whom Solomon forced to become his slaves [to build all those places], and they are still slaves. **22** But Solomon did not force any Israeli people to become slaves. Some Israelis became soldiers and army officers and commanders and drivers of his chariots and soldiers who rode on horses. **23** There were 550 officials who supervised the slaves who worked [to build all those places]. **24** After [Solomon's wife, who was] the daughter of the king of Egypt, moved from [the place outside Jerusalem called] 'The City of David' to the palace that Solomon's workers built for her, Solomon [told his workers to] fill in the slopes on the east side of the city. **25** Three times each year Solomon [brought to the temple] offerings that were completely burned [on the altar] and offerings to restore fellowship with Yahweh. He also brought incense to be burned in the presence of Yahweh. And so his men finished building the temple. **26** King Solomon's [workers] also built a fleet of ships at Ezion-Geber [city], which is near Elath [city], on the shore of the Gulf of Aqaba, in the land belonging to the Edom people-group. **27** [King] Hiram sent some very expert sailors to work on the ships with Solomon's workers. **28** They sailed to [the] Ophir [region] and brought back to Solomon about 16 tons of gold.

10 The queen [who ruled the] Sheba [area] heard that Yahweh had caused Solomon to become famous,

so she traveled to Jerusalem to ask him questions that were difficult [to answer]. **2** She came with a large group of wealthy/influential people, and she brought camels that were loaded with spices, and valuable gems, and a lot of gold. When she met Solomon, she asked him questions about all the topics/things in which she was interested. **3** Solomon answered all her questions. He explained everything that she asked about, even things that were very difficult. **4** The queen realized that Solomon was very wise. She saw his palace; **5** she saw the food that was served on his table [every day]; she saw where his officials lived (OR, how his officials were seated at the table), their uniforms, the servants who served the food and wine, and the sacrifices that he took to the temple to be offered. She was extremely amazed. **6** She said to King Solomon, "Everything that I heard in my own country about you and about how wise you are is true! **7** But I did not believe it was true until I came here and saw it myself. But really, what they told me is only half [of what they could have told me about you]. You are extremely wise and rich, more than what people told me. **8** Your wives are very fortunate! Your officials who are constantly standing in front of you and listening to the wise things that you say are also fortunate! **9** Praise Yahweh, your God, who has shown that he is pleased with you by causing you to become the king of Israel! God has always loved the Israeli people, and therefore he has appointed you to be their king, in order that you will rule them fairly and righteously." **10** Then the queen gave to the king [the things that she had brought. She gave him] almost five tons of gold and a large amount of spices and valuable gems. Never again did King Solomon receive more spices than the queen gave him at that time. **11** In the ships that belonged to King Hiram, in which they had previously brought gold from Ophir, they also brought a large amount of juniper wood and gems/valuable stones. **12** King Solomon told his workers to use that wood to make railings/supports in the temple of Yahweh and in the king's palace and also to make harps and lyres for the (musicians/men who played musical instruments). That wood was the largest amount of (OR, the finest) wood that had ever been seen [in Israel]. And no one since then has ever seen so much wood of that kind. **13** King Solomon gave to the queen from Sheba everything that she wanted. He gave her those gifts in addition to the gifts that he always gave [to other rulers who visited him]. Then she and the people who came with her returned to her own land. **14** Each year there was brought to Solomon a total of 25 tons of gold. **15** That was in addition to [the taxes] paid to him by the merchants and traders, and the annual taxes paid by the kings of Arabia and by the governors of [the regions in] Israel. **16** King Solomon's workers [took this] gold and hammered it into thin sheets and covered 200 large shields with those thin sheets of gold; they put (almost 15 pounds/more than 6 kg.) of gold on each shield. **17** His workers made 300 smaller shields. They covered each of them with (almost 4 pounds/1.5 kg.) of gold. Then the king put those shields in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon. **18** His workers also made for him a large throne. [Part of it was] covered with (ivory [decorations made from)] tusks of elephants and [part of it was covered] with very fine gold. **19** There were six steps in front of the throne. There was a statue of a lion on both sides of each step. So altogether there were twelve statues of lions. The back of the throne was rounded at the top. At each side of the throne there was an armrest, and alongside each armrest there was a small statue of a lion. No throne like that had ever existed in any other kingdom. **21** All of Solomon's cups were made of gold, and all the various dishes in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon were made of gold. They did not make things from silver, because during the years that Solomon [ruled], silver was not considered to be valuable. **22** The king had a (fleet/large number) of ships that sailed with the ships that King Hiram owned. Every three years the ships returned [from the places to which they had sailed], bringing gold, silver, ivory, monkeys, and baboons (OR, peacocks). **23** King Solomon became richer and wiser than any other king. **24** People from all over the world wanted to come and listen to the wise things that Solomon said, things that God had put into his mind. **25** All the people who came to him brought presents: They brought things made from silver or gold, or robes, or weapons (OR, myrrh), or spices, or horses, or mules. The people continued to do this every year. **26** Solomon acquired 1,400 chariots and 12,000 men who rode [on the horses] (OR, [in the chariots]). Solomon put some of them in Jerusalem and some of them in other cities where he kept his chariots. **27** During the years that Solomon was king, silver became as common in Jerusalem as stones; and [lumber from] cedar trees in the foothills of Judah was as plentiful as [lumber from] fig trees. **28** Solomon's agents bought horses and supervised the men who brought them into Israel from the areas of Musri and Cilicia [that were famous for breeding horses]. **29** In Musri they bought chariots and horses; they paid 600 pieces of silver for each chariot and 150 pieces of silver for each horse. They brought them to Israel. Then they sold many of them to the kings of the Heth people-group and the kings of Syria.

11 King Solomon married many foreign women. First he married the daughter of the king of Egypt. He also married women from the Heth people-group and from

the Moab, Ammon, and Edom people-groups, and from Sidon [city]. **2** He married them even though Yahweh had commanded the Israeli people, "Do not marry people from those areas, because if you do that, they will surely persuade you [IDM] to worship the gods that they worship!" **3** Solomon married 700 women who were kings' daughters. He also had 300 wives who were his slaves/servants. And his wives caused him to turn away [from worshiping God]. **4** By the time that Solomon became old, they had persuaded him to worship the gods from their countries. He was not completely dedicated/committed to Yahweh his God like his father [SYN] David had been. **5** Solomon worshiped Astarte, the goddess that the people of Sidon [worshiped], and he worshiped Molech, the disgusting god that the Ammon people-group [worshiped]. **6** That's how Solomon did things that Yahweh said were evil. He did not conduct his life like his father David had done; he did not conduct his life as Yahweh wanted him to. **7** On the hill to the east of Jerusalem he built a place to worship Chemosh, the disgusting god that the Moab people-group [worshiped], and a place to worship Molech, the disgusting god that the Ammon people-group [worshiped]. **8** He also built places where all his foreign wives could burn incense and offer sacrifices to the gods from their own countries. **9** Even though Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis [worshiped], had appeared to Solomon two times, and had commanded him to not worship foreign gods, Solomon refused to obey Yahweh. So Yahweh was angry with Solomon, **11** and said to him, "You have chosen to break the agreement that I made with you and to disobey what I commanded you. So I am surely not going to allow you to rule all of your kingdom. I am going to allow one of your officials to rule it. **12** But, because of [what I promised] your father David, I will allow you to rule all your kingdom while you are still [living]. [After you die], I will not allow your son to rule the whole kingdom [MTY]. **13** But I will not take all the kingdom away from him. Instead, I will allow him to rule one tribe [besides the tribe of Judah], because of what I promised to David, who served me [well], and because [I want David's descendants to rule in] Jerusalem, [where my temple is located]." **14** Yahweh caused Hadad, from the family of the kings in the Edom people-group, to rebel against Solomon. **15** What happened was that previously, when David's [army] had conquered the Edom people-group, his army commander Joab had gone there to [help] bury the [Israeli soldiers] who had been killed [in the battle]. Joab and his army remained in the Edom area for six months, and during that time they killed all the males of that area. **17** Hadad was a young child [at that time], and he had escaped to Egypt, along with some of his father's servants from the Edom area. **18** They [went to the] Midian [region], and then they went to [the desert area at] Paran. Some other men joined them there. Then they all traveled to Egypt and went to see the king of Egypt. The king gave Hadad some land and ordered his servants to give him some food regularly. **19** The king liked Hadad. As a result he gave him the sister of his own wife, Queen Tahpenes, to be Hadad's wife. **20** Later Hadad's wife gave birth to a son named Genubath. The sister of Tahpenes (raised him/brought him up) in the palace, where he lived with the king's sons. **21** While Hadad was in Egypt, he heard that David had died [EUP], and that Joab, the commander of David's army, was also dead. So he said to the king of Egypt, "Please allow me to return to my own country." **22** But the king said to him, "Why do you want to go back to your country? Is there something that you lack that you want me to give to you?" Hadad replied, "No, but please just allow me to go." [So the king allowed him to leave, and he returned to his own country and became the king of Edom]. **23** God also caused another man named Rezon, the son of Eliada, to rebel against Solomon. Rezon had run away from his master, King Hadadezer of [the] Zobah [area north of Damascus]. **24** Rezon then became the leader of a group of outlaws. That happened after David's [army had defeated Hadadezer and] had [also] killed all [his soldiers]. Rezon and his men went to Damascus and started to live there, and [the people there] appointed him to be their king. **25** All during the time that Solomon was alive, while Rezon was ruling [not only Damascus but all of] Syria, he was an enemy of Israel and caused trouble for Israel like Hadad did. **26** Another man who rebelled against [IDM] Solomon was one of his officials named Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. He was from Zeredah [town] in [the region where the tribe of] Ephraim [lives]. His mother was a widow named Zeruah. **27** This is what happened. Solomon's workers were filling in the land/ground on the east side of Jerusalem and repairing the walls [around the city]. **28** Jeroboam was a very capable young man. So, when Solomon saw that he worked very hard, he appointed him to supervise all the men who were forced to work in the areas where the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim live. **29** One day when Jeroboam was walking alone along the road outside of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh [city] met him. Ahijah was wearing a new robe, **30** which he took off and tore into twelve pieces. **31** He said to Jeroboam, "Take ten of these pieces for yourself, because Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], says to you, 'I am going to tear the kingdom from Solomon, and I am going to enable you to become the ruler of ten of the tribes [of Israel]. **32** Solomon's [descendants] will still rule one tribe (OR, two tribes), because of [what I promised]

David, a man who served me [very well], and because of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen from all the cities in Israel [to be the city where my people will worship me]. **33** I am going to do this because Solomon has rejected me and has been worshiping Astarte, the goddess that the people of Sidon worship, Chemosh, the god that the Moab people-group worship, and Milcom, the god that the Ammon people-group worship. He has not conducted his life as I wanted him to. He has not obeyed my statutes and laws, like his father David did. **34** 'But I will not take the entire kingdom away from him. I will enable him to rule [Judah] all during the years that he is alive. I will do that because of [what I promised to do for] David, whom I chose [to be the king], and who served me [well], and who always obeyed my commandments and laws. **35** But I will take the [other] ten tribes of his kingdom and give them to you [to rule]. **36** I will allow Solomon's son to rule one tribe, in order that descendants [MET] of David will always rule in Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen to be the place where [my people worship] me [MTY]. **37** I will enable you to become the king of Israel, and you will rule over all the territory that you want to. **38** If you obey all that I command you to do, and conduct your life as I want you to, and if you do what I say is right by obeying my laws and commandments like David did, I will help you. I will make sure that your descendants will rule after you [die], like I [promised to] do for David. **39** Because of [Solomon's sins], I will punish David's descendants, but I will not continue to punish them forever.'" **40** Solomon [found out what Ahijah told Jeroboam], so he tried to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam escaped and went to Egypt. He went to Shishak, the king of Egypt, and stayed with him until after Solomon died. **41** [A record of] all the other things that Solomon did, and all the wise things that he [said and wrote], was written in the Book Telling what Solomon Did. **42** He was the king in Jerusalem who ruled over all of Israel for 40 years. **43** Then Solomon died [EUP], and was buried in the [part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. And his son Rehoboam became the king.

12 All [HYP] the people of [northern] Israel went to Shechem [city] in order to appoint Rehoboam to be their king. So Rehoboam also went there. **2** When Jeroboam, who was still in Egypt, heard about that, he returned from Egypt [to Israel]. **3** The [leaders of the northern tribes] summoned him, and they went together [to talk] to Rehoboam. They said to him, **4** "Your father [Solomon] forced us to work very hard [MET] for him. If you (lighten these loads/do not force us to work that hard), and if you charge us less taxes than we were paying to him, we will serve you [faithfully]." **5** He replied, "Go away, and come back three days from now [and I will give you my answer]." So those leaders and Jeroboam left. **6** Then King Rehoboam consulted the older men who had advised his father Solomon while he was still living. He asked them, "What shall I say to answer those men?" **7** They replied, "If you want to serve your people well, speak kindly to those men when you reply to them. If you do that, your people will always serve you faithfully." **8** But he ignored what the older men advised him to do. Instead, he consulted the younger men who had grown up with him, who were now (his advisors/the ones who told him what would be good to do). **9** He said to them, "What should I say to the men who are asking me to reduce the [work and taxes] that my father required from them?" **10** They replied, "This is what you should tell them: 'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist. **11** What I mean is that my father required you [to work hard and pay high taxes]. But I will make those loads heavier. [It was as though] my father whipped you, but [it will be as though] I will whip you with whips that have pieces of metal in them.'" **12** So three days later, Jeroboam and all the leaders came to Rehoboam again, as he had told them to do. **13** The king ignored the advice of the older men and spoke harshly to the Israeli leaders. **14** [He told them what the younger men had advised.] He said, "My father put heavy burdens [of work and taxes] on you, but I will put heavier burdens on you. [It was as though] he beat you with whips, but I will beat you with whips that have pieces of metal in them!" **15** So the king did not pay any attention to the Israeli leaders. But this happened in order that what Yahweh wanted would occur, what he had told the prophet Ahijah about Jeroboam [becoming king of the ten tribes]. **16** When the Israeli leaders realized that the king did not pay any attention to what they said, they shouted, "We do not [RHQ] want anything to do with this descendant of King David! We will not pay attention to what this grandson of Jesse says! You people of Israel, let's go home! As for this descendant of David [MTY], he can rule his own kingdom [MTY]!" So the Israeli leaders returned to their homes. **17** And [after that,] the [only Israeli] people whom Rehoboam ruled over were those who lived in the territory of [the tribe of] Judah. **18** Then King Rehoboam sent Adoniram [to talk to the Israeli people]. Adoniram was the man who supervised [all the men who were] forced to work [for Rehoboam]. But the Israeli people killed him by throwing stones at him. When that happened, King Rehoboam quickly got in his chariot and escaped to Jerusalem. **19** Ever since that time, the people of [the northern tribes of] Israel have been rebelling against the descendants [MTY] of [King] David. **20** When the Israeli people heard that Jeroboam had returned [from Egypt], they invited him to come to a meeting, and there

they appointed him to be the king of Israel. Only the people of the tribes of Judah [and Benjamin] continued to be loyal to [the kings descended from King] [MTY] David. **21** When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he gathered 180,000 of the best soldiers from the tribes [MTY] of Judah and Benjamin. He wanted them to fight against the northern tribes of [MTY] Israel [and defeat them], in order that he could [rule all the tribes of] his kingdom again. **22** But God spoke to the prophet Shemaiah and said this to him: **23** "Go and tell this to [Solomon's son] Rehoboam, the king of Judah, and to all the people of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and the people from the northern tribe who live in Judah: **24** 'Yahweh says that you must not go to fight against your own relatives, the people of Israel. All of you must go home. What has happened is what Yahweh wanted to happen.'" [So Shemaiah went and told that to them,] and they all paid attention to what Yahweh had commanded them to do, and they went home. **25** Then Jeroboam's workers built [walls around] Shechem [city] in the hilly area [where the descendants] of Ephraim [lived], and he ruled from there for a while. He and his workers then left there and went to Peniel [town], and they built walls around that town. **26** Then Jeroboam said to himself, "If my people [continue to] go to Jerusalem and offer sacrifices to Yahweh at the temple there, soon they will again become loyal to Rehoboam, the king of Judah [DOU], and they will kill me." **28** So he consulted [his advisors, and then he did what they suggested]. He [told his workers to] make gold [statues of] two calves. Then he said to the people, "You have been going to Jerusalem [to worship] for a long time. It is a big trouble for you to continue going there. You people of Israel, look! These statues are the gods that brought our [ancestors] up from Egypt! [So you can worship these, here!]" **29** He [told his workers to] place one of the statues in Bethel [city in the south] and one in Dan [city in the north]. **30** So [what Jeroboam did caused] the people [to] sin. Some of them went and worshiped the calf at Bethel, and others went and worshiped the other calf at Dan. **31** [Moses had declared that only men from the tribe of Levi would be priests, but] Jeroboam also told his workers to build shrines on hilltops, and then he appointed men who were not from the tribe of Levi to be priests. **32** He also appointed Adonijah and two priests, Elishama and Jehoram. They had a celebration at the end of October, like the celebration [of Living in Temporary Shelters] that occurred in Judah [each year]. On the altar [that they built] in Bethel, he offered sacrifices to the gold statues of calves that they had made, and he stationed the priests there at the shrines that his workers had built. **33** Jeroboam went up to that altar on that day in October which he himself had chosen. There on that altar he burned incense [to be a sacrifice]. And he declared that the people should celebrate that festival [on that same day every year].

13 One day a prophet, obeying what Yahweh commanded him to do, went from Judah [north] to Bethel. He arrived there right at the time that Jeroboam was standing at the altar, ready to burn incense. **2** Saying what Yahweh told him to say, the prophet shouted, "This is what Yahweh says [about this] altar [APO]: 'I want you to know that [some day] a descendant [MTY] of King David will be born. His name will be Josiah, and he will come here. He will slaughter at this altar the priests who are burning incense for sacrifices on the hills [in this area], and he will burn the bones of dead people on this altar.'" [APO] **3** Then the prophet also said, "This is what will prove to you that Yahweh has said this: This altar will be split apart, and the ashes that are on it will be scattered.'" **4** When King Jeroboam heard the prophet say that, he pointed his finger at him and said to his servants, "Seize that man!" But immediately the king's arm became paralyzed/stiff, with the result that he could not move it. **5** And the altar immediately split apart, and the ashes spilled out [on the ground], which is what the prophet said that Yahweh [MTY] had predicted would happen. **6** Then the king said to the prophet, "Please pray that Yahweh will be merciful to me and heal my arm!" So the prophet prayed, and Yahweh completely healed the king's arm. **7** Then the king said to the prophet, "Come home with me and eat some food. And I will also give you a reward [for what you have done]!" **8** But the prophet replied, "Even if you would [promise to] give me half of everything that you own [MTY], I will not go with you, and I will not eat or drink anything with you here, **9** because Yahweh commanded me not to eat or drink anything here. He also commanded me not to return home on the road on which I came here." **10** So he started to return home, but he did not go on the road on which he came to Bethel. He went on a different road. **11** At that time there was an old man living in Bethel who was a prophet. His sons came and told him what the prophet [from Judah] had done there on that day, and they also told him what the prophet had said to the king. **12** Their father said, "On which road did he go?" So his sons showed him the road on which the prophet from Judah had gone [when he left Bethel]. **13** Then he said to his sons, "Put a saddle on my donkey." So they did that, and he got on the donkey. **14** He went along the road to (find/catch up with) the prophet from Judah. He found him sitting under an oak tree. He said to him, "Are you the prophet who came from Judah?" He replied, "Yes, I am." **15** The old prophet said to him, "Come home with me and eat some food." **16** He replied, "No, I am

not allowed to go with you into your house, or to eat or drink anything with you, 17 because Yahweh told me, 'Do not eat or drink anything here, and do not return home on the road on which you came.'" 18 Then the old prophet said to him, "I also am a prophet, like you are. Yahweh sent an angel to tell me that I should take you home with me and give you some food and drink." But the old man was lying [when he said that]. 19 But because of what the old prophet said, the prophet from Judah returned with him to his home and ate some food and drank some water with him. 20 While they were sitting at the table, Yahweh spoke to the old man. 21 Then he cried out to the prophet from Judah, "This is what Yahweh says: 'You have disobeyed him, and you have not done what he commanded you to do. 22 Instead, you have come back here and had things to eat and drink in a place where he commanded you not to do that. As a result, you will be killed, and your body will not be buried in the grave where your ancestors are buried.'" 23 When they had finished eating, the old man put a saddle on the donkey for the prophet from Judah, [and the prophet from Judah left]. 24 But as he was going, a lion met him and killed him. The prophet's corpse was lying on the road, and the donkey was standing beside it, and the lion was also standing beside the corpse. 25 Some men passed by and were surprised to see the corpse on the road and the lion standing next to the corpse. So they went into Bethel and reported what they had seen. 26 When the old man who had brought the prophet from Judah to his home heard about it, he said, "That is the prophet who disobeyed what Yahweh told him to do! That is why Yahweh allowed the lion to attack him and kill him. That is what Yahweh said would happen!" 27 Then he said to his sons, "Put a saddle on my donkey." So they did that. 28 Then he rode on the donkey and found the prophet's corpse on the road, and his donkey and the lion were still standing there alongside the corpse. But the lion had not eaten any of the flesh of the prophet and had not attacked the donkey. 29 The old man picked up the corpse of the prophet and put it on his donkey and brought it back to Bethel, in order to mourn for him and to bury his corpse. 30 He buried the prophet's corpse in the grave where other people in his family [had been buried]. Then he and his sons mourned for him, saying, "[We are very sorry], my brother!" 31 After they had buried him, the old man said to his sons, "When I die, bury my corpse in the grave where we buried the prophet from Judah. Lay my corpse next to his corpse. 32 [And do not forget what he said, because] the things that Yahweh told him to say about the altar in Bethel, and about the shrines on the hills in the towns in Samaria, will surely happen." 33 But King Jeroboam still did not turn away from continuing to do evil things. Instead, he appointed more priests [who were not descended from Levi]. Anyone who wanted to be a priest, he appointed to be a priest, in order that he could offer sacrifices on the hills. 34 Because he committed that sin, [a few years later] God got rid of most of Jeroboam's descendants and did not allow them to become kings of Israel.

14 At that time, Jeroboam's son Abijah became very sick. 2 Jeroboam said to his wife, "Disguise yourself, in order that no one will recognize that you are my wife. Then go to Shiloh [city], where the prophet Ahijah [lives]. He is the one who predicted/prophesied that I would become the king of Israel. 3 Take with you ten [loaves of] bread and some small flat cakes, and a jar of honey, [and give them] to him. [Tell him about] our son, [and] he will tell you what will happen to him." 4 So his wife went to Shiloh, to Ahijah's house. Ahijah was unable to see, because he was very old and had become blind. 5 But [before she got there,] Yahweh told Ahijah that Jeroboam's wife was coming to inquire about their son, who was very sick. And Yahweh told Ahijah what he should tell her. When she came to him, she pretended to be another woman. 6 But when Ahijah heard her footsteps as she entered the doorway, he said to her, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam! (Why do you pretend that you are someone else?/It will not help you to pretend that you are someone else.) [RHQ] [Yahweh] has given me bad news to tell you. 7 Go and tell Jeroboam that this is what Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], says to you: 'I chose you from among the common people and enabled you to become the king of my Israeli people. 8 I took [most of] the kingdom of Israel away from David's descendants and gave it to you. But you have not been like David, who served me [very well]. He obeyed all my commandments very sincerely, doing only things that I considered to be right. 9 But you have done more evil things/deeds than all those [who ruled] before you. You have rejected me, and you have caused me to become very angry by making metal images of other gods so that you [and others] could worship them. 10 'So, I am going to cause terrible things to happen to your family. I will cause all your male descendants to die, young ones and old ones. I will completely get rid of your family [MTY]. I will get rid of your family [MTY] just like a man completely burns dung [to cook his food]. 11 [The corpses of] any members of your family who die in cities will be eaten by dogs. And [the corpses of] any members of your family who die in the open fields will be eaten by vultures. [This will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said [that it will happen].' 12 So go back home. And as soon as you enter the city, your son will die. 13 All the Israeli people will mourn for

him and bury him. He is the only one of Jeroboam's family who will be buried [properly], because he is the only one of Jeroboam's family with whom Yahweh is pleased. **14** Furthermore, Yahweh will appoint for himself a king to rule over Israel who will get rid of Jeroboam's descendants. And that [will start to happen] today! **15** Yahweh will punish the people of Israel; he will shake them like [the wind] shakes the reeds [that grow in] a stream. He will expel the Israeli people from this good land that he gave to our ancestors. He will scatter them into countries east of [the Euphrates] River, because they have caused him to become very angry by [worshiping statues of] the goddess Asherah. **16** Yahweh will abandon the Israeli people because of the sins that Jeroboam committed, sins which led the Israeli people to commit them." **17** Jeroboam's wife returned home to Tirzah [city, the new capital of Israel]. And just as she entered her house, her son died. **18** All the Israeli people mourned for him and buried him, which is what Yahweh had told his servant, the prophet Ahijah, would happen. **19** Everything else that Jeroboam did, and the record of wars that his [army] fought, and how he ruled, is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **20** Jeroboam ruled for 22 years; then he died [EUP] and his son Nadab became king. **21** Solomon's son Rehoboam ruled Judah. He was 41 years old when he started to rule, and he ruled for 17 years. He ruled in Jerusalem, which is the city that Yahweh chose out of all the tribes of Israel to be the place where he should be worshiped [MTY]. Rehoboam's mother's name was Naamah; she was from the Ammon people-group. **22** The people of Judah did things that Yahweh considered to be evil. They caused him to become angry because they committed more sins than their ancestors had committed: They worshiped many other gods instead of worshiping only Yahweh. **23** They built places to worship those gods; on high hills, and under big trees they set up [stone] pillars to worship the goddess Asherah. **24** Also, there were male prostitutes at these places of worship. The Israeli people did the same disgraceful things that had been done by the people whom Yahweh had expelled while the Israelis were advancing through the land. **25** When Rehoboam had been ruling for almost five years, King Shishak of Egypt came [with his army] to attack Jerusalem. **26** They took away all the valuable things in the temple and in the king's palace, including the gold shields that Solomon's [workers] had made. **27** King Rehoboam's [workers] made bronze shields to replace them and entrusted them to officers who guarded the entrance to the king's palace. **28** Every time that the king went into the temple, those guards carried those shields; and [when he left the temple] they returned the shields to the storeroom. **29** Everything else that Rehoboam did is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **30** There were wars continually between [the armies of] Rehoboam and Jeroboam. **31** Then Rehoboam died [EUP], and he was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David', where his ancestors were buried. Then his son Abijah became the king.

15 After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost 18 years, Abijah became the king of Judah. **2** He ruled for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah, the granddaughter of [David's son] Absalom. **3** Abijah committed the same kind of sins that his father had committed. He was not fully dedicated/committed to Yahweh his God, as his grandfather David had been. **4** But, because of [what Yahweh his God had promised to] David, Yahweh gave Abijah a son [MET] to rule in Jerusalem after him, and in order to protect Jerusalem [from their enemies]. **5** Yahweh did that because David had always done what pleased Yahweh and because David had always obeyed Yahweh. The only time when he disobeyed Yahweh was when he caused Uriah [to be killed]. **6** There were wars between [the armies of] Rehoboam and Jeroboam all during the time that Abijah ruled. **7** Everything else that Abijah did is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **8** Abijah died [EUP] and was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David', and his son Asa became king. **9** After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost 20 years, Asa started to rule Judah. **10** He ruled in Jerusalem for 41 years. His grandmother was Maacah, the granddaughter of Absalom. **11** Asa did what was pleasing to Yahweh, as his ancestor David had done. **12** He got rid of the male prostitutes that were at the places where the people worshiped idols, and he also got rid of all the idols that his ancestors had made. **13** He also removed his grandmother Maacah so that she no longer had influence in the government [because of] being the mother of a previous king. He did that because she had made a disgusting [wooden] statue of the goddess Asherah. Asa [told his workers to] cut down the statue and burned it in the Kidron Valley. **14** He was not able to destroy all the places where the people worshiped [idols] on the high hills, but he continued to be dedicated/committed to Yahweh his entIre life. **15** He [told his workers to] place in the temple all the items that his father had dedicated to God, and all the gold and silver things that he had dedicated to God. **16** There were wars between [the armies of] Asa and Baasha, the king of Israel, all during the time that they ruled. **17** Baasha's army invaded Judah. They captured Ramah [town north of Jerusalem]. Then they started to build a wall around it in

order to prevent people from entering or leaving the area in Judah that was ruled by King Asa. **18** So Asa [told] his workers [to] take all the silver and gold that was still in the storerooms in the temple and in the palace. He told them to take it to Damascus and give it to King Ben-Hadad who ruled Syria. Ben-Hadad was the son of Tabrimmon and grandson of Hezion. He told the workers to say this to Ben-Hadad: **19** "I want there to be a peace treaty between you and me, like there was between your father and my father. For that reason, I am giving you this silver and gold. So now please cancel the treaty that you made with Baasha, the king of Israel, in order that he will take his soldiers away from attacking mine, [because he will be afraid of your army]." **20** [So the workers went and gave the message to] Ben-Hadad, [and he] did what Asa suggested. He sent his army commanders [and their soldiers] to attack some of the towns in Israel. They captured Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maacah, the area near Galilee Lake, and all the land of [the tribe of] Naphtali. **21** When Baasha heard about that, he [told his soldiers to] stop working at Ramah. He [and his soldiers returned to] Tirzah [and] stayed there. **22** Then King Asa sent a message to all the [people in the] towns in Judah, stating that they all were required to go to Ramah and carry away the stones and timber that Baasha's soldiers had been using to build a wall around the city. With those stones and timber they fortified Mizpah [city north of Jerusalem], and Geba, [a town] in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin. **23** Everything else that Asa did, the armies that his soldiers defeated, and the names of the cities that he caused to be fortified, are [RHQ] written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. But when Asa became old, he got a disease in his feet. **24** He died [EUP] and was buried where his ancestors were buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. Then his son Jehoshaphat became king. **25** After Asa had been the king of Judah for almost two years, King Jeroboam's son Nadab started to rule Israel. He ruled for two years. **26** He did things that Yahweh considered to be evil. His behavior was sinful like his father's behavior had been, and what he did led the people of Israel to sin. **27** [A man named] Baasha, from the tribe of Issachar, planned to harm him. He killed Nadab when Nadab and his army had surrounded Gibbethon [city] in the Philistia area. **28** That [DOU] was when Asa had been [the king ruling] Judah for almost three years. Then Baasha became the king of Israel. **29** As soon as Baasha became king, [he commanded his soldiers to] kill all of Jeroboam's family. Doing what Yahweh had told the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh would happen, they killed all of Jeroboam's family. None of them (was left/remained alive). **30** That happened because Yahweh had become very angry with Jeroboam because of all the sins that Jeroboam had committed, and because of the sins that he had persuaded the people of Israel to commit. **31** Everything else that Nadab did is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **32** There were wars between [the armies of] King Asa and King Baasha all the time that they ruled. **33** After Asa had been the king of Judah for almost three years, Baasha, the son of Ahijah, started to rule Israel at Tirzah [city]. He ruled for 24 years. **34** He did things that Yahweh considered to be evil, and his behavior was sinful like his father's had been, and he led the people of Israel to sin.

16 During the time that Baasha [was king of Israel], [the prophet] Jehu, Hanani's son, gave Baasha this message that he had received from Yahweh: **2** "You were very insignificant/unimportant [IDM] when I caused you to become the ruler of my Israeli people. But you have caused me to become very angry by doing [IDM] the kinds of evil things that King Jeroboam did. You have also caused me to become angry by causing my people to sin. **3** So now I will get rid of you and your family [MTY]. I will do to you just like I did to Jeroboam and his family. **4** [The bodies of] those in your family who die in this city [will not be buried; they] will be eaten by dogs; and [the corpses of] those who die in the fields will be eaten by vultures." **5** The other things that happened during the time that Baasha ruled Israel, and the things that he did, are written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **6** When Baasha died, he was buried in Tirzah, [the capital city]. Then his son Elah became king. **7** Yahweh gave that message about Baasha and his family to the prophet Jehu. Baasha had done many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, which caused Yahweh to become angry. Baasha did the same kind of things that King Jeroboam and his family had done previously. Yahweh was also angry with Baasha because he had killed all of Jeroboam's family. **8** After Asa had been the king of Judah for almost 26 years, Elah became the king of Israel. Elah ruled in Tirzah for [only] two years. **9** [A man named] Zimri was one of Elah's army officers. He commanded the drivers of half of Elah's army's (chariots/two-wheeled vehicles pulled by horses). He made plans to kill Elah while Elah was in Tirzah, getting drunk at the house of [a man named] Arza. Arza was the man who took care of the things in the king's palace. **10** Zimri went into Arza's house and killed Elah. Then Zimri became the king of Israel. That was when Asa had been the king of Judah for 27 years. **11** As soon as Zimri became king [MTY], he killed all of Baasha's family [MTY]. That included every male [IDM] in Baasha's family and all of Baasha's male friends. **12** That was just what Yahweh told

the prophet Jehu would happen. 13 Baasha and his son Elah had sinned and led the Israeli people to sin. They caused Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli people worshiped, to become angry, because they both urged the people [to worship] worthless idols. 14 Everything else that Elah did is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. 15 So Zimri became the king of Israel after Asa had been king of Judah for 27 years. But Zimri ruled in Tirzah for only seven days. The Israeli army was beseiging/surrounding Gibeah, a town which belonged to the Philistine people-group. 16 The men in the Israeli army camp heard that Zimri had secretly planned to kill King Elah, and then had killed him. So on that day the soldiers chose Omri, the commander of their army, to become the king of Israel. 17 The Israeli army was camped near Gibbethon [city]. When they heard what Zimri had done, they left there and went to Tirzah, and surrounded the city. 18 When Zimri realized that the city was [about to be] captured, he went into his palace and set it on fire. So the palace burned down, and he died [in the fire]. 19 He died because he had sinned by doing the things that Yahweh considered to be evil. Jeroboam had led the Israeli people to sin, and Zimri sinned just like Jeroboam had sinned. 20 All the other things that Zimri did, and the record of how he rebelled [against King Elah], are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. 21 After Zimri died, the Israeli people were divided. One group wanted Tibni, the son of Ginath, to be their king. The other group wanted Omri [to be the king]. 22 Those who supported Omri (were stronger than/defeated) those who supported Tibni. So Tibni was killed, and Omri became king. 23 Omri became king when Asa had been king of Judah for almost 31 years. Omri ruled Israel for 12 years. For the first six years he ruled in Tirzah. 24 Then he bought a hill from [a man named] Shemer and paid him about (150 pounds/70 kg.) of silver for it. Then Omri ordered his men to build a city on that hill, and he called it Samaria, to honor Shemer, the man who owned it previously. 25 But Omri did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He did more evil deeds than any of the kings who ruled Israel before he did. 26 [When] Jeroboam [was previously the king, he] had led the Israeli people to sin, and Omri committed the same kind of sins that Jeroboam did. The Israeli people caused Yahweh, the God the Israeli people had worshiped, to become very angry, because they worshiped worthless idols. 27 Everything that Omri did, and the record of the victories that his [army] won, are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. 28 After Omri died, he was buried in Samaria, and his son Ahab became king. 29 Ahab became king of Israel when Asa had ruled Judah for almost 38 years. Ahab ruled in Samaria [city] for 22 years. 30 Ahab did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He did more evil things than any of the kings who ruled Israel before he did. 31 He committed the same kind of sins that Jeroboam did, but he did things that were worse than the things that Jeroboam did. He married [a woman named] Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, the king of Sidon [city]. Then Ahab started to worship Baal, [the god that the Canaan people-group worshiped]. 32 He built a temple in Samaria in order that the Israeli people could worship Baal there, and he put an altar there for [making sacrifices to] Baal. 33 He also made an idol that represented Asherah, [Baal's wife]. He did many more things that caused Yahweh to become angry. He did more evil things than any of the previous kings of Israel had done. 34 During the years that Ahab [ruled], Hiel, a man from Bethel [city], rebuilt Jericho [city]. But when he started to rebuild the city, his oldest son Abiram died. And [when the city was finished,] while Hiel was building the city gates, his youngest son Segub died. They died just like Yahweh had told Joshua would happen [to the sons of anyone who would rebuild Jericho].

17 Elijah was [a prophet] who lived in Tishbe [town] in [the] Gilead [region]. One day he [went to] King Ahab and said to him, "Yahweh is the God whom we Israelis [worship] and the God whom I worship and serve. Just as certainly as Yahweh lives, there will be no dew or rain for the next few years, if I do not command rain to fall!" 2 Then Yahweh said to Elijah, 3 "[Because you have made the king angry with you, escape from the king and,] go to the east, to the Kerith Brook, east of where it flows into the Jordan [River]. 4 You will be able to drink water from the brook, and [you will be able to eat what] the crows [bring to you, because] I have commanded them to bring food to you." 5 So Elijah did what Yahweh commanded him to do. He went and camped alongside Kerith Brook. 6 Crows bought bread and meat to him every morning and every evening, and he drank [water] from the brook. 7 But after a while, the water in the brook dried up, because rain did not fall anywhere in the land. 8 Then Yahweh said to Elijah, 9 "Go and live in Zarephath [village], near Sidon [city]. There is a widow there who will give you food to eat. I have [already] told her what to do about that." 10 So [Elijah did what God said]. He went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the gates of the village, he saw a widow who was gathering sticks. He said to her, "Would you please bring me a cup of water?" 11 While she was going to get it, he called out to her, "Bring me a piece of bread, too!" 12 But she replied, "Your God knows that what I am telling you is true: I do not have even one piece of bread in my house. I have only a handful of flour in a jar, and a little [olive] oil in a jug. I was gathering a few sticks to use these

to [make a fire and] cook one more meal, and then after my son and I eat that, we will die [from hunger]." **13** But Elijah said to her, "Do not be worried! Go home and do what you said that you were going to do. But first, bake me a little loaf of bread and bring it to me. After you do that, take what is left and prepare some food for you and your son. **14** [I know that you will be able to do that,] because Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], says this: 'There will always be plenty of flour and [olive] oil left in your containers, until the time when I send rain again [and the crops grow again]!'" **15** So the woman did exactly what Elijah told her to do. And she and her son and Elijah had enough food every day, **16** because the flour in the jar was never finished, and the jug of oil was never empty. That happened just like Yahweh had told Elijah that it would happen. **17** Some time later, the woman's son became sick. He continued to get worse, and finally he died. **18** So the woman went to Elijah and said to him, "You are a prophet; so why have you done this to me? Have you come here to punish me for my sins by causing my son to die?" **19** But Elijah replied, "Give your son to me." So she gave her son to him, and he took the boy's [body] from her and carried it up [the steps] to the room where he stayed. He laid the boy's [body] on his bed. **20** Then Elijah cried out to Yahweh, "O Yahweh my God, this widow [has kindly allowed] me to stay in her home. So why have you brought this tragedy to her and caused her son to die?" [RHQ] **21** Then Elijah stretched himself on top of the boy's [body] and called out to Yahweh saying, "Yahweh my God, please allow this boy to become alive again!" He did this three times. **22** Yahweh heard what Elijah prayed, and [he caused] the boy [to] become alive again [DOU]. **23** Elijah carried the boy down [the steps] and gave him to his mother. He said, "Look, your son is alive!" **24** The woman said to Elijah, "Now I know [for certain] that you are a prophet and that the words that you speak are truly from Yahweh!"

18 For almost three years there was no rain in Samaria. Then Yahweh said this to Elijah: "Go and meet with King Ahab and [tell him that] I will soon send rain." **2** So Elijah went to talk to Ahab. In Samaria there was almost no food for anyone to eat. **3** There was a man there named Obadiah. He was in charge of the king's palace. He greatly revered Yahweh. **4** One time when [Queen] Jezebel had [tried to] kill all Yahweh's prophets, Obadiah hid 100 of them in two caves. He put 50 prophets in each cave, and he brought food and water to them. **5** [By this time, the (famine/lack of food and water) had become very severe in Samaria]. So Ahab summoned Obadiah and said to him, "We must check/look near every spring and in every valley to see if we can find enough grass to give to some of my horses and mules, so that they will not all die." **6** So they both started walking throughout the land. Obadiah went in one direction by himself, and Ahab went in another direction by himself. **7** While Obadiah was walking along, he saw Elijah coming toward him. Obadiah recognized Elijah and bowed down in front of him and said, "Is it really you, Elijah, my master?" **8** Elijah replied, "Yes. Now go and tell [Ahab,] your master, that I am here." **9** Obadiah objected. He said, "Sir, I have not [RHQ] harmed you at all. So why are you sending me back to Ahab? He will kill me! **10** Yahweh your God [knows that I am telling the truth when] I solemnly declare that King Ahab has searched in every kingdom all over the world [HYP] to find you. Each time that some king said to him, 'Elijah is not here,' Ahab demanded that the king of that country solemnly swear/declare that the king was telling the truth. **11** Now you say to me, 'Go and tell your master that Elijah is here!' **12** But as soon as I leave you, the Spirit of Yahweh will carry you away, and I will not know where he will take you. So when [I tell] Ahab [that you are here and he] comes to me and he does not find you here, he will kill me! But [I do not deserve to die because] I have revered Yahweh since I was a boy. **13** My master, have you not heard about what I did when Jezebel wanted to kill all of Yahweh's prophets? I hid 100 of them in two caves and took food and water to them. **14** Now, sir, you say, 'Go and tell your master that Elijah is here.' But if I do that, [and he comes and you are not here,] he will kill me!" **15** But Elijah replied, "Yahweh, the Almighty One whom I serve [IDM], knows that [I am telling the truth as] I solemnly declare that I will go to meet with Ahab today." **16** So Obadiah went to tell Ahab that Elijah had come. Ahab went to meet with him. **17** When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, the one who causes trouble for [the people of] Israel?" **18** Elijah replied, "It is not I who have caused trouble for the people of Israel! You and your family are the ones who have caused trouble! You have refused to obey Yahweh's commands, and you have worshiped the idols of Baal instead. **19** So now, command all the Israeli people to come to Carmel Mountain, and [be sure to] bring all the 450 prophets who worship Baal and the 400 prophets who worship [the goddess] Asherah, the ones to whom [your wife] Jezebel brings food and water." **20** So Ahab summoned all his prophets and all the other [Israeli] people to the top of Carmel Mountain, [and Elijah went up there too.] **21** Then Elijah stood in front of them and said, "How long [RHQ] are you going to be undecided [about who is truly God]? If Yahweh is [truly] God, then worship/serve him. If Baal is truly God, then worship/serve him!" But the people said nothing [in reply, because they were afraid of what Jezebel would do to them if they admitted that they worshiped Yahweh].

22 Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only true prophet of Yahweh who is left, but Baal has 450 prophets. 23 Bring two bulls. The prophets of Baal may choose the one that they want. They must [kill it and] cut it into pieces and lay the pieces on the wood that is on the altar that they have made. But they must not light a fire [under the wood]. [I will kill the other bull and cut it in pieces and lay the pieces on the altar that I make]. 24 Then they must call to their god [MTY], and I will call to Yahweh. The god who answers by lighting a fire [to the wood that is on that altar] is [the true] God!" Then all the people thought that Elijah's suggestion was good. 25 Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "You call to Baal first, because there are many of you. Choose one of the bulls and prepare it, and then call to your god. But do not light a fire under the wood!" 26 So they killed one of the bulls and cut it up and placed the pieces on the altar. Then they called out to Baal all morning. They shouted, "Baal, answer us!" But no one answered. There was no reply at all [DOU]. Then they danced wildly around the altar that they had made. 27 About noontime, Elijah started to make fun of them. He said, "[Surely] Baal is a god, so it seems that you must shout louder! Perhaps he is thinking about something, or perhaps he has gone to the toilet. Or perhaps he is traveling somewhere, or perhaps he is asleep and you need to wake him up!" 28 So they shouted louder. Then, doing one of the things that they frequently did [when they worshiped Baal], they slashed/cut themselves with knives and swords until a lot of blood flowed. 29 They continued calling out to Baal all afternoon. But there was no reply, no answer, no god who paid attention. 30 Then Elijah called to the people saying, "Come closer!" So they all crowded around him. Then Elijah repaired the altar of Yahweh that had previously been (ruined/torn down) [by the prophets of Baal]. 31 Then he took twelve [large] stones, each one to represent one of the Israeli tribes. The names of those tribes were given to them by their ancestor Jacob. 32 With these stones he rebuilt Yahweh's altar. Then around the altar he dug a little ditch that was large enough to hold about (three gallons/12 liters) of water. 33 He piled wood on top of the stones. He killed the bull and cut it in pieces. Then he laid the pieces on top of the wood. Then he said, "Fill four large jars with water, and pour the water on top of the pieces of meat and the wood." So they did that. 34 Then he said, "Do the same thing again!" So they did it again. Then he said "Do it a third time!" So they did it again. 35 As a result, the water flowed down below the altar and filled the ditches. 36 When it was time to offer the evening sacrifices, Elijah walked close [to the altar] and prayed. He said, "Yahweh, you who are the God that [our ancestors] Abraham and Isaac and Jacob [worshiped], prove today that you are the God whom the Israeli people [should worship], and prove that I am your servant. Prove that I have done all these things because you told me to do them. 37 Yahweh, answer me! Answer me in order that these people will know that you, Yahweh God, [have the power to do what you say that you will do], and that you have caused them to trust in [IDM] you again!" 38 Immediately a fire from Yahweh flashed down from the sky. The fire burned up the pieces of meat, the wood, the stones, and the dirt [that was around the altar]. It even dried up all the water in the ditch! 39 When the people saw that, they prostrated themselves on the ground and shouted, "Yahweh is God! Yahweh is God!" 40 Then Elijah commanded them, "Seize all the prophets of Baal! Do not allow any of them to escape!" So the people seized all the prophets of Baal, and took them down the mountain to the Kishon Valley, and Elijah killed them all there. 41 Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go and get something to eat and drink. [But do it quickly, because] it is soon going to rain very hard!" 42 So Ahab [and his men] left to prepare a big meal. But Elijah went back up to the top of Carmel Mountain and prayed. 43 Then he said to his servant, "Go and look out toward the sea, [to see if there are any rain clouds.]" So his servant went and looked, [and came back] and said, "I do not see anything." This happened six times. 44 But when the servant went the seventh time, he came back and said, "I saw a very small cloud above the sea. [As I extend my arm,] the cloud is about the size of my hand/fist." Then Elijah shouted to him, "Go and tell King Ahab to get his chariot ready and go home immediately! If he does not do that, the rain will stop him!" 45 Very soon the sky was full of black clouds. There was a strong wind, and then it began to rain very hard. Ahab got into his chariot and started to return to Jezreel [city]. 46 Yahweh gave extra strength to Elijah. He tucked his cloak into his belt [in order to run fast], and he ran ahead of Ahab's [chariot] all the way [17 miles/26 km.] to Jezreel.

19 When Ahab got home, he told [his wife] Jezebel what Elijah had done. He told her that Elijah had killed all the prophets of Baal. 2 So Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: "By this time tomorrow I will have [killed] you, just like you [killed all those prophets of Baal]. If I do not do that, I hope the gods will kill me." 3 When Elijah received [her message], he was afraid. So [taking his servant with him], he fled in order that he would not be killed. He went [far south] to Beersheba, in Judah. He left his servant there. 4 Then he went by himself further [south] into the desert. He walked all day. He sat down under a broom tree and prayed that [Yahweh] would allow him to die. He said, "Yahweh, I've had enough. So allow me to die, because for me to live is no

better than [being with] my ancestors [who have died]." 5 Then he lay down under the broom tree and slept. But while he was sleeping, an angel touched him and [woke him up and] said to him, "Get up and eat some food!" 6 Elijah looked around and saw some bread which had been baked on hot stones, and he also saw a jar of water. So he ate some bread and drank some water and lay down [to sleep] again. 7 Then the angel [who had been sent by] Yahweh came again and touched him, and said, "Get up and eat some [more] food, because you need [more strength] to go on a long journey." 8 So he got up and ate and drank some more, and because of doing that, he got enough strength to enable him to travel for forty days and nights to Sinai Mountain, the mountain [that was dedicated to] God. 9 He went into a cave there and slept there that night. [The next morning,] Yahweh said to him "Elijah, why are you here?" 10 Elijah replied, "I have zealously served you, Yahweh, God Almighty. But the Israeli people have broken the agreement that they made with you. They have torn down your altars, and they have killed all of your prophets. I am the only one whom they have not killed, and now they are trying to kill me, too. [So I am running away from them]." 11 Yahweh said to him, "Go out and stand in front of me on this mountain while I pass by." [Suddenly] a strong windstorm struck the mountain. As a result, rocks were loosened from the mountainside. But Yahweh was not in the wind. Then there was an earthquake, but Yahweh was not in the earthquake. 12 Then there was a fire, but Yahweh was not in the fire. Then there was a sound like someone whispering quietly. 13 When Elijah heard that, he wrapped his cloak around his face. He went out of the cave and stood at its entrance. And he heard Yahweh speaking to him, saying again, "Elijah, why are you here?" 14 He replied again, "I have zealously served you, Yahweh, God Almighty. But the Israeli people have broken the agreement that they made with you. They have torn down your altars, and they have killed all of your prophets. I am the only one whom they have not killed, and now they are trying to kill me, too. [So I am running away from them]." 15 Then Yahweh told him, "Go back to the desert near Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint [with olive oil] a man named Hazael, [to appoint him] to be the king of Syria. 16 Then anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi, to be the king of Israel, and also anoint Elisha the son of Shaphat, from Abel-Meholah [town], to become my prophet after you are dead. 17 Hazael's army [will kill many people, and] those who escape from [being killed by] his army will be killed by Jehu's [army], and those who escape from [being killed by] Jehu's army will be killed by Elisha. 18 But [you need to know that] there are still 7,000 people in Israel who have never bowed to [worship] Baal or kissed his [idol]." 19 So Elijah went [to Syria] and found Elisha as he was plowing a field with a team of oxen. There were eleven other men who were in front of him, plowing with teams of oxen in the same field. Elijah went to Elisha, and took off his own coat and put it on Elisha, [to show Elisha that he wanted him to take his place as a prophet. Then he started to walk away]. 20 Elisha left the oxen standing there and ran after Elijah, and said to him, "I will go with you, but first let me kiss my parents goodbye." Elijah replied, "Okay, go home. But do not forget why I have [given my cloak] to you!" 21 So Elisha went back [to his oxen]. He killed them [and cut them in pieces] and used the wood from the plow to build a fire to roast the meat. He distributed the meat to the other people [in his town], and they all ate some. Then he went with Elijah and became his helper.

20 Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, gathered all his army, and he persuaded 32 other kings to join him with their armies and horses and chariots. They marched to Samaria [city, the capital of Israel], and surrounded it, and [prepared to] attack it. 2 Ben-Hadad sent messengers into the city to King Ahab, to say this to him: "This is what King Ben-Hadad says: 3 '[You must give to] me all your silver and gold, your (good-looking/most beautiful) wives/women and strongest children.'" 4 The king of Israel replied to them, "Tell this to King Ben-Hadad: 'I agree to do what you requested. You can have me and everything that I own.'" 5 [The messengers told that to] Ben-Hadad, and he [sent them back with] another message: "I sent a message to you saying that you must give me all your silver and gold and your wives and your children. 6 But [in addition to that], about this time tomorrow, I will send some of my officials to search your palace and the houses of your officials, and to bring to me everything that pleases them." 7 King Ahab summoned all the leaders of Israel, and said to them, "You can see/realize for yourselves that this man is trying to cause much trouble. He sent me a message insisting that I must give him my wives and my children, my silver and my gold, and I agreed to do that." 8 The leaders and all the other people said to him, "Do not pay any attention to him! Do not do what he is requesting!" 9 So Ahab said to Ben-Hadad's messengers, "Tell the king that I agree to give him the things that he first requested, but I do not agree to allow his officials to take anything that they want from my palace and from the houses of my officials." So the messengers [reported that to King Ben-Hadad, and they] returned with another message from Ben-Hadad. 10 In that message he said, "[We will destroy] your city [completely, with the result that] there will not be enough dust and rubble left for each of my soldiers to have one handful! I hope/wish that the gods will strike me dead if we do not do that!" 11

King Ahab replied [to the messengers], "Tell King Ben-Hadad that a soldier who is putting on his armor [preparing to fight a battle] [MTY] should not boast at that time; he [should wait until] after he wins the battle." **12** Ben-Hadad heard that message while he and the other rulers were drinking [wine] in their temporary shelters. He told his men to prepare to attack [MTY] the city. So his men did that. **13** At that moment, a prophet came to King Ahab and said to him, "This is what Yahweh says: '[Do not be at all afraid of] [RHQ] the large enemy army that you see! I will enable your army to defeat them today, and you will know that it is I, Yahweh, [who have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" **14** Ahab asked, "What group [of our army] will defeat them?" The prophet replied, "The young soldiers who are commanded by the district governors will do it." The king asked, "Who should lead the attack?" The prophet replied, "You should!" **15** So Ahab gathered the young soldiers who were commanded by the district governors. There were 232 of those men. Then he also summoned all the Israeli army. There were [only] 7,000 soldiers. **16** They started to attack at noon, while Ben-Hadad and the other rulers were getting drunk in their temporary shelters. **17** The young soldiers advanced first. Some scouts who had been sent out by Ben-Hadad reported to him, "There are men coming out of Samaria [city]"! **18** He said, "It does not matter whether they are coming to fight against us or to ask for peace. Capture them, but do not kill them **19** The young Israeli soldiers went out of the city to attack [the Syrian army], and the other soldiers in the Israeli army followed them. **20** Each [Israeli soldier] killed a [Syrian] soldier. The rest of the Syrian army then ran away, and the Israeli soldiers pursued them. But King Ben-Hadad escaped riding his horse, along with some other men riding horses. **21** Then the king of Israel went out [of the city], and he and his soldiers captured [all] the [other Syrian] horses and chariots, and also killed a large number of Syrian soldiers. **22** Then that same prophet went to King Ahab and said to him, "Go back and prepare your soldiers, and think carefully about what will be necessary for you to do, because the king of Syria with attack with his army again in the springtime of next year." **23** [After the Syrian army was defeated,] Ben-Hadad's officials said to him, "The gods that the Israelis [worship] are gods [who live] in the hills. [Samaria is built on a hill, and] that is why their soldiers were able to defeat us. But if we fight against them in the plains/lowlands, we certainly will be able to defeat them. **24** So, this is what you should do: You must remove the 32 kings [who are leading your troops] and replace them with army commanders. **25** Then gather an army like the army that was defeated. Gather an army that has as many horses and chariots as the first army had. Then we will fight the Israelis in the plains/lowlands, and we will surely defeat them." Ben-Hadad agreed with them, and he did what they suggested. **26** In the spring of the following year, he gathered his soldiers and marched [with them] to Aphek [city east of Galilee Lake], to fight against the Israeli army. **27** The Israeli army was also gathered together, and they were equipped with the things that they needed [for the battle]. Then they marched out and formed two groups facing the Syrian army. Their army was very small; they resembled two small flocks of goats, whereas the Syrian army [was very large and] spread all over the countryside. **28** A prophet came to King Ahab and said to him, "This is what Yahweh says: 'The Syrians say that I am a god who lives in the hills, and that I am not a god who lives in the valleys. So I will [show that they are wrong by] enabling your men to defeat this huge army [IDM] [in the valley], and you will know that I, Yahweh, [have done it].'" **29** The two armies stayed in their tents for seven days, in groups that faced each other. Then, on the seventh day, they started fighting. The Israeli army killed 100,000 Syrian soldiers. **30** The other Syrian soldiers ran away into Aphek City. Then the wall of the city collapsed and killed 27,000 more Syrian soldiers. Ben-Hadad also escaped into the city, and hid in the back room of a house. **31** His officials went to him and said, "We have heard a report that the Israelis act mercifully. So allow us to go to the king of Israel, wearing coarse sacks around our waists and ropes on our heads/necks [to indicate that we will be his slaves]. Perhaps [if we do that,] he will allow you to remain alive." **32** [The king permitted them to do that,] so they wrapped coarse sacks around their waists and put ropes on their heads/necks, and they went to the king of Israel and said to him, "Ben-Hadad, who greatly respects you, says, 'Please do not kill me.'" Ahab replied, "Is he still alive? He is like a brother to me!" **33** Ben-Hadad's officials were trying to find out if Ahab would act mercifully, and when Ahab said "brother," they (were optimistic/thought that Ahab would be merciful). So they replied, "Yes, he is like your brother!" Ahab said, "Go and bring him to me." So they [went and] brought Ben-Hadad to him. [When Ben-Hadad arrived,] Ahab told him to get in his chariot [and sit with him]. **34** Ben-Hadad said to him, "I will give back to you the towns that my father's army took from your father. And I will allow you to set up market areas for your merchants in Damascus [my capital], just as my father did in Samaria [your capital]." Ahab replied, "Because you agree to do that, I will not execute you." So Ahab made an agreement with Ben-Hadad, and allowed him to go home. **35** Then Yahweh spoke to a member of a group of prophets and said to him, "Ask one of your fellow prophets to strike and wound you." [So he did what Yahweh told him

to do]. [He said to one of his fellow prophets, 'Strike me and wound me].' But that man refused to do it. **36** So the prophet said to him, "Because you refused to obey what Yahweh told you to do, a lion will kill you as soon as you leave me." And as soon as he left that prophet, a lion suddenly pounced on him and killed him. **37** Then the prophet found another prophet, and said to him, "Strike me!" So that man hit him [very hard] and injured him. **38** Then the prophet put a large bandage/cloth over his face so that no one would recognize him. Then he went and stood alongside the road, waiting for the king to come by. **39** When the king passed by, the prophet cried out to him, saying "Your majesty, [after I was wounded] while I was fighting in a battle, a soldier brought to me one of our enemies that he had captured, and said to me, 'Guard this man! If he escapes, you must pay me 3,000 pieces of silver, and if you do not pay that, you will be executed!' **40** But while I was busy doing other things, the man escaped!" The king of Israel said to him, "That is your problem! You yourself have said that you deserve to be punished." **41** The prophet immediately took off the bandage, and the king of Israel recognized that he was one of the prophets. **42** And the prophet said to him, "This is what Yahweh says: 'You have allowed that man [Ben-Hadad] to escape after I commanded you to be sure to execute him! Since you did not do that, you will be killed instead. And your army will be destroyed because you allowed [some of] his army to escape!'" **43** The king went back home to Samaria, very angry and depressed/dejected.

21 King Ahab had a palace in Jezreel [city]. Near the palace was a vineyard owned by a man from that city whose name was Naboth. **2** One day, Ahab [went to] Naboth and said to him, "Your vineyard is close to my palace. I would like to buy it, so that I can plant some vegetables there. In exchange, I will give you a better vineyard [somewhere else], or if you prefer, I will pay you for your vineyard." **3** But Naboth replied, "That land belonged to my ancestors, [so I want to keep it]. I hope that Yahweh will never allow me to give that land to you!" **4** So Ahab became very sullen and angry because of what Naboth had said. He went home and lay down on his bed. He turned his face toward the wall, and he refused to eat anything. **5** His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, "Why are you so depressed? Why are you refusing to eat anything?" **6** Ahab replied, "I talked to Naboth, that man from Jezreel. I told him that [I wanted] his vineyard. [I said,] 'I will buy it from you, or I will give you another vineyard for it.' But he refused [to let me have it]." **7** His wife replied, "You are [RHQ] the king of Israel, [so you can get whatever you want] Get up, and eat some food and do not worry [about what Naboth said]. I will get Naboth's vineyard for you." **8** Then Jezebel wrote some letters, and she signed Ahab's name on them. She used his official seal to seal them. Then she sent them to the older leaders and other important men who lived in Naboth's town. **9** This is what she wrote in the letters: "Proclaim a day when all the people will [gather together and] (fast/abstain from eating food). Give to Naboth an important place to sit among them. **10** Then find two men who always cause trouble. Give them places to sit opposite/facing him. Tell these men to testify that they heard Naboth say things that criticized God and the king. Then take Naboth out of the city and kill him by throwing stones at him." **11** The leaders [received the letters and] did what Jezebel had written in the letters for them to do. **12** They declared a day on which the people would all (fast/abstain from food). And they gave Naboth a seat in a place where honored people sat, in front of the people. **13** Two men who always caused trouble sat opposite/facing Naboth. While everyone was listening, they stated that they had heard Naboth say things that criticized God and the king. So the people seized Naboth. They took him outside the city and killed him [by throwing] stones at him. **14** Then those leaders sent a message to Jezebel, saying "We have executed Naboth." **15** When Jezebel found out that Naboth had been killed, she told Ahab, "Naboth is dead. Now you can go and take possession of the vineyard that he refused to sell to you." **16** When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went to the vineyard to claim that he now owned it. **17** Then Yahweh spoke to Elijah the prophet. He said, **18** "Go to Samaria and talk to Ahab, the king of Israel. He is in the vineyard of a man named Naboth. He has gone there to claim that he now owns it. **19** Tell Ahab that this is what I, Yahweh, say to him: 'You have murdered Naboth and taken his land.' So I am telling you this: 'In the same place where [Naboth died and] dogs came and licked up Naboth's blood, [you will die and] the dogs will lick up your blood, too!'" **20** So when Elijah met with Ahab, Ahab said to him, "You, my enemy, have found me!" [RHQ] Elijah answered, "Yes, I have found you. You have never stopped doing the things that Yahweh says are wrong. **21** So this is what Yahweh says to you: 'I will soon get rid of you. I will kill you, and I will also kill every male in your household, including those who are slaves and those who are not slaves. **22** Your family will all be killed, just like the family of King Jeroboam and like the family of King Baasha were killed. I will get rid of you because you have caused me to become very angry, and you have also led the Israeli people to sin.' **23** Yahweh has also told me that [your wife] Jezebel [will be killed, and] dogs in Jezreel will eat her corpse. **24** The [dead bodies of the] members of your family who die in this city [will not

be buried, they] will be eaten by dogs, and [the corpses of] those who die in the fields will be eaten by vultures." **25** There was no man no man like Ahab who always did things that Yahweh considered to be evil. His wife Jezebel incited/urged him to do [many of] those things. **26** The most abominable/detestable thing that Ahab did was to worship idols, just like the Amor people-group had done. And that is why Yahweh took the Amor people's land from them and gave it to the Israelis. **27** After Elijah finished talking to Ahab, Ahab tore his clothes [to show that he was sorry for all the sins that he had committed]. He put on rough clothes that were made from sacks, and he refused to eat anything. He even wore those rough clothes made from sacks when he slept, to show that he was sorry. **28** Then Yahweh said this to Elijah: **29** "I have seen [RHQ] that Ahab is now very sorry for all the evil things that he has done. So the things that I promised to do to his [family] will not happen while he is still alive. I will cause them to happen after his son becomes king. Then those things will happen to his family." [MTY]

22 For almost three years there was no war between Syria and Israel. **2** Then King Jehoshaphat, who ruled Judah, went to [visit] King Ahab, who ruled Israel. **3** [While they were talking,] Ahab said to his officials, "Do you realize that the Syrians are still occupying our city of Ramoth in [the] Gilead [region]? And we are doing nothing to retake that city!" **4** Then he turned to Jehoshaphat and asked, "Will your [army] join my [army] to fight against the people of Ramoth [and retake that city]?" Jehoshaphat replied, "[Certainly] I [will do whatever] you [want], and you may command my troops. You may take my horses into battle, also." **5** Then he added, "But we should ask Yahweh first, to find out what he wants us to do." **6** So Ahab summoned about 400 of his prophets together, and he asked them, "Should my [army] go to fight the people in Ramoth and retake that city, or not?" They answered, "Yes, go [and attack them], because God will enable your [army] to defeat them." **7** But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of Yahweh here whom we can ask?" **8** The King of Israel replied, "There is one man we can talk to. We can ask him if he can find out what Yahweh wants. His name is Micaiah; he is the son of Imlah. But I hate him, because when he (prophesies/tells what God says to him) he never says [that] anything good [will happen] to me. He always predicts [that] bad things [will happen to me]." Jehoshaphat replied, "King Ahab, you should not say that!" **9** So the king of Israel told one of his officers to summon Micaiah immediately. **10** The king of Israel and the king of Judah were wearing their (royal robes/robes that showed that they were kings). They were sitting on thrones at the place where people threshed grain, near the gate of Samaria [city]. All of Ahab's prophets were standing in front of the kings, (prophesying/predicting what was going to happen). **11** One of them, whose name was Zedekiah, the son of Kenaanah, had made from iron [something that resembled] horns of a bull. Then he proclaimed [to Ahab], "This is what Yahweh says: 'With horns like these your [army] will keep attacking the Syrians [like a bull attacks another animal] [MET], until you completely destroy them!'" **12** All the [other] prophets [of Ahab] agreed. They said, "Yes! If you go up to attack Ramoth [city] in [the] Gilead [region], you will be successful, because Yahweh will enable you to defeat them!" **13** Meanwhile, the messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, "Listen to me! All the other prophets are predicting that the king's army will defeat the Syrians. So be sure that you agree with them and say (what will be favorable/that the king's army will be successful)." **14** But Micaiah replied, "As surely as Yahweh lives, I will tell him only what Yahweh tells me to say." **15** When Micaiah came to Ahab, Ahab asked him, "Micaiah, should we go to fight against [the people of] Ramoth, or not?" Micaiah replied, "Sure, go! Yahweh will enable your army to defeat them!" **16** But King Ahab [realized that Micaiah was (lying/being sarcastic), so he] said to Micaiah, "I have told you [RHQ] many times that you must always tell only the truth when you say what Yahweh [has revealed to you]!" **17** So Micaiah said to him, "[The truth is that] in a vision I saw all the troops of Israel scattered on the mountains. They seemed to be like sheep that did not have a shepherd. And Yahweh said, 'Their master has been killed. So tell them all to go home peacefully.'" **18** Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "I told you [RHQ] that he never predicts [that] anything good [will happen to me]! He [always] predicts [that] bad things [will happen to me]." **19** But Micaiah continued, saying, "Listen to what Yahweh showed to me! [In a vision] I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, with all the armies of heaven surrounding him, on his right side and on his left side. **20** And Yahweh said, 'Who can persuade Ahab to go to fight against the people of Ramoth, in order that he may be killed there?' Some suggested one thing, and others suggested something else. **21** Finally one [evil] spirit came to Yahweh and said, 'I can do it!' **22** Yahweh asked him, 'How will you do it?' The spirit replied, 'I will go and inspire all of Ahab's prophets to tell lies.' Yahweh said, 'You will be successful; go and do it!' **23** So now [I tell you that] Yahweh has caused all of your prophets to lie to you. Yahweh has decided that something terrible will happen to you." **24** Then Zedekiah walked over to Micaiah and slapped him on his face. He said, "Do you think that Yahweh's Spirit left me in order to speak to you?" [RHQ] **25** Micaiah replied, "You will find out

for yourself [which of us Yahweh's Spirit has truly spoken to] on the day when you go into a room of some house to hide [from the Syrian troops]!" **26** King Ahab commanded [his soldiers], "Seize Micaiah and take him to Amon, the governor of this city, and to my son Joash. **27** Tell them that I have commanded that they should put this man in prison and give him only bread and water. Do not give him anything else to eat until I return safely from the battle!" **28** Micaiah replied, "If you return safely, [it will be clear that] it was not Yahweh who told me what to say to you!" Then he said [to all those who were standing there], "Do not forget what I have said [to King Ahab]!" **29** So the King of Israel and the King of Judah [led their armies] to Ramoth, in [the] Gilead [region]. **30** King Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "I will put on different clothes, [in order that no one will recognize that I am the king]. But you should wear your (royal robe/robe that shows that you are a king)." So Ahab disguised himself, and they both went into the battle. **31** The King of Syria told this to his thirty-two men who were driving the chariots: "Attack only the king of Israel!" **32** So when the men who were driving the Syrian chariots saw Jehoshaphat [wearing (his royal robes/clothes that showed he was the king)], they pursued him. They shouted, "There is the king of Israel!" But when Jehoshaphat cried out, **33** they realized that he was not the king of Israel. So they stopped pursuing him. **34** But one [Syrian] soldier shot an arrow at Ahab, without knowing that it was Ahab. The arrow struck Ahab between the places where the parts of his armor joined together. Ahab told the driver of his chariot, "Turn the chariot around and take me out of here! I have been severely wounded!" **35** The battle continued all the day. Ahab was sitting propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrian troops. The blood from his wound ran down to the floor of the chariot. And late in the afternoon he died. **36** Just as the sun was going down, someone among the Israeli troops shouted, "[The battle is ended!] Everyone should return home!" **37** So king Ahab died, and they took his body [in the chariot] to Samaria [city] and buried his body there. **38** They washed his chariot alongside the pool in Samaria, a pool where the prostitutes bathed. And dogs [came and] licked the king's blood, just like Yahweh had predicted would happen. **39** The account/record of the other things that happened while Ahab was ruling, and about the palace decorated with much ivory [that they built for him], and the cities that were built for him, was written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **40** When Ahab died, his body was buried where his ancestors were buried. Then his son Ahaziah became king. **41** Before King Ahab died, when he had been ruling in Israel for four years, Asa's son Jehoshaphat started to rule in Judah. **42** Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he started to rule, and he ruled in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. **43** Jehoshaphat was a good king, just like his father Asa had been. He did things that pleased Yahweh. But while he was king, he did not remove all the pagan altars [that the people had built] on the hilltops. So the people continued to offer sacrifices [to idols] on those altars and burned incense there. **44** Jehoshaphat also made [a] peace [agreement] with the king of Israel. **45** All the other things that happened while Jehoshaphat was ruling, and the great things that he did and the victories his [troops] won, are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **46** Jehoshaphat's father Asa [had tried to expel] the male prostitutes that stayed at the pagan shrines, but some of them were still there. Jehoshaphat got rid of them. **47** At that time, there was no king in Edom; a ruler who had been appointed by Jehoshaphat ruled there. **48** Jehoshaphat [ordered some Israeli men to] build a fleet/group of ships to sail [south] to [the] Ophir [region] to get gold. But they were wrecked at Ezion-Geber/Elath, so the ships never sailed. **49** Before the ships were wrecked, Ahab's son Ahaziah suggested to Jehoshaphat, "Allow my sailors to go with your sailors," but Jehoshaphat refused. **50** When Jehoshaphat died, his [body] was buried where his ancestors were buried in [Jerusalem,] the city where King David [had ruled]. Then Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram became king. **51** Before King Jehoshaphat died, when he had been ruling in Judah for 17 years, Ahab's son Ahaziah began to rule in Israel. Ahaziah ruled in Samaria for two years. **52** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, doing the [evil] things that his father and mother had done and the evil things that Jeroboam had done—the king who had led all the Israeli people to sin [by worshiping idols]. **53** Ahaziah bowed in front of Baal's idol and worshiped it. That caused Yahweh, the God who was the true God of the Israeli people, to become very angry, just as Ahaziah's father had caused Yahweh to become angry.

2 Kings

1 After King Ahab died, [the country of] Moab rebelled
against Israel. **2** One day, Ahaziah, [the new king of Israel,
] fell through the wooden slats/boards around the edge of
the flat roof [of his palace] in Samaria. He was badly injured,
so he summoned some messengers and told them, “Go to
Ekron [city in Philistia], and ask their god Baalzebub whether
I will (recover/become well).” **3** But an angel from Yahweh
said to Elijah, the prophet from Tishbe [town], “The king of
Samaria [is sending] some messengers [to Ekron]. Go and
meet them and say to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in
Israel that you are going to Ekron to ask Baalzebub, the god
of those people, [whether you will recover]? **4** Yahweh says
[that you should tell King Ahaziah] that he will not recover
from his being injured; he will surely die.’” **5** [So Elijah went
to meet] the messengers [and told that to them, and they]
returned to the king [instead of going to Ekron]. The king
asked them, “Why did you return [so soon]?” **6** They replied,
“A man came to meet us, and said to us, ‘Return to the king
who sent you and tell him that Yahweh says, “(Is it because
there no God in Israel that you are sending [messengers] to
Ekron to consult Baalzebub, their god?/You seem to think
there is no God in Israel, with the result that you are sending
[messengers] to Ekron to ask Baalzebub, their god, [whether
you will recover].) [RHQ] [Go tell the king that] he will not
recover from being injured; instead, he will surely die.”””
7 The king said to them, “The man who came to meet you and
told that to you, what did he look like?” **8** They replied, “He
was a hairy man and he had a [wide] leather belt around his
waist.” The king exclaimed, “That was Elijah!” **9** Then the
king sent an officer with 50 soldiers to seize Elijah. They
found Elijah sitting on the top of a hill. The officer called out
to him, “Prophet, the king commands that you come down
here!” **10** But Elijah replied, “I am a prophet; so, I command
that fire come down from the sky and burn up you and your
50 soldiers!” Immediately, fire came down from the sky and
completely burned up the officer and his 50 [soldiers]. **11**
[When the king found out about that,] he sent another officer
with 50 more soldiers. They went [to where Elijah was], and
the officer called out to him, “Prophet, the king commands
that you come down immediately!” **12** But Elijah replied, “I
am a prophet; [to prove that,] I command that fire come
down from the sky and kill you and your soldiers!” Then a
fire from God came down from the sky and killed the officer
and his soldiers. **13** [When the king heard about that] he
sent another officer with 50 more soldiers. [They went to
where Elijah was], and the officer prostrated himself in front
of Elijah, and said to him, “Prophet, I plead with you, be kind
to me and my 50 soldiers, and (do not kill us/allow us to
remain alive)! **14** [We know that] two times fire came down
from the sky and killed officers and the 50 soldiers who
were with them. So now, please be kind to me!” **15** Then
the angel from Yahweh said to Elijah, “Go down [and go]
with him. Do not be afraid of him.” So Elijah went with them
to the king. **16** [When Elijah arrived,] he said to the king,
“This is what Yahweh says: ‘You sent messengers to go
to Ekron to ask Baalzebub, their god, [whether you would
recover]. You acted as though [RHQ] there is no God in
Israel to consult. So you will not recover from being injured;
instead, you are going to die!’” **17** So Ahaziah died, which is
what Yahweh told Elijah would happen. Ahaziah’s [younger]
brother Joram became the new king, when Jehoram, the son
of Jehoshaphat, had been ruling Judah for almost two years.
Ahaziah’s brother became the king because Ahaziah had no
son [to become the king]. **18** [If you want to know about] all
the other things that Ahaziah did, they are [RHQ] written in
the scroll called ‘The History of the Kings of Israel’.

2 When Yahweh was about to take [the prophet] Elijah
up to heaven in a (whirlwind/twisting wind), Elijah and
[his fellow prophet] Elisha were traveling [south] from Gilgal
[town]. **2** Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, because Yahweh
has told [only] me to go to Bethel [town].” But Elisha replied,
“Just as certainly as Yahweh lives and you live, I will not
leave you!” So they went down [together] to Bethel. **3** A
group of prophets came to Elisha [and Elijah before they
entered the town], and they asked Elisha, “Do you know
that Yahweh is going to take your master/boss [Elijah] away
from you today?” Elisha answered, “Certainly I know that,
but don’t talk about it!” [IDM] **4** Then Elijah said to Elisha,
“Stay here, because Yahweh has told [only] me to go to
Jericho.” But Elisha replied [again], “Just as certainly as
Yahweh lives and you live, I will not leave you!” So they
went [together] to Jericho [city]. **5** [As they neared] Jericho,
a group of prophets who were from there came to Elisha
and said to him, “Do you know that Yahweh is going to
take your master/boss [Elijah] away from you today?” He
answered again, “Certainly I know that, but don’t talk about
it!” [IDM] **6** Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, because
Yahweh has told [only] me to go to the Jordan [River].” But
[again] Elisha replied, “As certainly as Yahweh lives and
you live, I will not leave you!” So they continued walking
together. **7** Fifty men from a group of prophets [who were
from Jericho] also went, but they watched from a distance as
Elijah and Elisha stopped at the edge of the Jordan [River].
8 Then Elijah rolled up his cloak and struck the water with
it. A path opened up for them through the river, and they
walked across [as though they were] on dry ground. **9** When

they came to the other side, Elijah said to Elisha, "What do you want me to do for you before (I am taken away/Yahweh takes me away)?" Elisha replied, "I want to receive twice as much of your power [as you have had,] (OR enable me to very powerfully continue your ministry)." **10** Elijah replied, "You have asked for something which is difficult [for me to cause to happen]. But, if you see me when (I am taken from you/Yahweh takes me from you), you will get what you are requesting. But if you do not see me, then you will not get it." **11** As they were walking and talking, suddenly a chariot that had fire [surrounding it], pulled by horses which also had fire [surrounding them], appeared. [The chariot driver] drove the chariot between Elijah and Elisha and separated them. Then Elijah was taken up to heaven in a (whirlwind/twisting wind). **12** Elisha saw it. He cried out, "My father/master! My father/master! The chariots of us Israeli people and their drivers [have taken my master away]!" [They disappeared into the sky,] and Elisha never saw Elijah again. Then Elisha tore his own robe into two pieces [to show that he was sad]. **13** Elijah's cloak [had fallen off when he was taken away, so] Elisha picked it up and returned to the bank of the Jordan [River]. **14** He [rolled up the cloak and] struck the water with it, and cried out, "Will Yahweh, the God who [enabled] Elijah [to perform miracles, enable me to do similar things]?" Then the water separated, and a path opened up for him, and Elisha went across. **15** When the group of prophets from Jericho saw what happened, they exclaimed, "Elisha now has the power that Elijah had!" [MTY] They walked over to him and bowed down in front of him. **16** [One of] them said, "Sir, if you permit us, 50 of our strongest men will go and search for your master [on the other side of the river]. Perhaps the Spirit of Yahweh has left him on some mountain or in some valley." Elisha replied, "No, do not send them." **17** But they kept insisting. Finally he was tired of saying "No," and he said, "Okay, send them." So 50 men searched for three days, but they did not find Elijah. **18** They returned to Jericho, and Elisha was still there. He said to them, "I told you that you should not go, [because you would not find him]!" [RHQ] **19** Then the leaders of [Jericho] city came to talk with Elisha. One of them said, "Our master, we have a problem. You can see that this is a very nice place [to live in]. But the water is bad, and as a result, crops will not grow on the land." **20** Elisha said to them, "Put some salt in a new bowl and bring the bowl to me." So they brought it to him. **21** Then he went out to the spring [from which the people in the town got water]. He threw the salt into the spring. Then he said, "This is what Yahweh says: 'I have made this water good/pure. No longer will anyone die, from having drunk this water, and now crops will be able to grow.'" [LIT] **22** And the water became pure, just as Elisha said it would be. Since that time it has always remained pure. **23** Elisha left Jericho and went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, a group of young boys from Bethel [saw him and] started to make fun of him. They continued shouting, "Go away, you bald-headed man!" **24** Elisha turned around and looked/glared at them. He asked Yahweh to (curse them/do something bad to them). Immediately two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of them. **25** Elisha left Bethel and went to Carmel Mountain, and after that he returned to Samaria [city].

3 After Jehoshaphat had been ruling Judah for almost 18 years, Ahab's son Joram became the king of Israel. He ruled in Samaria [city] for twelve years. **2** He did things that Yahweh considered to be evil, but he did not do as much evil as his father and mother had done, and he got rid of the pillar [for worshiping] Baal which his father had made. **3** But he committed the sins that [King] Jeroboam had committed and which led the Israeli people to sin, and he did not stop committing those sins. **4** Mesha, the king of Moab, raised sheep. [Every year] he was forced to give 100,000 lambs and the wool from 100,000 rams to the king of Israel, [because his kingdom was controlled by the king of Israel]. **5** But after King Ahab died, Mesha rebelled against the king of Israel. **6** So King Joram left Samaria and gathered together all his soldiers. **7** Then he sent this message to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah: "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. So will your army join my army and fight against the army of Moab?" Jehoshaphat replied, "Yes, we will help you. We are ready to do whatever you want us to. My soldiers and my horses are ready to help you." **8** He asked, "On which road shall we march to attack them?" Joram replied, "We will go [south to Jerusalem, where your army will join us. Then we will all go south of the Dead Sea, and then turn north] through the Edom Desert." **9** So the king of Israel [and his army] went with the kings of Judah and Edom [and their armies]. They marched for seven days. Then there was no water left for their soldiers or for their animals that carried supplies. **10** The king of Israel exclaimed, "This is a terrible situation! [It seems that] Yahweh will allow the three of us to be captured by [the army of] [MTY] Moab!" **11** Jehoshaphat said, "Is there a prophet here who can ask Yahweh for us [what we should do]?" One of Joram's army officers said, "Elisha, the son of Shaphat, is here. He was Elijah's assistant." [IDM] **12** Jehoshaphat said, "[It will be good to ask him, because] he speaks what Yahweh tells him to say." So those three kings went to Elisha. **13** Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Why do you come to me [RHQ]? Go and ask those prophets that your father and mother consulted!" But

Joram replied, "No, [we want you to ask Yahweh, because it seems that] Yahweh is going to allow us three kings to be captured by the army of Moab." **14** Elisha replied, "I serve Yahweh, the commander of the armies of angels in heaven. As surely as he lives, if I did not respect Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not even think about doing anything to help you. **15** But, bring a musician to me." [So they did that]. And when the musician played [on his harp], the power of Yahweh came on Elisha. **16** He said, "Yahweh says that he will cause this dry stream-bed to be full of water. **17** The result will be that your soldiers and your animals that carry supplies and your livestock will have plenty of water to drink. **18** That is not difficult for Yahweh to do. [But he will do more than that]. He will also enable you to defeat [the army of] Moab. **19** You will conquer all their beautiful cities, cities that have high walls around them. You must cut down all their fruit trees, stop water from flowing from their springs, and ruin their fertile fields by covering them with rocks." **20** The next morning, at the time when they offered the sacrifices [of grain], they were surprised to see water flowing from Edom and covering the ground. **21** When the people of Moab heard that the three kings had come [with their armies] to fight against them, all the men who were able to fight in battles, from the youngest men to the oldest ones, were summoned, and they (took their positions/prepared to fight) at the [southern] border of their land. **22** But when they rose early the next morning, they saw that the water across from them appeared to be as red as blood. **23** They exclaimed, "It is blood! The three enemy armies must have fought and killed each other! So let's go and take everything that they have left!" **24** But when they reached the area where the Israeli soldiers had set up their tents, the Israelis attacked the soldiers from Moab and forced them to retreat. The Israeli soldiers pursued the soldiers from Moab and killed many of them. **25** The Israelis also destroyed their cities. And whenever they passed fertile fields, they threw rocks on those fields, until the fields were covered with rocks. They stopped water from flowing from the springs and cut down the fruit trees. Finally, only [the capital city,] Kir-Hareseth, remained. The Israeli soldiers who threw stones with slings surrounded the city and attacked it. **26** When the king of Moab realized that his army was being defeated, he took with him 700 men who fought with swords, and they tried to force a way through the Israeli lines of soldiers to escape to [get help from] the king of Syria, but they were unable to escape. **27** Then the king of Moab took his oldest son, who would have become the next king, and killed him and offered him for a sacrifice [to their god Chemosh], burning him on top of the city wall. The Israeli soldiers were horrified, with the result that they left that city and returned to their own country.

4 One day the widow of one of [Yahweh's] prophets came to Elisha and cried out to him, "My husband, who worked with you, is dead. You know that he revered Yahweh [very much]. But now a man to whom he owed a lot of money has come to me. [And because I cannot pay back the money, he is threatening] to take away my two sons to be his slaves [as payment for what I owe him]!" **2** Elisha replied, "What can I do to help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?" She replied, "We have only a container of [olive] oil; we have nothing else." **3** Elisha said, "Go to your neighbors and borrow from them as many empty jars as you can. **4** Then take the jars into your house with your sons. Shut the door. Then pour olive oil from your container into the other jars. When each jar is full, set it aside [and fill another jar. Keep doing that until all the jars are full]." **5** [So she did what Elisha told her to do]. Her sons kept bringing jars to her, and she kept filling them. **6** Soon all the jars were full. So she said to one of her sons, "Bring me another jar!" But he replied, "There are no more jars!" And then the olive oil stopped flowing. **7** When she told Elijah [what had happened], he said to her, "Now sell the jars of oil. And [with the money you get,] pay what you owe, and there will be enough extra money to keep buying food for yourself and your sons." [So she did that]. **8** One day Elisha went to Shunem [town]. There was a wealthy woman who lived there [with her husband]. One day she invited Elisha to her house for a meal. [Elisha went there and] from then on, every time Elisha was in Shunem, he went to their house to eat a meal. **9** One day the woman said to her husband, "I am sure that this man who often comes here is a prophet [who brings messages] from God. **10** I think we should make a small room for him on our [flat] roof, and put a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp in it. If we do that, whenever he comes here, he will have a place to stay." [So they did that]. **11** One day Elisha returned to Shunem, and he went up to that room to rest. **12** He said to his servant Gehazi, "Tell the woman that I want to speak to her." [So the servant went and told her]. When she came [to the doorway of Elisha's room], **13** Elisha said to Gehazi, "Tell her that we both appreciate all the kind things that she has done for us. Then ask her what we can do for her. Ask, 'Do you want [me to go to] the king or the army commander, to request something for you?'" [Gehazi told her,] and she replied, "No, [he does not need to do that, because] my family/relatives are able to give me what I need." **14** [Later,] Elisha asked Gehazi, "What do you think that we can do for that woman?" He replied, "She does not have a son, and her husband is an old man. [So

maybe we should ask Yahweh to enable her to have a son]." **15** Elisha told Gehazi, "Call her back again." [So Gehazi went and called her]. And when the woman returned, as she stood in the doorway, **16** Elisha said to her, "About this time next year you will be holding your [infant] son in your arms." But she protested, "O, sir, you are a prophet [who brings messages] from God, so please do not deceive/lie to me by saying things like that!" **17** But a few months later, the woman became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son at that time the following year, just like Elisha had predicted. **18** When the child was older, one day he went out to the fields to see his father, who was [working] with the men who were harvesting [grain]. **19** [Suddenly] the boy exclaimed, "My head [hurts]! My head [hurts a lot]!" His father said to one of the servants, "Carry him home to his mother!" **20** So the servant carried him home, and his mother held him on her lap. But at noontime the boy died. **21** She carried him up [the steps] to the prophet's room and laid him on the bed. She left him there and went out and shut the door. **22** She then called out to her husband, saying, "Send to me one of the servants and a donkey, so that I can ride [on it] quickly to the prophet, and then come back!" [But she did not tell her husband that their son had died]. **23** Her husband [called out to her and] said, "Why [do you want to go] today? This is not the day when we celebrate the Festival of the New Moon, and it is not a Sabbath day!" But she only replied, "[Just do what I requested and] everything will be all right." **24** So she [told the servant to] put saddles on [two] donkeys, and as they left, she said, "Hurry! Do not slow down unless t tell you to do that!" **25** As they approached Carmel Mountain, where Elisha was, Elisha saw her in the distance. He said to Gehazi, "Look, the woman from Shunem is coming! **26** Run to her, and ask her if everything is all right with her and her husband and with her child!" [So Gehazi ran to her and asked her, but she did not tell Gehazi anything.] She only said, "Yes, everything is fine." **27** But when she came to where Elisha was, she [prostrated herself on the ground in front of Elisha and] took hold of his feet. Gehazi started to push her away, but Elisha said, "(Do not push her away/Leave her alone)! Something is troubling her very much, but Yahweh has not told me what it is." **28** Then she said to Elisha, "O, sir, I did not ask you to enable me to give birth to a son [RHQ]. And I told you not to lie to me about that!" [RHQ] **29** Then Elisha [realized that something must have happened to her son. So he] said to Gehazi, "Get ready [to leave immediately]. Take my staff/walking stick and go [to her home]. Do not [stop to] talk to anyone on the way. Go quickly [to where her son is] and lay the staff on the child's face. [If you do that, perhaps Yahweh will enable him to be well]." **30** But the boy's mother said, "Just [as certain] as Yahweh lives and you live, I will not go home if you do not go with me." So Elisha returned with her [to her home]. **31** Gehazi hurried quickly, and [when he got to the woman's home,] he laid the staff/walking stick on the child's face, but the child did not move or say anything. So Gehazi returned to meet Elisha [along the road], and told him, "The child is still dead." **32** When Elisha reached the house, he saw that the boy was lying dead on his bed. **33** Elisha went into the room by himself and shut the door and prayed to Yahweh. **34** Then he lay down on the boy's body, and put his mouth on the boy's mouth, and put his eyes on the boy's eyes, and put his hands on the boy's hands. Then the boy's body started to become warm! **35** Elisha got up and walked back and forth in the room [several times]. Then he stretched his body on the boy's body again. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes! **36** Then Elisha summoned Gehazi. He said, "Call the boy's mother!" [So Gehazi went and called her,] and when she came in, Elisha said, "Here, take your son!" **37** She [gratefully] prostrated herself at Elisha's feet. Then she picked up her son and carried him downstairs. **38** Then Elisha returned to Gilgal. But at that time there was (a famine/very little food) in that area. One day as the group of prophets was sitting in front of Elisha [listening to what he was teaching], he said to his servant, "Put a large pot on [the stove] and make some stew for these men." **39** One of the prophets went out to the fields to gather some vegetables. But he gathered [only] some wild gourds and put them in his cloak and brought them back. He shredded them and put them in the pot, but he did not know that the gourds were poisonous. **40** He served the stew to the prophets, but after the men had eaten only a couple bites, they cried out, "Elisha, there is something in the pot that will kill us!" So they would not eat it. **41** Elisha said, "Bring me some flour." [They brought him some, and] he threw it in the pot and he said, "It is all right now. You can eat it." And they ate it, and it did not harm them. **42** One day a man from Baal-Shalishah [town] brought to Elisha a sack of freshly cut grain and 20 loaves of barley bread, made from the first grain that they harvested [that year]. Elisha said [to his servant], "Give it to the group of prophets, so that they can eat it." **43** But his servant exclaimed, "Do you think that we can feed 100 of us prophets with only that much?" [RHQ] But Elisha replied, "Give it to the prophets so that they can eat it, because Yahweh says that there will be plenty for all of them, and there will be some left over!" **44** After his servant gave it to the prophets, they ate [all that they wanted], and there was food left over, just as Yahweh had promised.

5 [A man named] Naaman was the commander of the army of Syria. Yahweh had enabled him to win many victories/battles. He was a great warrior, and as a result the king of Syria greatly respected him. But he had (leprosy/a dreaded skin disease). **2** [Some time previously,] groups of soldiers/marauders from Syria had raided/attacked the land of Israel, and they had captured a young girl [and taken her to Syria]. She became a servant for Naaman's wife. **3** One day, that girl said to her, "I wish that (my master/your husband) would go to see the prophet in Samaria. That prophet would heal your husband from his leprosy." **4** [Naaman's wife told her husband] what the girl from Israel had said, [and] Naaman told [that] to the king. **5** The king said to him, "Okay, go [and see the prophet]. I will [write] a letter for you to take to the king of Israel, [saying that I sent you]." The king wrote in the letter, "I am sending this letter with [my army commander] Naaman, who serves me [faithfully]. I want you to heal him of his disease." So Naaman, [assuming/thinking that the king of Israel was the prophet, took the letter and] 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing, to give to the king of Israel, [and he went to Samaria, taking along several servants]. **7** [When he arrived in Samaria, he gave the letter to the king] of Israel. The king read the letter. Then, being very dismayed, the king tore his clothes and said, "I am not God [RHQ]! I am not able to enable people to live or to die [RHQ]! Why does [the king] who wrote this letter request me to cure this man of his leprosy? I think that he is just wanting to start a fight with me!" **8** But the prophet Elisha heard that the king of Israel had torn his robe [and said that]. So he sent a message to the king, saying, "Why are you upset/frustrated [RHQ]? Send Naaman to me, and he will find out that [because] I am a true prophet [here] in Israel, [I can help/heal him]." **9** So Naaman went with his horses and chariots to Elisha's house and waited outside the door. **10** But Elisha [did not come to the door. Instead, he] sent a messenger to Naaman, to tell him, "Go to the Jordan [River] and wash yourself seven times in the river. Then your skin will be restored/healed, and you will no longer have leprosy." **11** But Naaman became very angry. He said, "I thought that surely he would wave his hand over the leprosy, and pray to Yahweh his god, and heal me! **12** Surely the Abana River and the Pharpar River in Damascus [in my own country of Syria] are [RHQ] better than any of the rivers in Israel! Why can I not wash in those rivers and be healed?" [RHQ] So he turned and walked away with great anger/disgust. **13** But his servants came to him, and [one of them] said, "Sir, if that prophet had told you to do something difficult, you would certainly [RHQ] have done it. So you should certainly do what he says and wash [in the Jordan River] to be healed!" [RHQ] **14** So Naaman went down to the Jordan [River] and washed himself seven times, as (the prophet/Elisha) told him to do. Then his skin was restored/healed, and it became healthy/smooth, like the skin of a young child. **15** Then Naaman and those who were with him went back to talk to Elisha. They stood in front of him, and Naaman said, "Now I know that there are no real gods anywhere else in the world, but there is a God here in Israel! So now please accept these gifts that I [have brought to you]!" **16** But Elisha replied, "Just as certainly as Yahweh, the one whom I serve, lives, I will not accept any gifts." Naaman kept urging him [to accept the gifts], but Elisha kept refusing. **17** Then Naaman said, "Okay, but [I have one request. This dirt here in Israel is holy, so] please allow me to take some dirt from this place and put it [in sacks] on two mules. Then I will take it back home with me [and make an altar on this dirt]. From now on, I will offer sacrifices to Yahweh [on that altar]. I will not offer sacrifices to any other god. **18** However, when my master, [the king,] goes into the temple of the god Rimmon to worship him/it there, and he is leaning on my arm, I hope/desire that Yahweh will forgive me because I will have to bow down, too." **19** Elisha replied, "Go home, and do not worry about that." So Naaman [and his servants] started to travel home. **20** But then Elisha's servant Gehazi said to himself, "It is not good that my master allowed this Syrian man to leave like this. He should have accepted his gifts. So just as certainly as Yahweh lives, I will go and catch up with Naaman and get something from him." **21** So Gehazi hurried to catch up with Naaman. When Naaman saw Gehazi running toward him, he [stopped] the chariot [in which he was riding,] jumped out, and went to see what Gehazi wanted. He asked him, "Is everything all right?" **22** Gehazi replied, "Yes, but two young prophets from the hilly area where the descendants of Ephraim live have just arrived. Elisha has sent me to tell you that he would like 75 pounds of silver and two sets of clothing to give to them." **23** Naaman replied, "Certainly! You can have 150 pounds of silver!" He urged Gehazi to take it. He also gave him two sets of clothing. He tied up the silver in two bags and gave them to two of his servants to carry back to Elisha. **24** But when they arrived at the hill [where Elisha lived], Gehazi took the silver and the clothes from Naaman's servants and sent the servants back to Naaman. Then he took those things into his house and hid them. **25** When he went to Elisha, Elisha asked him, "Where did you go, Gehazi?" Gehazi replied, "I did not go anywhere." **26** Elisha asked him, ["Do you not realize that] my spirit was there when Naaman got out of his chariot to talk with you? This is certainly not [RHQ] the time to accept gifts of money

and clothes and olive groves and vineyards and sheep and oxen and servants! 27 Because you have done this, you and your children and all your descendants, forever, will have leprosy just like Naaman had!" And when Gehazi left the room, he was a leper! His skin was as white as snow!

6 One day a group of prophets said to Elisha, "Look, this place where we meet together with you is very small. 2 Allow us to go to the Jordan [River and cut down some trees to make] logs to build a new meeting place." So Elisha said, "Okay, go." 3 One of them said to Elisha, "Please come with us." So Elisha replied, "Okay, I will go with you." 4 So they went together. When they reached the Jordan [River], they cut down some trees. 5 But while one of them was cutting down a tree, suddenly the axe head [separated from the handle and] fell into the water. He cried out to Elisha, "O, Master, what shall I do? [The axe is not mine]; I borrowed it!" 6 Elisha replied, "Where did it fall into the water?" After the man showed him the place, Elisha cut off a stick, and threw it into the water, and caused the iron axe head to float [on top of the water]. 7 Elisha said, "Take it out of the water." So the man reached his hand down and picked up the axe head. 8 Whenever the king of Syria [prepared to send his army to] fight against Israel, he first consulted his officers, and then told them where they should set up their tents. 9 But each time, Elisha would send a message to warn the king of Israel, [telling him where the army of Syria was planning to attack them,] saying, "Be sure that your army does not go near that place, because the army of Syria has set up their tents there." 10 So the king of Israel would send [messengers] to warn [the people who lived in] that place, and the people would remain on guard. That happened several times. 11 The king of Syria was very upset/disturbed/angry about that. So he summoned his army officers and said to them, "[Obviously] one of you is (betraying us/revealing our plans) to the king of Israel. Which one of you is doing it?" 12 One of his officers answered, "Your Majesty, it is not one of us. Elisha the prophet [knows what we plan to do, and he] tells the king of Israel everything. He even knows what you say in your own bedroom!" 13 The king of Syria replied, "Go and find out where he is, and I will send [some men there] to capture him." Someone told him, "People say that he is in Dothan [town north of Samaria]." 14 So the king sent a large group of soldiers [to Dothan] with horses and chariots. They arrived at night and surrounded the town. 15 Early the next morning, Elisha's servant got up and went outside the house. He saw the soldiers of Syria with their horses and chariots surrounding the town. So he went inside [the house and reported it to Elisha] and exclaimed, "O, sir! What are we going to do?" 16 Elisha replied, "Do not be afraid! Those who will be helping us will be more than those who will be helping them!" 17 Then he prayed, "Yahweh, I request that you open my servant's eyes in order that he can see [what is out there]!" So Yahweh enabled the servant to look out and see that surrounding the hill on which the town [was built] was a huge number of horses, and chariots made of fire! 18 When the army of Syria prepared to attack Elisha, he prayed again, saying, "Yahweh, cause all these soldiers to become blind!" Yahweh answered his prayer and caused them to be unable to see clearly. 19 Then Elisha went to them and said, "You are not on the right road; this is not the city that you are searching for. I will take you to the man whom you are searching for." But he led them to Samaria, [the capital of Israel]! 20 As soon as they entered Samaria, Elisha prayed again, saying, "Yahweh, now enable these soldiers to see correctly again!" So Yahweh enabled them to see correctly, and they were surprised to see that they were inside Samaria [city]. 21 When the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, "Sir, shall I [tell my soldiers to] kill them? Shall we kill all of them?" 22 Elisha replied, "No, you must not kill them. If your army captured many of your enemies in a battle, you would certainly not [RHQ] kill them. Give these men something to eat and drink, and then allow them to return to their king." 23 So the king of Israel did that. He told his servants to provide a big feast for them. And when they had eaten and drunk plenty, he sent them away. They returned to the king of Syria [and told him what had happened]. So for a while after that, soldiers from Syria stopped raiding/attacking towns in Israel. 24 But some time later, Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, assembled his entire army, and they went to Samaria and surrounded the city [for a long time]. 25 Because of that, after a while there was hardly any food left inside the city, with the result that eventually a donkey's head, [which was usually worthless,] cost eighty pieces of silver, and (one cup/0.3 liter) of dove's dung cost five pieces of silver. 26 One day when the king of Israel was walking on top of the city wall, a woman cried out to him, "Your Majesty, help me!" 27 He replied, "If Yahweh will not help you, I certainly cannot [RHQ] help you. I certainly [RHQ] do not have any wheat or wine! 28 What is your problem?" She replied, "Several days ago, that woman [over there] said to me, '[Because we have nothing left to eat,] let's kill your son today, in order that we can eat his flesh. Then tomorrow we can [kill] my son [and] eat his flesh.' 29 So we [killed my son and cut his body up and] boiled his flesh and ate it. The next day, I said to her, 'Now give your son to me, in order that we can [kill him and cook his flesh and] eat it.' But she has hidden her son!" 30 When the king heard what the woman said, he tore his robe [to show that he was very distressed]. The people who were

standing close to the wall were able to see that the king was wearing rough cloth underneath his robe [because he was very distressed]. **31** The king exclaimed, "I wish/hope that God will strike me dead if I do not cut off the head of Elisha today, [because he is the one who has caused these terrible things to happen to us]!" **32** So the king sent an officer to get Elisha. Before the officer arrived, Elisha was sitting in his house with some Israeli elders who were talking with him. Elisha said to them, "That murderer, [the king of Israel,] is sending someone here to kill me. Listen: When he arrives, shut the door and do not allow him to come in. And the king will be coming right behind that officer!" **33** And while he was still speaking, the king and the officer arrived. The king said, "It is Yahweh who has caused us to have all this trouble/suffering. (Why should I wait any longer [RHQ] for him to do something [to help us]?/It is useless for me to wait any longer for him [to help us]!)"

7 Elisha replied to the king, "Listen to what Yahweh says: 'He says that by this time tomorrow, at the marketplace here in Samaria, you will be able to buy (ten pounds/five kg.) of fine wheat or (20 pounds/ten kg.) of barley for [only] one piece of silver.'" **2** The king's officer said to Elijah, "That cannot happen! Even if Yahweh himself would open the windows of the sky [and send grain down to us], that certainly could not [RHQ] happen!" Elisha replied, "[Because you said that,] you [SYN] will see it happen, but you will not be able to eat any of the food!" **3** That day there were four men who had (leprosy/a dreaded skin disease) who were sitting outside the gate of Samaria [city. They said to each other, "(Why should we] wait here until we die?/[It is ridiculous for us to] wait here until we die.) [RHQ] **4** If we go into the city, we will die there, because there is no food there. If we remain sitting here, we will die here. So let's go to where the army of Syria has set up their tents. If they kill us, we will die. But if they allow us to remain alive, we will not die." **5** So when it was getting dark, those four men went to the camp where the army of Syria had set up their tents. But when they reached the camp, they saw that there was no one there! **6** What had happened was that Yahweh had caused the army of Syria to hear something that sounded like a large army marching with chariots and horses. So they said to each other, "Listen! The king of Israel has hired the kings of Egypt and the Heth people-group [and their armies], and they have come to attack us!" **7** So they all ran away that evening and left their tents and their horses and donkeys there, because [they were afraid that] they would be killed [if they stayed there]. **8** When those four lepers came to the edge of the area where the soldiers of Syria had set up their tents, they went into one tent, [and saw all the things that had been left there]. So they ate and drank what was there, and they took the silver and the gold and clothes. Then they went [outside the tent] and hid those things. Then they entered another tent, and took things from there, and then went outside and hid them, also. **9** But then they said to each other, "We are not doing what is right. We have good news [to tell others] today. If we do not tell it to anyone now, and if we wait until morning to tell it, we will certainly be punished [by Yahweh]. So let's go right now to the palace and tell it to the king's officials!" **10** So they went to the guards at the city gates and called out to them, "We went to where the army of Syria had set up their tents, but we did not see or hear anyone there. Their horses and donkeys were still tied up, but their tents were all deserted/abandoned!" **11** The guards shouted the news, and some people [who heard it] went to the palace and reported it there. **12** [When] the king [heard it, he] got up out of his bed and said to his officials, "I will tell you what the army of Syria is planning to do. They know that we have no food here, so they have left their tents and are hiding in the fields. They think that we will leave the city [to find some food], and then they will capture us and capture the city." **13** But one of his officials said, "Many of our Israeli people have already died [from (hunger/not having anything to eat]). If those of us who are still alive all stay here, we also will die anyway. So let's send some men with five of our horses that are still alive to go and see [what has really happened]." **14** So they chose some men and told them to go in a chariot and find out what had happened to the army of Syria. **15** They went as far as the Jordan [River]. All along the road they saw clothes and equipment that the soldiers from Syria had thrown away while they were running away very quickly. So the men returned to the king and reported [what they had seen]. **16** Then many of the people of Samaria also went [out of the city and went] to where the army of Syria had previously set up their tents. They entered all the tents and took everything. [So there was now plenty of everything!] As a result people could buy ten pounds of fine wheat or 20 pounds of barley for only one piece of silver, which was what Yahweh had said would happen! **17** The king of Israel had appointed the officer who was his assistant to supervise what was happening at the marketplace. But as he was standing near the gate, all the people [who were rushing outside the city] trampled on him, and he died, which was what Elisha had said would happen to him when Elisha previously went to talk to the king. **18** Elisha had told him that by the next day there would be plenty of food, with the result that anyone could buy ten pounds of fine wheat or 20 pounds of barley for only one piece of silver. **19** And the

officer had answered, “That certainly cannot [RHQ] happen! Even if Yahweh himself would open the sky and send down some grain, that could not happen.” And Elisha had replied, “[Because you said that,] you [SYN] will see it happen, but you will not be able to eat any of the food!” **20** And that is what happened to him. The people [who were rushing out of] the city gate trampled on him, and he died.

8 After Elisha caused the son of the woman from Shunem [town] to become alive again, he told her that she should leave with her family and live somewhere else for a while, because Yahweh was going to (send a famine/cause food to become very scarce) in the land. He said that the famine would last for seven years. **2** So the woman did what Elisha told her to do. She and her family went to live in [the] Philistia [region] for seven years. **3** After the seven years were ended, they returned to their home. The woman went to the king to request that her house and her land be given back to her. **4** When she arrived, the king was talking with Gehazi, Elisha’s servant. The king was saying to him, “Tell me all the great things that Elisha has done.” **5** While Gehazi was telling the king that Elisha had caused the son of a woman [from Shunem] to become alive again, that woman came in and requested the king to enable her to get her house and land back again. Gehazi exclaimed, “Your Majesty, this is the woman whose son Elisha caused to become alive again!” **6** When the king asked her about it, she told him [that what Gehazi had said was true]. The king summoned one of his officials and said to him, “[I want] everything that this woman possessed previously, including the value of all the crops that have been harvested during these last seven years while she was away from her land, [to] be given back to her.” [So the official did that]. **7** Elisha went to Damascus, [the capital of Syria], when Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, was [very] sick. When someone told the king that Elisha was in Damascus, **8** the king told [one of his officials named] Hazael, “Go and talk to that prophet and take a present/gift with you to give to him. Request him to ask Yahweh if I will recover from my illness.” **9** So Hazael went to talk with Elisha. He took with him forty camels that were carrying many kinds of goods that were produced in Damascus. When Hazael met him, he said to him, “Your friend Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, sent me to ask you whether [you think] he will recover from his illness.” **10** Elisha said to Hazael, “Go and say to him, ‘Yes, you will certainly not die from this illness,’ but Yahweh has shown me that he will certainly die [before he recovers].” **11** Then Elisha stared at him and had a terrified look on his face. That caused Hazael to feel uneasy/embarrassed. Then [suddenly] Elisha started to cry. **12** Hazael said, “Sir, why are you crying?” Elisha replied, “Because [Yahweh has enabled] me [to] know the terrible things that you will do to the people of Israel: You will burn their cities with walls around them, you will kill their fine young men with a sword, you will bash the heads of their children, and you will rip open the bellies of their pregnant women [with a sword].” **13** Hazael replied, “I am [as insignificant as] [MET] a dog; (how could I do such things?/I would never do such terrible things!)” [RHQ] Elisha replied, “Yahweh has also revealed to me that you will become the king of Syria.” **14** Then Hazael left and returned to his master/boss [the king], who asked him, “What did Elisha say?” He replied, “He told me that you would certainly recover.” **15** But the next day, [while the king was sleeping,] Hazael took a blanket and soaked it in water. Then he spread it on the king’s face [in order that he could not breathe], and he died. Then Hazael became the king of Syria instead of Ben-Hadad. **16** After King Joram, the son of Ahab, had been ruling in Israel for almost five years, Jehoshaphat’s son Jehoram became the king of Judah. **17** He was thirty-two years old when he became the king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eight years. **18** His wife was the daughter of King Ahab. And like everyone in Ahab’s family, he continually did the evil things that the previous kings of Israel had done. He did things that Yahweh considered to be evil. **19** But Yahweh did not want to get rid of the people of Judah, because of what he had promised David, who served him [very well]. He had promised David that his descendants [MET] would always rule Judah. **20** During the time that Jehoram ruled, [the king of] Edom rebelled against Judah, and they appointed their own king. **21** So Jehoram went with his army and all their chariots to Zair [city near the border of Edom]. There the army of Edom surrounded them. But during the night, Jehoram and the commanders in their chariots were able to get through the enemy lines and escaped. And all his soldiers also fled to their homes. **22** So after that, Edom was no longer controlled by Judah, and it is still like that. During that same time, the people of Libnah [city] also freed themselves from being controlled by Judah. **23** [If you want to read about] the other things that Jehoram did, they are written in the scroll called ‘The History of the Kings of Judah’. **24** Jehoram died [EUP] and was buried where the other kings of Judah had been buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] ‘The City of David’. Then Jehoram’s son Ahaziah became the king. **25** After Ahab’s son Joram has been ruling in Israel for almost twelve years, Jehoram’s son Ahaziah became the king of Judah. **26** Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he started to rule. He ruled in Jerusalem for [only] one year. His mother’s name was Athaliah, [the daughter of King Ahab and] the granddaughter of King Omri of Israel. **27** King Ahab conducted his life just

like the members of Ahab's family had done. He did things that Yahweh considered to be very evil. 28 Ahaziah's army joined the army of King Joram of Israel to fight against the army of King Hazael of Syria. Their armies started fighting at Ramoth [city] in [the] Gilead [region], and the soldiers of Syria wounded Joram. 29 King Joram returned to Jezreel [city] to recover from his wounds. King Ahaziah went to visit him there.

9 Meanwhile, the prophet Elisha summoned one of the other prophets. He said to him, "Get ready [IDM] and go to Ramoth [city] in [the] Gilead [region]. Take this jar of [olive] oil with you. 2 When you arrive there, search for a man named Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat and grandson of Nimshi. Go with him into a room away from his companions, 3 and pour [some of] this oil on his head. Then say to him, 'Yahweh declares that he is appointing you to be the king of Israel.' Then open the door and run away as quickly as you can." 4 So the young prophet went to Ramoth. 5 When he arrived, he saw that the commanders of the army were having a conference. He [looked at Jehu and] said, "Sir, I have a message for [one of] you." Jehu replied, "Which one of us is the message for?" The young prophet replied, "It is for you, commander/sir." 6 So Jehu got up and went with the young prophet into a house. There the young prophet poured some [olive] oil on Jehu's head and said to him, "Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], declares this: 'I am appointing you to be the king of my Israeli people. 7 You must kill your master [King Joram], the son of Ahab, because I want to punish [Ahab's wife] Jezebel for murdering [MTY] many of my prophets and other people who served me. 8 You must kill [not only Joram but] all of Ahab's family. I want to get rid of every male in the family, including young ones and old ones. 9 I will get rid of Ahab's family, like I got rid of the families of two other kings of Israel, Jeroboam and Baasha. 10 And [when] Jezebel [dies], her corpse will not be buried. Dogs will eat her corpse there in Jezreel [city].'" After the young prophet said this, he left the room and ran. 11 When Jehu came out of the room to where his other commanders were, they said to him, "Is everything all right? Why did that mad fellow come to you?" He replied, "You know what kinds of things young prophets like him say." 12 They said, "You are lying! Tell us what he said!" He replied, "He told me that Yahweh said, 'I am appointing [MTY] you to be the king of Israel.'" 13 Then they all spread their cloaks on the steps of the building [for Jehu to walk out on], and they blew trumpets and shouted, "Jehu is now the king!" 14 King Joram and his army had been defending Ramoth against the attacks by the army of the king of Syria. King Joram had returned to Jezreel [city], to recover from being wounded in the battle against the army of Hazael, the king of Syria. And Jehu made plans to kill Joram. He said to his other commanders, "If helping me is truly what you want, make sure that no one leaves this city to go to warn the people of Jezreel [about what I am planning to do]." 16 Then Jehu and his officers got into their chariots and rode to Jezreel, where Joram was still recovering. And King Ahaziah of Judah was there, visiting Joram. 17 A guard was standing in the watchtower in Jezreel. He saw Jehu and his men approaching. He called out, "I see a lot of men [who are approaching]!" King Joram [heard what the watchman said, so he] said to his soldiers, "Send someone on a horse to go and find out if they are coming to be friendly to us or to attack us." 18 So a man rode out to meet Jehu and said to him, "The king wants to know [if you are coming to be] friendly to us." Jehu replied, "This is not the time for you [RHQ] to be concerned about acting friendly! Turn around and come behind me!" So the guard in the watchtower reported that the messenger had reached the group [that was approaching], but that he was not returning [alone]. 19 So King Joram sent another messenger, who asked Jehu the same question. Again Jehu replied, "This is not the time [RHQ] for you to be concerned about acting friendly! Turn around and follow me!" 20 Then the watchman reported again, "That messenger also reached them, but he is not coming back [alone]. And [the leader of the group must be] Jehu, the son of Nimshi, because he is driving [his chariot] furiously, [like Jehu does]!" 21 Joram said [to his soldiers], "Get [my chariot] ready!" So they did that. Then King Joram and King Ahaziah both rode toward Jehu, each one in his own chariot. And [it happened that] they met Jehu at the field that had previously belonged to Naboth! 22 When Joram met Jehu, he said to him, "Are you coming on a peaceful visit?" Jehu replied, "(How can there be peace while you and your people are prostrating themselves to worship idols and practicing very much (witchcraft/sorcery) like your mother Jezebel did?/There certainly cannot be peace while you and your people are prostrating themselves to worship idols and practicing (witchcraft/sorcery) like your mother Jezebel has been doing!)" [RHQ] 23 Joram cried out, "Ahaziah, they have deceived us! [They want to kill us]!" So Joram turned his chariot around and tried to flee. 24 But Jehu drew his bow mightily and shot [an arrow that pierced] Joram between his shoulder blades. The arrow [went through his body and] pierced his heart, and he slumped down dead in his chariot. 25 Then Jehu said to his assistant Bidkar, "Take his corpse and throw it here into the field that belonged to Naboth. [I am sure that] you remember that when you and I were riding together [in chariots] behind King Joram's father Ahab, that

Yahweh said this about Ahab: **26** 'Yesterday I saw Ahab murder [MTY] Naboth and his sons here. And I solemnly promise that I will punish him right here in this same field!' So take Joram's corpse and throw it into that field! That will fulfill what Yahweh said would happen." **27** When King Ahaziah saw what happened, he fled [in his chariot] toward Beth-Haggan [town]. But Jehu pursued him and said [to his other commanders], "Shoot him, also!" So they shot him [with arrows] while he was riding in his chariot on the road up to Gur, near Ibleam [town]. He continued going in his chariot until he reached Megiddo [city], where he died. **28** His officials took his corpse back to Jerusalem and buried it in the tombs in the [part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David', where his ancestors had been buried. **29** Ahaziah had become the king of Judah when Joram had been ruling Israel for almost eleven years. **30** Then Jehu went to Jezreel. When [Ahab's widow] Jezebel heard what had happened, she put paint/makeup on her eyelids, and combed her hair to make it beautiful, and looked out the window [of the palace toward the street below]. **31** While Jehu was entering the city gate, she called out to him, "You [are like] Zimri! You are a murderer! [I think] you are certainly not [RHQ] coming on a peaceful visit!" **32** Jehu looked up toward the window, and then he said, "Who is (on my side/wants to help me)? Anyone?" Two or three palace officials looked down at him [from a window and pointed to themselves]. **33** Jehu said to them, "Throw her down here!" So they threw her down, and [when she hit the ground and died], some of her blood splattered on the city wall and on the horses [that were pulling the chariots]. **34** Then Jehu went into the palace and ate and drank. Then he said [to some of his men], "Take the corpse of that women whom Yahweh has cursed and bury it, because she is a king's daughter [and therefore should be buried properly]." **35** But when they went to get her corpse to bury it, all that was left was only her skull and [the bones of] her feet and her hands. Everything else was gone. **36** When they reported this to Jehu, he said, "That is what Yahweh said would happen! He told his servant/prophet Elijah, 'In [the city of] Jezreel, dogs will eat the flesh of Jezebel's corpse. **37** Her bones will be scattered there in Jezreel like dung, with the result that no one will be able to [recognize them and] say, "These are Jezebel's bones."'"

10 There were seventy descendants of King Ahab who were living there in Samaria. Jehu wrote a letter [and made copies of it] and sent them to the rulers of the city, to the elders, and to those who raised and tutored Ahab's children. **2** [This is what he wrote]: "You are the ones who are [taking care of] the king's descendants. You have chariots and horses and weapons, and you live in cities that have walls around them. So as soon as you receive this letter, **3** choose one of the king's sons, the one who is the best qualified, and appoint him to be your king. Then [prepare to] fight to defend him." **4** But [when they got those letters from Jehu and read them], they became very afraid. They said, "King Joram and King Ahaziah could not resist him; (how can we resist him?/we cannot possibly resist him!)" [RHQ] **5** So the officer who was in charge of the palace and the mayor of the city sent a message to Jehu saying, "We want to serve you, and we are ready to do whatever you tell us to do. We will not appoint anyone to become our king. You do whatever you think is best." **6** So Jehu sent a second letter to them, writing this: "If you (are on my side/want to help me), and if you are ready to obey me, [kill] King Ahab's descendants [and cut off their heads and] bring their heads to me here in Jezreel at this time tomorrow." The seventy descendants of King Ahab were being brought up and supervised by the leaders of [Samaria] city. **7** When they received the letter from Jehu, they killed all seventy of Ahab's descendants and [cut off their heads]. They put their heads in baskets and sent them to Jehu at Jezreel. **8** A messenger came to Jehu and told him, "They have brought the heads of Ahab's descendants." So Jehu commanded that the heads should be put in two piles at the city gate and that the heads should stay there until the next morning. **9** The next morning he went out [to the city gate] and said to all the people, "I am the one who plotted against King Joram and killed him. You are not guilty of doing that. But [it was Yahweh, not I] [RHQ] who [commanded that] all these [descendants of Ahab should be] killed. **10** So you need to know that everything that Yahweh said would happen has happened. He has caused to happen what he told the prophet Elijah would happen." **11** Then Jehu executed all the other relatives of Ahab in Jezreel, and all Ahab's officers, and close friends, and his priests. He did not allow any of them to remain alive. **12** Then Jehu left [Jezreel] and went toward Samaria. While he was going there, at a place called 'Shepherds' Camp', **13** he met some relatives of King Ahaziah of Judah. He asked them, "Who are you?" They replied, "We are relatives of King Ahaziah. We are going to Jezreel to visit the children of Queen Jezebel and the other members of King [Joram's] family." **14** Jehu said to his men, "Seize them!" So they seized them and killed all of them at the pit named Beth-Eked. There were 42 people whom they killed; they did not allow any of them to remain alive. **15** Then Jehu [continued to travel toward Samaria]. Along the road, he was met by Jonadab, a leader of the Rechab clan. Jehu greeted him and said to him, "Are you as devoted to me [IDM] as I am devoted to you?" Jonadab replied, "Yes,

I am." Jehu said, "If you are, shake hands with me." So Jonadab shook hands with him, and Jehu helped him to get into his chariot. **16** Jehu said to him, "Come with me, and you will see that I am very devoted to Yahweh." So they rode together to Samaria. **17** When they arrived in Samaria, Jehu killed all of Ahab's relatives who were still alive. He did not (spare any of them/allow any of them to remain alive). That was what Yahweh told Elijah would happen. **18** Then Jehu summoned all the people [of Samaria], and said to them, "King Ahab was devoted to [your god] Baal a little bit, but I will serve him much more. **19** So now summon all the prophets of Baal, all of Baal's priests, and all the others who worship Baal. I am going to make a great sacrifice to Baal. I want all of them to be there. Any of them who is not there will be executed." But Jehu was planning to trick them; he was planning to kill all those who worshiped Baal. **20** Then Jehu commanded, "Announce that we are going to set aside a day to honor Baal." So they did that. **21** Jehu [decided what day they would gather and] sent messages throughout Israel [telling everyone what day to gather on], and on that day, everyone who worshiped Baal came. No one stayed at home. They all went into the huge temple of Baal and filled it from one end to the other. **22** Jehu told the priest who took care of the sacred robes to bring them out and give them to the people who worshiped Baal. So the priest did that. **23** Then Jehu went into the temple of Baal with Jonadab, and he said to the people who were there to worship Baal, "Be sure that only those who worship Baal are here. Be sure that no one who worships Yahweh has come in." **24** Then he and Jonadab prepared to offer sacrifices and other offerings to Baal that would be completely burned [on the altar that was there in Samaria]. But Jehu had stationed eighty of his men outside the temple, and had said to them, "I want you to kill all the people [who are in the temple]. Anyone who allows one of them to escape will be executed!" **25** As soon as Jehu [and Jonadab] had finished killing the animals that would be completely burned to be an offering to Baal, they [went outside and] said to the guards and officers, "Go in and kill all of them! Do not allow any of them to escape!" So the guards and officers went in and killed them all with their swords. Then they dragged their corpses outside the temple. Then they went into the inner room of the temple, **26** and they carried out the sacred pillar of Baal that was there, and they burned it. **27** So they destroyed that pillar that honored Baal, and then they burned down the temple, and made it a public toilet. And it is still a toilet! **28** That is how Jehu got rid of the worship of Baal in Israel. **29** But Jehu did not quit committing the kinds of sins that Jeroboam had committed, sins that led the people of Israel to sin by worshiping the gold [statues of] calves in Bethel and Dan [cities]. **30** Then Yahweh said to Jehu, "You have done what pleased me by getting rid of all of Ahab's descendants. So I promise you that your son and grandson and great-grandson and great-great-grandson will all be kings of Israel." **31** But Jehu did not obey all the laws of Yahweh, the God of the Israeli people. He did not stop committing the sins that Jeroboam had committed, sins that led the Israeli people to sin. **32** At that time, Yahweh began to cause the territory controlled by Israel to become smaller. [The army of] King Hazael [of Syria] conquered much of the Israeli territory. **33** He conquered the parts east of the Jordan [River], as far south as Aroer [town] on the Arnon [River]. That included [the] Gilead and Bashan [regions], where the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half of the tribe of Manasseh lived. **34** [If you want to read more] about all the other things that Jehu did [RHQ], they are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **35** Jehu died [EUP], and was buried in Samaria. His son Jehoahaz became the king in place of his father. **36** Jehu had ruled in Samaria as the king of Israel for twenty-eight years.

11 When King Ahaziah's mother Athaliah saw that her son had been killed, she commanded that all the members of Ahaziah's family [who might become king] must be executed. **2** So Ahaziah's sons were all about to be murdered. But Jehosheba, who was King Jehoram's daughter and Ahaziah's half-sister, took Ahaziah's [very young] son Joash and hid him and (his nursemaid/the woman who took care of him) in a bedroom [in the temple]. So he was not killed. **3** He stayed with Jehosheba for six years. All during that time, he remained hidden in the temple, while Athaliah ruled [Judah]. **4** But during the next year, Jehoiada the Supreme Priest summoned the officers who supervised the royal bodyguards and the palace guards. He told them to come to the temple. There he required them to solemnly promise that they would do what he told them to do. And he showed King Ahaziah's son Joash to them. **5** He gave them these instructions: "There are three groups of you guards. When one group finishes their work on the Sabbath day, [divide yourselves into] three smaller groups. One group must guard the palace. **6** Another group must guard at the Sur Gate. The other group must guard at the gate behind the other groups. **7** The two groups that are not working on the Sabbath day must guard the temple [to protect little King Joash]. **8** You must stand around the king wherever he goes, with your weapons in your hands. You must kill anyone who comes near you." **9** The officers [who supervised the guards] did what Jehoiada told them to do. Each one brought to Jehoiada the guards that he supervised—the guards who were just finishing their work and those who were about to

start their work on the Sabbath day. **10** The priest distributed to the commanders of the guards the spears and shields that had belonged to King David, that were kept/stored in the temple. **11** Then he commanded all the guards to stand in their positions, each one with his sword in his hand, all around the young king. **12** Then he brought Joash out. He put the crown on his head and gave him a scroll on which were written the rules [that the kings needed to obey]. Then he poured some olive oil on Joash's head and proclaimed that he was now the king. The people all clapped their hands and shouted, "We desire/hope that the king will live for many years!" **13** When Athaliah heard the noise that was being made by the guards and the other people, she ran to the temple, where the people were gathered. **14** She saw the new king standing there alongside one of the big pillars, which was the place at the temple where the kings usually stood. She saw that he was surrounded by the temple officers and men blowing trumpets, and that the people were shouting joyfully, and [some of] them were also blowing trumpets. She tore her clothes [to show her distress] and shouted, "You are traitors! You have tricked/deceived me!" **15** Jehoiada [immediately] said, "Kill her, but do not kill her here at the temple of Yahweh! Take her away between two rows of guards. And kill anyone who tries to rescue her!" **16** [She tried to flee, but] the guards seized her and took her to the palace, to the place where horses enter the courtyard. They killed her there. **17** Then Jehoiada made a solemn agreement between the king and the people, that they would always (obey/be faithful to) Yahweh. He also made an agreement requiring the people to be loyal to Joash their king. **18** Then all the people of Israel who were there went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They smashed the altars and the statues of Baal. They also killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars. Jehoiada stationed/put guards at the temple of Yahweh. **19** Then he and the officers of the temple, the officers who supervised the royal bodyguards, and the king's bodyguards brought the king from the temple to the palace. All the people [followed them]. Joash entered the palace at the Guard Gate and sat down on the throne, [which showed that he was the new king]. **20** All the people of Judah rejoiced. And because Athaliah had been killed, the city was quiet/calm. **21** Joash was seven years old when he became the king [of Judah].

12 When Jehu had been ruling Israel for almost seven years, Joash became the king of Judah. He ruled in Jerusalem for 40 years. His mother was Zibiah, from Beersheba [city]. **2** All his life, he did what pleased Yahweh, because Jehoiada the priest instructed/taught him. **3** But the places where the people worshiped [Yahweh] on the tops of hills were not destroyed, and they continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense at those places, [instead of at the place that God had chosen for them in Jerusalem]. **4** Joash said to the priests, "You must take all the money which the people contribute, both the money they are required to give and the money that they themselves decide to give, as sacred offerings to buy things for the temple. **5** Each priest must take the money from people who know him (OR, from one of the treasurers), and he must use that money to repair the temple whenever he sees that there is something that needs to be repaired." **6** But after Joash had been ruling for almost twenty-three years, the priests still had not repaired anything in the temple. **7** So Joash summoned Jehoiada and the other priests and said to them, "(Why are you not repairing things in the temple?/You should have been repairing things in the temple!) [RHQ] From now on, you must not keep the money that you receive from people who know you (OR, the treasurers). You must give it to the people who will be repairing things in the temple!" **8** The priests agreed to do that, and they also agreed that they themselves would not do the repair work. **9** Then Jehoiada took a chest and bored a hole in the lid. He placed it alongside the altar [for burning incense/sacrifices] that was on the right as anyone enters the temple. The priests who guarded the entrance to the temple put in the box the money that was brought to the temple. **10** Whenever they saw that there was a lot of money in the chest, the king's secretary and the Supreme Priest would come and count the money. Then they would put it in bags and tie the bags shut. **11** Then, after they weighed it, they would give the money to the men who supervised the work in the temple. Then the supervisors would use that money to pay the carpenters and builders who did the repair work in the temple, **12** and the masons and the stone cutters. Also with some of that money they bought timber and stones that had been cut to be used in the repair work, and to pay all the other expenses for the repair work. **13** But they did not use any of that money [to pay men] to make silver cups or wick trimmers or bowls or trumpets or any other items made of silver or gold to be used in the temple. **14** All that money was given to the men who were doing the work of repairing the temple. **15** The men who supervised the work always did things honestly, so the king's secretary and the Supreme Priest never required that the supervisors report what they had spent the money for. **16** But the money that people gave to pay for the wrong things that they had done and the money they gave to purify themselves because of the sins that they had committed was not put in the chest. That money belonged to the priests. **17** At that time, Hazael, the king of Syria, went [with his

army] and attacked Gath [city] and conquered it. Then he decided that they would attack Jerusalem. **18** So Joash, the king of Judah, took all the money that the previous kings, Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, had dedicated to Yahweh. He added some of his own money, and all the gold that was in the rooms in the temple where valuable things were kept/stored, and the gold in his palace, and sent it all to King Hazael, [to (appease him/persuade him to not attack Jerusalem)]. So King Hazael [took his army] away from Jerusalem. **19** [If you want to read more of] what Joash did, [it] is all written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **20** Joash's officials plotted against him, and two of them killed Joash on the road that goes down to [the] Silla [district]. The two men who did that were Jozabad, the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad, the son of Shomer. Joash was buried in the place where his ancestors were buried, [in the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. Then Joash's son Amaziah became the king of Judah.

13 After Joash had been ruling Judah for almost 23 years, Jehu's son Jehoahaz became the king of Israel. He ruled in Samaria [city] for 17 years. **2** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil and committed the same kind of sins that Jeroboam had committed, sins which led the people of Israel to sin. He did not stop committing those sins. **3** So Yahweh became very angry with the Israeli people, and he allowed the army of King Hazael of Syria and his son Ben-Hadad to defeat the Israelis many times. **4** Then Jehoahaz prayed to Yahweh [for help], and Yahweh heeded him, because he saw that the army of the king of Syria was oppressing the Israelis. **5** Yahweh sent a leader to Israel, who enabled them to be freed from being controlled by Syria. After that, the Israeli people lived peacefully as they had done previously. **6** But they still continued to commit the same kind of sins that Jeroboam and his family had committed and which led the Israelis to [also] sin. And the statue of the goddess Asherah remained in Samaria. **7** Jehoahaz had only 50 men who rode on horses and ten chariots and 10,000 other soldiers, because the army of Syria had killed all the rest, trampling them like people walk on dirt. **8** [If you want to read about] [RHQ] everything else that Jehoahaz did, you can read about it in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **9** Jehoahaz died [EUP] and was buried in Samaria. Then his son Jehoash became the king. **10** Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, started to rule in Israel after King Joash had been ruling in Judah for 23 years. Jehoash ruled in Samaria for 17 years. **11** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He refused to turn away from worshiping idols, which was the sin that [many years earlier King] Jeroboam had told the Israeli people to commit. **12** The other things that happened while Jehoash was king and all the things that he did are written in the book called 'The Account of What the Kings of Israel Did'. In that account they wrote about Jehoash's [army's] victories, and their war with [the army of] King Amaziah of Judah. **13** When Jehoash died, he was buried in Samaria where the [other] kings of Israel were buried. Then his son Jeroboam became king. **14** Elisha became very ill. Just before he died, King Jehoash went to Elisha and cried in front of him. [Saying the same words that Elisha had said when Elijah was taken to heaven], he said, "My father/master! My father/master! The chariots of us Israeli people and their drivers [are taking my master away]!" **15** Elisha said to him, "Bring to me a bow and some arrows!" So the king did that. **16** Then Elisha told the king to put his hands on the bow [and prepare to shoot some arrows]. And then Elisha put his own hands on the king's hands. **17** Then Elisha told him, "[Have someone] open that window toward the east." So they opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot!" So the king did. Then Elisha said, "That is the arrow that [indicates that your army] will defeat the Syrian army. Your army will completely defeat their [army] at Aphek [town]." **18** Then Elisha said, "Pick up the other arrows and strike the ground with them!" So the king picked up the arrows and struck the ground three times. **19** But Elisha was angry with him. He exclaimed, "You should have struck the ground five or six times! If you had done that, your army would have defeated the Syrian [army] until they were completely wiped out! But now, [because you struck the ground only three times,] your army will defeat them only three times!" **20** Then Elisha died and was buried. Groups of raiders from Moab came to Israel each year during (spring/the time when the cold season was ending). **21** One year, when some Israeli people were burying a man's body, they saw a group of those raiders. [They were afraid,] so quickly they threw that man's body into the tomb where Elisha [had been buried, and they ran away]. But as soon as the man's body touched Elisha's bones, the dead man became alive again and jumped up! **22** King Hazael of Syria [sent soldiers to] oppress the Israeli people all during the years that Jehoahaz [ruled Judah]. **23** But Yahweh was very kind [DOU] to the Israeli people. He helped them because of the agreement that he had made with [their ancestors] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He did not get rid of the Israelis, and he still has not rejected them. **24** When Hazael the king of Syria died, his son Ben-Hadad became the king. **25** [The army of] King Jehoash of Israel defeated [the army of] King Ben-Hadad three times, and recaptured the cities that Ben-Hadad's army had captured during the time that Jehoash's father Jehoahaz was ruling Israel.

14 After Jehoash had been ruling Israel for almost two years, Joash's son Amaziah became the king of Judah. **2** He was 25 years old when he started to rule, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 29 years. His mother was Jehoaddin; she was from Jerusalem. **3** Amaziah did many things that pleased Yahweh, but he did not do as many things that pleased Yahweh as King David had done. He did some of the good things that his father Joash had done. **4** But, [like his father,] he did not tear down the places for worshipping Yahweh at pagan shrines. The people continued to burn incense [to honor Yahweh] on those hills [instead of in Jerusalem, the place that Yahweh had appointed]. **5** As soon as he was completely in control of his kingdom, he caused to be executed the officials who had murdered his father. **6** But he did not execute their children. He obeyed what was written in the laws that God gave to Moses: "Parents must not be executed for [the crimes/sins committed by] their children, and children must not be executed for [crimes/sins committed by] their parents. People must be executed only for the sins that they themselves [have committed]." **7** Amaziah's soldiers killed 10,000 soldiers of the Edom people-group in the Salt Valley [south of the Dead Sea], and they captured Sela [city] and gave it a new name, Joktheel. That is still its name. **8** Then Amaziah sent messengers to King Jehoash of Israel, saying "Come here and let's talk together." **9** But King Jehoash replied to King Amaziah: "Once a thornbush growing [in the mountains] in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar tree, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son in order that he may marry her.' But a wild animal in Lebanon passed by the thornbush and trampled it. **10** [The meaning of what I am saying is that] your army has defeated the army of Edom, so now you have become very proud. But you should be content with defeating the people of Edom, and allow your soldiers to stay at home. If you cause trouble [by fighting against] us, you will surely [RHQ] cause a disaster to happen to you and to your people." **11** But Amaziah refused to heed Jehoash's message. So he marched with his army to fight against the Israeli army at Beth-Shemesh [city] in Judah. **12** The Israeli army defeated the army of Judah, and all the soldiers of Judah fled and ran back home. **13** Jehoash's army also captured King Amaziah there, and they also marched to Jerusalem and tore down the wall that was around the city, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. That was a section that was about (200 yards/180 meters) long. **14** Jehoash's soldiers seized all the gold and silver that they found, and all the utensils that were in the temple, and all the valuable things that were in the palace, and took them to Samaria. They also took to Samaria some prisoners whom they had captured. **15** [If you want to know about] all the other things that Jehoash did when he was king, including when he [and his army] fought against [the army of] King Amaziah of Judah, they are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **16** Jehoash died [EUP], and he was buried in Samaria, where the other kings of Israel had been buried. Then his son Jeroboam became the king. **17** Amaziah, the king of Judah, lived for 15 more years after Jehoash, the king of Israel, died. **18** [If you want to know more about] everything else that Amaziah did, it is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **19** Some people in Jerusalem plotted against Amaziah, so he fled to Lachish [city]. But they followed him there and killed him. **20** They took his corpse back to Jerusalem and buried it where his ancestors had been buried, in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. **21** Then all the people of Judah appointed Amaziah's son Uzziah, when he was 16 years old, to be their king **22** After his father died, Uzziah's workers captured Elath [city], and it came under the control of Judah again. **23** When Amaziah had been ruling Judah for almost 15 years, Jeroboam became the king of Israel. He ruled in Samaria [city] for 41 years. **24** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He did not stop committing the same kind of sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, committed, sins which led the Israeli people to sin also. **25** His soldiers conquered again some of the territory that had previously belonged to Israel, from Hamath [city] in the north to the Dead Sea in the south. That is what Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis worshiped, promised the prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai, from Gath-Hepher [town], would happen. **26** That happened because Yahweh saw that [the Israelis' enemies were causing] the Israelis [to] suffer very much. And there was absolutely no one [IDM] who would help them. **27** But Yahweh said that he would not destroy Israel completely, so he enabled King Jeroboam to rescue them. **28** [If you want to know more about] everything else that Jeroboam did, [about] his fighting courageously in battles, and [about] his [enabling the Israelis to] capture again Damascus and Hamath [cities], they are written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **29** Jeroboam died [EUP], [and was buried] where the other kings of Israel [were buried], and his son Zechariah became the king.

15 After Jeroboam had been ruling Israel for almost twenty-seven years, Uzziah, the son of King Amaziah of Judah, began to rule. **2** He was 16 years old when he started to rule, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 52 years. His mother was Jecoliah, from Jerusalem. **3** He did things that Yahweh was pleased with, like his father Amaziah had done. **4** But, the places at the pagan shrines where they worshiped

Yahweh were not destroyed, and the people continued to burn incense [to honor Yahweh] at those places [instead of in Jerusalem, the place that Yahweh had appointed]. **5** Yahweh caused Uzziah to become a leper, and he was a leper for the rest of his life. [He was not allowed to live in the palace]. He lived alone in a house, and his son Jotham ruled the country. **6** [If you want to know about] everything else that Uzziah did, it is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **7** Uzziah died [EUP], and they buried him in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David', where his ancestors had been buried. Then his son Jotham officially became the king. **8** After Uzziah had been ruling Judah for almost thirty-eight years, Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, became the king of Israel. He ruled in Samaria [city] for [only] six months. **9** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, like his ancestors had done. He committed the same kind of sins that Jeroboam had committed, sins which led the Israeli people to sin. **10** Then Shallum, the son of Jabesh, made plans to assassinate Zechariah. He killed him at Ibleam [town], and then he became the king. **11** Everything else that Zechariah did is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **12** When Zechariah died, [that ended the dynasty of King Jehu]. That fulfilled what Yahweh said to King Jehu would happen: "Your son and grandson and great-grandson and great-great-grandson will all be kings of Israel." **13** Shallum, the son of Jabesh, became the king of Israel after King Uzziah had been ruling Judah for almost thirty-nine years. But Shallum ruled in Samaria for [only] one month. **14** Then Menahem, the son of Gadi, went up from Tirzah [city] to Samaria and assassinated Shallum. Then Menahem became the king of Israel. **15** Everything else that Shallum did, including his killing King Zechariah, is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **16** While Menahem was ruling in Samaria, he completely destroyed Tappuah [village south of Samaria] and killed all the people who lived there and in the surrounding territory. He did that because the people in that city refused to surrender to him. [With his sword] he even ripped open the bellies of pregnant women. **17** When King Azariah had been ruling Judah for almost thirty-nine years, Menahem, the son of Gadi, became the king of Israel. He ruled in Samaria for ten years. **18** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He committed the same kinds of sins that King Jeroboam had committed, sins that led the people of Israel to sin. He continued to commit those sins for the rest of his life. **19** Then King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria came [with his army] to attack Israel. So Menahem gave him (thirty-eight tons/35,000 kg.) of silver in order that Tiglath-Pileser would help Menahem to continue to be king and rule his country more strongly. **20** Menahem obtained that money from the rich men in Israel. He compelled each of them to contribute 50 pieces of silver. So Tiglath-Pileser [took that money and] went back home. **21** [If you want to know more about] everything that Menahem did, it is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **22** Menahem died [EUP] and was buried, and his son Pekahiah became the king of Israel. **23** When King Uzziah had been ruling Judah for almost 50 years, Menahem's son Pekahiah became the king of Israel. He ruled in Samaria for [only] two years. **24** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He committed the same kind of sins that King Jeroboam had committed, sins which led the people of Israel to sin. **25** Then one of Pekahiah's army commanders whose name was Pekah, the son of Remaliah, planned with 50 men from [the] Gilead [region] to kill Pekahiah. They assassinated him in a fortified place in the king's palace in Samaria. Then Pekah became the king. **26** Everything else that Pekahiah did is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **27** When King Uzziah had been ruling Judah for almost 52 years, Pekah, the son of Remaliah, became the king of Israel. He ruled in Samaria for 20 years. **28** He also did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He committed the same kind of sins that King Jeroboam had committed, sins that led the people of Israel to sin. **29** While Pekah was the king, Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, came [with his army] and captured [the cities of] Ijon, Abel-Beth-Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, and the regions of Gilead, Galilee, and Naphtali. His army forced the Israeli people to leave their country and go to live in Assyria. **30** Then Hoshea, the son of Elah, plotted to kill Pekah. He assassinated him when Uzziah's son Jotham had been ruling Judah for almost 20 years. Then Hoshea became the king of Israel. **31** Everything else that Pekah did is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. **32** When Pekah had been ruling Israel for almost two years, Uzziah's son Jotham began to rule Judah. **33** He was 25 years old when he started to rule, and he ruled from Jerusalem for 16 years. His mother was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok. **34** He did many things that pleased Yahweh, like his father Uzziah had done. **35** But he did not destroy the places on the tops of hills where the people worshiped [Yahweh], and the people continued to burn incense there [to honor Yahweh]. Jotham's workers built the Upper Gate of the temple. **36** [If you want to know more about] everything else that Jotham did, it is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **37** It was during the time that Jotham was the king that Yahweh sent King Rezin of Syria and

King Pekah of Israel [with their armies] to attack Judah. **38** Jotham died [EUP] and was buried where his ancestors had been buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. Then his son Ahaz became the king of Judah.

16 When Pekah had been ruling Israel for almost 17 years, Ahaz, the son of Jotham, became the king of Judah. **2** He was 20 years old when he became the king [of Judah]. He ruled from Jerusalem for 16 years. He did not do things that pleased Yahweh his God, good things like his ancestor King David had done. **3** Instead, he was as sinful as the kings of Israel had been. He even sacrificed his son as an offering to idols. That was worse than the disgusting things that the people who previously lived there had done, people whom Yahweh had expelled as the Israelis were advancing through the land. **4** Ahaz offered sacrifices and burned incense [to honor Yahweh] on the tops of many hills and under many [HYP] big trees, [instead of in Jerusalem as Yahweh had commanded]. **5** While he was the king of Judah, King Rezin of Assyria and King Pekah of Israel [came with their armies] and attacked Jerusalem. They surrounded the city, but they could not conquer it. **6** At that time the [army of the] king of Edom expelled the people of Judah who were living in Elath [city]. Some of the people of Edom started to live there, and they are still living there. **7** King Ahaz sent messengers to King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria, to tell this message to him: "I promise that I will completely do what you tell me to do, [as though] I [was] your son. Please come and rescue us from the armies of Syria and Israel who are attacking my country." **8** Ahaz took the silver and gold that was in the palace and in the temple and sent it to Assyria to be a present/gift for the king of Assyria. **9** So Tiglath-Pileser did what Ahaz requested. His army marched to Damascus and captured it, and they took the people of Damascus as prisoners to live in the capital city of Assyria, and executed [King] Rezin. **10** When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet King Tiglath-Pileser, he saw the altar that was there. So he sent to Uriah, the Supreme Priest [in Jerusalem], a drawing of the altar and a model that was exactly like the altar in Damascus. **11** So Uriah built an altar [in Jerusalem], following the drawing that King Ahaz had sent. Uriah finished the altar before Ahaz returned [to Jerusalem] from Damascus. **12** When the king returned from Damascus, he saw the altar. He went to it **13** and burned animal sacrifices and a grain offering on it. He also poured a wine offering on it and threw on it the blood of the offerings to maintain fellowship with God. **14** The old bronze altar which had been dedicated long ago to Yahweh was between the new altar and the temple, so Ahaz moved it to the north side of his new altar, [which was bigger than the old altar]. **15** Then King Ahaz ordered Uriah: "Each morning put on this new altar the sacrifices that will be completely burned, and in the evening put on it the grain offering, along with my offering and the offerings that the people bring, ones that will be completely burned, and my grain offering and the people's grain and wine offerings. Pour against the sides of the altar the blood of all the animals that are sacrificed. But the old bronze altar will be only for me to use to find out what Yahweh wants me to do." **16** So Uriah did what the king commanded him to do. **17** King Ahaz told his workers to take off the frames of the carts [that were outside the temple] and to take down the basins that were on them. They also took down the bronze tank from the backs of the bronze [statues of the] oxen and put it on a stone foundation. **18** Then to please the king of Assyria, Ahaz had them remove from the temple the roof under which the people walked into the temple on the Sabbath Day, and closed up the private entrance into the temple for the kings of Judah. **19** [If you want to know about] the other things that Ahaz did, they are written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **20** Ahaz died [EUP], and he was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David', where his ancestors had been buried. Then his son Hezekiah became the king.

17 Elah's son Hoshea began to rule Israel after King Ahaz had ruled Judah for twelve years. Hoshea ruled in Samaria for nine years. **2** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, but he did not do as many evil things as the previous kings of Israel had done. **3** [The army of] King Shalmaneser of Assyria attacked and defeated [the army of] King Hoshea. As a result, the Israelis were forced to pay a lot of tribute/taxes to Assyria each year. **4** But several years later, Hoshea secretly planned to rebel against the rulers of Assyria. He sent messengers to So/Osorkon, the king of Egypt, [asking if his army could help the Israelis fight against the army of Assyria]. Hoshea also stopped paying the tribute/taxes that he had been paying to Assyria every year. But the king of Assyria found out about those things, so he told his officers to put Hoshea in prison. **5** Then he [brought the army of] Assyria to Israel, and they attacked everywhere in that land. His army surrounded Samaria [city] for three years. **6** Finally, after King Hoshea had been ruling Israel for nine years, the army of Assyria [MTY] [forcefully entered] the city [and] captured [the people]. They took the Israeli people to Assyria and forced some of them to live in Halah [town]. They forced others to live near the Habor River in Gozan district. They forced others to live in the towns where the Mede people-group lived. **7** Those things happened because the Israeli people had sinned against Yahweh their God. He had rescued their [ancestors] from the

power [MTY] of the king of Egypt and brought them [safely] out of Egypt, but later they began to worship other gods. **8** They imitated the things that the heathen/pagan people-groups did. Those were the groups that Yahweh had expelled as the Israelis occupied their land. The Israeli people also did the evil things that the kings of Israel (introduced/showed to them). **9** The Israeli people also secretly did many things that were not pleasing to Yahweh their God. They built shrines [to worship idols] in all their cities, including small towns and big cities with walls around them. **10** They set up stone pillars [to honor gods], and poles [to worship the goddess] Asherah at the top of every high hill and under every [big] tree. **11** The Israelis burned incense in every place where they worshiped those gods, just like the people-groups who lived there previously had done—the groups that Yahweh had expelled from the land. The Israelis did many wicked things that caused Yahweh to become angry. **12** Yahweh warned them many times that they should not worship idols, but they did it anyway. **13** Yahweh frequently sent his prophets and (seers/those who saw visions from Yahweh) to warn the people of Israel and the people of Judah. The message that Yahweh gave them was, "Turn away from all your evil behavior. Obey my commands and my laws, the laws that I told your ancestors [to obey] and which I told the prophets who served me to tell to you [again]." **14** But the Israeli people would not pay attention. They were stubborn [IDM] just like their ancestors were. Just like their ancestors did, they refused to believe in Yahweh their God. **15** They rejected Yahweh's laws and the agreement that he had made with their ancestors. They ignored Yahweh's warnings. They worshiped worthless idols and as a result they themselves became worthless. Although Yahweh had commanded them not to imitate the evil behavior of the people-groups that lived near them, they disobeyed that command. **16** The Israeli people disobeyed all of Yahweh's commands. They made two metal calves [to worship]. They set up two poles [to worship the goddess] Asherah, and they worshiped [the god] Baal, and the sun, the moon, and the stars. **17** They also burned their own sons and daughters to be sacrifices [to those gods]. They went to fortune-tellers and they practiced sorcery. They continually chose [MET] to do [all kinds of] evil things that caused Yahweh to become angry. **18** So, because Yahweh was very angry with the Israeli people, he allowed [their enemies] to take them away [from their country]. Only the people of the tribe of Judah were left [in the land]. **19** But even the people of Judah did not obey the commands of Yahweh their God. They imitated the evil customs that the Israelis had introduced. **20** So Yahweh rejected all the people of Israel and of Judah. He punished them by allowing the armies of other nations to defeat them [and take them away]. He got rid of all of them. **21** Earlier, when Yahweh allowed the people of Israel to separate/break away from the area [MTY] that King David [had estabished], they chose Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, to be their king. Then Jeroboam enticed the people of Israel to stop worshiping Yahweh [and to worship idols instead]. He led them to commit great sins. **22** And the Israeli people continued to do the evil things that Jeroboam introduced. They did not turn away from those sins, **23** until finally Yahweh got rid of them. That was just what his prophets had warned would happen. The Israeli people were taken away to the land of Assyria, and they still remain there. **24** The king of Assyria [ordered his soldiers to] take [groups of] people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim [cities] to [the] Samaria [region], and to resettle them in the towns there, to take the place of the Israelis [who lived there previously]. Those people took control over [the whole] Samaria [region] and lived in the towns there. **25** But those people [who came from other countries] did not worship Yahweh when they first arrived in Samaria. So Yahweh sent lions to kill some of them. **26** Then those people sent a message to the king of Assyria. They wrote, "We people who have resettled in the towns in Samaria do not know how to worship the God [that the Israelis worshiped] in this land. So he has sent lions among us to kill us, because we have not worshiped him correctly." **27** [When] the king of Assyria [read this letter, he] commanded [his officers], "You brought many priests here from Samaria. Send one of them back there. Tell him to teach the people who are now living there how to worship correctly the God whom the Israelis worshiped in that land." **28** So [the officers did that]. They sent one of the Israeli priests back to Samaria. That priest went to live in Bethel [city], and he taught the people there how to worship Yahweh. **29** But the people [who returned from Babylon and started to live in Samaria and] continued to make their own idols. They placed them in the shrines that the Israelis had built there. The people of each people-group made idols in the cities in which they were living. **30** The people from Babylon made idols to represent their god Succoth-Benoth. The people from Cuthah made idols to represent their god Nergal. The people from Hamath made idols to represent their god Ashima. **31** The people of Avva made idols to represent their gods Nibhaz and Tartak. The people from Sepharvaim sacrificed their own children. They completely burned them [in pits where hot fires were kept burning,] as offerings to their gods Adrammelech and Anammelech. **32** But those people also worshiped Yahweh, and they appointed from among their own groups many people to be priests at the shrines

on the tops of the hills, in order that those priests could offer sacrifices for them there. **33** So they revered Yahweh, but they also worshiped their own gods, just as the people living in the countries from which they had been taken to Samaria did. **34** They still keep their old customs. They really do not worship Yahweh, and they do not obey all the laws and commands that Yahweh gave to the descendants of Jacob, to whom he gave the new name Israel. **35** Yahweh had previously made an agreement with their ancestors, commanding them not to worship other gods or bow down to honor them or do other things to please them or offer sacrifices to them. **36** He had said to them, "You must have an awesome respect for me, Yahweh, the one who brought you out of Egypt with my very great power [DOU]. I am the one whom you must bow down to honor, and I am the one to whom you must offer sacrifices. **37** You must always obey the laws and commands that I [told Moses to] write for you. You must not worship other gods. **38** And you must not forget the agreement that I made with your ancestors. You must not revere other gods. **39** Instead, you must revere me, Yahweh, your God. If you do that, I will rescue you from the power [MTY] of all your enemies." **40** But the people [from those foreign nations] would not heed what Yahweh said. Instead, they continued to adhere to their old customs. **41** So, they worshiped Yahweh, but they also worshiped their idols. And their descendants still do the same thing.

18 After King Hoshea had been ruling Israel for almost three years, Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, began to rule Judah. **2** He was 25 years old when he became the king [of Judah] and he ruled from Jerusalem for 29 years. His mother was Abijah, the daughter of [a man whose name was] Zechariah. **3** Hezekiah did things that Yahweh considered to be right, like his ancestor King David had done. **4** He destroyed the places where people worshiped Yahweh on the tops of hills, and he broke into pieces the stone pillars [for worshiping the goddess Asherah]. He also broke into pieces the bronze [replica/statue of a] snake that Moses had made. He did that because the people had named it Nehushtan, and they were burning incense in front of it to honor it. **5** Hezekiah trusted in Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis [worshiped.] There was no king who ruled Judah before him or after him who was as [devoted to Yahweh as] he was. **6** He remained loyal to Yahweh and never disobeyed him. He carefully obeyed all the commandments that Yahweh had given to Moses. **7** Yahweh always (helped/was with) him. He was successful in everything that he did. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and refused to (pay taxes to him/do what the king of Assyria wanted him to do). **8** His army defeated [the soldiers of] Philistia as far [south] as Gaza [city] and the nearby villages. They conquered the entire area, from the smallest watchtower to the largest cities surrounded by walls. **9** After King Hezekiah had been ruling Judah for almost four years, and when King Hoshea had been ruling Israel for almost seven years, [the army of] King Shalmaneser of Assyria invaded Israel and surrounded Samaria [city]. **10** In the third year they captured the city. That was when Hezekiah has been ruling Judah for almost six years, and when Hoshea had been ruling Israel for almost nine years. **11** The king of Assyria commanded that the people of Israel be taken to Assyria. Some of them were taken to Halah [town], some were taken to a place near the Habor [River] in [the] Gozan [region], and some were taken to cities where the Mede people-group live. **12** That happened because the Israelis did not obey Yahweh their God. They disobeyed the agreement that Yahweh had made with their ancestors, and all the laws that Moses, the man who served Yahweh [very well], had told them to obey. They would not obey those laws; they would not even listen to them. **13** After King Hezekiah had been ruling Judah for almost 14 years, [the army of] King Sennacherib of Assyria attacked all the cities in Judah that had walls around them. They [did not capture Jerusalem, but they] captured all the other cities. **14** King Hezekiah sent a message to Sennacherib, while Sennacherib was in Lachish, saying "What I have done was wrong. Please [tell your soldiers to] stop attacking us. If you do that, I will pay you whatever you tell me to." So the king of Assyria said that Hezekiah must pay to him (ten tons/9,000 kg.) of silver and (one ton/900 kg.) of gold. **15** So Hezekiah gave to him all the silver that was in the temple and that was stored in the king's palace. **16** Hezekiah's men also stripped the gold from the doors of the temple and the gold that he himself had put on the doorposts, and he sent all that gold to the king of Assyria. **17** But the king of Assyria sent a large army with some of his important officials from Lachish [city] to [persuade] King Hezekiah [to surrender]. When they arrived at Jerusalem, they stood alongside the aqueduct/channel in which water flows from the upper pool into Jerusalem, near the road to the field where the women wash clothes. **18** They sent a message requesting King Hezekiah to come to them, but the king sent three of his officials [to talk to them]. He sent Hilkiah's son Eliakim, who supervised the palace; Shebna, the official secretary; and Asaph's son Joah, who communicated the king's messages to the people. **19** One of Sennacherib's important officials told them to take this message to Hezekiah: "This is what the king of Assyria, the great king, says: 'What are you trusting in [to rescue you] [RHQ]? **20** You say that you have weapons to fight us, and some country promises [to help you], [and

that will enable you to defeat us,] but that is only talk [RHQ]. Who do you think will help you to rebel against my [soldiers from Assyria]? **21** Listen to me! You are relying on [the army of] Egypt. But that is like [MET] using a broken reed for a walking stick on which you could lean. But it would pierce the hand of anyone who would lean on it! That is what the king of Egypt would be like for anyone who relied on him [for help]. **22** But perhaps you will say to me, "No, we are (relying on/trusting in) Yahweh our God [to help us]." [I would reply,] "Is he not the one whom you [insulted by] tearing down his shrines and altars and forcing everyone in Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah to worship only in front of the altar [in Jerusalem]?"' **23** So I suggest that you make a deal between you and my master/boss, the king of Assyria. I will give you 2,000 horses, but [I do not think that] you are able to find 2,000 of your men who can ride on them! **24** You are expecting the king of Egypt to send chariots and men riding horses [to assist you]. But they certainly would not [RHQ] be able to resist/defeat even the most insignificant/unimportant official in the army of Assyria! **25** Furthermore, (do you think that we have come to destroy Jerusalem without Yahweh's help?/do not think that we have come to Jerusalem without Yahweh's help.) [RHQ] It is Yahweh himself who told us to come here and destroy this land!" **26** Then Eliakim, Shebna and Joah said to the official from Assyria, "Sir, please speak to us in your Aramaic language, because we understand it. Do not speak to us in our Hebrew language, because the people who are standing on the wall will understand it [and be frightened]." **27** But the official replied, "Do you think [RHQ] that my master sent me to say these things only to you and not to the people who are standing on the wall? [If you reject this message,] the [people in this city] will soon need to eat their own dung and drink their own urine, just like you will, [because there will be nothing more for you to eat or drink]." **28** Then the official stood up and shouted in the Hebrew language [to the people sitting on the wall]. He said, "Listen to this message from the great king, the king of Assyria. He says, **29** 'Do not allow Hezekiah to deceive you. He will not be able to rescue you from my power [MTY]. **30** Do not allow him to persuade you to rely on Yahweh, saying that Yahweh will rescue you, and that the army of Assyria will never capture this city!' **31** "Do not pay attention to what Hezekiah says! This is what the king of Assyria says: 'Come out of the city and surrender to me. If you do that, I will arrange for each of you to drink the juice from your own grapevines, and to eat figs from your own trees, and to drink water from your own wells. **32** You will be able to do that until we come and take you to a land that is like your land—a land where there is grain to make bread and vineyards to [produce grapes for making] wine. It will be a land that has plenty of olive trees and honey. If you do what the king of Assyria commands, you will not die. You will continue to live. 'Do not allow Hezekiah to persuade you to trust in Yahweh saying that he will rescue you! **33** The gods that people of other nations worship have never rescued them from the power [MTY] of the king of Assyria [RHQ]! **34** Why were the gods of Hamath and Arpad [cities] unable to rescue their people from the king of Assyria [RHQ]? What happened to the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah, [towns that we completely destroyed and their gods disappeared] [RHQ]? Did any god rescue Samaria from my power? **35** No, none of the gods of the countries [that my army attacked] rescued their people [RHQ] from me! So why do you think that Yahweh will rescue you people of Jerusalem from my power [MTY]?'" **36** But the people [who were listening] stayed silent. No one said anything, because King Hezekiah had told them, "[When the official from Assyria talks to you,] do not answer him." **37** Then Eliakim the palace administrator and Shebna the court secretary and Joah the royal historian went back to Hezekiah with their clothes torn [because they were extremely distressed], and they told him what the official from Assyria had said.

19 When King Hezekiah heard what they reported, he tore his clothes and put on clothes made of rough cloth [because he was very distressed]. Then he went to the temple [to ask God what to do]. **2** He summoned Eliakim and Shebna and the (older/most important) priests, who were also wearing clothes made of rough sackcloth, and told them to talk to me. **3** He said to them, "Tell this to Isaiah: 'King Hezekiah says that we are having great distress/trouble now. [Other nations are causing] us to be insulted and disgraced. We are like [MET] a woman who is about to give birth to a child, but she does not have the strength that she needs to do it. **4** Perhaps Yahweh your God has heard everything that the official from Assyria said. Perhaps he knows that his boss/master, the king of Assyria, sent him to insult the all-powerful God, and that Yahweh will rebuke/punish him for what he said.' And he requests that you pray for the few of us who are still alive [here in Jerusalem]." **5** When the messengers from Hezekiah came to Isaiah, **6** Isaiah said to them, "[Go back to] your boss/master [and] tell him, 'This is what Yahweh says: Those messengers from the king of Assyria have said evil things about me. But you should not be disturbed because of what they said. **7** Listen to this: I will cause Sennacherib to hear a rumor that will worry him, [that a foreign army is about to attack his country]. So he will return to his own country, and there I will cause him to be assassinated by [men using] swords.'" **8** The official from

Assyria found out that the King of Assyria [and his army] had left Lachish [city], and that they were attacking Libnah, [which is a nearby city]. So the official went there [to report to him what had happened in Jerusalem]. **9** Soon after that, King Sennacherib received a report that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia was leading his army, and was coming to attack them. So before King Sennacherib left Libnah [to fight against the army from Ethiopia], he sent other messengers to King Hezekiah with a letter. **10** [In the letter] he wrote this to Hezekiah: "Do not allow your god on whom you are relying to deceive you by promising that [the city of] Jerusalem will not be captured by my army [MTY]. **11** You have certainly heard what the armies of the kings of Assyria have done to all the other countries. Our armies have completely destroyed them. So, (do you think that you will escape?/do not think that your god will save you!) [RHQ] **12** Did the gods of the nations that were about to be destroyed by the armies of the previous kings of Assyria rescue them? Did those gods rescue the people in the Gozan region and in Haran and Rezeph [cities in northern Syria] and the people of Eden who had been (deported/forced to go) to Tel-Assar [city]? None of the gods of those cities were able to rescue them. **13** What happened to the kings of Hamath and Arpad and Sepharvaim and Ivvah [cities] [RHQ]? [Most of them are dead, and the other people were deported]!" **14** Hezekiah took the letter that the messengers gave him, and he read it. Then he went up to the temple and spread out the letter in front of Yahweh. **15** Then Hezekiah prayed, "Yahweh, the God whom to whom we Israelis belong, you are seated on your throne above the [statues of] creatures with wings, [above the Sacred Chest]. Only you are truly God. You rule all the kingdoms on this earth. You are the one who created [everything on] the earth and [in] the sky. **16** So, Yahweh, please listen to what I am saying, and look [at what is happening]. And listen to what King Sennacherib has said to insult you, the all-powerful God. **17** "Yahweh, it is true that [the armies of] the kings of Assyria have completely destroyed many nations, and ruined their land. **18** And they have thrown the idols of those nations into fires and burned them. But [that was not difficult to do, because] they were not gods. They were only statues made of wood and stone, idols that were shaped by humans, [and that is why they were destroyed easily]. **19** So now, Yahweh our God, please rescue us from the power [MTY] [of the king of Assyria], in order that the people in all the kingdoms of the world will know that you, Yahweh, are the only one who is truly God." **20** Then Isaiah sent this message to Hezekiah: "This is what Yahweh, the God to whom we Israelis belong, says: 'I have heard what you prayed to me about Sennacherib, the king of Assyria. **21** This is what I say to him: "The people of Jerusalem [MTY] despise you and make fun of you. They wag/shake their heads to mock you while you flee from here. **22** Who do you think that you are despising and ridiculing? Who do you think you were shouting at? Who do you think you were looking at very proudly/arrogantly? It was I, the holy God whom the Israelis worship. **23** The messengers that you sent made fun of me. You said, 'With my many chariots I have gone to the highest mountains, even to the highest mountains in Lebanon. We have cut down its tallest cedar trees and its nicest pine/cyprus trees. We have been to the most distant/remote peaks and to its dense forests. **24** We have dug wells in other countries and drank water from them. And by marching through [MTY] the streams of Egypt, we dried them all up [HYP]!"' **25** ['But I reply], "Have you never heard that long ago I determined [that those things would happen]? I planned it long ago, and now I have been causing it to happen. I planned that your army would have [the power to] capture many cities that were surrounded by high walls, and cause them to become piles of rubble. **26** The people who lived in those cities have no power, and as a result they became dismayed and discouraged. They are as frail as plants and grass in the fields, as frail as grass that grows on the roofs of houses and is scorched by the hot east wind. **27** "But I know [everything about you]. I know when you are in your house and when you go outside; I also know that you are (raging/speaking very angrily) against me. **28** So, because you have raged against me, and because I have heard [MTY] you speak very proudly/arrogantly, [it will be as though] I will put a hook in your nose and an iron (bit/piece of metal) in your mouth [in order that I can lead you where I want you to go], and I will force you to return [to your own country] on the same road on which you came here, [without conquering Jerusalem]." ' **29** Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "This is what will happen to prove [that I am telling the truth]: This year and next year you [and your people] will be able to harvest only (wild grain/grain that grows without having been planted). But the following year, you [Israelis] will be able to plant grain and harvest it, and to plant vineyards and eat the grapes that you harvest. **30** The people [MTY] in Judah who remain alive will prosper and have many children; they will be like plants whose roots go deep down into the ground and which produce much [MET]. **31** There will be many people in Jerusalem [DOU] who will survive, because Yahweh, the commander of the armies of angels in heaven, wants [PRS] it to happen. **32** So this is what Yahweh, says about the king of Assyria: 'His armies will not enter this city; they will not even shoot any arrows into it! His soldiers will not march outside the city gates carrying shields, and they

will not even build high mounds of dirt against [the city walls] [to enable them to attack the city]. **33** Their king will return to his own country on the same road on which he came here. He will not enter this city! [That will happen because] I, Yahweh have said it! **34** I will defend this city and prevent it from being destroyed. I will do this for the sake of my own reputation and because of what I promised to King David, who served me well.'" **35** That night, an angel from Yahweh went out to where the army of Assyria had put up their tents, and killed 185,000 of their soldiers! When the rest of their soldiers woke up the next morning, they saw that there were corpses everywhere! **36** Then King Sennacherib left and went home to Nineveh, [the capital of Assyria]. **37** One day, when he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, two of his sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, killed him with their swords. Then they escaped and went to [the] Ararat [region, northwest of Nineveh]. And another of Sennacherib's sons, Esarhaddon, became the king of Assyria.

20 About that time, Hezekiah became very ill. [He thought that he] was about to die. Isaiah the prophet came to him and said, "This is what Yahweh says: 'You should tell the people in your palace what you want them to do after you die, because you are not going to recover from this illness. You are going to die.'" **2** Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall and prayed, **3** "Yahweh, do not forget that I have always served you faithfully, and I have done things that pleased you." Then Hezekiah started to cry loudly. **4** Isaiah left the king, but before he had crossed the middle courtyard of the palace, Yahweh gave him a message **5** which said, "Go back to Hezekiah, the ruler of my people, and say to him, 'I, Yahweh, the God whom your ancestor King David [worshiped], have heard what you prayed. And I have seen your tears. So, listen: I will heal you. Two days from now you will [be able to] go up to my temple. **6** I will enable you to live for 15 more years. And I will rescue you and this city again from the power [MTY] of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for the sake of my own reputation and because of what I promised King David, who served me [well].'" **7** So Isaiah [returned to the palace and told Hezekiah what Yahweh had said. Then he] [to Hezekiah's servants], "Bring a paste made of boiled figs. Put some of it on his boil, and he will get well." **8** Then Hezekiah replied to Isaiah, "What will Yahweh do to prove that he will heal me and that two days from now I will be able to go up to the temple?" **9** Isaiah replied, "Yahweh will do something that will prove to you that he will do what he promised. Do you want him to cause the shadow on the stairway/sundial to go back ten steps/degrees, or to go forward ten steps/degrees?" **10** Hezekiah replied, "It is easy to cause the shadow to move forward, [because that is what it always does]. Tell him to cause it to move backward ten steps/degrees." **11** So Isaiah prayed earnestly to Yahweh, and Yahweh caused the shadow to go backward ten steps/degrees on the stairway/sundial that King Ahaz had made (OR, that workers had built for King Ahaz). **12** At that time, King Merodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan the [previous] King of Babylonia, heard a report that King Hezekiah had been very sick. So he wrote some letters and gave them to some messengers to take to Hezekiah, along with a gift. **13** [When the messengers arrived], Hezekiah welcomed them gladly. Then he showed them everything that was in his (treasure houses/places where very valuable things were stored)—the silver and gold, the spices, the nice-smelling olive oil, and all the weapons [for his soldiers]. He showed them all the [valuable] things in his storerooms and everywhere else in his kingdom [HYP]; he showed them everything. **14** Then the prophet Isaiah went to Hezekiah and asked him, "Where did those men come from, and what did they say to you?" Hezekiah replied, "They came from a country very far from here. They came from Babylonia." **15** Isaiah asked, "What did they see in your palace?" Hezekiah replied, "They saw everything. I showed them absolutely everything that I own—all my valuable things." **16** [Isaiah knew that Hezekiah had done a very foolish thing]. So Isaiah said to him, "Listen to what Yahweh says to you. **17** There will be a time when everything that is still in your palace, all the valuable things that were put there by you and your ancestors, will be carried away to Babylon. There will be nothing left here! [That is what] Yahweh says [to you] **18** Furthermore, some of your own descendants will be forced to go there, and they will be castrated in order that they may become servants in the palace of the King of Babylon." **19** Then Hezekiah replied to Isaiah, "That message from Yahweh that you have given to me is good." He said that because he was thinking, "Even if that happens, there will be peace and security [in Israel] all the rest of my life." **20** [If you want to know more about] [RHQ] all the other things that Hezekiah did, about his brave deeds in battle, about his ordering a reservoir to be built in the city and a tunnel [to be dug] to bring water into the reservoir, they are all written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **21** Later Hezekiah died [EUP], and his son Manasseh became the king.

21 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to rule. He ruled Judah for 55 years from Jerusalem. His mother was Hephzibah. **2** He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He imitated the disgusting things that were formerly done by the people of the nations that Yahweh had expelled from the land of Israel as his people advanced

[through the land]. 3 He commanded his workers to rebuild the shrines [for worshiping Yahweh] that his father Hezekiah had destroyed [because they were not in the place that Yahweh had said they should worship him]. He directed his workers to build altars for worshiping Baal. He made [a statue of the goddess] Asherah, like Ahab the king of Israel had done [previously]. And Manasseh worshiped [DOU] the stars. 4 He directed his workers to build altars [for worshiping foreign gods] in the temple of Yahweh, about which Yahweh had said, "It is here in Jerusalem where I want people to worship [MTY] me, forever." 5 He directed that altars for worshiping the stars be built in both of the courtyards outside the temple. 6 He even sacrificed his own son by burning [him in a fire]. He performed rituals to practice sorcery and magic rituals. He also went to people who consulted the spirits of dead people to find out what would happen in the future. He did many things that Yahweh considered to be extremely evil, things that caused Yahweh to become very angry. 7 He placed the statue of the goddess Asherah in the temple, the place about which Yahweh had said to David and his son Solomon, "My temple will be here in Jerusalem. This is the city that I have chosen from all the territory of the twelve tribes of Israel, where I want people to worship me, forever. 8 And if the Israeli people obey all my commands and all the laws that I gave to Moses, the man who served me [very well], I will not again force them to leave this land that I gave to their ancestors." 9 But the people did not heed Yahweh. And Manasseh persuaded them to commit sins that are more evil than the sins that were committed by the people of the nations that Yahweh had expelled from the land as the Israeli people advanced. 10 [These are some of the things that] the prophets said many times, messages that Yahweh had given them: 11 "Manasseh, the king of Judah, has done these abominable things, things that are much worse than the things that the Amor people-group did in this land long ago. He has persuaded the people of Judah to sin by [worshiping] idols. 12 Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh, the God whom you Israeli people worship, say: I will the cause the people of Jerusalem and the rest of Judah to experience great disasters. It will be terrible, with the result that everyone who hears about it will be stunned [MTY]. 13 I will judge and punish [MET] the people of Jerusalem like I punished the family of King Ahab [of Israel]. I will (wipe Jerusalem clean/remove all the people from Jerusalem), like [MET] people wipe a plate and then turn it upside down [after they have finished eating, to show that they are now satisfied]. 14 And I will abandon the people who remain alive, and I will allow their enemies to conquer them and steal everything valuable from their land. 15 I will do this because my people have done things that I consider to be very evil, things which have caused me to become very angry. They have caused me to become angry continually, ever since their ancestors left Egypt." 16 Manasseh [commanded his officials to] kill many innocent people in Jerusalem, with the result that their blood flowed in the streets. He did this in addition to persuading the people of Judah to sin against Yahweh [by worshiping idols]. 17 [If you want to know more about] all the things that Manasseh did, they are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. 18 Manasseh died [EUP] and was buried in the garden outside his palace, the garden that Uzza [had made]. Then Manasseh's son Amon became the king. 19 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king. He ruled Judah from Jerusalem for [only] two years. His mother's name was Meshullemeth. She was from Jotbah [town], and was the granddaughter of Haruz. 20 Amon did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, like his father Manasseh had done. 21 He imitated the behavior of his father, and he worshiped the same idols that his father had worshiped [DOU]. 22 He abandoned Yahweh, the God whom his ancestors [had worshiped], and did not behave as Yahweh wanted him to. 23 Then one day some of his officials plotted to kill him. They assassinated him in the palace. 24 But then the people of Judah killed all those who had assassinated King Amon, and they appointed his son Josiah to be their king. 25 [If you want to read about] [RHQ] the other things that Amon did, they are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. 26 Amon was also buried in the tomb in the garden that Uzza [had made]. Then Amon's son Josiah became the king.

22 Josiah was eight years old when he became the king [of Judah]. He ruled from Jerusalem for 31 years. His mother was Jedidah and his grandfather was Adaiah from Bozkath [town]. 2 Josiah did things that were pleasing to Yahweh and conducted his life as his ancestor King David had done. He completely obeyed [IDM] all the laws of God. 3 After Josiah had been ruling for almost 18 years, he sent his secretary Shaphan, the son of Azaliah and grandson of Meshullam, to the temple with these instructions: 4 "Go to Hilkiah, the Supreme Priest, and tell him to give me a report, telling me how much money the men who guard the doors of the temple have collected from the people [as offerings]. 5 Then tell him to give all that money to the men who are supervising the work of repairing the temple. 6 They must give that money to the carpenters, the builders, and the masons, and they should also buy the timber and the stones that they will use to repair the temple. 7 But the men who supervise the work will not be required to make a report on the money that is given to them, saying what

they spent it for, because those men are completely honest." **8** [After Shaphan said that to Hilkiah] the king's secretary, Hilkiah said to Shaphan, "I have found in the temple a scroll on which is written the laws [that God gave to Moses]!" Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan, and he started to read it. **9** Then Shaphan [took the scroll] to the king and said to him, "Your temple guards have taken the money that was in the temple, and they have given it to the men who will supervise the work of repairing the temple." **10** Then Shaphan said to the king, ["I have brought to you] a scroll that Hilkiah gave to me." And Shaphan started to read it to the king. **11** When the king heard the laws that were written in the scroll that Shaphan was reading to him, he tore his clothes [because he was very dismayed]. **12** Then he gave these instructions to Hilkiah, to Shaphan's son Ahikam, to Micaiah's son Achbor, and to Asaiah, the king's special advisor: **13** "Go and ask Yahweh for me and for all the people of Judah, about what is written in this scroll that has been found. Because [it is clear that] Yahweh is very angry with us because our ancestors disobeyed what was written on this scroll, things that we [should have done]." **14** So Hilkiah, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to (consult/talk with) a woman whose name was Huldah, who was a prophetess who lived in the newer/northern part of Jerusalem. Her husband Shallum, son of Tikvah and grandson of Harhas, took care of the robes that were worn [in the temple] (OR, [by the king]). [Those five men told her about the scroll]. **15** She said to them, "This is what Yahweh the God whom we Israelis [worship] says: 'Go back and tell the king who sent you **16** that this is what Yahweh says: "Listen to this carefully. I am going to cause all the people who live here in Jerusalem to experience a disaster, which is what was written in the scroll that the king has read. **17** I will do that because they have abandoned me, and they burn incense to [honor] other gods. They have caused me to become very angry by [worshiping] the idols that they have made (OR, by all the wicked things that they have done), and my anger is like [MET] a fire that will not be put out." **18** The king of Judah sent you to inquire what I, Yahweh, wanted you to do, so this is what you should say to him: "Because you have heeded what was written in the scroll, **19** and you repented and humbled yourself when you heard what I said to warn you [about what would happen to] this city and the people who live here and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you. I said that I would cause this city to be abandoned. It will be a city whose name people will use when they curse someone. But I have heard what you prayed, **20** so I will allow you to die [EUP] and be buried peacefully. I will cause the people who live here to experience a terrible disaster, but you will not [be alive to] see it."'" After the men heard that, they returned to King Josiah and gave him that message.

23 Then the king summoned all the elders of Jerusalem and [of the other places in] Judah. **2** They went together to the temple, along with the priests and the prophets, and many other [HYP] people, from the most important people to the least important people. And while they listened, the king read to them all of the laws that Moses had written. He read from the scroll that had been found in the temple. **3** Then the king stood next to the pillar [where the kings stood when they made important announcements], and while Yahweh was listening, he repeated his promise to sincerely obey [DOU] all of Yahweh's commands and regulations [DOU]. He also promised to (fulfill the conditions of/do what was written in) the agreement he made with Yahweh. And all the people also promised to obey the agreement. **4** Then the king commanded Hilkiah the Supreme Priest and all the other priests who assisted him and the men who guarded the entrance to the temple to bring out from the temple all the items that people had been using to worship Baal, the goddess Asherah, and the stars. [After they carried them out,] they burned all those things outside the city near the Kidron Valley. Then they took all the ashes to Bethel, [because that city was already considered to be desecrated/unholy]. **5** There were many pagan priests that the previous kings of Judah had appointed to burn incense on the altars on the tops of hills in Judah. They had been offering sacrifices to Baal, to the sun, the moon, the planets, and the stars. The king stopped them from doing those things. **6** He [commanded that] the statue of the goddess Asherah [be] taken out of the temple. Then they took it outside Jerusalem, down to the Kidron Brook, and burned it. Then they pounded the ashes to powder and scattered that over the graves in the public cemetery. **7** He also destroyed the rooms in the temple where the temple male prostitutes lived. That was where women wove robes that were used to worship the goddess Asherah. **8** Josiah also brought [to Jerusalem] all the priests who were offering sacrifices in the other cities in Judah. He also desecrated the places on the tops of hills where the priests had burned incense [to honor idols], from Geba [in the north] to Beersheba [in the south]. Those priests were not allowed to offer sacrifices in the temple, but they [were allowed to] eat the unleavened bread that the priests [who worked in the temple] ate. He also [commanded that] the altars that were dedicated to the goat demons near the gate built by Joshua, the mayor of Jerusalem, [be] destroyed. Those altars were at the left of the main gate into the city. **10** Josiah also desecrated

the place named Topheth, in the Hinnom Valley, in order that no one could offer his son or daughter there to be completely burned for a sacrifice to [the god] Molech. **11** He also removed the horses that the [previous] kings of Judah had dedicated to worshiping the sun, and he burned the chariots that were used in that worship. Those horses and chariots were kept in the courtyard outside the temple, near the entrance to the temple, and near the room where [one of Josiah's] officials, whose name was Nathan-Melech, lived. **12** Josiah also commanded his servants to tear down the altars that the previous kings of Judah had built on the roof of the palace, above the room where King Ahaz had stayed. They also tore down the altars that had been built by King Manasseh in the two courtyards outside the temple. He commanded that they be smashed to pieces and thrown down into the Kidron Valley. **13** He also commanded that the altars that King Solomon had built east of Jerusalem, south of Olive Tree Hill, be desecrated. Solomon had built them for the worship of the disgusting idols—the [statue of the goddess] Astarte [worshiped by the people in] Sidon [city], Chemosh the god of the Moab people-group, and Molech the god of the Ammon people-group. **14** They also broke into pieces the stone pillars that the Israeli people worshiped, and cut down the [pillars that honored the goddess] Asherah, and they scattered the ground there with human bones [to desecrate it]. **15** Furthermore, he commanded them to tear down the place of worship at Bethel which had been built by King Jeroboam, the king who persuaded the people of Israel to sin. They tore down the altar. Then they broke its stones into pieces and pounded them to become powder. They also burned the statue [of the goddess] Asherah. **16** Then Josiah looked around and saw some tombs there on the hill. He commanded his men to take the bones out of those tombs and burn them on the altar. By doing that, he desecrated the altar. That was what a prophet had predicted many years before when Jeroboam was standing close to that altar at a festival. Then Josiah looked up and saw the tomb of the prophet who had predicted that. **17** Josiah asked, "Whose tomb is that?" The people of Bethel replied, "It is the tomb of the prophet who came from Judah and predicted that these things that you have just now done to this altar would happen." **18** Josiah replied, "Allow his tomb to remain as it is. Do not remove the prophet's bones from the tomb." So the people did not remove those bones, or the bones of the other prophet, the one who had come from Samaria. **19** In every city in Israel, at Josiah's command, they tore down the shrines that had been built by the previous kings of Israel, which had caused Yahweh to become very angry. He did to all those shrines/altars the same thing that he had done to the altars at Bethel. **20** He ordered that all the priests who offered sacrifices on the altars on the tops of hills must be killed on those altars. Then he burned human bones on every one of those altars [to desecrate them]. Then he returned to Jerusalem. **21** Then the king commanded all the people to celebrate the Passover Festival to honor Yahweh their God, which was written in the law of Moses that they should do [every year]. **22** During all the years that leaders ruled Israel and during all the years that kings had ruled Israel and Judah, they had not celebrated that festival. **23** But now, after Josiah had been ruling for almost 18 years, to [honor] Yahweh they celebrated the Passover Festival in Jerusalem. **24** Furthermore, Josiah got rid of all the people in Jerusalem and other places in Judah who practiced sorcery and those who requested the spirits of dead people [to tell them what they should do]. He also removed from Jerusalem and from the other places in Judah all the household idols and all the other idols and abominable things. He did those things in order to obey what had been written in the scroll that Hilkiah had found in the temple. **25** Josiah was totally devoted to Yahweh. There had never been [in Judah or Israel] a king like him. He obeyed all the laws of Moses. And there has never since then been a king like Josiah. **26** But Yahweh had become extremely angry with the people of Judah because of all the things that [King] Manasseh had done to infuriate him, and he continued to be very angry. **27** He said, "I will do to Judah what I have done to Israel. I will banish the people of Judah, with the result that they will never enter my presence again. And I will reject Jerusalem, the city that I chose [to belong to me], and I will abandon the temple, the place where I said that I [MTY] should be worshiped." **28** [If you want to know more about] [RHQ] all the other things that Josiah did, they are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **29** While Josiah was the king of Judah, King Neco of Egypt led his army north to the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria. King Josiah tried to stop the army of Egypt at Megiddo [city], but Josiah was killed in a battle there. **30** His officials placed his corpse in a chariot and took it back to Jerusalem, where it was buried in his own tomb, a tomb where the other previous kings had not been buried. Then the people of Judah poured [olive] oil on [the head of] Josiah's son Joahaz, to appoint him to be the new king. **31** Joahaz was 23 years old when he became the king [of Judah], but he ruled from Jerusalem for [only] three months. His mother was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah [city]. **32** Joahaz did many things that Yahweh said were evil, just like many of his ancestors had done. **33** King Neco's [army came from Egypt and captured him and] tied him up with chains and took him as a

prisoner to Riblah [town] in Hamath [district], to prevent him from continuing to rule in Jerusalem. Neco forced the people of Judah to pay to him (7,500 pounds/3,400 kg.) of silver and (75 pounds/34 kg.) of gold. **34** King Neco appointed another son of Josiah, Eliakim, to be the new king, and he changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. Then he took Joahaz to Egypt, and later Joahaz died there in Egypt. **35** King Jehoiakim collected a tax from the people [of Judah]. He collected more from the rich people and less from the poor people. He collected silver and gold from them, in order to pay to the king of Egypt what he commanded them to give. **36** Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became the king [of Judah], and he ruled from Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother was Zebidah, the daughter of Pedaiah from Rumah [town]. **37** He did many things that Yahweh says are evil, like his ancestors had done.

24 While Jehoiakim was ruling [Judah, the army of] King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded Judah. [They defeated the Judean army, and as a result,] Jehoiakim was required to pay a lot of tribute/taxes to King Nebuchadnezzar. But after three years, Jehoiakim rebelled. **2** Then Yahweh sent raiders from Babylonia and Syria, and from the Moab and Ammon people-groups, to attack the people of Judah and get rid of them, just as Yahweh had told his prophets to warn the people would happen. **3** These things happened to the people of Judah according to what Yahweh commanded. [He had decided] to get rid of the people of Judah because of the many sins that King Manasseh [had committed]. **4** Manasseh had even caused many innocent people in Jerusalem to be killed, and Yahweh would not forgive that. **5** The other things that happened while Jehoiakim was king, and all the things that he did, are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. **6** When Jehoiakim died, his son Jehoiachin became the king. **7** [The army of] the king of Babylon [defeated the army of Egypt, and] took control of all the area that the Egyptians formerly controlled, from the brook [at the border] of Egypt [in the south] to the Euphrates River [in the north]. So [the army of] the king of Egypt did not return [to attack Judah] again. **8** Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he became the king of Judah. His mother's name was Nehushta; she was the daughter of a man from Jerusalem named Elnathan. Jehoiachin ruled in Jerusalem for [only] three months. **9** Jehoiachin did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, just as his father had done. **10** [While Jehoiachin was king,] some officers of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came [along with the whole Babylonian army] to Jerusalem, and they surrounded the city. **11** While they were doing that, Nebuchadnezzar himself came to the city. **12** Then King Jehoiachin and his mother and his advisors and important officers and palace officials all surrendered to the Babylonian army. These thngs happened when Nebuchadnezzar had been king for eight years. He arrested Jehoiachin and took him to Babylon. **13** Just as Yahweh had said would happen, Nebuchadnezzar's [soldiers] took [to Babylon] all the valuable things from Yahweh's temple and from the king's palace. They cut apart all the gold items that King Solomon had put in the temple. **14** They took from Jerusalem [to Babylon] 10,000 people, including the important officials and the best soldiers and the people who made and repaired things that were made of metal. Only the very poor people were left in Judah. **15** Nebuchadnezzar's soldiers also took to Babylon Jehoiachin's wives and officials, his mother, and [all] the important people. **16** They also took to Babylon 7,000 of the best soldiers and 1,000 men who knew how to make and repair things that are made from metal. All of these people whom they took were strong and able to fight in wars. **17** Then the king of Babylon appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Mattaniah, to be the king [of Judah], and he changed Mattaniah's name to Zedekiah. **18** When Zedekiah was twenty-one years old, he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of a man named Jeremiah from Libnah [town]. **19** But Zedekiah did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, just as Jehoiakim had done. **20** Yahweh was very angry. So (and finally/after he had been patient a long time) he expelled the people of Jerusalem and [the other places in] Judah and sent them to Babylon. [That is what happened when] Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25 On January 15 of the ninth year that Zedekiah had been ruling, King Nebuchadnezzar arrived with his whole army, and they surrounded Jerusalem. They built ramps [made of dirt against the walls of the city], so that they could climb up the ramps and attack the city. **2** They did that for two years. **3** After Zedekiah had been ruling for eleven years, the (famine/shortage of food) had become very bad. All their food was gone. **4** On July 18 of that year, the Babylonian soldiers broke through part of the city wall, [and that enabled them to enter the city]. All the soldiers of Judah [wanted to escape]. But the Babylonian soldiers surrounded the city, so the [king and] the soldiers of Judah waited until it was nighttime. Then they fled through the gate that was between the two walls near the king's park. They ran across the fields and started to go down to the Jordan [River] Valley. **5** But the Babylonian soldiers chased/ran after them. They caught the king when he was by himself in the valley near the Jordan River. He was by himself because all his soldiers had abandoned him. **6** The Babylonian soldiers

took King Zedekiah to Riblah [city] in Babylon. There the king of Babylon decided what they would do to punish him. **7** There the king of Babylon forced Zedekiah to watch as the Babylonian soldiers killed all of Zedekiah's sons. Then they gouged out Zedekiah's eyes. They put bronze chains on [his hands and feet] and then they took him to Babylon. **8** On August 14 of that year, after Nebuchadnezzar had been ruling for 19 years, Nebuzaradan arrived in Jerusalem. He was one of king Nebuchadnezzar's officials and captain of the men that guarded the king. **9** He [commanded his soldiers to] burn down the temple of Yahweh, the king's palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem. So they burned down all the important buildings in the city. **10** Then Nebuzaradan supervised all the soldiers of the Babylonian army as they tore down the walls of Jerusalem. **11** Then he and his soldiers took to Babylon the people who were still living in the city, the other people [who lived in that area], and the soldiers who had previously surrendered to the Babylonian army. **12** But Nebuzaradan allowed some of the very poor people to stay in Judah to take care of the vineyards and [to plant crops in] the fields. **13** The Babylonian soldiers broke into pieces the bronze pillars, the bronze carts with wheels, and the huge bronze basin, all of which were in the temple courtyard, and they took all the bronze to Babylon. **14** They also took the pots, the shovels, the instruments for (snuffing out/extinguishing) [the wicks of] the lamps, the dishes, and all the other bronze items that the Israeli priests had used for offering sacrifices at the temple. **15** The soldiers also took away the (firepans/trays for carrying burning coals), the basins, and [all the other] items made of pure gold or pure silver. **16** The bronze from the two pillars, the carts with wheels, and the huge basin were very heavy; they could not be weighed. (Those things had been made/A man named Hiram had made these things) for the temple when Solomon [was the king of Israel]. **17** Each of the pillars was (27 feet/8 meters) tall. The bronze capital/top of each pillar was (7-1/2 feet/2.3 meters) high. They were each decorated all around with something that looked like a net made of bronze chains connecting bronze pomegranates. **18** Nebuzaradan took with him to Babylon Seraiah the Supreme Priest, Zephaniah his assistant, and the three men who guarded the entrance [to the temple]. **19** And they found people who were still hiding in Jerusalem. From those people he took one officer from the Judean army, five of the king's advisors, the chief secretary of the army commander who was in charge of recruiting men to join the army, and 60 other important Judean men. **20** Nebuzaradan took them all to the king of Babylon at Riblah [city]. **21** There at Riblah, in Hamath province, the king of Babylon commanded that they all be executed. That is what happened when the people of Judah were (taken forcefully/exiled) from their land [to Babylon]. **22** Then King Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah, who was the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, to be the governor of the people who were still living in Judah. **23** When all the army captains of Judah and their soldiers who had not surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar found out that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah to be the governor, they met with him at Mizpah [town]. These army captains were Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Kareah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth from Netophah [town], and Jaazaniah from the Maacah region. **24** Gedaliah solemnly promised them [that the officials from Babylon were not planning to harm them]. He said, "You may live in this land [without being afraid] and serve the king of Babylon, and [if you do], everything will go well for you." **25** But in October of that year, Ishmael, whose grandfather Elishama was one of the relatives of the descendants of King David, went to Mizpah along with ten other men and assassinated/killed Gedaliah and all the men who were with him. There were also men from Judah and men from Babylon whom they assassinated. **26** Then many [HYP] of the people from Judah, important people and unimportant ones, and the army captains, were very afraid of [what] the Babylonians [would do to them], so they fled to Egypt. **27** Thirty-seven years after King Jehoiachin of Judah was taken to Babylon, [Nebuchadnezzar's son] Evil-Merodach became the king of Babylon. He was kind to Jehoiachin, and on April 2 of that year, he released/freed Jehoiachin from prison. **28** He always spoke kindly to Jehoiachin and honored him more than the other kings who had been taken/exiled to Babylon. **29** He gave Jehoiachin new clothes to replace the clothes that he had been wearing in prison, and he allowed Jehoiachin to eat at the king's table every day for the rest of his life. **30** The king of Babylon also gave him money every day, so that he could buy the things that he needed. The king continued to do that until Jehoiachin died.

1 Chronicles

1 [The first person God created was Adam]. Adam's [son was] Seth. [Seth's son was] Enosh. [Enosh's son was] Kenan. **2** [Kenan's son was] Mahalalel. [Mahalalel's son was] Jared. [Jared's son was] Enoch. **3** [Enoch's son was] Methuselah. [Methusalah's son was] Lamech. [Lamech's son was] Noah. **4** [Noah's sons were] Shem, Ham, and Japheth. **5** The sons (OR, descendants) of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. **6** The sons (OR, descendants) of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. **7** The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim. **8** The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim (OR, Egypt), Put, and Canaan. **9** The descendants of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons (OR, descendants) of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. **10** Another descendant of Cush was Nimrod. When he grew up, he became a mighty warrior on the earth. **11** Mizraim (OR, Egypt) was the ancestor of the Lud people-group, the Anam people-group, the Lehab people-group, the Naphtuh people-group, **12** the Pathrus people-group, the Casluh people-group, and the Caphtor people-group. The people of [the] Philistia [region] were descended from the Casluh people-group. **13** Canaan's first son was Sidon. He was also the ancestor of the Heth people-group, **14** the Jebus people-group, the Amor people-group, the Girgash people-group, **15** the Hiv people-group, the Ark people-group, the Sin people-group, **16** the Arvad people-group, the Zemar people-group, and the Hamath people-group. **17** The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. Aram's sons were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech. **18** Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, who was the father of Eber. **19** Eber had two sons. One was named Peleg [which sounds like the word that means 'divided'] because during the time that he lived, [the people on] the earth were divided [into various language groups]. Peleg's [younger] brother was Joktan. **20** Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, **21** Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, **22** Obal, Abimael, Sheba, **23** Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. **24** The descendants of Shem, [in order from him to Abraham], were Arphaxad, Shelah, **25** Eber, Peleg, Reu, **26** Serug, Nahor, Terah, **27** and Abram, whose [name was later changed to] Abraham. **28** Abraham's sons were Isaac and Ishmael. **29** [The son of Abraham's slave wife Hagar was Ishmael.] Ishmael's [twelve] sons were Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, **30** Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, **31** Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. **32** [After]'s [wife Sarah died, he took another wife named] Keturah. The sons of Abraham and Keturah were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. Jokshan's sons were Sheba and Dedan. **33** Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. **34** The son of Abraham [and his wife Sarah] was Isaac, and Isaac's sons were Esau and [Jacob, whose name was later changed to] Israel. **35** The sons of Esau were Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. **36** The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho (OR, Zephi), Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek. **37** Reuel's sons were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. **38** [Another descendant of Esau was Seir. His descendants lived in the Edom region]. Seir's sons were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. **39** Lotan's sons were Hori and Homam, and Lotan's sister was Timna. **40** Shobal's sons were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. Zibeon's sons were Aiah and Anah. **41** Anah's son was Dishon. 1 Dishon's sons were Hemdan (OR, Hamran), Eshban, Ithran, and Keran. **42** Ezer's sons were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan (OR, Jaakan). Dishan's sons were Uz and Aran. **43** [These are the names of] the kings that ruled [the] Edom [region] before any kings ruled over Israel: Bela, the son of Beor, was king in Edom, and the name of the city [in which he lived] was Dinhabah. **44** When Bela died, Jobab, the son of Zerah from Bozrah [city], became the king. **45** When Jobab died, Husham became the king. He was from the region where the Teman people-group lived. **46** When Husham died, Hadad, the son of Bedad, became the king. He [ruled in] Avith city. Hadad's [army] defeated [the army of the] Midian [people-group] in [the] Moab [region]. **47** When Hadad died, Samlah became the king. He was from Masrekah [town]. **48** When Samlah died, Shaul became the king. He was from Rehoboth [city] along the [Euphrates] river. **49** When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan, the son of Achbor, became the king. **50** When Baal-Hanan died, Hadad became the king. He was from Pau city. His wife's name was Mehetabel; she was the daughter of Matred and the granddaughter of Me-Zahab. **51** Then Hadad died. The leaders of the clans of the Edom people-group were Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, **52** Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, **53** Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, **54** Magdiel, and Iram.

2 The sons of Jacob were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, **2** Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. **3** Judah's sons were Er, Onan, and Shelah. Their mother was the daughter of Shua from the Canaan people-group. [When] Judah's oldest son Er [grew up, he] did something that Yahweh considered to be very wicked, so Yahweh caused him to die. **4** Judah and his daughter-in-law Tamar had [twin boys named] Perez and Zerah. So altogether Judah had five sons. **5** The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. **6** Zerah had five sons: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Darda (OR, Dara). **7** [One of the sons of

Zimri was Carmi]. Carmi's son Achan (OR, Achar) caused the people of Israel to experience much trouble, because he stole some of the things that had been devoted [to Yahweh to be destroyed]. **8** Ethan's son was Azariah. **9** Hezron's sons were Jerahmeel, Ram, and Caleb (OR, Chelubai). **10** Ram was the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was a leader of the tribe of Judah. **11** Nahshon was the father of Salmon, who was the father of Boaz. **12** Boaz was the father of Obed, and Obed was the father of Jesse. **13** Jesse's oldest son was Eliab. His other sons were Abinadab, Shimea, **14** Nethanel, Raddai, **15** Ozem, and the youngest was David. **16** Their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. Zeruiah's three sons were Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. **17** Abigail's husband was Jether, a descendant of Ishmael, and their son was Amasa. **18** Hezron's younger son Caleb had two wives. One of them, Azubah, gave birth to [three] sons: Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. **19** When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath. Their son was Hur. **20** Hur was the father of Uri, and Uri was the father of Bezalel. **21** When Hezron was 60 years old, he married [EUP] Makir's daughter, who was the sister of Gilead. The son of Hezron and Makir was Segub. **22** Segub was the father of Jair. Jair's [army] controlled twenty-three cities in the region ruled by Gilead. **23** But [the armies of] Geshur and Aram captured those towns controlled by Jair. They also captured Kenath [city] and the nearby towns; altogether they captured 60 towns. The people who lived there were all descendants of Makir, the father of Gilead. **24** Shortly after Hezron died in Caleb-Ephrath [town], his widow Abijah had a son Asshur; Asshur started Tekoa [town]. **25** Hezron's oldest son was Jerahmeel. His sons were Ram, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. Jerahmeel's oldest son was Ram. **26** Jerahmeel had another wife named Atarah. Their son was Onam. **27** The sons of Ram, Jerahmeel's oldest son, were Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. **28** Onam's sons were Shammai and Jada. Shammai's sons were Nadab and Abishur. **29** Abishur's wife was Abihail. The sons of Abishur and Abihail were Ahban and Molid. **30** Nadab's sons were Seled and Appaim. Seled did not have any children. **31** Appaim's son was Ishi; Ishi's son was Sheshan. One of Sheshan's daughters was Ahlai. **32** Shammai's [younger] brother was Jada. Jada's sons were Jether and Jonathan. Jether did not have any children. **33** Jonathan's sons were Peleth and Zaza. Those were the descendants of Jerahmeel. **34** Sheshan did not have any sons; he had only daughters. He had a servant from Egypt whose name was Jarha. **35** Sheshan allowed his daughter to marry Jarha, and their son was Attai. **36** Attai was the father of Nathan. Nathan was the father of Zabad. **37** Zabad was the father of Ephlal. Ephlal was the father of Obed. **38** Obed was the father of Jehu. Jehu was the father of Azariah. **39** Azariah was the father of Helez. Helez was the father of Eleasah. **40** Eleasah was the father of Sismai. Sismai was the father of Shallum. **41** Shallum was the father of Jekamiah. And Jekamiah was the father of Elishama. **42** Jerahmeel's [younger] brother was Caleb. Caleb's oldest son was Mesha. Mesha was the father of Ziph. Ziph was the father of Mareshah. Mareshah was the father of Hebron. **43** Hebron's sons were Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema. **44** Shema was the father of Raham. Raham was the father of Jorkeam. Rekem was the father of Shammai. **45** Shammai was the father of Maon. Maon was the father of Beth-Zur. **46** Caleb had a slave wife who was named Ephah. Caleb and Ephah's sons were Haran, Moza, and Gazez. Haran had a son whom he also named Gazez. **47** Ephah's father was Jahdai. Jahdai was the father of [six sons:] Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. **48** Caleb had another slave wife whose name was Maacah. Caleb and Maacah's sons were Sheber, Tirhanah, **49** Shaaph, and Sheva. Shaaph was the father of Madmannah. Sheva was the father of Macbenah and Gibea. Caleb's daughter was Acsah. **50** These people were also descendants of Caleb: [Caleb had another wife whose name was] Ephrathah. Their oldest son was Hur. Hur's sons were Shobal, Salma, and Hareph. Shobal started Kiriath-Jearim [city]. Salma started Bethlehem [town]. Hareph started Beth-Gader [town]. **52** Shobal's descendants were Haroeh, and half of the Manahath people-group. **53** His descendants also included these clans that lived in Kiriath-Jearim: Ithri, Put, Shumath, and Mishra. The Zorath and Eshtaol clans were descendants of the Mishra clan. **54** Salma's descendants in Bethlehem were the Netophath clan, the Atroth-Beth-Joab clan, the other half of the Manahath clan, and the Zor clan. **55** Salma's descendants also included the families at Jabez [town] who wrote and copied important documents. These were the Tirath clan, the Shimeath clan, and the Sucath clan. They were all from the Ken people-group who came from Hammath [city], and who had married members of the family [MTY] of Rechab.

3 Six sons of [King] David were born in Hebron [city]. His oldest son was Amnon, whose mother Ahinoam was from Jezreel [city]. His next son was Daniel, whose mother was Abigail from Carmel [city]. **2** His next son was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, the king [who ruled] in Geshur [town]. His next son was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. **3** The next son was Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital. His youngest son was Ithream, whose mother was Eglah. **4** They were all born in Hebron, where David ruled for 7-1/2 years. After that, David ruled in

Jerusalem for 33 years. 5 Many of David's children were born in Jerusalem. Bathsheba, the daughter of Ammiel, gave birth to four of his sons: Shammua (OR, Shimea), Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon. 6 Nine [other sons of David were also born there. They were] Ibhar, Elishua (OR, Elishama), Eliphelet, 7 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, 8 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet. 9 In addition to all those sons, David's slave wives also gave birth to sons. David also had one daughter whose name was Tamar. 10 Solomon's son was [King] Rehoboam. Rehoboam's son was [King] Abijah. Abijah's son was [King] Asa. Asa's son was [King] Jehoshaphat. 11 Jehoshaphat's son was [King] Jehoram (OR, Joram). Jehoram's son was [King] Ahaziah. Ahaziah's son was [King] Joash. 12 Joash's son was [King] Amaziah. Amaziah's son was [King] Azariah. Azariah's son was [King] Jotham. 13 Jotham's son was [King] Ahaz. Ahaz's son was [King] Hezekiah. Hezekiah's son was [King] Manasseh. 14 Manasseh's son was [King] Amon. Amon's son was [King] Josiah. 15 Josiah's oldest son was Johanan. His other sons were Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, and Shallum. 16 Jehoiakim's sons were Jehoiachin (OR, Jeconiah) and Zedekiah. 17 [King] Jehoiachin was captured [and taken to Babylon]. His sons were Shealtiel, 18 Malkiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah. 19 Pedaiah's sons were Zerubbabel and Shimei. [Two of] Zerubbabel's sons were Meshullam and Hananiah, and their sister was Shelomith. 20 [Zerubbabel's] five [other sons were] Hashubah, Ohel, Berekiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-Hesed. 21 The descendants of Hananiah were Pelatiah and Jeshaiah. Jeshaiah's son was Rephaiah. Rephaiah's son was Arnan. Arnan's son was Obadiah. Obadiah's son was Shecaniah. 22 Shecaniah's son was Shemaiah. Shemaiah's five sons were Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat. 23 Neariah's three sons were Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam. 24 Elioenai's seven sons were Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani.

4 The descendants of Judah were Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. 2 Shobal's son was Reaiah. Reaiah was the father of Jahath, and Jahath was the father of Ahumai and Lahad. They were the ancestors of the Zorath people-group. 3 The oldest son of Caleb and his wife Ephrathah was Hur. Hur was the one who started/founded Bethlehem [town]. His three sons were Etam, Penuel, and Ezer. Etam's sons were Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash. Their sister was Hazzelelponi. Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer was the father of Hushah. 5 [Hezron's son] Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives whose names were Helah and Naarah. 6 The sons of Asshur and his wife Naarah were Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. 7 The sons of [Ashhur and his wife] Helah were Zereth, Zohar, Ethnan, 8 and Koz. Koz was the father of Anub, Hazzobebah, and the ancestor of the clans descended from Aharhel. Aharhel was the son of Harum. 9 [There was another descendant of Judah whose name was] Jabez. [He] was more respected than his brothers were. His mother named him Jabez [which means 'pain'] because she said, "I was enduring much pain when I gave birth to him." 10 [One day] he prayed to God whom his fellow Israelis [worshiped], saying, "Please greatly bless me and (enlarge my land/give me a lot of land/property). Remain [IDM] with me, and do not allow anyone to harm me. If you do that for me, I will not have any pain." And God did what Jabez requested him to do. 11 [Another descendant of Judah was] Shuhah. His [younger] brother Kelub was the father of Mehir. Mehir was the father of Eshton. 12 Eshton was the father of Beth-Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah. Tehinnah founded Nahash [town], but their families lived in Recah [town]. 13 [Another descendant of Judah was] Jephunneh. His son was Caleb. Caleb's sons were Iru, Elah, and Naam. Elah's son was Kenaz. The sons of Kenaz were Othniel and Seraiah. Othniel's sons were Hathath and Meonothai. Meonothai was the father of Ophrah. Seraiah was the father of Joab. Joab was the ancestor of the people who lived in Craftsmen's Valley. The valley was named that because many of the people who lived there were (craftsmen/men who were experts in making things). 16 [Another descendant of Judah was] Jehallelel. His sons were Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. 17 [Another descendant of Judah was Ezrah.] Ezrah's sons were Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. Mered married Bithiah, who was the daughter of the king of Egypt. The children of Mered and Bithiah were Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah. Ishbah was the father of Eshtemoa. Ezrah also had a wife from Judah. She gave birth to Jered, Heber, and Jekuthiel. Jered was the father of (OR, founded the town of) Gedor, Heber was the father of (OR, founded the town of) Soco, and Jekuthiel was the father of (OR, founded the town of) Zanoah. 19 Hodiah's wife, who was Naham's sister, bore two sons. One of them was the father of Keilah, the ancestor of the Gar people-group, and the other one was the father of Eshtemoa, the ancestor of the Maacath people-group. 20 [Another descendant of Judah was Shimon]. Shimon's sons were Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tilon. [Another descendant of Judah was] Ishi. His descendants were Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth. 21 One of Judah's sons was Shelah. Shelah's sons were Er the father of Lecah, Laadah the father of Mareshah, the families of those who made things from linen at Beth-Ashbea, 22 Jokim, and the men of Cozeba [town], and Joash and Saraph, two men who married women from [the] Moab [region] and later lived in Bethlehem (OR, and ruled in Jashubi-Lehem). All their

names and a record of what they did are written in very old scrolls. 23 They made pottery for the king; some of them lived in Netaim [town] and some of them lived in Gederah [town]. 24 Simeon's sons were Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul. 25 Shaul's son was Shallum. Shallum's son was Mibsam. Mibsam's son was Mishma. 26 Mishma's son was Hammuel. Hammuel's son was Zaccur. Zaccur's son was Shimei. 27 Shimei had 16 sons and six daughters, but none of his brothers had many children. So the descendants of Simeon never were as many as the descendants of [his younger brother] Judah. 28 The descendants of Simeon lived in [these cities and towns]: Beersheba, Moladah, Hazar-Shual, 29 Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, 30 Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, 31 Beth-Marcaboth, Hazar-Susim, Beth-Biri, and Shaaraim. They lived in those places until David became king. 32 They also lived in villages near those towns: Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Token, and Ashan. 33 There were other villages where they lived, as far [southwest] as Baalath [town]. Those were the places where they lived, and their names, according to the family records. 34 The men in the following list were the leaders of their clans: Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah the son of Amaziah, Joel, and Jehu the son of Joshibiah. Joshibiah was the son of Seraiah and the grandson of Asiel. Other clan leaders were Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, and Ziza. Ziza was the son of Shiphi and the grandson of Allon, who was the son of Jedaiah, who was the son of Shimri, who was the son of Shemaiah. Those families became very large/numerous. 39 They went outside of Gedor [town] on the east side of the valley to look for pastureland for their flocks of sheep. 40 They found good pastureland with plenty of grass. The place was peaceful and quiet. Previously the descendants of [Noah's son] Ham had lived there. 41 But while Hezekiah was the king of Judah, the leaders of the tribe of Simeon came to Gedor and fought against the descendants of Ham and destroyed their tents. They also fought against the descendants of Meun who were living there, and they killed all of them. So now there are no descendants of Meun living there. The descendants of Simeon started to live there, because there was good pastureland there for their sheep. 42 Ishi's four sons Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah and Uzziel led 500 other descendants of Simeon [and attacked the people who were living] in the hilly area of the Edom [region]. 43 They killed the few descendants of Amalek who were still alive. From that time until now, the descendants of Simeon have lived in [the] Edom [region].

5 Reuben was the oldest son of Jacob. Therefore, he should have received the special rights/privileges that belonged to firstborn sons. But he had sex with his father's slave wife, so [his father] gave the rights if a firstborn son to the sons of Reubers younger brother Joseph. And in the family records, Reuben is not mentioned first, like the firstborn sons always are. 2 Although Judah became more influential than his brothers, and a ruler of the tribe descended from him, Joseph's family received the rights that belonged to firstborn sons. 3 But Reuben was Jacob's oldest son. Reuben's sons were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 4 [Another descendant of Reuben was Joel]. Joel's son was Shemaiah. Shemaiah's son was Gog. Gog's son was Shimei. 5 Shimei's son was Micah. Micah's son was Reaiah. Reaiah's son was Baal. 6 Baal's son was Beerah. Beerah was a leader of the tribe/descendants of Reuben. But Tiglath-Pileser the king of Assyria captured him and took him to Assyria. 7 The names of these clans are listed here according to what is written in their family records. The first [name written was] Jeiel. Then Zechariah, 8 and then Bela. Bela was the son of Azaz, and Azaz was the son of Shema, and Shema was the son of Joel. Reuben's clan was very large. Some of them lived near Aroer [city] as far [north] as Nebo [town] and Baal-Meon [city]. 9 Some of them lived further east, as far as the edge of the desert [south of] the Euphrates River. [They went there] because they had a huge amount of cattle, [with the result that there was not enough pastureland for them] in [the] Gilead [region]. 10 When Saul was king [of Israel], Bela's clan fought against the descendants of Hagar and defeated them. After that, Bela's clan lived in the tents that the descendants of Hagar had lived in previously, in all the area east of [the] Gilead [region]. 11 The tribe of Gad lived near the tribe of Reuben; they lived in [the] Bashan [region], all the way [east] to Salecah [town]. 12 Joel was their chief; Shapham was his assistant; other leaders were Janai and Shaphat. 13 Other members of the tribe belonged to seven clans, whose leaders were Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber. 14 They were descendants of Abihail. Abihail was Huri's son. Huri was Jaroah's son. Jaroah was Gilead's son. Gilead was Michael's son. Michael was Jeshishai's son. Jeshishai was Jahdo's son. Jahdo was the son of Buz. 15 Ahi was Abdiel's son. Abdiel was Guni's son. Ahi was the leader of their clan. 16 The descendants of Gad lived in the towns in Gilead and Bashan regions, and on all the pastureland on [the] Sharon [plain]. 17 All of those names were written in the records of the clans of Gad during the time that Jotham was the king of Judah and Jeroboam was the king of Israel. 18 There were 44,760 soldiers from the tribes of Reuben and Gad and [the eastern] half of the tribe of Manasseh. They all carried shields and swords and bows [and arrows]. They [were all trained to] fight well in battles. 19 They attacked the

descendants of Hagar and the people of Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab [cities]. **20** The men from those three tribes prayed to God during the battles, requesting him to help them. So he helped them, because they trusted in him. He enabled them to defeat [IDM] the descendants of Hagar and all those who were helping them. **21** They took the animals that belonged to the descendants of Hagar: They took 50,000 camels, 250,000 sheep, and 2,000 donkeys. They also captured 100,000 people. **22** But many descendants of Hagar were killed because God helped the people of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. After that, those three tribes lived in that area until [the army of] Babylonia [captured them and] took them away to Babylon. **23** There were many people who belonged to the eastern half of the tribe of Manasseh. They lived in [the] Bashan [region east of the Jordan River], as far [north] as Baal-Hermon, Senir, and Hermon Mountain. **24** Their clan leaders were Epher, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel. They were all strong, brave, and famous soldiers, and leaders of their clans. **25** But they sinned against God, the one whom their ancestors had worshiped. They began to worship the gods/idols that the people of that region had worshiped, the people whom God had enabled them to destroy! **26** So the God whom the Israelis [worshiped] caused Pul, the king of Assyria, to conquer those tribes. Pul's other name was Tiglath-Pileser. His [army] captured the people of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the eastern half of the tribe of Manasseh, and took them to [various places in Assyria]: Halah, Habor, Hara and near the Gozan River. [They have lived in those places from that time] to the present time.

6 Levi's sons were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. **2** Kohath's sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. **3** Amram's children were Miriam and [her younger brothers] Aaron and Moses. Aaron's sons were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. **4** Eleazar was the father of Phinehas. Phinehas was the father of Abishua. **5** Abishua was the father of Bukki. Bukki was the father of Uzzi. **6** Uzzi was the father of Zerahiah. Zerahiah was the father of Meraioth. **7** Meraioth was the father of Amariah. Amariah was the father of Ahitub. **8** Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Ahimaaz. **9** Ahimaaz was the father of Azariah. Azariah was the father of Johanan. **10** Johanan was the father of Azariah. Azariah was a priest in the temple that Solomon commanded to be built in Jerusalem. **11** Azariah was the father of Amariah. Amariah was the father of Ahitub. **12** Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Shallum. **13** Shallum was the father of Hilkiah. Hilkiah was the father of Azariah. **14** Azariah was the father of Seraiah. Seraiah was the father of Jehozadak. **15** Jehozadak was forced to leave his home when Yahweh sent [King] Nebuchadnezzar's [army] [MTY] to capture many people in Jerusalem and other places in Judah and compel them [to go to Babylonia]. **16** Levi's sons were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. **17** Gershon's sons were Libni and Shimei. **18** Kohath's sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. **19** Merari's sons were Mahli and Mushi. Here is a list of the descendants of Levi, who became leaders of their clans. **20** Gershon's [oldest] son was Libni. Libni's son was Jehath. Jehath's son was Zimmah. **21** Zimmah's son was Joah. Joah's son was Iddo. Iddo's son was Zerah. Zerah's son was Jeatherai. **22** Kohath's [other] son was Amminadab. Amminadab's son was Korah. Korah's son was Assir. **23** Assir's son was Elkanah. Elkanah's son was Ebiasaph. Ebiasaph's son was Assir. **24** Assir's son was Tahath. Tahath's son was Uriel. Uriel's son was Uzziah. Uzziah's son was Shaul. **25** Elkanah's [other] sons were Amasai and Ahimoth. **26** Ahimoth's son was Elkanah. Elkanah's son was Zophai. Zophai's son was Nahath. **27** Nahath's son was Eliab. Eliab's son was Jeroham. Jeroham's son was Elkanah. Elkanah's son was Samuel. **28** Samuel's oldest son was Joel; his other son was Abijah. **29** Merari's oldest son was Mahli. Mahli's son was Libni. Libni's son was Shimei. Shimei's son was Uzzah. **30** Uzzah's son was Shimea. Shimea's son was Haggiah. Haggiah's son was Asaiah. **31** After the Sacred Chest was brought [to Jerusalem, King] David appointed some of the men who were descendants of Levi to be in charge of the music in [the Sacred Tent where the people worshiped] Yahweh. **32** Those musicians first sang and played their instruments in the Sacred Tent, which was also called the Tent of Meeting, and they continued to do that until Solomon's [workers] built the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem. In all their work, they obeyed the instructions [that David had given them]. **33** Here is a list of the musicians and their sons: From Kohath's descendants there was Heman, the leader of the singers. Heman was the son of Joel. Joel was the son of Samuel. **34** Samuel was the son of Elkanah. Elkanah was the son of Jeroham. Jeroham was the son of Eliel. Eliel was the son of Toah. **35** Toah was the son of Zuph. Zuph was the son of Elkanah. Elkanah was the son of Mahath. Mahath was the son of Amasai. **36** Amasai was the son of [another man whose name was] Elkanah. Elkanah was the son of Joel. Joel was the son of Azariah. Azariah was the son of Zephaniah. **37** Zephaniah was the son of Tahath. Tahath was the son of Assir. Assir was the son of Ebiasaph. Ebiasaph was the son of Korah. **38** Korah was the son of Izhar. Izhar was the son of Kohath. Kohath was the son of Levi. Levi was the son of Jacob. **39** Heman's helper was Asaph. His group [of singers] stood at the right side of

Heman. Asaph was the son of Berekiah. Berekiah was the son of Shimea. **40** Shimea was the son of Michael. Michael was the son of Baaseiah. Baaseiah was the son of Malkijah. **41** Malkijah was the son of Ethni. Ethni was the son of Zerah. Zerah was the son of Adaiah. **42** Adaiah was the son of Ethan. Ethan was the son of Zimmah. Zimmah was the son of Shimei. **43** Shimei was the son of Jahath. Jahath was the son of Gershon, and Gershon was the son of Levi. **44** [A group of singers from] Merari's family helped Heman and Asaph. They stood to the left of Heman. The leader of this group was Ethan, the son of Kishi. Kishi was the son of Abdi. Abdi was the son of Malluch. **45** Malluch was the son of Hashabiah. Hashabiah was the son of Amaziah. Amaziah was the son of Hilkiah. **46** Hilkiah was the son of Amzi. Amzi was the son of Bani. Bani was the son of Shemer. **47** Shemer was the son of Mahli. Mahli was the son of Mushi. Mushi was the son of Merari, and Merari was the son of Levi. **48** The other descendants of Levi were appointed to do other work in the sacred tent, the place [where the people worshiped] Yahweh. **49** Aaron and his descendants were the ones who placed on the altar the sacrifices that were to be burned completely, and they burned incense on another altar. Those sacrifices were in order that Yahweh would no longer be angry with the people of Israel for having sinned. Those men also did other work in the Very Holy Place in the sacred tent, obeying the instructions that Moses, who served God [well], had given to them. **50** These were the descendants of Aaron: Aaron's son was Eleazar. Eleazar's son was Phinehas. Phinehas's son was Abishua. **51** Abishua's son was Bukki. Bukki's son was Uzzi. Uzzi's son was Zerahiah. **52** Zerahiah's son was Meraioth. Meraioth's son was Amariah. Amariah's son was Ahitub. **53** Ahitub's son was Zadok, and Zadok's son was Ahimaaz. **54** Here is a list of the places where Aaron's descendants lived. Those who were descendants of Kohath were the first group to be allotted cities to live in. **55** They were allotted Hebron [city] in Judah and the pastureland around the city, **56** but the fields farther from the city and the villages near the city were given to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. **57** The descendants of Aaron [who were descendants of Kohath] were allotted Hebron, one of the cities [to which people could flee] and be protected [if they accidentally killed someone]. They also were allotted the towns and pastureland near Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, **58** Hilen, Debir, **59** Ashan, Juttah, and Beth-Shemesh. **60** They were also allotted Gibeon, Geba, Alemeth, and Anathoth [cities] from the tribe of Benjamin. Altogether, these clans descended from Kohath were allotted 13 towns. **61** The other clans descended from Kohath were allotted ten towns from the clans of the tribe of Manasseh [that lived west of the Jordan River]. **62** The descendants of Gershon were allotted 13 cities and towns from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the part of the tribe of Manasseh that lived in [the] Bashan [region on the east side of the Jordan River]. **63** The descendants of Merari were allotted twelve cities and towns from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. **64** The leaders of Israel allotted those towns and the nearby pasturelands to the descendants of Levi. **65** They also allotted to them the cities and towns from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin that were listed previously. **66** Some of the descendants of Kohath were allotted towns from the tribe of Ephraim. **67** They were allotted Shechem, which was one of the cities [to which people could flee] and be protected [if they accidentally killed someone], along with the nearby pastureland in the hills of Ephraim. They were also allotted these towns and pastureland near them: Gezer, **68** Jokmeam, Beth-Horon, **69** Aijalon, and Gath-Rimmon. **70** The other descendants of Kohath were allotted Aner and Bileam towns and the nearby pastureland from the part of the tribe of Manasseh that lived west [of the Jordan River]. **71** The descendants of Gershon, who were part of the tribe of Manasseh, lived east [of the Jordan River]. They were allotted the cities and towns and pastureland near them: Golan in [the] Bashan and Ashtaroth [regions]. **72** From the tribe of Issachar they were allotted cities and towns and pastureland near Kedesh, Daberath, **73** Ramoth, and Anem. **74** From the tribe of Asher they were allotted cities and towns and pastureland near Mashal, Abdon, **75** Hukok, and Rehob. **76** And from the tribe of Naphtali they were allotted cities and towns and pastureland near Kedesh in [the] Galilee [region], and Hammon and Kiriathaim [towns]. **77** The other descendants of Levi, those descended from Merari, were allotted towns and pasturelands from the tribe of Zebulun near Jokneam, Kartah, Rimmono, and Tabor. **78** From the tribe of Reuben they were allotted cities and towns and pastureland near Bezer in the desert, Jahzah, Kedemoth, and Mephaath. The tribe of Reuben lived east of the Jordan [River], across from Jericho. **80** From the tribe of Gad, they were allotted cities and towns and pastureland near Ramoth in [the] Gilead [region], [the cities of] Mahanaim, **81** Heshbon, and Jazer.

7 Issachar's four sons were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron. **2** Tola's sons were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Samuel (OR, Shemuel). They were all leaders of the clans [descended from] them. In the record of Tola's descendants were the names of 22,600 men who served in the army during the time that David was the king [of Israel]. **3** Uzzi's son was Izrahiah. Izrahiah's five sons were Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah. Izrahiah and his sons

were all leaders of their clans. 4 In the record of Izrahiah's descendants were the names of 36,000 men who served in the army because they had many wives and children. 5 In the records of the clans descended from Issachar were the names of 87,000 men who served in the army. 6 [Some of the] sons of Benjamin were Bela, Beker, and Jediael. 7 Bela's five sons were Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri. They were all leaders of clans. In the records of the clans descended from Bela there were names of 22,034 men who served in the army. 8 Beker's sons were Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. 9 In the records of the clans descended from Beker were the names of 20,200 men and leaders of the clans who served in the army. 10 Jediael's son was Bilhan. Bilhan's sons were Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Kenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. 11 They were all leaders of clans descended from them. There were 17,200 of them who served in the army. 12 Shuppim and Huppim were descendants of Ir. [One of] the descendants of Aher was Hushim. 13 Naphtali's sons were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. They were all descendants of [Jacob's slave wife] Bilhah. 14 [This is a list of] Manasseh's descendants. Manasseh had a slave wife who was from Syria. She was the mother of Asriel and Makir. Makir was the father of Gilead. 15 Makir [had two wives]. They were from the clans of Huppim and Shuppim. One of Makir's wives was named Maacah. Another descendant [of Makir] was Zelophehad. Zelophehad [had no sons; he] had only daughters. 16 Makir's wife Maacah gave birth to two sons whom she named Peresh and Sheresh. Sheresh's sons were Ulam and Rakem. 17 Ulam's son was Bedan. All those [men were considered to be] descendants of Gilead, who was the son of Makir and grandson of Manasseh. 18 Makir's sister name was Hammoleketh who was the mother of Ishdod, Abiezer, and Mahlah. 19 [One son of Gilead was] Shemida, whose sons were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam. 20 [This is a list of] the descendants of Ephraim. One son of Ephraim's was Shuthelah. Shuthelah's son was Bered. Bered's son was Tahath. Tahath's son was Eleadah. Eleadah's son was [also named] Tahath. 21 Tahath's son was Zabad. Zabad's son was Shuthelah. [Ephraim's other sons,] Ezer and Elead, went to Gath [city] to steal some cows and sheep. But they were both killed by some of the men from that city. 22 Their father Ephraim cried/mourned for them for many days, and his family came to comfort him. 23 Then he and his wife had sex [EUP] [again], and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. Ephraim named him Beriah [which resembles the word 'trouble',] because of the trouble that his family had experienced. 24 Ephraim's daughter was Sheerah. Her workers built [three towns]: Lower Beth-Horon, Upper Beth-Horon, and Uzzen-Sheerah. 25 [Another] son of Ephraim was Rephah. Rephah's son was Resheph. Resheph's son was Telah. Telah's son was Tahan. 26 Tahan's son was Ladan. Ladan's son was Ammihud. Ammihud's son was Elishama. 27 Elishama's son was Nun. Nun's son was Joshua, [the man who led the Israelis after Moses died]. 28 [This is a list of] the cities and areas where the descendants of Ephraim lived: Bethel and the nearby villages; Naaran to the east; Gezer to the west and the nearby villages; and Shechem and the nearby villages. Those villages extended [north] as far as Ayyah and the nearby villages. 29 Along the border of the area where the descendants of Manasseh lived were these towns: Beth-Shan, Taanach, Megiddo, and Dor, and the nearby villages. The people who lived in all those places were descendants of Jacob's son Joseph. 30 Asher's sons were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah. Their sister was Serah. 31 Beriah's sons were Heber and Malkiel. Malkiel was the father of Birzaith 32 Heber was the father of Japhlet, Shomer, and Hotham. Their sister was Shua. 33 Japhlet's sons were Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. 34 Japhlet's [younger] brother was Shomer. Shomer's sons were Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram. 35 Shomer's [younger] brother was Hotham (OR, Helem). Hotham's sons were Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. 36 Zophah's sons were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, 37 Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran [whose other name was Jether], and Beera. 38 Jether's sons were Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara. 39 [Another descendant of Asher was] Ulla, whose sons were Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. 40 All those men were descendants of Asher, and they were all leaders of their clans. They were brave warriors and excellent leaders. In the record of the clans that are descended from Asher are [the names of] 26,000 men who served in the army.

8 Benjamin had five sons: Bela, Ashbel, Aharah, 2 Nohah, and Rapha. 3 The sons of Bela were Addar, Gera, Abihud, 4 Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, 5 Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram. 6 [One of Gera's sons was Ehud.] The descendants of Ehud were leaders of their clans who lived in Geba [city], but they were forced to move to Manahath [city]. 7 Ehud's sons/descendants were Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera. Gera was the one who led them when they moved to Manahath. Gera was the father of Uzza and Ahihud. 8 [Another descendant of Benjamin was Shaharaim]. He and his wife Hushim had two sons, Abitub and Elpaal. In [the] Moab [region], Shaharaim divorced Hushim and his other wife Baara. [Then he married a woman whose name was] Hodesh, and they had [seven sons]: Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, Jeuz, Sakia, and Mirmah. They were all leaders of their clans. 12 Elpaal's sons were Eber, Misham, Shemed,

Beriah, and Shema. Shemed built [the towns of] Ono and Lod, and the nearby villages. Beriah and Shema were leaders of their clans, who lived in Aijalon [city]. They forced the people who lived in Gath [city] to leave their city. **14** Beriah's sons were Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, Michael, Ishpah, and Joha. **17** [Other] descendants of Elpaal were Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, **18** Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab. **19** [Another descendant of Benjamin was Shimei.] Shimei's descendants included Jakim, Zicri, Zabdi, Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath. **22** Shashak's sons were Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, **23** Abdon, Zicri, Hanan, **24** Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, **25** Iphdeiah, and Penuel. **26** [Another descendant of Benjamin was] Jeroham, whose sons were Shamsherai, Sheharíah, Athaliah, Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zicri. **28** In the records of these clans it is written that all those men were leaders of their clans, and they lived in Jerusalem. **29** [Another descendant of Benjamin was] Jeiel. He lived in Gibeon [town], and he was the leader there. His wife was Maacah. **30** His oldest son was Abdon. His other sons were Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, **31** Gedor, Ahio, Zeker, **32** and Mikloth. Mikloth was the father of Shimeah. All these sons of Jeiel also lived near their relatives in Jerusalem. **33** Ner was the father of Kish, and Kish was the father of [King] Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal. **34** Jonathan's son was Merib-Baal. Merib-Baal was the father of Micah. **35** Micah's sons were Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz. **36** Ahaz was the father of Jehoaddah. Jehoaddah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza. **37** Moza was the father of Binea. The son of Binea was Raphah. The son of Raphah was Eleasah. The son of Eleasah was Azel. **38** Azel had six sons: Azrikam, Bokeru, Ishmael, Shearíah, Obadiah, and Hanan. **39** Azel's [younger] brother was Eshek. Eshek's oldest son was Ulam. His other sons were Jeush and Eliphelet. **40** Ulam's sons were brave warriors and (good archers/able to shoot arrows well). Altogether they had 150 sons and grandsons. Those were the descendants of Benjamin.

9 The [names of all the] people of Israel were listed/written with the names of their clans, and that information was written in the scroll/book named 'The Record of the Kings of Israel'. [Many of] the people of Judah were captured and forced to go to Babylon. That happened because they did not faithfully [do what was pleasing to] God. **2** The first people who returned [to Judah 70 years later] and lived in their own land and in their own cities and towns were some Israeli priests, other descendants of Levi, and men who worked in the temple. **3** [Other] people from the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh [also returned to Judah and] lived in Jerusalem. This is a list of those people [of the tribe of Judah]: **4** Uthai the son of Ammihud. Ammihud was the son of Omri; Omri was the son of Imri; Imri was the son of Bani; Bani was a descendant of Perez; Perez was the son of Judah. **5** Asaiah and his sons were descendants of Shelah. Asaiah was the oldest son in his family. **6** Jeuel and others of his relatives in Zerah's clan. There were 690 people in this clan. **7** From the tribe of Benjamin, Sallu, the son of Meshullam. Meshullam was the son of Hodaviah; Hodaviah was the son of Hassenuah. **8** Ibneiah the son of Jeroham. Elah the son of Uzzi. Uzzi was the son of Micri. Meshullam the son of Shephatiah. Shephatiah was the son of Reuel; Reuel was the son of Ibnijah. **9** In other records of the people descended from Benjamin, there are the names of 956 people who were living in Jerusalem. All these were leaders of their clans. **10** Some of the priests [who returned to Judah were]: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jakin, **11** and Azariah who was the son of Hilkiah. Hilkiah who was the son of Meshullam; Meshullam who was the son of Zadok, Zadok who was the son of Meraioth; Meraioth who was the son of Ahitub; Ahitub who supervised the temple guards; **12** Adaiah who was the son of Jeroham; Jeroham who was the son of Pashhur; Pashhur who was the son of Malchijah; Maasai who was the son of Adiel; Adiel who was the son of Jahzerah; Jahzerah who was the son of Meshullam; Meshullam who was the son of Meshillemith; Meshillemith who was the son of Immer. **13** Altogether there were 1,760 priests [who returned to Judah]. They were leaders of their clans, and they all were responsible for doing work in the temple of God. **14** From the descendants of Levi [who returned to Judah] there was Shemaiah the son of Hasshub. Hasshub was the son of Azrikam; Azrikam was the son of Hashabiah; Hashabiah was a descendant of [Levi's youngest son] Merari. **15** [Other descendants of Levi who returned to Judah were] Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Mica. Mica was the son if Zicri; Zicri was the son of Asaph. **16** There was also Obadiah the son of Shemaiah. Shemaiah was the son of Galal. Galal was the son of Jeduthun. There was also Berekiah the son of Asa. Asa was the son of Elkanah, who lived in one of the villages where the Netophath people-clan lived. **17** From the [descendants of Levi who returned to Judah] who guarded the temple gates there were Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and some of their relatives. Shallum was their leader. **18** Those gatekeepers from the tribe of Levi stood at the King's Gate on the east side [of the temple]. **19** Shallum was the son of Kore. Kore was the son of Ebiasaph. Ebiasaph was the son of Korah. Shallum and his relatives were gatekeepers, and they were responsible to guard the gates of the Sacred Tent of Yahweh, like their

ancestors had done. 20 Previously Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, had supervised the gatekeepers, and Yahweh (was with/helped) Phinehas. 21 Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was the gatekeeper at the entrance of the Sacred Tent. 22 Altogether, there were 212 men who were chosen to guard the gates. Their names were written in the records of the clans in their villages. [King] David and the prophet Samuel appointed/chose those men because those men (were dependable/always did what they were told to do). 23 The work of those gatekeepers and their descendants was to guard the entrances of the Sacred Tent of Yahweh. That was before the temple was built to replace the Sacred Tent. 24 There were gatekeepers on each of the four sides of the Sacred Tent. 25 Sometimes it was necessary for the relatives of the gatekeepers who lived in those villages to come and help them. Each time some of them came, they helped the gatekeepers for seven days. 26 There were four descendants of Levi who [worked every day, and they] supervised the gatekeepers. They also took care of the rooms and treasures in the Sacred Tent of God. 27 They remained awake all during the night to guard the Sacred Tent, and each morning they opened the gates. 28 Some of the gatekeepers took care of the articles that were used in worship. They also took care of the flour, wine, olive oil, incense, and spices [that were used in the sacrifices]. 29 Other gatekeepers were appointed to take care of the other things in the Sacred Tent. 30 But some of the priests had the work of mixing the spices. 31 There was a descendant of Levi named Mattithiah, the oldest son of Shallum, who was a descendant of Korah. He (was very dependable/always did what he was told to do), so they gave him {he was given} the work of baking the bread that was used in the offerings [on the altar]. 32 Some of the gatekeepers who were descended from Kohath prepared the freshly baked loaves of sacred bread that were placed on the table [inside the Sacred Tent] every Sabbath/rest day. 33 Some of the descendants of Levi were musicians who worked in the Sacred Tent. The leaders of those families [stayed/slept] in the rooms [of the Sacred Tent]. They did not do [any other work] in the Sacred Tent because they were responsible to serve [as musicians] day and night. 34 Those are [the names of] the leaders of the clans descended from Levi. Their names were written in the records of the clans. They all lived in Jerusalem. 35 [One of the descendants of Benjamin,] Jeiel, lived in Gibeon [city]. He was the city leader. His wife's name was Maacah. 36 His oldest son was Abdon. His other sons were Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, 37 Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth. 38 Mikloth was the father of Shimeam. Jeiel's family lived near their relatives in Jerusalem. 39 Ner was the father of Kish. Kish was the father of [King] Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal. 40 Jonathan's son was Merib-Baal. Merib-Baal was the father of Micah. 41 Micah's sons were Pithon, Melech, Tahrea, [and Ahaz]. 42 Ahaz was the father of Jadah (OR, Jarah). Jadah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza. 43 Moza was the father of Binea. The son of Binea was Rephaiah. The son of Rephaiah was Eleasah. The son of Eleasah was Azel. 44 Azel had six sons: Azrikam, Bokeru, Ishmael, Shearíah, Obadiah, and Hanan.

10 The army of Philistia [again] fought against the Israelis. The Israeli soldiers ran away from them, and many Israelis were killed {the soldiers of Philistia killed many Israelis} on Gilboa Mountain. 2 The soldiers of Philistia caught up with Saul and his sons, and they killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua. 3 The fighting was very fierce around Saul, and the (archers/men who shot arrows) shot Saul and wounded him severely. 4 Saul said to the man who was carrying his weapons, "Take out your sword and kill me with it, in order that these heathen Philistines will not be able to injure me [further] and make fun of me [while I am dying]." But the man who was carrying Saul's weapons was terrified and refused to do that. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it [and died]. 5 When the man carrying his weapons saw that Saul was dead, he also threw himself on his own sword and died. 6 So Saul and three of his sons all died, and none of his descendants ever became king. 7 When the Israelis who were living in the valley saw that their army had run away and that Saul and his three sons were dead, they left their towns and ran away. Then the soldiers from Philistia came and (occupied/lived in) those towns. 8 The next day, when the Philistines came to take away the weapons of the dead [Israeli soldiers], they found the corpses of Saul and his three sons on Gilboa Mountain. 9 They took the clothes off Saul's corpse and [cut off] his head and took it and Saul's armor. 10 Then they sent messengers throughout their land, to proclaim the news throughout their own area, to their idols and to the other people. They put Saul's armor in the temple where their idols were, and they hung Saul's head in the temple of [their god] Dagon. 11 All the people who lived in Jabesh in [the] Gilead [region] heard what the Philistines had done to Saul's [corpse]. 12 So the bravest men/soldiers of Jabesh went and got the corpses of Saul and his sons and brought them back to Jabesh. They buried their bones under a large tree in Jabesh. Then the people of Jabesh (fasted/abstained from eating food) for seven days. 13 Saul died because he did not faithfully obey what Yahweh told him to do. He even went to a woman who talks to the spirits of dead people and asked her what he

should do, 14 instead of asking Yahweh what he should do. So Yahweh caused him to die, and he appointed David, the son of Jesse, to be the king [of Israel].

11 Then the people of Israel came to David at Hebron [town] and said to him, "Listen, we have the same ancestors [IDM] that you have. 2 In the past, when Saul was our king, it was you who led our Israeli [soldiers in our battles]. You are the one to whom Yahweh our God promised, 'You will be the leader [MET] of my people; you will be their king.'" 3 So all the Israeli elders came to David at Hebron. And David made a sacred agreement with them while Yahweh was listening. They anointed him [with olive oil to set him apart] to be the king of the Israeli people. That is what Yahweh had previously told [the prophet] Samuel would happen. 4 David and all the Israeli [soldiers] [SYN] went to Jerusalem. [At that time,] Jerusalem was called Jebus, and the people who lived there were the Jebus people-group. 5 Those people said to David, "Your [soldiers] will not be able to get inside our city!" But David's [soldiers] captured the city, even though it had strong walls around it, and since then it has been called 'The City of David'. 6 [What happened was this:]: David said [to his soldiers], "The one who leads [our soldiers] to attack the Jebus people-group will become the commander of all my army." Joab, the son of Zeruiah, led the soldiers, so he became the commander of all the army. 7 [After they captured] the city which had strong walls around it, David moved there. That is why they named it 'The City of David'. 8 David's workers rebuilt the city, starting where the land was filled in and extending to the wall that was around the city. Joab's [men] repaired the other parts of the city. 9 David became more and more powerful/influential, because the Almighty Commander of the armies of angels was with/helping him. 10 Yahweh had promised [that David would become the king]. And all the Israeli people (were happy that David was/supported David as) their king. There were many soldiers/warriors who helped David's kingdom to remain strong. 11 This is a list of the leaders of David's [most mighty] warriors: Jashobeam was from the Hacmon clan. He was one of the leaders of David's most powerful soldiers. One time he fought against 300 enemies and killed them all with his spear. 12 Another one was Eleazar, who was the son of Dodo from the clan of Ahoh. 13 [One day] he was with David at Pas Dammim when the soldiers of Philistia gathered there for the battle. There was a field of barley there. At first the Israeli soldiers ran away from the soldiers of Philistia, 14 but then David and Eleazar stopped in the middle of the field and fought to defend it and killed [many of] the soldiers of Philistia. Yahweh enabled them to win a great victory on that day. 15 One time three of David's thirty most mighty warriors came to David when he was camping next to the huge rock outside the cave near Adullam. At that same time, the army of Philistia had camped in the Rephaim Valley. 16 David was in a fortress, and some of the soldiers of Philistia were occupying Bethlehem. 17 [One day] David was very thirsty and said, "I wish that someone would bring me some water from the well near the gate at Bethlehem!" 18 So those three most outstanding warriors forced their way through the camp of Philistia soldiers and drew some water from the well, and brought it to David. But he would not drink it. Instead, he poured it out [on the ground to be an offering] to Yahweh. 19 He said, "Yahweh, it would certainly not be right for me to drink this water! That would be like [RHQ] drinking the blood of these men who were willing/ready to die for me!" So he refused to drink it. That was one of the things that those three most outstanding warriors did. 20 Joab's [younger] brother Abishai was the leader of the 30 most mighty warriors. [One time] Abishai fought 300 [enemy] soldiers with his spear and killed them. 21 So he became as famous as those three most outstanding warriors. He became their commander, even though he was not one of those three men. 22 Jehoiada's son Benaiah was a brave soldier from Kabzeel [town] who did heroic deeds. He killed two of the best warriors from [the] Moab [people-group]. One day he went down into a pit when snow was falling [on the ground] and killed a lion there. 23 He also killed a soldier from Egypt who was (7-1/2 feet/2.3 meters) tall. The soldier from Egypt carried a spear that was as long as a weaver's rod. Benaiah had [only] a club, but he grabbed the other man's spear and killed him with it. 24 Those are some of the things that Benaiah did. So he became as famous as the three mighty warriors. 25 He was more honored than the other members of the group of thirty most mighty warriors, but he did not become a member of the group of three most outstanding warriors. David appointed him to be the leader of his bodyguards. 26 These are the names of David's mighty warriors: Asahel, the [younger] brother of Joab; Elhanan, the son of Dodo, from Bethlehem; 27 Shammah, from [the] Harod [clan]; Helez, from [the] Pelon [clan]; 28 Ira, the son of Ikkesh, from Tekoa [town]; Abiezer, from Anathoth [city]; 29 Sibbecai, from Hushah's [clan]; Ilai from Ahoh's clan; 30 Maharai, from Netophah [town]; Heled, the son of Baanah, also from Netophah [town]; 31 Ithai, the son of Ribai, from Gibeah [town] in [the land that belonged to] the tribe of Benjamin; Benaiah, from Pirathon [town]; 32 Hurai, from the valleys near Gaash [Mountain]; Abiel from the clan of Arabah; 33 Azmaveth, from Baharum [town]; Eliahba, from Shaalbon [town]; 34 The sons of Hashem from [the] Gizon [clan]; Jonathan the son of Shagee from

the Harar [town/clan]; 35 Ahiam the son of Sharar/Sacar, from Harar [town/clan]; Eliphal the son of Ur; 36 Hepher from the Mekerath [clan]; Ahijah from the Pelon [clan/town]; 37 Hezro from Carmel [city]; Naarai the son of Ezbai; 38 Joel the [younger] brother of Nathan; Mibhar the son of Hagri; 39 Zelek from the Ammon people-group; Naharai, the man who carried Joab's weapons, from Beeroth [town]; 40 Ira and Gareb from Jattir [town]; 41 Uriah, [Bathsheba's husband], from the Heth people-group; Zabad the son of Ahlai; 42 Adina the son of Shiza, a leader from the tribe of Reuben, who had thirty [soldiers] with him; 43 Hanan the son of Maacah; Joshaphat from Mithna [town/clan]; 44 Uzzia from Ashterath [town]; Shama and Jeiel, the sons of Hotham, from Aroer [city]; 45 Jediael the son of Shimri and his [younger] brother Joha, from Tiz [town/clan]; 46 Eliel from Mahavah [town/clan]; Jeribai and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam; Ithmah from [the] Moab [region]; 47 Eliel and Obed, and Jaasiel from Zobah [town/clan].

12 David went to Ziklag [town] to escape from [King] Saul. While he was there, many warriors came and joined him, and they helped him when he fought battles. 2 They carried bows [and arrows]. They were able to shoot arrows and to sling stones. They could use either their right arms or their left arms to do that. They were relatives of Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. 3 Their leader was Ahiezer. Next in command was Joash. They were both sons of Shemaah from Gibeah [city]. [These are the names of some of those warriors:] Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; Beracah; Jehu from Anathoth [town]; 4 Ishmaiah from the Gibeon [city], who was a leader of the thirty mighty warriors; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, and Jozabad from Gederah [town]; 5 Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, and Shephatiah from Haruph [town]; 6 Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer and Jashobeam, who were descendants of Korah; 7 Joelah and Zebadiah, who were sons of Jeroham, from Gedor [town]. 8 Some men from the tribe of Gad [east of the Jordan River] joined David when he was at his fortress in [the caves in] the desert. They were brave warriors who were trained for fighting battles and able to use shields and spears well. They [SYN] were as fierce as [SIM, MTY] lions, and they could run as fast as [HYP, SIM] deer/gazelles on the hills/mountains. 9 Ezer was their leader. Next in command was Obadiah. Next was Eliab. 10 Next was Mishmannah. Next was Jeremiah. 11 Next was Attai. Next was Eliel. 12 Next was Johanan. Next was Elzabad. 13 Next was [another man whose name was] Jeremiah. The last was Macbannai. 14 Those men from the tribe of Gad were all army officers. Some of them commanded 1,000 soldiers, and some of them commanded 100 soldiers. 15 They crossed [to the west side of] the Jordan [River] during March, [at the time of the year] when the river was flooded. They chased from there all the people who lived in the valleys on both sides of the river. 16 Some other men from the tribe of Benjamin and from Judah also came to David in his fortress. 17 David went out [of the cave] to meet them and said to them, "If you have come peacefully to help me, I am eager to have you join with me. But if you have come to enable my enemies to capture me, even though I [SYN] have not done anything to harm you, I hope/wish that the God whom our ancestors (worshiped/belonged to) will see it and condemn/punish you." 18 Then [God's] Spirit came upon Amasai, who was another leader of the thirty [greatest warriors], and he said, "David, we want to be with you; you who are the son of Jesse, we will join you. We know that things will go very well [DOU] for you and for those who are with you, because your God is helping you." 19 So David welcomed those men, and he appointed them to be leaders of his soldiers. Some men from the tribe of Manasseh also joined David when he went with the soldiers of Philistia to fight against Saul's [army]. But David and his men did not really help the army of Philistia. After the leaders of Philistia talked [about David and his soldiers], they sent David away. They said, "If David joins his master Saul again, we will all be killed {his army will kill all of us}!" 20 When David went to Ziklag, these were the men from the tribe of Manasseh who went with him: Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, [another man whose name was] Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai. Each of them had been a commander of 1,000 men [in Saul's army]. 21 They were all brave soldiers, and they helped David to fight against the groups of men who roamed throughout the country, robbing people. So those men became commanders in David's army. 22 Every day more men joined David's men, and his army became large, like [SIM] the army of God (OR, a very huge army). 23 These are the numbers of soldiers who were ready for battle who joined David at Hebron [city]. They came to help him to become the king of Israel to replace Saul, as Yahweh had promised would happen. 24 There were 6,800 men from Judah, who carried shields and spears. 25 There were 7,100 men from the tribe of Simeon. They were all strong warriors trained to fight battles. 26 There were 4,600 men from the tribe of Levi. 27 Jehoiada, who was a leader descended from Aaron, was in that group of descendants of Levi, and there were 3,700 men with him. 28 Zadok, a strong young soldier, was also in that group, and there were 22 other leaders from his clan who came with him. 29 There were 3,000 men from the tribe of Benjamin who were Saul's relatives. Most of them had previously wanted one of Saul's descendants to be the king. 30 There were 20,800 men from the tribe of

Ephraim who were all brave warriors and trained for fighting battles and famous in their own clans. **31** There were 18,000 men from the half of the tribe of Manasseh [that lived west of the Jordan River]. They were all chosen to go and help David become the king. **32** There were 200 men who were leaders from the tribe of Issachar, along with their relatives. Those leaders always knew what the Israelis should do, and they knew the right time to do it. **33** There were 55,000 men from the tribe of Zebulun. They were all experienced warriors and knew how to use all kinds of weapons well. They were completely loyal to David. **34** There were 1,000 officers from the tribe of Naphtali. With them were 37,000 soldiers, each carrying shields and spears. **35** There were 28,600 soldiers from the tribe of Dan, all trained to fight battles. **36** There were 47,000 experienced soldiers from the tribe of Asher, all trained to fight battles. **37** There were also 120,000 soldiers from the area east of the Jordan [River who joined David]. They were from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the eastern half of the tribe of Manasseh. They had all kinds of weapons. **38** All those men were soldiers who volunteered to be in David's army. They came to Hebron wanting very much to enable David to be the king of all of the Israeli people. **39** The men spent three days there with David, eating and drinking, because their families had given them food to take with them. **40** Also, their fellow Israelis came from as far away as the area where the tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali lived, bringing food on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen. They brought a lot of flour, fig cakes, raisins, wine, [olive] oil, cattle and sheep. And throughout Israel, the people were very joyful.

13 [One day] David talked with all his army officers. Some of them were commanders of 100 soldiers and some were commanders of 1,000 soldiers. **2** Then he summoned the other Israeli leaders and said to all of them, "If it seems to you to be a good thing for us to do, and if it is what Yahweh our God wants, let's send a message to our fellow Israelis in all the areas of our country, including the priests and [other] descendants of Levi who are living among them in their towns and in the nearby pasturelands, to come and join us, **3** because we want to bring the Sacred Chest of our God back to us. While Saul [was the king], we did not go to God's presence to ask him what we should do." **4** All the people agreed with David, because they all thought that it was the right thing to do. **5** So David gathered all the Israeli people, from the Shihor [River] in Egypt to Lebo-Hamath [town in the north, and told them that he wanted them] to [help] bring the Sacred Chest of God [back to Jerusalem] from Kiriath-Jearim [city]. **6** David went with all the Israeli people to Baalah [town], which is [another name for] Kiriath-Jearim, to get the Sacred Chest. [The people believed that] God ruled from between the statues of winged creatures that was above the lid of the Sacred Chest [MTY]. **7** The people put the Sacred Chest on a new cart and transported it from Abinadab's house. Uzzah and Ahio were guiding [the oxen that were pulling the cart]. **8** David and all the Israeli people were celebrating in God's presence with all their strength. They were singing and [playing] lyres, harps, tambourines, and cymbals, and [blowing] trumpets. **9** But when David's men came to the place where Kidon threshed grain, the oxen stumbled. So Uzzah reached out with his hand to prevent the Sacred Chest from falling off the cart. **10** Yahweh immediately became very angry with Uzzah, and he caused Uzzah to suddenly die there because he had put his hand on the Sacred Chest, [and Yahweh had commanded that only the descendants of Levi who help the priests should touch the Sacred Chest]. **11** David was angry because Yahweh had punished [MTY] Uzzah. And now that place [where Uzzah died] is called 'The Punishment of Uzzah'. **12** That day, David was afraid of God. He asked [himself], "(How can I bring God's Sacred Chest to my [city]?/I am afraid to bring God's Sacred Chest to my [city].)" [RHQ] **13** So the men with David did not take the Sacred Chest to Jerusalem. Instead, they took it to the house of Obed-Edom, who was from Gath [city]. **14** The Sacred Chest stayed with Obed-Edom's family in his house for three months. And [during that time] Yahweh blessed Obed-Edom's family and everything that he owned.

14 One day Hiram, the king of Tyre [city], sent some messengers to David [to talk about making an agreement between their countries]. Then Hiram sent cedar logs, bricklayers, and carpenters to build a palace for David. **2** [When that happened,] David knew that Yahweh had truly caused him to be the king of Israel, and that he had caused his kingdom to be greatly respected. Yahweh did this because [he loved] his Israeli people. **3** David married more women in Jerusalem, and [those women] gave birth to more sons and daughters for him. **4** The names of the children that were born to him there in Jerusalem are Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, **5** Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet, **6** Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, **7** Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet. **8** When the army of Philistia heard that David has been appointed to be king of all of Israel, they came to capture him. But David heard that they were coming, so he [and his soldiers] marched out to fight against them. **9** The army of Philistia had attacked the people in the Rephaim Valley [southwest of Jerusalem] and had robbed them. **10** David asked God, "Should [my men and] I go and attack the army of Philistia? [If we go,] will you enable us to defeat [IDM] them?" Yahweh replied, "Yes, go, and I will enable

you to defeat [IDM] them." 11 So David and his men went up to a town where the soldiers of Philistia were staying and defeated them. Then David said, "God has enabled me [and my soldiers] to overwhelm my enemies like [MET] a flood." So they named that place {That place is called} 'Baal-Perazim' [which means 'Yahweh breaks through']. 12 [As the soldiers of Philistia fled], they left their idols there. So David commanded his soldiers to burn those idols. 13 But soon the army of Philistia attacked the people in that valley again. 14 So again David prayed to God [to ask him what he should do], and God replied, saying "Do not attack the army of Philistia from the front. Instead, go around them, and attack them [from the rear] in front of the balsam trees. 15 When you hear something in the tops of the balsam trees that sounds like [soldiers] marching, attack them. I, God, will have gone ahead of you to enable you to defeat the army of Philistia." 16 So David did what God commanded him to do, and he and his army defeated the army of Philistia, all the way from Gibeon [city in the east] to Gezer [city in the west]. 17 So David became famous in all the nearby countries, and Yahweh caused [the leaders of] all the [nearby] nations to be afraid of him.

15 David [commanded his workers to] build some houses for him in Jerusalem. He also told them to set up a tent in which to put the Sacred Chest. 2 He said, "Only the descendants of Levi are permitted to carry God's Sacred Chest, because they are the ones whom God chose to carry it and to serve him forever." 3 David summoned all the people of Israel to come to Jerusalem. He wanted the Sacred Chest of Yahweh to be put in the place that he had made for it. 4 He summoned the descendants of Aaron, [who was the first Supreme Priest,] and the other descendants of Levi. 5 120 descendants of Kohath, who was Levi's second son, came, with Uriel their leader. 6 There were 220 descendants of Merari, Levi's third son, who came, with Asaiah their leader. 7 There were 130 descendants of Gershon, Levi's first son, who came, with Joel their leader. 8 There were 200 people from Elizaphan's clan who came, with Shemaiah their leader. 9 There were 80 people from Hebron's clan who came, with Eliel their leader. 10 And there were 112 people from Uzziel's clan who came, with Amminadab their leader. 11 David summoned the priests Zadok and Abiathar and these [other] descendants of Levi: Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. 12 David said to them, "You are the leaders of the clans descended from Levi. You and the other descendants of Levi must purify yourselves, in order to [be able to do this special work for Yahweh. You must] bring the Sacred Chest of Yahweh, the God of us Israelis, up to the place that I have made for it [here in Jerusalem]. 13 The first time that we tried to bring it, we did not ask Yahweh how we should carry it {it should be carried}. You [descendants of Levi] were not the ones who carried it, so Yahweh our God punished us." 14 Then the priests and the [other] descendants of Levi [performed the rituals to] purify themselves, in order that it would be proper for them to do the work of carrying the Sacred Chest of Yahweh, the God of us Israeli people. 15 The descendants of Levi [inserted] the poles [into the rings on] the Sacred Chest so that with them, they could carry the Sacred Chest on their shoulders, like Moses had commanded, and like Yahweh had said that they should. 16 David told the leaders of the descendants of Levi to appoint some of their relatives to sing joyful songs and play lyres, harps, and cymbals [while they were carrying the Sacred Chest]. 17 So they appointed Heman and his relatives Asaph and Ethan. Heman was the son of Joel; Asaph was the son of Berekiah. Ethan, a descendant of Merari, was Kushaiah's son. 18 There was also another group of descendants of Levi who were appointed: Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, and two of the Sacred Tent gatekeepers, Obed-Edom and Jeiel. 19 Heman, Asaph and Ethan sang, and also played bronze cymbals. 20 Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah played lyres. 21 Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel and Azaziah played harps. 22 Kenaniah, the leader of the descendants of Levi, directed the singing because he was very skilled at doing that. 23 Berekiah and Elkanah were two of the men who guarded the Sacred Chest. 24 The priests Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer were appointed to blow trumpets in front of the Sacred Chest. Obed-Edom and Jehiah also guarded the Sacred Chest. 25 David and the Israeli leaders and the officers who commanded 1,000 soldiers went to bring the Sacred Chest back from Obed-Edom's house. They were very joyful as they brought it to Jerusalem. 26 God helped the descendants of Levi who carried the Sacred Chest of Yahweh; therefore David and the leaders sacrificed seven bulls and seven (rams/male sheep) [to thank him]. 27 All the descendants of Levi who carried the Sacred Chest, all the singers, and Kenaniah, the man who directed those who sang, wore robes of fine white linen and sacred vests made of fine linen. David also wore a sacred vest made of white linen. 28 So all of the Israeli people joined in bringing the Sacred Chest up [to Jerusalem]. They shouted [joyfully, while the musicians] blew horns and trumpets, and played cymbals, lyres, and harps. 29 While they were bringing the Sacred Chest into Jerusalem, Saul's daughter Michal

watched them, looking out of a window. When she saw King David dancing and celebrating, she despised him.

16 They brought the Sacred Chest [to Gibeon] and put it inside the Sacred Tent that David had [told his workers to] set up. Then they brought offerings to be completely burned [on the altar] and offerings to enable them to maintain fellowship [with God]. **2** When David had finished presenting all those offerings, he [asked Yahweh to] bless the people. **3** He gave a loaf of bread, some dates, and some raisins to every Israeli man and woman [who was there]. **4** Then David appointed some of the descendants of Levi to stand in front of [the Sacred Tent in which] the Sacred Chest [had been placed], to lead the people who worshiped and thanked and praised Yahweh, the God of the Israeli people. **5** Asaph, who played the cymbals, was their leader. Zechariah was his assistant. The other descendants of Levi [who helped Asaph] were Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel. They played lyres and harps. **6** Benaiah and Jahaziel were priests who blew trumpets frequently in front of [the Sacred Tent in which was] the Sacred Chest. **7** On that day, David gave to Asaph and his helpers this psalm to praise Yahweh: **8** Thank God, and pray to him [MTY]. Tell the people of all nations what he has done. **9** Sing to him; sing songs to praise him. Tell about all his miraculous deeds. **10** Be glad that you belong to him [MTY]; those who want to know Yahweh better should rejoice. **11** Trust in Yahweh and in his power; continually seek to get help from him. **12** Do not forget the wonderful things that he has done, the miracles and the just laws that he has given to us. **13** We people are the descendants of his servant Jacob; we are the people of Israel whom he has chosen. **14** Yahweh is our God. His just/fair laws are known by people throughout the world. **15** He never forgets the agreement that he has made: he made a promise that will last for 1,000 generations. **16** That is the agreement that he made with Abraham, and he repeated that agreement to Isaac. **17** It was an agreement for the Israeli people, and he wanted that agreement to endure forever. **18** What he said was, "I will give the Canaan region to you, to belong to you [and your descendants forever]." **19** [He said that to them] when there were only a few of them, a tiny group of people who were living in that land (like strangers/that belonged to other people); **20** they continued to wander from one place to another, from one kingdom to another. **21** But he did not allow others to oppress them, and he warned kings by saying to them, **22** "Do not harm the people whom I have chosen! Do not harm my prophets!" **23** You people throughout the world, sing to Yahweh. Every day proclaim [to others] that he has saved us. **24** Tell the people of the nations that he is great; tell all the people-groups the marvelous things [that he has done]. **25** Yahweh is great, and he deserves to be praised very much. He should be revered more than all the gods, **26** because all the gods that the [other] people-groups [worship] are only idols, but Yahweh [is truly great; he] created the skies. **27** He is glorious and majestic; his power and joy fill his Sacred Tent. **28** You people in nations all over the world, praise Yahweh! Praise Yahweh for his glorious power [HEN]! **29** Praise Yahweh like he [MTY] deserves to be praised. Bring an offering and come to his Sacred Tent. Worship Yahweh because he is holy. **30** Everyone on the earth should tremble in front of Yahweh. He put the earth firmly [in its place]; and nothing ever will be able to move/shake it. **31** Everything in the sky and on the earth should be happy. People [everywhere] should say, "Yahweh is our king!" **32** The oceans and all the creatures that are in the oceans should shout to praise him; the fields and everything that is in them should rejoice. **33** When they do that, [it will be as though] the trees in the forest will sing joyfully in front of Yahweh. That will happen when he comes to judge [everyone on] [MTY] the earth. **34** Thank Yahweh, because [everything that he does is] good. He faithfully loves us forever. **35** Say to him, "God, you are the one who rescues us, so gather us together and save us from [the armies of] other nations. When you do that, we will thank you [MTY], and we will be happy to praise you." **36** Praise Yahweh, the God of us Israeli people, He has always existed, and he will exist forever. After the people [finished singing that song], they all said, "(Amen/May it be so)!", and they praised Yahweh. **37** Then David left Asaph and the other members of his clan there in front of [the tent in which] Yahweh's Sacred Chest [had been placed]. He told them that they must do their work there every day. **38** David also left Obed-Edom and 68 other descendants of Levi to work with them. Hosah and Obed-Edom guarded [the entrances of the Sacred Tent]. **39** David also told Zadok the [Supreme] Priest and the other priests who worked with him to remain in front of Yahweh's Sacred Tent, which was still at the place where the Israeli people worshiped [God there] in Gibeon [city]. **40** Every morning and every evening they burned offerings on the altar, obeying the rules/laws that had been written [by Moses], rules/laws which Yahweh had given to the Israeli people. **41** With them were Heman and Jeduthun and other descendants of Levi. They [MTY] were chosen to sing songs to praise Yahweh because he faithfully loves his people forever. **42** Heman and Jeduthun were appointed to play the trumpets and cymbals when [the other descendants of Levi sang sacred songs]. The sons of Jeduthun were appointed to guard the gates [of the Sacred Tent]. **43** Then

all the people left. They returned to their homes, and David returned home to [ask Yahweh to] bless his family.

17 After David began to live in his palace, he said to the prophet Nathan, "[It does not seem right that] I am here living in a palace made of cedar [wood], but Yahweh's Sacred Chest is kept inside a tent!" **2** Nathan replied to David, "Whatever you are thinking about doing, do it, because God is with/guiding you." **3** But that night God spoke [MTY] to Nathan. He said, **4** "Go and tell my servant David that this is what I, Yahweh, am saying to him: 'You are not the one who should build a temple for me to live in. **5** I have not lived in any building, from the day that I brought the people of Israel up [out of Egypt] until now. Instead, I have [lived in a tent], moving from one place to another with [the Israelis] when they moved to other places [DOU]. **6** Wherever I went with all the Israelis [as they traveled], I never [RHQ] said to any of their leaders whom I appointed to lead [MET] them, "Why have you not built me a temple made of cedar [wood]?"' **7** Therefore, this is what you should say to my servant David: 'I, the Almighty Commander of the armies of angels, took you from a pasture where you were taking care of sheep, [and I appointed you] to be the ruler of my Israeli people. **8** I have (been with/helped) you wherever you have gone, and I have gotten rid of all your enemies as you advanced. And now I will cause you to become very famous, as well-known as the names of the greatest men [who have ever lived] on the earth. **9** Formerly, during the time that I appointed leaders for my Israeli people, many violent groups oppressed them. But this will not happen any more. I have chosen a place where my Israeli people can live [peacefully] and no one will disturb them any more. I will give not allow them to [be attacked by] their enemies. And I will defeat all your enemies. I declare to you that I, Yahweh, will enable your descendants to rule after you [die]. **11** When your life ends [EUP], and you [die and] go to be with your ancestors [who have died], I will appoint one of your sons to become king, and I will enable his kingdom to (be strong/resist all their enemies). **12** He is the one who will [arrange for] a temple to be built for me. And I will enable his descendants to be kings [MTY] of Israel forever. **13** I will be [like] a father to him, and [it will be as though] he [is] a son to me. I stopped loving [Saul,] the one who was the king before you became king, but I will never stop loving your son. **14** I will cause him to rule over my people [MTY], and his kingdom will endure forever [DOU].'" **15** So Nathan reported to David everything that Yahweh had revealed to him. **16** Then David went [into the Sacred Tent] and sat in the presence of Yahweh, and prayed this: "Yahweh my God, I am certainly not [RHQ] worthy for you to have done all these things for me, and my family is not worthy, either. **17** "And O God, now, in addition to everything else, you have spoken about what will happen to my descendants in the future for many generations. Yahweh my God, you have acted toward me as though I was the most important man [on the earth]! **18** "What more can I, David, say to you [for honoring me]? Although you know very well what I am like, **19** Yahweh, for my sake and because it is what you wanted to do, you have done these great things [for me], and you have revealed to me these things [that you are promising to do]. **20** "Yahweh, you are great. There is no one like you. Only you are God, which is what we have always heard. **21** And there is no nation in the world like Israel [RHQ]. Israel is the only nation on the earth whose people you rescued. You performed great and awesome miracles, rescuing our ancestors from [being slaves in] Egypt, and expelling the people of other people-groups [who were in Canaan]. **22** You have caused us your Israeli people to belong to you forever, and you, Yahweh, have become our God! **23** "And now Yahweh, I pray that you will cause the things that you have promised to do for me and my descendants [MTY] to be fulfilled forever. **24** When that happens, you [MTY] will be famous forever. And people will exclaim, 'The Almighty Commander of the armies of angels, is the God who rules Israel!' And you will cause that forever there will be descendants [MTY] of mine who will rule. **25** "You, my God, have revealed to me that you will cause [some of] my descendants to become kings. So I am brave enough to pray like this to you. **26** Yahweh, you are God! You have promised to do these good things for me. **27** And now you, Yahweh, have [promised to] bless my descendants [MTY], in order that they will continue to rule forever. That will happen because you, Yahweh, are the one who has blessed them, and you will keep blessing them forever."

18 Some time later, David's [army] attacked the army of Philistia and defeated them. They captured Gath [city] and the surrounding villages. **2** His [army] also defeated [the army of] the Moab [people-group]. The people were forced to accept David as their ruler, and also to pay money [each year to David's government, in order that David's army would protect them]. **3** David's [army] also fought against [the army of] Hadadezer, the king of [the] Zobah [region in Syria] near Hamath [city], when Hadadezer was trying to establish control over the area near the Euphrates River. **4** David's [army] captured 1,000 of Hadadezer's chariots, 7,000 chariot-drivers, and 20,000 soldiers. They hamstrung/crippled most of their horses; there were only 100 horses that they did not cripple. **5** When the army of Syria came from Damascus [city] to help Hadadezer's

[army], David's soldiers killed 22,000 of them. 6 Then David stationed groups of his soldiers in Damascus, and the people of Syria were forced to accept David as their ruler, and to pay to David's government [each year] the payment/tax that he demanded. And Yahweh enabled David's [army] to win battles everywhere they went. 7 David soldiers took the gold shields that were carried by the officers of Hadadezer's [army] and brought them to Jerusalem. 8 They also brought from Tebah (OR, Tibhath) and Cun, two towns that belonged to Hadadezer, a lot of bronze, which [David's son] Solomon [later] used to make the huge bronze basin and the pillars and other bronze items [for the temple]. 9 When Tou, the king of Hamath [city in Syria], heard that David's [army] had defeated the entire army of King Hadadezer, 10 he sent his son Hadoram to King David, to greet him and (congratulate him/tell him that he was happy) about his defeating Hadadezer's army, which had been fighting [the army of] Tou. Hadoram brought to David many items/gifts made of gold, silver, and bronze. 11 King David dedicated those things to Yahweh, like he had done with the silver and gold that his soldiers had taken from [the] Edom and Moab [people-groups], and from the Ammon people-group and from the people of Philistia, and from [the descendants of] Amalek. 12 [One of David's army commanders,] Abishai, whose mother was Zeruiah, went with his army and killed 18,000 soldiers from Edom in the Salt Valley. 13 Then David stationed groups of his soldiers there in Edom, and the people of Edom were forced to accept David as their king and to pay money to David's government [every year]. And Yahweh enabled David's [army] to win battles wherever they went. 14 David ruled over all the Israeli people, and he always did for them what was just and fair. 15 Zeruiah's son Joab was the chief army commander. Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the record-keeper. 16 Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the Supreme Priests. Shavsha was the official secretary. 17 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada ruled over the Kereth and Peleth groups [who were David's bodyguards]. And David's sons were his most important officials.

19 Some time later, Nahash, the king of the Ammon people-group, died. Then his son Hanun became their king. 2 [When] David [heard about that, he] thought [to himself], "Nahash was kind to me, so I will be kind to his son." So David sent some officials there, to tell Hanun that he was sorry to hear that Hanun's father [had died]. But when David's officials came to Hanun in the land where the Ammon people-group lived, 3 the leaders of the Ammon people-group said to Hanun, "Do you think that it is really to honor your father that King David is sending these men to say that he is sorry that your father died? [We think that] his men have come to (look around/spy) our city in order to determine how his [army] can conquer us." 4 Hanun [believed what they said, so he commanded some soldiers to] seize the officials whom David had sent, and shave off their beards, and [insult them by] cutting off the lower part of their robes, and then send them away. [So his soldiers did that]. 5 The officials were greatly humiliated/ashamed. When David found out about what had happened to his officials, he sent some messengers to them to tell them, "Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown again, and then return home." 6 Then the [leaders of the] Ammon people-group realized that they had greatly insulted [IDM] David. So Hanun and some of his officials sent about (37,000 pounds/34,000 kg.) of silver to hire chariots and chariot-drivers from [the] Aram-Naharaim, Aram-Maacah and Zobah [regions of Syria northeast of Israel]. 7 They hired 32,000 chariots and chariot-drivers, as well as the king of [the] Maacah [region] and his army. They came and set up their tents near Medeba [town in Moab region]. The soldiers from the Ammon people-group also marched out and (stood in their positions/arranged themselves for battle) [at the entrance to their capital city, Rabbah]. 8 When David heard about that, he sent Joab and all his army. 9 The soldiers of the Ammon people-group came out of their city and lined up for battle at the entrance to [their capital city, Rabbah]. Meanwhile, the other kings who had come [with their armies] stood in their positions in the open fields. 10 Joab saw that there were groups of enemy soldiers in front of his troops and behind his troops. So he selected some of the best Israeli troops and put them in positions to fight against the soldiers of Syria. 11 He appointed his [older] brother Abishai to be the commander of his other soldiers and he told them to (stand in their positions/arrange themselves) in front of [the army of] the Ammon people-group. 12 Joab said to them, "If the soldiers from Syria are too strong for us to defeat them, then your soldiers must come and help us. But if the soldiers from the Ammon people-group are too strong for you to defeat them, then my soldiers will come and help your men. 13 We must be strong/courageous, and fight hard to [defend] our people and our cities (that belong to/where we worship) our God. I will pray that Yahweh will do what he considers to be good." 14 So Joab and his troops [advanced to] fight the army of Syria, and the soldiers from Syria ran away from them. 15 And when the soldiers of the Ammon people-group saw that the soldiers from Syria were running away, they also started to run away from Abishai and his army, and they retreated back inside the city. So Joab [and his army] returned to Jerusalem. 16 After [the leaders of the

army of] Syria realized that they had been defeated by [the army of] Israel, they sent messengers to [another part of Syria on] the east side of the [Euphrates] river, and brought troops from there [to the battle area], with Shophach, the commander of Hadadezer's army, leading them. **17** When David heard about that, he gathered all the Israeli soldiers, and they crossed the Jordan [River]. They advanced and took their battle positions to attack the army of Syria. **18** But the army of Syria ran away from the soldiers of Israel. However, David's soldiers killed 7,000 of their chariot-drivers and 40,000 other soldiers. They also killed Shophach, their army commander. **19** When the kings who had been ruled by Hadadezer realized that they had been defeated by the Israeli army, they made peace with David, and agreed to allow him to rule them. So the rulers of Syria did not want to help the rulers of the Ammon people-group any more.

20 [In that region], kings usually went [with their armies] to fight [their enemies] (in the springtime/when the cold season ended). But that year, David [did not do that. Instead, he] stayed in Jerusalem, and he sent [his commander] Joab [to lead the army]. Joab took his troops. They [crossed the Jordan River and] ruined the land of the Ammon people-group. Then they went to Rabbah, [the capital city,] and surrounded it. David stayed in Jerusalem [for a while. But later he took more troops and went to help] Joab. Their armies attacked Rabbah and destroyed it. **2** Then David took the crown from the head of the king of Rabbah (OR, from the head of their god Milcom) and put it on his own head. It [was very heavy; it] weighed (75 pounds/34 kg.), and it had many very valuable stones [fastened to it]. They also took many other valuable things from the city. **3** Then they brought the people out of the city and forced them to [work for their army,] using saws and iron picks and axes. David's soldiers did this in all the cities of the Ammon people-group. Then David and all of his army returned to Jerusalem. **4** Later, [David's army] fought a battle with the army of Philistia, at Gezer [city]. During the battle Sibbecai, from Hushah [clan], killed Sippai, one of the descendants of the Rapha [giants]. So the armies of Philistia were defeated. **5** In another battle against the soldiers of Philistia, Elhanan, the son of Jair, killed Lahmi, the [younger] brother of [the giant] Goliath from Gath [town], who had a spear which was as thick as a weaver's rod. **6** There was another battle near Gath. A (huge man/giant) was there who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. He was descended from [the] Rapha [giants]. **7** When he made fun of the soldiers of Israel, Jonathan, the son of David's [older] brother Shimea, killed him. **8** Those were some of the descendants of [the] Rapha [giants] who had lived in Gath, who were killed [MTY] by David and his soldiers.

21 Satan decided to cause the Israeli people to have trouble. So he incited David to find out how many men in Israel [were able to be in the army]. **2** So David commanded Joab and the other army commanders, "Count all the men in Israel [who are able to be in the army]. Start at Beersheba [town in the south] and go all the way to Dan [city in the north]. Then come back and report to me, in order that I may know how many men there are." **3** But Joab replied, "Your majesty, even if Yahweh allowed us to have 100 times as many soldiers as we have now, you would [RHQ] still rule all of them. So why do you want us to do this? You will surely [RHQ] cause [all the people of] Israel to be guilty of sinning." **4** But David would not change his mind. So Joab [and his soldiers] went everywhere in Israel and in Judah, and counted the people. Then they returned to Jerusalem, **5** and they reported to David that there were 1,100,000 men in Israel who could be in the army, and 470,000 in Judah. **6** Joab did not count the men from the tribes of Levi and Benjamin, because he was disgusted with what the king had commanded. **7** David's command to count the people caused God to become angry, so he [told David that he had decided to] punish [the people of] Israel. **8** Then David prayed, saying, "Yahweh, what I did was very foolish. I have sinned greatly by what I have done. So now I plead with you, please forgive me." **9** Then Yahweh said to Gad, David's prophet, **10** "Go and tell this to David: I am allowing you to choose one of three things [to punish you]. I will do whichever one you choose." **11** So Gad went to David and said to him, "This is what Yahweh says: 'You can choose one of these [punishments]: **12** three years of famine [in Israel], or three months during which your armies will run away from their enemies [who will attack them with] swords, or three days during which I will send my angel to cause many people in the country to die because of a (plague/very serious illness).' So, you must decide what I will say to answer [Yahweh,] the one who sent me." **13** David replied to Gad, "I am very distressed. But allow Yahweh to punish [MTY] me, because he is very merciful. Do not allow humans to punish me, [because they will not be merciful]." **14** So Yahweh sent a plague on [the people of] Israel, and 70,000 of them died because of it. **15** And God sent an angel to destroy the people in Jerusalem by the plague. But when the angel was standing at the ground where Araunah, from the Jebus people-group, threshed grain, Yahweh saw all the suffering that the people had endured, and he was grieved. So he said to the angel, "Stop what you are doing [IDM]! That is enough [IDM]!" **16** David looked up and saw

the angel whom Yahweh had sent, standing between the sky and the ground. The angel had a sword in his hand that was pointed toward Jerusalem. Then David and the elders [of the city], who were wearing clothes made of rough sackcloth, prostrated themselves on the ground. **17** David said to God, "I am [RHQ] the one who ordered the men who could be in the army to be counted. I am the one who has sinned and done what is very wrong, but these people are [as innocent as] [MET] sheep. They have certainly not [RHQ] done anything [that is wrong]. So Yahweh my God, punish [IDM] me and my family, but do not allow this plague to continue to [cause] your people [to become sick and die]." **18** Then the angel who was sent by Yahweh told Gad to go up to the place where Araunah threshed grain and tell David to build an altar to [worship] Yahweh there. **19** So [after Gad told] David, [he] obeyed the message that Yahweh [MTY] had given to Gad, [and he went up there]. **20** While Araunah was threshing some wheat, he turned and saw the angel. His four sons who were with him [also saw the angel, and they] hid themselves. **21** Then David approached. When Araunah saw him, he left the place where he was threshing grain and prostrated himself, with his face touching the ground. **22** David said to him, "Please sell me your threshing place in order that I can build an altar here to [worship] Yahweh. Then he will stop this plague. I will pay the full price." **23** Araunah replied, "Take it! Your majesty, do whatever you want to. I will give you the oxen [that thresh the grain] for an offering to be completely burned [on the altar]. And I will give you the threshing boards to use as wood [on the altar], and I will give you grain for a grain offering. I will give all those things to you." **24** But the king said to Araunah, "No, [I will not take these things as a gift]. I will pay you the full price for it. I will not take things that belong to you, things that have cost me nothing and offer them as sacrifices to Yahweh to be completely burned on the altar." **25** So David paid Araunah 600 pieces of gold for the whole area. **26** David built an altar to [worship] Yahweh there, and he offered sacrifices to be completely burned [on the altar] and sacrifices to restore fellowship [with Yahweh]. David prayed to Yahweh, and Yahweh answered by sending a fire from heaven [to burn up the offerings] on the altar. **27** Then Yahweh spoke to the angel, and told him to put his sword back into its sheath. [So the angel did that]. **28** And when David saw that Yahweh had answered him there at the place where Araunah threshed grain [and had ended the plague], he offered sacrifices there. **29** Yahweh's Sacred Tent, which Moses had commanded to be set up in the desert, and the altar for burning sacrifices completely, were at that time on a hill at Gibeon [city]. **30** But David did not want to go there to request God to tell him what he wanted [him to do], because he was afraid that the angel sent from Yahweh [might strike him with] his sword.

22 Then David said, "Here, [at the edge of Jerusalem,] is where [we will build] the temple for our God Yahweh, and where [we will make] the altar for burning the offerings that the Israeli [people will bring]." **2** So David commanded that the foreigners who lived in Israel must gather together. [When they did that,] he appointed [some of those] men to [cut huge] stones [from the quarries] and to smooth their surfaces, to be used to build the temple of God. **3** David provided a large amount of iron for making nails and hinges for the doors in the gates of the temple. He also provided so much bronze [for making the altar and various utensils], that no one could weigh it all. **4** He also provided [money for buying] a large amount of cedar logs. Because there was a huge number of them, no one was able to count them. Those were logs that men from Tyre and Sidon [cities] sent to David. **5** David [provided all those things because he] thought, "My son Solomon is still young and he does not know what he needs to know [about building], and the temple of Yahweh must be (magnificent/very beautiful). It must be a glorious building that will become famous, and people throughout the world must consider it to be glorious/splendid. So now I will begin to prepare for it to be built, [and Solomon will be responsible for building it]." So David collected a great amount of building materials before he died. **6** [When] David [was old, he] summoned his son Solomon, and told him that he should arrange for a temple to be built for Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis [worshiped]. **7** He said to him, "I wanted [IDM] to build a temple to honor [MTY] Yahweh, my God. **8** But Yahweh told [a prophet to tell] me, 'You have killed many men [MTY] in the battles that you have fought. I have seen the blood of all the people whom you killed, so you will not be the one who will arrange for a temple to be built to honor me [MTY]. **9** But you will have a son [who will be king of Israel after you die]. He will be a man who is peaceful and quiet, [not a man who kills others]. And I will cause that there will be peace between him and his enemies who are in all the nearby lands. His name will be Solomon, [which sounds like the word for peace]. During the time that he is king, people in Israel will be peaceful and safe. **10** He is the one who will arrange for a temple to be built to honor me [MTY]. He will be [like] a son to me, and I will cause some of his descendants to rule [MTY] over Israel forever [HYP].' **11** "So now, my son, I hope/wish that Yahweh will help you, and enable you to be successful in arranging for building the temple of Yahweh, your God, which is what he said that you would do. **12** I also hope/wish that he will enable you to be wise and to understand what you need to know, and enable

you to obey his laws while you rule over Israel. 13 If you carefully obey all the laws and regulations/commands that Yahweh gave to Moses to give to us Israeli people, you will be successful. So be steadfast/strong and courageous. Do not be afraid of anything, and do not become discouraged! 14 "I have tried hard to provide [materials] for [building] the temple of Yahweh. I have provided nearly 4,000 tons of gold, and nearly 40,000 tons of silver. I have also provided a very large amount of iron and bronze; no one has been able to weigh it all. I have also gathered/provided lumber and stone [for the walls of the temple], but you may need to get some more of those things. 15 There are many men [in Israel] who have good ability to cut big stones for making stone walls, and carpenters, and men who are very skilled at making various kinds of things. 16 There are many men who know how to make things from gold and silver and bronze and iron. So now [I say to you], begin the work [of building the temple], and I hope/wish that Yahweh will help/be with you." 17 Then David commanded that all the Israeli leaders must assist Solomon. He said to them, 18 "Yahweh our God is certainly with/helping you [RHQ]. He has allowed you to have peace with all the nearby nations [RHQ]. He has enabled my [army] to conquer [IDM] them, so now Yahweh and my people control them. 19 Now you must obey Yahweh completely. Help Solomon to arrange for building the temple for Yahweh God, in order that you can bring the Sacred Chest that contains the Ten Commandments and the other sacred items that belong to God into the temple that you will build to honor Yahweh."

23 David was a very old man [DOU] when he appointed his son Solomon to be the next king. 2 David gathered the leaders of Israel and the priests and other descendants of Levi. 3 He [commanded some of his officials to] count the descendants of Levi who were at least thirty years old, and they found out that there were 38,000 of them. 4 Then David said, "From those 38,000 men, I want 24,000 of them to supervise the work at the temple of Yahweh, and I want 6,000 of them to be officials and judges. 5 I want 4,000 to be guards at the gates, and 4,000 to praise Yahweh, using the musical instruments that I have provided for them." 6 David divided the descendants of Levi into three family groups; each group consisted of men who were descendants of one of the three sons of Levi—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 7 From the descendants of Gershon there were Ladan and Shimei. 8 There were three sons of Ladan: Jehiel was the oldest, and his [younger] brothers Zetham and Joel. 9 There were three of the sons of Shimei: Shelomoth, Haziel, and Haran. They were all leaders of the clans of Ladan. 10 There were four men who were other sons of Shimei: 11 Jahath, who was his oldest son, and his [younger] brothers Ziza, Jeush, and Beriah. Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, so they were counted as though they were one family. 12 Kohath had four sons: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 13 There were two sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. Aaron and his descendants were set apart to dedicate the very holy things, to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, to serve in his presence, and to declare [to the people] what Yahweh [MTY] would do to bless them. They were to do those things forever. 14 The sons of Moses, the man who served God [well], were counted as part of the tribe of Levi. 15 The sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer. 16 The oldest son of Gershom was Shubael. 17 Rehabiah was the oldest son of Eliezer. Eliezer had no other sons, but Rehabiah had many sons. 18 The oldest son of Izhar was Shelomith. 19 Hebron had four sons. Jeriah was his oldest son, and his [younger] brothers were Amariah, Jahaziel, and Jekameam. 20 Uzziel had two sons. Micah was the oldest son, and his [younger] brother was Isshiah. 21 Merari had two sons: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli were Eleazar and Kish. 22 Eleazar had no sons; he had only daughters. Their cousins, the sons of Kish, married them. 23 The three sons of Mushi were Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. 24 Those were the descendants of Levi, whose names were listed according to their families/clans. They were chosen for special jobs by (casting lots/throwing small marked stones). Each person who was at least 20 years old was listed. They all worked in the temple of Yahweh. 25 David had said previously, "Yahweh, the God to whom we Israeli people belong, has enabled us to have peace, and he [has come to] live in Jerusalem forever. 26 Therefore, the descendants of Levi no longer need to carry the Sacred Tent and the items used in the work there." 27 Obeying the final instructions of David [before he died, instructions for doing this work at the temple], they counted only the descendants of Levi who were at least 20 years old. 28 The work of those descendants of Levi was to assist the descendants of Aaron in their work in the temple of Yahweh: To be in charge of the temple courtyards and the side rooms, the ceremonies for purifying all the sacred things, and to do other work at the temple. 29 They were also in charge of the sacred loaves of bread that were placed [each week] on the table [in the temple], the flour for the grain offerings, the wafers that were made without yeast, and the measuring the ingredients and mixing them and baking that bread and those wafers. 30 They were also told to stand every morning [at the temple] and thank Yahweh and praise him. They were also required to do the same thing every evening. 31 And they were to do the same thing whenever offerings that were to be completely

burned [on the altar] were presented/offered to Yahweh on Sabbath days and during the new moon celebrations and other religious festivals. They were told how many of them should be there and what they should do each time. **32** So the descendants of Levi did the work that was assigned to them by their fellow Israelis who were descendants of Aaron. They did that work in the area surrounding the Sacred Tent, and in the Sacred Tent, and [later] at the temple.

24 These are the groups of the descendants of Aaron [the first Supreme Priest]: Aaron's four sons were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. **2** But Nadab and Abihu died before their father died, and they had no children. So their [younger] brothers Eleazar and Ithamar became the priests. **3** Zadok, who was a descendant of Eleazar, and Ahimelech, who was a descendant of Ithamar, helped David to separate his descendants into two groups. Each group had certain duties. **4** There were more leaders among the descendants of Eleazar than there were among the descendants of Ithamar. So they appointed 16 leaders from Eleazar's descendants and eight leaders from Ithamar's descendants. **5** There were temple officials and priests, including descendants of both Eleazar and Ithamar, to make sure that the work was divided fairly. So they decided what work each person would do by (casting lots/throwing marked stones). **6** Shemaiah, the son of Nethanel, who was a descendant of Levi, wrote down the names [of the leaders of each group] while David and his officials were watching. Zadok, the [Supreme] Priest, and Ahimelech [his assistant], and the leaders of the families of the priests and of the families of the other descendants of Levi also watched. **7** Jehoiarib was the first one whose name was selected [by casting lots/throwing marked stones]. Next Jedaiah was selected. **8** Next, Harim was selected. Next, Seorim was selected. **9** Next, Malkijah was selected. Next, Mijamin was selected. **10** Next, Hakkoz was selected. Next, Abijah was selected. **11** Next, Jeshua was selected. Next, Shecaniah was selected. **12** Next, Eliashib was selected. Next, Jakim was selected. **13** Next, Huppah was selected. Next, Jeshebeab was selected. **14** Next, Bilgah was selected. Next, Immer was selected. **15** Next, Hezir was selected. Next, Happizzez was selected. **16** Next, Pethahiah was selected. Next, Jehezkel was selected. **17** Next, Jakin was selected. Next, Gamul was selected. **18** Next, Delaiah was selected. Next, Maaziah was selected. **19** Those were the men who were chosen to be the leaders of the groups that would serve in the temple, obeying the regulations that were set down by Aaron, regulations which Yahweh, the God to whom the Israeli people belonged, had given to him. **20** [This is a list of some of] the other descendants of Levi: Amram was the ancestor of Shubael and Jehdeiah. **21** Rehabiah was the ancestor of Isshiah, the oldest son in his family. **22** Izhar was the father of Shelomoth and the grandfather of Jahath. **23** [Kohath's son] Hebron had four sons: Jeriah and his [younger] brothers Amariah, Jahaziel, and Jekameam. **24** Uzziel was the father of Micah and the grandfather of Shamir. **25** Micah's [younger] brother was the father of Zechariah. **26** The sons of Merari were Mahli, Mushi, and Jaaziah. **27** Jaaziah had four sons: Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. **28** Mahli's son Eleazar did not have any sons. **29** From the descendants of [Mahli's second son] there was Jerahmeel. **30** The sons of Mushi were Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. Those were descendants of Levi who were listed according to the leaders of their families. **31** The jobs they would do were decided by (casting lots/throwing marked stones), like their fellow Israelis, the descendants of Aaron, did. They cast lots {The lots were cast} while King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the leaders of the families of the priests and the [other] descendants of Levi watched. They gave the same jobs to the families of each oldest brother and each youngest brother.

25 David and some of the temple officials (OR, army commanders) chose some of the descendants of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun to be in charge of proclaiming God's messages, and to play harps and lyres and cymbals. This is a list of the men whom they chose for that work: **2** From the sons of Asaph they chose Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Aserelah. Asaph supervised them. And the king appointed Asaph to proclaim God's messages. **3** From the sons of Jeduthun they chose six men: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiah, Shimei, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah. Jeduthun supervised them and also proclaimed God's messages, playing his harp while he thanked and praised Yahweh. **4** From the sons of Heman, who was one of the king's prophets, they chose Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shubael, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth. **5** God promised to cause Heman to be strong, so altogether, God have him 14 sons and three daughters. **6** All those men were supervised by their fathers while they played music in the temple of Yahweh. They played cymbals, lyres, and harps. And their fathers—Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman—were supervised by the king. **7** Those men and their relatives were all trained and skilled for playing musical instruments in the temple. That was their work for Yahweh. Including their relatives, there were 288 of them. **8** All of them, including ones who were young and those who were old, cast lots to determine what work they would do. **9** From the family of Asaph, the first ones selected were Joseph and 12 of his sons and relatives. **10** Next, Gedaliah and 12 of his

sons and relatives were selected. 11 Next, Zaccur and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 12 Next, Nethaniah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 13 Next, Bukkiah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 14 Next, Jesarelah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 15 Next, Jeshaiah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 16 Next, Mattaniah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 17 Next, Shimei and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 18 Next, Azarel and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 19 Next, Hashabiah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 20 Next, Shubael and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 21 Next, Mattithiah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 22 Next, Jerimoth and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 23 Next, Hananiah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 24 Next, Joshbekashah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 25 Next, Hanani and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 26 Next, Mallothi and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 27 Next, Eliathah and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 28 Next, Hothir and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 29 Next, Giddalti and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 30 Next, Mahazioth and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected. 31 Next, Romamti-Ezer and 12 of his sons and relatives were selected.

26 This is a list of the groups of men who guarded the temple gates: From the descendants of Korah, there was Meshelemiah, the son of Kore, who was one of the sons of Asaph. 2 The oldest son of Meshelemiah was Zechariah. His other sons were Jediael, Zebadiah, Jathniel, 3 Elam, Jehohanan, and Eliehoenai. 4 [Another guard] was Obed-Edom. His oldest son was Shemaiah. His other sons were Jehozabad, Joah, Sacar, Nethanel, 5 Ammiel, Issachar, and Peullethai. It was because God had blessed him that he had many sons. 6 Obed-Edom's son Shemaiah also had sons. They were leaders in their father's family because they were capable of doing many things well. 7 The sons of Shemaiah were Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad. Shemaiah's relatives Elihu and Semakiah were also capable men. 8 All of those descendants of Obed-Edom and their sons and relatives were capable people and strong workers. Altogether there were 62 of them. 9 Another guard was Meshelemiah. He and his sons and relatives were also capable people. There were 18 of them altogether. 10 Another guard was Hosah's son Shimri, a descendant of Merari. Hosah appointed Shimri to be the leader, even though he was not Hosah's oldest son. 11 Hosah's other sons were Hilkiah, Tabaliah, and Zechariah. Altogether there were 13 sons and relatives of Hosah. 12 Those men were leaders of the groups of men who guarded the gates of the temple. They worked at the temple like their relatives did. 13 By casting lots, the leader of each family chose one gate for their group to guard. [All of them, including] young men and old men (OR, including leaders of large families and small families), cast lots. 14 Shelemiah's group was selected to guard the East Gate. The group of Shelemiah's son Zechariah, who was a wise counselor, was selected to guard the North Gate. 15 Then Obed-Edom's group was selected to guard the South Gate, and his sons were selected to guard the [entrances to the temple] storerooms. 16 Then Shuppim's group and Hosah's group were selected to guard the West Gate and the Shalleketh Gate on the upper road [to the temple]. The work for the guards was divided evenly. 17 Each day there were six descendants of Levi who guarded the East Gate, four who guarded the North Gate, four who guarded the South Gate, and two at a time who guarded the entrances to the storerooms. 18 At the West gate there were two men who guarded the courtyard and four who guarded the road outside the courtyard. 19 Those were the groups of men who were descendants of Korah and Merari who guarded the gates [of the temple]. 20 Other descendants of Levi were in charge of the chests that contained the money that was dedicated to Yahweh, money that the people brought to the temple. 21 [One of those men was] Ladan, a descendant of Gershon. He was the ancestor of several family groups. Jehiel was the leader of one of those family groups. 22 Others who had that work were Zetham and his [younger] brother Joel, who were the sons of Jehiel. 23 Others who did that work were descendants of Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. 24 [From the descendants of Amram], Shubael, a descendant of Moses's son Gershom, was the leader who was in charge of the money chests. 25 [Others who did that work were] the descendants of [Gershom's younger brother] Eliezer. Those men were Eliezer's son Rehabiah, Rehabiah's son Jeshaiah, Jeshaiah's son Joram, Joram's son Zicri, and Zicri's son Shelomith. 26 Shelomith and his relatives were in charge of all the valuable things that had been dedicated [to Yahweh] by King David, by the leaders of the family groups, by the army commanders of 1,000 soldiers and commanders of 100 soldiers, and by other army commanders. 27 Some of the things that those army officers had taken [from Israel's enemies] in battles they dedicated for the repair of the temple of Yahweh. 28 And Shelomith and his relatives were also in charge of everything that had been dedicated [to Yahweh] by the prophet Samuel, by King Saul, and by [David's two army commanders] Ner and Joab. 29 From the descendants of Izhar, Kenaniah and his sons were given work outside [the temple area].

They were officials and judges in [various places] in Israel. **30** From the descendants of Hebron, Hashabiah and his relatives were responsible for the work done for Yahweh and for the king in all the area west of the Jordan [river]. There were 1,700 of them who were able to do their work well. **31** It was written in the records of the descendants of Hebron that Jeriah was their leader. When David had been ruling for almost 40 years, they searched in those records, and they found [names of] capable men descended from Hebron who were at Jazer [city] in the Gilead [region]. **32** Jeriah had 2,700 relatives who were able to do their work well, and who were leaders of their families. King David put them in charge of governing the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and [the eastern] half of the tribe of Manasseh, to be sure that all the people did what God and the king told them to do.

27 This is a list of the Israeli men who served the king in the army. Some were leaders of families, some were commanders of 100 men, some were commanders of 1,000 men, and some were their officers. There were 24,000 men [DOU] in each group. Each group served one month of each year. **2** Jashobeam, the son of Zabdiel, was in charge of the group that served during the first month [of each year]. **3** He was a descendant of Perez, and he was the commander of all the army officers during the first month of each year. **4** Dodai, from the clan of Ahohi, was the commander of the group that served during the following/second month of each year. Mikloth was his (assistant/chief officer). **5** Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the Supreme Priest, was the commander of the group that served during the following/third month. **6** He was the one who was a mighty warrior among David's thirty greatest soldiers, and he was their leader. His son Ammizabad was his assistant. **7** Asahel, Joab's [younger] brother, was [the commander of the group that served] during the following/fourth month. Asahel's son Zebadiah became the commander after Asahel [was killed]. **8** The commander for the following/fifth month was Shamhuth, a descendant of Izrah. **9** The commander for the following/sixth month was Ira the son of Ikkesh from Tekoa [town]. **10** The commander for the following/seventh month was Helez, a member of the Pelon [clan] from the tribe of Ephraim. **11** The commander for the following/eighth month was Sibbecai, a descendant of Zerah from Hushah [town]. **12** The commander for the following/ninth month was Abiezer from Anathoth [city] in the tribe of Benjamin. **13** The commander for the following/tenth month was Maharai, a descendant of Zerah from Netophath [town]. **14** The commander for the following/eleventh month was Benaiah from Pirathon [town] in the tribe of Ephraim. **15** The commander for the last month [of each year] was Heldai, a descendant of Othniel from Netophath [town]. **16** This is a list of the administrators of the [twelve] tribes [DOU] of Israel: Eliezer, the son of Zicri, was the administrator of the tribe of Reuben. Shephatiah, the son of Maacah, was the administrator of the tribe of Simeon. **17** Hashabiah, the son of Kemuel, was the administrator of the tribe of Levi. Zadok was the administrator of the tribe of Aaron. **18** Elihu, David's [older] brother, was the administrator of the tribe of Judah. Omri, the son of Michael, was the administrator of the tribe of Issachar. **19** Ishmaiah, the son of Obadiah, was the administrator of the tribe of Zebulun. Jerimoth, the son of Azriel, was the administrator of the tribe of Naphtali. **20** Hoshea, the son of Azaziah, was the administrator of the tribe of Ephraim. Joel, the son of Pedaiah, was the administrator of the tribe of the [western] half of the tribe of Manasseh. **21** Iddo, the son of Zechariah, was the administrator of the [eastern] half of the tribe of Manasseh, in [the] Gilead [region]. Jaasiel, the son of Abner, was the administrator of the tribe of Benjamin. **22** Azarel, the son of Jeroham, was the administrator of the tribe of Dan. Those were the leaders over the tribes of Israel. **23** [When] David [told Joab to count the men of Israel, he] did not [tell him to] count the men who were less then 20 years old, because Yahweh had promised [many years previously] that there would be as many [people] in Israel as there are stars in the sky. **24** Joab [and his helpers] started to count the men of Israel, but they did not finish counting them [because Joab knew that Yahweh was angry about their being counted]. Yahweh punished [MTY] the people of Israel because of this counting, and as a result the total number of Israeli men [able to serve in the army] was not written on the scroll about King David's [rule]. **25** Azmaveth, the son of Adiel, was in charge of the king's storehouses. Jonathan, the son of Uzziah, was is charge of the storehouses in various towns and villages in Israel, and also in charge of the watchtowers. **26** Ezri the son of Kelub was in charge of the workers who farmed the land [that belonged to the king]. **27** Shimei from Ramath [town] was in charge of the king's vineyards. Zabdi from Shepham [town] was in charge of storing the wine from the [grapes produced in] vineyards. **28** Baal-Hanan from Geder [city] was in charge of storing the olive oil. **29** Shitrai from the Sharon Plain was in charge of the herds of cattle that (grazed/ate grass) there. Shaphat the son of Adlai was in charge of the cattle in the valleys. **30** Obil, a descendant of Ishmael, was in charge of the camels. Jehdeiah from Meronoth [town] was in charge of the donkeys. **31** Jaziz, a descendant of Hagar, was in charge of the [king's] flocks of sheep. All of those officials were in charge of the things that belonged to King David. **32** David's uncle Jonathan was a wise counselor for him. Jehiel, the son of Hacmoni, taught the king's sons.

33 Ahithophel was the king's official counselor. 34 Hushai
from the Ark people-group was the king's special friend.
Benaiah's son Jehoiada became the king's advisor after
Ahithophel died, and later Abiathar became his advisor. Joab
was the chief commander of the army.

28 David summoned all the leaders of Israel to come to
Jerusalem. He summoned the leaders of the tribes,
the leaders/commanders of the groups that worked for the
king, the commanders of 100 soldiers, the commanders of
1,000 soldiers, those who were in charge of the property
and livestock that belonged to the king and his sons, all the
palace officials, and his mighty soldiers and bravest warriors.
2 David stood up and said, "My fellow Israelis, listen to me.
I wanted [IDM] to build a temple to be a place where we
would put the Sacred Chest of Yahweh, where it would stay
permanently. And I made plans to build it. 3 But God said
to me, 'You are not the one who will [arrange to] build a
temple for me [MTY], because you are a warrior and you
have killed many people [MTY] [in battles].' 4 "But Yahweh,
the God to whom we Israelis belong, had chosen me and
my descendants to be the kings of Israel forever. [First]
he chose the tribe of Judah, and from the people [MTY]
of Judah he chose my family, and from my father's sons
he chose me to be the king over all of Israel. 5 Yahweh
has given me many sons, but from them he chose my son
Solomon to be the next king to rule [MTY] the kingdom of
Israel. 6 He said to me, 'Solomon your son is the one who
will [arrange to] build my temple and the courtyards around it,
because I have chosen him to be [like] my son and I will be
[like] [MET] his father. 7 I will enable his kingdom to endure
forever if he continues to obey my laws and commands,
like you are doing now.' 8 "So now, while all [you people of]
Israel, all of you who belong to Yahweh, are watching, and
while God is listening, I command you [leaders] to carefully
obey all the commands of Yahweh our God, in order that
you may continue to possess this good land and enable
your descendants to inherit it forever. 9 "And you, my son
Solomon, must know God like I know him, and you must
serve him faithfully and because you want to. You must do
that because he knows what everyone is thinking and he
understands the reasons that people do what they do. If you
seek [to know] him, he will heed your prayers. But if you
abandon/reject him, he will abandon/reject you forever. 10
Yahweh has chosen you to [arrange to] build a temple for
him. So think about [what I have said], and be strong and do
what [he is wanting you to do]." 11 Then David gave to his
son Solomon [the scroll on which were written] the plans
for the main rooms of the temple, its porch, its storerooms,
all the other upper and lower rooms, and the Very Holy
Place where God would forgive the sins that people had
committed. 12 David wrote for him the plans that God's Spirit
had put into his mind for building the courtyards and all the
rooms that surrounded the temple, including the room where
the money and other valuable things that were dedicated to
God would be kept. 13 He gave Solomon instructions for the
groups of priests and other descendants of Levi, about all
the work that they must do to serve in Yahweh's temple, and
about taking care of all the things that would be used in the
work at the temple. 14 He wrote down how much gold and
how much silver should be used to make all the items in the
temple: 15 how much gold for making the gold lampstands
and the lamps, how much silver to make the silver lamps and
lampstands, 16 how much gold for making the table on which
[the priests would put] the sacred bread, how much silver to
use to make the other tables, 17 how much pure gold for the
meat forks and the bowls and the cups, how much gold for
each gold dish, how much silver for each silver dish, 18 and
how much pure gold to make the altar for [burning] incense.
He also gave to Solomon his plans for making the golden
statues of winged creatures that would be above the Sacred
Chest of Yahweh, [like] a chariot for him. 19 Then David said,
"I have written [all these plans] while Yahweh was directing
[MTY] me. He has enabled me to understand all the details
of his plan [for the temple that is to be built]." 20 David also
said to his son Solomon, "Be strong and courageous, and do
this work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, because Yahweh
our God will be with/helping you. He will not fail [to help] you
or abandon you until you finish all the work of making his
temple. 21 The groups of priests and [other] descendants of
Levi are ready to begin their work at the temple, and every
man who has a special skill will help you in all the work. And
my officials and the other people will obey you, whatever
you command them to do."

29 Then King David said to all the people who had
gathered there, "My son Solomon, the one whom God
has chosen [to be the next king], is young and does not
have much experience. This work [of building the temple] is
great/important, because this glorious building will not be
to [honor] people, but to honor Yahweh our God. 2 From
all the things that I possess, I have provided [what will be
needed] to [build] the temple of my God—the gold for the
things to be made of gold, the silver for the things to be
made of silver, bronze for the things to be made of bronze,
iron for the things to be made of iron, wood for the things to
be made of wood, and large amounts of onyx and turquoise
and other valuable stones of various colors, and marble and
all kinds of valuable stones. 3 In addition to all these things
that I have given for the temple, I am giving treasures of gold

and silver, because I very much desire that this holy temple for my God be built. **4** I am giving 110 tons of gold from Ophir and 260 tons of refined silver to cover the walls of the buildings, **5** for making the other items of gold and silver, and for the other work to be done by the craftsmen. So now, [I ask you], are there others willing to show [by contributing other gifts for the building of the temple] [EUP] that they have dedicated themselves to Yahweh?" **6** Then the leaders of the families/clans, the leaders of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the commanders of 100 soldiers, and the officials who supervised the work that the king wanted done, gave gifts (willingly/because they wanted to give them). **7** For the work at the temple they gave 190 tons and (185 pounds/84 kg.) of gold, 375 tons of silver, 675 tons of bronze, and 3,750 tons of iron. **8** And any people who owned valuable stones gave them to be put in the storeroom of the temple. Jehiel, a descendant of Gershon, was appointed to be in charge of them. **9** The people were happy to see that their leaders wanted to give those things, because [they knew that] their leaders were happy and enthusiastic to give those things to Yahweh. And King David also was very happy. **10** Then, while all the people there were listening, David prayed, saying, "We praise you, Yahweh, the God whom our ancestor Jacob worshiped. We will praise you forever! **11** You alone are great and powerful; only you are truly glorious and majestic and wonderful. [And that is true] because everything in heaven and on the earth is yours. You are the king of all the people in this world; you are the ruler of everything. **12** Because you are very powerful [DOU], you are able to cause anyone to be great and strong. **13** So now, our God, we thank you, and we praise you [MTY] for being very great. **14** But my people and I are not really able to give anything to you, because everything [that we have] comes from you, and what we have given to you are only the things that we have received from you [MTY]. **15** [In this land] we are like [MET] foreigners and strangers, like our ancestors were. Our time here on this earth is like [SIM] a shadow [that disappears quickly]; [we know that there is] nothing [that] can enable us [to escape dying]. **16** Yahweh our God, we have gathered all these things to use in building your [MTY] temple, but all of it really belongs to you, and you have given it to us [MTY]. **17** My God, I know that you test us people, and you are pleased if you find out that we do what is right. All these things I have given to you because I wanted to. And now I have seen that your people have also joyfully and generously given things to you. **18** Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshiped, I desire/hope that your people will continue to desire [to do things like this] forever, and that they will always be loyal to you. **19** And now, please enable my son Solomon to faithfully and sincerely [DOU] obey your commands and laws and decrees [DOU] and to do everything that is needed to build this beautiful building for which I have provided [all these things]." **20** Then David said to all the people who were gathered there, "Praise Yahweh our God!" So they all praised Yahweh the God whom their ancestors ([also worshiped/belonged to]). They prostrated themselves on the ground in front of Yahweh and in front of the king. **21** The next day the people offered sacrifices to Yahweh. They presented many animals to be completely burned [on the altar]: 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams, 1,000 male sheep, plus offerings of wine, and many other sacrifices on behalf of all [the people of] Israel. **22** On that day the people were joyful and ate and drank while Yahweh was watching. Then for the second time they declared that Solomon was now the king. While Yahweh was watching, they anointed him [with olive oil] to be the king, and they anointed Zadok to be the Supreme Priest. **23** So Solomon sat on the throne [because Yahweh wanted him to be] the king to succeed his father David. [During the following years] Solomon prospered, and all the Israeli people obeyed him. **24** King David's other sons and all the officers and mighty warriors accepted Solomon as their king, and they solemnly promised to obey him. **25** Yahweh caused Solomon to be highly respected by all the Israeli people, and they honored him very much. No king of Israel was honored as much as Solomon was. **26** Jesse's son David was the king who ruled all of Israel. **27** He ruled for 40 years: Seven years in Hebron [city] and 33 years in Jerusalem. **28** He became an old man who was very rich and greatly honored by all the people. Then he died, and his son Solomon became the king [of Israel]. **29** A record of all the things that King David did while he ruled, from the beginning to the end, was put on scrolls written by the prophets Samuel, Nathan, and Gad. **30** They told about his powerful rule [HEN], and all the things that happened to him and to the people of Israel and in the nearby kingdoms [while he was ruling Israel].

2 Chronicles

1 David's son [King] Solomon was able to gain complete control over his kingdom, because Yahweh his God helped him and enabled him to become very powerful. **2** [When] David [was king, he had arranged for a new] Sacred Tent [to be] made in Jerusalem. Then David [and the Israeli leaders] had brought God's Sacred Chest from Kiriath-Jearim [city] to the new Sacred Tent in Jerusalem that he had prepared for it. But [when Solomon became the king,] the first Sacred Tent was still at Gibeon [city]. That was the tent that Moses, the man who served God [well], had [arranged to be] made in the desert. And the bronze altar that Bezalel, the son of Uri and grandson of Hur, had made was also still in Gibeon, in front of the first Sacred Tent. [One day] Solomon summoned the army commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the commanders of 100 soldiers and the judges and all the other leaders in Israel. He told them to go with him to Gibeon. So they all went to a hill in Gibeon [where the Sacred Tent was], and Solomon and all the others with him worshiped Yahweh there. **6** Then Solomon went up to the bronze altar in front of the Sacred Tent, and he offered 1,000 animals to be [killed and] completely burned [on the altar]. **7** That night God appeared to Solomon [in a dream] and said to him, "Request whatever you want me to give to you." **8** Solomon replied, "You were very kind to David my father, and now you have appointed me to be the king to succeed him. **9** So Yahweh my God, you have caused me to become the king to rule people who are as many as the particles of dirt on the earth. So do what you promised my father David. **10** Please enable me to be wise and to know [what I should do], in order that I may rule these people [well], because there is no one who can rule all this great nation of yours [without your help]." **11** God replied, "[I am pleased with what] you desire; you have not requested a huge amount of money or to be honored or that your enemies be killed. And you have not requested that you live for a long time. Instead, you have requested that [I enable] you [to] be wise and [to] know [what you should do] in order that you may govern [well] my people whom I have appointed you to rule. **12** Therefore I will enable you to be wise and to know [what you should do to rule my people well]. But I will also enable you to have a huge amount of money and to be honored, more than anyone who was previously a king ever was honored, more than anyone who later becomes king will be honored." **13** Then Solomon [and the people who were with him all] left from being in front of he Sacred Tent [on the hill in Gibeon], and they returned to Jerusalem. From there he ruled the Israeli people. **14** Solomon acquired 1,400 chariots and 12,000 men who rode [on horses]. He put some of the chariots and horses in Jerusalem, and put some of them in various other cities. **15** During the years that Solomon was king, silver and gold were as common in Jerusalem as stones, and [lumber from] cedar trees were as plentiful as [lumber from] ordinary sycamore trees in the foothills. **16** Solomon's horses were imported/brought from Egypt and from [the] Kue [region in Turkey]. **17** In Egypt his men paid 15 pounds of silver for each chariot and 3-3/4 pounds of silver for each horse. They also exported/sold many of them to the kings of the Heth and Aram people-groups.

2 Solomon ordered that a temple should be built where Yahweh would be worshiped and also that a palace should be built for himself. **2** He selected 70,000 men to carry the building supplies and 80,000 men to cut stones [(from quarries/walls of rock) in] the hills. He also chose 3,600 men to supervise them. **3** Solomon sent this message to King Hiram of Tyre [city]: "[Many years ago] when my father David was building his palace, you sent to him cedar logs. Will you send me cedar logs, too? **4** "We are about to build a temple where we will worship Yahweh our God. We want to dedicate it to be a place where we will burn fragrant incense to [honor] him, and a place to put loaves of sacred bread, and for making sacrifices every morning and every evening and every Sabbath day, and to celebrate on the day of every new moon and at other special religious festivals to [honor] Yahweh our God. We want to do those things forever, like Yahweh has commanded. **5** [We want] this temple [to] be a great temple, because our God is greater than all other gods. **6** But no one can really build a temple that would be big enough for God [to live in], because even the highest heavens are not big enough for him. And I am worthy only to build a place where we can burn sacrifices to him. **7** Therefore, please send me a man who knows well how to make things from gold and silver and bronze and iron, and to make things from purple and red and blue cloth. He should also know well how to engrave designs. I want him to work in Jerusalem and in other places in Judah with my skilled craftsmen, the ones whom my father David appointed. **8** I know that your workers are skilled in cutting timber, so also please send me cedar logs, pine logs, and juniper logs from the Lebanon mountains. My workers will work with your workers. **9** In that way, those workers will provide me with plenty of lumber. [We will need plenty,] because I want the temple that we will build to be large and beautiful. **10** I will pay your workers, the men who cut the logs, 100,000 bushels of ground wheat, 100,000 bushels of barley, 110,000 gallons of wine, and 110,000 gallons of olive oil." **11** [When] Hiram [received that message, he] replied

by sending this message to Solomon: "Because Yahweh loves his people, he has appointed you to be their king." **12** [And Hiram added,] "Praise Yahweh, the God to whom the Israeli people belong, the one who created the sky and the earth! He has given King David a wise son, one who is very smart/intelligent and who has good skill and understanding. He wants to build a temple for Yahweh and a palace for himself. **13** "I will be sending to you Huram-Abi, a man who is very skilled. **14** His mother was from the tribe of Dan, and his father was from [here in] Tyre. He is very able to make things from gold and silver and bronze and iron and stone and wood, but he also makes nice things from purple and blue and red cloth, and he does all kinds of engraving. He can make things using any design/pattern that you give to him. He will work with your craftsmen, and the craftsmen who did work for your father, King David. **15** "Now please send us the wheat and barley and olive oil and wine that you promised to send to us. **16** When you do that, my workers will cut from trees in the Lebanon mountains all the logs that you need [and bring them down to the sea]. Then we will [tie the logs together to] form rafts with them, and float them in the sea to Joppa [city]. From there, you [can arrange for] them [to be] taken up to Jerusalem. **17** Solomon told his workers to count all the people from other countries who were living in Israel, similar to what his father David had done. There were 153,600 of them. **18** Solomon assigned 70,000 of them to carry materials, and 80,000 to cut stone [from quarries in] the hills, and 3,600 of them to supervise the others and be sure that they worked steadily.

3 Then Solomon's workers started to build the temple for Yahweh in Jerusalem. They built it on Moriah Hill, where [an angel from] Yahweh had appeared to his father David. They built it on the ground that Araunah, a descendant of the Jebus people-group, had sold to David and where David said that it should be built. **2** They began the work in April, when Solomon had been ruling almost four years. **3** The foundation of the temple was about 90 feet long and 30 feet wide. **4** The entrance room across the front of the temple was 30 feet wide and 30 feet high. **5** Solomon's workers used [panels/boards of] pine [wood] to line the main hall of the temple. Then they covered those panels with [very thin sheets of] pure gold. Then they decorated the walls with [carved images of] palm trees and designs that resembled chains. **6** They decorated the temple with very valuable stones. The gold that they used was from [the land of] Parvaim. **7** They covered the ceiling beams, the door frames, the walls and the doors of the temple with [very thin sheets of] gold. They also carved [statues of] winged creatures on the walls. **8** They also built the Very Holy Place [inside the temple]. It was 30 feet wide and 30 feet long. They covered its walls with sheets of pure gold that altogether weighed 23 tons. **9** They used 1-1/4 pounds of gold to [cover the heads of] the nails. They also covered the walls of the upper rooms with sheets of gold. **10** Solomon's workers made two statues of creatures with wings to put inside the Very Holy Place. They covered those statues with [very thin sheets of] gold. **11** [Each statue had two long wings]. One wing of each statue touched one of the walls of the Temple. The other wing of each statue touched a wing of the other statue. It was 7-1/2 feet from the outer tip of one wing to the outer tip of the other wing. The inner wings of the two statues touched each other. **13** It was 30 feet from the outer wing of the one statue to the outer wing of the other statue. The statues faced the doorway to the main room. **14** Solomon's workers made a curtain [to separate the main room from the Very Holy Place]. It was made of blue, purple, and red thread and fine linen. There were figures of winged creatures that were embroidered on the curtain. **15** They made two [bronze] pillars and put them at the entrance of the temple. They were each 27 feet high. Each had a top over it that was 7-1/2 feet high. **16** The workers made [carvings that resembled] chains and put them on top of the pillars. They made [carvings that resembled] pomegranates and attached them to the chains. **17** They set up the pillars in front of the temple, one on the south side [of the entrance] and the other on the north side. The one on the south side was named Jakin and the one on the north side was named Boaz.

4 Solomon's workers made a square bronze altar that was 10 yards wide on each side, and it was 5 yards high. **2** They also made a very large round tank that was made of metal and cast [in a clay mold]. It was 10 yards wide/across, and 5 yards high. It was 15 yards around it. **3** Below the outer rim there were two rows of [small figures of] bulls that were part of the metal of the basin. Each row had 300 figures of bulls. **4** The basin was set on twelve [statues of] bulls. There were three statues that faced north, three that faced west, three that faced south, and three that faced east. **5** The sides of the tank were 3 inches thick, and its rim was shaped like a cup that curved outward like the petals of flowers. The basin held about 16,500 gallons [of water]. **6** They also made ten basins for washing the [animals that were] to be sacrificed. The priests used the very large tank for washing themselves. **7** They also made ten gold lampstands according to what Solomon had instructed them. They put them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north side. **8** They made ten tables and put them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north side. They also made 100 gold bowls. **9** They also constructed one courtyard for the

priests, and a larger courtyard [for the other people]. They made doors for the courtyards and covered them with [thin sheets of] bronze. 10 They placed the very large tank [on the south side of the temple,] at the southeast corner. 11 They also made pots and shovels [for the ashes of the altar], and other small bowls. So Huram [and his workers] finished the work that King Solomon had given him to do at the temple of God. 12 [These were the things that they made:] the two large pillars, the two bowl-shaped top parts on top of the pillars, the two sets of carvings that resembled chains to decorate the tops of the two pillars, 13 the 400 carvings that resembled pomegranates that were placed in two rows, that decorated the bowl-shaped tops of the two pillars, 14 the stands, and the basins that were placed on them, 15 the very large tank, and the [statues of] twelve bulls underneath it, 16 the pots, shovels, meat forks, and all the other things [needed for the work at the altar]. All those things that Huram [and his workers] made for King Solomon were made of polished bronze. 17 They made them by pouring melted bronze into the clay molds that Huram had set up near the Jordan [river] between Succoth and Zarethan [cities]. 18 All of those things that Solomon [told them to] make used a very large amount of bronze; no one tried to weigh it all. 19 Solomon's workers also made all these things that were put at the temple: the golden altar, the tables on which the priests put the sacred bread, 20 the pure gold lampstands and the pure gold lamps, [in which the priests put oil] to burn in front of the Most Holy Place as God had told [Moses that the priests should do], 21 the pure gold decorations that resembled flowers, and the lamps and tongs, 22 the pure gold wick trimmers and bowls for sprinkling, and dishes and lamp snuffers, the gold doors of the temple and the doors to the main hall.

5 After Solomon's workers had finished building the temple, Solomon put in the temple storage rooms everything that his father David had dedicated to Yahweh—all the silver and gold and all the other things that were used at the temple. 2 Then King Solomon summoned to Jerusalem all the elders of Israel, all the leaders of the tribes and of the families/clans. He wanted them to help to bring to the temple Yahweh's Sacred Chest from Zion [Hill], where it was in [the part of the city called] 'The City of David'. 3 So all the leaders of Israel gathered together along with the king, during the Festival of [Living in Temporary] Shelters, in October. 4 When they had all arrived, the descendants of Levi lifted up the Sacred Chest, 5 and they carried it and the Sacred Tent and the sacred things that were inside it. The priests, who were also descended from Levi, carried them. 6 King Solomon and many of the other people of Israel who had gathered there walked in front of the Sacred Chest. And they sacrificed a huge amount of sheep and cattle. No one was able to count them [because there were very many]. 7 The priests then brought the Sacred Chest into the Most Holy Place, the inner room of the temple, and they placed it under the wings of the statues of winged creatures. 8 The wings of those statues spread out over the Sacred Chest and over the poles by which it was carried. 9 The poles were very long, with the result that they could be seen by [those who were standing] at the entrance to the Most Holy Place, but they could not be seen by anyone standing outside the temple. Those poles are still there. 10 The only things that were inside the Sacred Chest were the two stone tablets that Moses had put there at Sinai Mountain, where Yahweh made an agreement with the Israeli people after they came out of Egypt. 11 Then the priests left the Holy Place. All the priests who were there, from every group, had performed the rituals to cause them to be acceptable to God. 12 All the descendants of Levi who were musicians—Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, their sons and their other relatives—stood on the east side of the altar. They were wearing linen clothes, and they were playing cymbals, harps, and lyres. There were 120 other priests who were blowing trumpets. 13 The men blowing trumpets, those playing the cymbals and other musical instruments, and the singers, made music together, praising Yahweh and singing this song: "Yahweh is good [to us]; he faithfully loves us forever." Then [suddenly] the temple was filled with a cloud. 14 The glorious radiance of Yahweh filled the temple, with the result that the priests were not able to continue doing their work.

6 Then Solomon said, "Yahweh, you said that you would live in a dark cloud. 2 But now I have built a glorious temple for you to live in forever!" 3 Then while all the people stood there, Solomon turned toward the people and he [asked God to] bless them. 4 He said to them, "Praise Yahweh, the God to whom we Israelis belong, who has caused to happen what he promised to my father David. What he said to David was this: 5 'From the time that I brought my people out of Egypt, I have never chosen a city in Israel in which a temple should be built for people to [worship] me there. Nor did I choose anyone to be the leader of my Israeli people. 6 But now I have chosen Jerusalem to be the place for people to worship me, and I have chosen you to rule my Israeli people.'" 7 [Then Solomon said], "My father David wanted to build a temple for Yahweh, the God to whom we Israelis belong. 8 But Yahweh said to him, 'You have wanted to build a temple for me, and what you wanted to do was good. 9 However, you are not the one who I want to build the temple; it is one of your own sons

who [I want to] build a temple for me.' 10 "And Yahweh has done what he promised to do. I have become the king of Israel to succeed my father, and I am ruling the people, like Yahweh promised, and I have arranged for this temple to be built for us to worship Yahweh, the God to whom we Israelis belong. 11 I have put the Sacred Chest in the temple, in which are the stone tablets [on which are engraved the Ten Commandments of] the agreement that Yahweh made with us Israeli people." 12 Then Solomon stood in front of the altar which was in front of the people of Israel who had gathered there. 13 His workers had built a bronze platform there [for him to stand on], which was 7-1/2 feet long and 7-1/2 feet wide and 4-1/2 feet high. They put it in the outer courtyard. Solomon stood on that platform and then knelt down in front of all the people of Israel who had gathered there, and he spread out his arms toward heaven, 14 and he prayed, "Yahweh, the God to whom we Israeli people belong, there is no God like you in heaven or on the earth. You solemnly promised that you would faithfully love us, and that is what you have done for us who earnestly do what you want us to do. 15 "You have done the things that you promised my father David, who served you [very well], that you would do. Truly, you promised to do those things for him, and today we see that by your power you have caused it all to happen. 16 "So now, Yahweh, the God we Israelis belong to, please do the things that you promised to my father David that you would do. You said that there would always be some of his descendants to rule Israel, if they faithfully conduct their lives as he did. 17 So now, God of us Israeli people, cause what you promised David, who served you [well], to happen. 18 "But, my God, will you really live on earth among people? There is surely not enough space for you in the sky, or even in the heaven! So there is surely not enough space for you to live in this temple that my workers have built. 19 But Yahweh, my God, please listen to my prayer, while I am pleading with you this day and do what I am requesting. 20 Please protect this temple day and night. This is the place about which you have said, 'I will always be there.' Please listen to my prayer about this place. 21 Listen to me when I pray, and listen to your Israeli people when they pray. Listen from heaven, where you live; and when you hear us pray, forgive us. 22 "If someone is accused of doing something wrong to another person, and they bring him to testify in front of your altar outside this holy temple, and if he says, 'I did not do that; may God punish me if I am not telling the truth,' 23 then you listen from heaven, and you decide who is telling the truth. Then punish the person who is guilty as he deserves to be punished, and declare that the other person is innocent. 24 "And when your Israeli people are defeated by their enemies because they sinned against you, [and forced to go to some distant country,] if they turn away from their sinful behavior and turn toward this temple and admit [that] you [have justly punished them], and plead [that you will forgive them], 25 listen to them from heaven and forgive your Israeli people for the sins that they [have committed], and bring them back to this land that you gave to our ancestors. 26 "When you do not allow any rain to fall because your people have sinned against you, if they turn toward this temple and admit [that] you [have justly punished them], and turn away from their sinful behavior and humbly pray to you, 27 hear from heaven and forgive the sins of your Israeli people. Teach them the right way to conduct their lives. Then cause it to rain here on the land that you gave to your people to belong to them [permanently]. 28 "And when the people of this land experience famines or if there is a plague, or when their crops are destroyed by very hot winds or by mildew or by locusts or grasshoppers, or when their enemies surround any of their cities [in order to attack them], if any of those bad things happen to them, 29 when your Israeli people earnestly plead with you, knowing in their inner beings that they are suffering [because they have sinned], if they stretch out their hands toward this temple and pray, 30 hear from your home in heaven, and forgive them. You alone know what each person is thinking, so reward each person according to everything that he does, 31 in order that they will revere you and conduct their lives as you want them to, all the time that they live in this land that you gave to our ancestors. 32 "There will be some foreigners who do not belong to your Israeli people who have come here from countries far away because they have heard that you are very great and that you perform great miracles. If they turn toward this temple and pray, 33 from your home in heaven listen to their prayer, and do for them what they request you to do. Do that in order that all the people-groups in the world will know about you and revere you, like we, your own Israeli people do. And then they will know that this is the temple that I have caused to be built for you. 34 "When you send your people to go to places to attack their enemies, if they pray to you, wherever they are, if they turn toward this city that you have chosen and toward this temple that I have caused to be built to honor you, 35 listen in heaven to their prayers; listen to what they plead for you [to do], and assist them. 36 ["It is true that] everyone sins. So, when your people sin against you, and you become angry with them, you may allow their enemies to capture them and take them to their countries, even to countries that are far away. 37 When that happens, while they are in the countries to which they were forced to go, if they are sorry for having sinned, if

they say, 'We have sinned; we have done things that are wrong and have done things that are very wicked,' **38** if they repent very sincerely, and if they turn toward this land that you gave to our ancestors, and toward this city that you have chosen [to be the place where we should worship you], and toward this temple that I have caused to be built for you and pray, **39** then from your home in heaven hear their prayer, and listen to them while they plead [for your help], and do what they ask you to do, and forgive your people who have sinned against you. **40** "Now, my God, look at us and listen to us as we pray to you in this place. **41** Yahweh our God, come and stay in this place with the Sacred Chest, the chest that shows that you are powerful. Yahweh God, cause your priests to know clearly that you have blessed them. Cause us your people to rejoice because of all the good things [that you do for us]. **42** Yahweh God, do not reject me [the king] whom you have appointed [to be the king of Israel]; do not forget that you greatly loved David, who served you [very well]."

7 When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from the sky and burned all the offerings and sacrifices [that were on the altar], and the glorious radiance of Yahweh filled the temple. **2** The radiance [was extremely bright], with the result that the priests could not enter the temple of Yahweh. **3** When all the Israeli people [who were there] saw the fire coming down and the glory of Yahweh above the temple, they prostrated themselves with their faces touching the ground. They worshiped and thanked Yahweh, singing, "Yahweh is always good to us; he faithfully loves us forever." **4** Then the king and all the people who were there dedicated the temple to Yahweh by offering more sacrifices to him. King Solomon gave 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep and goats to be sacrificed. **6** The priests stood in their positions, and the other descendants of Levi stood in their positions holding the musical instruments [to praise] Yahweh, instruments that King David had caused to be made for praising Yahweh and thanking him. [They sang], "He faithfully loves us forever." Facing the other descendants of Levi the priests stood, blowing their trumpets, while all the Israeli people were standing [and listening]. **7** Solomon dedicated the middle part of the courtyard in front of the temple. Then he gave offerings to be completely burned there along with the fat of the animals to be sacrificed to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. The priests burned them there in the courtyard because in addition to those things there were offerings of grain, with the result that there was not enough space on the bronze altar to burn all those sacrifices. **8** Solomon [and the other people] celebrated the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters for seven days. There was a huge group of people who celebrated with him. Some of them came from [as far away as] Lebo-Hamath [in the far north] and the border of Egypt [in the far south]. **9** On the eighth/next day they gathered again [to worship Yahweh]. They had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days and the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters for seven days. **10** Then on the next day Solomon sent them to their homes. They were very joyful because of all the good things that Yahweh had done for David and Solomon and for all his Israeli people. **11** Solomon's [workers] finished building the temple and Solomon's palace. And Solomon finished doing everything else that he had planned to do. **12** Then Yahweh appeared to him one night [in a dream] and said to him, "I have heard your prayer, and I have chosen this temple to be the place where my people will offer sacrifices to me. **13** "When I prevent any rain from falling, or when I command locusts to eat all the crops, or when I send a plague among my people, **14** if the people who belong to me humble themselves and pray, and request me to help them, and if they turn away from their sinful behavior, then I will hear from heaven. I will forgive them for having sinned and I will cause them to prosper again. **15** I [SYN] will see them and I [SYN] will hear them when they pray to me in this place. **16** I have chosen and have (set apart/dedicated) this temple in order that people may worship [MTY] me there forever. I will always watch over [MTY] it and protect [IDM] it. **17** "And as for you, if you obey me as David your father did, and if you do all that I command you to do, and obey all my laws and decrees, **18** I will make sure that your descendants will always be kings, which is what I promised to David your father, saying, 'Some of your descendants will always be the kings of Israel.' **19** "But if you Israelis turn away from me and disobey the decrees and commands that I have given to you, and you start to worship other gods, **20** I will cause you to be expelled from this land that I have given to you, and I will abandon this temple that I have set apart to be the place where people should worship me. I will cause it to be despised and ridiculed by people of all nations. **21** Although this temple is now greatly respected, when that happens, all the people who pass by will be appalled, and they will say, 'Why has Yahweh done terrible things like this to this country and to this temple?' **22** And others will reply, 'It happened because they rejected Yahweh, the God to whom their ancestors belonged, the one who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and they have been worshiping other gods and trying to please them. And that is why Yahweh has caused them to experience all these disasters.'"

8 Solomon's [workers] worked for 20 years to build the temple and the king's palace. **2** Then his [workers] rebuilt

the cities that [King] Hiram had given back to Solomon, and Solomon sent Israelis to live in those cities. **3** Solomon's [army] then went to Hamath-Zobah [town] and captured it. **4** His workers also rebuilt walls around Tadmor [town] in the desert, and in [the] Hamath [region] in all the towns where they kept supplies. **5** They rebuilt Upper Beth-Horon [town] and Lower Beth-Horon [city], and built walls around them with gates [in the walls] and bars [to fasten the gates]. **6** They also rebuilt Baalath [town] and all the cities where supplies were kept and the cities where Solomon's chariots and horses were kept. Solomon's [workers] built whatever he wanted them to build, in Jerusalem and in Lebanon, and in other places in the area that he ruled. **7** Solomon forced people from many other groups who were not Israelis to work for him like slaves. They were people from the Heth, Amor, Periz, Hiv, and Jebus people-groups. **8** They were descendants of groups whom the Israelis had not completely destroyed. Solomon forced them to become his slaves, and they are still slaves. **9** But Solomon did not force Israelis to work for him. Israelis became his soldiers and commanders of his chariots and his chariot-drivers. **10** They were also King Solomon's chief officials. There were 250 of them, and they supervised the workers. **11** Solomon moved his wife, who was the daughter of the king of Egypt, from [the place outside Jerusalem called] 'The City of David' to the place that his workers had built for her. He said, "I do not want my wife to live in the palace that [my father] King David's workers built, because the Sacred Chest [was in that palace for a while], and any place where the Sacred Chest has been is holy." **12** On the altar that Solomon's [workers] had built in front of the entrance [to the temple], Solomon sacrificed many offerings that were to be completely burned. **13** He did that to obey the rules about what sacrifices Moses had declared should be made. These included sacrifices for every day and for the Sabbath days and to celebrate each day on which there was a new moon and for the three other festivals that were celebrated each year. Those festivals were the Festival of Eating Unleavened Bread, the Harvest Festival, and the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters. **14** Obeying what his father David had commanded, he appointed the groups of priests for their work, and he appointed the descendants of Levi to lead the people while they sang to praise Yahweh and while they assisted the priests in their daily work. He also appointed groups of them to guard all the gates, because that was also what David, the man who pleased God [very well], had commanded. **15** The priests and other descendants of Levi obeyed completely everything that the king commanded, including [taking care of] the storerooms. **16** They did all the work [of building the temple] that Solomon told them to do, until it was all completed. So they finishing building the temple. **17** Then some of Solomon's men went to Ezion-Geber and Elath [cities] on the coast of the Red Sea, an area that belonged to the Edom people-group. **18** King Hiram sent to Solomon from [Tyre city] some ships that were commanded by his officers. They were men who were experienced sailors. These men went in the ships with Solomon's men to [the] Ophir [region] and brought back about 17 tons of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.

9 The queen who ruled [the] Sheba [area in Arabia] heard that Solomon had become famous, so she traveled to Jerusalem to ask him questions that were difficult [to answer]. She came with a large group of servants, and she brought camels that were loaded with spices, and valuable gems, and a lot of gold. When she met Solomon, she asked him questions about all the things/topics in which she was interested. **2** Solomon answered all her questions. He explained everything that she asked about, even things that were very difficult. **3** The queen realized that Solomon was very wise. She saw his palace, **4** she saw the food that was served on his table [every day]; she saw how his officials were seated at the table, their uniforms, the servants who served the food and wine, and the sacrifices that he took to the temple to be completely burned on the altar. She was extremely amazed. **5** She said to the king, "Everything that I heard in my own country about you and about how wise you are is true! **6** But I did not believe it was true until I came here and saw it myself. You are [extremely wise and rich,] more than what people told me. **7** The men who work for you are very fortunate! Your officials who are constantly standing in front of you and listening to the wise things that you say are also fortunate! **8** Praise Yahweh your God, who has shown that he is pleased with you by appointing you to be the king of Israel for him. God has always loved the Israeli people, and desires to assist them forever, and therefore he has appointed you to be their king, in order that you will rule them fairly and righteously." **9** Then the queen gave to Solomon about 4-1/2 tons of gold and a large amount of spices and gems. Never had King Solomon received more spices than the queen gave him at that time. **10** King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba everything that she wanted. He gave her more than she had given to him. Then she and those who came with her returned to her own land. [In the ships that belonged to King Hiram,] Hiram's workers and Solomon's workers brought gold from Ophir. They also brought a large amount of juniper wood and gems. King Solomon [told his workers] to use that wood to make railings in the temple and in his palace and also to

make harps and lyres for the musicians. That wood was the the finest wood that had ever been seen in Israel. 13 Each year there was brought to Solomon a total of 25 tons of gold. 14 That was in addition to the [taxes] paid to him by the merchants and traders. Also, the kings of Arabia and the governors of [the districts in] Israel brought gold and silver to Solomon. 15 King Solomon's [workers took this] gold [and] hammered [it] into thin sheets and covered 200 large shields with those thin sheets of gold; they put almost 7-1/2 pounds of gold on each shield. 16 His [workers] made 300 [smaller] shields. They covered each of them with almost 4 pounds of gold. Then the king put those shields in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon. 17 His [workers] also made for him a large throne. [Part of] it was covered with [decorations made from] ivory and [part of it was covered] with very fine gold. 18 There were six steps in front of the throne. There was a gold footstool that was attached to the throne. At each side of the throne there was an armrest, and alongside each armrest there was a [small statue of a] lion. 19 On the six steps there were twelve statues of lions, one on each side. No throne like that had ever existed in any other kingdom. 20 All of Solomon's cups were made of gold, and all the various dishes in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon were made of gold. [They did not make things from silver], because during the years that Solomon [ruled], silver was not considered to be valuable. 21 The king had a fleet of ships that sailed with the ships that King Hiram owned. Every three years the ships returned [from the places to which they had sailed], bringing gold, silver, ivory, monkeys, and baboons (OR, peacocks). 22 King Solomon became richer and wiser than any other king on the earth. 23 Kings from all over the world wanted to come and listen to the wise things that Solomon said, things that God had enabled him to know. 24 All the people who came to him brought presents: They brought things made from silver or gold, or robes, or weapons, or spices, or horses, or mules. The people continued to do this every year. 25 Solomon had 4,000 stalls for his horses and chariots, and 12,000 horses. Solomon put some of them in Jerusalem and some of them in other cities where he kept his chariots. 26 Solomon ruled over all the kings in the area from the [Euphrates] River [in the northeast] to the Philistia area [in the west] to the border of Egypt [in the south]. 27 [During the years that Solomon was] king, [he] caused silver to become as common in Jerusalem as stones; and he caused cedar trees in the foothills of Judah to become as plentiful as fig trees. 28 Solomon's agents brought horses from [the] Musri [area] and other places. 29 Lists of all the other things that Solomon did are recorded in the scrolls written by the prophet Nathan and by the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh [city], and in [the scroll in which were written] the visions that the prophet Iddo saw concerning [King] Jeroboam. 30 Solomon ruled from Jerusalem all of Israel for 40 years. 31 Then Solomon died and was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. And his son Rehoboam became the king.

10 All the people of Israel went to Shechem [city] in order to appoint Rehoboam to be their king. So Rehoboam also went there. 2 Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had fled to Egypt [to escape] from King Solomon. But when he heard [about the people wanting to appoint Rehoboam to be their king], he returned [to Israel] from Egypt 3 So the [leaders of the northern tribes] summoned him, and he went with them [to talk] to Rehoboam. They said to Rehoboam, 4 "Your father [Solomon] forced us to work very hard for him. If you do not force us to work that hard, and if you charge us less taxes than we were paying to him, we will serve you [faithfully]." 5 He replied, "Come back three days from now [and I will give you my answer]." So those leaders [and Jeroboam] left. 6 Then King Rehoboam consulted his older men who had advised his father Solomon while he was still alive. He asked them, "What shall I say to answer these men?" 7 They replied, "If you will be kind to these people and do things that will please them, and if you say kind things to them when you answer them, they will always serve you." 8 But he ignored what the older men advised him to do. Instead, he consulted the younger men who had grown up with him, who were now his advisors. 9 He said to them, "How should I answer the men who are asking me to reduce the [work and taxes] that my father required from them?" 10 The young men who had grown up with him replied, "[Those men] have said that your father forced them to work very hard for him, so they want you to reduce the [work and taxes] that your father required from them. But this is what you should tell them: 'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist. 11 What I mean is that my father required you to [work hard and pay high taxes]. But I will make those loads heavier. [It was as though] my father whipped you, but I will whip you with whips that have pieces of metal in them.'" 12 Three days later, Jeroboam and all the leaders came to King Rehoboam again, which is what he had told them to do. 13 The king ignored the advice of the older men and spoke harshly to the Israeli leaders. 14 [He told them what the younger men had advised.] He said, "My father put heavy burdens [of work and taxes] on you, but I will put heavier burdens on you. [It was as though] he beat you with whips, but I will beat you with whips that have pieces of metal in them!" 15 So the king did not pay any attention to the Israeli leaders. But this happened in order that what Yahweh had

told the prophet Ahijah about Jeroboam would happen. **16** When the Israeli leaders realized that the king did not pay any attention to what they said, they shouted, "We do not want anything to do with this descendant of King David! We will not pay attention to what this grandson of Jesse says! You people of Israel, let's go home! As for this descendant of David, he can rule his own kingdom!" So the Israeli leaders returned to their homes. **17** And [after that, the only Israeli] people whom Rehoboam ruled over were those who lived in the territory of [the tribes of] Judah [and Benjamin]. **18** Then King Rehoboam went with Adoniram [to talk to the Israeli people]. Adoniram was the man who supervised [all the men who were] forced to work [for Rehoboam]. But the Israeli people killed him by throwing stones at him. When that happened, King Rehoboam quickly got in his chariot and escaped to Jerusalem. **19** Ever since that time, [the people of the northern tribes of] Israel have been rebelling against the descendants of [King] David.

11 When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he gathered 180,000 of the best soldiers from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. He wanted them to fight against [the northern tribes of] Israel [and defeat them], in order that he could rule [all the tribes of] the kingdom again. **2** But Yahweh spoke to the prophet Shemaiah and said this to him: **3** "Go and tell this to [Solomon's son] Rehoboam, the king of Judah, and to all the Israeli people of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin: **4** 'Yahweh says that you must not go to fight against [the people of Israel; they are] your distant relatives. All of you must go home. What has happened is what Yahweh wanted to happen.'" [So Shemaiah went and told that to them,] and they all heeded what Yahweh had commanded them to do, and they did not attack Jeroboam [and his soldiers]. **5** Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem, and his workers built walls around several of the cities and towns in Judah to protect them [against enemy attacks]. **6** In [the area that belonged to] the tribes of Judah and Benjamin they built walls around Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, **7** Beth-Zur, Soco, Adullam, **8** Gath, Mareshah, **9** Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, **10** Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron. **11** He also appointed an army commander in each of those cities and towns, and gave them supplies of food, olive oil, and wine [to keep in storage]. **12** He put shields and spears in all the cities and made them well-protected. So he continued to rule the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. **13** The priests and other descendants of Levi throughout Israel supported Rehoboam. **14** The descendants of Levi [who lived outside the territory of Judah and Benjamin] abandoned their property and their pastureland, and they came to Jerusalem and [to other places in] Judah, because Jeroboam and his sons would not allow them to do the work of priests of Yahweh. **15** Instead, Jeroboam appointed the priests that he wanted to work [at the altars he commanded to be built] on the hilltops, [to offer sacrifices to] the idols that he commanded to be made [that resembled] goats and calves. **16** And people from every tribe in Israel who wanted to worship Yahweh, the God to whom the Israelis belonged, went with the descendants of Levi to Jerusalem to live there and to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [worshiped]. **17** They caused the kingdom of Judah to be strong, and for three years they were happy that Solomon's son Rehoboam was the king. During that time they conducted their lives [righteously] as David and Solomon had done previously. **18** Rehoboam married Mahalath. She was the daughter of David's son Jerimoth, and her mother was Abihail, the daughter of Eliab and granddaughter of Jesse. **19** Rehoboam and Mahalath had three sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham. **20** Later Rehoboam married Maacah, the daughter of Absalom, and they had four sons: Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. **21** Rehoboam loved Maacah more than he loved any other of his wives and slave wives. Altogether he had 18 wives and 60 slave wives, and 28 sons and 60 daughters. **22** Rehoboam appointed his son Abijah to be the leader of his [older and younger] brothers, because he wanted to appoint Abijah to be the next king. **23** He very wisely sent some of his other sons to other cities in the areas of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and to all the other cities that had walls around them. He gave them plenty of supplies and many wives.

12 After Rehoboam was in complete control of his kingdom, he and all [the other people in] Judah stopped obeying the laws of Yahweh. **2** As a result, after Rehoboam had been king for almost five years, Yahweh sent Shishak, the king of Egypt, [with his army] to attack Jerusalem. **3** Along with his army he brought 1,200 chariots and 60,000 soldiers riding horses and a very large number of troops from two regions in Libya, and from Ethiopia. **4** They captured many of the cities in Judah that had walls around them, and they came as far as Jerusalem. **5** Then the prophet Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and the other leaders of Judah who had gathered in Jerusalem because they were afraid of [the army of] Shishak. Shemaiah said to them, "Yahweh says this: 'You have abandoned me; so now I am abandoning you, to [allow you to be captured by the army of] Shishak.'" **6** Then the king and the other Israeli leaders humbled themselves and said, "What Yahweh is doing to us is fair." **7** When Yahweh realized that they had humbled themselves, he gave this message to Shemaiah: "Because they have humbled themselves, I will not allow

them to be destroyed. Instead, I will soon rescue them. I will not use Shishak's army to completely destroy the people of Jerusalem, 8 but they will conquer Jerusalem and force the people there to do what Shishak wants them to do. As a result, the people of Jerusalem will learn [that it is better] to serve me than to serve the kings of other countries." 9 When Shishak's [army] attacked Jerusalem, they took/carried away the valuable things that were in the temple of Yahweh and the valuable things that were in the king's palace. They took everything [that was valuable], including the gold shields that Solomon's [workers] had made. 10 So King Rehoboam's workers made bronze shields to be used instead of the gold ones and gave the bronze shields to the commanders of the men who guarded the entrance to his palace. 11 After that, whenever the king went to the temple, the guards went with him, carrying those bronze shields. Then [when the king left,] they would return the shields to the guards' room. 12 Because Rehoboam humbled himself, Yahweh stopped being angry with him and did not get rid of him. Instead, he caused good things to happen in Judah. 13 King Rehoboam again was in complete control in Jerusalem and continued to be the king [of Judah]. He was 41 years old when he became the king. He ruled for 17 years in Jerusalem, which is the city that Yahweh had chosen from all the tribes in Israel to be the place in which people were to worship him. 14 Rehoboam's mother's name was Naamah. She was from the Ammon people-group. Rehoboam did evil things because he did not try to find out what Yahweh wanted him to do. 15 An account of all the things that Rehoboam did while he was the king, and lists of the members of his family, are in the scrolls written by the prophets Shemaiah and Iddo. The armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam were constantly fighting each other. 16 When Rehoboam died, he was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. Then his son Abijah became the king.

13 When Jeroboam had been ruling [Israel] for almost 18 years, Abijah became the king of Judah. 2 He ruled in Jerusalem for three years. His mother was Micaiah (OR, Maacah), the daughter of Uriel from Gibeah [town]. There was a war between [the armies of] Abijah and Jeroboam. 3 Abijah went into the battle, taking 400,000 of his capable soldiers, and Jeroboam prepared to fight them, taking 800,000 of his capable troops. 4 Abijah stood on the top of Zemaraim Mountain, which is in the hilly area that belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, and he shouted, "Jeroboam and all you other people of Israel, listen to me! 5 You should know that Yahweh, the God to whom all we Israelis belong, has appointed David and his descendants to be the kings of Israel forever. He has confirmed that by making a permanent agreement. 6 But Jeroboam, who was [only] an official of David's son King Solomon, rebelled against his king. 7 And when Solomon's son Rehoboam became king and was still young and inexperienced, a group of worthless scoundrels gathered around you, Jeroboam, and rebelled against Rehoboam. 8 "And now you are planning to fight against the kingdom that Yahweh established to be governed by David's descendants. It is true that you have a huge army, and you and your soldiers have brought with you the golden [statues of] calves that Jeroboam's workers made to be gods for all of you. 9 But you expelled the priests that Yahweh [appointed], men who are descendants of Aaron [the first Supreme Priest], and you expelled the descendants of Levi, and you appointed the priests that you wanted, like the people of other countries do. You allow anyone to become a priest of idols that are not gods if he comes to dedicate himself to be a priest by sacrificing a young bull and seven rams. 10 "As for us, Yahweh is our God, and we have not abandoned him. Our priests who serve Yahweh are descendants of Aaron, and the descendants of Levi assist them. 11 Every morning and every evening they present to Yahweh offerings to be completely burned [on the altar], and they burn fragrant incense. [Each week] they place the sacred bread on the sacred table, and each morning they light the lamps that are on the gold lampstand. We are obeying what Yahweh our God requires us to do. But you have abandoned him. 12 Yahweh is with us; he is our leader. The priests whom he has appointed will blow their trumpets to signal [that we are ready] to fight a battle against you. You Israeli men, do not fight against Yahweh, the God to whom your ancestors belonged, because you will not be successful and win the battle against him." 13 [While he was speaking,] Jeroboam sent some of his troops around the army of Judah. So while the soldiers who were with Jeroboam were in front of the army of Judah, the other soldiers of Israel were behind the army of Judah. 14 When the soldiers of Judah turned and saw that they were going to be attacked from the front and from the rear, they cried out to Yahweh. The priests blew their trumpets, 15 and the men of Judah shouted a loud battle-cry. Then Yahweh [enabled Abijah and the army of Judah to] defeat Jeroboam and [the army of] Israel. 16 The soldiers of Israel fled from the soldiers of Judah, and God enabled the army of Judah to defeat them. 17 Abijah and his troops struck the capable soldiers of Israel and killed 500,000 of them. 18 So the soldiers of Israel were defeated, and the soldiers of Judah won the battle because they trusted in Yahweh, the God to whom their ancestors belonged. 19 Abijah's army pursued the army of Jeroboam, and they captured from the people of Israel the cities of

Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephron, and the surrounding villages. 20 During the remaining time that Abijah ruled, Jeroboam did not become powerful again. Then Yahweh caused him to become very ill, and he died. 21 But Abijah became more powerful. He married 14 wives and had 22 sons and 16 daughters. 22 An account of the other things that Abijah did while he was the king, including what he said and what he did, is in the scroll written by the prophet Iddo.

14 When Abijah died, he was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. His son Asa became the king. While Asa was ruling, there was peace in Judah for ten years. 2 Asa did things that Yahweh his God considers to be right and good. 3 His workers got rid of the altars to worship foreign gods that were on the high hills. They smashed the sacred stone pillars and cut down the poles for worshiping [the goddess] Asherah. 4 Asa commanded the people of Judah to worship [only] Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors worshiped, and to obey his laws and commands. 5 His workers destroyed all the shrines on the hilltops and the altars for burning incense [to idols] in every town in Judah. As a result, there was peace while Asa ruled the kingdom [of Judah]. 6 His workers built cities and constructed walls around them. No army attacked Judah during that time, because Yahweh enabled them to have peace. 7 Asa said to the people of Judah, "We should protect these towns by building walls around them, with watchtowers and gates that have bars. This country still belongs to us because we have requested Yahweh our God to help us. We requested him for his help, and he has given us peace in our entire country." So they built buildings and prospered. 8 Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Judah. They all carried large shields and spears. He also had 280,000 men from the tribe of Benjamin [in his army]. They carried [smaller] shields, and bows [and arrows]. They were all brave soldiers. 9 Zerah, a man from Ethiopia/Sudan, marched with a huge army and 300 chariots to attack [the army of Judah and Benjamin]. They went as far as [the town of] Mareshah [about 25 miles/southwest of Jerusalem]. 10 Asa went [with his army] to fight against them, and both armies took their positions in the Zephathah Valley. 11 Then Asa cried out to Yahweh his God, saying, "Yahweh, there is no one like you who can help those who have very little power to resist a mighty army. Yahweh our God, help us, because we are relying on you; and trusting in you we have come [to fight] against this huge army. Yahweh, you are our God; do not allow anyone to defeat you." 12 Then Yahweh enabled Asa and the army of Judah to defeat the army from Ethiopia. They fled, 13 and Asa and his army pursued them [to the southwest] as far as Gerar. A huge number of the soldiers from Ethiopia were killed, with the result that those [who were not killed] were unable to fight any more. They were greatly defeated by Yahweh and his army, and the men of Judah carried away a great amount of their possessions. 14 The men of Judah were able to destroy the people in villages near Gerar because Yahweh had caused the people there to become terrified [and unable to fight]. The army of Judah took away all the valuable things from those villages. 15 They also attacked the places where the local people who took care of domestic animals had set up their tents, and they took away big herds of sheep and goats and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

15 The Spirit of God came upon Azariah, the son of Obed. 2 Azariah went to talk with Asa, and said to him, "Asa and all [you men of the tribes of] Judah and Benjamin, listen to me. Yahweh is with you whenever you are trusting in him. If you request him [to help you], he will help you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you. 3 For many years the Israeli people did not know the true God, and they did not have priests or God's laws. 4 But when they experienced trouble, they turned to Yahweh our God, and requested him to help them. And he helped them. 5 At that time, people were not safe when they traveled, because all the people who lived in the nearby countries were experiencing many difficulties. 6 The people of various nations were thoroughly defeated by [armies of] other nations, and people in some cities were crushed by [armies from] other cities, because God was allowing them to experience many difficulties. 7 But you people, you must be strong and do not become discouraged, because [God] will reward you for what you do [to please him."] 8 When Asa heard what the prophet Azariah said, he was encouraged. He [commanded his workers to] remove all the detestable idols from everywhere in the land of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and from the towns that [his soldiers] had captured in the hills of the tribe of Ephraim. Asa's workers repaired the altar [where people offered sacrifices] to Yahweh that was in front of the entrance to the temple [in Jerusalem]. 9 Then he gathered all [the people of the tribes of] Judah and Benjamin and many people from the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were living among them. [He was able to do that] because many people from [those tribes in] Israel had come to me to Judah when they realized that Yahweh, the God that Asa [worshiped], was helping him. 10 After Asa had been ruling for almost 15 years, in May of that year, those people gathered in Jerusalem. 11 At that time they sacrificed to Yahweh 700 bulls and 7,000 sheep and goats, from the animals that they had captured [when they defeated the army of Ethiopia/Sudan]. 12 They solemnly made an

agreement to very sincerely worship Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [worshiped]. 13 They promised to execute all those who would not worship Yahweh, including those who were important and those who were not important, both men and women. 14 They shouted and blew trumpets and other horns while they solemnly promised to do that. 15 All the people who were living in Judah were happy with the agreement because they had solemnly and very sincerely promised to keep it. They eagerly requested help from Yahweh, and he helped them. So he enabled them to have peace throughout their country. 16 King Asa's grandmother Maacah had made a disgusting pole for [worshiping the goddess] Asherah. So Asa [commanded his workers to] cut down that pole and chop it into pieces and burn it in the Kidron Valley. He then did not allow Maacah to continue [to influence the people because of her] being the mother of the previous king. 17 Although Asa's [workers] did not get rid of the shrines on the hilltops in Israel, he was very determined to [do what] pleased Yahweh all his life. 18 He [ordered his workers to] bring into God's temple all the silver and gold and other valuable items that he and his father had dedicated [to God]. 19 There were no more wars [in Judah] until Asa had been ruling Judah almost 35 years.

16 When Asa had been ruling [Judah] for almost 36 years, King Baasha of Israel went [with his army] to attack Judah. They [captured the town of] Ramah [north of Jerusalem] and started to build a wall around [it], in order to prevent any people from entering or leaving the area in Judah that was ruled by King Asa [because the only road into Judah from Israel went through Ramah]. 2 So Asa told his workers to take all the silver and gold that was in the storerooms of the temple and in his own palace, and take and give it to Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, who was ruling in Damascus. [He sent him a message,] saying 3 "I want there to be a peace treaty between me and you, like there was between my father and your father. Look, I am sending you [a lot of] silver and gold. So please cancel the treaty that you have made with Baasha, the king of Israel, in order that he will take his soldiers away from attacking mine, [because he will be afraid of your army]." 4 Ben-Hadad agreed to do what King Asa [suggested]. He sent the commanders of his armies [with their soldiers] to attack some of the towns in Israel. They captured Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maacah and all the cities in the area belonging to the tribe of Naphtali where supplies were kept. 5 When Baasha heard about that, he [commanded his troops to] stop fortifying Ramah and doing other work there. 6 Then King Asa gathered all the men of Judah, and they took away from Ramah all the stones and timber that Baasha's men had been using [to build the wall around that town]. They took those materials to [the town of] Geba and [the city of] Mizpah [north of Jerusalem] and built walls around them. 7 At that time the prophet Hanani went to King Asa and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Syria and not on Yahweh our God, you missed your opportunity to destroy the army of the king of Syria. 8 The huge armies from Ethiopia and Libya with all their chariots and soldiers [riding] on horses [were certainly very powerful. But] when you relied on Yahweh, he enabled your army to defeat them. 9 That happened because Yahweh sees [what is happening] all over the earth, and he strengthens those who completely trust him. You have done a very foolish thing, so from now on other armies will be fighting your army." 10 Asa was very angry with the prophet because of what the prophet had said. So he [commanded his officials to] put Hanani in prison. At that same time, he started to treat some of his people very cruelly. 11 All the things that Asa did while he was ruling, from the time he started to rule until he died, are written in the scroll containing the record of the [activities of the] kings of Judah and Israel. 12 When Asa had been ruling for almost 39 years, he was afflicted with a disease in his feet. The disease was very severe, but in spite of that, he did not request help from Yahweh. Instead he sought help only from doctors. 13 When he had been ruling for almost 40 years, he died. 14 He was buried in the tomb that his workers had made for him in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. They laid his corpse on a bed covered with spices and various perfumes that had been mixed together. They also lit a huge fire to honor him.

17 Asa's son Jehoshaphat became the king [of Judah], and he enabled his army to become very strong, with the result that they could resist attacks from [the army of] Israel. 2 He put soldiers in all the cities in Judah around which they had built walls, and he put soldiers in other places in Judah and in the towns in the area belonging to the tribe of Ephraim that [soldiers of] his father Asa had captured. 3 Yahweh helped Jehoshaphat because when he started [to rule Judah], he did the things that pleased Yahweh like his ancestor [King] David had done. He did not worship the idols of Baal. 4 Instead, he sought advice from the God whom his father [had worshiped], and he obeyed God's commands, and did not do the [evil things that the kings of] Israel continually did. 5 Yahweh enabled him to completely control his kingdom. All [the people of] Judah brought gifts to him, with the result that he became very rich and was greatly honored. 6 He was completely devoted to doing what pleased Yahweh. His workers got rid of the shrines on the hilltops and the poles for [worshiping the goddess] Asherah throughout Judah. 7 When he had been ruling [Judah] for

almost three years, he sent some of his officials—Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah—to teach the people in various towns in Judah. 8 With them he sent several descendants of Levi—Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah—and two priests, Elishama and Jehoram. 9 They took with them a scroll on which were written the laws of Yahweh and taught them to the people in all the towns throughout Judah, 10 The people in all the kingdoms surrounding Judah became very afraid of [what Yahweh might do to punish them if they fought against Judah], so they did not start wars with Jehoshaphat's army. 11 Some people from Philistia brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, and they also brought to him the silver that he demanded that they pay to him. Some Arabs brought to him 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats. 12 Jehoshaphat continued to become more powerful/influential. His workers built forts and places to store supplies in various towns in Judah. 13 Then they put large amounts of supplies in those storehouses. Jehoshaphat also placed in Jerusalem soldiers who were experienced. 14 The leaders and numbers from each tribe were as follows: From the tribe of Judah, Adnah was the leader of the soldiers, and he commanded 300,000 soldiers. 15 His assistant was Jehohanan, who commanded 280,000 soldiers. 16 Next was Zicri's son Amasiah, who volunteered to serve Yahweh in this way; he commanded 200,000 soldiers. 17 From the tribe of Benjamin, Eliada, who was a brave soldier, was the leader of the soldiers; he commanded 200,000 men who had bows [and arrows] and shields. 18 Next was Jehozabad, who commanded 180,000 men who had weapons for fighting battles. 19 Those were the soldiers who served the king [in Jerusalem], in addition to the men whom the king had placed in the other cities in Judah that had walls around them.

18 Jehoshaphat became very wealthy and was greatly honored. But then he arranged for one of his family to marry someone from the family of King Ahab [of Israel]. 2 Several years later, he went down [from Jerusalem] to Samaria to visit Ahab. Ahab welcomed him and the people who had come with him by slaughtering many sheep and cattle [for a feast]. 3 Then he asked Jehoshaphat, "Will you [and your army] go with my army to attack Ramoth [city] in [the] Gilead [region]?" Jehoshaphat replied, "My soldiers and I will go to the battle when you tell us to go." 4 Then he added, "But we should ask Yahweh first, to find out what he wants us to do." 5 So the king of Israel gathered all his 400 prophets and asked them, "Should we go to attack the people of Ramoth [city], or should we not do that?" They replied, "Yes, go [and attack them] because God will enable your army to defeat them." 6 But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of Yahweh here whom we can ask?" 7 The king of Israel replied, "There is still one man here, whom we can ask to find out what Yahweh wants, his name is Micaiah, the son of Imlah. But I hate him because he never says anything good about me. He always predicts [that] bad [things will happen to me]." Jehoshaphat replied, "King Ahab, you should not say that!" 8 So the king of Israel told one of his officials to summon Micaiah immediately. 9 The king of Israel and the king of Judah were sitting there on their thrones, wearing their royal robes. They were at the place where people threshed grain, near the gate of Samaria [city]. All of [Ahab's] prophets were standing in front of them, predicting what was going to happen. 10 [One of them whose name was] Zedekiah, the son of Kenaanah, had made from iron something that resembled the horns of a bull. He proclaimed to Ahab, "This is what Yahweh says: 'With horns [like these], your [army] will keep attacking the army of Syria [like a bull attacks another animal], until you completely destroy them.'" 11 All the other prophets [of Ahab] agreed. They said, "Yes! If you attack Ramoth [city] in [the] Gilead [region], you will be successful, because Yahweh will enable you to defeat them." 12 The messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, "Listen to me! All the other prophets are unitedly predicting that the king will be successful [in the battle]. So be sure to agree with them and say that the king's army will be successful!" 13 But Micaiah said, "As surely as Yahweh lives, I will tell the king only what Yahweh tells me to say." 14 When Micaiah arrived, the king [of Israel] asked him, "Should we go to attack Ramoth, or not?" Micaiah replied, "Sure, go! Yahweh will enable your army to defeat them!" 15 But King Ahab [realized that Micaiah was lying, so he] said to Micaiah, "I have told you many times that you must always tell only the truth when you say what Yahweh [has revealed to you]!" 16 Then Micaiah replied, "[The truth is that in a vision] I saw all the troops of Israel scattered on the mountains. They seemed to be like sheep that did not have a shepherd. And Yahweh said, 'Their master has been killed. So tell them all to go home peacefully.'" 17 Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "I told you that he never predicts that anything good will happen to me! He [always] predicts that bad things will happen to me." 18 But Micaiah continued, saying, "Listen to what Yahweh showed to me! [In a vision] I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, with all the armies of heaven [standing around him], on his right side and on his left side. 19 And Yahweh said, 'Who can persuade Ahab, the king of Israel, to go to fight against the people of Ramoth, in order that he may be killed there?' "Some suggested one thing, and others suggested something else. 20 "Finally one spirit, [having received a

message from Satan], came to Yahweh and said, 'I can do it!' "Yahweh asked him, 'How will you do it?' **21** "The spirit replied, 'I will go and inspire all of Ahab's prophets to tell lies.' Yahweh said, 'You will be successful; go and do it!' **22** "So now [I tell you that] Yahweh has caused your prophets to lie to you. Yahweh has decided that something terrible will happen to you." **23** Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah walked over to Micaiah and slapped him on his face. He said, "Do you think that Yahweh's Spirit left me in order to speak to you?" **24** Micaiah replied, "You will find out for yourself [to which of us Yahweh's Spirit has truly spoken] on the day when you go into a room of some house to hide [from the Syrian soldiers]!" **25** King Ahab commanded [his soldiers], "Seize Micaiah and take him to Amon, the governor of this city, and to my son Joash. **26** Tell them that I have commanded that they should put this man in prison and give him only bread and water. Do not give him anything else to eat until I return safely [from the battle]!" **27** Micaiah replied, "If you return safely, [it will be clear that] it was not Yahweh who told me what to say to you!" Then he said [to all those who were standing there], "Do not forget what I have said [to King Ahab]!" **28** So the king of Israel and the king of Judah [led their armies] to Ramoth, in [the] Gilead [region]. **29** King Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "I will put on different clothes, [in order that no one will recognize that I am the king.] But you should wear your royal robe." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they both went into the battle. **30** The King of Syria told his soldiers who were driving the chariots, "Attack only the king of Israel!" **31** So when the soldiers who were driving the Syrian chariots saw Jehoshaphat [wearing the royal robes], they thought "He must be the king of Israel!" **32** So they turned to attack him. But when Jehoshaphat cried out, Yahweh helped him, and they realized that he was not the king of Israel. And God caused them to stop pursuing him. **33** But one [Syrian] soldier shot an arrow at Ahab, without knowing that it was Ahab. The arrow struck Ahab between the places where the parts of his armor joined together. Ahab told the driver of his chariot, "Turn the chariot around and take me out of here! I have been [severely] wounded!" **34** The battle continued all that day. Ahab was sitting propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrian soldiers. And late in the afternoon, when the sun was setting, he died.

19 When King Jehoshaphat was returning safely to his palace in Jerusalem, **2** the prophet Jehu, the son of [the prophet] Hanani, went out of the city to meet the king, and said to him, "It was not right for you to help a wicked man and to love those who hate Yahweh. Because of what you have done, Yahweh is angry with you. **3** But you have done some good things; you got rid of the poles in this country for [worshiping the goddess] Asherah, and you have strongly determined to do what pleases God." **4** Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem. But [one time], like he had done once previously, he went out among all the people in the country, from Beersheba [city in the far south] to the hilly area of [the tribe of] Ephraim [in the far north], and he convinced them to return to [worshiping] Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [worshiped]. **5** He appointed judges throughout Judah, in each of the cities that had walls around them. **6** He told them, "Make your decisions carefully, because you are judging cases not [in order] to [please] people but to [please] Yahweh. And he will be watching you whenever you make a decision. **7** So now revere Yahweh, and judge cases carefully, [and do not forget that] Yahweh our God never acts unjustly, and he never does what people want because of their offering him money; he never accepts bribes." **8** In Jerusalem also, Jehoshaphat appointed some priests and other descendants of Levi and some leaders of Israeli families [to be judges]. He told them to do what Yahweh's laws said was right when they settled disputes. Those men lived in Jerusalem. **9** He told them this: "You must always do your work faithfully, revering Yahweh. **10** In every dispute that your fellow Israelis who live in the cities want you to settle, you must warn them to not sin against Yahweh [by telling lies during the trial]. If you do not warn them, God will punish both you and your fellow Israelis. If you warn them, you will not be sinning. You must warn them whether [someone has accused them] of murdering someone, or of disobeying some other law or command or decree [of Yahweh]. **11** Amariah the Supreme Priest will supervise you in any matter that Yahweh is concerned about, and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the leader of the tribe of Judah, will supervise you in any matter that I am responsible for. And the descendants of Levi will assist you. Act courageously, and I pray that Yahweh will help those who do their work well."

20 Later [armies from] Moab and Ammon and some soldiers from [the] Meun [area in Edom] came [to fight] against Jehoshaphat's [army]. **2** Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A huge army is coming to attack your army. They are coming from [the] Edom [region], from the eastern side of the [Dead] Sea. They have already come to Hazazon-Tamar!" Another name for that place is En-Gedi. **3** Jehoshaphat became very afraid, so he decided to ask Yahweh [what he should do]. He also proclaimed that all [the people of] Judah should fast. **4** The people of Judah gathered together to request Yahweh to help them. They came [to Jerusalem] from every town in Judah to seek help

from Yahweh. 5 Then Jehoshaphat stood up in front of the people of Judah in front of the new courtyard of the temple, 6 and he prayed this: "Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors belonged to, you are surely the God who [rules from] heaven. You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. You have great power, and no one can successfully oppose you. 7 Our God, you expelled the people who lived in this land while your Israeli people advanced, and you certainly gave it to us who are descendants of your friend Abraham, to belong to us forever. 8 We have lived here and have built a temple where we, your people, worship you. We said, 9 'If we experience disasters, either from our enemies attacking us or from you punishing us, or if we experience a plague or a famine, we will stand in your presence in front of this temple that is built to honor you, and we will cry out to you when we are distressed/suffering, and you will hear us and will rescue us.' 10 You would not allow our Israeli ancestors to enter the countries of Ammon and Moab and Edom when they were traveling from Egypt [to Canaan]. So our ancestors turned away from those areas and did not attack the people there and did not destroy them. But now they are coming here [to attack us]. 11 [We did not destroy them. But now] look at how they are repaying us by trying to expel us from the land that you gave to our ancestors to belong to them [and their descendants forever] 12 So, our God, please punish them, because we do not have enough power to resist/defeat this huge army that is coming to attack us. We do not know what to do. But we are pleading for you to help us." 13 All the men of Judah and their wives and children and babies were standing there in the presence of Yahweh [while Jehoshaphat prayed]. 14 Then the Spirit of Yahweh came upon Jahaziel, who was the son of Zechariah, who was the son of Benaiah, who was the son of Jeiel, who was the son of Mattaniah. He was a descendant of Levi and a descendant of Asaph. He stood up in front of the whole group that was gathered there, 15 and said, "King Jehoshaphat and all you who live in Jerusalem and in other places in Judah, listen! This is what Yahweh says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this huge army [that is coming to attack you], because it is not you who [will win] this battle. It is God [who will win it]. 16 Tomorrow march down toward them. They will be climbing up through Ziz Pass [north of En-Gedi]. You will meet them at the end of the gorge near the Jeruel Desert. 17 But you will not need to fight this battle. You soldiers from Jerusalem and other places in Judah, just take your positions, and then stand still and watch [what will happen]. You will see Yahweh rescue you. Do not be afraid or discouraged. March toward them tomorrow, and Yahweh will be with you.'" 18 Jehoshaphat prostrated himself with his face touching the ground, and all the people of Jerusalem and other places in Judah [who were there] knelt down to worship Yahweh. 19 Then some descendants of Levi who were descendants of both Kohath and Korah stood up and loudly praised Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis [belonged to]. 20 Early the next morning the army left to go to the desert near Tekoa [town]. While they were leaving, Jehoshaphat stood up and said to the people, "You people of Jerusalem and other places in Judah, listen to me! Trust in Yahweh our God; if you do that, you will be strong. Trust in [what] his prophets [have said]; if you do that, you will be successful." 21 Then, after consulting with some of the people, he appointed some men to go in front of the army, singing to Yahweh and praising him because of his being holy and wonderful. They were singing, "Thank Yahweh, because he faithfully loves us forever." 22 When they began to sing and praise Yahweh, Yahweh caused the soldiers from Ammon and Moab and Edom who were invading Judah to panic, with the result that they were defeated. 23 The soldiers from Ammon and Moab started to fight against the soldiers from Edom, and they completely annihilated the soldiers from Edom. After they finished slaughtering the men from Edom, they started to attack each other. 24 When the soldiers from Judah came to the place where they could look down over the desert, they looked toward that huge army [of their enemies], and they saw only corpses lying on the ground. No one had survived. 25 So Jehoshaphat and his soldiers went to take the possessions of their enemies, and they saw that there was a lot of equipment and clothing and other valuable things; there was more than they could carry away. There were very many things, with the result that it took three days for them to collect it all. 26 The following day they gathered in Beracah Valley and praised Yahweh there. That is why that valley is still called Beracah, [which means praise.] 27 Then while Jehoshaphat led them, all the soldiers who were from Jerusalem and other places in Judah returned to Jerusalem. They were happy because Yahweh had enabled them to defeat their enemies. 28 When they arrived at Jerusalem, they went to the temple, [playing] harps and lutes and trumpets. 29 People in the kingdoms of the nearby countries became very afraid when they heard how Yahweh had fought against the enemies of the Israelis. 30 Then there was peace in the kingdom that was ruled by Jehoshaphat, because God had caused the surrounding nations not to attack it. 31 Jehoshaphat continued to rule Judah. He was 35 years old when he became king of Judah, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 25 years. His mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. 32 He did things that were pleasing to Yahweh, like his father Asa had done, and

he did not stop doing those things. 33 But he did not get rid of the shrines on the hilltops, and many of the people still did not faithfully do what the God whom their ancestors belonged to wanted. 34 A record of the other things that Jehoshaphat did while he ruled, from when he began to rule until he died, is in the scrolls written by [the prophet] Jehu, the son of Hanani. They are also in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel. 35 During his reign, Jehoshaphat made a treaty with Ahaziah, the king of Israel, who was a very wicked king. 36 They agreed that their workers would build a fleet of ships to use to buy and sell [things with other countries]. After those ships were built at Ezion-Geber [on the Gulf of Aqaba], 37 Eliezer the son of Dodavahu from Mareshah [city] warned Jehoshaphat. He said, "You have made an alliance with Ahaziah, [who is a wicked king]. Therefore, Yahweh will destroy the ships that your workers have made." And the ships were wrecked, and were not able to sail to other countries.

21 Then Jehoshaphat died, and was buried where his ancestors were buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. Then his son Jehoram became the king [of Judah]. 2 His [younger] brothers were Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah. 3 Before Jehoshaphat died, he gave them gifts of silver and gold and other valuable things. He also appointed them to rule various cities in Judah that had walls around them. But he appointed Jehoram to be the king of Judah, because Jehoram was his oldest son. 4 After Jehoram was completely in control of his father's kingdom, he had all of his [younger] brothers executed, along with some of the leaders of the nation. 5 Jehoram was 32 years old when he became the king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eight years. 6 But he did many of the [evil] things that the kings of Israel had done. He did many things that Yahweh considers to be evil, things that the family of Ahab had done, because he married one of Ahab's daughters. 7 However, because of the agreement that Yahweh had made with King David, Yahweh did not want to get rid of the descendants of David. He had promised that David's descendants would always be the ones who ruled Judah. 8 While Jehoram was ruling, the people of [the] Edom [region] rebelled against [the king of] Judah and appointed their own king. 9 So Jehoram and his officers and his men in chariots went to Edom. There, the army of Edom surrounded them. Jehoram escaped during the night. 10 But the king of Judah was never able to regain control of Edom, and Edom is still not controlled by Judah. [The people in] Libnah [city between Judah and Philistia] also rebelled against Judah. Those things happened because Jehoram turned away from [obeying] Yahweh, the God whom his ancestors [belonged to]. 11 On the hilltops in Judah he had also built shrines [to worship idols], and had caused the people of Judah to stray away from Yahweh by worshiping foreign gods. 12 One day, Jehoram received a letter from the prophet Elijah. Elijah had written this in the letter: "This is what Yahweh, the God whom your ancestor [King] David [worshiped], says: 'You have not done things that please me like your father Jehoshaphat did or what King Asa did. 13 Instead, you have continually done the [evil things] that the kings of Israel have done. You have encouraged the people in Jerusalem and other places in Judah to stop worshiping Yahweh, like the descendants of Ahab did. You have also murdered your own brothers, who were more righteous men than you are. 14 So now Yahweh is about to very severely punish the people in your kingdom and even your own children and your wives and everything that you own. 15 And you yourself will have an intestinal disease that will continue to become worse, and you will suffer from it until you die.'" 16 Then Yahweh caused some men from the Philistia people-group and some Arabs who lived near the coast [of the Mediterranean Sea], where people from Ethiopia had settled, to become angry with Jehoram. 17 Their army invaded Judah and took away [from Jerusalem] all the valuable things that they found in the king's palace, and even his sons and wives. His youngest son, Ahaziah, was the only one of his sons whom they did not take away. 18 After that happened, Yahweh caused Jehoram to be afflicted with an intestinal disease that no one could cure. 19 About two years later, while he was in great pain, he died because of that disease. The people of Judah had made bonfires to honor his ancestors when they died, but they did not make a bonfire for Jehoram. 20 Jehoram was 32 years old when he became the king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eight years. No one was sorry when he died. His corpse was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David', but he was not buried where the other kings [of Judah] had been buried.

22 The people of Jerusalem appointed Jehoram's youngest son Ahaziah as their king, because the men [from Philistia] who had invaded Judah with some Arabs had killed all of Jehoram's other sons. So Ahaziah started to rule Judah. 2 Ahaziah was 22 years old when he became king. He ruled in Jerusalem for one year. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of [King] Omri [of Israel]. 3 King Ahaziah conducted his life just like the members of Ahab's family had done, because his mother encouraged him to do things that are evil. 4 He did things that Yahweh considers to be evil, like the descendants of Ahab had done, because after Ahaziah's father died, they became his advisors. And Ahaziah died as a result of heeding their bad advice. 5 He

also did what they advised when he went with Joram, the son of King Ahab of Israel, to fight against the army of Hazael, the king of Syria, at Ramoth-Gilead. 6 Then King Ahaziah went down to Jezreel [city] to see Joram, the son of [King] Ahab, because he had been wounded. 7 It was during that visit that God caused Ahaziah to die. When Ahaziah arrived, he went with Joram to meet Jehu, the son of Nimshi, whom Yahweh had appointed to kill all the descendants of Ahab. 8 While Jehu [and the men who were with him] were killing the descendants of Ahab, they found the leaders of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's relatives who had been working for Ahaziah, and they killed all of them. 9 Then Jehu went to find Ahaziah, and his soldiers found Ahaziah while he was hiding in Samaria [city]. They brought him to Jehu and executed him. Then they buried his corpse, because they said, "[He deserves to be buried, because] he was a descendant of Jehoshaphat, who tried hard to please Yahweh." There were no descendants of Ahaziah who were powerful enough to become the kings of Judah. 10 When Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son had been killed, she commanded that all the members of Ahaziah's family [who might become king] must be executed. 11 But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram, took Joash, Ahaziah's very young son, away from the other sons of the king who were about to be murdered, and she hid him and his nursemaid in a bedroom in the temple. Because Jehosheba, who was the daughter of King Jehoram and the wife of the Supreme Priest Jehoiada, was Ahaziah's sister, she hid the child, with the result that Athaliah could not kill him. 12 He remained hidden there for six years while Athaliah ruled [Judah].

23 After Joash had been hidden in the temple for six years, Jehoiada the priest decided that it was necessary to do something. So he made an agreement with the army commanders of groups of 100 soldiers: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, Azariah the son of Obed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zicri. 2 They went throughout Judah and gathered the descendants of Levi and the leaders of Israeli families from all the towns. When they came to Jerusalem, 3 the whole group went to the temple and made an agreement with the young king there. Jehoiada said to them, "This is the son of the previous king of Judah. So he is the one who must rule, like Yahweh promised that the descendants of King David must do. 4 "So this is what you must do: One-third of you priests and other descendants of Levi who are starting their work on the Sabbath day must guard the doors [of the temple]. 5 One-third of you must guard the king's palace, and one-third of you must guard the Foundation Gate. All the other people will be in the courtyards outside the temple. 6 Only the priests and the descendants of Levi who work there will enter the temple. They will be allowed to enter the temple because they are set apart [for that work]. All the others must remain in the courtyards, obeying what Yahweh has commanded. 7 You descendants of Levi must stand around the young king, each of you with your weapon in your hand. Anyone else who tries to enter the temple you must kill. And stay close to the young king, wherever he goes." 8 So the descendants of Levi and all [the men of] Judah did what Jehoiada had told them. He did not allow anyone to go home after having finished his work on that Sabbath day. Each commander took charge of his men, the ones who were finishing their work on that day and those who were starting their work on that day. 9 Then Jehoiada gave each of the commanders the spears and the large and small shields that had been put there in the temple by King David. 10 He commanded all the guards to stand in their positions, each with his sword in his hand, all around the king—around the altar and the temple, from the north side to the south side. 11 Then Jehoiada and his sons brought Joash out. They put a crown on his head and gave him [a scroll] on which were written the rules [that the kings needed to obey], and proclaimed that he was now the king. They anointed him with olive oil and shouted, "We hope that the king will live for many years!" 12 When Athaliah heard the noise being made by the people running [toward the king] and cheering, she ran to the temple. 13 She saw the young king there, standing alongside the pillar at the entrance of the temple, [which is the place at the temple] where the kings usually stood. The army commanders and trumpet players were standing beside the king, and all the people of Judah were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and singers with their musical instruments were leading the people while they praised God. Then Athaliah tore her robes and started screaming, "You are committing treason!" 14 Jehoiada the Supreme Priest said to the army commanders, "Kill her, but do not kill her at the temple of Yahweh!" Then he said to them, "Bring Athaliah out in front of the troops and kill anyone who tries to follow her!" 15 [She tried to flee, but] they seized her as she reached the gate where horses enter the palace area, and they killed her there. 16 Then Jehoiada made an agreement that he and the king and all the other people would be Yahweh's people. 17 Then all the people who were there went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They smashed the altars [of Baal]. They also killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of those altars. 18 Then Jehoiada appointed the priests, who were also descended from Levi, to work at the temple. They were part of the group to whom King David had given various jobs at the temple, to sacrifice

the animals that were to be completely burned on the altar, doing what was written in the laws that Moses had given to them. He also told them to rejoice and sing, which was also what David had commanded. **19** He also put guards at the gates of the temple in order that anyone who was unacceptable to God would not be allowed to enter. **20** Jehoiada took with him the army commanders, the important men, the leaders and many others, and brought the king down from the temple. They went into the palace through the Upper Gate, and put the king on his throne. **21** Then all the people of Judah rejoiced. And there was calm throughout the city, because Athaliah had been killed.

24 Joash was seven years old when he became the king [of Judah], and he ruled in Jerusalem for 40 years. His mother's name was Zibiah; she was from Beersheba [city]. **2** Joash did what pleased Yahweh as long as Jehoiada was [the Supreme] Priest. **3** Jehoiada chose two women to be Joash's wives. And they bore Joash sons and daughters. **4** Some years later, Joash decided that the temple should be repaired. **5** He summoned the priests and other descendants of Levi and said to them, "Go to the towns in Judah and collect from the people the tax money that they are required to pay each year, and use that money to pay for repairing the temple. Do it immediately." But the descendants of Levi did not do it immediately. **6** So the king summoned Jehoiada and said to him, "Why have you not required the descendants of Levi to bring to Jerusalem from various places in Judah the annual/yearly tax that Moses said that the people of Judah must pay, for taking care of the Sacred Tent?" **7** [The temple needed to be repaired] because the sons of that wicked woman Athaliah had entered into the temple [and had wrecked some of the things], and had also used some of the sacred items that were in it for [the worship of] Baal. **8** So, obeying what the king commanded, the descendants of Levi made a chest and placed it outside the temple, at one of the entrances. **9** Then the king sent letters everywhere in Judah, requesting everyone to bring their tax money to the temple, like Moses had required the Israeli people to do [when they were] in the desert. **10** All the officials and the other people [agreed, and they] brought their contributions gladly. They put the money into the chest until it was full. **11** Whenever the descendants of Levi brought the chest to the king's officials, and they saw that there was a lot of money in it, the king's secretary and the assistant to the [Supreme] Priest would take all the money from the chest, and then put the chest back in its place. They did this frequently, and they collected a huge amount of money. **12** The king and Jehoiada gave the money to the men who were supervising the work of repairing the temple. Those men hired stoneworkers and carpenters to repair the temple. They also hired men who worked with iron and bronze to repair things in the temple [that were broken]. **13** The men who did the repair work worked hard, and the work of repairing the temple progressed. They rebuilt the temple so that it was like it was originally, and they even made it stronger. **14** When they had finished the repair work, they brought to the king and to Jehoiada the money that they had not used for the repairs. That money was used to make things to use for offering the sacrifices that were completely burned [on the altar], and to make bowls and other gold and silver things for the temple. As long as Joash lived, the people continually brought to the temple sacrifices that were to be completely burned on the altar. **15** Jehoiada lived to become very old. He died when he was 130 years old. **16** He was buried where the kings had been buried, in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David'. [He was buried there] because of the good things that he had done in Judah for God and for God's temple. **17** After Jehoiada died, the leaders of Judah went to Joash, bowed in front of him, and persuaded him to do what they wanted. **18** So they and the other people stopped worshiping at the temple, and they started worshiping the poles dedicated to [the goddess] Asherah and other idols. Because of their doing those sinful things, God was very angry with the people of Jerusalem and [with the people in other places in] Judah. **19** Although Yahweh sent prophets to persuade them to return to him, and although the prophets told them about the evil things that they had done, the people would not pay attention. **20** Then God's Spirit came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the [Supreme] Priest. He stood up front of the people and said, "This is what God says: 'Why are you disobeying what I, Yahweh, have commanded? You have abandoned me, so I will abandon you.'" **21** But the people planned to kill Zechariah. And the king joined them in doing it. The people killed Zechariah by throwing stones at him in the temple courtyard. **22** King Joash had forgotten about how Zechariah's father Jehoiada had been kind to him. That's why he gave orders for the people to kill Jehoiada's son Zechariah, who said as he was dying, "I hope that Yahweh will see [what you are doing to me] and punish [you for doing it]." **23** Near the end of that year (OR, early in the following year), the army of Syria marched to attack [the army of] Joash. They invaded Judah and attacked Jerusalem and killed all the leaders of the people. They [seized many valuable things and] sent them to their king in Damascus, [their capital city.] **24** The army of Syria [that came to Judah] was very small, but Yahweh allowed them to defeat the large army of Judah, because he was punishing Joash and the

other people of Judah for having abandoned him, the God whom their ancestors worshiped. **25** Before the battle ended, Joash was severely wounded. Then his officials decided to kill him for murdering Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the [Supreme] Priest. They killed him while he was in his bed. He was buried in [the part of Jerusalem called] 'The City of David', but they did not bury him in the place where the other kings had been buried. **26** Those who conspired to kill him were Zabad the son of Shimeath, who was a woman from the Ammon [people-group], and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith, who was a woman from the Moab [people-group]. **27** An account of the things that were done by the sons of Joash and the many prophecies about Joash and what he did to repair the temple are written in the scroll called 'the History of the Kings [of Judah and Israel]'. Then after Joash died, Amaziah his son became the king.

25 Amaziah was 25 years old when he became the king [of Judah], and he ruled from Jerusalem for 29 years. His mother was Jehoaddin; she was from Jerusalem. **2** Amaziah did many things that pleased Yahweh, but he did not do them enthusiastically. **3** As soon as he was in complete control of his kingdom, he caused to be executed the officials who had murdered his father. **4** But he did not command their sons to be executed; he obeyed what was in the laws that Moses had written. In those laws Yahweh had commanded, "People must not be executed because of [what] their children [have done], and children must not be executed for [what] their parents [have done]. People must be executed only for the sins that they themselves have committed." **5** Amaziah summoned the men of [the tribes of] Judah and Benjamin to come to Jerusalem, and there he put them in groups, each clan in a group by themselves. Then he appointed officers to command each group. Some officers commanded 100 men and some commanded 1,000 men. They counted the men who were at least 20 years old; altogether there were 300,000 men. They were all men who were prepared to be in the army, and able to [fight well,] using spears and shields. **6** Amaziah also hired 100,000 capable soldiers from Israel and paid almost four tons of silver for them. **7** But a prophet came to him and said, "Your majesty, you must not allow those soldiers from Israel to march with your soldiers, because Yahweh does not help the people of the tribe of Ephraim or from [anywhere else in] Israel. **8** Even if your soldiers go and fight courageously in battles, God will cause your enemies to defeat you; do not forget that God has the power to help armies or to cause them to be defeated." **9** Amaziah asked that prophet, "If I do that, what about the huge amount of silver that I paid to hire those soldiers from Israel?" The prophet replied, "Yahweh is able to pay you back more money than you paid [to hire those soldiers]." **10** So Amaziah told those soldiers from Israel to return home. They left to go home, but they were very angry with the king of Judah [for not allowing them to stay and fight]. **11** Then Amaziah became brave, and he led his army to the Salt Valley. There they killed 10,000 men from the Edom people-group. **12** The army of Judah also captured 10,000 others, and took them to the top of a cliff and threw them all down over the cliff, with the result that their corpses were all smashed to pieces. **13** While that was happening, the soldiers from Israel whom Amaziah had sent home after not allowing them to fight along with his soldiers, raided cities and towns in Judea, from Samaria [city] to Beth-Horon [town]. They killed 3,000 people and took away a great amount of valuable things. **14** When Amaziah returned [to Jerusalem] after his army had slaughtered the soldiers from Edom, he brought the idols that were worshiped by the people of Edom. He set them up to be his own gods. Then he bowed down to [worship] them and offered sacrifices to them. **15** Because of that, Yahweh was very angry with Amaziah. He sent a prophet to him, who said, "Why do you worship these foreign gods that were not even able to save their own people when your army attacked them?" **16** While he was still speaking, the king said to him, "We certainly did not appoint you to be one of my advisors. So stop [talking]! If you say anything more, [I will tell my soldiers to] kill you!" So the prophet said, "I know that God has determined to get rid of you, because you have [begun to] worship idols, and have not heeded my advice." Then the prophet said nothing more. **17** Some time later Amaziah, the king of Judah, consulted his advisors. Then he sent a message to Jehoash, the king of Israel. He wrote, "Come here and let's talk together." **18** But Jehoash replied to King Amaziah, "One time a thistle growing [in the mountains] in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar tree saying, 'Let your daughter marry my son.' But a wild animal in Lebanon came along and trampled the thistle under its feet. **19** [The meaning of what I am saying is that] you are saying to yourself that your army has defeated the army of Edom, so you have become very proud. But you should stay at your home. It would not be good for you to cause trouble, which would result in you and your kingdom of Judah being destroyed." **20** But Amaziah refused to heed Jehoash's message. That happened because God wanted Jehoash's army to defeat them, because they were worshiping the gods of Edom. **21** So Jehoash's army attacked. Their two armies faced each other at Beth-Shemesh [city] in Judah. **22** The army of Judah was badly defeated by the army of Israel, and all the soldiers of Judah fled to their homes. **23** King Jehoash's army also

captured King Amaziah there. Then he brought Amaziah to Jerusalem, and his soldiers tore down the wall [that was around the city], from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. That was a section that was about 600 feet long. **24** His soldiers also carried away the gold and silver and other valuable furnishings from the temple which the descendants of Obed-Edom had previously been guarding. They also took away the valuable things in the palace, and they took to Samaria some prisoners whom they had captured. **25** King Jehoash of Israel died, and King Amaziah of Judah lived for 15 years after that. **26** An account of all the other things that Amaziah did while he was the king [of Judah] is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah and Israel'. **27** From the time that Amaziah started to disobey Yahweh, some men in Jerusalem planned to kill him. He was able to escape to Lachish [city], but those who wanted to kill him sent another group of people to Lachish and killed him there. **28** They put his corpse on a horse and brought it back to Jerusalem and buried it where his ancestors [had been buried] in the part of Jerusalem called 'The City of David'.

26 After King Amaziah died, all the people of Judah appointed his son Uzziah, who then was 16 years old, as their king. [One of the things that happened] while he was the king [was that] his men captured Elath [town on the Gulf of Aqaba] and rebuilt it. **3** Uzziah ruled in Jerusalem for 52 years. His mother was Jecoliah; she was from Jerusalem. **4** Uzziah did things that Yahweh considered to be good, like his father Amaziah had done. **5** He tried to please God while [the priest] Zechariah was living, because Zechariah taught him to revere God. As long as Uzziah tried to please God, God enabled him to be successful. **6** Uzziah and his army started to fight against the army of Philistia. They tore down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod [cities]. Then they rebuilt the towns near Ashdod and in other places in Philistia. **7** God helped them to fight the army of Philistia and the Arabs who lived in [the town of] Gur-Baal and the descendants of Meun who had come to that area from Edom. **8** Even the Ammon [people-group] paid taxes to Uzziah each year. So Uzziah became famous as far as the border of Egypt, because he had become very powerful. **9** Uzziah's [workers] built watchtowers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the place where the wall turns, and they placed weapons in them. **10** They also built watchtowers in the desert and dug many wells. They did that [to provide water] for a lot of the king's cattle that were in the foothills and in the plains. Uzziah liked farming, so he also stationed workers [to take care of] his fields and vineyards in the hills and in the fertile areas. **11** Uzziah's army was trained for fighting battles. They were in groups that were always ready to go into battle. Jeiel, the king's secretary, and Maaseiah, one of the army officers, counted the men and placed them in groups. Hananiah, one of the king's officials, was their commander. **12** There were 2,600 leaders of those groups of soldiers. **13** In the groups that those leaders commanded there were a total of 307,500 well-trained soldiers. It was a very powerful army which was ready to help the king fight against his enemies. **14** Uzziah gave to each soldier a shield, a spear, a helmet, a vest made of iron plates, a bow [and arrows], and a slingshot. **15** In Jerusalem his skilled workers made machines to put on the watchtowers and on the corners [of the walls], to shoot arrows and to hurl large stones. He became very famous even in distant places, because God helped him very much and enabled him to become very powerful. **16** But because Uzziah was very powerful, he became very proud, and that led to his being punished. He disobeyed what Yahweh his God had commanded. He went into the temple to burn incense on the altar [where God had said that only the priests should burn] incense. **17** Azariah the [Supreme] Priest and 80 other brave priests followed him into the temple. **18** They rebuked him and said to him, "Uzziah, it is not right for you to burn incense to [honor] Yahweh. That duty is only for the priests, those who are descendants of Aaron [our first Supreme Priest]! You must leave [immediately], because you have disobeyed Yahweh our God, and he will not honor you [for what you have done]!" **19** Uzziah had in his hand a pan for burning incense. He became very angry with the priests, but suddenly there was leprosy on his forehead. **20** When Azariah the [Supreme] Priest and all the other priests [who were there] looked at him, they saw the leprosy on his forehead, so they quickly took him outside. And truly the king was eager to leave the temple, because he knew that it was Yahweh who had caused him to have that leprosy, [and he did not want it to become worse.] **21** King Uzziah had leprosy until he died. And because he had leprosy, he lived in a house that was not near other houses, and he was not allowed to enter [the courtyard of] the temple. His son Jotham supervised the palace and ruled the people of Judah. **22** A record of all the other things that Uzziah did while he was the king [of Judah] was written by the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz. **23** Because Uzziah was a leper, [when he died,] they would not bury him in the tombs where the other kings were buried. Instead, he was buried in a nearby cemetery that the kings owned. Then his son Jotham became the king [of Judah].

27 Jotham was 25 years old when he became the king of Judah. He ruled from Jerusalem for 16 years. His mother was Jerushah, the daughter of [the priest] Zadok. **2**

Jotham did many things that pleased Yahweh like his father Uzziah did. He obeyed Yahweh and did things that are right. He did many things that his father Uzziah had done, but he did not burn incense in the temple, like his father had done. However, the people of Judah continued to sin against Yahweh. **3** Jotham's [workers] rebuilt the Upper Gate of the temple, and they did a lot of work to repair the wall near Ophel [Hill]. **4** They built towns in the hills of Judah, and they built forts and defense towers in the forests. **5** During the time that Jotham was the king of Judah, his army attacked and defeated the army of the Ammon people-group. Then, every year during the next three years, he required the Anmon people-group to pay to him four tons of silver, 60,000 bushels of wheat, and 60,000 bushels of barley. **6** Jotham faithfully obeyed Yahweh his God, and as a result he became a very powerful king. **7** A record of everything else that Jotham did during the time that he was the king, including the wars that his army fought, is written in the scroll called '[the History of] the Kings of Israel and Judah'. **8** After Jotham had ruled Judah for 16 years, he died when he was 41 years old. **9** He was buried in Jerusalem, and his son Ahaz became the king [of Judah].

28 Ahaz was 20 years old when he became the king [of Judah]. He ruled from Jerusalem for 16 years. His ancestor King David was a good king, but Ahaz was not like David. He constantly disobeyed Yahweh **2** and was as sinful as the kings of Israel had been. He made idols of the god Baal. **3** He burned incense in Hinnom Valley. He even [killed some of] his own sons [and] offered [them] as sacrifices to be completely burned. That imitated the disgusting customs of the people-groups who previously lived there, people whom Yahweh had expelled as the Israelis advanced through the land. **4** Ahaz offered sacrifices [to idols] at shrines on hilltops and under every big green tree. **5** Therefore Yahweh his God allowed his army to be defeated by the army of the king of Syria. They captured many soldiers of Judah and took them as prisoners to Damascus. The army of the king of Israel also defeated the army of Judah and killed very many of their soldiers. **6** In one day the army of Remaliah's son, King Pekah [of Israel], killed 120,000 soldiers in Judah. That happened because [the people of] Judah had abandoned Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [worshiped]. **7** Zicri, a warrior from the tribe of Ephraim, killed king Ahaz's son Maaseiah, Azrikam the officer in charge of the palace, and Elkanah, the king's assistant. **8** The soldiers of Israel captured 200,000 of the people of Judah, including many wives and sons and daughters [of the soldiers of Judah]. They also seized and took back to Samaria many valuable things. **9** But a prophet of Yahweh whose name was Obed was there [in Samaria]. He went out of the city to meet the army when it returned to Samaria. He said to them, "Because Yahweh, the God whom your ancestors [belonged to], was angry with [the people of] Judah, he allowed you to defeat them. But God has seen the cruel way that you slaughtered them. **10** And now you want to [sin by] causing men and women from Judah to become your slaves, but you have certainly also sinned against Yahweh our God! **11** So listen to me! Send back [to Judah] your fellow-countrymen whom you have captured, because Yahweh is extremely angry with you [for what you did to them]." **12** Then some of the leaders of [the tribe of] Ephraim—Azariah the son of Jehohanan, Berekiah the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai—rebuked those who were returning from the battle. **13** They said to them, "You must not bring those prisoners here! If you do that, Yahweh will consider that we are guilty of sinning. We are already guilty of committing many sins; do you want to cause us to be even more guilty by committing another sin? God is already very angry with [us people of] Israel!" **14** So, while their leaders and others were watching, the soldiers released the prisoners, and also gave back to them the valuable things that they had captured. **15** The leaders who were selected took some of the clothes that the soldiers had taken from the prisoners and gave those clothes back to the people who were naked. They also gave to the prisoners sandals and other clothes and things to eat and drink, and they gave them olive oil to rub on their wounds. They gave donkeys to those who were very weak, in order that they could ride on them. Then they led them all to Jericho, the city that had many palm trees. Then those leaders [of Israel] returned to Samaria. **16** About that time, King Ahaz sent [a message] to the king of Assyria requesting help. **17** [He did that because the army from] the Edom people-group had come again and attacked Judah and taken away many of the people of Judah as prisoners. **18** At the same time, men from Philistia had raided/attacked towns in the foothills and in the southern desert of Judah. They had captured Beth-Shemesh, Aijalon, and Gederoth [cities], as well as Soco, Timnah and Gimzo [towns] and the nearby villages. **19** Yahweh [allowed those things to happen in order to] humble king Ahaz, because he had encouraged the people of Judah to do wicked things and had disobeyed Yahweh very much. **20** Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, sent [his army saying that they would] help Ahaz, but instead of helping him, they caused him to experience trouble. **21** Ahaz's [soldiers] took some of the [valuable] things from the temple and from the king's palace and from other leaders of Judah and sent them to the king of Assyria [to pay him to help them], but the

king of Assyria refused to help Ahaz. 22 While King Ahaz was experiencing those troubles, he disobeyed Yahweh even more. 23 He offered sacrifices to the gods that were worshiped in Damascus, whose [army] had defeated his [army]. He thought, "The gods that are worshiped by the kings of Syria have helped them, so I will offer sacrifices to those gods in order that they will help me." But worshiping those gods caused Ahaz and all of Israel to be ruined. 24 Ahaz gathered all the furnishings [that were used] in the temple and broke them into pieces. He locked the doors of the temple and set up altars [for worshiping idols] at every street corner in Jerusalem. 25 In every town in Judah, his workers built shrines to burn sacrifices to other gods, and that caused Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [worshiped], to be very angry. 26 A record of the other things that Ahaz did while he was the king, from when he started to rule until he died, is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah and Israel'. 27 Ahaz died and was buried in Jerusalem, but he was not buried in the tombs where the other kings [had been buried]. Then his son Hezekiah became the king.

29 Hezekiah was 25 years old when he became the king [of Judah]. He ruled from Jerusalem for 29 years. His mother was Abijah, the daughter of [a man whose name was] Zechariah. 2 Hezekiah did things that Yahweh considered to be right, like his ancestor King David had done. 3 During March of the first year that Hezekiah was ruling Judah, he unlocked the doors of the temple, and his workers repaired them. 4 Then he gathered the priests and other descendants of Levi in the area on the east side of the temple, 5 and he said to them, "You descendants of Levi, listen to me! Consecrate yourselves. And then consecrate the temple of Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped/belonged to]. Remove from the temple all the things that are not pleasing to God. 6 Our ancestors disobeyed God; they did many things that he considered to be evil, things that were not pleasing to him. They abandoned this place where Yahweh lives, and they have turned away from him. 7 They locked the doors of the temple and extinguished the lamps. They did not burn any incense, and they did not offer any sacrifices that were to be completely burned [on the altar]. 8 Therefore, Yahweh has become very angry with us people of Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah, and he has caused other people to become frightened and horrified [when they hear what Yahweh did to punish us]. And they ridicule us. You know this very well. 9 That is why our fathers have been killed in battles, and our sons and daughters and our wives have been captured and taken [to other countries]. 10 But now I intend to make an agreement with Yahweh, our God, in order that he will no longer be angry with us. 11 [You who are like] my sons, do not waste any time. [Do immediately what Yahweh wants you to do.] Yahweh has chosen you to stand in his presence and offer sacrifices and burn incense." 12 Then these descendants of Levi started to work [in the temple]: From the descendants of Kohath there were Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah. From the descendants of Merari there were Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehallelel. From the descendants of Gershon there were Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah. 13 From the descendants of Elizaphan there were Shimri and Jeiel. From the descendants of Asaph there were Zechariah and Mattaniah. 14 From the descendants of Heman there were Jehiel and Shimei. From the descendants of Jeduthun there were Shemaiah and Uzziel. 15 When those men had gathered their fellow descendants of Levi and had consecrated themselves, they entered the temple in order to consecrate it. That was what the king had commanded them to do, and they were also obeying what Yahweh had commanded. 16 The priests entered the temple to consecrate it. They brought out into the courtyard of the temple everything that they had found in the temple that was not pleasing to Yahweh. Then the descendants of Levi took those things down to the Kidron Valley [and burned them there]. 17 The priests and other descendants of Levi started this work on the first day of March and finished purifying the courtyard [of the temple] on the eighth day of that month, and they finished purifying the temple one week later. 18 Then they went to King Hezekiah and reported, "We have purified all parts of the temple, and the altar where sacrifices are completely burned, and all the items used at the altar, the table on which the priests place the sacred bread, and the things [used at that table]. 19 While Ahaz was our king, he disobeyed what Yahweh had commanded, and he removed from the temple many things [that should be there], but now we have brought them back and placed them in front of the sacred altar." 20 Early the next morning, King Hezekiah gathered together the city officials, and they went to the [courtyard of the] temple. 21 They took with them seven bulls, seven rams, seven male lambs, and seven male goats to be an offering in order that Yahweh would forgive the sins of all the people in the kingdom of Judah, and in order to purify the temple. The king commanded that the priests, who were descendants of Aaron, should offer those animals to be sacrificed to Yahweh on the altar. 22 So first the priests slaughtered those bulls, and took their blood and sprinkled it on the altar. Then they slaughtered the rams and sprinkled their blood on the altar. Then they slaughtered the lambs and sprinkled their blood on the altar.

23 The goats that were slaughtered to be an offering in order that Yahweh would forgive the sins of the people were brought to the king and the others who were there. Then the king and those who were present laid their hands on those goats. 24 Then the priests slaughtered those goats and splashed their blood on the altar in order that Yahweh would forgive the sins that all the Israeli people had committed. The priests did that because the king had commanded that offerings that would be completely burned [on the altar] and other sacrifices should be made for all the people of Israel. 25 The king then told the descendants of Levi to stand in the temple with their cymbals and harps and lyres, obeying what David and his prophets Gad and Nathan had commanded. Those were things that Yahweh had told his prophets that the descendants of Levi should do. 26 So the descendants of Levi [went and] stood in the temple, ready to play the musical instruments that King David had given to them. And the priests were ready to blow their trumpets. 27 Then Hezekiah told some of the priests to burn the animals that would be sacrificed on the altar. When they started to burn the animals, the people started to sing to [praise] Yahweh, while the other descendants of Levi were playing their instruments. 28 All the people who were there bowed to worship Yahweh, while the singers sang and the trumpeters blew their trumpets. They continued to do this until they had finished slaughtering all the animals that would be completely burned. 29 When they finished making those offerings, the king and all those who were there knelt down and worshiped Yahweh. 30 Then King Hezekiah and his officials commanded the descendants of Levi to praise Yahweh, singing the songs [composed/written] by David and Asaph the prophet. So they sang songs joyfully and bowed their heads to worship. 31 Then Hezekiah said, "You have now dedicated yourselves to Yahweh. So come close to the temple and bring animals to be sacrificed and other offerings to thank [Yahweh for what he has done for you]." And those who wanted to bring animals to be completely burned [on the altar] brought them. 32 Altogether they brought 70 bulls, 100 rams, and 200 male lambs to be completely burned on the altar. 33 The other animals that they brought were 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep and goats that were set apart to be sacrifices. 34 But there were not enough priests to remove the skins from the animals that would be completely burned [on the altar]. So their fellow descendants of Levi helped them until that work was finished, and until other priests had purified/consecrated themselves to do that work. It was necessary for them to do that because many of the priests had not yet performed the rituals to consecrate themselves for that work, like the descendants of Levi had done. 35 In addition to the all the offerings that were completely burned [on the altar], the priests also burned the fat of the other animals that were sacrificed to maintain good fellowship with Yahweh, and the usual wine offerings. So the worship at the temple began again. 36 And Hezekiah and all the other people of Judah celebrated, because God had enabled them to do all those things very quickly.

30 The king and his officials and all the other people who had gathered in Jerusalem wanted to celebrate the Passover Festival. But they were not able to celebrate it at the usual time, because many of the priests had still not performed the rituals to purify themselves; therefore they were not allowed to do serve in the festival. Also, everyone had still not come to Jerusalem [to celebrate the Passover]. So they decided to celebrate it one month later than usual. 4 The king and all the other people who had gathered thought that was a good plan. 5 So they decided to send messages to all the towns in Judah and in Israel, from Beersheba [in the far south] to Dan [in the far north], including towns in the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, to invite people to come to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover [Festival] to [honor] Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli people [worshiped/belonged to]. Many of the people had not previously celebrated that festival, even though it had been written [in the laws of Moses that they should do that]. 6 Obeying what the king commanded, messengers went throughout Judah and Israel, taking messages that had been written by the king and his officials. This is what they wrote: "You Israeli people, you who survived after being slaves of the kings of Assyria, return to Yahweh, the God whom [our great ancestors] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [worshiped/belonged to], in order that he may return to you. Your fathers and brothers did not faithfully obey Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped]. 7 Do not act like they did, because what they did caused other people to become disgusted with them. 8 Do not be stubborn as our ancestors were. Do what Yahweh desires. Come [to Jerusalem] to the temple, which he has set apart forever. Do what pleases Yahweh our God, in order that he will no longer be angry with you. 9 If you return to Yahweh, the people who have captured our brothers [and sisters] and our children will be kind to them, and allow them to return to this land. Do not forget that Yahweh our God is kind and merciful. If you return to him, he will no longer reject you." 10 The messengers went to all the towns in the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, as far [north] as the tribe of Zebulun, [and gave them this message,] but most of the people there scorned them and ridiculed them. 11 But some of the people of [the tribes of] Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and

went to Jerusalem. 12 Also in Judah God motivated the people to be united in wanting to do what Yahweh wanted them to do, which is what the king and his officials had told them to do in the message that they sent. 13 So a huge crowd of people gathered in Jerusalem in May, to celebrate the Festival of Eating Unleavened Bread. 14 They removed the altars [of Baal] in Jerusalem and took away the altars for burning incense [to honor other gods, and burned them] in Kidron Valley. 15 They slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of that month. Some of the priests and the other descendants of Levi were ashamed [because they had not performed the rituals to cause them to be acceptable to work for Yahweh]. So they performed those rituals, and brought to the temple animals to be completely burned [on the altar]. 16 Then they stood at the places where Moses had written in his laws that they should stand. Then the descendants of Levi gave to the priests [bowls containing blood of the animals that were being sacrificed], and the priests sprinkled [the altar] with some of the blood. 17 Many people in the crowd had not purified themselves, and therefore they were not able to kill the lambs [and dedicate them] to Yahweh. So it was necessary for the descendants of Levi to kill the lambs for them. 18 Although most of the people who had come from [the tribes of] Ephraim, Manasseh, and Issachar had not purified themselves, they ate the food of the Passover Festival anyway, ignoring the rules written [by Moses]. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying "Yahweh, you always do what is good; I pray that you will forgive everyone 19 who sincerely wants to honor you, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped], even if they have not purified themselves by obeying the sacred laws that you gave to us." 20 And Yahweh heard what Hezekiah prayed; he forgave the people, [and did not punish them]. 21 The Israeli people who were there in Jerusalem celebrated the Festival of Eating Unleavened Bread for seven days. They rejoiced greatly as they celebrated, while the priests and other descendants of Levi sang to Yahweh every day, and played musical instruments to [praise] God. 22 Hezekiah thanked all the descendants of Levi for doing this work for Yahweh, and for very skillfully leading the people who were worshiping. For those seven days the people ate the Passover food and brought offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh and praised Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [belonged to/had worshiped]. 23 Then the whole group decided to celebrate for seven more days, so they did: They celebrated joyfully for seven more days. 24 King Hezekiah provided 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep to be slaughtered for the people [to eat during the festival], and the officials also gave them 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep and goats. Many priests consecrated themselves. 25 All the people of Judah rejoiced, including the priests and other descendants of Levi and all the people from Israel who had come, and including some from other countries who were living in Israel and some from other countries who were living in Judah. 26 Everyone in Jerusalem was very joyful, because nothing like this had happened in Jerusalem since the time when David's son Solomon was the king of Israel. 27 The priests and the other descendants of Levi stood up to bless the people, and God heard them in heaven, the holy place where he lives.

31 After the festival ended, the Israelis who were there went to all the towns in Judah and smashed the stones/pillars [for worshiping idols], and cut down the poles [for worshiping the goddess] Asherah. They destroyed the shrines on the hilltops and the altars [of Baal] throughout the areas where the tribes of Judah and Benjamin lived, and also in the areas of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. After destroying all of them, they returned to their own towns. 2 Hezekiah divided the priests and [other] descendants of Levi into groups. He appointed some of the groups to offer sacrifices that would be completely burned [on the altar] and offerings to maintain fellowship [with Yahweh]. He appointed some groups to do other work at the temple: some to lead the people in their worship, some to thank Yahweh, and some to sing songs to praise to Yahweh at the gates of the temple. 3 The king contributed some of his own funds to buy animals that would be sacrificed in the morning and in the evening of each day, and on the Sabbath days, to celebrate the new moons, and during the other feasts, according to what was written in the laws [that Yahweh gave to Moses]. 4 Hezekiah told the people living in Jerusalem to give to the priests and the other descendants of Levi the portions [of meat] that should be given to them, in order that they could devote all their time to obeying the laws of Yahweh. 5 As soon as he told that to the people, they generously gave the first part of their harvest of grain, and the first part of the new wine [that they produced], and [olive] oil and honey, and of the crops that grew in their fields. They brought [to the temple] a tenth of all their crops. 6 The men of Israel and Judah who were living in various towns in Judah also brought a tenth of their cattle and sheep and goats, and a tenth of other things that they had dedicated to Yahweh their God, and they piled all those things in heaps. 7 They started to do that in May and finished doing it in September. 8 When Hezekiah and his officials saw the heaps, they praised Yahweh and [requested God to] bless the people. 9 But Hezekiah asked the priests and other descendants of Levi, "Why are these heaps of things here?" 10 Then Azariah the [Supreme] Priest, a descendant of Zadok, replied, "Since the

time that the people started to bring their offerings to the temple, we have had even more food than we need. This has happened because Yahweh has greatly blessed our fellow Israelis, with the result that all this is left over [after we priests and other descendants of Levi took all that we need]!" 11 Then Hezekiah ordered that they should prepare storerooms in the temple. So they did that. 12 Then they brought into the storerooms all the tithes and offerings and the things dedicated to Yahweh [which the people had brought]. One of the descendants of Levi whose name was Conaniah was in charge of those things, and his [younger] brother Shimei was his assistant. 13 Those two men supervised Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismakiah, Mahath and Benaiah while they did the work. They were appointed by King Hezekiah; Azariah was in charge of [everything that was done in] the temple. 14 Kore the son of Imnah, another descendant of Levi, who guarded the east gate of the temple, was in charge of the offerings to God that were made voluntarily. He distributed to the priests and [other] descendants of Levi the offerings and other things that were dedicated to Yahweh. 15 Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah and Shecaniah faithfully assisted him in the towns where the priests lived. They distributed those things to the groups of their fellow priests; they distributed them to everyone, from the youngest to the oldest. 16 They also distributed things to the males who were at least 30 years old, those whose names were written on the scrolls where lists of family names were written. They were males who [were allowed to] enter the temple to perform their tasks/work each day, the tasks that each group had been assigned to do. 17 The names of the priests were on the scrolls where their clans' names were written. They also distributed things to groups of [other] descendants of Levi, those who were at least 20 years old. 18 They included all their little children and wives and other sons and daughters whose names were on the scrolls where their clans' names were written, because they also faithfully had dedicated themselves to Yahweh. 19 [Hezekiah] also appointed other men to distribute portions of those offerings to the priests and other descendants of Levi who were living in the pasturelands around the towns in Judah. But they gave things only to those who were descendants of Aaron [the first Supreme Priest], whose names were on the scrolls containing the names of their clans. 20 That is what Hezekiah did throughout Judah. He always faithfully did things that Yahweh his God considered to be right and good. 21 In everything that he did for the worship in the temple, and as he obeyed God's laws and commands, he tried to find out what his God wanted, and he worked energetically. So he was successful.

32 After King Hezekiah had obeyed Yahweh's instructions and had done all those things, King Sennacherib of Assyria came [with his army] and invaded Judah. He commanded his soldiers to surround the cities that had walls around them, thinking that they would [break through those walls and] conquer those cities. 2 When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come [with his army] and that they intended to attack Jerusalem, 3 he consulted with his officials and army leaders. They said among themselves, "Why should we allow the king of Assyria [and his army] to come and find plenty of water to drink?" So they decided to stop the water from flowing outside the city. So a large group of men gathered together and blocked all the springs and the stream that flowed through that area. 5 Then they worked hard to repair all the sections of the city wall that had been broken, and they built watchtowers on the walls. They built another wall outside/around the wall that was already outside the city, and they strengthened the defenses on the sloping terraces [on the east side of the area called 'The City of David']. They also made a large number of weapons and shields. 6 Hezekiah appointed army commanders, and he gathered them in front of him in the square at one of the city gates, and he encouraged them by saying this to them: 7 "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged on account of the king of Assyria and the huge army that is with him, because [Yahweh] is with us, and his [power] is greater than their [power]. 8 They have to rely on the power of humans, but we have Yahweh our God to help us and to fight battles for us." So the people became more confident because of what Hezekiah, the king of Judah, said. 9 Later, when Sennacherib and all his soldiers were surrounding Lachish [city], he sent some officers to Jerusalem to give this message to King Hezekiah and to all the people of Judah who were there: 10 "[I am] Sennacherib, the [great] king of Assyria, [and] this is what I say: 'While you are staying in Jerusalem, my soldiers are surrounding the city. So why [RHQ] are you so confident? 11 Hezekiah says to you, "Yahweh our God will save us from [being defeated by the army of] the king of Assyria," but he is misleading you. He wants you to die from having no food or water. 12 Isn't Hezekiah the one who told his men to get rid of your god Yahweh's shrines and altars on the hilltops, saying to [you people of] Jerusalem and other places in Judah, "You must worship at only one altar and burn sacrifices on only that altar"? 13 'Do you people not know what I and my ancestors have done to all the people-groups in other countries? [We destroyed them all, and] none of the gods of those nations were ever able to prevent my [troops] from conquering them! So how can your god prevent my soldiers from conquering

you? 15 So do not allow Hezekiah to deceive you like this. Do not believe what he says, because no god of any nation or kingdom has ever been able to rescue his people from being conquered by my army and the armies of my ancestors. So certainly your god will not be able to rescue you from my power'." 16 Sennacherib's officers said more things to belittle Yahweh the God of the Israelis and Hezekiah, who served God [well]. 17 King Sennacherib wrote more letters insulting Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis [belonged to/worshiped]. He said things like this: "The gods [worshiped by] the people-groups in other countries did not rescue their people from my power. Similarly, the god of Hezekiah will not rescue his people from my power." 18 Then King Sennachereb's officers shouted in the Hebrew language to the people who were on the wall, in order to cause them to be terrified, thinking that as a result the army of Assyria could capture the city [without a battle]. 19 They belittled the God [worshiped by the people] of Jerusalem as they belittled the gods of the other people-groups of the world—saying that they were only [idols] made by humans. 20 Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah cried out to God, praying about this. 21 And [that night] Yahweh sent an angel who killed all the soldiers of Assyria and their leaders and their officers in the place where the king of Assyria and his army had set up their tents. So the king of Assyria left and returned to his own country, very disgraced. And one day when he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons struck him with their swords and killed him. 22 That is how Yahweh rescued Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem from the power of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, and from their other enemies. Yahweh took care of them (OR, gave them peace) everywhere in the country. 23 Many people brought offerings for Yahweh to Jerusalem, and also brought valuable gifts for King Hezekiah. And from that time, Hezekiah was highly respected/honored by the people of all the other nations. 24 About that time, Hezekiah became very ill. He was about to die. But he prayed to Yahweh, and Yahweh answered his prayer. He performed a miracle [and healed Hezekiah]. 25 But Hezekiah [SYN] was very proud, and he did not thank Yahweh for being kind to him. Therefore Yahweh was angry with him and [and punished him] and [the people of] Jerusalem and other places in Judah. 26 Then Hezekiah said that he was sorry for being proud, and the people of Jerusalem also said that they were sorry [for their sins]. So Yahweh did not punish them during the remaining years that Hezekiah [was their king]. 27 Hezekiah became very rich and was greatly honored. His [workers] made storerooms for his silver and gold, and for his very valuable stones, and for spices and shields and other valuable things. 28 [His workers] also built buildings to store the grain and wine and [olive] oil [that people produced and brought to him]. They also made stalls for various kinds of cattle and pens for his flocks [of sheep and goats]. 29 They built towns and acquired for the king many flocks [of sheep and goats] and herds [of cattle], because God had enabled him to become very rich. 30 Hezekiah was the one who told his workers to block the place where the water flows out of the Gihon Spring, and to build a tunnel through which the water flowed to the west side of the area called 'The City of David'. He was able to do everything that he wanted to do. 31 But when messengers who were sent by the rulers of Babylon came and asked about the miracle that God had performed for him, God allowed Hezekiah to say what he himself wanted to say, in order to test [whether or not Hezekiah would admit that God had performed a miracle]. 32 A record of the other things that happened while Hezekiah was ruling, and the things that he did to please God, is on the scroll in which is written the vision that [Yahweh gave to] the prophet Isaiah. It is also written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah and Israel'. 33 When Hezekiah died, he was buried in the tombs where the most respected kings [of Judah] were buried. Everyone in Jerusalem and other places in Judah honored him. Then his son Manasseh became the king.

33 Manasseh was 12 years old when he became the king [of Judah], and he ruled from Jerusalem for 55 years. 2 He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He imitated the disgusting things that were formerly done by the people-groups that Yahweh had expelled from Israel as his people advanced [though the land]. 3 He commanded his workers to rebuild the shrines [for worshiping idols] that his father Hezekiah had destroyed. He told them to set up altars to [honor] the statues of Baal, and to make altars to [honor the goddess] Asherah. He bowed down to [worship] all the stars. 4 He directed his workers to build altars [for foreign gods] in the temple, about which Yahweh had said, "It is here in Jerusalem that I want people to worship me, forever." 5 He directed that altars for [worshiping] all the stars be built in both of the courtyards outside the temple. 6 He even sacrificed [some of] his own sons and burned them in a fire in Hinnom Valley. He performed rituals to practice sorcery. He asked fortune-tellers for advice. He performed witchcraft. He talked to people who consulted the spirits of people who had died to find out what would happen in the future. He did many things that Yahweh considered o be very evil, things that caused Yahweh to become very angry. 7 Manasseh took a carved idol [that his workers had made] and put it in the temple. That is the temple concerning which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, "My temple will be

here in Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen [where I want people to] worship me, forever. 8 If they will obey all the laws and decrees and regulations that I told Moses to give to them, I will not again force the Israeli people to leave this land that I gave to their ancestors." 9 But Manasseh led the people of Jerusalem and other places in Judah to do things that are wrong, with the result that they did more evil than was done by the people in the people-groups that Yahweh had expelled as the Israeli people advanced [through the land]. 10 Yahweh spoke to Manasseh and the people of Judah, but they paid no attention. 11 So Yahweh caused the army commanders of Assyria [and their soldiers] to [come to Jerusalem, and they] captured Manasseh. They put a hook in his nose and put bronze chains on his [feet] and took him to Babylon. 12 There, while he was suffering, he humbled himself greatly in the presence of Yahweh, the God whom his ancestors [worshiped], and pleaded with Yahweh to help him. 13 When he prayed, Yahweh heard him and pitied him. So he [allowed him to] return to Jerusalem and [to] rule his kingdom again. Then Manasseh realized that Yahweh is [an all-powerful] God. 14 Later, Manasseh's [workers] rebuilt the eastern section of the outer wall around Jerusalem, and [they] made it higher. That section extended from Gihon Spring [north] to the Fish Gate, and around the part of the city that they called Ophel [Hill]. Manasseh also appointed army officers to guard each of the cities in Judah that had walls around them. 15 Manasseh's [workers] removed from the temple the idols and the stone statues of gods of other nations. Manasseh also [told them to] remove the altars that they had previously built on Zion Hill and in [other places in] Jerusalem. He had all those things thrown out of the city. 16 Then he [told them to] repair the altar of Yahweh, and he offered sacrifices to restore fellowship with Yahweh and to thank him. And he told [the people of] Judah that they must worship [only] Yahweh. 17 The people continued to offer sacrifices on the hilltops, but only to Yahweh their God. 18 The other things that happened while Manasseh was ruling, including his prayer to God and the messages from Yahweh that the prophets gave to him, are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. 19 What Manasseh prayed and how God pitied him because he pleaded to God, and also his sins and ways in which he disobeyed God, and the [list of] places where he built shrines and set up poles to [honor the goddess] Asherah and other idols [before he humbled himself], are written in what the prophets wrote. 20 Manasseh died and was buried in his palace. Then his son Amon became the king [of Judah]. 21 Amon was 22 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for two years. 22 He did things that Yahweh considered to be evil, like his father Manasseh had done. Amon worshiped all the idols that Manasseh's [workers] had made. 23 But he did not humble himself and turn to Yahweh like his father did. So he became more sinful than his father had been. 24 Then Amon's officials made plans to kill him. They assassinated him in his palace. 25 But then the people of Judah killed all those who had assassinated Amon, and they appointed his son Josiah to be their king.

34 Josiah was eight years old when he became the king [of Judah]. He ruled from Jerusalem for 31 years. 2 He did things that were pleasing to Yahweh and conducted his life like his ancestor King David had done. He fully obeyed [IDM] all the laws of God. 3 When he had been ruling for almost eight years, while he was still a young man, he began to worship God like his ancestor [King] David had done. Four years later, he began to get rid of all the pagan shrines on hilltops in Jerusalem and in [other places in] Judah, and the poles to [honor the goddess] Asherah, and the carved idols and statues of gods. 4 While he directed them, his workers tore down the altars where people worshiped Baal. They smashed the altars that were near those altars, where people burned incense. They smashed the poles [honor the goddess] Asherah and the idols and statues. They smashed them to bits and scattered the bits over the graves of those who had offered sacrifices to them. 5 They burned the bones of the priests [who had offered sacrifices]; they burned them on their own altars. In that way Josiah caused Jerusalem and other places in Judah to be acceptable places to worship Yahweh again. 6 In the towns in [the tribes of] Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far [north] as [the tribe of] Naphtali and in the ruins around all those towns, 7 Josiah's [workers] tore down the pagan altars and the poles to [honor the goddess] Asherah, and crushed the idols to powder. They also smashed to pieces all the altars for burning incense throughout Israel. Then Josiah returned to Jerusalem. 8 When Josiah had been ruling for almost 18 years, he [did something else to] cause the land and the temple to be acceptable places to worship Yahweh. He sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah and Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joah the son of Joahaz, who wrote on a scroll what happened in the city, to repair the temple of Yahweh. 9 They went to Hilkiah the Supreme Priest and gave him the money that had been brought to the temple. That was the money that the descendants of Levi who guarded the doors of the temple had collected from the people of [the tribes of] Manasseh and Ephraim and [other places in northern] Israel, and also from all the people in Jerusalem and other places in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. 10 Then Hilkiah gave some of the money to

the men who had been appointed to supervise the work of repairing the temple. The supervisors paid the men who did the repair work. **11** They also gave some of the money to the carpenters and builders to buy the cut stones and the timber for the joists and the beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had allowed to decay. **12** The workers did their work faithfully. Their supervisors were Jahath and Obadiah, who were descendants of [Levi's son] Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, who were descendants of [Levi's son] Kohath. All the other descendants of Levi, those who played musical instruments well, **13** supervised all the workers as they did their various jobs. Some of the descendants of Levi were secretaries and some kept records and some guarded the gates [of the temple]. **14** While they were giving to the supervisors the money that had been taken to the temple, Hilkiah the [Supreme] Priest found a scroll on which were written the laws that Yahweh had told Moses to give to the people. **15** So Hilkiah said to Shaphan, "I have found in the temple a scroll on which are written the laws [that God gave to Moses]!" Then Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan. **16** Shaphan [took the scroll] to the king and said to him, "Your officials are doing everything that you told them to do. **17** They have taken the money that was in the temple, and they have given it to the men who will supervise the workers who will repair the temple." **18** Then Shaphan said to the king, "[I have brought to you] a scroll [that] Hilkiah gave to me." And Shaphan started to read it to the king. **19** When the king heard the laws [that were written in the scroll], he tore his clothes [because he was very dismayed/worried]. **20** Then he gave these instructions to Hilkiah, to Shaphan's son Ahikam, to Micah's son Abdon, to Shaphan, and to Asaiah the king's special advisor: **21** "Go and ask Yahweh for me, and for all his people who are still alive in Judah and Israel, about what is written in this scroll that has been found. Because [it is clear that] Yahweh is very angry with us because our ancestors disobeyed what Yahweh said; they did not obey the laws that are written on this scroll." **22** So Hilkiah and the others went to talk with a woman whose name was Huldah, who was a prophetess who lived in the newer part of Jerusalem. Her husband Shallum who was the son of Tikvah, took care of the robes that were worn [in the temple]. **23** [When they told her what the king had said,] she said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship], says: 'Go back and tell the king who sent you **24** that this is what Yahweh says: "Listen to this carefully. I am going to cause a disaster to strike Jerusalem and all the people who live here. I will cause them to experience the curses that were written in the scroll that was read to the king of Judah. **25** I will do that because they have rejected me, and they burn incense to [honor] other gods. They have caused me to become very angry because of all the idols that they have made (OR, because of all the wicked things that they have done), [and my anger is like] a fire that will not be extinguished. **26** The king of Judah sent you to ask what I, Yahweh, want. Go and tell him that this is what I, Yahweh, the God whom you Israelis worship, say about what you read: **27** "Because you heeded [what was written in the scroll], and you humbled yourself when you heard what I said to warn [about what would happen to] this city and the people who live here, and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you. **28** So I will allow you to die and be buried peacefully. I will cause a great disaster to strike this place and the people who live here, but you will not [be alive to] see it."" So they reported her reply to the king. **29** Then the king summoned all the elders of Jerusalem and [other places in] Judea. **30** They went up together to the temple with the leaders of Judah and many other people of Jerusalem and the priests and other descendants of Levi, from the least important to the most important ones. And while they listened, the king read to them everything that was in the scroll containing God's laws that had been found in the temple. **31** Then the king stood next to the pillar [at the entrance to the temple, where kings stood when they announced something important], and while Yahweh was listening, he repeated his promise to very sincerely and completely obey Yahweh and all his commands and regulations and decrees that were written on the scroll. **32** Then the king said that everyone who lived in Jerusalem and from [the tribe of] Benjamin should promise that they also would obey those laws. And they did that, agreeing that they would keep the agreement that God, whom their ancestors had worshiped, had made with them. **33** Josiah [instructed his workers to] remove all the detestable idols from everywhere in the land of the Israeli people, and he commanded that all the people from Israel who were there should worship [only] Yahweh their God. And as long as Josiah was alive, the people did what was pleasing to Yahweh, the God whom their ancestors [worshiped].

35 Josiah [commanded that the people should] celebrate the Passover Festival to honor Yahweh in Jerusalem. So they slaughtered the lambs for the Passover [Festival] at the end of March. **2** Josiah assigned to the priests the tasks that they should perform at the temple and encouraged them to do their work well. **3** The [other] descendants of Levi were the ones who taught all the Israeli people; they had been dedicated to serve Yahweh. Josiah said to them, "Put the Sacred Chest in the temple that [the workers of] David's son [King] Solomon of Israel built. But [carry it on

poles;] do not carry it on your shoulders. And do your your work well for Yahweh your God and for his Israeli people. **4** Divide yourselves into clans, obeying the instructions that King David and his son Solomon wrote. **5** Then stand in the temple, with one group of the descendants of Levi to help each clan of the people [when they bring their offerings to the temple]. **6** Slaughter the lambs for the Passover [Festival]. Perform the rituals to cause yourselves to be acceptable to Yahweh for doing this work. Prepare the sacrifices, doing what Yahweh told Moses to tell you that you should do." **7** Josiah provided [from his own flocks and herds] 30,000 sheep and goats for the Passover sacrifices. **8** His officials also voluntarily contributed animals for the people and the priests and the [other] descendants of Levi. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the officials who were in charge of the temple, gave to the priests 2,600 lambs and 300 cattle to be sacrifices for the Passover. **9** And Conaniah along with his [younger] brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, the leaders of the [other] descendants of Levi, provided 5,000 lambs and 500 cattle for the other descendants of Levi, to be sacrifices for the Passover. **10** Everything [for the Passover] was arranged: The priests and the other descendants of Levi stood in their places in their groups, like the king had commanded. **11** Then they slaughtered the Passover lambs. The priests sprinkled the blood [from the bowls] that were handed to them, while the [other] descendants of Levi removed the skins from the animals. **12** They set aside the animals to be completely burned on the altar, in order to give them to the various family groups to offer to Yahweh, obeying the instructions that were written in the laws God gave Moses. They did the same thing with the cattle. **13** Obeying those regulations, they roasted the lambs for the Passover over the fire. And they boiled the [meat of the] sacred offerings in pots and kettles and pans, and served the meat immediately to all the people [who were there]. **14** After that, they prepared meat for themselves and for the priests, because the priests were busy until nighttime, sacrificing the offerings to be completely burned and burning the fat parts of the offerings. So the [other] descendants of Levi prepared meat for themselves and for the priests, who were descendants of Aaron, [the first Supreme Priest]. **15** The musicians, who were descendants of Asaph, stood in their places, as King David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's prophet had commanded. The men who guarded the gates [of the temple] did not need to leave their places, because their fellow descendants of Levi prepared food for them to eat. **16** So on that day everything that needed to done for worshiping Yahweh was done. They celebrated the Passover [Festival], and they presented offerings to be completely burned on the altar, which was what Josiah had commanded. **17** The Israelis who were there celebrated the Passover [Festival] on that day, and for seven days they celebrated the Festival of [Eating] Unleavened Bread. **18** The Passover [Festival] had not been celebrated like that in Israel since the time that the prophet Samuel lived. None of the other kings of Israel had ever celebrated the Passover like Josiah did, along with the priests, the other descendants of Levi, and all [the other people of] Judah and Israel who were there with the people who lived in Jerusalem. **19** They celebrated this Passover Festival when Josiah had been ruling for almost 18 years. **20** After Josiah had done all those things to [restore the worship at] the temple, King Neco of Egypt went [with his army] to attack Carchemish [city] alongside the Euphrates [River], and Josiah marched [with his army] to fight against them. **21** Neco sent some messengers to Josiah, to tell him, "You are the king of Judah, and there is certainly no quarrel between you and me. My army is not attacking you people; we are attacking another army, [the army of Babylonia]. God has told me to hurry. So stop opposing God, who is for me. If you do not stop, God will get rid of you." **22** But Josiah would not pay attention to him. Instead, he disguised himself in order to be able to attack [the army of Egypt without anyone recognizing him]. He did not pay any attention to what God had told Neco to say. Instead, he [and his army] went to fight Neco's army at the plain of Megiddo. **23** Some Egyptian archers shot King Josiah. He told his officers, "Take me away from here because I am badly wounded." **24** So they took him out of his chariot and put him in another chariot that he had brought with him, and they took him to Jerusalem, where he died. He was buried in the tombs where his ancestors [had been buried], and all [the people of] Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah mourned for him. **25** [The prophet] Jeremiah composed a song to mourn for Josiah, and all the men and women singers in Israel still mourn for Josiah by singing that song. That became a custom in Israel; the words of that song are written in a scroll of funeral songs. **26** A record of the other things that happened while Josiah ruled, from the time he started to rule until he died, including how he faithfully honored God by obeying everything that was written in the laws of Yahweh, is in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel and Judah'.

36 Then the people of Judah chose Josiah's son Jehoahaz and appointed him as the king in Jerusalem. **2** Jehoahaz was 23 years old when he became the king, but he ruled from Jerusalem for [only] three months. **3** King Neco of Egypt [captured him and] prevented him from ruling any longer. He also forced the people of Judah to pay him a

tax of almost four tons of silver and about 75 pounds of gold. **4** The king of Egypt appointed Jehoahaz's [younger] brother Eliakim to be the king of Judah. He changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. After Neco captured Jehoahaz, he took him to Egypt. **5** Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became the king [of Judah], and he ruled from Jerusalem for 11 years. He did things that Yahweh his God considers to be evil. **6** Then the army of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jehoiakim's army. They [captured Jehoiakim and] bound him with bronze chains and took him to Babylon. **7** Nebuchadnezzar's soldiers also took valuable things from the temple; they took them to Babylon and put them in king [Nebuchadnezzar's] palace there. **8** A record of the other things that happened while Jehoiakim was ruling, the detestable things that he did, including the evil things that people said that he did, is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel and Judah'. After [he was taken to Babylon], his son Jehoiachin became the king [of Judah]. **9** Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he became the king [of Judah], and he ruled from Jerusalem for [only] three months and ten days. He did things that Yahweh considers to be evil. **10** During the spring of the next year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent [soldiers] to bring him to Babylon. They also took to Babylon many valuable things from the temple of Yahweh. Then Nebuchadnezzar appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, to be the king of Judah. **11** Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became the king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 11 years. **12** He did many things that Yahweh his God considered to be evil. And he did not humble himself when the prophet Jeremiah gave him a message from Yahweh [to warn him]. **13** He would not return to Yahweh, the God that the people of Israel [said that they worshiped]. Zedekiah also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had forced him to solemnly promise using God's name [to be loyal to him]. Zedekiah became very stubborn. **14** Furthermore, all the leaders of the priests and also the people [of Judah] became more wicked again, doing all the detestable things that the people of the other nations did, and causing the temple in Jerusalem that Yahweh had caused to be holy to become [an] unacceptable [place to worship him]. **15** Yahweh, the God whom the ancestors [of the people of Judah belonged to/worshiped], gave messages to his prophets many times, and the prophets told those messages to the people of Judah. Yahweh did that because he pitied his people and did not want his temple to be destroyed. **16** But the people continually made fun of God's messengers. They despised God's messages. They ridiculed his prophets, until finally God became extremely angry with his people, with the result that nothing could stop him [from destroying Judah]. **17** He incited the king of Babylonia to attack [Judah with his army]. They killed the young men with their swords, even in the temple. They did not spare/pity anyone, young men or young women or old people. God enabled the army of Nebuchadnezzar to kill all of them. **18** His soldiers took to Babylon all the things that were used in God's temple—big things and little things, all the valuable things, and the valuable things that belonged to the king and his officials. **19** They burned the temple, and they broke down the wall surrounding Jerusalem. They burned all the palaces [in Jerusalem] and destroyed all the remaining valuable things there. **20** Nebuchadnezzar's soldiers took to Babylon the remaining people who had not been killed with their swords. Then those people became the king's slaves and his son's slaves, until the [army of the] king of Persia conquered [the army of Babylonia]. **21** [Moses had said that every seventh year the people must not plant their fields; they must allow the soil to rest. But the people had not done that. So after the army of Babylonia destroyed Judah,] the soil was allowed to rest. That continued for 70 years, fulfilling what Yahweh told Jeremiah and what Jeremiah had predicted/prophesied would happen. **22** During the first year that Cyrus was the king of Persia, in order that what Yahweh told Jeremiah would happen would occur, Yahweh motivated Cyrus to write this and proclaim it throughout his kingdom: **23** "I, Cyrus, the king of Persia, declare that Yahweh, the God [who rules] in heaven, has enabled me to become the ruler of all the kingdoms of this world. And he wants me to [command that my workers] build a temple {a temple be built} for him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Any of his people living among you people of Persia are allowed to go to Jerusalem. And I will pray that Yahweh will be with them."

Ezra

1 During the first year that Cyrus ruled [the] Persian [Empire], he did something that fulfilled what Jeremiah had prophesied. Yahweh motivated Cyrus to write this message, and then Cyrus sent this message throughout his empire: **2** "I, King Cyrus, who rule [the] Persian [Empire], declare this: 'Yahweh, the God [who is in/rules] from heaven, has caused me to become the ruler of all the kingdoms [that I know about] on the earth. And he has appointed me [to enable his people] to build a temple for him in Jerusalem, in Judah [land]. **3** All you people who belong to God may go up to Jerusalem to rebuild this temple for Yahweh, the God who lives in Jerusalem, the God [who is worshiped by you] Israeli people. I desire/hope that your God will be with you [and help those who go there]. **4** Those people who are in places where Israelis are living, whose ancestors were exiled here, should contribute silver and gold to those who go. They should also give them supplies [that they will need for the journey to Jerusalem]. They should also give them some livestock, and gifts of money to help build the temple of God in Jerusalem.'" **5** Then God motivated some of the priests and (Levites/men who did work in the temple) and some of the leaders of the tribes that were descended from Judah and Benjamin to return to Jerusalem. Those whom God motivated got ready to return to Jerusalem and build the temple for Yahweh there. **6** All of their neighbors helped them by giving them things made of silver and things made of gold, and supplies for the journey, and livestock. They also gave them other valuable gifts, and also gave them money [to buy things for building the temple]. **7** King Cyrus brought out the valuable things that King Nebuchadnezzar's [soldiers] had taken from the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem and put in the temple of Nebuchadnezzar's gods [in Babylon]. **8** Cyrus commanded Mithredath, the treasurer of [the] Persian [Empire], to count all these items and then give them to Sheshbazzar, the leader of [the group that was going to return to] Judah. **9** This is a list of the items that Cyrus donated: 30 large gold dishes 1,000 large silver dishes 29 silver (censers/incense burning pans) **10** 30 gold bowls 410 silver bowls 1,000 other items. **11** All together, there were 5,400 items made of silver or gold, that [were given to] Sheshbazzar [to] take with him when he and the others returned to Jerusalem.

2 King Nebuchadnezzar's [soldiers] had captured many [Israeli] people and taken them to Babylonia. [Many years later,] some Israeli people returned to Judah. Some returned to Jerusalem, and some returned to [other places in] Judah. They went to the towns where their ancestors had lived. This is a list of the groups who returned. **2** The leaders of those groups were Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah. There were: **3** 2,172 descendants of Parosh **4** 372 descendants of Shephatiah **5** 775 descendants of Arah **6** 2,812 descendants of Pahath-Moab, from the families of Jeshua and Joab **7** 1,254 descendants of Elam **8** 945 descendants of Zattu **9** 760 descendants of Zaccai **10** 642 descendants of Bani **11** 623 descendants of Bebai **12** 1,222 descendants of Azgad **13** 666 descendants of Adonikam **14** 2,056 descendants of Bigvai **15** 454 descendants of Adin **16** 98 descendants of Ater, whose other name was Hezekiah **17** 323 descendants of Bezai **18** 112 descendants of Jorah **19** 223 descendants of Hashum **20** 95 descendants of Gibbar. [People whose ancestors had lived in these towns in Judah:] **21** 123 from Bethlehem **22** 56 from Netophah **23** 128 from Anathoth **24** 42 from Azmaveth **25** 743 from Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth **26** 621 from Ramah and Geba **27** 122 from Micmash **28** 223 from Bethel and Ai **29** 52 from Nebo **30** 156 from Magbish **31** 1,254 from Elam **32** 320 from Harim **33** 725 from Lod, Hadid, and Ono **34** 345 from Jericho **35** 3,630 from Senaah. **36** Priests who returned: 973 descendants of Jedaiah (that is, those from the family of Jeshua) **37** 1,052 descendants of Immer **38** 1,247 descendants of Pashhur **39** 1,017 descendants of Harim. The ones from the [rest of the] tribe of Levi who returned were: **40** 74 descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, who were from the family of Hodaviah **41** 128 singers who were descendants of Asaph **42** 139 (gatekeepers/men who guarded the gates of the temple) who were descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai. **43** The (temple workers/men who would work in the temple) who were descendants of these men: Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, **44** Keros, Siaha, Padon, **45** Lebanah, Hagabah, Akkub, **46** Hagab, Shalmai, Hanan, **47** Giddel, Gahar, Reaiah, **48** Rezin, Nekoda, Gazzam, **49** Uzza, Paseah, Besai, **50** Asnah, Meunim, Nephusim, **51** Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur, **52** Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha, **53** Barkos, Sisera, Temah, **54** Neziah, and Hatipha. **55** These descendants of [King] Solomon's servants [returned]: Sotai, Hassophereth, Peruda, **56** Jaalah, Darkon, Giddel, **57** Shephatiah, Hattil, Pokereth-Hazzebaim, and Ami. **58** Altogether, there were 392 temple workers and descendants of Solomon's servants who returned. **59** There was another group who returned [to Judah] from Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Kerub, Addan, and Immer [towns in Babylonia]. But they could not prove that they were descendants of [people who previously lived in] Israel. **60** This group included 652 people who were descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda. **61** Hobaiah's clan, Hakkoz's clan, and Barzillai's

clan also returned. Barzillai had married a woman who was a descendant of Barzillai from [the] Gilead [region], and he had taken for himself the name of his father-in-law's clan. 62 The people in that group searched in the documents that had the names of the ancestors of all the clans, but these men's names were not found. So they were not permitted do the work that priests did. 63 The governor told them that they would need to ask a priest to consult Yahweh by [(casting/throwing] the sacred lots/stones [that had been marked]), to determine if those men were truly Israelis. When the priests did that, [if the stones showed that those men were Israelis], they would be permitted to eat the shares of the sacrifices that were given to the priests. 64 Altogether 42,360 Israeli people who returned to Judah. 65 There were also 7,337 servants and 200 musicians, both men and women, who returned. 66 The Israelis brought with them [from Babylonia] 736 horses, 245 mules, 67 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys. 68 When they arrived at the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, some of the clan leaders gave money [for the supplies needed] to rebuild the temple at the place where the temple had been previously. 69 They all gave as much money as they were able to give. Altogether they gave 61,000 gold coins, (6,250 pounds/3,000 kg.) of silver, and 100 robes for the priests. 70 Then the priests, the [other] descendants of Levi, the musicians, the temple guards, and some of the [other] people started to live in the towns and villages [near Jerusalem]. The rest of the people went to the other places in Israel where their ancestors had lived.

3 After the Israeli people [returned to Israel, and] had begun to live in their towns, (in the autumn of/after the hot season ended in) that year, they all gathered together in Jerusalem. 2 Then Jeshua, the son of Jehozadak, and his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his friends, all began to rebuild the altar of God, the one whom the Israeli people [worshiped]. They did that in order that they could sacrifice burned offerings on it, according to what the prophet Moses had written in the laws [that God gave to him]. 3 Even though they were afraid of the people who were already living in that area, they rebuilt the altar at the same place [where the previous altar had been]. Before they started to lay the foundation of Yahweh's temple, [the priests] started to burn sacrifices to Yahweh [on the altar]. They offered sacrifices every morning and every evening. Fifteen days after [they started to offer these sacrifices], the people celebrated the Festival of [Living in Temporary] Shelters, as [Moses] had commanded them to do in the laws [that God gave to him]. Each day the priests offered the sacrifices [that were required] for that day. In addition, they presented the regular burned offerings and the offerings [that were required] for the New Moon Festivals and the other festivals that they celebrated each year to [honor] Yahweh. They also brought other offerings only because they desired to bring them, [not because they were required to bring them]. 7 Then the Israelis hired masons and carpenters, and they bought [logs from] cedar trees from the people of Tyre and Sidon [cities], and they gave those people food and wine and olive oil for the logs. They brought the logs down from [the mountains in] Lebanon [to the Mediterranean seacoast and then floated them along the coast of the Sea,] to Joppa. King Cyrus permitted them to do that. [Then the logs were brought from Joppa inland up to Jerusalem]. 8 The Israelis started to rebuild the temple in the (spring/time before the hot season) of the second year after they returned to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel and Jeshua and all the people who had returned to Jerusalem worked on the building. All the (Levites/men who did work in the temple) supervised this work. 9 Jeshua and his sons and his other relatives, and Kadmiel and his sons, who were descendants of Hodaviah, also helped to supervise the work. The family of Henadad, who were also all Levites, joined with them in supervising this work. 10 When the builders finished laying the foundation of the temple, the priests put on their robes and stood in their places, blowing their trumpets. Then the Levites, who were descendants of Asaph, clashed/banged their cymbals to praise Yahweh, just as King David had [many years previously] told [Asaph and the other musicians] to do. 11 They praised Yahweh and thanked him, and they sang this song about him: "He is very good [to us]! He faithfully loves us Israeli people, and he will love us forever." Then all the people shouted loudly, praising Yahweh because they had finished laying the foundation of Yahweh's temple. 12 Many of the [old] priests, Levites, and leaders of families remembered [what] the first temple [was like], and they cried aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid [because they knew that the new temple would not be as beautiful as the first temple]. But the other people shouted joyfully. 13 The shouting and the crying was very loud; [even people] far away could hear it.

4 The enemies of the people of [the tribes of] Judah and Benjamin heard that the [Israeli] people who had returned from Babylonia were rebuilding a temple for Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli people [worshiped]. 2 So they went to Zerubbabel [the governor] and the other leaders, and said [deceptively], "We want to help [you build the temple], because we worship that same God whom you worship, and we have been offering sacrifices to him since Esarhaddon, the King of Assyria, brought us here." 3 But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the other [Israeli] leaders replied, "We will not allow you to help us build a temple for our(exc) God. We will

build it (ourselves/without your help) for Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis worship, like Cyrus, the King of Persia, told us to do." **4** Then the people who had been living in that land [before the Israelis returned] tried to cause the Jews to become discouraged and become afraid, and to cause them to stop building the temple. **5** They bribed government officials to oppose what the Israelis were doing [and prevent them from continuing to work on the temple]. They did that all during the time that Cyrus was King of Persia. They continued to do it when Darius became the King of Persia. **6** During the first year that [Darius' son] Xerxes was king, the [enemies of the Jews] wrote a note [to the king] saying that the Jews [were planning to rebel against the government]. **7** Later, when [Xerxes' son] Artaxerxes [became the King of Persia], Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and their colleagues/companions wrote a letter to him. They wrote the letter in the Aramaic language, and it was translated [into another language that the king knew]. **8** Rehum, the high commissioner, and Shimshai, the provincial secretary, wrote the letter to King Artaxerxes concerning what was happening in Jerusalem. **9** They stated that the letter was from Rehum the high commissioner/governor and Shimshai the provincial secretary and from their associates, the judges, and other government officials, who were from Erech [city], Babylon [city], and Susa [city] in Elam [district]. **10** [They also wrote that they represented] the other people-groups whom [the army of] the great and glorious/famous [King] Ashurbanipal had (deported/forced to move from their homes) and taken to live in Samaria and in other cities in the province west of the Euphrates [River]. **11** This is what they wrote in the letter: "To King Artaxerxes, From the officials who serve you who live in the province west of the Euphrates [River.] **12** "Your majesty, we want you to know that the Jews who came here from your territories are rebuilding this city, [Jerusalem]. These people are wicked and want to rebel against you. Now they are repairing the foundations [of the walls/buildings] and building the walls [of the city]. **13** "It is important for you to know that if they rebuild the city and finish building the walls, they will stop paying any kind of taxes. As a result, there will be less money in your treasury. **14** Now, because we are loyal to [IDM] you, and because we do not want you to be humiliated [IDM], we are sending this information to you. **15** And, we suggest that you order/tell [your officials] to search the records that your ancestors made/wrote. [If you do that], you will find out that the people in this city have always rebelled [against the government]. You will also find out that from long ago these people have caused trouble for kings and for rulers of provinces. They have always revolted [against those who ruled them]. That is the reason that this city was destroyed [by the Babylonian army]. **16** We want you to know that if they rebuild this city and finish building its walls, you will no longer be able to control/rule [the people in] this province west of the Euphrates [River]." **17** [After] the king [read this letter, he] sent this reply to them: "To Rehum, the high commissioner, and Shimshai, the provincial secretary, and their colleagues in Samaria and in other parts of the province that is west of the [Euphrates] River: I (send you my greetings/wish that things will go well for you). **18** The letter that you sent to me was translated and read to me. **19** So then I ordered [my officials] to search the records. I have found out that [it is true that] the people of that city have always revolted against their rulers, and that the city is full of people who have rebelled and caused trouble. **20** Powerful kings have ruled in Jerusalem, and they have also ruled over the whole province west of the [Euphrates] River. [The people in that province were] paying all kinds of taxes to those kings. **21** So you must command that the people must stop rebuilding the city. Only if I tell them [that they may rebuild it] will they be allowed to continue. **22** Do this immediately [LIT], because I do not want those people to do anything to harm the things/area about which I am concerned." **23** [Messengers took] that letter to Rehum and Shimshai and their colleagues and read it to them. Then Rehum and the others went quickly to Jerusalem, and they forced the Jews to stop [rebuilding the city wall]. **24** The result was that the Jews stopped rebuilding the temple. They did not do any more work to rebuild the temple until Darius became the King of Persia.

5 At that time two prophets gave messages from God to the Jews in Jerusalem and [other cities in] Judah. The prophets were Haggai and Zechariah, who was a descendant of Iddo. They spoke those messages representing God, whom the Israelis [worshiped/belonged to], the one who was their true king. **2** Then Zerubbabel and Shealtiel [led many other people] as they started [again] to rebuild the temple of God in Jerusalem. And God's prophets [Haggai and Zechariah] were with them and helped them. **3** Then Tattenai the governor of the province west of the [Euphrates] River and Shethar-Bozenai his assistant and [some of] their officials went to Jerusalem and said to the people, "Who has permitted you to rebuild this temple and put furnishings in it?" **4** They also requested the people to tell them the names of the men who were working [at the temple]. [But the people refused]. **5** However, God was taking care of the Jewish leaders, so their enemies were not able to prevent the people from continuing [to rebuild the temple]. [They continued to work while their enemies] sent a report to King Darius, and asked him [what he wanted them to do] about it.

6 So Tattenai and Shethar-Bozenai and their officials sent a
report to King Darius. 7 This is what they wrote: "King Darius,
we hope that things are going well for you! 8 ["We want you
to know that] we went to Judah Province, where the temple
of the great God is being rebuilt. The people are building it
with huge stones, and they are putting wooden beams in the
walls. The work is being done very carefully, and they are
progressing well. 9 "We asked the Jewish leaders, 'Who has
permitted you to rebuild this temple and put furnishings in
it?' 10 And we requested them to tell us the names of their
leaders, in order that we could tell you who they were. 11
"But [instead of telling us their leaders' names,] what they
said was, 'We serve the God [who created] the heaven and
the earth. Many years ago a great king [who ruled] us Israeli
people [told our ancestors to] build a temple here, and now
we are rebuilding it. 12 "'But God, [who rules] in heaven,
allowed [the armies of] Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylonia,
to destroy that temple, because our ancestors did things that
caused God to become very angry. Nebuchadnezzar's army
took [many of] the [Israeli] people to Babylonia. 13 "'However,
during the first year that Cyrus the King of Babylon started to
rule, he decreed that the temple of God should be rebuilt. 14
Cyrus returned [to the Jewish leaders] all the gold and silver
cups that had been taken from the temple in Jerusalem
and which had been put in the temple in Babylon. Those
cups were given to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom King
Cyrus had appointed to be the governor in Judah. 15 "'The
king instructed him to take the cups back to Jerusalem,
to the place [from which they had previously been taken].
He also decreed that they should rebuild the temple at
the place where it had been before. So Cyrus appointed
Sheshbazzar to be the governor in Judah. He also sent all
those things made of gold and silver, for Sheshbazzar to put
in the new temple. 16 So Sheshbazzar did that. He came
here to Jerusalem, and [supervised the men who] laid the
foundation of the temple. And since that time, the people
have been working on the temple, but it is not finished yet.'
17 "Therefore, your majesty, please order someone to search
in the place in Babylon where the important records are kept,
to find out whether [it is true that] King Cyrus decreed that
God's temple should be rebuilt in Jerusalem. Then you can
tell us what you want us to do about this matter."

6 [Later] Darius [became the ruler of the Persian Empire.
When the enemies of the Israelis forced them to stop
rebuilding the temple, the Persian officials sent a message
to King Darius. They asked him to] search the records in the
(archives/government records), in the building where the
king stored the important documents, [to find out whether
King Cyrus had authorized that the temple should be rebuilt].
2 [The king commanded someone to search there, but those
documents were not there in Babylon]. They found a scroll
at the fort in Ecbatana, in Media province, [that contained
the information that they wanted to know]. This is what was
written on that scroll: 3 "During the first year that Cyrus [ruled
the empire], he sent out a decree concerning the temple
of God which is at Jerusalem. In the decree it was stated
that a new temple must be built at the same place that [the
Israeli people previously] had offered sacrifices, where the
[original] foundation [of the first temple] was. The temple
must be 90 feet high and 90 feet wide. 4 The building must
be made from large stones. After putting down three layers
of stones, a layer of timber must be put on top of them.
This work will be paid for by money from my treasury. 5
Also, the gold and silver utensils that King Nebuchadnezzar
took from the temple of God in Jerusalem and brought to
Babylon must be taken back to Jerusalem. They must be put
in God's temple just as they were in the previous temple." 6
After reading this, King Darius sent this message [to the
leaders of the Israeli people's enemies in Jerusalem]: "This
is a message for Tattenai, the governor of the province west
of the [Euphrates] River, and for [his assistant] Shethar-
Bozenai, and for all your colleagues: Stay away from that
area! 7 Do not (interfere with/hinder) the work of building
the temple of God! The temple must be rebuilt at the same
place where the former temple was. And do not hinder the
governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews [while they
are doing this work]. 8 "Furthermore, I declare that you
must help these leaders of the Jews as they rebuild this
temple of God [by giving them funds for the building work].
9 "The Jewish priests in Jerusalem need young bulls and
rams and lambs to sacrifice as they make burned offerings
to the God of heaven. You must give them the animals
that they need. Also, you must be certain to give them the
wheat, salt, wine, and [olive] oil that they need each day
[for those sacrifices]. 10 If you do that, the Jewish priests
will be able to offer sacrifices that please the God who is
in heaven, and they will pray that God will bless me and
my sons. 11 "If anyone disobeys this decree, [my soldiers]
will pull a beam from his house. Then [after they sharpen
one end of the beam,] they will lift that man up and impale
him on that beam. Then they will [completely destroy that
man's house until only] a pile of rubble is left. 12 God has
chosen [that city of] Jerusalem as the place where people
will honor him [MTY]. What I desire is that he will get rid of
any king or any nation that tries to change this decree or
tries to destroy that temple in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have
made this decree. It must be obeyed quickly and thoroughly."
13 Tattenai, the governor of the province, and [his assistant]

Shethar-Bozenai and their colleagues [read the message and] immediately obeyed the decree of King Darius. **14** So the Jewish leaders continued their work [of rebuilding the temple]. They were greatly encouraged by the messages that the prophets Haggai and Zechariah preached. The Israelis continued building the temple, just like God had commanded them to do and like King Cyrus had decreed. **15** They finished building it on March 12, during the sixth year that King Darius [ruled]. **16** Then the priests and the Levites and all the other Israeli people who had returned from Babylon very joyfully dedicated the temple. **17** During [the ceremony to] dedicate the temple, they sacrificed 100 young bulls, 200 rams, and 400 lambs. They also sacrificed twelve male goats as an offering in order that [God would forgive] the sins of the people of the twelve tribes of Israel. **18** Then the priests and Levites were divided into groups that would [take turns to] serve at the temple. They did this according to what Moses had written [many years previously] in the laws [that he wrote]. **19** On April 21, the Jews who had returned from Babylon celebrated the Passover Festival. **20** [To qualify themselves for offering the sacrifices], the priests and Levites had already purified themselves by performing certain rituals. Then they slaughtered the lambs for the benefit of all the people who had returned from Babylon, for the other priests, and for themselves. **21** Those who had returned from Babylon and the other people in that land who had turned away from their immoral practices in order to worship Yahweh, the God of the Israeli people, ate the Passover meal. **22** They celebrated the Unleavened Bread Festival of [Eating] Unleavened Bread for seven days. The Israeli people throughout the land were joyful because Yahweh had changed the attitude of the king of Assyria toward them, and as a result, the king had helped them to rebuild the temple of God, the one whom they [worshiped].

7 [Many/Fifty years] later, while Artaxerxes was the king of Persia, I, Ezra came from Babylon here to Jerusalem. I am the son of Seraiah and the grandson of Azariah, and the great-grandson of Hilkiah. **2** Hilkiah was the son of Shallum, who was the son of Zadok, who was the son of Ahitub, **3** who was the son of Amariah, who was the son of Azariah, who was the son of Meraioth, **4** who was the son of Zerahiah, who was the son of Uzzi, who was the son of Bukki, **5** who was the son of Abishua, who was the son of Phinehas, who was the son of Eleazar, who was the son of Aaron, the [first] Supreme Priest. **6** I am a man who knows very well the laws that Moses [wrote]. Those were the laws that Yahweh, the God whom we Israeli people ([worship/belong to]), had given to us Israeli people. When I arrived in Jerusalem, Yahweh my God was kind to me, and as a result the [people] gave me everything that I had requested the king to [tell them to] give to me. **7** Some of the priests, some [other] descendants of Levi, [some] singers, [some] (gatekeepers/men who guarded the gates of the temple), and [some] men who worked in the temple, and some other [Israeli] people came up with me here to Jerusalem. That was during the seventh year that Artaxerxes was the king [of Persia]. **8** We left Babylon on April 8, which was the first day of the Jewish year. Because God was very kind to us, we arrived [safely] in Jerusalem on August 4 of that year. **10** During my entire life, I devoted myself to studying the laws of Yahweh, and how to obey those laws. I had also taught those laws and all their regulations to the Israeli people [for many years]. **11** King Artaxerxes [knew that] I am a priest who knows the Jewish laws very well. [He knew that for many years] I had studied those laws and had taught all the rules and regulations of those laws to the Israeli people. [So before I left Babylon to come to Jerusalem,] he wrote a letter, and gave a copy to me. [This is what he wrote]: **12** ["This letter is] from me, Artaxerxes, the greatest of the kings. [I am giving it] to Ezra the priest, who has studied very well all the rules and regulations that the God [who is/rules] in heaven [gave to the Israeli people]. **13** "Ezra, I command that when you return to Jerusalem, any of the Israeli people in my kingdom who want to are allowed to go with you. That includes any priests and [other] descendants of Levi [who will work in the temple] who want to go. **14** I, along with my seven counselors/advisors, am sending you to Jerusalem, in order that you can determine what is happening there and in [other towns in] Judah. You are taking with you [MTY] a copy of God's laws; make sure that the people are doing everything that is written in those laws. **15** [We are also saying that] you should take with you the silver and gold that I and my advisors are wanting to give to you, in order that you will present it to be an offering to the God who [rules] the Israeli people and who lives in Jerusalem. **16** You should also take any silver and gold that the people in the entire Babylonia province give to you, and the money that the priests and [other] Israeli people have happily said that they would give to you to be offerings for building the temple of their God in Jerusalem. **17** With this money, you should buy the bulls, rams, lambs, and the grain and wine that the priests will burn on the altar [outside] the temple of your God in Jerusalem. **18** "If there is any silver or gold that remains [you have bought all those things], you and your companions/colleagues are permitted to use it to [buy] whatever you desire, but buy only things that [you know that] God wants you to buy. **19** We have given to you some valuable items to be used in the temple of your God. Take

them also to Jerusalem. 20 If you need any other things for the temple, you are permitted to get the money for those things from the building here where my government's money is kept/stored. 21 "And I, King Artaxerxes, command this to all the treasurers in the province west of the [Euphrates] River: 'Give to Ezra, the priest who has studied very well the laws of the God [who is/rules] in heaven, everything that he requests, and give it to him quickly. 22 The most that you should give to him is (7,500 pounds/3,400 kg.) of silver, 500 bushels of wheat, 550 gallons of wine, and 550 gallons of [olive] oil, but give to him all the salt that they need. 23 Be sure that you provide whatever their God requires for his temple, because we certainly do not [RHQ] want him to be angry with me or with my descendants who will later be kings. 24 We are also commanding that none of the priests, descendants of Levi, musicians, temple guards, or other men who work in the temple, will be required to pay any kind of taxes.' 25 "Ezra, your God has enabled you to become very wise. Using that wisdom, appoint men in the province west of the [Euphrates] River who will judge cases involving the people, and men who will judge cases involving the government. You must appoint men who know the laws of your God. All of you must teach God's laws to others who do not know them. 26 Everyone who does not obey God's laws or the laws of my government must be punished severely. Some of them will be executed, some will be put in prison, some will be sent out of the country or have all their property taken away from them." 27 [Because King Artaxerxes was very kind like that, I said], "Praise Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors [worshiped/belonged to]! He has caused the king to want to honor the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem. 28 Because God was very kind to me, the king and all his advisors and all his powerful officials have also been kind to me. So, because God has helped me, I have become encouraged, and I have [been able to] persuade some of the Israeli leaders to go up to Jerusalem with me."

8 This is a list of the names of the leaders of the clans who came with me up [to Jerusalem] from Babylonia when Artaxerxes was the king [of Persia]: 2 Gershom, from the clan descended from [Aaron's grandson] Phinehas Daniel, from the clan descended from [Aaron's son] Ithamar Hattush, the son of Shecaniah, from the clan descended from King David 3 Zechariah and 150 [other] men from the clan descended from Parosh 4 Eliehoenai the son of Zerahiah and 200 other men from the clan descended from Pahath-Moab 5 Shecaniah the son of Jahaziel and 300 other men from the clan descended from Zattu 6 Ebed the son of Jonathan and 50 other men from the clan descended from Adin 7 Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah and 70 other men from the clan descended from Elam 8 Zebadiah the son of Michael and 80 other men from the clan descended from Shephatiah 9 Obadiah the son of Jehiel and 218 other men from the clan descended from Joab 10 Shelomith the son of Josiphiah and 160 other men from the clan descended from Bani 11 Zechariah the son of Bebai and 28 other men from the clan descended from [another man whose name was] Bebai 12 Johanan the son of Hakkatan and 110 other men from the clan descended from Azgad 13 Also Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, who returned [here] later with 60 men from the clan descended from Adonikam 14 And Uthai and Zaccur and 70 other men from the clan descended from Bigvai. 15 I gathered all of them together at the canal that goes [from Babylon] to Ahava [town]. We set up our tents there and stayed there for three days. [During that time] I checked the lists of names and found out that there were priests [going with us], but no [other] descendants of Levi [who could help them in the temple]. 16 So I summoned Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, two men whose names were Elnathan, and Jarib, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were all leaders [of the people]. I also summoned Joiarib and another Elnathan, who were wise. 17 I sent them all to Iddo, the leader of the descendants of Levi, who was living in Casiphia [town], to request that he and his relatives and other men who had worked in the temple send to us some men who would [go/come with us to] work in God's new temple [in Jerusalem]. 18 Because God was kind to us, they brought to us a man named Sherebiah and 18 of his sons and other relatives. Sherebiah was a very wise man, a descendant of Mahli, [who was a grandson] of Levi. 19 They also sent to us Hashabiah, along with Jeshaiah, descendants of [Levi's son] Merari, and 20 of their relatives. 20 They also sent 220 other men to work in the temple. Those men's ancestors had been appointed by King David to assist the descendants of Levi [who helped the priests in the temple]. I listed/wrote the names of all those men. 21 There alongside the Ahava Canal, I told them that we all would (fast/abstain from eating food) and pray. I also told them that we should humble ourselves in the presence of our God. We prayed that God would protect us while we traveled, and also protect our children and our possessions/belongings. 22 Previously we had told the king that our God takes care of all those who truly trust in him, but that he becomes very angry with those who refuse to obey him. So I would have been ashamed if I had asked the king to send soldiers and men riding on horses to protect us from our enemies while we were traveling along the road. 23 So we (fasted/abstained from eating food) and requested God to protect us, and he (answered our prayers/did what we

requested.) 24 I chose twelve of the leaders of the priests,
Sherebiah and Hashabiah and ten of their relatives. 25 I
appointed them to supervise carrying to Jerusalem the gifts
of silver and gold and the other valuable items that the king
and his advisors and other officials, and the Israeli people
[who were living in Babylonia], had contributed for the temple
of our God. 26 As I gave these various items to those priests,
I weighed each of the items. This was the total: 25 tons of
silver, 100 items made from silver that altogether weighed
7,500 pounds, (7,500 pounds/3,400 kg.) of gold, 27 20 gold
bowls that altogether weighed (19 pounds/8.6 kg.), and two
items made of polished bronze that were as valuable as
ones made of gold. 28 I said to those priests, "You belong
to Yahweh, the God whom our ancestors (worshiped/also
belonged to), and these valuable things also belong to him.
The people themselves gave these things to be offerings to
Yahweh (voluntarily/because they wanted to). 29 So guard
them carefully, and [when we arrive] in Jerusalem, weigh
them in the presence of the priests, the descendants of
Levi [who will help the priests], and the other Israeli leaders
there. They will then put them in the storerooms in the
new temple." 30 So the priests and [other] descendants of
Levi took from me all the gifts of silver and gold and the
other valuable items, in order to carry them to the temple in
Jerusalem. 31 On April 19, we left the Ahava Canal and
started to travel to Jerusalem. Our God took care of us, and
while we traveled, he prevented our enemies and bandits
from (ambushing us/suddenly attacking us). 32 After we
arrived in Jerusalem, we rested for three days. 33 Then on
the fourth/next day we went to the temple. There the silver
and gold and the other items were weighed and given to
the priest Meremoth, the son of Uriah. Eleazar the son of
Phinehas and two descendants of Levi, Jozabad the son of
Jeshua and Noadiah the son of Binnui, were with him. 34
They counted everything, and wrote down how much they
weighed, and wrote [a description of] each item. 35 We who
had returned from Babylonia offered to God sacrifices on
the altar. We offered twelve bulls for all us Israeli people.
We also offered 96 rams and 27 lambs. We also sacrificed
twelve goats [to atone] for the sins that all the people had
committed. These were all completely burned on the altar.
36 Some of us who returned [from Babylonia] took to the
governors and other officials of the province west of the
[Euphrates] River the letter that the king had given to us.
[After they read the letter,] they did all [that they were able
to do] for us Israeli people and for the temple of God.

9 Some time later, the Jewish leaders came to me and said,
"Many Israelis, and even some priests and [other men
who are] descendants of Levi [who work in the temple], have
not kept themselves from [doing what] the other people who
are living in this land [do]. They are practicing the detestable
things that the Canaan, Heth, Periz, Jebus, Ammon, and
Amor people-groups, and the people from Moab and Egypt
do. 2 [Specifically, some] Israeli men have married women
who are not Israelis, and they have allowed their sons
to do the same thing. So we, God's sacred people, have
become (contaminated/polluted in God's sight). And some
of our leaders and officials have been the first/worst ones
to do this." 3 When I heard that, [I became very angry,
with the result that] I tore my clothes and tore some hair
from my head and from my beard. Then I sat down, very
shocked/dismayed. [The Israelis knew that God had warned
us that he would punish us if we disobeyed] what he had
said to us [about marrying women who are not Israelis]. 4
[So] many of the Israelis trembled/were afraid when they
heard that some of those who had returned from Babylonia
had sinned by disobeying the God of us Israelis like that.
They came and sat with me until it was time to offer the
evening sacrifices [of grain]. 5 When it was time to offer
those sacrifices, I was still sitting there, wearing those torn
clothes and mourning/sad. I stood up, and then I quickly
prostrated myself on the ground. I lifted up my hands to
Yahweh, my God, 6 and this is what I prayed: "Yahweh my
God, I am very ashamed to raise my head in front of you.
The sins that we Israelis have committed [are very great; it is
as though they] have risen up higher than our heads, and
our guilt [for committing those sins, it is as though it] rises up
to the heavens. 7 Since the time that our ancestors lived
until now, we have been very guilty. That is the reason that
we and our kings and our priests have been defeated by [the
armies of] the kings of other lands. They killed [some of our
people], they captured [some], they robbed [some], and they
[caused them all to be] disgraced, just like we are today.
8 "But now, Yahweh God, you have been very kind to us.
You have allowed some of us to (survive/continue to live).
You have revived our spirits [IDM] and allowed us to escape
from being slaves [in Babylonia] and to return safely [IDM] to
live in this sacred place. 9 We were slaves, but you did not
abandon us. Instead, because you faithfully love us, you
caused the kings of Persia to be very kind to us. You have
allowed us to continue to live and to rebuild your temple
which had been completely destroyed. You have allowed
us to start to live safely here in Jerusalem and in [other
towns in] Judah. 10 "Our God, what more can we say now
[RHQ]? In spite of all that [you have done for us], we have
disobeyed your commands. 11 They are commands that you
gave to your servants, the prophets, to tell to us. They said
that the land that we would occupy was polluted because

of the detestable/disgusting things that were done by the people who lived there. They said that in the land there were people from one end to the other who did immoral/shameful things. **12** They said, 'Do not allow your daughters to marry their sons! Do not allow your sons to marry their daughters! Do not even try to cause things to go well for those people-groups! If you obey these instructions, your nation will be strong, and you will enjoy the good crops that grow on the land, and the land will belong to your descendants forever.' **13** "You punished us because we were very guilty for having done wicked things. But you have not punished us as much as we deserve to be punished. [I say this because] you, our God, have allowed some of us to survive. **14** However, some of us are again disobeying your commands, and we are marrying women who do those detestable things. If we continue to do that, surely you will get rid of all of us [RHQ], with the result that none of us will remain alive. **15** Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship/belong to], you are fair/just. We are guilty. We are only a few people who have escaped [from Babylonia], but we pray to you, even though we do not deserve to stand in your presence."

10 While I was kneeling down in front of the temple and praying and crying, I was confessing [the sins that the Israeli people had committed]. Many people, men and women and children, gathered around me and also cried very much. **2** Then Shecaniah, the son of Jehiel from the clan of Elam, said this to me: "We have disobeyed God. [Some of] us have married women who are not Israelis. But we can still confidently expect [Yahweh to be merciful to] us Israeli people. **3** We will do what you, and the others who have an awesome respect for what our God has commanded, tell us to do. We will do what God told us in his laws. We will make an agreement with our God, saying that we will divorce our wives who are not Israelis, and we will send them away with their children. **4** (It is your responsibility to/Because you are our leader, you must) [tell us what to do]. So get up, and be courageous, and do [what is necessary]. We will (support you/tell people to do what you say)." **5** So I stood up and demanded that the leaders of the priests, the [other] descendants of Levi, and all [the other] Israeli people solemnly declare that they would do what Shecaniah said that they should do. So they all solemnly promised to do that. **6** Then I went away from the front of the temple and went to the room where Jehohanan lived. I stayed there that night, but I did not eat or drink anything. I was still sad because some of the Israelis who had returned [from Babylonia] had not faithfully obeyed [God's laws]. **7** Then we sent a message to all [the people in] Jerusalem and [in other towns in] Judah, saying that all those who had returned [from Babylonia] should come to Jerusalem immediately. **8** We said that if any of them did not arrive within three days, the leaders of the people would order that all the property of those people would be taken from them, and that they would no longer be considered to belong to the Israeli people; [they would be considered to be foreigners]. **9** So within three days, on December 19, all the people of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin gathered in Jerusalem. They were there, sitting in the courtyard in front of the temple. They were trembling because it was raining hard and because they were worried [that they would be punished for what they had done]. **10** Then I stood up and said to them, "[Some of] you men have committed a very bad sin. You have married women who are not Israelis. By doing that, you have made us Israeli people more guilty [than we were before]. **11** So now you must confess to Yahweh, the God whom your ancestors [worshiped/belonged to], the sin which you have committed, and you must do what he wants. Separate yourselves from the people of other nations and from the women from those nations whom you have married." **12** The whole group answered, shouting loudly, "Yes, what you have said is right! We will do what you have said." **13** But then [one of] them said, "But we are a very large group, and it is raining hard. Also, there are many of us who have committed this bad sin. This is something that we cannot (take care of/handle) in one or two days, and we cannot stand here in this rain. **14** So allow our leaders to decide for all of us what we should do. Tell everyone who has married a woman who is not Israeli to come at a time that you decide. They should come with the elders and judges from each city. If we do that, our God will stop being angry with us [because of what we have done]." **15** Jonathan the son of Asahel, Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah, Meshullam, and Shabbethai, a descendant of Levi, were the only ones who objected to this. **16** All the others who had returned from Babylonia said that they would do it. So I chose leaders of each of the clans, and I wrote down their names. On December 29, these men came and sat down to investigate the matter. **17** By March 27 of the next year they finished determining which men had married women who were not Israelis. **18** This is a list of the names of the priests who had married non-Israeli women, and the clans to which they belonged. From the clan of Jeshua and his brothers, who were sons of Jehozadak, there were Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. **19** They solemnly promised to divorce their wives, and they each sacrificed a ram to be an offering [to atone] for their sins. **20** From the clan of Immer there were Hanani and Zebadiah. **21** From the clan of Harim there were Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah. **22** From the clan of Pashhur there were Elioenai,

Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah. **23** The
[other] descendants of Levi [who had married non-Israeli
women] were Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (whose other name
was Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. **24** There was
Eliashib the musician. From the temple guards there were
Shallum, Telem, and Uri. **25** This is a list of the names of the
other Israelis who had married foreign wives: From the clan
of Parosh there were Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin,
Eleazar, Hashabiah, and Benaiah. **26** From the clan of Elam
there were Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth,
and Elijah. **27** From the clan of Zattu there were Elioenai,
Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza. **28** From
the clan of Bebai there were Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai,
and Athlai. **29** From the clan of Bani there were Meshullam,
Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth. **30** From
the clan of Pahath-Moab there were Adna, Kelal, Benaiah,
Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. **31**
From the clan of Harim there were Eliezer, Ishijah, Malkijah,
Shemaiah, Shimeon, **32** Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.
33 From the clan of Hashum there were Mattenai, Mattattah,
Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. **34** From
the clan of Bigvai there were Maadai, Amram, Uel, **35**
Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi, **36** Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,
37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu. **38** From the clan of
Binnui there were Shimei, **39** Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,
40 Macnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, **41** Azarel, Shelemiah,
Shemariah, **42** Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. **43** From the
clan of Nebo there were Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina,
Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah. **44** Each of those men had
married a woman who was not an Israeli. [But immediately]
they divorced those women and sent them and their children
away.

Nehemiah

1 [I am] Nehemiah, the son of Hacaliah. [I am writing] this account [of what I did when I returned to Jerusalem. After King Artaxerxes had been ruling the Persian Empire] for almost 20 years, near the end of that year, I was in Susa, the capital [of Persia]. **2** My brother Hanani came to visit me. He and some other men had just returned from Judah. I queried them about the Jews who were living there, whose [parents] had been (exiled/taken forcefully) [to Babylonia many years previously]. I also asked them about [what was happening in] Jerusalem. **3** They said to me, "The Jews in Jerusalem who returned there from Babylonia are living in a very difficult situation. The walls of the city have been broken down, and even the city gates have been burned down." **4** When I heard that, I sat down and cried. For several days I mourned, and I (fasted/abstained from eating food), and I prayed to our God, [who is/rules] in heaven. **5** I said, "Yahweh, [you who are/rule] in heaven, you are a wonderful and awesome God. You keep your promise to faithfully love those who love you and who obey your commands. **6** Now please look down and listen to what I am praying. I pray during the day and at night for your Israeli people. I confess that we Israeli people have sinned. Even my family and I have sinned against you. **7** We have acted very wickedly. [Many years ago] your servant Moses gave us your laws and all the things you commanded us to do [DOU], but we have not obeyed/done them. **8** "But please remember what you told your servant Moses. You said, 'If you sin, I will scatter you among the ([heathen nations/nations that do not believe in me]). **9** But if you return to me and obey my commands, even if you have been exiled to very remote/distant places on the earth, I will bring you back here [to Israel], the land that I [MTY] have chosen to be honored in.' **10** "We are your servants. We are the people whom you brought here by your very great power [MTY, DOU] **11** Yahweh, please hear this prayer of mine, and the prayers of all your people who are delighted to revere you [MTY]. Today I will go to the king, to request that he do me a great favor. Please motivate him to act kindly toward me, in order that I will be successful [in obtaining what I want]." At that time, I was the one whose work was to taste all the food and drink before it was served to the king, [to be sure that no one had put poison in it].

2 After King Artaxerxes [had been ruling the Persian Empire] for almost 20 years, (during the spring/before the hot season) of that year, when it was time to serve wine to him [during a feast], I took the wine and gave it to him. I had never looked sad when I was in front of him before, [but on that day he saw that I looked very sad]. **2** So he asked me, "Why are you sad? [I know that] you are not sick. It must be that you are troubled about something." Then I was very afraid, [because it was not proper to be sad when I came to the king] (OR, [because I was worried what the king would do to me if he refused to do what I was about to request him to do]). **3** I replied, "Your majesty, I hope you will live a very long time! But (how can I prevent myself from being sad, because the city where my ancestors are buried [has been destroyed] and is in ruins?/I cannot keep myself from looking sad, because the city where my ancestors are buried [has been destroyed and] is in ruins.) [RHQ] [Even] the city gates have been completely burned." **4** The king replied, "What do you want me to do [for you]?" I prayed [silently] to our God [who is/rules] in heaven. **5** Then I replied, "If you are willing [to do it], and if I have pleased you, send me to the city [of Jerusalem] in Judah [province] where my ancestors are buried, in order that I may [help people to] rebuild the city." **6** While the queen was sitting beside the king, he asked, ["If I allow you to go,] how long will you be gone? When will you return?" [I told the king how long I would be gone, and] the king gave me permission to go, and I told him what day [I wanted to leave]. **7** I also said to the king, "If you are willing to do it, write letters for me to take to the governors of the province west of the [Euphrates] River. Tell them to allow me to travel safely [through their province] until I arrive in Judah. **8** Also, [please write] a letter to Asaph, the man who takes care of your forest [in that area], telling him to give me timber to make the beams to support the gates of the fortress that is near the temple, and timber for making the walls of the city, and for building the house in which I [will live]." The king did what I requested him to do, because my God was graciously/kindly (helping/acting for) me. **9** [After I got ready, I left to travel to Judah]. The king sent some army officers and soldiers riding on horses to accompany me, [to protect me]. When I came to where the governors of the provinces west of the [Euphrates] River lived, I gave them the letters that the king had written. **10** But when [two government officials,] Sanballat from [a village near] Horon and Tobiah from the Ammon [people-group], heard that I had arrived, they were very angry that someone had come to help the Israeli people. **11** When I arrived in Jerusalem, I did not tell anyone what thoughts God had given to me about what I should do there. Three days after I arrived in Jerusalem, I went out of the city in the evening, taking a few other men with me. I was riding a donkey; we had no other animals with us. **13** We left the city, going out through the Valley Gate, then past the well called the Jackal (OR, Dragon's) Well, and then past the gate called the Rubbish/Garbage Gate. We inspected all the walls that had been broken down and all

the gates that had been burned down. **14** Then we went to the Fountain Gate and to the pool called the King's Pool, but my donkey could not get through [the narrow opening] (OR, [the rubble]). **15** So we turned back and went along the [Kidron] Valley. We inspected the wall there before we turned back/around and entered the city again at the Valley Gate. **16** The [city] officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, because I had not told anyone about what I planned to do. I had not said anything about it to the Jewish leaders or the officials or the priests or any of the others who would be helping me in the work [that I wanted to do]. **17** But now I said to them, "You all know very well the terrible things [that have happened to] our city. The city is ruined; even the gates are burned down. So we should rebuild the city wall. If we do that, we will no longer feel humiliated/disgraced." **18** Then I told them about how God had kindly/graciously helped me [when I talked to the king], and what the king had said to me. They immediately replied, "Let's start rebuilding!" So they started to do this good work. **19** But when Sanballat, Tobiah, and Gershom the Arab [king of the Kedar region] heard about what we planned to do, they made fun of us and ridiculed us. They said, "What is this work that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king [again]?" [RHQ] **20** But I replied, "Our God [who is/rules] in heaven will help our plans to succeed. But as for you, you have no right to decide anything about this city, because you have not participated in what has happened in this city in previous years."

3 [(This is a list/These are the names) of the people who helped to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem]. Eliashib the Supreme Priest and the other priests began to rebuild it at the Sheep Gate. They also put the gates in their places. They built the wall as far as the Tower of 100 Soldiers and [further north] to the Tower of Hananel, and they dedicated it to God. **2** Next to them, [beyond the Tower of Hananel,] men from Jericho built [part of the wall]. Next to them, Zaccur, the son of Imri, built [part of the wall]. **3** The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. The put in their places the wooden beams above the gates, and also the doors, the bolts, and the bars [for locking the gate]. **4** Next to them, Meremoth, the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz, repaired [the next part of the wall]. Next to him, Meshullam, the son of Berekiah and grandson of Meshezabel, repaired [the next part of the wall]. Next to him, Zadok the son of Baana repaired the next part of the wall. **5** Next to him, the men from Tekoa [town] repaired [part of the wall], but the leaders of Tekoa refused to do the work that their boss/supervisor assigned to them. **6** Joiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah, repaired the Old Gate. They also put in their places the beams above the gate and put in the bolts and the bars [for locking the gate]. **7** Next to them, Melatiah from Gibeon [city], Jadon from Meronoth [town], and other men from Gibeon and from Mizpah [city], which was where the governor of the province west of the [Euphrates] River lived, repaired [part of the wall]. **8** Next to them, Uzziel, the son of Harhaiah, and Hananiah repaired the wall as far as the Broad/Wide Wall. Harhaiah made things from gold, and Hananiah made perfumes. **9** Next to them, Rephaiah the son of Hur, who ruled half of Jerusalem District, repaired [part of the wall]. **10** Next to him, Jedaiah the son of Harumaph repaired [part of the wall] near his house. Next to him, Hattush the son of Hashabneiah repaired [part of the wall]. **11** Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab, repaired a section [of the wall], and also repaired the Tower of the Ovens. **12** Next to them, Shallum the son of Hallohesh, who ruled the other half of Jerusalem District, repaired [part of the wall]. His daughters [helped him with the work]. **13** Hanun and people from Zanoah [city] repaired the Valley Gate. They put the gates in their places, and also put in the bolts and bars [for locking the gate]. They repaired the wall for (1,500 feet/500 meters), as far as the Dung Gate. **14** Malchijah the son of Rechab, who ruled Beth-Haccherem District, repaired the Dung Gate. He also put in their places the bolts and bars [for locking the gate]. **15** Shallum the son of Colhozeh, who ruled Mizpah District, repaired the Fountain Gate. He put/built a roof over the gate, and put in their places the gates and the bolts and the bars [for locking the gate]. Near the Pool of Shelah he built the wall next to the king's garden, as far as the steps that went down from the City of David. **16** Next to him, Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, who ruled half of the Beth-Zur District, repaired [the wall] as far as the tombs [in the City] of David, to the reservoir that the people had made and the army barracks. **17** Next to him, several descendants of Levi [who helped the priests] repaired [parts of the wall]. Rehum the son of Bani repaired one section. Hashabiah, who ruled half of the Keilah District, repaired the next section on behalf of the people of his district. **18** Bavvai the son of Henadad, who ruled the other half of the Keilah District, repaired [the next section] along with other descendants of Levi. **19** Next to him, Ezer the son of Jeshua, who ruled Mizpah [city], repaired another section in front of the [steps which] went up to the (armory/building where the weapons are kept), as far as where the wall turns [a bit to the right]. **20** Next to him, Baruch the son of Zabbai repaired a section, as far as the door of the house of Eliashib the Supreme Priest. **21** Next to him, Meremoth the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz, repaired a section from the door of Eliashib's house to the end of Eliahib's house. **22** Next to him, [several

priests repaired parts of the wall]. Priests from the area near Jerusalem repaired [one section]. **23** Next to them, Benjamin and Hasshub repaired [a section] in front of their house. Azariah, the son of Maaseiah and grandson of Ananiah, repaired the next [section] in front of his house. **24** Next to him, Binnui the son of Henadad repaired a section, from Azariah's house to where the wall turns a bit. **25** [Next to him], Palal the son of Uzai repaired [a section], from where the wall turns and from where the watchtower is taller than the upper palace, the one where King [Solomon] had lived. The watchtower is near the courtyard where the guards [live]. **26** Next to him, Pedaiah the son of Parosh repaired [a section] toward the east to a place near the Water Gate and near the tall tower. That part of the wall is near Ophel [Hill], where the temple servants lived. **27** Next to him, men from Tekoa [town] repaired another section, from near the tall tower as far as the wall near Ophel [Hill]. [That was the second section that they repaired]. **28** A group of priests repaired [the wall] north from the Horse Gate. Each one repaired the section near his own house. **29** Next to them, Zadok the son of Immer repaired [the section] in front of his house. Next to him, Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, who (was the gatekeeper at/opened and closed) the East Gate, repaired [the next section]. **30** Next to him, Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired a section. That was the second [section that they repaired]. Next to them, Meshullam the son of Berekiah, made repairs across from where he lived. **31** Next to them, Malchijah, who also made things from gold, repaired [a section] as far as the building used by the temple servants and merchants, which was close to the Inspection Gate. This was the gate into the temple that was near the room on top of the northeast corner of the wall. **32** Other men who made things from gold, along with merchants, repaired [the last section of the wall], as far as the Sheep Gate.

4 When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the city wall, he was very angry. He was enraged/furious. He made fun of us Jews. **2** While his colleagues and officials of the army troops who had come from Samaria were listening, he said, "What do these feeble/pathetic Jews [think they] are doing? Do they think that if they offer enough/many sacrifices, [their gods will hear them and enable] them to finish building the wall in one day? The stones [that were in the wall previously have been weakened by] being burned in a fire. Those stones that they are pulling out of the rubbish/garbage heaps—do they think that they can make them strong again?" [RHQ] **3** Tobiah was [standing] beside Sanballat. He said, "That stone wall [that they are building] is very weak; so if even a fox climbed up on it, the wall would fall down!" **4** Then I prayed. I said, "Our God, hear us, because they are ridiculing us! Cause the words of their insults to fall back on them! Allow their enemies to come and capture them and force them to go to a foreign land! **5** They are guilty; they have [said things that] caused you to be angry while the people here who are building the wall are listening; so punish them!" **6** But after some time, we finished building the wall around the whole city, up to half as high as the first wall had been. We were able to do that because we worked very hard. **7** But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the men from Arabia, the people from the Ammon [people-group] and from Ashdod [city] heard that the work on the wall was continuing and that we were filling in the gaps in the wall, they became very angry. **8** They all planned to come and fight against the people of Jerusalem [MTY] and to cause trouble. **9** But we prayed to our God [to protect us], and we put men [around the walls] to guard [the city] day and night. **10** Then the people of [MTY] Judah started to say, "The men who are working [on the wall] are becoming very tired. There is a lot of [heavy] rubble that we must remove; we ourselves cannot finish the work. **11** "Besides, our enemies are saying, 'Before the Jews see us, we will swoop down on them and kill them and stop their work [on the wall]!'" **12** The Jews who were living near our enemies came and told us many times, "You should leave the city and go to other places, in order that your enemies will not attack you!" **13** So I put guards at the places where the wall was not very high yet and at places where there were gaps in the wall. I put guards to protect each of their family groups. I gave the guards daggers, spears, and bows [and arrows]. **14** Then after I inspected everything, I summoned the leaders and [other] officials and [many of] the other people, and I said to them, "Do not be afraid of our enemies! Think about [what] Yahweh, who is great and glorious, [can do]! And fight to protect your friends, your families, and your homes!" **15** Our enemies heard that we knew what they were planning to do and that God had (spoiled their plans/prevented them from doing what they planned). [But we were sure that God would defend us,] so we all started to work on the wall again. **16** But after that, only half of the men who were working for me worked on the wall. The others stood there on guard, holding their spears, shields, bows [and arrows], and [wearing their] coats made of metal plates. [To encourage the people] were building the wall, their leaders stood behind them. **17** Those who carried [baskets of supplies on their heads/shoulders] and those who built the wall did their work with one hand, and held a weapon with the other hand. **18** All those who were building [the wall] had a dagger fastened to their side. The man who would blow the trumpet [if our enemies attacked]

was standing at my side. 19 Then I said to the officials, the other important men, and the other people, "This wall is very long, and we are far apart from each other along the wall. 20 If you hear the man blowing the trumpet, gather around us at that place. [Remember that] our God will fight for us!" 21 So we continued to work. Half of the men continued to hold their spears all day, from when the sun rose [in the morning] until the stars appeared [at night]. 22 At that time, I also said to the people, "Tell every worker and his helper that they must stay inside Jerusalem at night. By doing that, they can guard us at night, and they can work [on the wall] during the daytime." 23 During that time, none of us ever took off our clothes (OR, we wore our clothes all the time)—I and my relatives and my workers and the guards who were with me. And we had our weapons with us, in our hands.

5 [Later,] many of the men and their wives protested loudly about what [some of] the [other] Jews were doing. 2 Some/One of them said, "We have many children. So we need a lot of grain to be able to eat and continue to live." 3 Others said, "The fields and vineyards and houses that we own, it has been necessary for us to (mortgage them/promise to give them to someone if we do not pay back to him the money he has loaned us) in order to get money to buy grain, during this (famine/time where there is not much food)." 4 Others said, "We have [needed to] borrow money to pay the taxes that the king [commanded us to pay] on our fields and our vineyards. 5 We are Jews just like [IDM] they are. Our children are ([just as good as/equal with)] their children. But we have needed to sell some of our children to become slaves [in order to pay what we owe]. We have already sold some of our daughters to become slaves. Our fields and vineyards have been taken away from us, so now we do not have [the money to pay what we owe, and we are forced to sell our children to get money to pay those debts]." 6 I was very angry when I heard these things that they were complaining about. 7 So I thought about what I could do about it. I told the leaders and officials [who were responsible for this work], "You are charging interest to your own relatives [when they borrow money from you]!" Then I called together a large group of people, 8 and I said to their [leaders], "Some of our Jewish relatives have been forced to sell themselves to become slaves of people who have come from other countries. As much as we have been able to, we have been buying them back [out of slavery]. But now you are forcing your own relatives to sell themselves to you, their fellow Jews, as slaves!" [When I said that to them,] they were silent. There was nothing that they could say [because they knew that what I said was true]. 9 Then I said to them, "What you are doing is terrible [EUP]! You certainly ought to [RHQ] obey God and do what is right! If you did that, our enemies who do not revere Yahweh [would see that we are doing what is right and] would not ridicule us. 10 My fellow Jews and I and my servants have lent money and grain to people [without charging interest]. So you all should stop charging interest on these loans. 11 Also, you must give back to them their fields, their vineyards, their olive tree orchards, and their houses that you have taken from them. You must also give back to them the interest that you charged them when they borrowed money, grain, wine, and [olive] oil from you, and you must do it today!" 12 The leaders replied, "We will do what you have said. We will return to them everything that we forced them to give to us, and we will not require that they give us anything more." Then I summoned the priests, and I forced the leaders to vow in front of them that they would do what they had promised to do. 13 I shook out the folds of my robe and said to them, "If you do not do what you have just now promised to do, I hope/desire that God will shake you like I am shaking my robe. He will take away your homes and everything else that you own." They all replied, "Amen/May it be so!" And they praised Yahweh. Then they did what they had promised to do. 14 I was appointed to be the governor of Judea in the twentieth year that Artaxerxes was the king [of Persia]. For the next twelve years, until he had been ruling for almost 32 years, neither I nor my officials accepted [the money that we were allowed/entitled to receive to buy] food because of my being the governor. 15 The men who were governors before I became the governor had burdened the people by requiring them to pay a lot of taxes. They had forced each person to pay to them 40 silver coins every day, in addition to giving food and wine to them. Even their servants/officials oppressed the people. But I did not do that, because I revered God. 16 I also continued to work on the wall, and I did not take land from people [who were unable to pay back the money that they had borrowed from me]. All those who worked for me joined me to work on the wall. 17 Also, every day I was responsible to feed 150 Jewish officials, and also [official] visitors who came from nearby countries. 18 Each day I [told my servants to] serve [us the meat from] one ox, six very good sheep, and chickens. And every ten days I gave them a large new supply of wine. But I knew that the people were burdened [by paying lots of taxes], so I did not accept [the money that I was entitled/allowed to receive to buy all this] food because of my being the governor. 19 My God, do not forget me, and reward me because of all that I have done for these people.

6 Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem, and our other enemies heard [a report] that we had finished rebuilding the wall, and that now there were no more (gaps/places where the wall

was not finished) (although we had not yet put the doors in the gates). 2 So Sanballat and Geshem sent [a message] to me, in which they said "Come and talk with us at a place in Ono Plain [north of Jerusalem]." But [I knew that] really they wanted to harm me [if I went there]. 3 So I sent messengers to them, to tell them, "I am doing an important work, and I cannot go down [there]. (Why should I stop doing this work just to go down to [talk with] you?/I do not want to stop doing this work just to go down to [talk with] you.)" [RHQ] 4 They sent me the same message four times, and each time when I replied to them I said the same thing. 5 Then Sanballat sent one of his servants to me, bringing a fifth message. This one was written, but it was not sealed. [He did that in order that others would read the message that the servant was carrying] in his hand. 6 This is what was written in the message: "Some people in the nearby countries have heard a report that you and the other Jews are rebuilding the wall [in order to be able to resist attacks], because you are planning to revolt [against the king of Babylon]. And the report also says that you are planning to become the king [of the Israelis]. Geshem says that what they have reported is true. 7 [People are also saying that] you have appointed some prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem that you, [Nehemiah,] are now the king in Judea. King [Artaxerxes] will certainly hear these reports, [and then you will be in big trouble]. So I suggest that we should meet together to talk about this matter." 8 [When I read that message,] I sent [the messenger] back to Sanballat to say, "None of what you are saying is true. You have (made this up/concocted this) in your own head/mind." 9 [I said that because I knew that] they were trying to cause us to be afraid, with the result that we would stop working [on the wall]. So I actually became more determined (OR, I prayed to God to help me) [to continue the work]. 10 [One day] I went to talk with Shemaiah, son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel. I went to talk with him in his house, because he was not able (OR, allowed) to leave his house. He said to me, "You and I must enter the very sacred place in the temple and lock the doors, because people are going to come to kill you at night." 11 I replied, "I (am not that kind of person/do not do things like that) [RHQ]! I would not run and hide in the temple to save my life! No, I will not do that!" 12 When I thought [about what he had said], I realized that God had not told Shemaiah to say that to me. I realized that Tobiah and Sanballat had bribed him [to say that to me]. 13 They had bribed him to cause me to be afraid. They wanted me to [disobey God's commands and] sin [by hiding in the temple]. If I did that, they would be able to ruin my reputation [MTY] and discredit me. 14 [So I prayed,] "My God, do not forget what Tobiah and Sanballat have done. Punish them. And do not forget that the female prophet Noadiah and some of the other prophets have also tried to cause me to be afraid." 15 On October 2 we finished rebuilding the wall. We did it all in 52 days. 16 When our enemies in the nearby countries heard about that, they realized that they had been humiliated, because everyone knew that it was because God helped us that we had been able to do this work [and that they had not been able to force us to quit]. 17 During this time, the Jewish leaders had been sending many messages/letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah had been sending messages back to them. 18 Many people in Judea were closely associated with Tobiah, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah. Furthermore, Tobiah's son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berekiah. 19 People often talked in my presence about all the good things that Tobiah had done, and then they would tell him everything that I said. So Tobiah sent many letters to me to try to cause me to become afraid.

7 After the wall had been finished and we had put the gates in their places, we assigned to the temple guards and to the members of the [sacred] choir and the other descendants of Levi the work that they were to do. 2 I appointed two men to [help me to] govern Jerusalem, my brother Hanani and Hananiah who was the commander of the fortress [in Jerusalem]. Hananiah always did his work reliably, and he revered God more than most other people do. 3 I said to them, "Do not open the gates of Jerusalem until late each morning. And close the gates and put the bars across the doors [(late in each afternoon/before sunset)] while the gatekeepers are still guarding the gates." I also told them to appoint some people who lived in Jerusalem to be guards [on the wall], and to assign some of them to be guards at certain other places and to assign others to guard the area close to their own houses. 4 The city [of Jerusalem] covered a large area, but [at that time] not many people lived in the city, and they had not built many new houses yet [HYP]. 5 [To defend the city, we needed more people there.] Then God gave me the idea to summon the leaders and officials and [other] people, and to look in the books [in which were written the names] of all the people and their clans. So I found the records of the people who had first returned from Babylonia. This is what I found written in those records: 6 (This is a list/Here are the names) of the people who returned to Jerusalem and to other places in Judea. They had been living in Babylonia since King Nebuchadnezzar's army had captured their relatives/ancestors and took them to Babylonia. But they had returned to Judea and were living in the towns [where their ancestors had lived]. 7 Their leaders

were Zerubbabel, Joshua, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah, and me. This is a list of the number of men in each clan who returned: **8** 2,172 men from the clan of Parosh; **9** 372 men from the clan of Shephatiah; **10** 652 men from the clan of Arah; **11** 2,818 men from the clan of Pahath-Moab, who are descendants of Jeshua and Joab; **12** 1,254 men from the clan of Elam; **13** 845 men from the clan of Zattu; **14** 760 men from the clan of Zaccai; **15** 648 men from the clan of Bani (OR, Binnui); **16** 628 men from the clan of Bebai; **17** 2,322 men from the clan of Azgad; **18** 667 men from the clan of Adonikam; **19** 2,067 men from the clan of Bigvai; **20** 655 men from the clan of Adin; **21** 98 men from the clan of Ater, whose other name is Hezekiah; **22** 328 men from the clan of Hashum; **23** 324 men from the clan of Bezai; **24** 112 men from the clan of Hariph, [whose other name is Jorah]; **25** 95 men from the clan of Gibeon, [whose other name is Gibbar]. **26** Men whose ancestors had lived in these towns also returned: 188 men from Bethlehem and Netophah **27** 128 men from Anathoth; **28** 42 men from Beth-Azmaveth **29** 743 men from Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah and Beeroth; **30** 621 men from Ramah and Geba; **31** 122 men from Micmash; **32** 123 men from Bethel and Ai; **33** 52 men from Nebo; **34** 1,254 from Elam; **35** 320 from Harim; **36** 345 from Jericho; **37** 721 from Lod, Hadid, and Ono; **38** 3,930 from Senaah. The following priests also returned: **39** 973 from the clan of Jedaiah who are descendants of Jeshua; **40** 1,052 from the clan of Immer; **41** 1,247 from the clan of Pashhur; **42** 1,017 from the clan of Harim. **43** [Other] descendants of Levi who returned were: 74 from the clan of Jeshua and Kadmiel, who are descendants of Hodevah [who is also known as Hodaviah]; **44** 148 singers who are descendants of Asaph. **45** Also 138 temple gatekeepers from the clans of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai returned. **46** Temple workers who returned were descendants of these men: Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, **47** Keros, Sia [who is also known as Siaha], Padon, **48** Lebanah, Hagabah, Shalmai, **49** Hanan, Giddel, Gahar, **50** Reaiah, Rezin, Nekoda, **51** Gazzam, Uzza, Paseah, **52** Besai, Meunim, Ephusesim [who is also called Nephusim], **53** Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur, **54** Bazlith [who is also called Bazluth], Mehida, Harsha, **55** Barkos, Sisera, Temah, **56** Neziah, and Hatipha. **57** Descendants of the servants of King Solomon who returned were: Sotai, Sophereth [who is also called Hassophereth], Perida [who is also known as Peruda], **58** Jaalah, Darkon, Giddel, **59** Shephatiah, Hattil, Pokereth-hazzebaim, and Amon. **60** Altogether, there were 392 temple workers and descendants of Solomon's servants who returned. **61** Another group of 642 people from the clans of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda also returned. They came from the towns of Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Kerub, Addan ([which is also known as Addon]), and Immer [in Babylonia]. But they could not prove that they were descendants of Israelis. **63** Priests from the clans of Hobaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai also returned. Barzillai had married a woman who is a descendant of [a man named] Barzillai from [the] Gilead [region], and he had taken his wife's family name. **64** They searched in the records that contained the names of people's ancestors, but they could not find the names of those clans, so they were not allowed to have the rights and duties that priests have right away. **65** The governor told them that before they could eat the food offered as sacrifices, a priest should use the marked stones [to find out what God said about their being priests]. **66** Altogether, there were 42,360 people who returned to Judea. **67** There were also 7,337 of their servants, and 245 singers, which included men and women. **68** The Israelis also brought back [from Babylonia] 736 horses, 245 mules, **69** 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys. **70** Some of the leaders of the clans gave gifts for the work [of rebuilding the temple]. I, being the governor, gave (17 pounds/8.6 kg.) of gold, 50 bowls [to be used in the temple], and 530 robes for the priests. **71** Some of the leaders of the clans gave a total of (337 pounds/153 kg.) of gold, and (3,215 pounds/1,460 kg.) of silver. **72** The rest of the people gave a total of (337 pounds/153 kg.) of gold, (2,923 pounds/1,330 kg.) of silver, and 67 robes for the priests. **73** So the priests, the [other] descendants of Levi [who helped the priests], the temple guards, the musicians, the temple workers, and many ordinary people, who were all Israelis, started to live in the towns and cities of Judea [where their ancestors had lived].

8 Ezra, who taught people the laws of Moses, [had a scroll on which] the laws of Moses were written. Those were the laws that Yahweh had commanded the Israeli people [to obey]. On October 8 of that year, all the people gathered together in the plaza/square that was close to the Water Gate. Men and women and [children] who [were old enough to] understand gathered together. Someone told Ezra to bring out that scroll. **3** So he brought it out and read it to the people. He started reading it early in the morning and continued reading it until noontime. All the people listened carefully to the laws that were written on the scroll. **4** Ezra stood on top of a high wooden platform that had been built just for that event. At his right side stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah. At his left side stood Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam. **5** Ezra stood on the platform above the people, where they could all see him. He opened the scroll; and as he did that, all the people stood up,

[and they continued to stand, to show respect for God's word]. 6 Then Ezra praised Yahweh, the great God, and all the people lifted up their hands and said, "Amen! Amen!" Then they all bowed down with their foreheads touching the ground, and they worshiped Yahweh. 7 Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah, were all (Levites/men who worked in the temple). They explained the meaning of the laws of Moses to the people who were standing there. 8 They also read from scrolls that contained the laws that God [gave to Moses], and they interpreted [into the Aramaic language] what they read, making the meaning clear so that the people could understand the meaning. 9 Then I, Nehemiah the governor, and Ezra, and the Levites who were interpreting what was being read to the people, said to them, "Yahweh your God considers that this day is very holy/sacred. So do not be sad or cry!" They said that because all the people were crying as they were listening to the laws of Moses. 10 Then I said to them, "Now go home and enjoy [some] good food and drink [some] sweet wine. And send some of it to people who do not have anything [to eat or drink]. This is a day that Yahweh considers sacred. Do not be sad! Yahweh will cause you to be joyful and make you strong." 11 The Levites also caused the people to be quiet, saying "Be quiet [and do not cry], because this is a sacred day! Do not be sad!" 12 So the people went away, and they ate and drank, and they sent portions of food [to those who did not have any]. They celebrated very joyfully, because they had heard and understood what had been read to them. 13 The next day, the leaders of the families and the priests and [other] descendants of Levi met with Ezra to study carefully the laws that Yahweh had given to Moses. 14 While they were doing that, they realized that Yahweh had told Moses to command the Israeli people to live in shelters during that month, [to remember that their ancestors lived in shelters when they left Egypt]. 15 They also learned that they should proclaim in Jerusalem and in all the towns that the people should go to the hills and cut branches from olive trees [that they have planted] and from wild olive trees and from myrtle trees and palm trees and fig trees. They should make shelters from these branches, and live in those shelters during the festival, just as Moses wrote [that they should do]. 16 So the people went out [of the city] and cut branches and used them to build shelters. They built shelters on the [flat] roofs [of their houses], in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the temple, and in the plazas/squares close to the Water Gate and the Ephraim Gate. 17 All of the Israeli people who had returned from Babylon built shelters and lived in them [for one week]. The Israeli people had not celebrated that festival like that since the time that Joshua lived. And they were very joyful. 18 Every day during that week Ezra read to the people from the scroll that contained the laws that God [gave Moses]. Then on the eighth day, just as one of the laws of God said that they should do, they gathered together to end the celebration.

9 On October 31, the people gathered together again. They (fasted/abstained from eating food), they wore clothes made from rough cloth, and they put dirt on their heads [to show that they were sorry for their sins]. 2 The Israeli people separated themselves from all the foreigners. They stood there and confessed their sins and the sins that their ancestors had committed. 3 The scroll that contained the laws of Yahweh, the God whom they [worshiped], was read to them for three hours. Then for three more hours they confessed their sins and they worshiped Yahweh. 4 [Some of] the descendants of Levi were standing on the stairs. They were Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, [another] Bani, and Kenani. 5 Then [the leaders of] the Levites called out to the people. They were Jeshua, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah. They said, "While you are standing there, praise Yahweh your God, who has always lived and will live forever!" [Then one of them continued by praying this to God], "Yahweh, we praise your glorious name! You are much greater than anything that we can think about or talk about! 6 "You only are God. You made the sky and the heavens and all the stars. You made the earth and everything that is on it, and you made the seas/oceans and everything that is in them. You are the one who gives life to everything and helps them remain alive. All the angels who are in heaven worship you. 7 "Yahweh, you are God. You chose Abram and brought him out of Ur [city] in Chaldea [region]. You gave him a new name, Abraham. 8 You saw that he was trustworthy. Then you made (an agreement with/a promise to) him, saying that you would give [to him and] to his descendants the land that the descendants of Canaan, Heth, Amor, Periz, Jebus, and Girgash lived in. And you have done what you promised, because you always do what is right. 9 "You saw what our ancestors were suffering in Egypt. You heard them cry to you for help when they were at the Red Sea. 10 Because you knew that the leaders of Egypt were treating our ancestors very arrogantly, you performed many kinds of miracles that caused the king and his officials and all his people to suffer. As a result, you became famous then, and you are still famous! 11 You caused the Red Sea to divide, with the result that your people walked through it on the ground without [getting their feet] wet. [After they were all safely on the other side,] you [caused the water

to come back again], and you hurled into the deep water the [soldiers of the Egyptian army] that were pursuing our ancestors. Their soldiers sank into the deep sea like stones! **12** During each day you led our ancestors with a bright cloud that resembled a huge pillar, and each night you led them by a flaming cloud that gave them light to show them where to walk. **13** "When our ancestors were at Sinai Mountain, you came down from heaven and spoke to them. You gave them many regulations and instructions that are just and reliable, and you gave them commands and laws that are good. **14** You taught them about your holy (Sabbath/day of rest), and you gave many kinds of laws to your servant Moses for him to tell to the people. **15** When they were hungry, you gave them manna from the sky; and when they were thirsty, you gave them water from a rock. You commanded them to go and take, from the people who lived there, the land which you had promised to give to them. **16** "But our ancestors were very proud and stubborn [IDM], and they did not do what you commanded them to do. **17** They refused to heed you, and they forgot about all the miracles that you had performed for them. Instead, they became stubborn [IDM], and they appointed someone to lead them back to Egypt, where they would be slaves again! But you are a God who forgives us and who is kind and merciful [to us]. You do not quickly become angry. You always faithfully love us. **18** So, even though their [leaders] made an idol that resembled a calf and insulted you by saying [about the idol], 'This is our god, who brought you up out of Egypt,' you did not desert them. **19** "Because you always act mercifully, you did not abandon them when they were in the desert. The bright cloud which was like a huge pillar continued to lead them during the daytime, and the fiery cloud showed them where to walk at night. **20** You sent your good Spirit to instruct them. You continued to provide water when they were thirsty. **21** For 40 years you took care of them in the desert. During all that time, they had everything [that they needed]. Their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell up [even though they were continually walking]. **22** "You helped our ancestors to defeat armies of great kings who ruled many people-groups. By doing that, you enabled our ancestors to (occupy/live in) even the most distant places in this land. They occupied the land over which King Sihon ruled from Heshbon [city] and the land over which King Og ruled in [the] Bashan [area]. **23** You caused our ancestors' descendants to become as numerous as the stars in the sky, and you brought them into this land, the land that you told their fathers to enter and occupy. **24** Their sons went in and took the land [from the people that lived there]. You enabled them to defeat the descendants of Canaan who lived here in this land. You enabled them to conquer the descendants of Canaan and their kings and the people whom they ruled. You enabled our ancestors to do to those people whatever they wanted to do. **25** Our ancestors captured cities that had walls around them, and they took possession of fertile land. They took possession of houses that were full of good things, where there were wells that were already dug. They took possession of many vineyards and groves of olive trees and fruit trees. They ate all that they wanted to and became fat. They were delighted in all these good things that you gave to them. **26** "But they disobeyed you and rebelled against you. They (turned their backs on/rejected) your laws. They killed the prophets who warned them that they should return to you. They badly insulted you. **27** So you allowed their enemies to defeat them. But when their enemies caused them to suffer, they called out to you. You heard them from heaven, and because you are very merciful, you sent them people to help them, and those leaders rescued them from their enemies. **28** "But after there was a time of peace again, our ancestors again did things that displeased you. So again you allowed their enemies to conquer them. But whenever they cried out to you again [to help them], you heard them from heaven, and because you act mercifully, you rescued them many times. **29** "You warned them that they should again [obey] your laws, but they became proud and stubborn, and they disobeyed your commands. They sinned by disobeying what you commanded them to do, the things that would enable them to live a good long life [if they obeyed them]. They stubbornly refused [IDM] to listen to you and continued sinning. **30** You were patient with them for many years. You warned them trough [the messages] your Spirit gave to the prophets. But they did not (heed/pay attention to) those messages. So again you allowed [the armies of] other nations to defeat them. **31** But because you act very mercifully, you did not get rid of them completely or abandon them [forever]. You are a very gracious/kind and merciful God! **32** "Our God, you are great! You are mighty! You are awesome! You faithfully love us as [you promised in] your agreement with us that you would do! But now we are experiencing great difficulties/hardships. Great troubles have come to us, to our kings, to our [other] leaders, to our priests, and to our prophets. We have been experiencing these troubles since [the armies of] the kings of Assyria [conquered us], and we are still experiencing them. We ask that you sincerely think about [LIT] all these things. **33** [We know that] you acted justly each time that you punished us. We have sinned greatly, but you have treated us fairly. **34** Our kings and other leaders and our priests and our other ancestors did not obey your laws. They did not heed your

commands or the warnings that you gave to them. 35 Even when they had their own kings, and they enjoyed the good things that you did for them in this large and fertile land that you gave to them, they did not serve you. They refused to quit doing what was evil. 36 "So now we are [like] slaves here in this land that you gave to our ancestors, the land that you gave to them in order that they could enjoy all the good things that grow here. 37 Because we have sinned, [we cannot eat the things that grow here]. The kings that now rule over us are enjoying the things that grow here. They rule us and [take] our cattle. We have to serve them and do the things that please them. We are experiencing great misery/distress. 38 "However, we [Israeli] people now are making an agreement/promise [to obey you], and we are writing this agreement/promise [on a scroll]. We will write on it the names of our leaders and the names of the Levites and the names of the priests, and then we will seal it."

10 (This is a list/These are the names) of those who signed the agreement: I, Nehemiah, the governor; and also Zedekiah. 2 The priests who signed it were: Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, 3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah, 4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, 5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, 6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, 7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, 8 Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah. 9 The [other] descendants of Levi who signed it were: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui from the clan of Henadad, Kadmiel, 10 Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, 11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, 12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, 13 Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu. 14 The Israeli leaders who signed it were: Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, 15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, 16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, 17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, 18 Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, 19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, 20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, 21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, 22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, 23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, 24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, 25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, 26 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, 27 Malluch, Harim, and Baanah. 28 Then the rest of the people also made a solemn agreement. The people who did it included priests, temple gatekeepers, singers, and temple workers. They also included all the men from other countries who had separated themselves from the other foreigners living in Israel. These men, along with their wives, their sons and daughters who were old enough to understand [what they were doing, were people who wanted to obey God's laws]. 29 They all joined with their leaders in making this solemn agreement. They agreed to obey all the laws that God had given to Moses. They agreed to obey everything that Yahweh our God had commanded, and all his regulations and instructions. [And this is what they promised to do:] 30 "We will not allow our daughters to marry people who live in this land [who do not worship Yahweh], and we will not allow our sons to marry them. 31 "If people from other countries who live in this land bring us grain or other things to sell to us on Sabbath days or any other sacred day, we will not buy anything from them. And in every seventh year, we will not plant any crops, and we will (cancel all debts/declare that people will no longer have to pay back what they owe us). 32 "We also promise that every year we will pay (one-eighth of an ounce/4 grams) of silver for the work of taking care of the temple. 33 With that money they can buy these things: The sacred bread [that is placed before God], the grain that is burned [on the altar] each day, the lambs that were completely burned [on the altar], the sacred offerings for the Sabbath days and for celebrating each new moon and other festivals that God told us to celebrate, and other offerings that are dedicated to God, the animals to be sacrificed to atone for the sins of the Israeli people, and anything else that is needed for the work of taking care of the temple. 34 "Each year the priests, the [other] descendants of Levi who help the priests, and the rest of us will (cast lots/throw marked stones) to determine [for that year] which clans will provide wood to burn on the altar the sacrifices that are offered to Yahweh our God, in order to do what was written in the laws [God gave to Moses]. 35 "We promise that each year each family will take to the temple an offering from the first grain that we harvest and from the first fruit that grows on our trees [that year]. 36 "Also, we will take to the priests at the temple our firstborn sons and dedicate them to God. And we will also bring firstborn calves and lambs and baby goats [to be offered as sacrifices]. That is what is written in God's laws [that we must do]. 37 "We will also take to the priests at the temple the flour made from the first grain [that we harvest each year], and our other offerings of wine, [olive] oil, and fruit. We will also take to the descendants of Levi [who help the priests] the tithes/10% of [the crops that we grow on] our land, because they are the ones who collect the tithes in all the villages where we work/live. 38 The priests who are descendants of Aaron will be with the [other] descendants of Levi and supervise them when they collect the tithes. Then the descendants of Levi must take 10% of the things that people bring and put them in the storerooms in the temple. 39 The descendants of Levi and [some of] the other Israeli people must take 10% of the offerings of grain, wine, and [olive] oil to the storerooms where the various utensils that are used in the temple are kept. That is the place where the priests who are serving at that time, the temple guards, and those who sing in the temple choir live. [We promise that] we will not neglect [taking care of the temple of our God]."

11 The [Israeli] leaders [and their families] settled in the sacred city, Jerusalem. The other people (cast lots/threw marked stones) to determine which family from each ten families would live in Jerusalem. The other people continued to live in the other towns and cities [in Judea]. **2** Those people [asked God to] bless those who volunteered to [be among the 10% who] moved to Jerusalem. **3** [Some of] the priests, [some of] the [other] descendants of Levi, [some of] the temple workers, and the descendants of King Solomon's servants, and many of the other people lived on their own property in the towns [where their ancestors had lived]. **4** But some people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin [decided to] live in Jerusalem. One of them from the tribe of Judah was Athaiah. He was the son of Uzziah, who was the son of Zechariah, who was the son of Amariah, who was the son of Shephatiah, who was the son of Mahalalel, who was a descendant of [Judah's son] Perez. **5** [Another one from the tribe of Judah was] Maaseiah, [who was] the son of Baruch, [who was] the son of Colhozeh, [who was] the son of Hazaiah, [who was] the son of Adaiah, [who was] the son of Joiarib, [who was] the son of Zechariah, [who was] a descendant of [Judah's son] Shelah. **6** There were 468 men who were descendants of Perez who were valiant/courageous soldiers who lived in Jerusalem. **7** [One of the men] of the tribe of Benjamin who decided to live in Jerusalem was Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah. **8** Two of Sallu's relatives, Gabbai and Sallai, also settled in Jerusalem. Altogether, 928 people from the tribe of Benjamin settled in Jerusalem **9** Their leader was Joel, son of Zichri. The official who was second in command in Jerusalem was Hassenuah. **10** The priests [who settled in Jerusalem] were Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jakin, **11** Seraiah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub [who had previously been] the Supreme Priest. **12** Altogether, 822 members of that clan worked in the temple. Another [priest who settled in Jerusalem] was Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah. **13** Altogether, there were 242 members of that clan who were leaders of the clan [who settled in Jerusalem]. Another [priest who settled in Jerusalem] was Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer. **14** There were 128 members of that clan who were valiant soldiers [who settled in Jerusalem]. Their leader was Zabdiel the son of Haggedolim. **15** Another descendant of Levi who settled in Jerusalem was Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni. **16** Two others were Shabbethai and Jozabad, who were prominent men who supervised the work outside the temple. **17** Another one was Mattaniah, the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph. Mattaniah directed the temple choir when they sang the prayers to thank [God]. His assistant was Bakbukiah. Another one was Abda, the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. **18** Altogether, there were 284 descendants of Levi who settled in Jerusalem. **19** The men who guarded the temple gates were Akkub and Talmon and 172 of their relatives who settled in Jerusalem. **20** The other Israeli people including priests and [other] descendants of Levi lived on their own property in other towns and cities in Judea. **21** But the temple workers lived on Ophel [Hill in Jerusalem]. They were supervised by Ziha and Gishpa. **22** The man who supervised the [other] descendants of Levi who [helped the priests and] lived in Jerusalem was Uzzi, the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica. Uzzi belonged to the clan of Asaph, the clan that was in charge of the music in the temple. **23** The king [of Persia] had commanded that the clans should decide what each clan should do to lead the music in the temple each day. **24** Pethahiah, the son of Meshezabel, [who was] from the clan of Zerah and a descendant of Judah, was the ambassador [of the Israelis] to the king of Persia. **25** Some of the people [who did not settle in Jerusalem] lived in villages close to their farms. Some from the tribe of Judah lived in villages near Kiriath-Arba, Dibon, and Jekabzeel [cities]. **26** Some lived in Jeshua [city], in Moladah [city], in Beth-Pelet [city], **27** in Hazar-Shual [city], and in Beersheba [city] and the villages near it. **28** Others lived in Ziklag [city], in Meconah [city] and the villages near it, **29** in En-Rimmon [city], in Zorah [city], in Jarmuth [city], **30** in Zanoah [city], in Adullam [city], and in the villages near those cities. Some lived in Lachish [city] and in the nearby villages, and some lived in Azekah [town] and the villages near it. All of those people lived in Judea, in the area between Beersheba [in the south] and Hinnom Valley [in the north, at the edge of Jerusalem]. **31** The people of the tribe of Benjamin lived in Geba [city], Micmash [city], Aija [city which is also known as Ai], Bethel [city] and in nearby villages, **32** in Anathoth [city], in Nob [city], in Ananiah [town], **33** in Hazor [city], in Ramah [city], in Gittaim [city], **34** in Hadid [city], in Zeboim [town], in Neballat [town], **35** in Lod [town], in Ono [town], and in Craftsmen's Valley. **36** Some of the groups of the descendants of Levi who had lived in Judea were sent to live with [the people of the tribe of] Benjamin.

12 [Many] priests and [other] descendants of Levi returned (from Babylonia/to Jerusalem) with Zerubbabel and

Jeshua. They included Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, 3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, 4 Iddo, Ginnethon, Abijah, 5 Mijamin, Moadiah, Bilgah, 6 Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah. All those men were leaders of the priests during the time that Jeshua [was the Supreme Priest]. 8 [Some of the other] descendants of Levi who returned were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah. They were in charge of singing songs to thank [God]. 9 Bakbukiah, Unni, and other descendants of Levi formed a choir that stood opposite the other group [and sang in reply to them]. 10 Jeshua [who was the Supreme Priest] was the father of Joiakim, who was the father of Eliashib, who was the father of Joiada, 11 who was the father of Jonathan, who was the father of Jaddua. 12 When Joiakim was the Supreme Priest, these were the leaders of the clans of priests: Meraiah, from [the clan of] Seraiah; Hananiah, from [the clan of] Jeremiah; 13 Meshullam, from [the clan of] Ezra; Jehohanan, from [the clan of] Amariah; 14 Jonathan, from [the clan of] Malluch; Joseph, from [the clan of] Shecaniah; 15 Adna, from [the clan of] Harim; Helkai, from [the clan of] Meremoth/Maraioth; 16 Zechariah, from [the clan of] Iddo; Meshullam, from [the clan of] Ginnethon; 17 Zicri, from [the clan of] Abijah. There was also a leader from [the clan of] Miniamin; Piltai, from [the clan of] Moadiah; 18 Shammua, from [the clan of] Bilgah; Jehonathan, from [the clan of] Shemaiah; 19 Mattenai, from [the clan of] Joiarib; Uzzi, from [the clan of] Jedaiah; 20 Kallai, from [the clan of] Sallu/Sallai; Eber, from [the clan of] Amok; 21 Hashabiah, from [the clan of] Hilkiah; and Nethanel, from [the clan of] Jedaiah. 22 During the years that Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua [were Supreme Priests], they (wrote/kept a list of) the names of the clans who were descendants of Levi. When Darius was the king of Persia, they stopped writing that list. 23 They wrote the names of the leaders of the clans who were descendants of Levi in the Book of Events [in Israel], but they stopped writing those names when Eliashib's grandson Johanan [was the Supreme Priest]. 24 These are the leaders of the clans [who are] descendants of Levi: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel and others who were divided into two groups. The two groups faced each other, one group replying to the other, during the time that they praised and thanked God. They did that just as King David, the man who served God well, had instructed. 25 These singers included Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, and Obadiah. The men who guarded the storerooms close to the gates [of the temple] were Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub. 26 They did that work during the time that Joiakim, who was the son of Jeshua and the grandson of Jehozadak, [was the Supreme Priest,] and I was the governor, and Ezra was the priest who knew the Jewish laws very well. 27 When we dedicated the wall around Jerusalem, we summoned the descendants of Levi [who help the priests] from the nearby places where they [were living]. We asked them to [join with us to] celebrate when we dedicated the wall. We wanted them to sing songs to thank [Yahweh] and make music by playing cymbals and harps and other stringed instruments. 28 We summoned the descendants of Levi who habitually sang together. They came to Jerusalem from nearby areas [where they had settled], and from places around Netophah [town southeast of Jerusalem], 29 and from three places [northeast of Jerusalem]—Beth Gilgal [city] and the areas around Geba and Azmaveth. Those singers had built villages to live in near Jerusalem. 30 [When they came to Jerusalem], the priests and [other] descendants of Levi [who help the priests] performed rituals to cause themselves to be acceptable to God, and then they performed similar rituals to purify the [other] people, the gates, and the wall. 31 Then I gathered together the leaders of Judah on top of the wall, and I appointed them to lead two large groups to march around the city [on top of the wall], thanking God. [As they faced the city,] one group walked to the right toward the Dung Gate. 32 Behind their leaders marched Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah. 33 Behind them marched a group of priests who were blowing trumpets. They were Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah. Next came Zechariah, the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, a descendant of Asaph. 36 Behind them marched other members of Zechariah's clan: Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani. They all were playing the same kinds of musical instruments that King David had played [many years previously]. Ezra, the man who knew the Jewish laws very well, marched in front of this group. 37 When they reached the Fountain Gate, they went up the steps to David's City, past his palace, and then to the wall at the Water Gate, on the east side [of the city]. 38 The other group of those who were thanking [Yahweh] marched to the left on top of the wall. I followed them with half of the people. [We marched] past the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall. 39 [From there we marched] past Ephraim Gate, Jeshanah Gate, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, the Tower of the Hundred Soldiers, to the Sheep Gate. We finished marching near the gate into the temple. 40 Both the groups reached the temple while they were thanking God. They stood in their places there. The leaders who were with me [also stood with me in our places]. 41 My group included these priests who were [all blowing] trumpets: Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai,

Zechariah, Hananiah, 42 [another] Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers, whose leader was Jezrahiah, sang loudly. 43 [After we went outside the temple,] we offered many sacrifices. We men all rejoiced because God had caused us to be very happy. The women and the children also rejoiced. People far away could hear the noise that we made there in Jerusalem. 44 On that day, men were appointed {they appointed men} to be in charge of the storerooms where they kept the money that people contributed [for the temple]. They also kept there [the other things that the people contributed—] the tithes and the first part of the grain and fruit that was harvested each year. Those men collected those things from the fields/farms near the cities, and [took them to Jerusalem and] gave them to the priests and the [other] descendants of Levi, as [Moses had said in his] laws that they should do. All the Israeli people were happy about the work that the priests and the descendants of Levi did, 45 because they performed the rituals to purify things, and the other rituals that God had commanded. The musicians in the temple also did their work as King David and his son Solomon had declared that they should do. 46 Ever since the time that David had been the king and Asaph had been his chief musician, the musicians had led the people while they sang songs to praise and thank God. 47 During the years that Zerubbabel and I governed the Israeli people, they all contributed the food that the singers and temple gatekeepers needed each day. They gave (a tithe/10%) of their crops to the descendants of Levi [who helped the priests], and those descendants of Levi gave (a tithe/10%) of that to [the priests, who were] descendants of Aaron [the first Supreme Priest].

13 On that day, when someone read to the people parts of the laws [that God gave] to Moses, they read where it was written that no one from the Ammon people-group or the Moab people-group was ever to be allowed to be with God's people while they were gathered together [to worship]. 2 The reason for that was that the people of Ammon and the people of Moab did not give/sell any food or water to the Israelis [while the Israelis were going through their areas after they left Egypt]. Instead, the people of Ammon and Moab paid money to Balaam in order that he would curse the Israelis. But God commanded Balaam to bless the people, not to curse them. 3 So when the people heard these laws [being read to them], they sent away all the people whose ancestors had come from other countries. 4 Previously, Eliashib the priest had been appointed to be in charge of the storerooms in the temple. He was a relative of [our enemy] Tobiah. 5 He allowed Tobiah to use a large room in which they had previously stored the grain offerings and the incense, the equipment that is used in the temple, the offerings [that the people had brought] for the priests, and the tithes of grain and wine and [olive] oil that [God] had commanded the people to bring to the [other] descendants of Levi, and to the temple musicians, and to the temple guards. 6 While [Tobias was using that room], I was not in Jerusalem, because in the 32nd year that Artaxerxes was the king of Babylonia, I went back there to report to him. After a while I requested the king to allow me to return to Jerusalem, [and he allowed me to go]. 7 When I arrived in Jerusalem, I found out that Eliashib had done an evil thing by allowing Tobiah to use a room in God's temple. 8 I became very angry, and I threw out of that room everything that belonged to Tobiah. 9 Then I commanded [that they perform a ritual] to make the rooms (pure/acceptable to God) again. And I also ordered that all the equipment used in the temple and all the grain offerings and incense should be put in that room again. 10 I also found out that the temple musicians and [other] descendants of Levi had left Jerusalem and returned to their fields/farms, because the Israeli people had not been bringing to them the food [that they needed]. 11 So I rebuked the officials, saying to them, "(Why have you not taken care of the work in the temple?/It is disgraceful that you have not taken care of the work in the temple.)" [RHQ] So I brought the descendants of Levi and the musicians back to the temple, and told them to do their work there again. 12 Then all the people of Judah again started to bring to the temple storerooms their tithes of grain, wine, and [olive] oil. 13 I appointed these men to be in charge of the storerooms: Shelemiah, who was a priest; Zadok, who knew the Jewish laws very well; and Pedaiah, a descendant of Levi. I appointed Hanan, who is the son of Zaccur and grandson of Mattaniah, to assist them. I knew that I could trust these men while they distributed those offerings to their fellow workers. 14 My God, do not forget all these good things that I have faithfully done for your temple and for the work that is done there! 15 During that time, I saw some people in Judea [who were working] on the Sabbath day. [Some were] pressing grapes [to make wine]. Others were putting grain, [bags of] wine, [baskets of] grapes, figs, and many [HYP] other things, on their donkeys and taking them into Jerusalem. I warned them that they should not sell things to the people of Judea on Sabbath days. 16 I also saw some people from Tyre [city] who were living there in Jerusalem who were bringing fish and other things [into Jerusalem] to sell to the people of Judea on the Sabbath day. 17 So I rebuked the Jewish leaders and told them, "This is [RHQ] a very evil thing that you are doing! You are causing the Sabbath days to be unholy. 18 Your ancestors did [RHQ] things like that, so God punished them,

and as a result, this city was destroyed! And now by causing the Sabbath day to be unholy, you are going to cause God to be angry with us Israeli people [and punish us] more!" **19** So I ordered that at (the beginning of every Sabbath day/every Friday evening) they should shut the gates of the city before it became dark. I also ordered that they should not open the gates until (the Sabbath day was ended [the next day]/Saturday evening). Then [each Sabbath day] I put some of my men at the gates, so they would make sure that nothing to sell was brought into the city on that day. **20** One or two times merchants [DOU] stayed outside of the city on (Friday night/[the night before the Sabbath day]). **21** I warned them, "It is useless [RHQ] for you to stay here outside the walls [on Friday night]! If you do this again, I will tell my men to arrest you!" So after that, they did not come on Sabbath days. **22** I also commanded the descendants of Levi to [perform the ritual to] purify themselves and to guard the city gates, to make sure that the Sabbath was kept holy [by not allowing merchants to enter it on Sabbath days]. My God, do not forget this also that I [have done for you]! And because of your faithfully loving me, allow me to continue to live [many more years]! **23** During that time, I also found out that many of the Jewish men had married women from Ashdod [city], and from [the] Ammon and Moab [people-groups]. **24** The result was that half of their children spoke the language that people in Ashdod speak or some other language, and they didn't know how to speak our language. **25** So I rebuked those men, and I [asked God to] curse them, and I beat them and pulled out [some of] their hair. Then I forced them to solemnly promise, knowing that God [MTY] was [listening], that they would never again marry foreigners, and never allow their children to marry foreigners. **26** [I said to them], "Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned [RHQ] as a result of [marrying] foreign women. He was greater than any of the kings of other nations. God loved him, and caused him to become the king of all the Israeli people, but his foreign wives caused even him to sin. **27** [Do you think that] we should do what you have done, and disobey our God by marrying foreign women [who worship idols]? [RHQ]" **28** One of the sons of Jehoiada, the son of Eliashib the Supreme Priest, had married the daughter of [our enemy] Sanballat, from Beth-Horon [town]. So I forced Jehoiada's son to leave Jerusalem. **29** My God, do not forget that those people [who have married foreign women] have caused it to be a shame/disgrace to be a priest, and have caused people to despise the agreement that you made with the priests and with the [other] descendants of Levi [who help the priests])! **30** I did all that to make sure that there were no more foreign people among the [Israeli] people [who would encourage them to worship idols]. I also established regulations for the priests and [other] descendants of Levi, in order that they would know what work they should do. **31** I also arranged for people to bring the firewood [that was needed to burn on the altar, as Moses had declared] that we should [do]. I also arranged for the people to bring the first part of what they harvested [each year]. My God, do not forget [that] I [have done all these things], and bless me [for doing them]!

Esther

1 King Xerxes ruled [a very big empire which had] 127
provinces. It extended from India [in the east] to Ethiopia
[in the west]. **2** He ruled the empire [while he lived] in the
capital city, Susa. **3** During the third year that he ruled his
empire, he invited all his administrators and [other] officials
to a big banquet/feast. He invited all the commanders of the
armies of Persia and Media to come to the banquet. He also
invited the governors and other leaders of the provinces. **4**
[The celebration] lasted for six months. During that time the
king showed his guests all his wealth and other things that
showed how great his kingdom was (OR, how great a king
he was). **5** At the end of those six months, the king invited
people to another banquet. He invited to the banquet all the
men who worked in the palace, including those who had
important jobs and those who had unimportant jobs. [This
celebration] lasted for seven days. It was in the courtyard
of the palace in Susa. **6** [In the courtyard] were beautiful
blue and white curtains that were fastened by white and
purple cords/ribbons to rings that were on pillars made
from [expensive white stone called] marble. [The guests
sat on] gold and silver couches. The couches were on a
pavement/floor which had on top of it designs made from
various kinds of expensive stones. **7** [The guests] drank
wine from gold cups. Each cup had a different design on
it. **8** There was a lot of wine, because the king wanted the
guests to drink as much as they wanted. But the king told
the servants that they should not force anyone to drink more
than he wanted. **9** [At the same time, the king's wife,] Queen
Vashti, invited the wives of the men who worked in the
palace to a banquet [in another room in the palace]. **10** On
the last/seventh day of those banquets, when King Xerxes
was partially drunk from drinking wine, he [summoned] seven
of his personal servants. They were Mehuman, Biztha,
Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas. **11** He told
them to bring Queen Vashti to him, wearing her crown. He
wanted his guests to see that she was very beautiful. **12**
But when those servants told Vashti what the king wanted,
she refused to go to the king [because she did not want to
display her beauty in front of a group of half-drunk men]. So
that caused the king to become very angry. **13** Immediately
he had a meeting with the seven men who were the most
important officials in Persia and Media. They were the men
whom he often asked (for their advice/what he should do).
And they were men who knew all the customs and laws [of
Persia]. Their names were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha,
Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan. **15** The king said
to them, "Queen Vashti has refused to obey me when I sent
my servants [to tell her to come here]. What do our laws say
that we should do to someone who [acts/behaves like that]?"
16 While the other officials were present, Memucan told the
king, ["Your majesty], Queen Vashti has (insulted/done wrong
against) you, but she has also insulted all your officials
and everyone else (in your empire/that you rule over). **17**
All the women [throughout the empire] will hear what she
has done, and they will say, 'The king commanded Queen
Vashti to come to him, and she refused.' [So they will not
obey their husbands. Instead,] they will begin to not respect
their husbands. **18** Before this day ends, the wives of all us
officials in Persia and Media will hear what the queen did,
and they also will refuse to obey their husbands. They will
not respect us, and they will cause us to become very angry.
19 So if it pleases you, O king, you should write a law. Like all
the other laws of Persia and Media, it will be a law that (no
one can change/cannot be changed.) Write a law that states
that Queen Vashti will never be allowed to see you again
[and will not continue to be the queen]. Then you can choose
another woman to be queen, a woman who deserves to
be queen more than Vashti does. **20** Then, when everyone
in your empire hears what you have commanded, all the
women, including those who are important and those who
are not important, will respect and obey their husbands."
21 The king and the other officials liked what Memucan
suggested, so he [did that. He wrote a law] proclaiming that.
22 Then he sent letters to all the provinces, stating that all
men should have complete authority over their wives and
their children. He wrote the letters in every language and
type of writing/alphabet that was used in each province.

2 After a while, King Xerxes quit being so angry. He thought
about Vashti, and he thought about the law he had made
because of what she [had done, and he wanted another
wife]. **2** So his personal servants said to him, "[Your majesty,]
you should send some men to search throughout the empire
for some beautiful young women/virgins for you. **3** [After they
find some,] you can appoint some officials in each province
to bring them to the place where you keep (your wives/the
women you sleep with) here in Susa. Then Hegai, the man
who is in charge of these women, can arrange for ointments
to be put [on their bodies] to make them [more] beautiful. **4**
Then the woman who pleases you most can become queen
instead of Vashti." The king liked what they suggested, so
he did it. **5** At that time there was a Jew [living] in Susa,
the capital, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair. Jair
was a descendant of Shimei. Shimei was a descendant
of [King Saul's father] Kish. [They were all] from the tribe
descended from Benjamin. **6** [Many years before that,] King
Nebuchadnezzar had taken (Mordecai/Mordecai's family)

[and brought them from Jerusalem] to Babylon, at the same time he brought King Jehoiachin of Judah and many other people to Babylon. **7** Mordecai had a cousin whose [Hebrew] name was Hadassah. She had a beautiful face and beautiful body/figure. Her [Persian] name was Esther. After her father and mother died, Mordecai took care of Esther as though she were his own daughter. **8** After the king commanded [that they search for some beautiful women], they brought Esther and many other young women to the king's palace [in Susa], and (the king put Hegai/Hegai was put) in charge of them. **9** Hegai was very pleased with Esther, and he treated her well. He immediately arranged for her to be given ointments to make her [even more] beautiful, and [he ordered that] special food [would be given to her]. [He arranged that] seven maids from the king's palace [would take care of her], and arranged that she/they would stay in the best rooms. **10** Esther did not tell anyone that she was a Jew, because Mordecai had told her not to tell anyone. **11** Every day Mordecai walked near the courtyard of the place where those women stayed. He asked [people who entered the courtyard] to find out [and tell him] what was happening to Esther. **12** Before these women were taken to the king, they put ointments on [the bodies of] these women for one year to make them more beautiful. For six months they [rubbed olive] oil mixed with myrrh [on their bodies each day]. For [the next] six months they rubbed ointments and perfumes on their bodies. **13** Then, when one of these women [was summoned to] go to the king, she was allowed to wear whatever clothes and jewelry she chose. **14** In the evening, they would take her [to the king's own room]. The next morning, they would take her to another place where the women [who had slept with the king] stayed. There another official whose name was Shaashgaz was in charge [of those women]. [Those women would live there for the rest of their lives, and] one of those women would go back to the king again only if the king very much wanted her to come again, and only if he told Shaashgaz the name of the woman. **15** Everyone who saw Esther liked her. After King Xerxes had been ruling for seven years, it was Esther's turn to go to him. When they took her to the king, it was during the middle part of the winter. She wore only the things that Hegai suggested. **17** The king liked Esther more than he liked any of the other women [that they brought to him]. He liked her so much that he put on her head the queen's crown, and he declared that Esther would be the queen instead of Vashti. **18** To celebrate her [becoming the queen], he had a big banquet/feast prepared for all his administrators and [other] officials. He generously gave [expensive] gifts to everyone, and he declared that in all the provinces there would be a holiday, [a time when people did not have to pay taxes]. **19** Later all those women who had spent a night with the king were gathered together again. By that time Mordecai had become an official at the palace. **20** But Esther still did not tell anyone that she was a Jew. She continued to do what Mordecai had told her to do. **21** One day when Mordecai was doing his work in the palace, two of the king's officials were there. Their names were Bigthana and Teresh. They were the guards who stood outside the king's own rooms. They became angry [with the king], and they were planning how they could assassinate/kill him. **22** But Mordecai heard about what they were planning, and he told that to Queen Esther. Then she told the king what Mordecai had found out. **23** The king investigated and found out that Mordecai's report was true. So the king ordered that those two men be hanged. When that was done, (an official wrote a report/a report was written) about it in a book called 'The book that records what happened while Xerxes was king'.

3 Some time later, King Xerxes (promoted/gave his most important job/work to) Haman, the son of Hammedatha, who was a descendant of [King] Agag. Haman became more important than all his other officials. [Only the king was more important.] **2** Then the king commanded that all the other officials had to bow down in front of Haman to honor him [when he walked by]. But Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman. **3** The [other] officials [saw that, and they] asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey what the king commanded?" **4** Mordecai told them that he was a Jew, [and that Jews would bow down only to God]. Day after day the other officials spoke to Mordecai about that, but he still refused to obey. So they told Haman about it, to see if Haman would tolerate it. **5** When Haman saw that Mordecai would not bow down to him, he became extremely angry. **6** [After he found out that Mordecai was a Jew,] he decided that it would not be enough to get rid of only Mordecai. He decided to kill all the Jews in all the area that Xerxes ruled. **7** So, during the twelfth year that Xerxes was ruling, during the month of April, [Haman told his advisors to] (cast lots/throw small marked stones) to determine the best month and the best day to kill the Jews. Haman's advisors did that, and the day that was selected was March 7th [during the following/next year]. **8** Then Haman [went to] the king [and] said to [him], "[Your majesty,] there is a certain group of people who live in many areas [of your empire] whose customs are different from ours. They even refuse to obey your laws. So it would be good for you to get rid of them. **9** If it pleases you, command that they should all be killed. [If you do that,] I will give (375 tons/750,000 pounds) of silver to your administrators so that you can use it for your government." **10** The king liked [what Haman said, so, and

to confirm what he decided], he gave the ring that had his official seal on it to Haman, who now hated the Jews. **11** The king told Haman, "Keep your money, but do what you want to with those people [whom you talked about]!" **12** On April 17th Haman summoned the king's secretaries, and he dictated a letter to them that they [translated and] wrote to all the governors and administrators and other officials in all the provinces. They wrote copies of the letter in every language and every kind of writing/alphabet that was used in the empire. They wrote that all the Jews, [including] young people and old people, women and children, had to be killed on one day. That day was March 7th of the following year. They also wrote that [those who killed the Jews] could take everything that belonged to the Jews. [They signed] the king's name [at the end of] the letters. Then they sealed the letters [with wax, and stamped the wax by] using the king's ring. Then they sent the letters swiftly to every province in the empire, **14** The king [also commanded that] copies of these letters should be [nailed up] where [all the people] could see them, in every province, so that the people would be ready to do on the day the king had set [what was written in the letter]. **15** Then, according to what the king commanded, men [riding horses] took those letters quickly to every province [in the empire]. And one of the letters was read [aloud to the people] in the capital city, Susa. Then the king and Haman sat down and drank [wine], but the people in Susa were very perplexed [about why this was going to happen].

4 When Mordecai found out about those [letters, he was so anguished that] he tore his clothes and put on [rough] sackcloth and [threw] ashes over himself. Then he went into the city, crying very loudly. **2** He stood outside the gate of the palace, because no one who was wearing sackcloth was allowed to enter the palace. **3** In every province [of the empire], when the letter from the king was read to the Jewish people, they cried and mourned. They (fasted/abstained from eating food), and wailed loudly. Many of them also put on sackcloth and threw ashes on themselves and lay [on the ground]. **4** When Esther's maids and other officials came to her and told her what Mordecai had done, she was very distressed. So she sent to Mordecai [some good] clothes to wear instead of the sackcloth, but he refused to take them. **5** Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's officials whom he had appointed to help take care of Esther. She told him to go [out and talk] to Mordecai to find out what was distressing him and why [he was wearing sackcloth to show] that he was grieving. **6** Hathach went to Mordecai, who was in the plaza in front of the palace gate. **7** Mordecai told him everything that had happened. He told him how much money Haman had promised to give to the government if the king commanded that all the Jews be killed. **8** Mordecai also gave to Hathach a copy of the decree that had been read in Susa, [in which it was stated] that all the Jews must be killed. He told Hathach to show the copy to Esther. He told Hathach to explain to Esther what (it meant/would happen). Then he told him to urge her to go to the king and request the king to act mercifully to her people. **9** So Hathach returned to Esther and told her what Mordecai said. **10** Then Esther told Hathach to [return to] Mordecai [and] tell this [to him]: **11** "There is a law [about people going to talk to the king]. All the king's officials and all the people in the empire know this law. [In that law it states that] anyone who goes to the king in his inner court without having been summoned by the king must be executed. Only those to whom the king has extended his scepter/staff will not be executed. And a month has passed since the king has summoned me, [so what will happen to me if I try to see him and he doesn't want to see me?]" **12** So Hathach [went back to] Mordecai [and] told [him] what Esther had said. **13** Mordecai replied, "[Go back and] tell this to Esther: 'Do not think that just because you live there in the palace, you will escape when all the other Jews [are killed]. **14** If you say nothing now, someone from some other place will rescue [many of] us Jews, but you and your relatives will be killed. Furthermore, (perhaps [God]/who knows if [God]) has put you here [as queen] (for a situation like this/to prevent this from happening to us)!'" [RHQ] **15** Then [after Hathach told this to] Esther, [she] told him to return to Mordecai and say this to him: **16** "Gather together all the Jews here in Susa, and tell them to (fast/abstain from food) for my sake. Tell them to not eat or drink anything for three days and nights. My maids and I will also fast. Then, I will go to talk to the king. Even if (I am executed/they execute me) for disobeying the law [by seeing him when he does not hold out the scepter/staff toward me, I am willing for that to happen"]. **17** So [after Hathach told this to Mordecai,] Mordecai went and did what Esther told him to do.

5 Three days later, Esther [prepared a big banquet/feast. Then she] put on the robes that showed that she was queen, and she went to the inner courtyard of the palace, across from the room where the king was. He was sitting on the throne, facing the entrance [of the room]. **2** When the king saw Esther standing there in the courtyard, he extended the gold scepter/staff toward her [to signal that he would be glad to talk to her]. So Esther came close and touched the tip of the scepter/staff. **3** Then the king asked her, "Esther, what do you want? Tell me, and I will give you what you want, even if you ask me to give you half of my kingdom!" **4** Esther replied, "[Your majesty,] if it pleases you, you and Haman come to the banquet that I have prepared for you!" **5**

The king said [to his servants], "Go and tell Haman to come quickly to a banquet that Esther has prepared for the two of us!" So the king and Haman went to the banquet that Esther had prepared for them. **6** While they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, "Tell me what you [really] want. I will give it to you, even if [you ask for] half of my kingdom." **7** Esther replied, "[I will tell you] what I want [most of all. Your majesty], if you are pleased with me, and if you are willing to give me what I am requesting, please come [again] tomorrow to another banquet that I will prepare for the two of you. Then I will tell you [what I really want"]. **9** Haman was feeling very happy as he left the banquet. But then he saw Mordecai sitting at the gate of the palace. Mordecai did not stand up and tremble fearfully in front of Haman, so Haman became extremely angry. **10** However, he did not show that he was angry; he [just] went home. Then he gathered together his wife Zeresh and his friends, **11** and he boasted to them about being very rich, and about having many children. He also boasted that the king had greatly honored him, and that the king had (promoted him/given him the second-most important job in the empire), so that [all] the other officials had to respect him. **12** Then Haman added, "And that is not all! Queen Esther invited just two of us, the king and me, to a banquet she prepared for us today. And she is inviting [only] the two of us to another banquet that she will prepare tomorrow!" **13** Then Haman said, "But those things (mean nothing to me/do not make me happy) while I keep seeing that Jew, Mordecai, [just] sitting there at the gate of the palace [and ignoring me]!" **14** So Haman's wife Zeresh and all his friends [who were there] suggested, "[Why don't you quickly] set up (a gallows/posts on which to hang someone). Make it 75 feet tall. Then tomorrow morning ask the king to hang Mordecai on it. After that, you can go to the banquet with the king and be cheerful." That idea pleased Haman [very much], so he gave [men] orders to set up the gallows/posts.

6 That night the king was unable to sleep, so he [summoned] a servant [and] told [him] to bring the records of what had happened during all the time he had been king. [So the servant brought the records] and read some of them to the king. **2** [The servant read about] Bigthana and Teresh, the two men who had guarded the entrance to the king's rooms. He read the account of when Mordecai had found out that they planned to assassinate the king [and that he had told the king about it]. **3** The king asked [some of his servants], "What did we do to reward Mordecai or show that we appreciate what he did?" The servants replied, "We did not do anything for him." **4** At that moment, Haman entered the outer courtyard of the palace. He wanted to talk to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows that he had [just] set up. The king [saw him and] said, "Who is [that out there] in the courtyard?" **5** His servants replied, "That is Haman standing there in the courtyard." The king said, "Bring him in [here]!" **6** When Haman came in, the king asked him, "What should I do for a man whom I want to honor?" Haman thought to himself, "(Whom would the king like to honor more than me?/I think there is no one whom the king would like to honor more than me!)" [RHQ] **7** So he replied to the king, "If there is someone you wish to honor, **8** you should [tell your servants to] bring him one of the robes you wear [you to show that you are] the king. Also tell them to bring one of the horses you have ridden. Tell them to put a fancy headdress on the horse's head to show that it belongs to you, the king. **9** Then tell one of your very important officials to put the robe on the man whom you want to honor, and tell that man to sit on the horse, and then lead the horse through the city streets. And tell that official to keep shouting, 'This is what (the king does/is doing) for the man whom he wants to honor!'" **10** The king replied to Haman, "[Fine]! Go and do what you said immediately! Get my robe and my horse, and do just what you suggested! Do it for Mordecai, the Jew, who is sitting [outside] at the gate of the palace. Do not forget anything that you suggested!" **11** So Haman did what the king said. He got the robe and the horse. He put the robe on Mordecai, and as Mordecai sat on the horse, Haman led the horse through the city streets proclaiming "This is what the king (does/is doing) for the man whom the king wants to honor!" **12** Then, Mordecai returned [and sat] at the gate of the palace. But Haman hurried home, covering his face [because he felt] completely disgraced/humiliated. **13** He told his wife Zeresh and his friends everything that had happened to him that day. Then his wife and his friends said to him, "Mordecai, the man who has caused you to be completely disgraced/humiliated, is a Jew. [It is clear that the God whom the Jews worship is fighting for them.] So you will never be able to defeat Mordecai. He will defeat you!" **14** And while they were still talking, some of the king's officials arrived to take Haman quickly to the banquet/feast that Esther had prepared.

7 So the king and Haman went to eat the second banquet/feast that Queen Esther had prepared. **2** As they were drinking wine, the king asked again, "Esther, what do you want me to do [for you? Tell me, and] I will do it for you. Even if [you ask me for] half of my kingdom, I will give it to you." **3** Esther replied, "O king, if you are pleased with me, and if you are willing to do [what I ask], save me, and save my people. That is what I want you to do for me. **4** [It is as though] I and my people [are cattle that] have been sold to

be slaughtered. [It is as though] we have been sold to people who want to completely destroy us. If we had only been sold to people to become their male and female slaves, I would not say anything, because that would have been a matter too small to bother you, the king." **5** Then King Xerxes asked her, "Who would want to do such a [terrible] thing? Where is he?" **6** Esther replied, "[The man who is] our enemy is this evil man Haman!" Then Haman was terrified as he stood in front of the king and queen. **7** The king became extremely angry. He immediately left his wine and got up and went outside into the palace garden [to decide what to do]. But Haman stayed, in order to plead with Queen Esther that she would spare his life. **8** He threw himself down on the couch where Esther was reclining. But at that moment the king returned from the garden to the room where they had been eating. [He saw Haman, and assumed he was preparing to rape Esther]. He exclaimed, "Are you going to rape the queen while she is here with me in my own palace?" As soon as the king said that, some officials covered Haman's head, [as they did to people who were about to be hanged]. **9** Then Harbona, one of the king's personal officials, said, "[Outside,] near Haman's house, there is a (gallows/set of poles for hanging someone). It is 75 feet high. Haman made it for Mordecai, the man who spared your life!" The king said, "Hang him on it!" **10** So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for hanging Mordecai! And then (the king's anger cooled off/the king was no longer so angry).

8 [Later] on that same day, King Xerxes declared that everything that Haman, the enemy of the Jews, owned, would now belong to Queen Esther. Esther told the king that Mordecai was her cousin. [When] the king [heard that, he sent a message to tell] Mordecai to come in. **2** When Mordecai came in, the king took off the ring that had his official seal on it, the ring that he had [previously] given to Haman, and gave it to Mordecai, [to indicate that Mordecai was now his most important official]. And Esther appointed Mordecai to be in charge of everything that had belonged to Haman. **3** Esther again [came to] talk to the king. She prostrated herself at his feet, crying. She [wanted to] plead for him to stop what Haman had planned, to kill all the Jews. **4** The king held out his gold scepter/staff toward Esther, so Esther arose and stood in front of him. **5** She said, "Your majesty, if you are pleased with me, and if you think that it is the right thing to do, make a new law to cancel what Haman decreed, that all the Jews in all the provinces in your empire should be killed. **6** I cannot bear seeing all my family and [all the rest of] my people killed." **7** King Xerxes replied to Queen Esther and Mordecai, "Because Haman tried to get rid of all the Jews, I have given to Esther everything that belonged to Haman, and I have ordered [my soldiers] to hang Haman. **8** So now I am also permitting you to write other letters, to [save] your people. You may put my name [on the letters], and use my ring to seal them because no letter that has my name on it and which is sealed with my ring can ever be changed." **9** Then the king summoned his secretaries, on June 25th, and [Mordecai told them to] write letters to the Jews and to all the governors and other officials in all of the 127 provinces, which extended from India [in the east] to Ethiopia [in the west]. They wrote these letters in all the languages that the people in each area spoke. They also wrote letters to the Jewish people, in their language. **10** They wrote in those letters that the Jews in every city were permitted by the king to gather together to protect themselves. They also were permitted to kill any group of soldiers who attacked them. They were also permitted to kill the women and children of those who attacked them, and to take the possessions of the people whom they killed. **12** [All this was to be done] on March 7th of the following year. Mordecai signed the king's name on the letters, and sealed them with the seal that was on the king's ring. Then he gave them to messengers, who rode on fast horses that had been raised especially for the king. **13** Copies of this law were to be nailed to posts in every province and read to all the people, in order that the Jews would be ready to (get revenge on/fight against) their enemies on March 7th. **14** The king commanded the men who took these letters [to all the provinces] to ride quickly on the king's horses. And copies of the letter were also posted and read to the people in [the capital city,] Susa. **15** Before Mordecai left the palace, he put on the blue and white robe and a large gold crown that the king had given him. He also put on a coat made of fine purple cloth. When the people in Susa heard the new law, they all shouted and cheered. **16** The Jews in Susa were very happy, and [other people] honored [them]. **17** And when the new law arrived in every city and province, the Jews there celebrated and prepared feasts and were very joyful. And many men throughout the empire [were circumcised and] became Jews, because they were now afraid of [what] the Jews [would do to them if they were not Jews].

9 The first law that the king had commanded was to be made effective on March 7th. On that day the enemies of the Jews hoped to get rid of them. But instead, on that same day the Jews defeated their enemies. **2** Throughout the empire, the Jews gathered together in their cities to attack those who wanted to get rid of them. No one could fight against the Jews, because all the other people in the areas where the Jews lived were afraid of them, [so they did not want to help anyone who attacked the Jews]. **3** All the

governors and [other] officials and important people in all the provinces helped the Jews, because they were afraid of Mordecai. **4** They were afraid of him because in all the provinces [they knew that] Mordecai was now the king's most important official, [with the authority that Haman previously had]. Mordecai was becoming more famous because [the king was giving him] more and more power. **5** [On March 7th,] the Jews attacked and killed with their swords all of their enemies. They did whatever they wanted to do, to the people who hated them. **6** [Just] in Susa alone, the capital city, they killed 500 people. **7** Among those whom they killed were the ten sons of Haman. [Their names were] Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, **8** Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, **9** Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha. **10** Those were grandsons of Hammedatha and sons of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. The Jews killed them, but they did not take the things that belonged to the people whom they killed. **11** [At the end of] that day someone reported to the king the number of people whom the Jews killed in Susa. **12** Then the king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed 500 people here in Susa, including the ten sons of Haman! [So I think that] they must have killed many more people in the rest of my empire [RHQ]! [But okay], now what else do you want me to do for you. You tell me, and I will do it." **13** Esther replied, "If it pleases you, allow the Jews here in Susa to do again tomorrow what [you] commanded [them] to do today. And command that the bodies of Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows/poles." **14** So the king commanded that the Jews be permitted to kill more of their enemies the next day. After he issued [another] order in Susa, the bodies of Haman's ten sons were hanged. **15** On the next day, the Jews in Susa gathered together and killed 300 more people. But [again,] they did not take the things that belonged to the people whom they killed. **16** That happened on March 8th. On the following day, the Jews [in Susa] rested and celebrated. In all the other provinces, the Jewish people gathered together to defend themselves, and they killed 75,000 people who hated them, but [again] they did not take the things that belonged to the people whom they killed. **17** That occurred on March 7th, and on the following day they rested and celebrated. **18** After the Jews in Susa gathered together [and killed their enemies] on March 7th and 8th, they rested and celebrated on March 9th. **19** That is why [every year], on March 8th, the Jews who live in villages now celebrate [defeating their enemies]. They have feasts and give gifts [of food] to each other. **20** Mordecai wrote down all the things that had happened. Then he sent letters to the Jews who lived throughout the empire of King Xerxes. **21** He told them that every year they should celebrate on the 8th and 9th of March, **22** because those were the days when the Jews got rid of their enemies. He also told them that they should celebrate on those days by feasting and giving gifts [of food] to each other and to poor people. They would remember it as the month in which they changed from being very sorrowful to being very joyful, from crying to celebrating. **23** So the Jews agreed to do what Mordecai wrote. They agreed to celebrate on those days [every year]. **24** They would remember how Haman, son of Hammedatha, a descendant of [King] Agag, became an enemy of all the Jews. [They would remember] how he had made an evil plan to kill the Jews, and that he had (cast lots/thrown small marked stones) to choose the day to kill [DOU] them. **25** [They would remember] that when Esther told the king about Haman's plan, the king arranged that the evil plan that Haman had made to kill the Jews would fail, and that he [would be killed] instead of the Jews, and that Haman and that his sons were hanged. **26** [Because the (lot/small marked stone) that Haman threw was called] Pur, the Jews called these days Purim. And, because of everything that ([Mordecai] wrote/was written) in that letter, and because of all that happened to them, **27** the Jews [throughout the empire] agreed to celebrate in that manner on those two days every year. They said that they would tell their descendants and those people who became Jews to be certain to celebrate this festival every year. They should celebrate just as [Mordecai] told them to do [in the letter] that he wrote. **28** They said that they would remember and celebrate on those two days every year, in each family, in every city, and in every province. They solemnly declared that they and their descendants would never stop remembering and celebrating those days called Purim. **29** Then Mordecai and Queen Esther, who was the daughter of Abihail, wrote a second letter about the Purim feast. Esther used the authority that she had because of being the queen to confirm that what Mordecai had written in the first letter was true. **30** What they wrote [in the second letter] was, "We wish that all of you will be living peacefully and safely/righteously. We want you and your descendants to celebrate Purim each year on the days that we two established, and to do the things that we two told you to do." In that letter, Queen Esther and Mordecai also gave them instructions about (fasting/abstaining from eating food) and being sorrowful. Then copies of that letter were sent to all the Jews who were living in the 127 provinces of the empire. **32** The letter that Esther wrote about the manner in which they should celebrate the Purim feast was also written in an official record.

10 King Xerxes required that all the people in his empire pay taxes. Even the people who lived on the islands [in

the Mediterranean Sea] (OR, in coastal areas) were required
to pay taxes. **2** And all the great and powerful things that
Xerxes did were written in the scroll called/entitled 'The
record of the things done by the kings of Media and Persia'.
In this book were also written [the things done] by Mordecai,
the man whom the king had greatly honored. **3** Mordecai,
who was a Jew, became the king's most important official,
and [all] the Jews also considered him to be a very great
man. They [all] respected him, because he did many good
things for the Jews, and he often asked [the king] to do good
things for them.

Job

1 In the land named Uz, there was a man named Job. He was a very godly/righteous [DOU] man, who greatly respected/revered God and always avoided doing evil things. **2** He had seven sons and three daughters. **3** He owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 1,000 oxen, and 500 female donkeys. He also had many servants. He was the richest man in all the area east [of the Jordan River]. **4** Each year, Job's sons made feasts [in their houses] to celebrate their birthdays. Whenever each one made a feast, he would invite [all his brothers and] his three sisters to come and eat together. **5** When each celebration ended, Job would summon them. He would get up early in the morning and kill animals and burn them on the altar as sacrifices, one for each of his children. He said to himself, "Perhaps [one of] my sons has sinned and said something evil about God in his heart." **6** One day, the angels came and gathered together in front of Yahweh, and Satan came too. **7** Yahweh asked Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan replied, "I have come from the earth, where I been traveling back and forth, seeing what is happening." **8** Yahweh said to Satan, "Have you (noticed/thought about) my [faithful] servant Job? He is very godly/righteous [DOU], he greatly respects/reveres me, and he always avoids doing evil things. There is no one else on the earth like him." **9** Satan replied to Yahweh, "[What you say is true], but Job greatly respects you [only] because of what [you have done for him] [RHQ]. **10** You have always [RHQ] protected [MET] him and his family and everything that he owns. You have made him very prosperous/rich. He has livestock all over this land. **11** But if you take away [MTY] everything that he has, he will curse you openly. [IDM]" **12** Yahweh replied to Satan, "(All right/Okay), I will permit you to take away everything that he has. But do not harm him." Then Satan left, [and he prepared to cause many disastrous things to happen to Job]. **13** One day [after that], Job's sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the home of their oldest brother. **14** While they were doing that, a messenger arrived at Job's home and said to him, "While your oxen were plowing [the fields] and the donkeys were grazing nearby, **15** a group of men from [the] Sheba [area] came and attacked us. They killed all your servants [who were working in the fields] and took away all the oxen and donkeys! I am the only one who escaped to [come and] tell you what happened." **16** While he was still talking to Job, another messenger arrived. He said to Job, "Lightning from the sky [MTY] struck and killed all the sheep and all the men who were taking care of the sheep! I am the only one who escaped to [come and] tell you [what happened]." **17** While he was still talking to Job, another messenger arrived. He said to Job, "Three groups [of robbers/bandits] from Chaldea [land] came and attacked us. They stole all the camels and killed all the men who were taking care of them. I am the only one who escaped to [come and] tell you [what happened]." **18** While he was still talking to Job, another messenger arrived and reported this to Job: "Your sons and daughters were feasting in the home of their oldest brother. **19** Suddenly a (very strong wind/tornado) came from the desert and struck the house. The house collapsed on your sons and daughters and killed them all! I am the only one who escaped to [come and] tell you [what happened]." **20** Job stood up, and tore his robe and shaved his head [because he was very sad/grieved]. Then he prostrated himself on the ground [to worship God]. **21** He said, "When I was born, I had no clothes on. When I die, I will not take any clothes with me. Yahweh gave me [everything that I possessed], and [now] he has taken it all away. But (we should/I will) always praise Yahweh [anyway]! [MTY]" **22** In spite of all these [things that happened to] Job, [he] did not sin by saying that what God had done was wrong.

2 On another day, the angels came again and gathered together in front of Yahweh, and Satan came too. **2** Yahweh asked Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan replied, "I have come from the earth, where I have been traveling back and forth, seeing what is happening." **3** Yahweh asked Satan, "Have you (noticed/thought about) my [faithful] servant Job? He is very godly/righteous [DOU], he greatly respects/reveres me, and he [always] avoids doing evil things. And he still acts in a very godly/righteous manner, even though you persuaded me to [let you] cause disastrous things to happen to him for no reason." **4** Satan replied to Yahweh, "He praises you only because you bless him [IDM]. People will give up everything they have to save their own lives. **5** But if you harm his body [MTY], he will surely curse you openly [IDM]!" **6** Yahweh replied to Satan, "(All right/Okay), you may do to him whatever you want to do, but do not cause him to die." **7** So Satan left, and he caused Job to be afflicted with very painful boils, from the top of his head to the soles of his feet. **8** Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped the boils on his skin, and he sat in ashes [as people did when they were mourning for those who had died]. **9** His wife said to him, "Are you still trying to (be loyal to/faithfully trust in) God? You should curse God, and then you will die." **10** But Job replied, "You talk like people who do not know God talk. (Should we accept only the good things that God [does for us]?/We should not accept only the good things that God [does for us].) [RHQ] We should also accept bad things." So in spite of all these [things that

happened to] Job, [he] did not say anything against God. **11** Among Job's friends were Eliphaz from Teman [town], Bildad from Shuah [land] and Zophar from Naamah [land]. When they heard about all the terrible things that had happened to Job, they left their home areas and went together to Job to console/comfort him [DOU]. **12** When they saw Job from a distance, they almost did not recognize him. They wailed loudly, they tore their robes, and they threw dust over their heads [to show how sorry they were because of what had happened to Job]. **13** Then they sat on the ground with Job for seven days. None of them said anything to Job, because they saw that he was suffering greatly, [and they did not think that anything that they said would lessen his pain].

3 Finally, Job spoke, and he cursed the day that he was born. **2** He said, **3** "I wish that the day when I was born could be eradicated, and also the night when I was conceived. **4** I wish that the day when I was born would have been covered in darkness. I wish that God who is in heaven [MTY] would have forgotten about that day, and that the sun would not have shone on it. **5** I wish that thick/intense darkness would have filled that day, and that a black cloud would have come over it and blotted out all light and caused people to be terrified. **6** I wish that the night when I was conceived would be erased from the calendar, with the result that it would never again appear as one night in any month, and that it would not be included in any calendar. **7** I wish that no child would again be conceived on that night of the month [MET], and that no one would again be happy on that night. **8** I want those people who (curse/put evil spells on) days—those who know how to arouse/awaken the great sea monster—to curse that day. **9** I wish that the stars that shone early in the morning on that day [after I was conceived] will not shine again. I want those stars to have wished in vain for light to shine; and that they would not have shone on that day. **10** [That was an evil day] because my mother was able to conceive; instead, I was born, and I have now experienced all these terrible things. **11** "I wish that I had died [RHQ] when I was born— at the time I emerged from my mother's womb. **12** I wish that my mother had not [RHQ] allowed me to live. I wish that she had not nursed me. **13** If I had died at the time when I was born, I would be asleep, resting peacefully [in the place where the dead people are]. **14** I would be resting with kings whose [beautiful palaces] that they built are now in ruins (OR, who rebuilt [palaces] that had previously been destroyed), and I would be resting with their officials [who have also died]. **15** I would be resting with princes who were wealthy, whose palaces were filled with gold and silver. **16** I wish that I had been buried like a child who died in its mother's womb and never lived to see the light. **17** After wicked people die, they do not cause any more troubles; those who are very tired now will rest. **18** Those who were in prison rest peacefully [after they die]; they no longer have slave-drivers who curse them. **19** Rich people and poor people are alike after they die, and those who were slaves are no longer controlled by their masters. **20** ("Why does God allow those who are suffering greatly [like me] to continue to remain alive?/I do not understand why God allows those who are suffering greatly [like me] to continue to remain alive.) [RHQ] Why does he allow those who are very miserable/distressed to keep living [RHQ]? **21** They long/want to die, but they do not die. They desire to die more than people desire to find a hidden treasure. **22** When they finally die and are buried, they are very happy. **23** Those who do not know where they are [eventually] going when they die [RHQ], people whom God has forced [MET] to continue to live in misery, (it is not right that they continue to live./why do they continue to live?) [RHQ] **24** I continually cry very much; as a result, I cannot eat; and I can never stop groaning. **25** Things that I always worried might happen to me, have happened to me; things that I always dreaded have happened to me. **26** Now I have no peace [in my inner being], I have no peace; I cannot rest; instead, I have only troubles."

4 Then Eliphaz, from Teman, replied to Job. He said, **2** "Will you please let me say something to you? I am not [RHQ] able to remain silent [any longer]. **3** In the past, you have instructed/taught many people, and you have encouraged those who were weak. **4** By what you said, you have helped those who (needed spiritual help/almost quit trusting in God) [MET], and you have enabled them to become spiritually strong again [MET]. **5** But now, when you experience disasters, you become discouraged. The disasters hit you, and you are stunned. **6** You revere God; (does that not cause you to trust [in him]?/that should cause you to trust [in him].) [RHQ] If you were guiltless, you would [RHQ] be confident that [God] would not [have allowed] these disasters [to] happen to you! **7** Think about this: Do innocent people die [while they are still young] [RHQ]? Does God get rid of godly people [RHQ]? [No!] **8** What I have experienced is this: [Just as] [MET] farmers who plant bad [seeds] do not harvest good [crops], [just as those who start] trouble for others, later bring trouble on themselves. **9** They die when God angrily blows his breath on them, when he is very angry with them. **10** [Even though wicked people may be very powerful like] young lions, [God] will get rid of them [MET]. **11** [They will die like] fierce lions [that] starve to death when there are no animals that they can kill and eat, and [their children will be separated from each other like]

young lions separate from each other [to find food]." 12 "I heard a message that someone came and whispered to me. 13 He spoke to me at night when I was having a bad dream that disturbed/frightened me while I was fast asleep. 14 It caused me to be afraid and tremble; it caused all my bones to shake. 15 A ghost glided past my face and caused the hair on [on the back of] my neck to stand straight up. 16 It stopped, but I could not see what form it had. But [I could sense that] there was some being in front of me, and it said in a quiet voice, 17 '(Does God consider anyone to be righteous?/No human beings can be righteous in God's sight!) [RHQ] (Their creator cannot consider them to be pure./Can their creator consider them to be pure?) [RHQ] 18 God cannot be sure that his own angels [will always do what is right]; he declares that some of them have done what is wrong. 19 So he certainly cannot trust human beings who were made from dust and clay, who are crushed as easily as moths are crushed! 20 People are sometimes well in the morning, but in the evening they are dead. They are gone forever and do not even know it (OR, and no one pays any attention to it). 21 They are like [MET] tents that collapse [suddenly]: They die [suddenly] before they become wise.'"

5 "Job, [it is okay that you] continue to cry out for someone to help you, but [I am certain that] [RHQ] no angel will come to help you! 2 Foolish people die because of being (resentful/very angry at someone); people who are easily deceived are destroyed by their being jealous [of others]. 3 I have seen foolish people who seemed to be successful/prosperous, but suddenly [they experienced disaster/trouble because] someone cursed their home. 4 Their sons are never safe; they (lose their case/are condemned) when someone (takes them to court/sues them), because there is no one to defend them. 5 Hungry people [steal] the crops that foolish people harvest, [and] eat [those crops]; they even steal the crops that grow among thorns, and greedy people take away the wealth of foolish people. 6 But evil circumstances/sufferings are not produced by the soil; troubles do not grow up from the ground. 7 People have troubles from the time that they are born just as surely as sparks shoot up [from a fire]. 8 ["If I were suffering like you are,] I would ask God [for help] and tell him (what I am complaining about/about my suffering). 9 He does great things, things that we cannot understand; we cannot even count the marvelous things that he does. 10 He sends rain on the ground; he sends water on our fields. 11 He exalts those who are humble, and causes those who mourn to be joyful (OR, safe, prosperous). 12 He causes crafty/cunning people to not be able to do what they plan to do, with the result that they achieve nothing. 13 He causes people who [think that they] [IRO] are wise to be trapped by the cunning things they try to do, with the result that they do not succeed. 14 [It is as though] even in the daytime they are covered by darkness, and grope around [trying to find the road] at noontime like people do at night. 15 But God saves helpless people from being harmed by what [wicked people] say [MTY], he saves needy people from being injured by [MTY] powerful people. 16 So, poor people confidently expect [that good things will happen to them] but God causes wicked [people] to stop talking. 17 "But those whom God corrects/rebukes are happy; so do not despise/dislike it when [God] who is all-powerful disciplines you. 18 He wounds people, but then he puts bandages on those wounds; he hurts people, but he [SYN] also heals them. 19 He will rescue you many times from your troubles, with the result that nothing evil will happen to you. 20 When there is a famine, he will not allow you to die, and when there is a war, you will not be killed [MTY]. 21 God will protect you when people slander [MTY] you; you will not be afraid when many things [around you] are destroyed. 22 You will [be able to] laugh/scoff when things are destroyed and when there is famine, and you will not be afraid of wild animals. 23 You will not worry about [having big] rocks in your fields [that will make plowing difficult], and you will not worry about [being attacked by] wild animals there. 24 In your tent, you will know that things will go well for you, and when you look at your livestock, you will see that (they are all there/none of them is missing). 25 You will be sure that you will have many descendants, who will be as numerous as blades of grass. 26 You will become very old before you die, like sheaves of grain continue to grow until it is time to harvest them. 27 ["My friends and I] have thought carefully about these things, and [we know that] they are true, so pay attention to what I have said!"

6 Then Job spoke again, saying [to Eliphaz], 2 "If all my troubles and misery could be put on a scale and weighed, 3 they would be heavier than all the sands [on the shores] of the oceans. That is why I spoke (very rashly/without thinking clearly) [about the day that I was born]. 4 [It is as though] Almighty [God] has shot me with arrows. [It is as though] those arrows had poison on their tips, and that poison has gone into my spirit. The things that God has done to me have terrified me. 5 Just like a wild donkey does not [complain by] braying when it has plenty of grass to eat, and an ox does not [complain by] bellowing when it has food to eat [MET], [I would not complain if you were really helping/comforting me]. 6 People complain [RHQ] when they must eat food which has no salt or other tasteless food [MET], [and that is what your words are like, Eliphaz]. 7 Just like I do not want to eat food [like that], and I loathe/detests that kind of food

[MET], [I do not appreciate what you have said to me]. **8** "I wish that God would do for me what I have requested from him [DOU]. **9** I wish that he would crush me [and let me die]. I wish that he would reach out his hand and take away my life. **10** If he would do that, I would be comforted by knowing that in spite of the great pain that I have suffered, I have always obeyed what [God,] the Holy One, has commanded. **11** But now I do not have [RHQ] enough strength to endure all these things. And since I have nothing [to hope for] in (the future/this life), it is difficult for me to be patient now [RHQ]. **12** I am not [RHQ] strong like rocks are, and my body is not made of bronze. **13** So I am not able to help myself, and [it seems that] there is no one to rescue me." **14** "When a man has many troubles, his friends should be kind to him, even if he stops revering Almighty [God]. **15** But [you,] my friends, are not dependable. You are like streams: They spill over their banks [in the spring] **16** when [the melting] ice and snow make those streams overflow, **17** but when the dry season comes, there is no water flowing [in those streams], and the channels dry up. **18** [The caravans of merchants] turn off the path [to search for some water], but there is no water, so they die [in the desert]. **19** The men in those caravans search [for some water] because they are sure that they will find some. **20** But they do not find any, so they are very disappointed. **21** Similarly, you friends have not helped me at all! You have seen that terrible things have happened to me, and you are afraid [that God might do similar things to you]. **22** [After I lost all my wealth,] did I ask any of you for money? [RHQ] Did I plead with any of you to spend some of your money to help me [RHQ]? **23** Have I asked any of you to rescue me from my enemies [RHQ]? Have I asked you to save me from those who (oppressed me/treated me badly) [RHQ]? [No!]" **24** "Answer me [now, and then] I will be quiet; tell me what wrong things I have done! **25** When people speak what is true, that will not hurt the person who hears it, but what you say, criticizing me, [is not true, so your saying it] proves nothing [RHQ]! **26** I am a man who has nothing to hope for, but you try to correct me, and you think what I say is nothing but wind [RHQ]! **27** You do not sympathize with me at all [for all that I am suffering]. [You are heartless!] You would even gamble to see who gets an orphan [as a prize]! **28** Please look at me! I will not [RHQ] lie to you. **29** Stop [saying that I have sinned, and] stop criticizing me unjustly! You should realize that I have not done things that are wrong. **30** Do you think that I am lying? No, I am not lying, because I know what is right and what is wrong [RHQ]."

7 "People need to work hard on this earth, like soldiers do; all during the time that we are alive, we work hard [RHQ], like laborers/servants do. **2** We are like [SIM] slaves who keep wanting to be in the cool shade, and we are like [SIM] workers who are waiting to be paid. **3** God has given me many months [in which I think that it is] useless [to remain alive]; he has allotted/given to me many nights during which I feel miserable. **4** When I lie down [at night] I say, 'How long will it be until morning?' But nights are long, and I (toss/turn over and over) [on my bed] until dawn. **5** My body is covered with maggots and scabs; pus oozes out of my open sores. **6** My days pass as quickly as a weaver's (shuttle/stick that takes the thread back and forth), and they end without my confidently expecting [that things will be better the next day]. **7** God, do not forget that my life is [as short as] a breath [MET]; I [think that] I [SYN] will never again be happy. **8** God, you [SYN] see me now, but [some day] you will not see me any more. You will search for me, but I will be gone [because I will be dead]. **9** Like [SIM] clouds (disperse/break up) and then disappear, people [die and] descend to the place where dead people are, and they do not return; **(Sheol h7585)** **10** they never return to their houses, and people among whom they lived do not remember them any more. **11** So, I will not be silent; while I am suffering I will speak; I will complain [to God about what has happened to me] because I [SYN] am very angry. **12** [God,] why do you watch closely what I am doing? [Do you think that] I am a [dangerous] sea monster? **13** When [I lie down at night,] I think, 'I will be comforted here on my bed; my pain will be less while I am sleeping.' **14** But then you give me dreams that cause me to be afraid; you give me visions that terrify me, **15** with the result that I would prefer to be strangled to death than to continue to [be alive] being only a bunch of bones. **16** I detest continuing to be alive; I do not want to live for many years [HYP]. Allow me to be alone, [because I will be alive] for only a very short remaining time [HYP]. **17** "We human beings are not [very important]; so, why do you pay a lot of attention to us [DOU]? **18** You look at us every morning [to see what we are doing], and examine us every moment [to see if we are doing what is right]. **19** (When will you stop looking at me and leave me alone [for a little time], long enough to swallow my spit?/Please stop looking at me and leave me alone [for a little time], long enough to swallow my spit.) [RHQ] **20** [Why do] you watch me constantly? If I sin, that certainly does not harm you! Why have you set me up like a target to shoot at? Do you consider me to be a heavy load that you are forced to carry? **21** [If I have sinned,] are you not able to forgive me for my sins— the things that I have done that are wrong? Soon I will lie in my grave; you will search for me, but [you will not find me because] I will be [dead and] gone."

8 Then Bildad, from [the] Shuah [area], spoke to Job. He said, **2** "Job, how much longer will you talk like this? What you say is [only] hot air. **3** Almighty God certainly never does [RHQ] what is unfair/unjust. He always does [LIT] what is right/fair. **4** So, it is evident that your children have sinned against him, therefore he has caused them to be punished for evil things that they have done. **5** But, if you will [now] earnestly request [DOU] Almighty [God] to help you, **6** and if you are pure and honest/righteous, he will surely do something good for you and reward you by giving your family back to you and enabling you to prosper. **7** And even though you [think that you] were not very prosperous/wealthy before, during the last part of your life you will become very wealthy. **8** "I request you to think about what happened long ago and consider what our ancestors found out. **9** [It seems as though] we were born only yesterday and we know very little [HYP]; our time here on the earth [disappears quickly, like] a shadow [MET]. **10** So, why do you not allow your ancestors to teach you and tell you something? Allow them to tell you from what they learned! **11** Papyrus can certainly not [RHQ] grow in places where there is no marsh/swamp; reeds certainly cannot [RHQ] flourish/grow where there is no water. **12** [If they do not have enough water], while they are still blossoming, they wither more quickly than other plants wither. **13** Those who do not pay attention to what God says are like those [reeds]; godless people stop confidently expecting [that good things will happen to them]. **14** The things they confidently expect to happen do not happen; things they trust [will help them] are [as fragile as] [MET] a spider's web. **15** If they lean against a house (OR, trust in their wealth; OR, lean on a spider web), it does not (endure/protect them) [LIT]; they cling to things [to be protected], but those things do not remain firm. **16** Godless people [are like plants] [MET] that are watered before the sun rises; their shoots spread all over the gardens. **17** The roots of those plants twist around piles of stones and cling tightly to rocks. **18** But if those plants are pulled out, [it is as though] the place where they were planted says 'They were never here!' [And that is what happens to wicked people who do not heed what God says]. **19** Truly, evil people [MET] are not joyful [IRO] for a long time; other people come and take their places. **20** :So, [I tell you, Job], God will not reject you if you are truly godly/righteous, but he does not help [IDM] evil people. **21** He will enable you [MTY] to continually laugh and to always shout [joyfully]. **22** But those who hate you will be very ashamed, and the homes of wicked people will disappear."

9 Then Job replied, **2** "Yes, I certainly know that [much of] what you said is true. But (how can anyone say to God, 'I (am innocent/have not done what is wrong) and prove it?'/no one can say to God 'I (am innocent/have not done what is wrong) and prove it.') [RHQ] **3** If someone wanted to argue with God [about that], God could ask him 1,000 questions, and that person would not be able to answer any of them! **4** God is very wise [IDM] and very powerful; no one who has tried to challenge God has been able to win. **5** He even moves mountains, without them (OR, anyone) knowing about it. When he is angry, he turns them upside down. **6** He sends earthquakes that shake the ground; he causes the pillars that support the earth to tremble. **7** [Some days] he speaks to the sun, and it does not rise, and [some nights] he prevents the stars from shining. **8** He alone (stretched out/put in place) the sky; he alone puts his feet on the waves (OR, on the huge sea monster). **9** He put in their places [the clusters/groups of stars that are called] The Dipper/Bear, Orion, the Pleiades, and the stars in the southern sky. **10** Only he does great things that we cannot understand; he does more marvelous things than we are able to count. **11** He passes by where I am, but I do not see him; he moves further on, but I do not see him go. **12** If he [wants to] snatch something away, no one [RHQ] can hinder him; no one dares to ask him, 'Why are you doing that?' [RHQ] **13** God will not very easily stop being angry; he defeated [MTY] those who [tried to] help Rahab, [the great sea monster]. **14** "So, [if God took me to court], what could I say [MTY] to answer him? **15** Even though I (would be innocent/would not have done what is wrong), I would not be able to answer him. All I could do would be to request God, my judge/accuser, to act mercifully toward me. **16** If I summoned him to [come to the courtroom] and he said that he would come, I would not believe that he would pay attention to what I would say. **17** He sends storms to batter me, and he bruises me many times (without any reason to do that/even though I am innocent). **18** [It is as though] he will not let me get/catch my breath, because he causes me to suffer all the time. **19** If I would try to (wrestle with/fight against) him, [there is no way that I could defeat him,] [because] he is stronger than I am. If I would request him to appear in court, there is no one who could [RHQ] force him to go there. **20** Even though I was innocent, what I would say would cause him to say that I must be punished [MTY]; even though I had not done anything wrong, he would prove that I am guilty. **21** "I have not done what is wrong, but that is not important. I despise continuing to remain alive. **22** But it doesn't matter, because God will get rid of [all of us,] both those who are innocent and those who are wicked. **23** When people experience disaster and it causes them to suddenly die, God laughs at it, even if they are innocent. **24** God has allowed wicked people to control [what happens

in] the world. [It is as though] he has caused judges to be blindfolded, [with the result that they cannot judge fairly]. If it is not God who has put wicked people in control, who has done it? **25** "My days go by very quickly, like a fast runner; [it is as though] they run away, and nothing good happens to me on those days. **26** My life goes by very rapidly, like a boat made from reeds sailing swiftly, or like an eagle that swoops down to seize a small animal. **27** If I smile and say [to God], 'I will forget what I am complaining about; I will stop looking sad and try to be cheerful/happy,' **28** then I become afraid because of all that I am suffering, because I know that God does not consider that I am innocent. **29** He will (condemn me/declare that I should be punished), so why should I keep trying in vain [to defend myself]? **30** If I washed myself with snow or cleansed my hands with lye/soap [to get rid of my guilt], **31** he would still throw me into a filthy pit; as a result [it would be as though] even my clothes would detest me. **32** "God is not a human, as I am, so there is no way that I could answer him [to prove that I am innocent] if we went together to have a trial [in a courtroom]. **33** There is no one to (mediate/hear us and decide who is right), no one who has authority over both of us [IDM]. **34** I wish/desire that he would stop punishing [MTY] me, and that he would not continue to terrify me. **35** If he did that, I would declare [that I am innocent] without being afraid of him, because I know that I really have not [done what is wrong like God thinks that I have]."

10 "I am tired of living. And I will not be silent and stop saying what I am complaining about. Instead, being very unhappy, I will speak [IDM]. **2** I will say to God, 'Do not say that I must be punished; instead, tell me what wrong you are saying that I have done. **3** Does it seem to be good for you to oppress me, to abandon me, whom you created, and instead, to help wicked people to do the things that they plan to do? **4** Do you understand things the way that we humans do? **5** (Do you live for only a few years, like we do?/You certainly do not live for only a few years, like we do.) [RHQ] **6** So, why do you [RHQ] continue to search for my faults? Why do you hunt for my sins? **7** You know that I am not guilty, and that no one can rescue me from your power [MTY]. **8** "'With your hands you created me and shaped/formed my body; but now you are [deciding that you should not have done that, and you are] destroying me. **9** Do not forget that you made me from [a piece of] clay; are you going to cause me to become dirt again [RHQ]? **10** You certainly [RHQ] directed/controlled it when I was conceived, and you formed me inside my mother's womb [MET]. **11** You fastened my bones together with sinews, and [then] you covered them with flesh inside my skin. **12** You have caused me to be alive, and you have faithfully loved me, and you have carefully (preserved me/kept me alive). **13** "'But you (kept secret/did not reveal) what [you were planning to do to me]; I am certain that you were planning [to do] these [things to me]. **14** You were watching to see if I would sin, in order that [if I sinned,] you would refuse to forgive me. **15** If I am a wicked man, I hope/wish that terrible things will happen to me. But even if I am righteous, I still must bow my head [and feel ashamed], because I am very disgraced and feel miserable. **16** And if I am proud, you hunt me like [SIM] a lion hunts [for some animal to kill], and you act powerfully to injure me. **17** You constantly find more witnesses [to testify that I have done what is wrong], and you continually become more angry/perturbed with me. [It is as though] you are always bringing new troops to attack me. **18** "'God, why did you allow me to be born? I wish/desire that I had died before anyone [SYN] saw me. **19** [I consider that] it would have been better if I had been carried directly from my mother's womb to the grave than for me to live. **20** [I think that] [RHQ] there are only a few days for me to remain alive; so (allow me to be alone/stop attacking me), in order that I may be a little cheerful **21** before I go to the place from which I will never return, where it is always gloomy and very dark [DOU], **22** a place of darkness and dark shadows, where [everything] is confused/disordered, where [even a small amount of] light there is like darkness (OR, there is no light, only darkness).'"

11 Then Zophar, from [the] Naamah [area], said this to Job: **2** "(Should no one answer all that you have said?/Someone should certainly answer all that you have said.) [RHQ] Just because you talk a lot, (should that cause us to declare that you (are innocent/have done nothing wrong)?/that should not cause us to declare that you (are innocent/have done nothing wrong).) [RHQ] **3** Job, (should your babbling cause us to be silent?/your babbling should certainly not cause us to be silent.) [RHQ] When you make fun of us, shall no one [rebuke you and] cause you to be ashamed? **4** You say, 'What I say is true; God knows that I am (innocent/without guilt).' **5** But I wish/desire that God would talk and say something [MTY] to answer you! **6** God knows everything about everything, so I wish/desire that he would tell you the secrets that he knows because he is wise. But you need to know that God is punishing you less than you deserve! **7** ["Tell me], will you ever be able to find out the things about God that are very difficult to understand? Will you be able to find out everything that there is to know about Almighty God? **8** [What there is to know about God] is greater than [the distance from earth to] heaven; so there is no way [RHQ] that you can [understand it all]. It is greater than [the distance from here to] the place of the dead; so it is

impossible for you [RHQ] to know it all. **(Sheol h7585)** **9** What there is to know about God is wider than the earth and wider than the ocean. **10** "If God comes to you and puts you in prison and then brings you to a court, (who can stop him?/no one can stop him.) [RHQ] **11** He knows which people are worthless; and when he sees people doing wicked things, (will he ignore it?/he will certainly not ignore it!) [RHQ] **12** Stupid people [like you] will start to become wise [SAR] when wild donkeys [stop giving birth to wild donkeys and] start giving birth to tame donkeys. **13** "Job, repent [IDM]; reach out your hands to seek God's help. **14** If you have done evil things, stop doing them; and do not allow any people in your house to do wicked things. **15** If you do what I have said, surely you will lift up your head because you will not be ashamed; you will be strong, and not afraid [of anything]. **16** You will forget all your troubles; they will be like [the] water [of a flood] that has all disappeared. **17** [Your troubles will be ended, like the darkness ends] at the dawn; [it will be as though] [MET] the sun is shining brightly on you, like [it shines] at noon. **18** You will feel safe/secure, because you will confidently expect [that good things will happen to you]; God will protect you and enable you to rest safely [each night]. **19** You will lie down, and no one will cause you to be afraid. And many people will come and request you to do things for them. **20** But wicked people [SYN] will not be able to understand [why bad things are happening to them]; they will not have any way to escape [from their troubles]. The only thing that they will want to do is to die. [EUP]"

12 Then Job said [to his three friends], **2** "You (talk as though/You think) [SAR] that you are the people [whom everyone should listen to], and that when you die, there will be no more wise people. **3** But I have as much good sense as you do; I am (not less wise than/certainly as wise as [LIT]) you. Certainly everyone knows [RHQ] all that you have said. **4** My friends all laugh at me now. Previously I habitually requested God to help me, and he answered/helped me. I am righteous, a very godly man [DOU], but everyone laughs at me. **5** Those [like you] who have no troubles make fun of me; they cause those [like me] who are already suffering to have more troubles. **6** Bandits live peacefully, and no one threatens those who cause God to become angry; their own strength is the god [that they worship]. **7** "But ask the wild animals [what they know about God], and [if they could speak] they would teach you. [If you could] ask the birds, they would tell you. **8** [If you could] ask the creatures [that crawl] on the ground, or the fish in the sea, they would tell you [about God]. **9** All of them certainly know [RHQ] that it is Yahweh who has made them with his hands. **10** He directs the lives of all living creatures; he gives breath to all [us] humans [to enable us to remain alive]. **11** And when we [SYN] hear what other people [like you] say, we [RHQ] think carefully about what they say [to determine what is good and what is bad], like we [SYN] taste food [to determine what is good and what is bad]. **12** Old people are [often] very wise, and because of having lived many years, they understand much, **13** but God is wise and very powerful; he has good sense and understands [everything]. **14** If he tears [something] down, no one can rebuild it; if he puts someone in prison, no one can open [the prison doors to allow that person to escape]. **15** When he prevents rain from falling, everything dries up. When he causes a lot of rain to fall, [the result is that] there are floods. **16** He is the one who is truly strong and wise; he rules over those who deceive others and those whom they deceive. **17** He [sometimes] causes [the king's] officials to no longer be wise, and he causes judges to become foolish. **18** He takes from kings the robes that they wear and puts loincloths around their waists, [causing them to become slaves]. **19** He takes from priests the sacred clothes that they wear, [with the result that they no longer can do their work], and takes power from those who rule others. **20** He [sometimes] causes those whom others trust to be unable to speak, and he causes old men to no longer have good sense. **21** He causes those who have authority to be despised, and he causes those who are powerful to no longer have any power/strength. **22** He causes things that are hidden in the darkness to be revealed. **23** He causes some nations to become very great, and [later] he destroys them; he causes the territory of some nations to become much larger, and [later] he causes them to be defeated and their people to be scattered. **24** He causes [some] rulers to become foolish/stupid, and then he causes them to wander around, lost, in an barren desert. **25** They grope around in the darkness, without any light, and he causes them to stagger like [SIM] people who are drunk."

13 "Hey, I [SYN] have seen everything [that you have seen], and I have heard and understood all [that you have said]. **2** What you know, I also know; I do (not know less than/know as much as) you. **3** But I would like to speak to Almighty God, [not to you]; I would like to argue with him [and prove that I (am innocent/have not done things that are wrong]). **4** As for you, you do not allow people to know the truth about me, like someone covers [up a bad surface of a wall] with whitewash [MET]. You are all like doctors [MET] [that give people] useless [medicines]. **5** I wish/desire that you would be silent; that would be the wisest thing that you [could do]. **6** Listen to what I will say to you now; listen while I am saying [what is true about myself]. **7** Are you telling lies about me to prove God [is just in causing me to suffer]? Are

you saying what is deceitful in order to benefit him? 8 Are you trying to defend him? Are you trying to prove [as you would] in a court that he is innocent? 9 If he looks closely, will he find that everything that you have done is good? Or can you deceive him, like you deceive other people? 10 If you secretly say/do things to cause God to act favorably toward you, he will surely rebuke you. 11 He will certainly [RHQ] cause you to be terrified by his power/greatness; you will become extremely afraid. 12 The things that you say [that you think are] wise are [as useless as] [MET] as ashes; what you say to defend your opinions is no better than [MET] clay [that quickly crumbles]. 13 "So, be quiet and allow me to speak, and then it will not matter what happens to me. 14 I am ready to endure anything; I am [even] willing to risk being executed [IDM, DOU] [for what I will say]. 15 If God kills me, then I will not have anyone else whom I can confidently expect to help me, but I am going to defend my behavior in his presence [anyway]. 16 No wicked/godless person would dare to stand in the presence of God, [but because I say that I have not done things that are wrong], perhaps, if I can prove that to God, he will save me." 17 "God, listen very carefully to what I say [DOU]. 18 I am ready to prove that I am innocent, and I know that you also will declare that I am not guilty. 19 I certainly do not think [RHQ] that [you or anyone else] will say that what I say is not true; if anyone did that, I would (be silent/stop talking) and die. 20 "I am requesting you to do two things for me; if you do them, I will (not hide from you/come and stand in front of you) [LIT]. 21 [The first thing that I request is that you] stop punishing [IDM] me; and [the second thing that I request is that you] stop causing me to be very terrified. 22 You speak [first], and then I will reply; or allow me to speak first, and [then] you reply. 23 What have I done that is wrong? What sins have I committed? Show me how I have disobeyed you. 24 Why (do you refuse to be friendly with/have you abandoned) me [IDM]? Why do you (act toward me as though I am/consider me to be) your enemy? 25 I am [as insignificant as] [MET] a leaf that is blown by the wind; why are you trying to cause me to be afraid [RHQ]? Why are you pursuing me? Am I [useless, nothing more than a bit of] dry chaff [RHQ]? 26 [It seems that] you are writing things to accuse me [of doing things that are wrong], even recalling bad things that I did when I was young. 27 [It is as though] you have fastened my feet with chains [to prevent me from walking], and you watch me wherever I walk; [It is as though] you even look closely at my footprints [to see where I have gone]. 28 [As a result], my body is decaying like [SIM] rotten wood, like a piece of cloth that is eaten by [larvae of] moths."

14 "We humans are very frail. We live only a short time, and we experience a lot of trouble. 2 We disappear quickly, like flowers that grow from the ground quickly and then wither and die [SIM]. We are like shadows that disappear [when the sun stops shining]. 3 [Yahweh,] why do you keep watching me [to see if I am doing something that is wrong] [RHQ]? Are you wanting to take me to court to judge me? 4 People are sinners from the time when they are born; who can cause them to be sinless? No one [RHQ]! 5 You have decided how long our lives will be. You have decided how many months we will live, and we cannot live more months than the (limit/number of months) that you have decided. 6 So please stop examining us, and allow us to be alone, until/while we finish our time [here on earth], like a man finishes his work [at the end of the day]. 7 If someone cuts a tree down, we hope that it will sprout again and grow new branches. 8 Its roots in the ground may be very old, and its stump may decay, 9 but if some water falls on it, it may bud/sprout and send up shoots like a young plant. 10 But when we people lose all our strength and die, we stop breathing and then we are gone [forever]. 11 Just like water evaporates from the ocean, or like a riverbed dries up, 12 people [lie down and die and] do not get up again. Until the heavens disappear, people who die [EUP] do not wake up, and no one can wake them up. 13 ["Yahweh,] I wish that you would put me safely in the place of the dead and forget about me until you are no longer angry with me. I wish that you would decide how much time I would spend there, and then remember [that] I [am there]. **(Sheol h7585)** 14 When we humans die, we will certainly not live again [RHQ]. If [I knew that] we would live again, I would wait patiently, and I would wait for you to release me [from my sufferings]. 15 You would call me, and I would answer. You would be eager to see me, one of the creatures that you had made. 16 You would take care of [MET] me, instead of watching me to see if I would sin. 17 [It is as though the record of] my sins would be sealed in a small bag, and you would cover them up. 18 "But, just like mountains crumble and rocks fall down from a cliff, 19 and just like water slowly wears away the stones, and just like floods wash away soil, [you eventually destroy us]; you do not allow us to continue to (hope/confidently expect) [that we will keep on living]. 20 You always defeat us, and then we die [EUP]. You cause our faces to look ugly after we die, and you send us away. 21 [When we die] we do not know if our sons will grow up and [do things that will cause them to] be honored. And if they become disgraced, we do not see that, [either]. 22 We will feel our own pains; we will not feel anything else; we will be sorry for ourselves, not for anyone else."

15 Then Eliphaz replied to Job: **2** "If you were truly wise [RHQ], you would not have replied to us by claiming that you know a lot; what you are saying is just a lot of hot air [MET]. **3** You should not [RHQ] be saying things that do not benefit anyone, using words that do no one any good. **4** [By what you say,] you show that you do not revere God, and you are hindering people from meditating/thinking about God. **5** [It is as though] your sins are telling you what to say; you talk like people who will not admit that they are wicked. **6** Everything that you say [MTY] shows that you should be punished; so, it is not necessary for me to show that. **7** ["Tell me do you know more than everyone else because you think that] you are the first person who was ever born? [SAR, RHQ] Were you born before the hills [were created]? **8** Were you listening when God made all his plans? [SAR, RHQ] Or do you think that you are the only person who is wise? **9** (What do you know that we do not know?/You do not know anything that we do not know.) [RHQ] You do not understand [RHQ] anything that is not also clear to us. **10** My friends and I are also wise; we acquired [wisdom] from old gray-haired people, from people who were born before your father was born. **11** God wants to comfort you, and to speak gently/kindly to you; (is that not enough for you/do you need more than that)? **12** Why do you allow yourself to be (carried away/excited) by your emotions? Why are [you very angry, with the result that] your eyes flash? **13** You are angry [IDM] with God, and so you [MTY] are criticizing/denouncing him. **14** "(How can any person, [including you,] be sinless?/No person, [including you], can be sinless.) [RHQ] (How can anyone on the earth be [completely] righteous?/No one on the earth can be [completely] righteous.) [RHQ] **15** Hey, God does not even trust his angels; he does not consider even them to be [completely] pure. **16** So, he certainly does not [trust] abominable/disgusting and depraved/corrupt people who do evil things [as easily] as they drink water [MET]. **17** Job, listen to what I will tell you. I will declare to you what I know, **18** things that wise men have told me, truths that their ancestors did not keep hidden. **19** God gave this land to those ancestors, who were truly wise; no one from another country caused them to think wrongly [IDM]. **20** It is wicked people who suffer with great pain all the time that they are alive; that is what happens to those who (oppress/act violently toward) others. **21** They constantly hear sounds that terrify them; while they are prospering, bandits attack them. **22** Wicked people surely know that they will not escape from darkness/death, because [they are sure that someone] is waiting to kill them with a sword. **23** They wander around, searching for food, saying 'Where can I find some?' And they know that they will soon experience disasters. **24** Because they are afraid of those things happening to them, they are afraid and worry that these things will come to them like [the army of] a king comes to attack [their enemies and cause them to suffer] [SIM]. **25** [Those things happen to them] because they (shook their fists/dared to fight) against Almighty God, and thought that they were strong enough to defeat him. **26** They stubbornly [IDM] rush to attack God [as though they were carrying] a strong shield [to protect themselves]. **27** They are so fat [that they are unable to fight]. **28** They will live in cities that have been abandoned, cities which have become a heap of ruins. **29** But they will not remain rich very long; Everything that they own will be taken from them; their possessions will all disappear. **30** They will not escape from the darkness [of death]; they will be like trees whose branches are burned by fire and whose blossoms are blown away by the wind. **31** Since they are very foolish, with the result that they trust in things that are really worthless, then things that are worthless will be all that they get. **32** Before they are old, they will wither; they will be like [MET] branches that wither and never become green again. **33** They will be like [SIM] vines whose grapes fall off before they are ripe, like olive trees whose blossoms fall off before they produce any fruit. **34** Wicked/godless people will not have any descendants, and fires will completely burn up the homes of [those who built those homes using] money they received from bribes. **35** They plan to cause trouble and to do evil things, and they are always preparing to deceive people."

16 Job replied [to Eliphaz and the others:] **2** "I have heard things like that before; all of you, [instead of helping me,] are only causing me to feel more miserable. **3** Will your speeches, which are only hot air, never end [RHQ]? Eliphaz, what bothers/irritates you so much that you continue replying to me? **4** If it were you [three and not I] who were suffering, I could say the things that you are saying; I could make great speeches [to criticize/condemn you], and I could shake my head at you [to ridicule you]. **5** But, [unlike all of you,] with what I said [MTY] I would encourage you and try to cause your pain to be less. **6** "But now, if I talk, my pain does not decrease, and if I am silent, my pain still certainly does not [RHQ] go away. **7** God has now taken away all my strength, and he has destroyed my family. **8** He has shriveled me up, and people think that shows that I [am a sinner]. And people see that I am only skin and bones, and they think that proves that I [am guilty]. **9** Because God is very angry with me and hates me, [it is as though he is a wild animal that] [MET] has gnashed his teeth at me because he is my enemy. **10** People gape/stare at me with their mouths open [to sneer at me]; they have struck me on

the face/cheek to ridicule me, and they crowd around me to threaten me. 11 [It is as though] God has handed me over to ungodly people and turned me over to the wicked [DOU]. 12 Previously, I was living peacefully, but he crushed me; [it is as though] he grabbed my neck and smashed me to pieces. [It is as though] [MET] he set me up like a target; 13 people are surrounding me [and shooting arrows at me]. His arrows pierce my kidneys and cause the bile [from my liver] to spill onto the ground, and God does not pity me at all. 14 [It is as though] [MET] I am a wall that he is breaking through; he rushes at me like [SIM] a soldier [attacking his enemies]. 15 ["Because I am mourning,] I wear pieces of rough cloth that I have sewed together, and I sit [here] in the dirt, very depressed/discouraged. 16 My face is red because I have cried very much, and there are dark circles around my eyes. 17 [All this has happened to me] even though I have not acted violently [toward anyone], and I [always] pray sincerely/honestly [to God]. 18 [When I die,] I want the ground [APO] to [act as though I had been murdered and] cry out against those who killed me, and I do not want anyone to stop me while I am demanding [that God act justly toward] me. 19 But even now, [I know that] there is someone in heaven who will testify for me, and he will say that what I have done is right. 20 My [three] friends scorn/ridicule me, but my eyes are full of tears [while I cry out] to God. 21 I pray that [the] one [who knows what I have done] would come to plead with God for me like people plead for their friends. 22 [I say this because] within a few years [I will die]; I will walk along the [to the grave] from which I will never return."

17 "My (life/time to live) is almost ended; I have no strength left; my grave is waiting for me. 2 Those who are around me are making fun of me; I [SYN] watch them while they (taunt/make fun of) me." 3 "God, [it is as though I am in prison;] please pay the money in order that I may be released, because there is certainly no one else who will help me. 4 You have prevented my friends from understanding [what is true about me]; do not allow them to triumph over me, [saying that I have done things that are wrong]. 5 [Our ancestors often said, 'It often happens that] when someone betrays his friends in order to get some of their property, it is that person's children who will be punished for it;' [so I desire/hope that will be true of these friends of mine who are lying about me]. 6 "But now people use that saying of our ancestors when they talk about me; they spit in my face [to insult me]. 7 (My sight has become dim/I cannot see well) because I am extremely sad, and my arms and legs are [very thin, with the result that they almost do not cast] [MET] a shadow. 8 Those who [say that they] are good/righteous are shocked [when they see what has happened to me], and people who [say that they] (are innocent/have not done anything that is wrong) say that I am wicked/godless and should be punished. 9 Those who [claim that they] are righteous will continue to do what [they think] is right, and those [who say] they have not sinned will continue to become stronger. 10 "But even if all of those people came [and stood in front of me], I would not find anyone among them who is wise. 11 My (life/time to live) is almost ended; I have not been able to do the things that I confidently expected to do; [I have not been able to accomplish] anything that I [SYN] desired. 12 My friends do not know when it is night and when it is day; when it is night, they claim that it is daylight; when it is becoming dark, they claim it is becoming light. 13 If my home will be the place where dead people are, where will I sleep in the darkness? **(Sheol h7585)** 14 I may say to the grave, 'You will be [like] a father to me,' and say to the maggots [that will eat my body], 'You will be [like] a mother or younger sisters to me [because you will be where I will always be].' 15 But if I say those things, (will there be anything good that I can confidently expect to happen to me?/there will be nothing good that I can confidently expect to happen to me.) [RHQ] (Is there anyone who knows anything good that I can expect when I am in the grave?/No one knows anything good that I can expect when I am in the grave.) [RHQ] 16 After I descend to the place where the dead are, (will I be able to confidently expect anything good there?/I certainly will not be able to confidently expect anything good there.) [RHQ] [It will be as though] [RHQ] I and the things I hope for will descend with me into the dust [where the dead are]." **(Sheol h7585)**

18 Then Bildad replied [again]: 2 "When are you going to stop talking [RHQ]? If you would stop talking and listen, we could tell you something. 3 Why do you think that we are [as stupid] as cattle? [DOU, RHQ] 4 By being [very] angry and hurting yourself, do you think that doing that will shake the earth, or cause the rocks in the mountains to move? [RHQ]? 5 "What will happen is that the lives of wicked people [like you] end [as quickly as we can] put out a light or extinguish the flame of a fire. 6 And when the lamps above them [in their tents] are extinguished, there will be no light in those tents. 7 [For many years] they walked confidently, but later [in life it was as though] they stumbled and fell, because [they themselves did not heed] the advice [that they gave to others]. 8 [It was as though] they walked into their own net or fell into a pit that they themselves have dug. 9 [It was as though] a trap grabbed their heels and held them fast [DOU], 10 [as though the noose of] a rope that was hidden on the ground, [whose other end was fastened to the limb of a tree], seized them when they walked into it. 11 Everywhere they

went, there were things that caused them to be terrified; [it was as though] those things were pursuing them and biting at their heels. **12** They became hungry, with the result that they had no strength. They experienced disasters [PRS] constantly. **13** Diseases spread all over their skin/bodies; diseases that (caused their bodies to decay/destroyed their arms and legs). **14** [When they died,] they were snatched away from their tents and brought to the one who rules over the dead. **15** Now their tents will burn down, when burning sulfur rains down on those tents! **16** [Because those who died had no descendants], they were [like trees whose] roots have dried up and whose branches have all withered [MET]. **17** No one on the earth will remember them any more; no [one on any] street [will even remember] their names [MTY]. **18** They will be expelled from the earth where there is light, and they will be sent into the place where it is dark. **19** They will have no children or grandchildren, no descendants where they previously lived. **20** People from the east to the west [who hear about what happened to them], will be shocked and horrified. **21** And that is what happens to ungodly/sinful people [like you], to people who (have no interest in/have rejected) God."

19 Then Job replied: **2** "How long will you [three] torment me and crush my spirit by saying to me [that I am wicked]? **3** You have already insulted me many [HYP] times; (are you not ashamed for saying these things to me?/you should be ashamed for saying these things to me.) [RHQ] **4** Even if it were true that I have done things that are wrong, I have not injured you! **5** If you truly think that you are better than I am, and you think that my being miserable now proves that I (am guilty/have committed many sins), **6** you need to realize that it is God who has caused me to suffer. [It is as though] he has trapped me with his net. **7** "I cry out, 'Help me!', but no one answers me. I call out loudly, but there is no one, [not even God,] who acts fairly toward me. **8** [It is as though] [MET] God has blocked my way, with the result that I cannot go where I want to; [it is as though] he has forced me to try to find my way in the darkness. **9** He has (taken away my good reputation/caused people not to honor me any more); [it is as though] he removed [MET] a crown from my head. **10** He batters me from every side, and I will soon die. He has caused me to no longer confidently expect [him to do good things for me]. **11** He attacks me because he is extremely angry with me [MET], and he considers that I am his enemy. **12** [It is as though] he sends his army to attack me; they surround my tent, preparing to attack me. **13** "God has caused my brothers to abandon me, and all those who know me act like strangers to me. **14** All my relatives and good friends have left me. **15** The people who were guests in my house have forgotten me, and my female servants consider that I am a stranger or that I am a foreigner. **16** When I summon my servants, they do not answer; I plead with them to come [to help me, but they do not come]. **17** My wife does not want to come close to me because my breath [smells very bad], and even my brothers detest me. **18** Even young children despise me; when I stand up [to talk to them], they laugh at me. **19** My dearest friends detest me, and those whom I love [very much] have turned against me. **20** My body is [only] skin and bones; I am barely alive [IDM]. **21** ["I plead with] you, my [three] friends, pity me, because God has (struck [EUP] me with his hand/caused me to suffer greatly). **22** Why do you cause me to suffer like God does? Why do you continue to slander [MET] me? **23** "I wish/desire that someone would take these words of mine and write them permanently in a book [in order that people can read them]. **24** Or else, I wish that he would carve them on a rock with (a chisel/an iron tool) in order that they would last forever. **25** But I know that the one who vindicates/defends me in court is alive, and that some day he will stand [here] on the earth [and make the final decision about whether I deserve to be punished]. **26** And even after diseases have eaten away my skin, while I still have my body, I will see God. **27** I will see him myself; I will see him with my own eyes! I am overwhelmed [as I think about that]! **28** "If you three men say, 'What more can we do to cause Job to suffer?' and if you say, 'He has caused his own [troubles],' **29** you should be afraid that God will punish [MTY] you; he punishes those [like you] with whom he is angry; and when that happens, you will know that there is [someone who] judges [people]."

20 Then Zophar replied, **2** "I am very perturbed about what you have said, so I want to reply very quickly. **3** By saying these things you have insulted me, but I know how (OR, because I understand very much) I can reply to you. **4** "Do you not know that from long ago, ever since people were first put on the earth, **5** wicked people [like you] do not continue to rejoice for a long time, ungodly people are happy only for a (moment/very short time) [HYP]? **6** [Even] though their reputation/pride reaches up to the sky and their fame goes up as high as the clouds, **7** they will disappear forever, like their own dung, and those who knew them will ask, '(Where did they go/What happened to them)?' **8** They will be forgotten like [SIM] a dream is, and they will exist no more. They will vanish, like visions [that people see] during the night. **9** Those who saw those people previously will never see them again; even their families [MTY] will not see them any more. **10** Their children will be forced to return the valuable things that those children stole from poor

people [DOU]. 11 Previously their bodies were young and strong, but they will die and [their bodies will] be buried in the ground. 12 "Doing wicked things was like having sweet food in their mouths, and they wanted to continue to taste it. 13 And they did not want to stop doing those things, 14 [but some day] the evil things that they enjoyed doing will become like food [that they swallow] [and which becomes] as bitter as snake venom. 15 Wicked people will not continue to keep the money they have accumulated, like people do not keep the food that they vomit. God takes their wealth from them. 16 What wicked people do is [like] [MET] swallowing snake venom; it will kill them like [MET] the bite of a poisonous snake kills people. 17 They will not remain alive to see abundant blessings [IDM] [from God], milk and olive oil and honey, that are [so abundant they are] like [MET] a stream that flows by. 18 They will be forced to give back the things that they stole from the poor; they will not be able to continue to enjoy those things. They will not remain happy because of what they got from their businesses, 19 because they oppressed poor people and refused to help them, and they took other people's houses [by cheating them]. 20 "They were always greedy and never satisfied. They just keep dreaming about owning more and more things. 21 When they finished eating their food, there was never anything left over [because they had greedily eaten it all]; but now their prosperity will end. 22 When they are extremely prosperous/wealthy, they will suddenly experience a lot of trouble. (Misery will strike them and crush them [PRS]/They will suffer very greatly). 23 When the wicked people are filling their stomachs, God will show that he is very angry with them and punish them; the punishment [that he gives them] will be like [MET] rain falling on them. 24 They will try to escape from [being killed by] iron weapons, but arrows with bronze points will pierce them. 25 The arrows will [go completely through their bodies and] stick out of their backs; the shiny points of the arrows will have blood dripping from them, and those wicked people will be terrified. 26 Their valuable possessions will all be destroyed; a fire that is not lit by humans, [but by God,] will burn them up and also destroy the things that are left in their tents. 27 The [angels in] heaven [MTY] will reveal the sins that those wicked people have committed, and [people on] earth will stand up and testify against them. 28 When God punishes [MTY] [people], all the possessions in the wicked people's houses will be carried away by a flood. 29 That is what will happen to wicked people [like you]; that is what God has decided will happen to them."

21 Then Job replied, 2 "Listen to what I say, all [three] of you; that is the only thing that you can do that will comfort me. 3 Be patient with me, and allow me to speak. Then, after I am finished speaking, you can continue to make fun of me. 4 "It is certainly not [RHQ] people against whom I am complaining, [but God] And it is certainly [RHQ] right for me to be impatient! 5 Look at me! Does what you see not cause you to be appalled and to put your hands over your mouths [and say no more]? 6 When I think about [what has happened to me], I am frightened and my entire body shakes. 7 "[But let me ask this:] 'Why do wicked people continue to live, and become prosperous, and not die until they are very old?' 8 They have their children around them, and they watch them while they [grow up and] start to live in their own houses, and they enjoy their grandchildren. 9 Wicked people live in their own houses without being afraid, and God does not punish [MTY] them. 10 Their bulls always mate with the cows successfully, and the cows give birth to calves and never miscarry. 11 Wicked people send their young children outside [to play], and the children play [happily] like [SIM] lambs [in a pasture]. 12 Some children dance and sing, while others shake tambourines and play lyres, and they are happy when they hear people playing flutes. 13 Wicked people enjoy having good things all the time that they are alive, and they die quietly/peacefully and go down to the place of the dead. (Sheol h7585) 14 While they are alive, they say to God, 'Do not bother us; we do not want to know how you want us to conduct our lives! 15 Why do you, Almighty God, think that we should serve you? (What advantage do we get if we pray to you?/It is useless for us to pray to you.) [RHQ]' 16 Think about it: Wicked people think that it is because of what they have done that they have become prosperous, but I do not understand why they think like that. 17 ("How often does it happen that wicked people die [MET] before they are old?/Very seldom do wicked people die [MET] before they are old.) [RHQ] (Do they ever experience disasters?/They seldom experience disasters.) [RHQ] (Does God ever punish them because of being very angry with them?/God never punishes them because of being very angry with them.) [RHQ] 18 [He does not blow] them away like wind blows away straw; they are never carried off by a whirlwind. 19 You say, 'When people have committed sins, God waits and punishes their children because of those sins;' but [I say that] God should punish those who sin, [not their children,] in order that the sinners will know [that it is because of their own sins that they are being punished]. 20 I hope/wish that wicked people will experience themselves being destroyed, that they will experience being punished by an angry Almighty God. 21 After wicked people are dead, they are not at all concerned [RHQ] about what happens to their families [MTY]. 22 "Since

God judges [everyone,] even those that are in heaven, (who can teach God anything?/certainly no one can teach God anything.) [RHQ] **23** Some people die while they are very healthy, while they are peaceful, when they are not afraid of anything. **24** Their bodies are fat; their bones are strong. **25** Other people die being very miserable; they have never experienced good things happening to them. **26** But both rich and poor people die and are buried, and maggots eat their bodies. [Everyone dies, so it is clear that dying is not always the punishment for being wicked]. **27** "Listen, I know what you [three] are thinking. I know the evil things that you plan to do to me. **28** You say, 'What happened to the tents in which wicked people were living? The houses of evil rulers have been destroyed!' **29** But have you never inquired of people who travel much? Do you not believe their reports about what they have seen, **30** that wicked people usually do not suffer at the time when there are great disasters; that wicked people are the ones who are rescued when God is angry [and punishes people] [MTY]? **31** There is no one [RHQ] who accuses wicked people, and there is no one who (pays them back/gives them the punishment that they deserve) for all the evil things that they have done. **32** The corpses of wicked people are carried to their graves, and people are put there to guard those graves. **33** A huge number [HYP] of people go to the grave site. Some go in front of the procession and some come behind. And the clods of dirt thrown on the graves of those wicked people who have died are like a nice blanket. **34** "So how can you console me by talking nonsense? Every reply that you make is full of lies!"

22 Then Eliphaz replied, **2** "(Can anyone be useful to God?/Certainly no one can be useful to God.) [RHQ] Even people who are wise cannot be helpful to God. **3** If you were righteous, (would that benefit Almighty [God]?/that certainly would not benefit Almighty [God].) [RHQ] If you had (lived a perfect life/never done anything that is wrong), would that help him? **4** "Is it because you have an awesome respect for God that he punishes you? Is that the reason that he puts you on trial? **5** No, it certainly must be [RHQ] because you are extremely wicked. It must be that the evil things that you have done are so many that no one can count them! **6** You must have lent money to others and wrongly forced them to give you things to guarantee that they would pay that money back to you; you must have taken all their clothes and left them with nothing to wear. **7** You must not have given water to those who were thirsty, and you must have refused to give food to those who were hungry. **8** Because you were very powerful, you [must have] taken over all the people's land, and then, being very respected, you have begun to live on that land. **9** [When] widows [came to you for help], you [must have] sent [them] away without giving them anything, and you must have oppressed orphans. **10** Because of all that, now there are pits around you for you to fall into, and suddenly there are things that terrify you and cause you to tremble. **11** [It is as though] it has become very dark, with the result that you cannot see anything, and [it is as though] [MET] a flood covers you. **12** "[But consider this, Job]: God lives [RHQ] high up in the heavens. From there he [RHQ] looks down on the highest stars. **13** So why do you say, 'What does God know [about what we are doing]? [He is hidden from us by] dark clouds, so ([how] can he judge us?/he certainly cannot judge us.) [RHQ]' **14** [Do you think that] while he walks on the dome that covers the sky, there are thick clouds around him, with the result that he cannot see [what we do]? **15** Will you continue to conduct your life the old way that evil people have done [for many years]? **16** They suddenly died while they were still young; they disappeared [like everything disappears when there is] a flood [MET]. **17** They kept saying to God, 'Do not bother us,' and they also said [defiantly], 'Almighty [God] can do nothing [RHQ] to [harm] us!' **18** But it was God who filled their houses with good things, so I cannot at all understand why wicked people think like they do. **19** "But when God punishes wicked people, and righteous people see that, they are glad, and they laugh, ridiculing the wicked people. **20** They say, 'Now our enemies have been destroyed, and all [their possessions] that were left have been burned in a fire.' **21** "So, [Job,] be reconciled to God and make peace with him; if you do that, good things will happen to you. **22** Allow him to teach you, and keep thinking about what he has told you. **23** If you humble yourself and return to God, if you stop doing all the evil things that you have been doing in your house, **24** if you throw away your gold, even the fine gold from the dry stream beds in Ophir [land], **25** and if you allow Almighty [God] to be [as precious to you as] your gold and your silver [have been], **26** you will be happy because of your close relationship with God, and you will be able to approach him [IDM] [confidently]. **27** You will pray to him, and he will do what you request him to do; you will do the things that you promised him that you would do. **28** Everything that you decide to do will be successful; [it] will [be as though] a light [is] shining on the road in front of you. **29** God humbles those who are proud, but he saves those who are downcast/discouraged. **30** God rescues those who (are innocent/have not done things that are wrong), so he will rescue you if you (start doing things that are right/are not guilty [IDM] of doing things that are wrong)."

23 Then Job replied again, **2** "Today I am again complaining bitterly/strongly [to God]; I [continue] groaning, but he [SYN] [continues to] (punish me/cause me to suffer). **3** I (wish that I knew/want to know) where I could meet/talk with him, so that I could go to the place where he lives. **4** If I could do that, I would tell him why [I know that] I am innocent; I would tell [MTY] to him all my (arguments/evidence [to show that I have not done what is evil]). **5** Then I would find out what he would reply to me [DOU]. **6** Would he use his great power to argue with me? No, he would listen to me carefully. **7** I am (an honest/a righteous) man; so I would be able to discuss things with him [fairly], and then he would declare that I am innocent, [and that decision would endure] forever. **8** "But, I have gone to the east, and he is not there; I have gone to the west, but I have not found him there. **9** I have gone north and I have gone south, but I have not seen him anywhere. **10** But he knows how I have conducted my life; and when he has finished testing me, [he] will [see that] I [am] as pure as [SIM] gold [whose impurities have all been burned out]. **11** I [SYN] have faithfully walked on the path that he showed me; I have not stopped [obeying] him. **12** I have always obeyed what he [SYN] commanded; I have treasured the words that he has spoken. **13** "He never changes. There is no one who can [RHQ] stop him [from doing what he desires]. Whatever he wants to do, he does. **14** And he will finish doing for me the things that he has planned for me; [and I am sure that] he has thought about doing many things for me. **15** So I am terrified in his presence; when I think [about what he can do], I am very afraid [DOU]. **16** Almighty God has caused me [SYN] to feel terrified [DOU]. **17** [It is as though] there is only thick darkness in front of me, but it is God that I am afraid of, not the darkness."

24 "(Why does Almighty [God] not set a time when he will judge [evil people]?/I do not understand why Almighty [God does] not set a time when he will judge [evil people].) [RHQ] Those who know him never [RHQ] see him do that! **2** [Some evil people] remove the markers of boundaries of [other people's] land, [in order to steal their land]; they seize/steal [other people's] sheep and put them in their own pastures. **3** [Some] (take away/steal) the donkeys that belong to orphans, and they take widow's oxen to guarantee that the widows will pay back the money that they loaned to those widows. **4** [Some] shove poor people off the road (OR, prevent poor people from (obtaining their rights/being treated justly)), and they force poor people to find places to hide from them. **5** The result is that poor people have to search for food in the desert like wild donkeys do. **6** The poor people harvest left-over grain in other people's fields, and gather grapes from vineyards that belong to wicked men. **7** During the night they have nothing to cover their bodies, nothing to keep them warm. **8** When it rains on the mountains, the poor people become very wet, so they huddle under the rock ledges to be protected [from the rain]. **9** [Some evil men] snatch infants away from their widowed mothers [SYN], and they say 'I will return your babies to you when you repay the money that I lent to you.' **10** But the poor people walk around with no clothes on; they are hungry while they are working to carry [other people's] bundles of grain [to the places where their grain will be threshed]. **11** Poor people press olives to make [olive] oil; they tread on grapes [to make juice for wine], but [they are not allowed to drink any of it when] they become thirsty. **12** In the cities, people who are wounded and dying cry out [to God for help], but God does not heed their prayers. **13** Some wicked people avoid the light [because they do evil things in the dark]; they do not walk on roads that are lighted. **14** Murderers steal things during the night, and then they arise before dawn in order that they may [go out again and] kill needy [DOU] people. **15** Those who want to commit adultery wait for twilight/evening; they say 'I do not want anyone to see me,' so they keep their faces covered. **16** It is during the night that robbers break into houses [to steal things], but during the day they hide because they want to avoid [being seen in] the light. **17** All of those [people] want to do their evil things at night, not in the morning [when it is light], because they are not afraid of [the things that happen during the] night that terrify others." **18** "[But it is wicked people] who are swept/carried away by floods, and God curses the land that they own, and no one goes to work in their vineyards. **19** Just like the snow melts away when it is hot and there is no rain, those who have sinned disappear into the place where dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** **20** Not even their mothers remember them now; wicked people are destroyed like trees that are cut down, and maggots eat their corpses. **21** They mistreat women who have been unable to give birth to children and women who no longer have children [to take care of them], and they never do good things for widows. **22** But God, by his power, gets rid of mighty/influential people. God acts and causes the wicked people to die. **23** God allows them to think that they are secure and safe, but he is watching [MTY] them all the time. **24** They prosper for a little while, and then [suddenly] they are gone; they disappear like weeds wither and die; they are like [SIM] stalks of grain that have been cut off. **25** If this is not true, is there [RHQ] anyone who will show that I am a liar and prove that what I have said is not true?"

25 Then Bildad [also] replied, **2** "God is very powerful; everyone should have an awesome respect for him; he causes everything to be peaceful high up in heaven.

3 (Can anyone count the angels who are in his army [in heaven]?/No one can count the angels who are in his army [in heaven].) [RHQ] (Is there any place where his light does not shine?/There is no place where his light does not shine.) [RHQ] 4 So, (how can God consider anyone to be righteous?/God certainly cannot consider anyone to be righteous.) [RHQ] (How can any human being be truly pure?/No human being can be truly pure.) [RHQ] 5 Consider this: God does not even consider the full moon to be bright, and he does not consider the stars to be spotless. 6 So, (what about humans?/he does not consider humans [to be important].) [RHQ] They are [as insignificant as] [MET] maggots. [God does not think more highly of] people [than he thinks of] worms."

26 Job replied [to Bildad], saying this [sarcastically]: 2 "I am a very weak and helpless man; and (you [certainly] have not helped me [SAR] very much!/[do you think that] you have helped me [SAR] very much?) [RHQ] 3 (You certainly have counseled me well—I, who am not wise at all./[Do you think that] you have counseled me well—I, who am not wise at all?) [RHQ] ([I'm sure you think that] you have given a lot of very good advice to me. [RHQ] 4 Who helped you to say all those [great/wise] things? Who inspired you to speak like you did?" 5 "[Because] the spirits of dead people [are afraid], [they] tremble in the waters that are deep under the earth. 6 God knows all about [those who are in] the place of the dead; there is nothing down there that prevents God from seeing what is there. **(Sheol h7585)** 7 God stretched out the earth over the huge empty space and caused the earth to have nothing [to support it]. 8 He fills the thick/dense clouds with water and prevents that water from bursting the clouds. 9 He causes clouds to (obscure/prevent us from seeing) the moon. 10 He separated the light from the darkness and put the horizon to mark the place where the night ends and the daytime begins. 11 When [he is angry, it is as though] he rebukes the pillars that hold up the sky. They are (shocked/very fearful), and they tremble. 12 With his power he calmed the sea; with his skill/wisdom he destroyed Rahab, the huge sea monster. 13 With his breath he caused the sky to be bright/clear; with his hand he killed the great dragon in the sea. 14 But those events show only a small amount of his power; [it is as though] we are hearing only whispers of his powerful voice. When we hear thunder, [we say,] '(Who can really understand [how great] his power [is]/No one can [really] understand [how great] his power [is]!) [RHQ]'"

27 Job replied again [to his three friends], 2 "Almighty God has refused to treat me justly/fairly. He has caused me to feel bitter/resentful. But [just as surely] as he lives, 3 as long as God's Spirit enables me to breathe, 4 I will not lie; I [SYN] will not say anything to deceive anyone. 5 I will never admit that what you [three] have said is true; until the day that I die, I will insist that I have not done things that are wrong. 6 I will say that I am innocent, and never (say anything different/change what I say); my conscience will never reproach me as long as I live. 7 "I want my enemies to be [punished] like all wicked [people are punished]; I want [God to punish] those who oppose me like [he punishes all] unrighteous [people]. 8 When [it is time for] God [to] get rid of godless/wicked people and [to] cause them to die, there is absolutely nothing good [RHQ] that they can confidently expect [to happen to them]. 9 When they experience troubles, (will God hear them call [out to him for help]?/God certainly will not hear them call out [to him for help].) [RHQ] 10 (Will they be happy about what Almighty [God] does?/They certainly will not be happy about what Almighty [God] does.) [RHQ] (Will they [begin to] pray to him frequently?/They certainly will not [begin to] pray to him frequently.) [RHQ] [Certainly not!] 11 "I will teach you [three] something about the power [MTY] of Almighty God [MTY]; I will reveal what he is thinking. 12 But you [three] have seen for yourselves [what God has done]; so (why are you saying such nonsense?/you should not be saying such nonsense.) [RHQ] 13 "[I will tell you] what Almighty God does to wicked people, the things that he does to people who oppress others. 14 [Even] if they have many children, [many of] those children will die in wars [MTY], and their [other] children will [die because they do] not have enough food to eat. 15 Their children who are still alive will die from diseases, and their widows will not [even] mourn for them. 16 Sometimes [wicked people] accumulate a huge amount [SIM] of silver and pile up clothes like [SIM] those clothes were a pile of clay, 17 but [those wicked people will die, and then] righteous people will wear those clothes, and honest/innocent people will get their silver and divide it [among themselves]. 18 The houses that they build are [as frail/fragile] as [SIM] spider webs, or they are like flimsy huts that watchmen live in [while they guard people's fields]. 19 Wicked people are rich when they lie down [at night], but when they wake up [in the morning, they find out that] their money has disappeared. 20 "Things that terrify them [PRS] strike them like a flood [SIM]; during the night a whirlwind carries them away. 21 [It is as though] the wind from the east picks them up and carries them away from their homes, and they disappear. 22 That wind strikes them without pitying them while they are running away, trying to escape from its force/power [MTY]. 23 That wind [is like someone] clapping his hands [MET] at them [to ridicule them], howling at them wherever they run to."

28 "It is true that there are places where men dig to find silver, and there are places where people refine/purify gold [that they have dug]. **2** People dig iron [ore] out of the ground, and they (smelt copper ore/heat copper ore to get the copper from it). **3** Men use lamps while they work far down under the ground to search for the ore inside the mines where it is very dark. **4** They dig (shafts/narrow holes very deep down into the ground) in places that are far from where people live, where travelers do not go. They work far away from [other] people, swinging back and forth on ropes [as they descend into the mine shafts]. **5** Food grows on the surface of the ground, but down under the ground, [where there is no food,] the miners make fires to break apart the rocks. **6** The stones [that are dug from under the ground] contain (sapphires/very valuable blue stones), and the dirt contains bits of gold. **7** [Some birds have very good eyes,] but even hawks do not know [where the mines are], and falcons/vultures have not seen those places. **8** Lions or [other] proud wild animals have not walked on the roads near those mines. **9** Miners tear apart [MTY] very hard rock; [it is as though] they turn the mountains upside down [to get the ore]. **10** They cut tunnels through the rocks, and they find (precious/very valuable) things. **11** They dam up small streams in order that water does not flow, and they bring up into the light valuable things that are hidden [in the ground and in the streams]. **12** "But wisdom: Where can people find that? Where can we find out how to truly understand things? **13** Humans do not know where to find it; no one can find it [here on this earth] where they are living. **14** [It is as though] water that is deep [inside the earth] and [water that is in] the seas say [PRS], 'Wisdom is not here!' **15** [People] cannot buy wisdom by paying for it with silver or gold. **16** Wisdom is worth much more than fine gold from Ophir [land] or other very valuable stones. **17** It is worth much more than gold or beautiful glass, worth more than vases made from fine gold. **18** Wisdom is worth more than coral or crystal/pure quartz; the price of wisdom is higher/more than the price of pearls. **19** The prices of (topaz/very valuable yellow stones) from Ethiopia and of pure gold are lower/less than the price of wisdom. **20** "So, where does wisdom come from? Where can we find out how to truly understand things? **21** No living humans can see it [MTY]; and birds cannot see it while they are flying [MTY]. **22** [It is as though] the places where people go after they die say [PRS], 'We have only heard rumors about [where to find wisdom].' **23** God [is the only one who] knows how to find wisdom; he knows where it is, **24** because he can see things even in the most remote/distant places on the earth; he can see everything that is below the sky. **25** When he decided how strongly the winds should blow, and how much rain would be in the clouds, **26** and when he decided where rain [should fall], and what path lightning should take [from the clouds down to the ground], **27** at that time he saw wisdom and decided that it is extremely valuable. He examined it and (approved it/said that it was very good). **28** And [then] he said to humans, 'Listen! To have an awesome respect for me is [what will enable you to become] wise; and to truly understand everything, you must first turn away from doing what is evil.'"

29 Job spoke again, **2** "I wish/desire that I could be like I was previously, during the years when God took care of me. **3** During those years, [it was as though] God's lamp [MET] shone on me and gave me light while I walked in the darkness. **4** At that time I was young and strong, and because God was my friend, [he protected] [PRS] my tent. **5** Almighty [God] was with me during those years when all my children were around me. **6** [My herds] provided me with plenty of milk, and streams of oil flowed from the rock where my olives were pressed. **7** "Whenever I went to [the place where the elders gathered at] the city gate, I sat down with them, **8** and when the young men saw me, they stepped aside [respectfully], and the old men [also] stood [respectfully]. **9** The leaders of the people stopped talking [DOU], **10** and even the most important men became quiet and ceased talking [MTY] [in order to hear me speak to them]. **11** When they [SYN] all heard [what I told them], they said good things about me. When they [SYN] saw me (OR, what I had done), they commended me, **12** because I had helped the poor people when they cried out for help and I aided/helped orphans who had no one else to help them. **13** Those who were suffering and about to die praised [PRS] me, and I caused widows [SYN] to sing joyfully, [because of my helping them]. **14** I always acted justly; my continually doing that was like [MET] a robe that I wore and a turban [that was wrapped around my head]. **15** [It was as though] [MET] I was eyes for blind people and feet for people who were lame. **16** I was [like] [MET] a father to poor people, and in courts I defended those who were strangers. **17** My causing wicked people [to be unable to continue oppressing others was like] [MET] breaking the fangs [of fierce wild animals] and forcing them to drop from their teeth/mouths the animals that they had caught/seized. **18** "At that time I thought, 'Surely I will live securely, until I am very old [SIM], and I will die at home [with my family].' **19** I was [like a tree] [MET] whose roots reach down into the water and whose branches become wet with dew each night. **20** People always honored me, and I was always [strong like] [MET] a new bow. **21** "When I spoke, people waited to hear [what I would say] and remained silent until I advised them [what

they should do]. 22 After I finished speaking, they did not say any more; [it was as though] [MET] my words fell on their ears [like refreshing drops of rain]. 23 They waited for me [to speak] like they wait for rain; they [appreciated what I said] like [MET] [farmers appreciate] the final rain in the spring [before the dry season]. 24 When they were discouraged, I smiled at them [to encourage them]; they became encouraged when they saw that I approved of them. 25 I was their leader, and I decided what things [would be good for them to do]; I was among them like [SIM] a king who is among his troops; I was like someone who comforts [others] who are mourning."

30 "But now men who are younger than I am make fun of me— men whose fathers I greatly despised, with the result that I would not even have allowed them to help my dogs guard my sheep. 2 They were men who were old and (weak/worn out); so (what could I gain from them working for me?/I would have gained nothing from them working for me.) [RHQ] 3 They were very poor and hungry, with the result that they chewed on roots [at night] in dry and desolate places. 4 They pulled up plants in the desert [and ate them] and warmed themselves by [burning] the roots of broom trees. 5 Everyone shouted at them as though they were thieves and expelled them [from their areas]. 6 They were forced to live in caves in the hills, in holes in the ground, and in the sides of cliffs. 7 In the bushes they howled [like animals because they were hungry], and they huddled together under thornbushes. 8 They were people without good sense, whose names no one knows; they have been expelled from the land [where they were born]. 9 "And now their [children] sing songs to make fun of me. They tell jokes about me. 10 They are disgusted with me, and they [usually] stay away from me, [but when they see me,] they are happy to spit in my face. 11 Because [it is as though] [MET] God has cut my bowstring, [he has caused me to be unable to defend myself,] and he has humbled me, and my enemies have done to me whatever they wanted. 12 (Gangs/Groups of violent youths) attack me and force me to run away; they prepare to destroy me. 13 They prevent me from escaping, and they [do] not [need] anyone to help them (OR, there is no one to help me). 14 [It is as though I am a city wall and] [SIM] they have broken through the wall, and they have come crashing down on me. 15 I am very terrified; My dignity/honor has been taken away as though [SIM] [it has been] blown away by the wind, and my prosperity has disappeared like [SIM] clouds disappear. 16 "And now I [SYN] am about to die [IDM]; I suffer every day. 17 My bones ache during the night, and the pain that torments me never stops. 18 [It is as though God] seizes my clothes and chokes me with the collar of my coat. 19 He has thrown me into the mud; I am [not worth anything more than] dust and ashes. 20 "I cry out to God, but he does not answer/help me; I stand up [and pray], but he does not pay any attention. 21 He acts very cruelly toward me; with all of his power [MTY] he causes me to suffer. 22 He [allows] the wind to lift me up and blow me away, and he tosses me up and down in a violent storm. 23 I know that he will cause me to die, which is what happens to everyone [MTY] who is alive. 24 "When people experience disasters, and they sit on a pile of ruins and cry out for help, others surely [RHQ] reach out their hand to help them. 25 [That is what I did previously]. I wept for people who were experiencing troubles, and I felt sorry for poor/needy people. 26 But when I expected good things [to happen to me], evil things happened; when I waited for light/happiness, all I experienced was darkness/unhappiness [MET]. 27 I am very distressed [IDM], all the time; I suffer every day. 28 I go about very discouraged; I stand up and plead for people to help me. 29 My wailing sounds as sad as [MET] the cries of jackals/foxes and ostriches. 30 My skin has become dark/black and is peeling off, and I have a fever [which causes my body to feel like it is] burning. 31 Previously, I played joyful music on my harp and with my flute, but now I play only the sad music of those who mourn."

31 "I solemnly promised myself that I would not look at a young woman with a desire [to have sex with her]. 2 [If I did not do what I promised,] what would God who is in heaven [MTY] do to me [RHQ]? Almighty [God] would certainly not [RHQ] give me any reward! 3 [Previously I thought that] surely [RHQ] it was unrighteous people who would experience calamities, and that it was those who do what is wrong who would experience disasters. 4 God certainly sees [RHQ] everything that I do, [so why is he causing me to suffer?] [It is as though] he counts every step that I take. 5 ["I solemnly declare that] I have never acted wickedly and have never tried to deceive people. 6 I request only that God judge me fairly [MET], and if he does that, he will know that I (am innocent/have not done what is wrong). 7 If [it were true that] I have stopped living righteously, or [that] I [SYN] have desired the things that I look at [MTY], or [that] I am guilty of any other sin, 8 then I hope/wish that when I plant [seeds], someone else will [harvest the crops and] eat [them] and that others will uproot the [fruit trees] that I planted. 9 "If [it were true that] I [SYN] have been attracted by some other man's wife, or [that] I have hidden myself and waited outside [the] door [to] her [house], 10 I hope/desire that my wife will become the servant/slave of another man and have sex [EUP] with him. 11 [For me to do] that would be a terrible sin, and the judges would decide that

I should be punished. 12 My [committing adultery] would [produce in me a fire like] [MET] the fire that burns people in hell, and it would burn up everything that I own. **(questioned)** 13 "And, if [it were true that] I have ever refused to listen to one of my male or female servants when they complained to me about something, 14 God would arise [and declare that he would punish me]; and when he would do that, what would I do? If he would ask me [about what I have done], (what would I answer?/I would not be able to answer.) [RHQ] 15 God, who created me, certainly also created my servants [RHQ]; surely he is the one who formed them and me in our mothers' wombs [RHQ]; [so we all should behave toward each other equally]. 16 "I have guided orphans from the time that they were born; I have taken care of them since they were young. So, if [it were true that] I ate all my food myself and did not share some of it with orphans, or [that] I refused to give poor people the things that they wanted, or [that] I caused widows to live (in despair/without hope [that they would receive any help from anyone]), 19 or [that] I had seen people die [from cold] because they had no clothes, or [that] I had seen poor people who did not have clothes [to keep them warm], 20 and they were not able to become warm [from clothes made] from the wool of my sheep with the result that they thanked me for [giving them clothes,] 21 or if [it were true that] I threatened to strike any orphan because I knew that the elders at the city gates would (decide in my favor); 22 [if those things were true about me], I hope/desire that my shoulder blade would be torn out and my arm be torn from my shoulder. 23 I always feared that God would cause me to experience a great disaster [if I did any of those evil things], and I would not have been able to endure the powerful [things that he would do to punish me]. 24 "If [it were true that] I trusted in my gold/money [DOU], 25 or that I rejoiced because I had acquired many things and had become very rich, 26 or that I looked at the sun when it was shining or looked at the beautiful moon 27 and I [SYN] had been tempted [to worship them] by kissing my hand to revere them, 28 those things also would be sins for which the judges would say that I must be punished, because I would have been rejecting God [by doing those things]. 29 "[It is not true that] I [SYN] sinned by requesting God to curse people who hated me with the result that God would cause them to die. It is also not true that I was glad when they were ruined or that I rejoiced when they experienced disasters [DOU]. 31 [It is also not true that] I never welcomed travelers to stay in my tent or that I did not open my doors to them, but [forced them to] sleep in the streets. [All] the men who work for me certainly know that [RHQ]! 33 Some people try to hide their sins, but I have never done that; 34 and I never remained silent and refused to go outside of my home because I was very (afraid of/worried about) what people would say [about me], and that they would hate/scorn me. 35 "I wish/desire that there was someone who would hear what I am saying! I solemnly declare [that all that I have said is true]. I wish that those who oppose me would write down [on a scroll] the evil things that they say that I did. 36 [If they did that,] I would wear that scroll on my shoulder, or wear it on top of my head, [in order that everyone could see it]. 37 I would tell [God] everything that I have done, and I would approach him [confidently], like a ruler would. 38 If [it were true that] I have stolen land, with the result that [it was as though] its furrows cried out to accuse me of stealing; 39 or [if it were true that] I have eaten the crops that grew in someone else's fields without paying [for those crops], with the result that those farmers who grew those crops died [from hunger]; 40 then I wish/desire that thorns would grow [in my fields] instead of wheat. May bad weeds grow instead of barley!" That is the end of what Job said [to his three friends].

32 Then those three men stopped answering Job, because [they could not convince Job that he was wrong in claiming that] he had not done anything that was wrong. 2 Then Elihu, the son of Barachel, a descendant of Buz, from the clan of Ram, became very angry at Job. He was angry because Job continued to claim that he was righteous/innocent, and that God was wrong [to punish him]. 3 He was also angry with Job's three friends, because they had declared that Job must have done many things that were wrong, but they were unable to convince Job [that what they said was true]. As a result, [it seemed to Elihu that] God did what was wrong by punishing Job. 4 Elihu was younger than the others, so he waited [until they had finished speaking] before he replied to Job. 5 But when Elihu realized that the three men had no more to say [MTY] to Job, he became angry. 6 And this is what he said: "I am young, and you all are much older than I am. So, I was timid, and I was afraid to tell you what I was thinking. 7 I thought, 'Let those [PRS] who are much older speak, because older people [should be able to] say things that are wise.' 8 But the Spirit of Almighty [God] is within people, and it is he who enables them to be wise. 9 It is not people becoming old that enables them to be wise; not [all] old people understand what is right. 10 "So, I say, 'Listen to me, and allow me to say what I think.' 11 I waited for you all to speak; I wanted to hear the wise things that you would say. I waited while you thought carefully about what [would be the right things] to say. 12 I paid attention carefully, but surprisingly, none of you were able to prove that what Job said was wrong. 13 So, do not say [to yourselves], 'We have discovered what is

wise!' It is God who must (refute Job/show that what Job said was wrong), because you three have not been able to do that. **14** Job was replying to you, [not to me], but I will not reply to him by saying what you three said. **15** "You three are dismayed [because you have not been able to convince him that he was wrong], so you are not saying any more to him [DOU]. **16** But because you do not speak, I certainly will not wait any longer [RHQ]; you merely stand there and do not reply any more. **17** So [now] I also will reply [to Job] and say what I think. **18** I have plenty to say, and my spirit compels me to say it. **19** My inner being is like [SIM] a (wineskin/bag that has (new/fermenting) wine in it), and it will soon burst. **20** I must speak [MTY], in order that I do not have to keep holding what I want to say; I must say something [MTY] to reply [to you all]. **21** I will speak [fairly], not favoring any of you, and I will not try to flatter anyone. **22** I [really] do not know how to flatter people; and if I did that, God would soon get rid of me."

33 "But now, Job, listen carefully to all that I am going to say [DOU]. **2** I am ready to tell you [MTY, DOU] [what I think]. **3** I know that I am speaking honestly and that I am speaking [MTY] sincerely. **4** Almighty God has created me [as well as you], and his breath has caused me to live. **5** So, answer [what] I [say] if you can; think carefully [about how you will reply to me]. **6** "God considers that you, and I are both [equal]; he formed both of us from clay. **7** So you do not need to be afraid of me; I will not crush/oppress you [by what I say] [MTY]. **8** I have heard you [DOU] speaking, and this is what you have said: **9** 'I am innocent; I have not committed any sins; I am pure; I have not done things that are wrong. **10** But God finds reasons to accuse me, and he considers that I am his enemy. **11** [It is as though] he has put my feet (in stocks/between wooden blocks to prevent me from walking away), and he watches everything that I do.' [MTY] **12** But what you have said is wrong, and I will tell you [what you have said that is wrong]. God is much greater than any human. **13** So, (why are you arguing against God, saying 'He never answers my questions'?/you should not be arguing against God, saying 'He never answers my questions.') [RHQ] **14** God does speak [to us] in various ways, but we do not pay any attention to what he says. **15** [Sometimes he speaks to us] at night in dreams and visions, when we are on our beds, asleep [DOU]. **16** He reveals things [MTY] to us and terrifies us by the things he warns us about. **17** He tell us those things in order that we stop doing [evil] things and to prevent us from becoming proud. **18** He does not want us to be destroyed [MTY]; he wants to prevent us from dying [MTY] [while we are still young]. **19** God also [sometimes] corrects us by forcing us to lie on our beds suffering much pain and with fever/aching in our bones. **20** The result is that we do not desire any food, not even very special food. **21** Our bodies become very thin, with the result that we look like skeletons [HYP], and our bones stick out. **22** [We know that] we will soon die and go to the place where dead people are. **23** "But sometimes an angel [may come to one of us], one of the thousands of angels who come to intervene between us and God, to tell us what are the right things for us [to do]. **24** The angel is kind to us and says to God, 'Release that person, so that he does not descend to the place where dead people are! Do that because I have found the money to pay so that he can be released! **25** Allow his body to be strong again; allow him to be strong like he was when he was a youth!' **26** When that happens, that person will pray to God, and God will accept/answer him; he will (enter God's presence/worship God) joyfully, and then he will tell others how God saved him [from dying]. **27** He will sing as he tells everyone, 'I sinned, and I did things that were not right, but God did not punish me in the way that I deserved. **28** He has saved me from dying and going to the place where dead people are, and I will continue to enjoy being alive.' **29** God does all these things for us many times; **30** he keeps us [SYN] from [dying and] going to the place where the dead are, in order that we can continue to enjoy being alive [IDM]. **31** So Job, listen to me; do not say anything more; just allow me to speak. **32** [After I speak], if you have something more that you want to say to me, say it, because I would like to find a way to declare that you (are innocent/have not done what is wrong). **33** But if you have nothing more that you want to say, then just listen to me, and I will teach you how to become wise."

34 Then Elihu continued: **2** "You [three] men who [think that you] [SAR] are very wise, hear me; listen to what I am saying, you men who [say that you] know so much. **3** When we [SYN] hear what other people [like you] say, we [RHQ] think carefully about what they say [to determine what is good and what is bad], like we [SYN] taste food [to determine what is good]. **4** We need to decide [who is saying] what is right and to determine among ourselves what is good/best. **5** Job has said, 'I am innocent, but God has refused to judge me fairly/justly. **6** Even though I have always done what is right, he is lying about me. Even though I have not done what is wrong, he has caused me to suffer, and I will certainly die.' **7** (Is there any person like Job, who insults others as easily as people accept a drink of water?/There is no person like Job, who insults others as easily as people accept a drink of water.) [RHQ] **8** He habitually associates with people who do what is evil and spends time with wicked people. **9** He has said, 'It is useless

for people to try to please God.' 10 "So, you men who [claim that you] understand everything, listen to me! Almighty God would never consider doing anything that is wicked or wrong [DOU]! 11 He (pays back/punishes) people for what they have done; he gives them what they deserve for the way that they have conducted their lives. 12 Truly, Almighty God never does what is wicked; he always [LIT] does what is fair/just. 13 The authority that he has to rule everything on the earth, no one [RHQ] gave it to him; no one [RHQ] put him in control of the whole world. [He has always had that authority]. 14 If he would take his spirit back to himself, 15 everyone would die [immediately], and their corpses would soon become dirt again. 16 "So, [Job], if [you say that you] understand everything, listen to what I am saying. 17 God could certainly not [RHQ] govern the world if he hated doing what is fair/just. So, will you condemn God, who is righteous and powerful, [saying that what he has done is wrong]? 18 He tells [some] kings that they are worthless, and he says to [some] officials that they are wicked. 19 He does not favor rulers [more than he favors others]; he does not favor rich people more than poor people, because he created all of them. 20 People [often] die suddenly; he strikes them at midnight and they die; he even gets rid of mighty people without the help of any humans [SYN]. 21 "He sees [MTY] everything that people do; [when we walk,] he watches every step that we take. 22 There is no gloom or darkness [DOU] that is so dark that sinners can hide [from him] in that darkness. 23 God does not [need to] set a time when we will stand in front of him in order that he may judge us. [He can judge us whenever he wants to]. 24 He destroys mighty people without [needing to] investigate [what they have done], and he appoints others to take their places. 25 Because he [already] knows what they have done, he removes them at night and gets rid of them. 26 Where [many] people can see it, he strikes/punishes them because of the wicked things that they have done; 27 he strikes them because they turned away from doing what he wanted them to do and did not pay attention to any of his commands. 28 They [mistreated] the poor people, with the result that those poor people cried out to God [for help], and he heard those afflicted people when they cried out [to him]. 29 But if God decides to do nothing [to punish wicked people], no one can criticize/condemn him. If a godless/wicked man rules a nation, a man who tricks/deceives the people, 30 and if [God] hides his face [with the result that he does not see that ruler or punish him], no one will be able to prevent that ruler [from doing those things]. 31 "Job, have you or anyone else ever said to God, 'I have been punished [for my sins], and I will not sin any more; 32 so teach/show me what [sins I have committed]; if I have done anything that is evil, I will not do it any more'? 33 [Job,] you object to what God has done to you, but do you think that he will do what you want him to do? It is you who must choose [what you say to God], not I; so tell me what you are thinking about this. 34 "People who have good sense, those who are wise and who listen to what I say, will say to me, 35 'Job is speaking ignorantly; what he says is nonsense.' 36 I think that Job should be taken to a court and (put on trial/judged), because he answers [us his friends] like wicked men would answer. 37 To add to the [other] sins that he has committed, he is rebelling [against God]; he shows us that he does not respect God [IDM], making long speeches [saying that God has punished him unjustly]."

35 Then Elihu also said this: 2 "[Job,] do you think that what you said is right/correct? You say, 'God knows that I am innocent,' 3 and you say [to God], 'What good have I received for not sinning? What benefit have I received from that?' [DOU, RHQ] 4 [Well,] I will answer you, and I will answer your three friends, too. 5 "[Job], look up at the sky; look at the clouds that are high above you and realize [that God is far above everything]. 6 If you have sinned, that does not [RHQ] harm God at all. If many times you do things that are wrong, that certainly does not [RHQ] affect him [DOU]. 7 And if you are righteous, does that help God? No, he is not benefited by anything that you do [DOU]. 8 It is other people who suffer because of the wicked things that you do, but by doing good things for people, you help them. 9 "People cry out because of the many things that people do to others to (oppress them/treat them cruelly); they call for help because of the things that powerful people do [MTY] to them. 10 But (no one/none of them) calls out [to God], saying 'Why does God, my creator, [not help me]? He [should] enable me to sing [joyful] songs, [instead of very sad songs,] during the night. 11 He [should be able to] teach us more than all the wild animals do; he [should] enable us to become wiser than [all] the birds are!' 12 People cry out [for help], but God does not answer them, because those who cry out are proud and evil people. 13 It is useless for them to cry out, because God, the Almighty One, does not pay any attention to what they say. 14 So, when you complain that you cannot see God, and you tell him that you are waiting for him [to decide whether or not you should be punished for what you have done], God will not listen to you, either! 15 Furthermore, [you say that] because he does not pay attention when people commit sins, he does not become angry and punish them. 16 You say things that are useless; you say a lot of things without knowing [what you are talking about]."

36 Elihu [finished by] saying this: **2** "[Job,] be patient with me a little longer, because I have something else to teach you. I have something else to say that God [wants you to know]. **3** I will tell you what I have learned from many sources, in order to show that God, my creator, is just/fair. **4** I am not saying anything to you that is false; I, who am standing in front of you, am someone who understands things (very well/perfectly) [HYP]. **5** "Hey, God is [very] powerful, and he does not despise anyone, and he understands everything. **6** He does not allow wicked people to remain alive, and he always acts justly toward those who are poor. **7** He always watches over [MTY] those who are righteous; he allows them to sit on thrones [and rule] with kings, and they are honored forever. **8** But if people [who commit crimes] are caught, they [are thrown into prison and] are caused to suffer by being fastened with chains. **9** When that happens, God shows them what they have done; he shows them the sins that they have committed, and he shows them that they have been proud/arrogant. **10** He causes them to listen [MTY] to what he is warning them, and he commands them to turn away from [doing what is] evil. **11** If they (listen to/heed) him and serve him, [after they get out of prison] they will prosper for all the years that they are alive and be peaceful/happy. **12** But if they do not (listen/pay attention) to him, they will die violently, not knowing [why God is causing them to die]. **13** "Godless/Wicked people continue being angry, and they do not cry out for help, [even] when God is punishing them. **14** They die while they are still young, disgraced because of their very immoral behavior [EUP]. **15** But God teaches people by causing them to suffer; by afflicting them, he causes them to listen to [MTY] what he is telling them. **16** "And Job, [I think that] God [wants to] bring you out of your troubles and allow you to live without distress; he wants your table to be full of very nice food. **17** But now, you are being punished [MTY] as wicked people are punished; [God] [PRS] has been punishing you (justly/as you deserve). **18** So be careful that you are not deceived by [desiring to acquire] money or that you are not ruined by [accepting] large bribes. **19** [If you are deceived by those things,] it certainly will not [RHQ] help you to cry out when you are distressed; all of your strength will not help you. **20** Do not wish that it would be nighttime [in order that God will not see you and punish you], because night is the time when [even] people-groups are destroyed! **21** Be careful not to [begin doing] evil things, because [God] has caused you to suffer to prevent you from doing evil. **22** "Hey, God is extremely powerful; there is certainly [RHQ] no teacher who teaches like he does. **23** No one has [RHQ] told him what he should do, and no one has [RHQ] said to him, 'You have done what is wrong!' **24** People have [always] sung to praise him, so you also should never forget to praise him for what he has done. **25** Everyone has seen [what he has done], but [sometimes] we can see it only from far away. **26** "Hey, God is very great, and we are not able to know how great he is, and we do not know how old he is. **27** He draws water up [from the earth and puts it in clouds] and causes it to become rain. **28** The rain pours down from the sky/clouds; God causes abundant showers to fall on everyone. **29** No one can [RHQ] understand how the clouds move [across the sky] or how it thunders in the sky where God lives. **30** He causes lightning to flash all around him, but he causes the bottom of the oceans to remain dark. **31** By providing plenty of rain for us, he enables us to have abundant food. **32** [It is as though] he holds the lightning in his hands, and [then] he commands it to strike where he wants it to. **33** When we hear his thunder, we know that there will be a storm, and the cattle know it, too."

37 "My heart pounds [DOU] when [I think about] that. **2** Listen, all of you, to the thunder, which is like God's voice [DOU]. **3** He causes thunder to be heard all across the sky, and he causes lighting to flash to the most distant places on the earth. **4** After [the lightning flashes], we hear the thunder which is like [MET] God's majestic voice; he does not restrain the lightning when he speaks. **5** When God speaks, it is awesome, like thunder; he does amazing things which we cannot [fully] understand. **6** He commands the snow to fall on the ground, and [sometimes] he causes it to rain very hard. **7** And [when God does that,] it prevents people [SYN] from working, in order that all people may know that he is the one who has done that (OR, what he can do). **8** [When it rains,] animals go into their hiding places, and they remain there [until the rain stops]. **9** The storms/hurricanes come from the place [in the south where they start], and the cold wind comes from the north. **10** [In the (winter/cold season), the cold north wind is like] God's breath [that] causes [MET] water to freeze; he causes the lakes/streams to become ice. **11** God fills the clouds with moisture/hail, and lightning flashes from the clouds. **12** He guides the clouds and causes them to move back and forth in order that they may accomplish all that he commands them to do, all over the world. **13** Sometimes God sends rain to punish us, and sometimes he sends rain to show us that he acts kindly toward us. **14** "Job, listen to this; stop and think about the wonderful things that God does. **15** (Do you know how God commands the lightning to flash down from the clouds?/We do not know how God commands the lightning to flash down from the clouds.) [RHQ] **16** Only God knows everything perfectly; so (do you know how he

causes the clouds to (move/float) (amazingly/wonderfully) across the sky?/you certainly do not know how he causes the clouds to (move/float) (amazingly/wonderfully) across the sky!) [RHQ] **17** No, you just sweat there in your clothes; [it is very oppressive] when the [hot] wind stops blowing from the south and [all the leaves on the trees] (become still/do not move). **18** (Can you stretch out the skies like God does and make them as hard as [SIM] a sheet of polished brass?/You certainly cannot stretch out the skies like God does and make them as hard as [SIM] a sheet of polished brass!) [RHQ] **19** "Job, tell us(exc) what we should say to God; we do not know anything [IDM]. As a result, we do not know what to say to him to defend ourselves. **20** Should I tell God that I want to speak to him? No, because [if I did that,] he might destroy me. **21** Now, people cannot look [directly] at the sun when it shines brightly in the sky after the wind has blown the clouds away; [so, we certainly cannot look at the brightness of God]. **22** God comes out of the north with a light [that shines like] gold; his glory causes us to be afraid. **23** Almighty God is very powerful, and we cannot come near to him. He always acts righteously, and he will never oppress us. **24** That is the reason that we have an awesome respect for him; he does not pay attention to those who proudly, [but wrongly], think that they are wise."

38 Then Yahweh spoke to Job from inside a great windstorm. He said to him, **2** "(Who are you to question what I plan to do?/You have no right/authority to question what I plan to do.) [RHQ] You are speaking ignorantly! **3** I want to ask you [some] questions, so, just like men prepare themselves for a difficult task [MET], prepare to answer my questions. **4** ("Where were you/Were you there with me) [long ago] when I (laid the foundations of/created) the earth? Since you know so much, tell me [where you were at that time]. **5** Do you know how I decided how large the earth would be? Do you know who stretched a measuring tape around the earth? Surely [since you think that you know so much,] you should know that! **6** What supports the pillars on which the earth rests? When the stars [that shine early] in the morning sang together, and someone put in place the stone that causes the earth to stay in its place, and all the angels shouted joyfully [when they saw that happening], who laid that cornerstone? [Did you?] **8** "When the seas poured forth from inside the earth, who prevented the water from flooding over the land? **9** It was I, [not you,] who caused clouds to come over the seas and caused it to become very dark [under those clouds]. **10** I set limits for the seas, and I put barriers [so that the water would not come over the land]. **11** [I pointed to the shore] and said to the water, 'I permit you to come up to here, but I do not permit you to come any farther. Your powerful waves must stop there!' **12** "Job, have you [ever] commanded the morning [to begin]? Have you [ever] told the dawn to start a new day? **13** Have you [ever] told the dawn to spread out over the whole earth, with the result that wicked people run away from the light? **14** When it becomes light after the dawn, the hills and the valleys become clear like the folds in a cloth. **15** When it becomes daylight, the wicked do not have the darkness [that they like]; [in the daylight] they no longer are able to raise up their arms, ready to hurt people. **16** "[Job,] have you traveled to the springs [in the bottom of the ocean] from which the water in the seas comes? Have you investigated/explored the very bottom of the oceans? **17** Has someone shown you the gates to the place where dead people are, the gates to the place where it is very dark? **18** Do you know how big the earth is? Tell me, if you know all these things! **19** "Where is the road to the place where light comes from? And [can you tell me] where darkness lives? **20** Can take me to its home? Do you know where the road is that goes there? **21** I am sure that you know these things, because you [talk as though you] were born before the time when all things were created; you [must] be very old! **22** "Have you entered the place where I store the snow and the place where I keep the hail? **23** I store the snow and the hail [in order that I can use them to help my people] when [they have] troubles, in times when [they are fighting] wars [DOU]. **24** And where is the road to the place from which I cause the lightning to flash? Where is the place from where the east wind begins to blow over all the earth? **25** Who created the channels in which the rain comes down from the sky? Who makes the roads for the thunder/lightning? **26** Who causes rain to fall in the desert, in places where no one lives? **27** Who sends the rain that gives moisture/water to areas where nothing has grown, with the result that grass begins to grow again? **28** Does the rain have a father? Does the dew [also] have a father? **29** And from whose womb does ice come [in the (winter/cold season)]? Who gives birth to the frost that comes down from the sky? **30** [In the winter,] the water [freezes and] becomes hard, like a rock, and the surface of lakes becomes frozen. **31** "[Job], can you fasten the chains that hold the stars together in clusters/groups in the sky? **32** Can you tell the stars when they should shine? Can you guide [the stars in the groups in the northern sky whose names are] the Big Bear and the Little Bear? **33** Do you know the laws that the stars must obey? Can you cause those same laws to rule [everything here] on the earth? **34** "Can you shout to the clouds and cause rain to pour down on you? **35** Can you cause flashes of lightning to come down and strike where you want it to strike? Do those flashes say to you, 'Where do

you want us to strike next?' 36 Who enables the clouds to know when they should cause rain to fall? 37 And who is skilled/wise enough to be able to count the clouds? Who can tilt the jugs of water in the sky [to cause the rain to fall], 38 with the result that the dry ground becomes hard as the dry (clods/lumps of soil) [become wet and] stick together? 39 "When a lioness and her cubs crouch in their dens or hide in a thicket, [waiting for some animal to pass by that they can kill,] can you find animals for a lioness to kill so that [she and] her cubs can [eat the meat and] not be hungry any more? 41 Who provides dead animals for crows, when the baby crows are calling out to me [for food], [when they are so weak] because of their lack of food [that] they (stagger around/can hardly stand up) [in their nests]?"

39 "[Job], do you know at what time/season [of the year] the female mountain goats give birth? Have you watched the wild deer while their fawns were being born? 2 Do you know how many months pass from the time they become pregnant until their fawns are born? 3 [When they give birth,] they crouch down so that the fawns do not [get hurt by] falling to the ground when they are born. 4 The young fawns grow up in the open fields, and then they leave their mothers and do not return to them again. 5 "Who allows the wild donkeys to go wherever they want [DOU]? 6 I am the one who put them in the desert, in places where grass does not grow. 7 They do not like the noise in the cities; [in the desert] they do not have to listen to the shouts of those who force donkeys to work. 8 They go to the hills to find food; there they search for grass to eat. 9 :Will a wild ox agree to work for you? Will it allow you to keep it penned up at night in the place where you put feed for your animals? 10 And can you fasten it with a rope so that it will plow furrows/trenches in your fields? 11 Since it is very strong, can you trust it to work for you? Can you go away after you tell it what work it should do [and assume that it will do that work]? 12 Can you rely on it to come back [from the field], bringing your grain to the place where you thresh it? 13 "[Think also about] the ostriches. [They] joyfully flap their wings, but they do not have wing feathers [that enable them to fly] like storks do. 14 Ostriches lay their eggs on top of the ground [and then walk away], leaving the eggs to be warmed in the sand. 15 Ostriches do not worry that some wild animal may step on the eggs and crush them [DOU]. 16 Ostriches act cruelly towards their chicks; they act as though the chicks belonged to some other ostrich. They are not concerned if [their chicks die], [and so] the laying of the eggs was in vain. 17 That is because I did not allow ostriches to be wise. I did not enable them to be intelligent. 18 But, when they get up and begin to run, they scornfully laugh at horses with their riders [because the horses cannot run as fast as the ostriches!] 19 And [think about] horses. [Job], are you the one who caused horses to be strong? Are you the one who put flowing (manes/long hair) on their necks? 20 Are you the one who enabled them to leap forward like locusts? When they (snort/blow loudly through their noses), they cause people to be afraid. 21 They paw the ground, rejoicing about being very strong, as they prepare to rush into a battle. 22 [It is as if] they laugh at the thought of being afraid. They are not afraid of anything! They do not run away when [the soldiers in the battle are fighting each other with] swords. 23 The quivers containing the riders' arrows rattle against the horses' sides, and the spears and javelins flash [in the light of the sun]. 24 The horses paw the ground fiercely/excitedly, [wanting the battle to begin,] and they rush into the battle when the trumpet is blown. 25 They neigh [joyfully] when they hear someone blowing the trumpet. They can smell a battle even when they are far away, and they understand what it means when the commanders shout their commands [to their soldiers]. 26 "[And think about big birds.] Are you the one who enabled hawks to spread their wings and fly to the south [for the winter]? 27 Do eagles fly high up [into the cliffs] to make their nests because you commanded them to do that? 28 They live in [holes in] those cliffs. They are safe in those high pointed rocks [because no animals can reach them there]. 29 As they watch carefully from there, they see far away the animals that they can kill (OR, dead bodies of animals). 30 After an eagle kills an animal, the baby eagles drink the blood of that animal."

40 Then Yahweh said to Job, 2 "Do you still want to argue with me, the Almighty One? Since you criticize me, (you should be able to answer my questions!/why are you not able to answer my questions?) [RHQ]" 3 Then Job replied to Yahweh, 4 "[Now I realize that] I am completely worthless. So (how could I answer [those questions]?/I could not possibly answer [those questions]!) [RHQ] I will put my hand over my mouth [and not say anything]. 5 I have already said more than I should have said, so now I will say nothing more." 6 Then Yahweh [again] spoke to Job from inside the great windstorm. He said, 7 "I want to ask you some [more] questions. So as men prepare themselves for a difficult task [MET], prepare yourself again to answer some [more] questions. 8 "Are you going to accuse me and say that I am unjust? Are you going to say that what I have done is wrong, in order that you can say that what you have done is right? 9 Are you as powerful [MTY] as I am? Can your voice sound [as loud] as thunder, as mine can? 10 [If you can do that], put on the robes that show that you are glorious and are greatly honored! 11 Show that you are very angry;

show that you have the right/authority to humble people who are [very] proud! 12 Humble those proud people [just] by looking at them [angrily] Crush wicked people quickly! 13 Bury them in the ground! Send them to the place where dead people are, where they will not be able to get out! 14 After you do that, I will congratulate/praise you and say that [truly] you can save yourself by your own ability/power. 15 "Think [also] about the huge animals that live near the water. I made you, and I made them also. They eat grass, like oxen do. 16 Their legs/thighs are [very] strong, and the muscles of their bellies are [very] powerful. 17 Their tails are stiff (OR, bend down) like the branches of a cedar tree. The sinews/muscles of their thighs are close together. 18 Their [thigh] bones are [like] tubes [made] of bronze, and the bones of their legs are like bars [made] of iron. 19 They are among the strongest of the animals that I made, and I, who created them, am the only one who can kill them. 20 On the hills grows food [PRS] for them to eat while many [HYP] other wild animals play nearby. 21 They lie down [in the water] under the lotus plants; they hide in [tall] reeds in the swamps. 22 Those huge animals find shade under the lotus plants, and they are surrounded by poplar trees. 23 They are not disturbed by raging/swiftly-flowing rivers; they are not even disturbed/frightened when [rivers like the] Jordan [River] rush over them. 24 No one can [RHQ] catch them by blinding their eyes or by piercing their noses with [the teeth of] a trap!"

41 "[Think also about] (crocodiles/great sea dragons). Can you catch them with a fishhook or fasten their jaws with a rope? 2 Can you put ropes through their noses [to control them] or thrust hooks through their jaws? 3 Will they plead with you to act mercifully toward them or (use sweet talk/speak to you nicely) [in order that you will not harm them]? 4 Will they make an agreement with you to work for you, to be your slaves as long as they live? 5 Can you cause them to become pets like you cause birds to become your pets? Can you put a leash/rope around their [necks] so that your servant girls [can play with them]? 6 Will merchants try to buy them [in the market]? Will they cut them up into pieces and sell the meat? 7 Can you pierce their skins by throwing fishing spears at them? Can you pierce their heads with a harpoon? 8 If you grab one of them with your hands, it will fight you in a way that you will never forget, and you will never try to do it again! 9 It is useless to try to subdue them. Anyone who tries to subdue one of them will lose his courage. 10 No one dares/tries to (arouse them/cause them to be angry). So, [since I am much more powerful than they are,] (who would dare to cause me to be angry?/no one would dare to cause me to be angry!) [RHQ] 11 Also, everything on the earth is mine. Therefore, no one [RHQ] is able to give anything to me and require me to pay [money] for it! 12 I will tell you about [how strong] crocodiles' legs [are] and how strong their well-formed bodies are. 13 (Can anyone strip off their hides?/No one is able to strip off their hides.) [RHQ] (Can anyone try to put bridles on them?/No one can try to put bridles on them.) [RHQ] (OR, Can anyone pierce their very thick hides?) 14 (Can anyone pry open their jaws, which have terrible teeth in them?/No one can pry open their jaws, which have terrible teeth in them!) [RHQ] 15 They have rows of scales on their back which are as hard as a rock (OR, tightly fastened together). 16 The scales are very close together, with the result that not even air can get between them. 17 The scales are joined very closely to each other, and they cannot be separated. 18 When crocodiles sneeze, [the tiny drops of water that come out of their noses] sparkle in the sunlight. Their eyes are red like the rising sun. 19 [It is as though] sparks of fire pour out of their mouths [DOU]. 20 Smoke pours out of their nostrils/noses like steam comes out of a pot that is put over a fire made from dry reeds. 21 Their breath can cause coals to blaze, and flames shoot out from their mouths. 22 Their necks are very strong; wherever they go, they cause people to be very afraid. 23 The folds in their flesh are very close together and are very hard/firm. 24 [They are fearless, because] the inner parts of their bodies are as hard as a rock, as hard as the lower millstone [on which grain is ground]. 25 When they rise up, they cause [even] very strong people to be terrified. As a result, people (fall back/run away) when crocodiles thrash around. 26 [People] [PRS] cannot injure them with swords, and spears or darts or javelins cannot injure them, either. 27 They [certainly are not afraid of weapons made of] straw or rotten wood, but [they are not even afraid of weapons made of] iron or bronze! 28 [Shooting] arrows [at them] does not cause them to run away. [Hurling] stones at them from a sling is like [hurling] bits of chaff at them. 29 They are not afraid of clubs [any more than they would be afraid of men throwing] bits of straw [at them], and they laugh when they hear the whirl/sound of javelins [being thrown at them]. 30 Their bellies are covered with scales that are as sharp as broken pieces of pottery. When they drag themselves through the mud, their bellies tear up the ground like a plow. 31 They stir up the water and cause it to foam [as they churn/swim through it]. 32 As they go through the water, the (wakes/trails in the water behind them) glisten. People [who see it] would think that the foam in those wakes had become white hair. 33 There are no creatures on earth that are as fearless as crocodiles. 34 They are the proudest of all the

creatures; [it is as though] they [rule like] kings over all the other wild animals."

42 Then Job replied to Yahweh. [He said], **2** "I know that you can do everything and that no one can stop you from doing what you want to do. **3** [You asked me], '(Who are you, who by speaking ignorantly, question what I plan to do?/You have no right to question what I plan to do by speaking ignorantly.)' [RHQ] It is true that I spoke about things that I did not understand, things that are very wonderful/marvelous, and therefore I am not able to know them. **4** You said to me, 'Listen while I talk to you. I want to ask you some questions, so prepare yourself to answer them.' **5** I had heard about you previously, but now [it is as though] I have seen you with my own eyes. **6** Therefore I (am ashamed of/withdraw) what I said, and I sit in dust and ashes to show that I am sorry [for what I said]." **7** After Yahweh said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz, "I am angry with you and your two friends, [Bildad and Zophar], because what my servant Job said about me was right/true, but what you have spoken about me was not right/true. **8** So now you must take to Job seven young bulls and seven rams and [kill them and] burn them on the altar as a sacrifice for yourselves. Then Job will pray for you, and I will do what he requests me to do, [and I will forgive you for speaking wrongly about me]. I will not punish you, even though you deserve to be punished, because what you said about me was not right/true, but what Job said about me was right/true." **9** So Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar did what Yahweh commanded them to do, and Yahweh did what Job requested him to do [for the three of them]. **10** After Job prayed for his three friends, Yahweh [healed him and] caused him to become rich again. Yahweh gave him twice as many things as he had before. **11** Then all his brothers and sisters, and all the people who had known him before, came to his house, and they ate a meal together. They consoled/comforted [DOU] him because of all the troubles that Yahweh had allowed him to experience. **12** Then Yahweh blessed Job in the second half of his life more than he had blessed him in the first half of his life. He now acquired/owned 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 2,000 oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. **13** And he also had seven [more] sons and three [more] daughters. **14** He named the first daughter Jemimah, he named the second daughter Keziah, and he named the third daughter Keren-Happuch. **15** In all of [Uz] land there were no young women who were as beautiful as the daughters of Job, and Job declared that they would inherit some of his possessions, just like their brothers would inherit some. **16** After that, Job lived 140 more years. Before he died, he (saw/enjoyed being with) his great-great-grandchildren. **17** He was very old [DOU] when he died.

Psalms

1 [God] is pleased with those who do not do what [MET] wicked people advise them to do, and who do not imitate
the behavior of [MET] sinful people, and who do not join in
with people who (ridicule/sneer at) [God]. **2** Those whom
God is pleased with delight in doing the things that he
has instructed/taught us to do. They read and think about
Yahweh's requirements, day and night. **3** They [constantly
produce/do things that please God] just like fruit trees that
have been planted along the banks of a stream produce fruit
at the right time every year. [Like] trees that never wither,
they succeed in everything that they do. **4** But wicked people
are not like that! Wicked people are [as worthless as] chaff
that is blown away by the wind. **5** Therefore, wicked people
(will not be acquitted/will be condemned) [LIT] when [God]
judges people, and furthermore, sinful people will not even
be present when [God] gathers righteous people together, **6**
because he guides and protects righteous people, but the
path that the wicked walk on leads them to where they will
be destroyed/punished [by God forever].

2 (Why do the [leaders of] nations rage [against God]?/It
is foolish for the nations to be angry [with God]) [RHQ].
(Why do people plan to rebel [against God] even though it
is in vain?/It is useless for people to plan to rebel [against
God]) [RHQ]! **2** The kings of the nations prepare to revolt;
the rulers plot together [to fight] against Yahweh and against
his chosen king. **3** They shout, "We should free ourselves
from their control [MET]; we should not let them rule over us
any longer!" **4** But Yahweh, the one who sits [on his throne]
in heaven, laughs [at them]; he ridicules those rulers. **5**
Then, because he is angry with them, he rebukes them. He
causes them to be terrified when [they realize] that he will
furiously punish them. **6** [Yahweh says], "I have installed my
king on Zion, my sacred hill [in Jerusalem]." **7** [And his king
says], "I will proclaim what Yahweh has decreed. He said to
me, '[It is as though] you are my son; today I have declared
to everyone that [it is as though] [MET] I am your father.
8 Ask me to give you the nations, so that they belong to
you [to rule over them permanently], and I will give them to
you. [Even] the most remote nations will be yours. **9** You will
defeat them completely [MET]; you will [destroy them like
people] smash a clay pot with an iron rod [SIM].'" **10** So
then, you kings and other rulers on the earth, act wisely!
[Heed what Yahweh is] warning you! **11** Serve Yahweh,
fervently revering him; Rejoice [about what he has done for
you], but tremble before him! **12** Bow down humbly before
his son! If you do not do that, Yahweh will be angry, and he
will suddenly get rid of you. Do not forget that he can very
quickly show that he is very angry! But he is very pleased
with all those who request him to protect them [MET].

3 Yahweh, I have many enemies [DOU]! There are many
people who oppose/rebel against me. **2** Many people are
saying about me, "God will [certainly] not help him!" **3** But
Yahweh, you are like a shield [that protects me] [MET]. You
greatly honor me, and you encourage me (OR, enable me to
triumph over my enemies) [IDM]. **4** I cry out to you, Yahweh,
and you answer me from [Zion], your sacred hill. **5** [At night]
I lie down and sleep, and I awake [in the morning feeling
good/refreshed] because you, Yahweh, (take care of/protect)
me [all during the night]. **6** There may be thousands of
[enemy] soldiers who surround me, but I am not afraid. **7**
Yahweh, arise! My God, [come and] rescue me [again]! You
[insult] my enemies by slapping them on their cheeks; [when
you strike them], you break their teeth, [with the result that
they cannot hurt anyone] [MET]. **8** Yahweh, you are the one
who saves your people [from their enemies]. Yahweh, bless
your people!

4 God, answer me when I pray to you. You are the one who
vindicates me; Rescue me from things that distress me.
Act mercifully toward me, and listen to me while I pray. **2**
How long will you people cause me to be disgraced instead
of honoring me [RHQ]? You [people] love to falsely accuse
me. **3** All those who are loyal to Yahweh, he has chosen
them to belong to him. Yahweh listens to me when I pray to
him. **4** When you people get angry, do not [allow your anger
to control you and cause you to] sin. While you lie on your
bed, silently examine what you are thinking. **5** Also, offer to
Yahweh the proper sacrifices, and continue trusting in him. **6**
Some people ask, "Who will allow good things to happen to
us?" [But I say], "Yahweh, continue to act kindly toward us. **7**
You have made me very happy; I am happier than people
who have harvested a great amount of grain and grapes. **8** I
can lie down [at night] and sleep soundly because [I know
that] you, Yahweh, will keep me safe."

5 Yahweh, listen to me while I pray! Pay attention to me
when I am groaning [because I am suffering very much].
2 You are my King and my God. When I call to you to ask
you to help me, listen to me, because you are the one to
whom I pray. **3** Listen to me when I pray to you [each]
morning, and I wait for you to reply. **4** You are not a god
who is pleased with wicked people; you do not (associate
with/invite into your house) [those who do what is] evil. **5**
You do not allow those who are very proud to come to you to
worship you. You hate all those who do evil things. **6** You get
rid of liars, and you despise those who murder [others] and
those who deceive [others]. **7** Yahweh, because you love me

so much and so faithfully, I come into your temple. I revere you greatly, and I bow down to worship you at your sacred temple. 8 Yahweh, because you act righteously toward me, show me what is right for me to do. Because I have many enemies, show me clearly what you want me to do. 9 My enemies never say what is true; they just want to destroy [others]. The things that they say [MTY] are [as foul as] an open grave [where a corpse is decaying]. They use their tongues to tell lies. 10 O God, declare that they are guilty [MTY] [and punish them]. Cause them to experience the same disasters/troubles that they plan to cause to happen to others. Get rid of them because they have committed many sins, and they have rebelled against you. 11 But cause that all those who go to you to be protected will rejoice; cause them to sing joyfully to you forever. Protect those who love you [MTY]; they are truly happy because (of what you [do for them/they belong to] you). 12 Yahweh, you always bless those who act righteously; you protect them like a [soldier is protected by his] shield [SIM].

6 Yahweh, do not punish me when you are angry [with me]; Do not even rebuke/scold me [when you are angry]. 2 Yahweh, be kind to me and heal me because I have become weak. My body [SYN] shakes because I am experiencing much pain. 3 Yahweh, I am greatly distressed. How long ([must I endure this/will it be before you help me]) [RHQ]? 4 Yahweh, please come and rescue me. Save me because you faithfully love me. 5 I will not be able to praise you after I die [RHQ]; No one in the place of the dead praises you. (Sheol h7585) 6 I am exhausted/groan [from my pain]. At night I cry very much, with the result that my bed and my pillow become wet from my tears. 7 My tears blur my eyes so much that I cannot see well. My eyes have become weak because my enemies [have caused me to cry constantly]. 8 You people who do evil things, get away from me! 9 Yahweh heard me when I was crying and called out to him [to help me], and he will answer my prayer. 10 [When that happens], all my enemies will be ashamed, and they will [also] be terrified. They will get away [from me] and suddenly [leave me] because they will be disgraced.

7 Yahweh my God, I come to you to protect me. Rescue me, save me from all those who are pursuing me [in order to harm me]. 2 If you do not do that, they will tear me into pieces like a lion does [when it attacks the animals it wants to kill], and no one will save me [from them]. 3 Yahweh my God, if I have done anything that is wrong, 4 if I have done evil to some friend who did good things to me, or if, for no good reason, I have spared (OR, acted violently toward) those who were my enemies, 5 allow my enemies to pursue me and capture me. Allow them to trample me into the ground and leave me [SYN] [lying dead] in the dirt. 6 But Yahweh, because you are [very] angry [with those who pursue me], arise and attack/defeat my enemies who are furiously/angrily [attacking me] Do to them what is just! 7 Gather around you the people of [all] nations, and rule them from where you are in heaven [MTY]. 8 Yahweh, judge the people of [all] nations! And, Yahweh, show that I have done nothing that is wrong. 9 God, you know what every person is thinking, and because you are righteous, you [always] do what is just/right. [So now] stop evil people from doing wicked [deeds], and defend [all of us who are] righteous! 10 God, you protect me like a shield [protects soldiers] [MET]; you protect all those who are righteous in their inner being. 11 You judge [everyone] correctly, and every day you punish [wicked people]. 12 Whenever your enemies do not (repent/change their behavior), [it is as though] [MET] you sharpen your sword and put a string on your bow [to get ready to kill them]. 13 You are preparing your weapons that kill those whom they strike; the arrows that you will shoot have flaming tips. 14 Wicked people tell lies, and they think that they surely will be able to do [MET] the evil things that they are planning to do [just as surely as] a pregnant woman [knows that she is going to give birth to a child] [MET]. 15 But when they dig a deep pit [to trap others], they themselves will fall into it. 16 They themselves will experience the trouble that they want to cause others to have; they will hurt themselves by the violent things that they want to do to others. 17 I praise Yahweh because he [always acts] righteously/justly; I sing to praise Yahweh, the one who is much greater than any other god.

8 Yahweh, our Lord, people all over the world know that you [MTY] are very great! Your glory reaches up higher than the heavens! 2 You have taught little children and infants to praise you; they cause your enemies and those who try to (get revenge on/get rid of) you to be silent. 3 When I look up at the sky [at night], and see the things that you have made— the moon and the stars that you have set in place— 4 it is amazing [to me] that [RHQ] you think about people, that you are concerned about [us] humans! 5 You made the angels in heaven to be only a little more important than we are; you caused us to be like kings [MET] and you gave us splendor and honor [DOU]! 6 You put us in charge of everything that you made; you gave us authority over all things— 7 the sheep and the cattle, and even the wild animals, 8 the birds, the fish, and everything [else] that swims in the seas. 9 Yahweh, our Lord, people all over the world know that you [MTY] are very great!

9 Yahweh, I will praise you with all of my inner being. I will tell [others] about all the wonderful things that you have done. **2** I will sing to celebrate what you [MTY], who are much greater than all other gods, [have done]. **3** When my enemies realize [that you are very powerful], they stumble, and then they are killed. **4** You sat on your throne to judge people, and you have judged fairly/justly concerning me. **5** You rebuked the [people of other] nations and you have gotten rid of the wicked people; you have erased their names forever. **6** Our enemies have disappeared; you destroyed their cities, and people do not even remember them any more. **7** But Yahweh rules forever. He judges [people while he sits] on his throne to judge people, **8** and he will judge [all the people in] [SYN] the world justly; he will judge the people [of all nations] fairly [DOU]. **9** Yahweh will be a refuge for those who are oppressed; [yes, he will be like] a shelter for them when they have trouble. **10** Those who know Yahweh [MTY] trust in him; he never abandons those who come to him ([for help/to worship him]). **11** Yahweh rules from Zion [Hill]; praise him while you sing to him. Tell [the people of all] the nations the [marvelous] things that he has done. **12** He does not forget [to punish] those who have murdered others; and he will not ignore people who are crying because they are suffering. **13** Yahweh, be merciful to me! Look at the ways that my enemies have injured me. Do not allow me to die [because of these injuries]. **14** I want to live in order that I can praise you at the gates of Jerusalem [MTY] and to rejoice because you rescued me. **15** [It is as though] the [wicked people of many] nations have dug a pit for me to fall into [MET], but they have fallen into that same pit. [It is as if] they spread out a net to catch me [MET], but their feet have been caught in that same net. **16** Because of what you have done, people know that you decide matters [fairly/justly], but [you allow] wicked people to be trapped by the same evil things that they themselves do. **17** Wicked people will all [die and] be buried in their graves, and [their spirits] will go to be with all those who have (forgotten about/rejected) you. **(Sheol h7585)** **18** But you will not forget those who are needy/poor; what they confidently expect will certainly happen. **19** Yahweh, arise and judge the [wicked] people of the nations; do not allow them to think that [because they are strong] they will never be punished. **20** Yahweh, teach them to be terrified about you. Cause them to know that they are merely human beings.

10 Yahweh, (why are you far away [from us]?/it seems that you are far away [from us].) [RHQ] Why do you not pay attention when we have troubles [RHQ]? **2** People who are proud gladly cause poor people to suffer. So [cause what they do to others to happen to them]! May they be caught in the [same] traps that they set to catch others [MET]! **3** They brag about the [evil] things that they want to do. They praise people who seize from others things that do not belong to them, and they curse you, Yahweh. **4** Wicked people are very proud. As a result, they do not (seek help from/are not concerned about) God; they do not even think that God exists. **5** But [it seems that] they succeed in everything that they do. They do not think that they will be condemned/punished for their deeds, and they (sneer at/make fun of) their enemies. **6** They think, "Nothing bad will happen to us! We will never have troubles!" **7** When they talk [MTY], they are always cursing, lying, and threatening to harm others. They constantly say [MTY] evil things that show that they are ready to do cruel things to others. **8** They hide in villages, ready to (ambush/suddenly attack) and kill people who (are innocent/have done nothing wrong). They constantly search for people who will not be able to (resist/defend themselves) [when they are attacked]. **9** They are like [MET] lions that crouch down and hide, waiting to pounce on their prey. They are like hunters that catch their prey with a net and then drag it away. **10** Just like helpless animals are crushed, people who cannot defend themselves are killed because wicked people are very strong. **11** Wicked people say, "God will not pay any attention [to what we do]. His eyes are covered, so he never sees anything." **12** Yahweh God, arise [and help us] Punish [IDM] those wicked people! And do not forget those who are suffering! **13** Wicked people revile you [RHQ] continually. They think, "God will never punish us!" **14** But you see the trouble and the distress [that they cause]. People who are suffering expect that you will help them; and you help orphans, [also]. **15** (Break the arms/Destroy the power) of wicked [DOU] people! Continue to pursue and punish them for the wicked things that they do, until they stop doing those things. **16** Yahweh, you are our king forever, but [wicked] nations will disappear from the earth. **17** You have listened to afflicted/suffering people when they cry out to you. You hear them [when they pray], and you encourage [IDM] them. **18** You show that orphans and oppressed people have not done things that are wrong, with the result that human beings will not cause people to be terrified any more.

11 I trust that Yahweh will protect [MTY] me. So do not [RHQ] say to me, "You need to escape/flee to the mountains like birds do, **2** because wicked people have hidden in the darkness, they have pulled back their bowstrings and aimed their arrows to shoot them at godly/righteous [IDM] people [like you]. **3** When people are not punished for disobeying the laws, (what can righteous people do?/there is not much that righteous people can do.)" [RHQ] **4** But

Yahweh is sitting on his throne in his sacred temple in heaven, and he [SYN] watches everything that people do. **5** Yahweh examines what righteous people do and what wicked people do, and he hates those who like to perform violent actions [to injure others]. **6** He will send down [from the sky] flaming coals and burning sulfur, and send scorching hot winds to punish wicked people. **7** Yahweh is righteous and he loves those who act righteously; righteous people are able to come into his presence.

12 Yahweh, help us! [It seems that] people who are loyal to you have all vanished. **2** Everyone tells lies to other people; they deceive others by (flattering them/saying good things about them that they know are not true). **3** Yahweh, we wish that you would cut off their tongues so that they cannot continue to boast. **4** They say, "By telling lies we will get what we want; we control what we say [MTY], so no one can tell us what we should not do!" **5** But Yahweh replies, "I have seen the violent things that they have done to helpless people; and I have heard those people groaning, so I will arise and rescue the people who are wanting me to help them." **6** Yahweh, you always do what you have promised to do; what you have promised is [as precious and pure as] silver that has been heated seven times in a furnace [to get rid of all the] impure material. **7** Wicked people strut around [proudly], and people praise them for doing vile/wicked deeds, but Yahweh, [we know that] you will protect/rescue us from those wicked people.

13 Yahweh, how long will you continue to forget about me [RHQ]? Will you hide yourself [SYN] from me forever? **2** How long must I endure anguish/worry? Must I be miserable/sad every day? How long will my enemies continue to defeat me? **3** Yahweh my God, look at me and answer me. Enable me to become strong [again] [IDM], and do not allow me to die. **4** Do not allow my enemies [to boast] saying, "We have defeated him!" Do not allow them to defeat me, with the result that they will rejoice about it! **5** But I trust that you will faithfully love me; I will rejoice when you rescue me. **6** Yahweh, you have done many good things for me, so I will sing to you.

14 [Only] foolish people say to themselves, "There is no God!" People who say those things are corrupt/worthless; they do abominable/detestable deeds; there is not one [of them] who does what is good/right. **2** Yahweh looks down from heaven and sees humans; he looks to see if anyone is very wise, with the result that he desires [to know] God. **3** But they are all corrupt/evil; no one does what is good/right. **4** Will those evil people never learn [what God will do to punish them] [RHQ]? They act violently toward Yahweh's people while eating the food that he provides, and they never pray to Yahweh. **5** But [some day] they will become very terrified because God helps those who act righteously [and will punish those who reject him]. **6** Those who do evil may prevent helpless people from doing what they plan to do, but Yahweh protects those helpless people [MET]. **7** I wish/desire that [Yahweh] would come from Jerusalem [MTY] and rescue [us] Israeli people! Yahweh, when you bless your people again, all of us Israeli people, who are the descendants of Jacob, will rejoice.

15 Yahweh, who are allowed to enter your Sacred Tent? Who are allowed to live on your sacred mountain? **2** Only those who always do what is right and do not sin may do that. They always say what is true **3** and they do not slander others. They do not do to others things that are wrong, and they do not say bad things about others. **4** [Godly people] hate those whom God has rejected, but they respect those who revere Yahweh. They do what they have promised to do even if it causes them trouble to do that. **5** They lend money to others without charging interest, and they never accept bribes in order to lie about people who have not done what is wrong. Those who do those things will never stop trusting God [even if disastrous things happen to them].

16 God, protect me because I go to you to keep me safe! **2** I said to Yahweh, "You are my Lord; all the good things that I have come from you." **3** Your people who live in this land are wonderful; I delight to be with them. **4** Those who choose to worship other gods will have many things that cause them to be sad. I will not join them when they make sacrifices [to their gods]; I will not even join them when they speak [MTY] the names of their gods. **5** Yahweh, you are the one whom I have chosen, and you give me great blessings. You protect me and control what happens to me. **6** Yahweh has given me a wonderful place in which to live; I am delighted with all the things that he has given me [MET]. **7** I will praise Yahweh, the one who teaches/disciplines me; even at night [he] you put in my mind what is right for me to do. **8** I know that Yahweh is always with me. He is beside me; so nothing will (perturb me/cause me to be worried). **9** Therefore I am glad and I [MTY, DOU] rejoice; I can rest securely **10** because you, Yahweh, will not allow my soul/spirit to remain in the place where the dead people are; you will not allow me, your godly one, to stay there. **(Sheol h7585)** **11** You will show me the road that leads to [receiving eternal] life, and you will make me joyful when I am with you. I will have pleasure forever when I am (at your right hand/seated next to you).

17 Yahweh, listen to me while I plead with you to act justly toward me. Hear me while I call out to you to help me. Pay attention to what I say while I pray because I am speaking [MTY] honestly/truthfully. **2** You are the one who is able to declare that I (am innocent/have not done anything that was wrong) because you see/know that I am telling the truth. **3** You know what I think, [even] at night; you have examined what I say and do, and you know that I have determined to never tell any lies. **4** I have not done like others do; I have always done what is right [IDM], and I have not acted cruelly toward others. **5** I have always done what you told me to do [IDM], I have (never failed to do/always done) [LIT] those things. **6** O God, I pray to you because you answer me; please listen [MTY] to what I am saying. **7** Show me that you faithfully love me. By your great power [MTY] rescue those who (run to/trust in) you to protect them from their enemies. **8** Protect me as people carefully protect their own eyes; protect me like [birds] protect [their babies] under their wings [MET]. **9** Do not allow wicked people to attack me; my enemies surround me, wanting to kill me. **10** They never pity [IDM] anyone, and they are always boasting. **11** They have hunted/searched for me and found me. They surround me, watching for an opportunity to throw me to the ground. **12** They are like lions [SIM] that are ready to tear apart the animals that they capture; they are like young lions that are hiding, waiting to pounce [on their prey]. **13** Yahweh, come and (oppose/fight against) my enemies and defeat them! Use your sword to save me from those wicked people! **14** Yahweh, by your power [MTY] rescue me from those people who are interested [only] in things here in this world. But you provide plenty of food for those whom you love dearly; their children also have many things that their grandchildren will inherit. **15** Yahweh, because I act righteously, I will [some day] see you [SYN]. When I awake, I will see you face-to-face, and then I will be happy.

18 Yahweh, I love you, the one who enables me to be strong. **2** Yahweh is like an [overhanging] rock [DOU, MET] [under which I can hide from my enemies]; he is like a strong fortress, the one who protects me; he protects me like a shield [MET] [protects a soldier]; he is the one to whom I go (for refuge/to be protected/safe), and he defends me by his great power [IDM]. **3** I called out to Yahweh, who deserves to be praised, and he rescued me from my enemies. **4** All around me were dangerous situations in which I might be killed [PRS]; it was as though there were huge waves [MET] that almost crashed on me and killed me. **5** [It was as though] the place where dead people are had ropes that were wrapped around me, or [it was as though] there was a trap [MET] that would [seize and] kill me. **(Sheol h7585)** **6** But when I was very distressed, I called out to Yahweh, and from his temple he heard me. He listened to me when I cried out [for help]. **7** Then the earth quaked/shook strongly [DOU]; the mountains shook very strongly from their centers [DOU] because Yahweh was angry. **8** [It was as though] smoke poured out from his nostrils, and [as though] burning coals came out of his mouth. **9** He opened the sky and came down with a black cloud under his feet. **10** He flew, riding on the back of a creature that had wings, traveling [fast], blown along by the wind. **11** Darkness was all around him [like a blanket] [MET]; dark clouds, full of moisture, covered him [MET]. **12** Hailstones and flashes of lightning were around him; hail and burning coals fell from the sky. **13** Then Yahweh [spoke in a loud voice] from the sky, and [his enemies] heard his voice that sounded like thunder. **14** He shot his arrows at them and caused them to scatter; His flashes of lightning caused them to become very confused (OR, to run away). **15** The bottom of the ocean became visible, and the foundations of the earth were uncovered, when Yahweh rebuked his enemies when he snorted. **16** [It was as though] he reached down from heaven and grabbed me and pulled me up out of the deep ocean. **17** He rescued me from my strong enemies who hated me; they were very strong, with the result that I [could not defeat them]. **18** When I (was distressed/had troubles), they attacked me, but Yahweh defended/protected me. **19** He led me to a place where I was safe; he rescued me because he was pleased with me. **20** Yahweh has rewarded me because I do what is right; he has blessed me because I (am innocent/have not done things that are wrong). **21** I have obeyed Yahweh's laws; I have not abandoned him. **22** My behavior was directed by his rules; I have not stopped obeying them. **23** He knows that I have not done what is wrong; I have kept myself from sinning. **24** So he rewards me because I do what is right; he knows that I [SYN] have not committed sins. **25** Yahweh, you are faithful to those who faithfully [do what you tell them to do]; you always do what is good/right to those who do what you want them to do. **26** You are kind to those who are kind to others, but you act wisely toward those who (act perversely/do bad things). **27** You save those who are humble, but you cause those who are proud to be humiliated/ashamed. **28** You give light to my [soul/spirit]; you take away the darkness of my soul. **29** You enable me to be strong, with the result that I can run and attack a line of enemy soldiers; with your help I can (scale/climb up) the walls [that surround my enemies' cities]. **30** Everything that Yahweh my God does is perfect. We can depend on him to do what he promises. He is like a shield [MET] to protect all those who go to him for refuge. **31** Yahweh is [RHQ] the only

one who is God; only he is like an [overhanging] rock [under which we can be safe]. **32** God is the one who enables me to be strong and who keeps me safe on the roads that I walk on. **33** He enables me to [walk swiftly without stumbling], like a deer walks/runs in the mountains. **34** He teaches me how to use a strong/metal bow in order that I can use it to fight in battles. **35** Yahweh, you protect and save me with your shield; you have made me safe by your power [MTY]. I have become (strong/a great [king]) because you have helped me. **36** You have cleared the road for me, with the result that now I do not slip/stumble. **37** I have pursued my enemies and caught them; I did not stop until I had defeated/killed them all. **38** When I strike them, they are not able to get up again; they lie on the ground, defeated. **39** You have enabled me to be strong in order that I can fight battles and defeat my enemies. **40** You caused my enemies to run away (OR, you enabled me to put my foot on my enemies' necks [after I captured them and forced them to lie on the ground]); I have gotten rid of all those who hated me. **41** They called out for someone to help them, but no one saved them. **42** I pulverize them, with the result that they become like [MET] the dust that the wind [blows away]; I throw them out like [SIM] [people throw] dirt out into the streets. **43** You enabled me to defeat those who fought against me, and appointed me to be the ruler of [many]; people whom I did not know about previously are now slaves [in my kingdom]. **44** When foreigners hear about me, they (cringe/bow low before me) and they obey me. **45** They are no longer courageous, and from their forts [where they were hiding] they come [to me] trembling. **46** Yahweh is alive! Praise the one who is like an [overhanging] rock [MET] [under which I am safe] Exalt the God who saves me! **47** He enables me to get revenge on my enemies; he causes me to defeat nations and to rule over them, **48** and he rescues me from my enemies. He has lifted me up high so that violent men could not reach me [and harm me]. **49** So I praise him [and I tell] the nations [the great things that he has done]. **50** He has enabled me, his king, to powerfully defeat my enemies; he faithfully loves me, David, the one he has chosen [to be king], and he will faithfully love my descendants forever.

19 [When people look at everything that] God [has placed in] the skies, they can see that he is very great; they can see the great things that he has created. **2** Day after day [it is as though the sun] proclaims [the glory of God], and night after night [it is as though the moon and stars] say that they know [that God made them]. **3** They do not really speak; they do not say any words. There is no voice [from them] for anyone to hear. **4** But what they declare [about God] goes throughout the world, and [even people who live in] the most distant/remote places on earth can know it. The sun is in the skies where God placed it [MET]; **5** it rises each morning like a bridegroom [who is happy] as he comes out of his bedroom after his wedding. It is like a strong athlete who is very eager to start running in a race. **6** The sun rises at one side of the sky and goes across [the sky and sets on] the other side, and nothing can hide from its heat. **7** The instructions that Yahweh has given us are perfect; they (revive us/give us new strength). We can be sure that the things that Yahweh has told us will never change, and [by learning them] people who have not been previously taught/instructed will become wise. **8** Yahweh's laws are fair/just; [when we obey them], we become joyful. The commands of Yahweh are clear, and [by reading them] [PRS] we start to understand [how God wants us to behave]. **9** It is good for people to revere Yahweh; that is something that they will do forever. What Yahweh has decided is fair, and it is always right. **10** The things that God has decided are more valuable than gold, even the finest/purest gold. They are sweeter than honey that drips from honeycombs. **11** Furthermore, [by reading them] I learn [what things are good to do and what things are evil], and they promise a great reward to [us who] obey them. **12** But there is no one who can know all his errors [RHQ]; so Yahweh, forgive me for these things which I do that I do not realize are wrong. **13** Keep me from doing things that I know are wrong; do not let my sinful desires control me. If you do that, I will no longer be guilty for committing such sins, and I will not commit the great sin [of rebelling terribly] against you. **14** O Yahweh, you are [like] an [overhanging] rock [MET] under which I can be safe; you are the one who protects me. I hope/desire that the things that I say and what I think will [always] please you.

20 I desire that Yahweh will answer you [when you call out to him] when you have troubles! God is the one whom ([our ancestor] Jacob/the Israeli people) [worshiped]; I desire that he will protect you [MTY] [from being harmed by your enemies]. **2** I desire/hope that he will reach out from his sacred temple and help you, and aid you from [where he lives] on Zion [Hill]. **3** I desire/hope that he will accept all the offerings that you give him to be burned [on the altar], and all your [other] offerings. **4** I want him to give to you what you desire, and that you will be able to accomplish all that you desire to do. **5** When [we hear that] you have defeated [your enemies], we will shout joyfully. We will lift up a banner proclaiming that it is God [MTY] [who helps us](inc). I want Yahweh to [do for you] all that you request him to do. **6** I know now that Yahweh rescues [me], the one whom he has chosen [to be king]. From his holy place in heaven he will answer me, and he will save me by his great power [MTY]. **7**

Some [kings] trust that because they have chariots [they will be able to defeat their enemies], and some trust that their horses [will enable them to defeat their enemies], but we will trust in the power [MTY] of Yahweh our God. **8** Some kings will stumble and fall down, but we will be strong and (not be moved/continue standing firm). **9** Yahweh, enable [me], your king, to defeat our enemies! Answer us when we call out to you [to help us.]

21 Yahweh, ([I], your king am glad/the king is glad) because you have caused me/him to be strong. (I rejoice/he rejoices) greatly because you have rescued me/him [from my/his enemies]. **2** You have given me/him the things that I/he [SYN] desired and you have not refused to do what I requested you to do. **3** In answer to my/his prayer, you enabled me/him to succeed and prosper. You placed a gold crown on my/his head. **4** I/He asked you to enable me/him to live [for a long time], and that is what you gave me/him, a very long [HYP] life. **5** (I am/He is) greatly honored because you have helped me/him to defeat my/his enemies; you have made me/him famous. **6** You will bless me/him forever, and you have caused me/him to be joyful in your presence. **7** Yahweh, you are God Almighty, and (I trust/the king trusts) in you. Because you faithfully love me/him, disastrous things will never happen to me/him. **8** You will enable me/him to capture [MTY] all my/his enemies and all those who hate me/him. **9** When you appear, you will throw them into a fiery furnace. Because you are angry [with them], you will get rid of them; the fire will burn them up. **10** You will remove their children from this earth; their descendants will all disappear. **11** They planned to harm you, but what they plan will never succeed. **12** You will cause them to run away [IDM] by shooting arrows at them. **13** Yahweh, show us that you are very strong! When you do that, while we sing we will praise you because you are very powerful.

22 My God, my God, why have you abandoned/deserted me? Why do you stay so far from me, and why do you not hear/help me [RHQ]? Why do you not hear me when I am groaning? **2** My God, every day I call to you during the daytime and during the night, but you do not answer me, so I am not able to sleep. **3** But you are holy. You sit on your throne as king, and [we the people of] Israel praise you [PRS]. **4** Our ancestors trusted in you. [Because] they trusted in you, you rescued them. **5** When they cried out to you, you saved them. They trusted in you, and (they were not disappointed/you [saved them] as you said that you would). **6** But [you have not rescued me] [People despise me and consider that I am not a man]; [they think that] I am [as worthless as] a worm! Everyone [HYP] scorns me and despises me. **7** Everyone who sees me [HYP] makes fun of me. They sneer at me and [insult me by] shaking their heads [at me as though I were an evil man]. They say, **8** "He trusts in Yahweh, so Yahweh should save him! [He says that] Yahweh is very pleased with him; if that is so, Yahweh should rescue him!" **9** [Why do] you [not] protect me [now as you did] when I was born? I was safe even when I was (nursing/drinking milk from my mother's breasts). **10** [It was as though] you adopted me right when I was born. You have (been my God/taken care of me) ever since I was born. **11** So, (do not stay far from/stay close to) [LIT] me now because [enemies who will cause me much] trouble are near me, and there is no one [else] who can help me. **12** [My enemies] surround me [like] a herd/group of wild bulls. [Fierce people, like those] strong bulls that graze [on the hills] in Bashan [area], encircle me. **13** [They are like] roaring lions that are attacking the animals that they want to kill [MET] [and eat]; they rush toward me [to kill] me; they [are like lions that] have their mouths open, [ready to tear their victims to pieces] [MET]. **14** I am completely exhausted [MET], and all my bones are out of their joints/places. I [no longer expect that God will save me]; [that expectation is gone completely], like wax that has melted away. **15** My strength is [all dried up] [MET] like a broken piece of a clay jar that has dried [in the sun]. [I am so thirsty that] my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. O God, [I think that you are about to let] me die and become dirt! **16** My enemies [MET] surround me like a pack/group of wild dogs. A group of evil men has encircled me, [ready to attack me]. They have [already] smashed my hands and my feet. **17** [I am so weak and thin that] my bones can be seen and counted. My enemies stare at me and (gloat/are happy) about [what has happened to] me. **18** They looked at the clothes that I [was wearing] and gambled to determine which piece each of them would get. **19** O Yahweh, do not stay far away from me! You who are my [source of] strength, come quickly and help me! **20** Rescue me from [those who want to kill me with] their swords. Save me from those who are [like wild/fierce] dogs [MET]. **21** Snatch me away from [my enemies who are] like lions whose jaws [are already open, ready to chew me up] Grab me away from [those men who are like] wild oxen [that attack other animals with] their horns [MET]! **22** [But you have saved me, so] I will declare to my fellow [Israelis] how great you [MTY] are. I will praise you among the group of your people gathered [to worship you]. **23** You people who have an awesome respect for Yahweh, praise him! All you who are descended from Jacob, honor Yahweh! All you Israeli people, revere him! **24** He does not despise or ignore

those who are suffering; he does not hide (his face/himself) from them. He has listened to them when they cried out to him for help. **25** Yahweh, in the great gathering [of your people], I will praise you for what you have done. In the presence of those who revere you, I will offer [the sacrifices] that I promised. **26** The poor people [whom I have invited to the meal] will eat as much as they want. All who come worship Yahweh will praise him. I pray that [God will enable] you all to live a long and happy life! **27** I pray that [people in all nations, even] in the remote areas, will think about Yahweh and turn to him, and that people from all the clans in the world will bow down before him. **28** Because Yahweh is the king! He rules all the nations. **29** I desire that all the rich people on the earth will bow before him. Some day they will die, but I want them to prostrate themselves on the ground in his presence [before they die]. **30** People (in the future generations/who have not been born yet) will also serve Yahweh. Our descendants will be told about what Yahweh [has done]. **31** People who are not yet born, [who will live in future years], will be told how Yahweh rescued his people. People will tell them, "Yahweh did it!"

23 Yahweh, you [care for] me [like] a shepherd [cares for his sheep]. [So] I have everything that I need. **2** You [encourage] me [and give me peace]; [you are like a shepherd] who leads [his sheep] to places where there is plenty of green grass [for them to eat], and lets them rest beside streams where the water [is flowing] slowly. **3** You renew my strength. You guide me along the roads that are the right ones [for me] in order that I can honor you. **4** Even when I am walking through very dangerous dark ravines where I might be killed, I will not be afraid of anything because you are with me. You protect me [like a shepherd protects his sheep]. [He uses] his club and his walking stick [to protect them from being attacked by wild animals]. **5** You prepare a [great] feast for me, in a place where my enemies can see me. You [joyfully receive me], [as people joyfully receive the guests they have invited] [by] pouring [olive] oil over their heads. You have given me very many blessings! **6** I am certain that you will be good to me and act mercifully toward me as long as I live; and [then, O] Yahweh, I will live in your home [in heaven] forever.

24 The earth and everything in it belongs to Yahweh; all the people in the world belong to him, too, **2** because he caused the ground to be above the water, above the water that was deep below the surface of the earth. **3** Who will be allowed to go up on Zion Hill [in Jerusalem], in order to stand [and worship] in Yahweh's holy temple? **4** [Only] those whose actions [MTY] and thoughts are pure, who have not worshiped idols, and who do not tell lies when they have solemnly promised [to tell the truth]. **5** (They will be blessed by Yahweh/Yahweh will bless them). When God [judges them], he, who has saved them, will say that they (have done nothing wrong/are without fault). **6** They are the ones who approach God, they are the ones who may worship God, the one [we] Israelis worship. **7** Open up [APO] the [temple] gates in order that our glorious king may enter! **8** [Do you know] who the glorious king is? He is Yahweh, the one who is very strong [DOU]; He is Yahweh, who conquers [all his enemies] in battles! **9** Open up the [temple] gates in order that our glorious king may enter! **10** [Do you know] who the glorious king is? He is Yahweh almighty; he is our glorious king!

25 Yahweh, my God, I give myself to you. **2** I trust in you. Do not allow my enemies [to defeat me], with the result that I would be ashamed/disgraced. Do not allow my enemies to defeat/conquer me, with the result that they would rejoice. **3** Do not allow any of those who trust in you to be disappointed/disgraced. Cause those who (act treacherously toward/try to deceive) others to be disappointed/disgraced. **4** Yahweh, show me the way that I should (conduct my life/live as you want me to), teach me how to act in the manner that you want me to act/behave. **5** Teach me to conduct my life [by obeying] your truth because you are my God, the one who saves me. All the time I trust in you. **6** Yahweh, do not forget how you have acted mercifully to me and have faithfully loved me; that is the way that you have acted toward me from long ago. **7** Forgive me for all the sinful things I did and the ways that I rebelled against you when I was young; I ask this because you faithfully love your people and do good things for them, Yahweh, do not forget me! **8** Yahweh is good and fair/just; therefore he shows sinners (how they should conduct their lives/how to live as you want them to). **9** He shows humble people what is right for them to do and teaches them what he wants [them to do]. **10** He always faithfully loves and does what he has promised to those who keep his agreement with them and who do what he requires. **11** Yahweh, forgive me for all my sins, which are many, in order that I may honor you [MTY]. **12** To all those who revere you [RHQ], you show them the (right way to conduct their lives/things that they should do). **13** They will always be prosperous, and their descendants will continue to live in [this] land. **14** Yahweh is a friend of those who have an awesome respect for him, and he teaches them the agreement that he [made with them]. **15** I always ask [MTY] Yahweh to help me, and he rescues me from danger [MET]. **16** Yahweh, pay attention to me and be merciful to me, because I am alone, and I am very

distressed because I am suffering/oppressed. 17 Help me to not worry, and rescue me from my troubles. 18 Note that I am distressed and troubled [DOU], and forgive [me for] all my sins. 19 Also note that I have many enemies, see that they hate me very much. 20 Protect me, and rescue me from them; do not allow [them to defeat me], [with the result that] I would be ashamed/disgraced; I have come to you to (get refuge/be safe). 21 Protect me because I do what is good and honest/just [PRS], and because I trust in you. 22 God, rescue [us] Israeli people from all of our troubles!

26 Yahweh, show that I (am innocent/have not done what is wrong). I always do what is right; I have trusted in you and never doubted [that you would help me]. 2 Yahweh, examine what I have done and test me; thoroughly evaluate what I think [IDM]. 3 I never forget that you faithfully love me, I conduct my life according to your truth. 4 I do not spend my time with liars and I stay away from hypocrites. 5 I do not like to be with evil people, and I avoid wicked people. 6 Yahweh, I wash my hands to show that I (am innocent/have not done what was wrong). As I join with others marching around your altar, 7 we sing songs to thank you, and we tell others the wonderful things that you [have done]. 8 Yahweh, I love [to be in] the temple where you live, in the place where your glory appears. 9 Do not get rid of me like you get rid of sinners; do not cause me to die like you cause those who murder [MTY] people to die, 10 and people who [SYN] are ready to do wicked things and people who are always taking bribes. 11 But as for me, I always try to do what is right. So be kind to me and rescue me. 12 I stand in places where I am safe, and when [all your people] gather together, I praise you.

27 Yahweh is the one who gives light [to my soul/spirit] and the one who saves me, so I do not [RHQ] need to be afraid of anyone. Yahweh is the one to whom I go for refuge, so I will never be afraid. 2 When those who do evil come near me to attack me, they stumble and fall down. 3 [Even] if an army surrounds me, I [SYN] will not be afraid. [Even] if they attack me, I will trust [in God]. 4 There is one thing that I have requested from Yahweh; this is the one thing that I desire: That I may worship in Yahweh's house/temple every day of my life, and see that Yahweh is wonderful and inquire [what he wants me to do]. 5 He will protect me when I have troubles; he will keep me safe in his Sacred Tent. He will set me safely (on a high rock/in a secure place). 6 Then I will triumph over [IDM] my enemies. I will shout joyfully as I offer sacrifices in his Sacred Tent, and I will praise Yahweh as I sing. 7 Yahweh, listen to me while I pray. Be kind to me and answer my prayer. 8 I sensed that I heard you say, "Come and worship me [IDM]," so, Yahweh, I will worship you. 9 I am your servant; Do not be angry with me and turn away from me. You have always helped me. You are the one who has saved me, so do not abandon me [now]. 10 [Even] if my father and mother desert me, you will take care of [IDM] me. 11 Yahweh, teach me to do what you want me to do, and lead me on a safe path because I have many enemies. 12 Do not allow my enemies to do to me what they want; they say many false things about me and [threaten to do] violent things to me. 13 But I know that because I trust in you you will be good to me as long as I live. 14 So trust in Yahweh, [all of you]! Be strong and courageous, and wait expectantly for him [to help you]!

28 Yahweh, I call out to you; [you are like an overhanging] rock [under which I can hide]. Do not refuse to answer me, because if you are silent, I will soon be with those who are in their graves. 2 Listen to me when I call out for you [to help me], when I pray, lifting up my hands as I face your sacred temple. 3 Do not drag me away with wicked people, with those who do wicked deeds, with those who pretend [to act] peacefully toward others while in their inner beings, they hate them. 4 Punish those people in the way that they deserve for what they have done; punish them for their evil deeds [DOU]. 5 Yahweh, they do not pay attention to the [wonderful] things that you have done and that you have created; so get rid of them permanently and do not let them appear again! 6 Praise Yahweh because he has heard me when I called out for him to help me! 7 Yahweh makes me strong and [protects] me [like a shield] [MET]; I trusted in him, and he helped me. I was glad, and from my inner being I praised him as I sang to him. 8 Yahweh causes us to be strong and protects us; and he saves me, the one he appointed [MTY] to be king. 9 Yahweh, save/rescue your people; bless those who belong to you. [Take care of them like] a shepherd [takes care of his sheep] [MET]; take care of them forever.

29 You angels in heaven, praise Yahweh! Praise him because he is very glorious and powerful. 2 Proclaim that (he/his name) is glorious; bow down before Yahweh in his holy [temple]. 3 Yahweh's voice is heard above the oceans; Yahweh, the glorious God, thunders. His voice thunders over the huge oceans [DOU]. 4 His voice is powerful and majestic. 5 The sound of Yahweh's voice breaks great cedar trees, the cedars that grow in Lebanon. 6 He causes [the mountains in] Lebanon to jump like calves jump, and causes Hermon [Mountain] to jump like a young bull jumps. 7 Yahweh's voice causes lightning to flash. 8 His voice causes the desert to shake; he shakes Kadesh Desert

[in the southern part of Judah]. 9 Yahweh's voice shakes the huge oak trees and strips the leaves from the trees while the people in the temple shout, "Praise [God]!" 10 Yahweh ruled over the flood [that covered the earth]; he is our King who will rule forever. 11 Yahweh enables his people to be strong, and he blesses them by causing things to go well for them.

30 Yahweh, I praise you because you rescued me. You did not allow [me to die], [with the result that] my enemies could gloat/rejoice. 2 Yahweh, my God, I called out for you to help [me when I was ill], and you healed me. 3 You saved/restored me when I was dying [MTY]. I was nearly dead, but you caused me to get well again. **(Sheol h7585)** 4 All you who belong to Yahweh, sing praise to him! Think about what [God], the holy one, has done, and thank him! 5 When he becomes angry, he is angry for only a very short time [HYP], but he is good [to us] all of our life. We may cry during the night, but the next morning we will be joyful. 6 As for me, when I had no troubles, I said [to myself], "No one will defeat me!" 7 Yahweh, because you were good to me, at first you caused me to be safe [as though I was inside] [MET] a mountain. But then [I became ill, and I thought that] you had turned away from me, and I became afraid. 8 [Then] I called out to you, and I pleaded for you [to help me]. 9 [I said], "Yahweh, (what will you gain if I die?/ you won't gain anything if I die) [MTY]. (In what way will it benefit you?/it won't benefit you at all) if I go to the place where the dead people are [RHQ]. Dead people are certainly not able to praise you [RHQ], and they are not able to tell others that you are trustworthy [RHQ]! 10 Yahweh, listen to me, and be merciful to me! Yahweh, help me!" 11 But [now you have healed me], and you have caused me to change from being sad to dancing [joyfully]. You have taken away the clothes that showed that I was very sad and you have given me clothes that showed that I was [very] joyful. 12 So I will not be silent; I will sing out [loudly] to praise you. Yahweh, you are my God, and I will thank you forever.

31 Yahweh, I have come to you to be protected; do not allow me to be [defeated, with the result that I am] disgraced. Since you always do what is fair/right, rescue me! 2 Listen to me, and save me right now! Be [like] a huge rock [under which I can hide] [MET] and [like] a strong fort in which I will be safe. 3 Yes, you are [like] my huge rock and my fort; guide me and lead me [DOU] in order that I can honor you [MTY]. 4 You are the one who protects me, so keep me from falling into the hidden traps [that my enemies have set for me]. 5 Yahweh, you are a God who can be trusted, so I put myself into your care because you rescued me. 6 Yahweh, I hate those who worship useless idols, but I trust in you. 7 I will be very glad [DOU] because you faithfully love me. You see me when I have been afflicted, and you have known when I have had troubles. 8 You have not allowed my enemies to capture me; instead, you have rescued me from danger. 9 [But now], Yahweh, be kind to me [again] because I am distressed. Because I cry [so much], I cannot see well, and I am completely exhausted. 10 I have become very weak because I am [so] miserable, and it is causing my life to become shorter. I have become weak because of all my troubles; even my bones are becoming weaker. 11 All of my enemies make fun of me, and [even] my neighbors despise me. [Even] my friends are afraid of me [because they think I am being punished by God], and when they see me on the streets, they run away. 12 People have forgotten me like they forget people who are dead. [They think I am as useless] as a broken pot. 13 I have heard people slandering me, and they have caused me to become terrified. My enemies are making plans in order to kill me. 14 But Yahweh, I trust in you. You are my God. 15 My whole life [MTY] is in your hands; save me from my enemies, from those who pursue me. 16 Be kind to me and rescue me because you always faithfully love me. 17 Yahweh, I call out to you, so do not allow me to be disgraced. I desire that wicked people will be disgraced; I want them to [soon die and] go down to the place where the dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** 18 I desire that you will cause people [MTY] who tell lies to be unable to speak. Do that to people who are proud and those who arrogantly accuse righteous people. 19 You have stored up many blessings for those who revere you. You do those good things for those who go to you to be protected; everyone sees you doing that. 20 You hide people in your presence where it is safe, and protect them from people who plot [to kill them]. You hide them in safe places from their enemies [MTY] who accuse/insult them. 21 Praise Yahweh! When my enemies surrounded the city [in which I was living], he showed me in a wonderful way that he faithfully loves me. 22 I was afraid, and I cried out, "I have been separated from Yahweh!" but you heard me and answered my cry for help. 23 You people who belong to Yahweh, love him! Those who are loyal to him, he protects, but those who are very proud, he punishes them severely like they deserve to be punished. 24 You who confidently expect Yahweh [to do great things for you], be strong, be courageous!

32 Those whom God has forgiven for rebelling against him, whose stains [MET] of sin have been wiped away, are truly blessed [by God]! 2 Those whose record of their sins Yahweh has erased, those who no longer do deceitful things, are [truly] blessed [by God]! 3 When I did not confess

my sins, (my body/I) was very weak and sick, and I groaned (all day long/continually). **4** Day and night, [Yahweh], you [SYN] punished me severely. My strength drained away like [water that] ([evaporates/dries up]) on a hot summer [day]. **5** [Then/Finally] I admitted/confessed my sins to you; I stopped trying to hide them. (Think about that!) I said [to myself], "I will confess to Yahweh the wrong things that I have done." And [when I confessed them], you forgave me, so now I (am no longer guilty/will no longer be punished) for my sins. **6** Therefore, the people who are godly should pray to you [when they] (realize that they have sinned/have difficulties). If they pray to you, [difficulties] [MET] will not overwhelm them [like] a great flood. **7** You are [like] a place where I can hide [from my enemies] [MET], you protect me from troubles, and you (enable me/[put people around me who will enable me]) to shout, praising you for saving me [from my enemies]. **8** [Yahweh says], "I will teach you about how you should conduct your life. I will instruct you and watch over you. **9** Do not be stupid like horses and mules that do not have understanding; they need (bits/pieces of metal put in their mouths) and (bridles/ropes fastened to their head) so they will go in the direction you want them to go." **10** Wicked people will have many [troubles that will make them] sad, but those who trust in Yahweh will experience him faithfully loving them all the time. **11** [So, all] you righteous people, rejoice about what Yahweh [has done for you]; you whose (inner beings/lives) are pure, be glad and shout joyfully!

33 You righteous people should sing joyfully to Yahweh because that is what he deserves. **2** Praise Yahweh as you play songs on the lyre/harp. Praise him as you play [other] instruments that have many strings. **3** Sing a new song to him; Play those instruments well, and shout joyfully as you play them! **4** Yahweh always does what he says that he will do; we can trust that everything that he does is right. **5** He loves everything that we do that is just and right. People all over the earth can know that Yahweh faithfully loves us. **6** Yahweh created everything in the sky by commanding it. By what he said [MTY] he created all the stars. **7** He gathered all the water into one huge mass like [someone scoops liquid] into a container. **8** Everyone on the earth should revere Yahweh [DOU]. **9** When he spoke, the world (was created/started to exist). Everything started to exist as a result of him commanding it. **10** Yahweh frustrates the things that the [pagan] nations decide to do. He prevents them from doing the [evil] things that they plan to do. **11** But what Yahweh decides to do will last forever. What he plans to do will never be changed. **12** Yahweh blesses those nations who choose him to be their God; He is pleased with those whom he has chosen to receive what he has promised. **13** Yahweh looks down from heaven and sees all us people; **14** from where he rules [MTY], he looks down on all the people who live on the earth. **15** He formed our inner beings, and he sees everything that we do. **16** It is not because a king has a great army that he is able to win [battles], and it is not because a soldier is very strong that he is able to defeat [his enemy]. **17** It is foolish to trust that because horses are very strong that they will able to win a battle and save their riders. **18** Do not forget that Yahweh watches over those who revere him, those who confidently expect him to faithfully love them. **19** He saves them [SYN] from dying [before they should die] and preserves them when there is a famine. **20** We trust that Yahweh will help us; he protects us like a shield protects a soldier [MET]. **21** We rejoice because of what he [has done for us]; we trust in him because he [MTY] is holy. **22** Yahweh, we pray that you will always faithfully love us while we confidently expect you [to do great things for us].

34 I will always thank Yahweh; I will constantly praise him [MTY]. **2** I will boast about what Yahweh [has done]. All those who are oppressed/discouraged should hear me and rejoice. **3** Join with me in telling others that Yahweh is great! You and I should together proclaim how glorious he is! **4** I prayed to Yahweh, and he (answered my prayer/did what I asked him to do); he rescued me from [all those who caused me] to be afraid. **5** Those who trust [IDM] that he [will help them] will be joyful; (they will never be disappointed/he will always do for them the things that he promises) [LIT]. **6** I was miserable/helpless, but I called out to Yahweh, and he heard me. He rescued me from all my troubles. **7** An angel from Yahweh guards those who revere him, and the angel rescues them. **8** Find out for yourself, and you will experience that Yahweh is good to you! He is very pleased with those who ask him to protect them. **9** All you who belong to him, revere him! Those who do that will always have the things that they need [LIT]. **10** Lions [are usually] very strong, [but sometimes] even young lions are hungry and become weak, but those who trust in Yahweh will (have everything/not lack any good thing) [LIT] [that they need]. **11** You (who are my students/whom I teach), come and listen to me, and I will teach you how to revere Yahweh. **12** If [RHQ] any of you wants to enjoy life and have a good long life, **13** do not say anything that is evil! Do not tell lies! **14** Turn away from doing evil, and do what is good! Always try hard to enable people to live peacefully [with each other.] **15** Yahweh [MTY] carefully watches over those who [act] righteously; he always responds [MTY] to them when they call [to him for help]. **16** But Yahweh [SYN] (is opposed to/turns away from) those who do what is evil. [And after they die], people will forget them completely. **17**

Yahweh hears righteous people when they call out to him;
he rescues them from all their troubles. 18 Yahweh is always
ready to help those who are discouraged; he rescues those
who have nothing good to hope for. 19 Righteous people
may have many troubles, but Yahweh rescues them from all
those troubles. 20 Yahweh protects them from being harmed;
[when their enemies attack them], they will not break any
bones of those righteous people. 21 Wicked people will
be killed by their own evil deeds (OR, by [people doing to
them] the same evil things [that the wicked do to others])
[PRS], and Yahweh will punish those who oppose righteous
people. 22 Yahweh will save those who serve him. He will
(not condemn/forgive) [LIT] those who trust in him.

35 Yahweh, fight against those who fight against me! Fight
against [my enemies] when they fight me! 2 Be [like] a
shield [DOU] to protect me and come to help me! 3 Lift up
your spear [DOU] and [throw it] at those who pursue me!
Promise me that you will enable me to defeat [my enemies].
4 Cause those who are trying to kill me to be defeated and
disgraced! Cause those who are planning to do evil things
to me to be pushed back and become confused! 5 Send
your angel to pursue them, and as a result cause them to
disappear like chaff/straw blown away by the wind! 6 Cause
the path on which they run to be dark and slippery as your
angel pursues them! 7 Although I did not do anything wrong
to them, they concealed a deep pit for me to fall into; they
hid a net in which they would catch me. 8 Cause them to
suddenly experience disaster! Cause them to be trapped
in their own nets! Cause them to fall into the pits that they
have dug for me and disappear! 9 Then I will be joyful about
what you, Yahweh, have done for me, I will be glad that you
have rescued me. 10 With my whole inner being [SYN] I will
say, "There is no one like Yahweh [RHQ]! No one else can
rescue helpless people from powerful people [RHQ]. No one
else can rescue weak and needy people from those who
want to rob them." 11 People who tell lies stand in court
and falsely accuse me of doing things that I do not know
[anything] about. 12 In return for my doing good things for
them, they do evil things to me, with the result that I feel that
I am alone. 13 When they were ill, I showed that I was sad. I
did not eat any food, and I bowed my head as I prayed [for
them]. 14 I mourned and bowed my head as I prayed as
though it was a friend or my mother for whom I was grieving.
15 But when I had troubles, they were all happy about it.
They gathered around to make fun of me. Strangers struck
me, and they would not stop. 16 Worthless people ridicule
me and snarl at me. 17 Yahweh, how long will you only
watch them doing this? Rescue me from their attacking me;
Save me from being killed by these men who are attacking
me like [MET] lions [that are attacking other animals] 18
Then, when many of your people gather, I will praise you
and I will thank you in front of all of them. 19 Do not allow
my enemies, who tell lies about me, defeat me and then
rejoice! Do not allow those who hate me when there in no
reason to hate me to (smirk/smile happily)! 20 They do not
talk peacefully to people; instead, they seek ways to tell lies
about people who are peaceful. 21 They shout at me, to
accuse me, saying, "We saw the wrong things that you did!"
22 Yahweh, you have seen these things, so do not be silent!
Do not stay far from me! 23 Arise, my God, and plead my
case in court, and successfully defend me! 24 Yahweh, my
God, because you are righteous, prove that I am innocent in
order that my enemies will not be able to gloat [that I was
judged to be guilty]. 25 Do not allow them to be able to
say to themselves, "Yes, we have gotten rid of him [IDM]
just like we desired!" 26 Cause those who rejoice about my
misfortunes to be completely defeated and disgraced; cause
those who boast that they are much greater than me to be
disgraced and dishonored! 27 But cause those who desire
that I be acquitted to be happy and shout joyfully, and cause
them to continually say, "Yahweh is great! He is delighted to
cause things to go well for those who serve him." 28 Then I
will proclaim that you act righteously, and I will praise you all
day long.

36 [Wicked people continually desire to] sin. They consider
[IDM] that they do not need to revere God. 2 Because
they are very proud, they do not think that God will discover
their sins and condemn them (OR, they do not think about
their sins and hate themselves for it). 3 [Everything] that they
say is deceitful and full of lies; they no longer do what is good
and are no longer wise. 4 While they are lying on their beds,
they plan to do things to harm [others]; they are determined
to do things that are not good, and they never refuse [to do
what is] evil. 5 Yahweh, your faithful love for us reaches
as high as the heavens, you faithfully [do what you have
promised]; [it is as though your doing that] extends up to the
clouds. 6 Your righteous behavior is [as permanent as] the
highest mountains [MET], your acting justly [will continue as
long as] the deepest oceans [exist]. You take care of people
and you take care of animals. 7 God, your faithful love for us
is very precious. You protect us like birds protect their baby
birds under their wings [MET]. 8 You provide for us plenty of
food from the abundant supply [IDM] that you have; your
great blessings for us [flow] like a river. 9 You are the one
who causes everything to live; your light is what enables
us to see. 10 Continue to faithfully love those who have
experienced a relationship with you, and bless those who
act righteously/justly. 11 Do not allow proud people [SYN] to

attack me, or allow wicked people to chase me away. 12 Look where evil people have fallen on the ground, defeated; they were thrown down, and they will never rise again.

37 Do not be bothered/upset by what wicked [people do]. Do not desire to have the things that people who do wrong/evil have, 2 because they will soon disappear, like grass withers [in the hot sun] and dries up. Just like some green plants [come up but] die [during the hot summer], evil people will soon die also. 3 Trust in Yahweh, and do what is good; if you do that, you will live safely in the land [that he has given you], and you will live peacefully [MET]. 4 Be delighted with all that Yahweh [does for you]; if you do that, he will give you the things that you desire most. 5 Commit to Yahweh all the things that you plan to do; trust in him, and he will do [whatever is needed to help you]. 6 He will show [as clearly] as the sunlight that you (are innocent/have done nothing that is wrong); he will show [as clearly] as [the sun at] noontime [SIM] that all the things that you have decided are just. 7 Be quiet in Yahweh's presence, and wait patiently for him [to do what you want him to do]. Do not be bothered/upset when what evil men do is successful, when they are able to do the wicked things that they plan. 8 Do not be angry [about what wicked people do]. Do not want to punish them yourself. Do not be envious of such people because you will only harm [yourself if you try to envy them]. 9 [Some day Yahweh] will get rid of wicked people, but those who trust in Yahweh will live [safely] in the land [that he has given to them]. 10 Soon the wicked will disappear. If you look for them, they will be gone. 11 But those who are humble will live safely in their land. They will happily enjoy living peacefully and having the other good things [that Yahweh gives them]. 12 Wicked people plan to harm righteous/godly people; they snarl at them [MET] [like wild animals]. 13 But Yahweh laughs [at them] because he knows that some day [MTY] [he will judge and punish] the wicked people. 14 Wicked people pull out their swords/daggers and they put strings on their bows, ready to kill people who are poor [DOU] and to slaughter those who live righteously. 15 But they will be killed by their own swords/daggers, and their bows will be broken. 16 It is good to be righteous/godly even if you do not have many possessions, but it is bad to be wicked, even if you are very wealthy, 17 because [Yahweh] will completely take away the strength of wicked people, but he will (sustain/take care of) people who live righteously. 18 Every day Yahweh cares about those who have not done any evil things; the things that Yahweh gives them will last forever. 19 They will survive when calamities occur; when there are famines, they will still have plenty to eat. 20 But wicked people will die; [just] like the beautiful wild flowers in the fields [die under the hot sun] and disappear like smoke [MET], Yahweh [will cause] his enemies to suddenly disappear. 21 The wicked people borrow [money], but they are not able to repay it; righteous/godly people, [in contrast, have enough money that] they can give generously [to others]. 22 Those whom Yahweh has blessed will live safely in the land that he has given to them, but he will get rid of those people whom he has cursed. 23 Yahweh protects those who do what is pleasing to him, and he will enable them to walk confidently, wherever they go; 24 even if they stumble, they will not fall down, because Yahweh holds them by his hand. 25 I was young [previously], and now I am an old man, but [in all those years], I have never seen righteous/godly people being abandoned by Yahweh, nor have I seen that their children [needed to] beg for food. 26 Righteous/Godly people are generous, and happily lend [money to others], and their children are a blessing to them. 27 Turn away from [doing] evil, and do what is good. If you do that, you [and your descendants] will live in your land forever. 28 [That will happen] because Yahweh likes to see people doing what is just, and he will never forsake righteous/godly people. He will protect them forever; but he will get rid of the children of wicked people. 29 Righteous/Godly people will own the land [that Yahweh promised to give to them], and they will live there forever. 30 Righteous people give wise [advice to others], and they [MTY] say what is just/fair. 31 They continually think about God's laws; they do not stray from [God's] path. 32 Those who are evil wait in ambush for righteous people in order to kill them [as they walk by]. 33 But Yahweh will not abandon righteous people, and allow (them to fall into their enemies' hands/their enemies harm them). And he will not allow righteous people to be condemned when someone takes them to a judge [to be put on trial]. 34 Be patient and trust that Yahweh [will help you], and (walk on his paths/do what he wants you to do). [If you do that], he will honor you by giving you the land [that he promised], and when he gets rid of the wicked, you will see it happen. 35 I have seen that wicked people who (act like tyrants/terrify people) [sometimes] prosper, like trees that grow well in fertile soil, 36 when I looked [later], they were gone! I searched for them, but [Yahweh had caused] them to disappear. 37 Notice the people who have not done evil things, those who act righteously: their descendants will have peace in their inner beings. 38 But Yahweh will get rid of the wicked; he will also get rid of their descendants (OR, as a result, they will not have any descendants). 39 Yahweh rescues righteous people; in times of trouble he protects them [MET]. 40 Yahweh helps them and saves them;

he rescues them from [being attacked/harmed by] wicked people because they go to him to be protected [MET].

38 Yahweh, when you are angry [with me], do not rebuke/scold me and punish me! **2** [Now it is as though] you have shot your arrows at me and wounded me; you have struck me and knocked me down. **3** Because you have been angry with me, I am suffering great pain. Because of my sin, my whole body is diseased. **4** All my sins are [like a flood] that covers my head; they are like a load that is very heavy, with the result that I cannot carry it. **5** Because I have done foolish things, I have sores that have become worse, and they stink. **6** [Sometimes] I am bent over, and [sometimes] I lie prostrate; I am sad/cry all day. **7** My body is burning with fever, and I am very ill. **8** I am completely exhausted, and I have no strength. I am very distressed, and I groan with pain. **9** Yahweh, you know that I desire [to be healed]; you hear me while I am groaning. **10** My heat is pounding heavily, and all my strength is gone. I am no longer able to see well. **11** My friends and neighbors stay away from me because of my sores; even my own family stays away from me. **12** And those who want to kill me set traps to catch me; those who want to harm me discuss ways to get rid of me; they plot against me all day. **13** Now I act like I'm deaf, and do not listen [to what they say]. I act like I cannot talk, so I say nothing [to reply to them]. **14** I act like a man who does not answer [when people talk to him], because he cannot hear anything. **15** But Yahweh, I trust in you. My Lord God, you will answer me. **16** I said to you, "Do not cause [me to die, with the result that] my enemies will rejoice! Do not cause me to stumble, with the result that they will be very happy!" **17** I say that because I am about to fall down, and I constantly have pain. **18** I confess the wrong things that I have done; I am [very] sorry for the sins that I have committed. **19** My enemies are healthy and strong; there are many people who hate me for no reason. **20** Those who do evil things to me in return for my doing good things to them oppose me because I try to do what is right. **21** Yahweh, do not abandon me! My God, do not stay far from me! **22** Lord, you are the one who saves/rescues me; Quickly [come and] help me!

39 I said [to myself], "I will be careful not to sin by the things that I say [MTY]. I will not say anything [to complain] while wicked people are near to me [and can hear me]." **2** [So] I was completely silent [DOU], and I did not [even] talk about things that were good, but it was useless, because I began to suffer even more. **3** I became very anxious/worried [IDM]. As I thought [about my troubles], I became more worried. Then [finally] I said [MTY], **4** "Yahweh, show/tell me how long I will live. Tell me when I will die. Tell me how many years I will live! **5** [It seems that] you have caused me to live only a short time; (my lifetime/all the time that I have lived) seems like nothing to you. The time that all we humans live is [as short as] [MET] a puff of wind. **6** Then we disappear like a shadow does. It seems that all that we do is for nothing/useless. We [sometimes] get a lot of money, but we do not know who will get it [after we die]. **7** So now, Yahweh, if I expect [RHQ] [to receive blessings from other people], I will be disappointed. You are the [only] one from whom I confidently expect [to receive blessings]. **8** Save me from [being punished for] all the sins that I have committed. And do not allow foolish people to make fun of me. **9** I did not say anything [when you punished me], because [I knew that] you were the one who caused [me to suffer]. **10** But now, please stop punishing me! [If you do not do that], I am about to die because of the ways that you [SYN] have struck/afflicted me. **11** When you rebuke someone and punish him for the sin that he has committed, you destroy the things that (he loves/are precious to him), like moths' [larva] destroy clothing. Our lives [disappear like] a puff of wind. **12** Yahweh, listen to me while I pray; pay attention to me while I cry out to you. Help me while I am crying. I am here on the earth for only a short time, like all my ancestors. **13** [Now] please leave me alone, [and do not punish me any more] in order that I may smile and be happy for a while before I die. [EUP, DOU]"

40 I waited patiently for Yahweh [to help me], and he listened to me [DOU] when I called out to him. **2** [When I had many troubles, it was as though] I was in a deep pit. But he lifted me up out of the mud and slime of that pit; he set my feet on a [solid] rock, and enabled me to walk (safely/without falling). **3** He has given me a new song to sing, a song to praise him who is our God. Many people will find out [what he has done for me], and they will revere and trust him. **4** Yahweh is pleased with those who trust him, those who do not trust in idols or join with those who worship those false gods. **5** O Yahweh, my God, you have done many wonderful things! No one can list all the wonderful things that you have planned for us. If I tried to tell [others] about all those wonderful things, I would not be able to, because there would be too many for me to mention. **6** Various kinds of sacrifices and other offerings are not the [only] things that delight you. You have enabled me to understand that very well [IDM]. [Animals] burned [on the altar] and [other] offerings are not all that you require [for sins to be forgiven]. **7** So I said [to you], "Yahweh, here I am, [to do] the things that have been written in the scroll [that contains your laws], things that you want me [to do]." **8**

O my God, I delight to do what you desire; I [keep] your laws within my inner being. 9 Whenever all [your people] are gathered, I have told them about how you save us. Yahweh, you know that I have not been afraid to tell that to them. 10 And I have not kept to myself the news that you always act justly/fairly; when many of your people have gathered together [to worship you in the temple], I have told them that you are faithful to us and save us. I have (not concealed/openly told people) that you faithfully love us and act loyally toward us. 11 Yahweh, do not stop being merciful to me. Because you faithfully love [me] [PRS] and are loyal [to me], always protect me. 12 I have many troubles; [so many that] I cannot count them. My sins are like a flood that has covered me [PRS, MET]; [they are so many that] I cannot find my way. The sins that I have committed are more than the hairs on my head. I am very discouraged. 13 O Yahweh, please save me! Come quickly to help me! 14 Humble those who are happy about my troubles, and cause them to be disgraced and ashamed. Chase away those who are trying to get rid of me. 15 I hope/desire that those who make fun of me will be dismayed when you defeat them. 16 But I hope that all those who go to [worship] you will be very joyful [DOU]. I want those who love you because you saved them to shout repeatedly, "Yahweh is great!" 17 As for me, I am poor and needy [DOU]; but [I know that] Yahweh has not forgotten me. O my God, you are the one who saves and helps me, so please come quickly [and help me!]

41 Yahweh is pleased with those people who help to provide for the poor; he will rescue those people when they have troubles. 2 Yahweh protects them and allows them to live [for a long time]. He enables them to be happy in the land [of Israel], and rescues them from their enemies. 3 When they are sick, Yahweh strengthens them, and he heals them. 4 [When I was sick], I said, "Yahweh, be merciful to me and heal me; [I know that I am sick because] I have sinned against you." 5 My enemies say cruel things about me; they say, "How soon will he die, and then everyone will forget about him [MTY]? (OR, he will not have [any descendants to continue] his name)." 6 When my enemies come to me, they falsely say that they [are concerned about me]. They listen to bad news about (me/my health). Then they go away and tell everywhere what is happening to me. 7 All those who hate me whisper to others about me, and they hope/desire that very bad things will happen to me. 8 They say, "He will soon die because of his being sick; he will never get up from his bed [before he dies]." 9 Even my best friend, whom I trusted very much, who [often] ate with me, has (betrayed me/put me into my enemies' hands) [IDM]. 10 But Yahweh, be merciful to me, and enable me to become healthy [again]. When you do that, I will be able to (pay back my enemies/get revenge on my enemies/cause my enemies to suffer like they caused me to suffer). 11 [If you enable me to] do that, with the result that my enemies do not defeat me, I will know that you are pleased with me. 12 [I will know that] it is because I have done what is right that you have helped me, and [I will know that] you will let me be with you forever. 13 Praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship]; Praise him forever! Amen! I desire that it will be so!

42 Deer pant, desiring to drink water from a stream [when there is a drought] (OR, [when they are being pursued by hunters].) In the same way [SIM], God, I need you very much. 2 I desire to have fellowship with [MET] you, the all-powerful God. [I wonder], "When will I be able to go [back to the temple in Israel] and worship in your presence again?" 3 Every day and every night I cry; [it is as though] the only thing I have to drink is my tears; and while I do that, my enemies are continually asking me, "Why does your god not [help you]?" 4 I am very distressed [IDM] as I remember when I went with the crowd of people to the temple [in Jerusalem], leading them as we walked along; we were all shouting joyfully and singing to thank God [for what he had done]; we were a large group who were celebrating. 5 So [I say to] myself, "(Why am I sad and discouraged?/I should not be sad and discouraged!) [RHQ] I confidently expect God [to help me], and again I will praise him, my God, the one who saves me." 6 [But now, Yahweh], I am very discouraged [IDM], so I think about you, even from where the Jordan [River] gushes out from the bottom of Hermon [Mountain] and from Mizar Mountain. 7 But here, the great sorrow that I feel is like water that you send down [MET]; [it is like] a waterfall that tumbles down and floods over me. 8 Yahweh shows me each day that he faithfully loves me, and each night I sing to him and pray to him, the God who causes me to live. 9 I say to God, [who is like] an [overhanging] rock [under which I can hide] [MET], "It seems that you have forgotten me. I (mourn/cry) constantly because my enemies act cruelly toward me" [RHQ]. 10 They make fun of me constantly; they continually ask, "Why does your god not help you?" [RHQ] And when they insult me [like that], [it is like] wounds that I feel even in my bones. 11 But [I think,] "(Why am I sad and discouraged?/I should not be sad and discouraged!) [RHQ] I will confidently expect God [to help me], and I will praise him again, my God, the one who saves me."

43 God, declare that I (am innocent/have not done things that are wrong). Defend me when (ungodly people/people who do not worship you) say things against me, rescue me from people who deceive and [say things

about me that are] not true. 2 You are God, the one who protects me; (why have you abandoned me?/it seems that you have abandoned me!) [RHQ] It does not seem right that [RHQ] I am forced to mourn/cry constantly because my enemies are cruel to me. 3 Shine your light on me and speak your truth to me; and let them guide me, and take me back to Zion, your sacred hill [at Jerusalem], and to [your temple], where you live. 4 When you do that, I will go to your altar, to [worship you], my God, who causes me to be extremely joyful. There I will praise you, the God whom I [worship], while I play my harp. 5 So (why am I sad and discouraged?/I should not be sad and discouraged!) [RHQ] I confidently expect God [to bless me], and I will praise him again, my God, the one who saves me.

44 God, we ourselves have heard what our parents and grandparents told us. They told us about the miracles that you performed long ago. 2 [They told us] how you expelled the ungodly people and enabled us to live in their land. [They told us] that you punished those ungodly people and enabled your own people to prosper [IDM]. 3 It was not by using their own swords that they conquered the people that lived in that land, and it was not by their own power that they were victorious; it was only by your power [MTY, DOU] [that they did those things]; and they were sure that you were with them, and that showed that you were pleased with them. 4 You are my King and my God; it is you who enable us, your people [MTY], to defeat our enemies. 5 It is by your power that we knock our enemies down and tramp on them. 6 I do not trust that I will be saved by using my bow [and arrows] and my sword. 7 No, it is you who have rescued us from our enemies, it is you who have caused those who hate us to become ashamed [because they were defeated]. 8 We have continually boasted about what God [has done for us], and we will thank him [MTY] forever. 9 But [now] you have rejected us and caused us to be disgraced; when our armies march out [to fight a battle], you no [longer] go with them. 10 You have caused us to run away from our enemies, with the result that they captured the things that belonged to us. 11 You have allowed us to become like [MET] sheep that were ready to be slaughtered; you scattered us [far away] among [other]. 12 [It is as though] [MET] you sold us, your people, [to our enemies] for a very small price, and you did not gain much profit from selling us! 13 People who live in nations near us make fun of us; they laugh at us and deride/belittle us. 14 They make jokes using the name of [our country], they shake their heads [to indicate that they despise us]. 15 All day I feel disgraced; from seeing my face, people know that I am ashamed. 16 I hear what those who sneer at me and revile me say; I am ashamed in front of my enemies and those who want to harm me. 17 All these things have happened to us [even] though we have not forgotten you, and we are not the ones who disobeyed the agreement you made with [our ancestors]. 18 We have not stopped being loyal to you, and we have not stopped doing what you want us to do [IDM]. 19 But [it is as though] you have allowed us to be helpless among wild animals, and abandoned us in a deep dark [ravine]. 20 If we had forgotten to worship [MTY] our God, or if we had spread out our hands to [worship] a foreign god, 21 you certainly would have known that, because you know [even] what we secretly think. 22 But it is because we belong to you, [that our enemies] are constantly killing us. They act toward us as though we were only sheep to be slaughtered. 23 [So], Yahweh, arise! Why are you asleep [RHQ]? Get up! Do not reject us forever! 24 Why are you not looking at us? Why are you forgetting that we are suffering and being oppressed [by our enemies]? 25 We are pushed down to the ground and we cannot get up. 26 Arise, and come and help us! Rescue us because you faithfully love us!

45 In my inner being I am stirred by a beautiful message which will be sung to the king. The words of this message will be written with a pen by me, a skilled writer. 2 [O King], you are the most handsome man in the world, and you always speak [MTY] eloquently, because God has always blessed you. 3 You who are a mighty warrior, put on your sword! You are glorious and majestic. 4 Ride on like a great chief to defend the truth that you speak and the fair decisions that you make! Because you are strong [MTY], you will do awesome deeds. 5 Your arrows are sharp, and they pierce the hearts of your enemies. Soldiers of many nations will fall dead at your feet. 6 The kingdom [MTY] that God will give to you will remain forever. You rule [MTY] people justly. 7 You love right actions, and you hate evil actions. Therefore God, your God, has chosen [MTY] you [to be king] and caused you to be happier [MET] than any other king. 8 The perfume of various spices is on your robes. [People] (entertain you/make you happy) in ivory palaces by playing stringed instruments. 9 Among the women who stay near you [EUP] stay are daughters of [other] kings. And at your right hand stands [your bride], the queen, wearing beautiful ornaments of gold that comes from Ophir. 10 [Now I will say something] to your bride: Listen to me carefully [DOU]! Forget the people who live in your home country, forget your relatives! 11 Because you are [very], the king will desire [to sleep with] [EUP] you. He is your master, so you must obey him. 12 The people from Tyre [city] will bring gifts to you; their rich people will try to persuade you to do favors for them. 13 [O king], your bride will be entering the palace

wearing beautiful robes made from gold thread. 14 While she is wearing a gown that has many colors, her companions will lead her to you. She will have many other young women who accompany her. 15 They will be very joyful [DOU] as they are led along to enter your palace. 16 Some day, your sons and your grandsons will become kings, just like your ancestors were. You will enable them to become rulers in many countries [HYP]. 17 And as for me, I will enable people in every generation to remember the great things that you [MTY] have done, and people will praise you forever.

46 God is the one who protects us and causes us to be strong; he is always ready to help us when we have troubles. 2 So, even if the earth shakes, we will not be afraid. Even if the mountains fall into the middle of the sea, 3 and if the water in the sea roars and foams, and the hills shake violently, we will not be afraid! 4 [Blessings that come from] God are like a river that makes everyone in the city where [we worship] God joyful. It is the city where the temple of God, who is greater than any other god, exists. 5 God is in this city, and it will never be destroyed; he will [come to] help [the people in] that city at dawn every day. 6 [Sometimes] the [people of many] nations are terrified; kingdoms (are overthrown/cease to exist); God speaks [loudly like thunder], and the earth melts (OR, people everywhere become terrified) [MET]. 7 But Yahweh, the commander of the armies of heaven, is with us; the God whom Jacob worshiped (OR, we Israeli people worship) is our refuge. 8 Come and (see/think about) the amazing things that Yahweh has done [DOU]! 9 He stops wars all over the world; he breaks bows [and arrows]; he destroys spears; he burns up shields. 10 [God says], "Be quiet, and remember that I am God! I will be honored by the people of all nations. I will be honored all over the earth." 11 [So never forget that] Yahweh, the commander of the armies of heaven, is with us; the God whom Jacob worshiped (OR, we Israeli people worship) is our refuge.

47 You people all [over the world], clap your hands for joy! Shout joyfully to [praise] God! 2 Yahweh, who is much greater than any other god, is awesome; he is the king who rules over all the world! 3 He enabled us to defeat [the armies of] the people-groups [that lived in Canaan]. 4 He chose for us this land where we now live; we Israeli people [MTY], whom he loves, are proud that we own this land. 5 God has gone up [into his temple]. The people shouted joyfully and blew trumpets as Yahweh went up. 6 Sing songs to praise our God! Sing to praise him [DOU]! Sing to God, our king! 7 God is the one who rules over everything in the world; sing a psalm to him! 8 God sits on his sacred throne as he rules over the people of [all] ethnic groups. 9 The rulers of those people-groups gather as God's people, the people [descended] from Abraham, [do]. But God has more power than the weapons/shields [of all the kings] on the earth; (he is greatly honored/people honor him) everywhere.

48 Yahweh is great, and he deserves to be greatly praised in the city where he [lives], [which is built on Zion], his sacred hill. 2 That city, on a high [hill], is beautiful; it is the city where the true [God], the great king, [lives], and it causes people all over the world to rejoice [when they see it]. 3 God is in the strong towers there, and he shows that he protects the people in that city. 4 Many kings gathered [with their armies] to attack [that city], 5 but when they saw it, they were amazed; they became terrified, and ran away. 6 Because they were very afraid, they trembled like a woman who is about to give birth to a child; 7 they shook [like] ships sailing from Tarshish are shaken by a strong wind. 8 We had heard [that this city is glorious], and now we have seen that it is. It is the city in which Yahweh, the almighty one, [lives]. It is the city which God will preserve/protect forever. 9 God, [here] in your temple we think about how you faithfully love us. 10 You [MTY] are famous and (are praised/people praise you) all over the earth, because you rule powerfully [MTY] and justly. 11 The people who live near Zion Hill should be happy! The people in [all] the cities [MTY] in Judah should rejoice because you judge people fairly. 12 [You Israeli people should] walk around Zion [Hill] and count the towers there; 13 notice the walls there and examine the forts in order that you can tell about them to your children. 14 [Say to them], "This is [the city that belongs to] our God, [the one who lives] forever; he will guide us all of our lives."

49 You people of all ethnic groups, listen! You people all over the world, 2 important people and unimportant people, rich people and poor people, everyone, [listen to what I am saying], 3 [because] what I am thinking is very sensible, and what I say will enable you to become wise! 4 I think about [MTY] (proverbs/wise sayings), and while I play my harp, I explain what they mean. 5 I am not [RHQ] afraid when I am in trouble/danger, when I am surrounded by my enemies, 6 by evil men who trust that [things will always go well for them because] they are wealthy, and who boast about being very rich. 7 [They may be rich], but no one can pay money with the result that he would live forever! No one can pay God enough so that God will allow him [to continue] to live, 8 because that cost is too great, and he will never be able to pay enough 9 with the result that he will live forever and never [die and] be buried! 10 We see that foolish and stupid people die, but we see that wise people also die; they

all leave their wealth, and others inherit it. 11 Those wise people once had [houses on] land that they owned, [but now] their graves are their homes forever, the place where they will stay for all time! 12 Even if people are great, that cannot prevent them from dying; all people die, the same as animals do. 13 That is what happens to those who foolishly trust [in what they have accomplished], to those who are delighted in [all] that they possess. 14 They are certain to die just like sheep, when a shepherd leads them away to be slaughtered. [PRS, MET] In the morning righteous people will rule over them, and then [those wealthy people will die and] their bodies will quickly decay in their graves; they will be where dead people are, far from their homes. **(Sheol h7585)** 15 But it is certain that God will rescue me so that I am not kept in the place of the dead. **(Sheol h7585)** 16 [So], do not be dismayed when someone becomes rich and the houses where they live become more and more luxurious, 17 because when he dies, he will take nothing with him; his wealth will not go with him. 18 While [a rich person] is alive, he congratulates himself, and people praise him for being successful, 19 but he will [die], joining his ancestors, who will never see daylight again. 20 Even if someone is great, that cannot prevent him from dying; he will die, the same as animals do.

50 God, the all-powerful one, speaks; he summons all people, from the east to the west. 2 His glory shines from Zion [Hill in Jerusalem], an extremely beautiful city. 3 Our God comes to us, and he is not silent. A great fire is in front of him, and a storm is around him. 4 He comes to judge his people. He shouts to the [angels in] heaven and to [the people on] the earth. 5 He says, "Summon those who faithfully [worship] me, those who made an agreement with me by offering sacrifices to me." 6 The [angels in] heaven declare, "God is righteous, and he is the supreme judge." 7 God says, "My people, listen! You Israeli people, listen, as I, your God, say what you have done that is wrong. 8 I am not rebuking you for making sacrifices to me, for the offerings that you completely burn [on the altar]. 9 But I do not really need [you to sacrifice] the bulls from your barns and the goats from your pens, 10 because all the animals in the forest belong to me, [and all] the cattle on 1,000 hills also belong to me. 11 I [own and] know all the birds and all [the creatures] that move around in the fields. 12 [So], if I were hungry, I would not tell you [to bring me some food], because everything in the world belongs to me! 13 I do not eat the flesh of the bulls [that you sacrifice], and I do not drink the blood of the goats [that you offer to me]. 14 The sacrifice [that I really want is that] you thank me and do all that you have promised to do. 15 And pray to me when you have troubles. [If you do that], I will rescue you, and [then] you will praise me. 16 But I say this to the wicked people: (Why do you/It does not benefit you at all to) [RHQ] recite my commandments or talk about the agreement that I made with you, 17 because you have refused to allow me to discipline you, and you have rejected what I told you to do. 18 Every time that you see a thief, you become his friend, and you spend [much] time with those who commit adultery. 19 You are [always] talking [MTY] about doing wicked things, and you are [always] to deceive people. 20 You are always accusing members of your own family [of doing wrong], and slandering them. 21 You did [all] those things, and I did not say anything to you, [so] you thought that I was [a sinner] just like you. But now I rebuke you and accuse you, right in front of you. 22 So, all you who have ignored me, pay attention to this, because if you do not, I will tear you to pieces, and there will be no one to rescue you. 23 The sacrifice that [truly] honors me is to thank me [for what I have done]; and I will save those who always do the things that I want them to."

51 O God, be merciful to me, because you love me faithfully; because you are very merciful, erase [the record of] the ways that I disobeyed you! 2 Make me pure from the wrong things that I have done; make me clean from [the guilt of] my sin. 3 [I say that] because I know the ways that I have disobeyed you; I cannot forget them. 4 You, you only, are the one that I have [really] sinned against, and you have seen the evil things that I have done. When you say that I am guilty, you are right/correct, and when you judge me, you justly say [that I deserve to be punished]. 5 I have been a sinner since the day that I was born; [truly], I have been like that since my mother conceived me. 6 What you desire is that I desire what is true in order that you [can] teach me how to act wisely. 7 Purify me from the guilt of my sins, and [after that happens], I will be clean [in my inner being]; cleanse me, and [then in my inner being] I will be (whiter than snow/very clean). 8 Allow/Cause me to be joyful [DOU] again; you have (crushed my spirit/completely discouraged me) [MTY]; [but now] let me rejoice [again]. 9 Do not continue to look at the sins [IDM] that I have committed; erase the record of the evil things that I have done. 10 O God, cause my inner being to be pure. Put new [thoughts] within me and make me faithful again. 11 Do not send me away from you [because of my sin], and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Cause/Allow me to be happy again because of [knowing] that you have freed me [from the guilt of my sin], and make me willing [to obey you]. 13 If you do that, I will [be able to] teach [other] sinners what you want them to do, and they will repent and begin to obey you. 14 O

God, you are the one who saves me; forgive me for being guilty of causing someone [who was not my enemy] to die. [When you do that], I will sing joyfully about your being very good and righteous. **15** O Yahweh, help me to speak [in order that] I may praise you. **16** You are not pleased [only] with the sacrifices [that people bring to you]. If that were [enough to] please you, I would bring you sacrifices. You are not pleased with burnt offerings [alone]. **17** The sacrifice that you [really] want is for people to be truly humble and sorry [for having sinned]; O God, you will not refuse that kind of sacrifice. **18** [O God], be good to [the people who live in] Jerusalem [MTY], [and help them] to rebuild the city walls. **19** When that happens, [they will bring you] the proper sacrifices, animals that they will completely burn, young bulls that they will burn on your altar, and you will be pleased.

52 You people [think that you] are strong and brag about the sins that you have committed, while you plan to harm godly people. **2** All during the day you plan to get rid of [others]; what you say [MTY] [injures others] like a sharp razor [SIM], and you are [always] deceiving [others]. **3** You like [doing what is] evil more than you like doing what is good, and you like telling lies more than you like telling the truth. **4** You who say things [MTY] to deceive people, you like to say (things that hurt people/cruel things)! **5** But God will get rid of you forever; he will grab you and drag you from your home and take you away from this world where people are alive. **6** When righteous [people] see that, they will be awestruck, and they will laugh at [what happened to] you, and say, **7** "Look [what happened to] the man who would not ask God to protect him; he trusted that his great wealth [would save him]; he trusted in the money that he got by wickedly taking it from others!" **8** But I am [secure/safe because I worship] in God's temple; I am like a [strong] green olive tree. I trust in God, who faithfully loves us forever. **9** God, I will always thank you for the things that you have done. As I stand before godly [people], I will proclaim that you are good (OR, the many good [MTY] [things you have done for us]).

53 [Only] foolish people say to themselves, "There is no God!" People who say that are corrupt; they commit terrible sins; there is not one of them who does what is good/right. **2** God looks down from heaven and sees humans; he looks to see if anyone is [very] wise, with the result that he seeks [to know] God. **3** [But] they are all morally corrupt; no one does what is good/right. **4** Will all these evil people never learn [what God will do to them]? They act violently toward Yahweh's people while eating the food that he provides, and they never pray to Yahweh. **5** But [some day] those people will become terrified, like they have never been terrified before, because God will cause those who are separated from him to die, and he will [disrespect them by] scattering their bones. They have rejected God, so he will cause them to be [defeated and] completely disgraced. **6** I wish/desire that someone from Jerusalem [MTY] would come and rescue the Israeli [people]! God, when you bless your people again, [all] the Israeli [people, all the descendants of] Jacob, will rejoice.

54 God, by your power [MTY, DOU] save me [from my enemies], and show people that I have not done anything that is wrong! **2** God, listen to my prayer; listen to what I say to you, **3** because strangers are [trying to] attack me; proud men are wanting to kill me; men who do not have any (respect for/interest in) you. **4** But God is the one who helps me; Yahweh defends/protects me [from my enemies]. **5** He will cause the evil things that they want to do to me to happen to them instead; because he faithfully [does what he promises], he will get rid of them. **6** Yahweh, I will gladly give an offering to you because I want to, and I will thank you [MTY], for you are good [to me]; **7** you have rescued me from all my troubles, and I have seen that you have defeated my enemies.

55 God, listen to my prayer, and do not turn away from me while I am pleading with you. **2** Listen to me, and answer me, because I am overwhelmed by [all] my troubles. **3** My enemies cause me to be terrified; wicked people oppress me. They cause me to have great troubles; they are angry with me, and they hate me. **4** I am terrified, and I am very much afraid that I will die. **5** I am very fearful and I tremble/shake, and I am completely terrified. **6** I said, "I wish that I had wings like a dove! If I had wings, I would fly away and find a place to rest. **7** I would fly far away and live in the desert. **8** I would quickly find a shelter from [my enemies] [who are like] [MET] a strong wind and rainstorm." **9** Lord, confuse my enemies, and cause their plans to fail, because I see them acting violently and causing strife in the city [of Jerusalem]. **10** During [each] day and night they march around on top of its walls, committing crimes and causing trouble. **11** They destroy [things] everywhere. They oppress and defraud [people] in the (marketplaces/public squares). **12** If it were an enemy who was making fun of me, I could endure it. If it were someone who hates me, who despises me, I could hide from him. **13** But it is someone who is just like me, my companion, someone who was my friend [who is doing this to me]. **14** We previously had many good talks together; we walked around together in God's temple. **15** I desire/hope that my enemies will die suddenly; while they are still young, cause them to go down to the

place where the dead people are. They they think evil things. (Sheol h7585) 16 But I [will] ask Yahweh, [my] God, to help me, and he will save me. 17 [Each] morning and [each] noontime and [each] evening I tell him what I am concerned about, and I moan, and he hears my voice. 18 I have [very] many enemies, but he will rescue me and bring me back safely from the battles that I fight. 19 God is the one who has ruled everything forever, and he will listen to me. He will cause my enemies to be [defeated and] disgraced, because they do not change their evil behavior and they do not revere God. 20 My companion, [whom I mentioned previously], betrayed his friends and broke the agreement that he made with them. 21 What he said was [easy to listen to, like] butter [is easy to swallow] [MET], but in his inner being he hated people; his words were [soothing] like [olive] oil, [but they hurt people like] sharp swords do [MET]. 22 Put your troubles in Yahweh's hands, and he will take care of you; he will never allow righteous [people] to experience disasters. 23 God, you will cause murderers [MTY] and liars to die before they have lived half as long as they expect to live; but [as for me], I will trust in you.

56 God, be merciful to me because men have harassed me; all day my enemies pursue me. 2 My enemies harass me all day long; there are many of them who proudly attack me. 3 But whenever I am afraid, I trust in you. 4 God, I praise/thank you because you do what you have promised; I trust in you, and then I am not afraid. Ordinary humans certainly cannot [RHQ] harm me! 5 All day long my enemies claim that I said things that I did not say (OR, try to destroy what I am doing); they are always thinking of ways to harm me. 6 In order to cause trouble for me, they hide and watch everything that I do, waiting for [an opportunity] to kill me [MTY]. 7 So, God, punish them for the wicked things that they are doing; show that you are angry by defeating those people! 8 You have counted [all] the times that I have been wandering alone/distressed; [it is as though] you have put [all] my tears in a bottle [in order that you can see how much I have cried]. [You have counted my tears and written] the number in your book. 9 When I call out to you, [my] God, my enemies will be defeated; I know that will happen, because you are fighting for me. 10 I praise/thank you that you do what you have promised; Yahweh, I [will always] praise you for that [DOU]. 11 I trust in you, and as a result, I will not be afraid. I know that humans cannot really [RHQ] harm me! 12 I will bring to you the offering that I promised; I will bring an offering to you to thank you, 13 because you have rescued me from being killed; you have kept me from stumbling. As a result, I will continue to live in your presence in the light that [shines on those who are still] alive (OR, in the light that [enables people to] live).

57 God, be merciful to me! Act mercifully toward me because I come to you to protect me. I ask you to protect me [like little birds are protected under their mother's] wings [MET] until the storm/danger is ended. 2 God, you who are greater than all other gods, I cry out to you, the one who enables me to do all that you desire. 3 You will answer me from heaven and rescue me, but you will cause those who oppress me to be [defeated and] disgraced! (Think about that!) God will [always] faithfully love me and (will be faithful/will do what he promises). 4 [Sometimes] I am surrounded by [my enemies who are like] lions that [kill] humans; [they are like] lions that chew with their teeth [animals that they kill]; but my enemies have spears and arrows, not teeth; and [the false things that] they say [MTY] [hurt people as much as] sharp swords [hurt people] [MET]. 5 God, show in the heavens that you are very great! And show your glory to people all over the earth! 6 [It is as if] [MET, HYP] my enemies spread a net to seize me, and I became very distressed [IDM]. [It is as if] [MET, HYP] they dug a deep pit along the path where I walk, but they themselves fell into it! 7 God, I have complete confidence [DOU] in you. I will sing to you, and I will praise you while I sing. 8 I will awaken myself; I will arise before the sun rises and [praise you while I play] my harp or my (lyre/small harp). 9 Lord, I will thank you among [all] the people; and I will sing to praise you among [many] ethnic groups, 10 because your faithful love for us is [as great as the distance from the earth] to the sky, and because your (faithfulness/faithfully doing what you promise) is [as great as the distance] up to the clouds [MET]. 11 God, show in the heavens that you are very great! And show your glory [to people] all over the earth!

58 When you mighty men speak, you never say what is right; you never decide things about people justly [RHQ]! 2 No, in your inner beings you think only about doing what is wrong, and you commit violent crimes in this land [of Israel]. 3 Wicked people do wrong things and tell lies from the time that they are born [DOU]. 4 God, show in the heavens how great you are! And show your glory to people all over the earth! What wicked people say [injures people like] the venom of a snake [MET]; They refuse to listen to good advice, [as though they were] cobras that were deaf [MET]! 5 As a result, [like a snake that does not respond when] a charmer plays a flute or when someone sings magic songs, [they do not pay attention when others rebuke them]. 6 God, as for these enemies who [want to attack me like] young lions, break their teeth! 7 Cause them to disappear

like water disappears [in dry ground]! Cause the arrows that they shoot to have no (heads/sharp points)! 8 Cause them to become like snails that disappear in the slime; cause them to be like babies that are born dead! 9 Get rid of them [as fast as] thornbushes are blown away [after they are cut] (OR, [as fast as] a fire heats a pot over burning thorns). 10 Righteous people will rejoice when they see wicked people being punished as they deserve; they will wash their feet in the blood of wicked people. 11 [Then] people will say, "It is true that there is a reward for righteous people; and there is indeed a God who judges people justly here on the earth!"

59 God, save me from my enemies! Protect me from those who want to attack me! 2 Rescue me from men who want to do what is wicked, men who are murderers! 3 Look! They are waiting to kill me! Fierce men have gathered to assault me. Yahweh, they are doing that even though I have not done what is wrong! 4 It is not because I have committed any sin [against them] that they run and get ready to attack me. 5 Yahweh my God, commander of the armies of heaven, the one we Israelis [worship], arise and punish the [ungodly/heathen people of] all the nations; do not be merciful to those [wicked people] who have (acted treacherously toward/secretly planned to harm) us. 6 They return each evening, snarling like vicious dogs [SIM] as they prowl around this city. 7 They loudly say terrible things; they say [MTY] many things that [injure people like] [MET] swords do, but they think, "No one will [RHQ] hear us!" 8 But Yahweh, you laugh at them. You (scoff at/ridicule) the [people of the pagan] nations. 9 God, I have confidence in you because you are very strong; you are my refuge. 10 Because you love me, you will come to save me; you will allow me to watch while you defeat my enemies. 11 But do not kill them [immediately] in order that my people will not forget [how you punished them]! [Instead], Lord, [you who are like a] shield [that protects us] [MET], scatter them by your power, and [then] defeat them. 12 Because what they say [MTY] is sinful, allow them to be trapped for being proud. Because they are [always] cursing and telling lies, 13 because you are angry, get rid of them; destroy them completely in order that people will know that you rule over us, your Israeli people, and that you rule over all the earth. 14 My enemies return each evening, snarling like [vicious] dogs as they prowl around this city. 15 They roam around, searching for food; and if they do not find enough, they growl. 16 But [as for me], I will sing about your power; [every] morning I will sing joyfully about your faithfully loving [us]. I will sing about how you protected me when I was [very] distressed. 17 God, you are the one who enables me to be strong; you are my refuge; you faithfully love me.

60 [I prayed], "God, you have rejected us [Israelis]! Because you have been angry [with us], you have [enabled our enemies] to break through our ranks. [Please] enable us to be strong again! 2 [When we were defeated, it was as though] [MET] there was a big earthquake in our land that caused the ground to split open. So now, [just as only you can] cause the cracks in the land to disappear, [help our army to be strong again], because [it is as though] our country is (falling apart/being destroyed). 3 You have caused [us], your people, to suffer very much; [it is as though] you forced us to drink [strong] wine that caused us to stagger around [after we became drunk]. 4 But you have raised a battle flag for those who revere you in order that they can gather around it and not [be killed by the enemies'] arrows. 5 Answer our [prayers] and enable us by your power [MTY] to defeat [our enemies] in order that we, the people whom you love, will be saved." 6 [Then] God [answered my prayer and] spoke from his temple, saying, "Because I have conquered [your enemies], I will divide up [everything in] Shechem [city], and I will distribute it among my people [the land in] Succoth Valley. 7 The Gilead [region] is mine; the [people of the tribe of] Manasseh are mine; [the tribe of] Ephraim is [like] my helmet [MET]; and [the tribe of] Judah is [like] the (scepter/stick [that I hold which shows that I am the ruler]) [MET]; 8 but the Moab [region] is [like] my washbasin [MET]; I throw my sandal in the Edom [area to show that it belongs to me]; I shout triumphantly because I have defeated [the people of] the Philistia [area]." 9 [Because I want to defeat the people of] Edom, (who will lead my [army triumphantly] to their [capital] city that has strong walls around it?/I want someone to lead my [army triumphantly] to their [capital] city that has strong walls around it.)" [RHQ] 10 So, God, we [desire/hope that] [RHQ] you have not truly abandoned us, and that you will go with us when our armies march out [to fight our enemies]. 11 [We need you to] help us when we fight against our enemies, because the help that humans can give us is worthless. 12 But with you [helping us], we shall win; you will enable us to defeat our enemies.

61 God, listen to me, and answer my prayer [DOU]! 2 While I am discouraged and far from my home, I am calling out to you. Lead me to [the place that is like] a high rock [MET] on top of which I will be safe. 3 You have been my refuge; you have been [like] a strong tower [MET] [in which I am safe] from being attacked by my enemies. 4 Allow me to live close to your temple all during my life [HYP]! Allow me to be safe [MET], [like a little bird is safe] under [its mother's] wings. 5 God, you heard me when I solemnly promised [to give offerings to you]; you have given to me the blessings that belong to those who have an awesome

respect for you [MTY]. 6 [I am] the king [of Israel]; [please] allow me to live [and rule] for many years, and allow my descendants to rule [also]. 7 Allow us to rule forever while you observe us; watch over us while you faithfully love us and do for us what you promised. 8 If you do that, I will always sing to praise you [MTY] while I offer to you each day the sacrifices that I promised to give to you.

62 God is the only one who can give me peace in my inner being, and he is the one who saves me [from my enemies]. 2 Only he is like an [overhanging] rock [under which I can be safe] [MET]; he will be [like] a shelter, [with the result that] I will never be defeated [MET]. 3 When will you, [my enemies], stop attacking me [RHQ]? I feel that I am [as useless against you as] a wall that is about to fall over or a broken-down fence [MET]. 4 My enemies plan to remove me from my important position so that people no longer honor me. They delight in telling lies. They bless people by what they say [MTY], but in their inner beings they curse [those people]. 5 God is the only one who gives me peace in my inner being; he is the one whom I confidently expect [to help me]. 6 Only he is [like an overhanging] rock [under which I can be safe] [MET]; he is [like] a shelter, and [as a result] I will never be defeated. 7 God is the one who saves me and honors me. He is [like an overhanging] strong rock under which I [can] find shelter [MET]. 8 [You my] people, always trust in him. Tell him all your troubles, because he is (our refuge/the one who protects us) [MET]. 9 People who are considered to be unimportant are [as worthless/unreliable as] a breath of air; people who are considered to be important [also] really (amount to nothing/cannot be trusted [to help us)]. If you put them all on a scale, [it would be as if] they weighed less than a puff of air. 10 Do not trust in money gained by extorting it from others; do not try to gain anything by robbing others. If you become very wealthy, do not trust in [IDM] your money. 11 I have heard God say more than once that he is the one who [really] has power, 12 and that he is the one who faithfully loves [us]. He rewards every one [of us] according to the deeds that we do.

63 God, you are the God whom I [worship]. I greatly desire to be with you like [SIL] a person in a dry hot desert greatly desires [some cool water]. 2 So, I want to see you in your temple; I want to see that you are great and glorious. 3 Your constantly loving [me] is (worth more/more precious) than [my] life, so I [MTY] will [always] praise you. 4 I will praise you all the time that I live; I will lift up my hands to you while I pray. 5 [Knowing you satisfies me more than] [IDM, MET] my eating a very big feast, [so] I will praise you while I sing [MTY] joyful songs. 6 While I lie on my bed, I think about you. I think/meditate about you all during the night, 7 because you have always helped me, and I sing joyfully knowing that I am protected by you [as a little bird is protected] under [its mother's] wings [MET]. 8 I cling to you; and with your hand/power you protect me. 9 But those who are trying to kill me will [die and] descend into the place of the dead; 10 they will be killed in battles [MTY] and their [corpses] will be eaten by jackals/wild dogs. 11 But I, the king [of Israel], will rejoice in what God has done; and all those who revere and trust God will praise him, but he will not allow liars to say anything.

64 God, listen to me as I tell you the things that I am worried about. I am afraid of my enemies; so save/rescue me from them. 2 Protect me from what wicked men are planning to do to me; protect me from that gang of men who do what is evil. 3 The hostile things they say [MTY] are like [SIM] [sharp] swords; their cruel words are like [SIM] arrows. 4 Without being afraid, they [lie about people and slander people] who have not done what is wrong, like someone who suddenly jumps up from where he is hiding and shoots [arrows] at his enemy [MET]. 5 They encourage each other about doing the evil things that they are planning to do; they talk [with each other] about where they can set traps to catch people, and they think, "No one [RHQ] will see what we are doing, 6 because we have planned very well the crime that we are going to commit!" No one can fully understand what people can think and plan! 7 But [it will be as though] God will shoot his arrows at them, and suddenly they will be wounded. 8 Because of what they say [MTY], he will get rid of them, and then everyone who sees [what has happened to] them will shake their heads [to ridicule them]. 9 And then everyone will be afraid [to sin because of what might happen to them, also]; they will tell others what God has done, and they themselves will think much about it. 10 Righteous people should rejoice because of what Yahweh [has done]; they should go to him to (find protection/be safe); and all those who are godly will praise him.

65 God, it is right/appropriate [for us] to praise you in Jerusalem, and to do what [we] have promised you that [we] would do, 2 [because] you answer our prayers. People everywhere will come to you 3 because of the sins [that they have committed]. Our many sins are like a very heavy burden to us, but you forgive us. 4 You are pleased with those whom you have chosen to live close to your temple. We are happy with all the blessings that we receive from [worshiping in] your sacred temple. 5 [God, when we pray to you], you answer us and save us by doing awesome deeds; you are the one who rescues us; people who live in very remote places on the earth, on the other side of the oceans,

trust in you. 6 By your strength you put the mountains in their places, [showing that] you are very powerful. 7 You calm the seas when they roar, and you stop the waves from crashing [on the shore]; you [also] calm people when they (make a great uproar/shout angrily together). 8 People who live in very remote/distant places on the earth (are awed by/revere) you because of the miracles that you perform; because of what you do, people who live far to the west and far to the east shout joyfully. 9 You take care of the soil and send rain, causing many good things to grow; you fill the streams with water, and cause grain/crops to grow. That is what you have determined/said would happen. 10 You [send plenty of rain] on the fields that have been plowed, and you fill the furrows with water. With showers you soften the [hard clods/lumps of] soil, and you bless the soil by causing young plants to grow. 11 Because you bless the soil, there are very good crops at harvest season; wherever you have gone [MTY], good crops are very abundant [IDM]. 12 The pastures are full of flocks [of sheep and goats]; [it is as though] the hills are very joyful. 13 The meadows are full of sheep and goats, and the valleys are full of grain; [it is as though] they [also] sing and shout joyfully.

66 [Tell] everyone on the earth that they should sing joyfully to praise God! 2 They should sing songs that say that God [MTY] is very great, and they should tell everyone that he is very glorious! 3 They should say to God, "The things that you do are awesome! You are very powerful, with the result that your enemies (cringe/bow down) in front of you." 4 Everyone on the earth [should] worship God and sing to praise him and honor him [MTY]. 5 Come and think about what God has done! Think about the awesome things that he has done. 6 He caused the [Red] Sea to become dry land, [with the result that our] ancestors were able to walk right through it. There we rejoiced because of what he [had done]. 7 By his great power he rules forever, and he keeps watching all the nations [to see what things they do], [so] those nations that want to rebel [against him] should not be proud. 8 You people [of all nations], praise our God! Praise him loudly in order that people will hear you as you praise him. 9 He has kept us alive, and he has not allowed us to (stumble/be defeated). 10 God, you have tested us; you have allowed us to experience great difficulties [to make our lives become pure] as [people] put precious metals in a hot fire [to burn out what is impure] [MET]. 11 [It is as if] you allowed us to fall into traps [MET], and you [forced us to endure difficult things which were like] putting heavy loads on our backs [MET]. 12 You allowed [our] enemies to trample on us; we [experienced difficulties/troubles that were like] [MET] walking through fires and floods, but now you have brought us into a place where we have plenty. 13 [Yahweh], I will bring to your temple offerings that are to be completely burned [on the altar]; I will offer to you what I promised. 14 When I was experiencing [much] trouble, I said that I would bring offerings to you [if you rescued me]; [and you did rescue me, so] I will bring to you what I promised. 15 I will bring sheep to be burned on the altar, and I will [also] sacrifice bulls and goats, and when they are burning, [you will be pleased when] the smoke [rises up] ([to you/to the sky]). 16 All you [people] who revere God, come and listen, and I will tell you what he has done for me. 17 I called out to him to help me, and I praised him while I was speaking to him [MTY]. 18 If I had ignored the sins that I had committed, the Lord would not have paid any attention to me. 19 But because [I confessed my sins], God has listened to me and he paid attention to my prayers. 20 I praise God because he has not ignored my prayers or stopped faithfully loving me.

67 God, be merciful to us and bless us; be kind to us [IDM], 2 in order that [everyone in] the world may know what you want them to do, and [the people of] all nations may know that you [have the power to] save [them]. 3 God, I desire that [all] people-groups [will] praise you; I want them all to praise you! 4 I desire that [the people of all] nations will be glad and sing joyfully, because you judge the people-groups equally/justly, and you guide [all] nations in the world. 5 God, I desire that the people-groups [will] praise you; I want them all to praise you! 6 Good crops have grown on our land; God, our God, has blessed us. 7 [And because] God has blessed us, I desire that all [people] everywhere [MTY] on the earth will revere him.

68 God, arise and scatter your enemies, and cause those who hate you to run away from you. 2 Like [wind] blows smoke away, chase your enemies away. Like wax melts when it is near a fire, cause wicked people to (disappear/be destroyed). 3 But righteous people should be joyful; they should rejoice when they are in God's presence; they should be happy, and be very joyful. 4 Sing to God; sing to praise him; sing a song (OR, make a road) for him who rides on the clouds; his name is Yahweh; be glad when you are in his presence. 5 God, who lives in his sacred temple, is [like] [MET] a father to [those who are] orphans, and he is the one who protects widows. 6 For those who have no one to live with, he provides families [to live with]. He frees prisoners and enables them to be successful, but those who rebel [against him] will be forced to live in a very hot and dry land. 7 God, you led your people out [of Egypt], and then you marched with them through the desert. 8 After you did that, because when you, the God [worshiped by us]

Israeli people, appeared to us at Sinai [Mountain], the earth shook, and rain poured down from the sky. **9** You caused plenty of rain to fall [on your land], [and so] you enabled good crops to grow again on the land that you gave [to us Israelis]. **10** Your people built homes there; and because you were good to them, you provided [food] for those who were poor. **11** The Lord gave a message, and many women took that message to other places. **12** [They proclaimed], "Many kings and their armies are running away [from our army]!" [When our army brought back to their homes] the things that they captured, the women who were at home divided up those things [among themselves and among their families]. **13** Even those women who were in the pens [taking care of] the sheep [received some of those things]; they got statues of doves whose wings were covered with silver and whose feathers were covered with pure yellow gold. **14** When Almighty [God] scattered the [enemy] kings [and their armies], [the number of weapons that they abandoned there] seemed like there had been a snowstorm on Zalmon (OR, a black) [Mountain]. **15** There is a very high mountain in the Bashan [region], a mountain which has many peaks. **16** But the [people who live near] that mountain should not [RHQ] envy those who live near [Zion], the mountain on which God chose to live! Yahweh will live there forever! **17** [After we defeated all our enemies], [it was as though] the Lord, surrounded by many thousands of strong chariots, descended from Sinai [Mountain] and came into the sacred temple [in Jerusalem]. **18** He ascended the sacred mountain [where his temple is], and took with him many people who had been captured [in battles]; and received gifts from the enemies [whom he had defeated]. He received gifts even from those who had rebelled against him, and Yahweh our God will live there [in his sacred temple] forever. **19** Praise the Lord, who [helps us] carry our heavy loads every day; he is the one who saves/rescues us. **20** Our God is the God who saves us; He is Yahweh, our Lord, the one who (allows us to escape/prevents us) from being killed [in battles]. **21** But God will smash the heads of his enemies, the skulls of those who continue to behave sinfully. **22** The Lord said, "I will bring back the [corpses of those who were killed in] Bashan, and I will bring back those who sank deep in the ocean [and drowned]. **23** I will do that in order that you may wash your feet in their blood, and your dogs can [also] lap up some of your enemies' blood." **24** God, many people see you march triumphantly into your sacred temple, [celebrating that you have defeated your enemies]. You [march like] a king does, and a large crowd walks with you. **25** The singers are in front, and the people who play stringed instruments are at the rear, and young women who are beating their tambourines are between them. **26** [They are all singing], "You Israeli people, praise God when you gather together; praise Yahweh, all you who are descendants of Jacob!" **27** First come [the people of the tribe of] Benjamin, the smallest [tribe], and following them come the leaders of [the tribe of] Judah and their group, and following them come the leaders of [the tribes of] Zebulun and Naphtali. **28** God, show people that you are very powerful; show people the power with which you have helped us previously. **29** Show that power from your temple in Jerusalem, where kings bring gifts to you. **30** Rebuke [your enemies, such as those in Egypt who are like] wild hippopotamuses/animals that live in the reeds; and [powerful nations that are like] bulls that are among their calves [MET]; rebuke/trample them until they bow down and give you gifts of silver. Scatter the people who enjoy making wars. **31** Then people will bring gifts of bronze (OR, of cloth) to you from Egypt; the people in Ethiopia will lift up their hands [to praise you]. **32** [You people who are citizens of] kingdoms/countries all over the world, sing to God! Sing praises to the Lord! **33** Sing to the God, the one who rides across the sky, the sky that [he created] long ago. Listen as he shouts with a very powerful voice. **34** Proclaim that God is very powerful; he is the king that rules over Israel, and in the skies [he also shows that] he is powerful. **35** God is awesome as he comes out of his sacred temple; he is the God whom [we] Israeli people [worship]. He makes [DOU] his people very powerful. Praise God!

69 O God, save me, because [I am in great danger]. [It is as though] flood water is up to my neck, [and I am about to drown] [MET]. **2** I continue to sink in the deep mud, and there is no solid ground for me to stand on. I am in deep water, and flood waters are swirling around me. **3** I am exhausted from calling out [for help]; my throat is very dry. Because I have cried so much as I have waited for God [to help me], my eyes are swollen. **4** Those who hate me when there is no reason to hate me are more than the number of hairs on my head [HYP]! Those who want to get rid of me are strong, and they tell lies about me. They demand that I return to them things that I did not steal! **5** O God, (you see the sins that I have committed/my sins are not hidden from you). You know that I have foolishly [disobeyed your laws]. **6** O Yahweh God, [you who are the commander] of the armies [of heaven], do not allow the [wrong things that] I [have done] to cause those who trust in you to be disappointed/disillusioned. O God, you whom [we] Israeli people [worship], do not allow me to cause your people to be humiliated. **7** People have insulted/ridiculed me because [I am devoted to] you. They have thoroughly humiliated [IDM] me. **8** Even my own [older] brothers act as if they do not

know me; they treat me like a foreigner. **9** [Some people have despised your temple]; but my zeal for [keeping] your temple [holy] is like a fire burning inside me. So [it is as though] those who are insulting you are also insulting me. **10** When I have humbled myself and (fasted/abstained from eating food) [to show my sadness about the disgraceful things that they have done to your temple], they just insult me. **11** When I put on [rough] sackcloth [to show that I am sad], they laugh at [IDM] me. **12** Even the elders [of the city] say bad things about me. The drunkards of the city sing [disgusting] songs about me. **13** But Yahweh, I will [continue] praying to you. At the time that you choose, answer me and rescue me because you faithfully love me. **14** Do not allow me to sink any more in the mud. Rescue me from those who hate me! Lift me up out of these deep waters! **15** Do not allow flood waters to swirl around me, do not allow the deep [mud] to swallow me; keep me from sinking into the pit [of death] [MET]. **16** O Yahweh, answer my prayer and help me because you are good and love me faithfully. **17** Do not (hide yourself from/refuse to hear) me; answer me quickly because I am in great trouble. **18** Come near to me and save me; rescue me from my enemies. **19** You know that I am insulted and that [people cause] me [to feel] ashamed and dishonored; you know [who] all my enemies [are]. **20** [Their] insults have deeply offended me, and I (feel helpless/am in despair). I searched for [someone who would] pity [me], but there was no one. I wanted someone to encourage/comfort me, but there were none. **21** [Instead], they gave me food [that tasted like] poison, and when I was thirsty, they gave me sour wine to drink. **22** I hope/desire that the feasts [MTY] [that they enjoy] will (become a snare for/bring trouble to) them, and that [those whom they invite to] the sacrificial feasts will also be trapped. **23** I hope/desire that their eyesight will become dim so that they cannot see anything, and that their backs/bodies will become weaker and weaker. **24** Show them that you are very angry with them! Because of your great/furious anger, chase after them and catch them. **25** Cause their towns to become abandoned/deserted and that there will be no one left to live in their tents/houses. **26** [Do this] because they persecute those whom you have punished, (they talk about the sins of/they want to hurt even more) those whom you have wounded. **27** Keep making a record of all their sins, do not acquit/pardon them [for the evil things that they have done]. **28** Erase their names [SYN] from the book [containing the names of those who have eternal] life; do not include them in the list of righteous people. **29** As for me, I have pain and am suffering. O God, protect me and rescue me. **30** When God does that, I will sing as I praise God, and I will honor him by thanking him. **31** My doing that will please Yahweh more than [sacrificing] oxen, more than offering him full-grown bulls. **32** Oppressed/Afflicted people will see [that God has rescued me], and they will be glad. I want all of you who ask God [to help you] to be encouraged. **33** Yahweh listens to those who are needy; He does not ignore/forget those who are oppressed/imprisoned. **34** I desire that everything will praise God— everything that is in heaven and on earth, and all the creatures that are in the seas. **35** God will rescue the people of Jerusalem [from their enemies], and he will rebuild the towns that are in Judah. His people will live there and [again] possess the land. **36** The descendants of his people will inherit it, and those who love him will live there [safely].

70 God, please save me! Yahweh, come quickly to help me! **2** Humble those who are happy about my troubles/difficulties, and cause them to be disgraced/ashamed. Chase away those who are trying to kill me. **3** I hope/desire that you will cause them to become dismayed and ashamed [because you have defeated them]. **4** [But] I hope/desire that all those who go to [worship] you will be very joyful [DOU]. I want those who love you because you saved them to shout repeatedly [HYP], "God is great!" **5** As for me, I am poor and needy [DOU]; [so] God, come quickly to help me! Yahweh, you are the one who saves and helps me, [so please] come quickly!

71 Yahweh, I have come to you to (get refuge/be protected); never allow me to become ashamed [because of being defeated]. **2** Because you always do what is right, help me and rescue me; listen to me, and save me! **3** Be [like an overhanging] rock [MET] under which I [can be] safe/protected; [be like] a strong fortress in which I am safe [DOU]. You [continually] command (OR, [Continually] command) [your angels] to rescue me. **4** God, rescue me from wicked [people], from the power of unjust and evil men. **5** Yahweh, my Lord, you are the one whom I confidently expect [to help me]; I have trusted in you since I was young. **6** I have depended on you all my life; you have taken care of me [IDM] since the day that I was born, [so] I will always praise you. **7** The manner in which I have conducted my life has been an example to many [people], because [they realize that] you have been my strong defender. **8** I praise you all day long, and I proclaim that you are glorious/wonderful. **9** Now, when I have become an old man, do not reject/abandon me; do not abandon me now, when I am not strong any more. **10** My enemies say [that they want to kill] me; they plan together [how they can do that]. **11** They say [about me], "God has abandoned him; so now we can pursue him and seize him, because

there is no one who will rescue him." 12 God, do not stay far away from me; hurry to help me! 13 Cause those who (accuse me/say that I have done things that are wrong) to be defeated and destroyed; cause those who want to harm me to be shamed and disgraced. 14 But [as for me], I will continually and confidently expect [you to do great things for me], and I will praise you more and more. 15 I will tell people that you do what is right; all day long I will tell people how you have saved me, although what you have done is more than I can fully understand. 16 Yahweh, my Lord, I will praise you for your mighty deeds; I will proclaim that only you always act justly. 17 God, you have taught me [many/those things] ever since I was young, and I still tell people about your wonderful deeds. 18 And now, God, when I am old and my hair is gray, do not abandon me. [Stay with me] while I continue to proclaim to my children and grandchildren [HYP] that you are [very] powerful! 19 God, you do many righteous deeds; [it is as though] they extend up to the sky. You have done great things; there is no one like you [RHQ]. 20 You have caused me to have many troubles and to suffer much, [but] you will cause me to become strong again; when I am almost dead [HYP], you will keep me alive. 21 You will cause me to be greatly honored and you will encourage/comfort me again. 22 I will also praise you [while I play] my harp; I will praise you, my God, for faithfully [doing what you have promised to do]. I will play hymns to praise you, the holy God whom [we] Israelis [worship]. 23 I [SYN] will shout joyfully while I play [the harp] for you; with my entire inner being I will sing because you have rescued me. 24 All day long I will tell people that you act righteously, because those who wanted to harm me will have been defeated and disgraced.

72 A psalm written by Solomon. O God, enable [me,] the king [whom you appointed in Israel], to rule justly. Show/Teach me how to judge matters fairly 2 in order that I will judge your people fairly, that I will govern your oppressed people justly. 3 I desire that [all over the country—even] on the hills and mountains [DOU]— people will live peacefully and righteously. 4 Help [me], your king, to defend the poor people and to rescue needy people and to defeat those who oppress them. 5 I desire that your people will revere you as long as the moon shines, [forever]. 6 I desire that my rule will [be enjoyed by the people] [SIM] like [they enjoy] rain on growing crops, like [they enjoy] showers that fall on the land. 7 I hope/desire that people will live righteously during the years that I rule, and that my people will live peacefully and prosperously as long as the moon shines. 8 I hope/desire that the kings [of Israel] will rule [the people] in all the area from one sea [in the east] to another [in the west], and from the [Euphrates] River to the most remote/distant places on earth. 9 I hope/desire that those who live in the desert will bow down before them, and that their enemies will throw themselves on the ground [in submission] to them. 10 I hope/desire that the kings of Spain and of the islands [in the Mediterranean Sea] will bring (tribute money/taxes) to the kings [of Israel], and that the kings of Sheba [to the south] and of Seba [to the southwest] will bring them gifts. 11 I hope/desire that all the [other] kings [in the world] will bow before the kings [of Israel], and that [people of] all nations will serve them. 12 They will rescue poor people when they (cry out/plead) for help, and help those who are needy and those who have no one to help them. 13 They will pity those who are weak and needy; he saves the people's lives. 14 Our kings will rescue the people from being oppressed and from being treated cruelly, [because] (their lives/they) [MTY] are precious to our kings. 15 I hope/desire that our kings will live a long time! I hope/desire that they will be given gold from Sheba. I desire that people will always pray for our kings and praise them all the time, [every day]. 16 I hope/desire that the fields will produce plenty of grain [everywhere, even] on the tops of the hills in the land where they rule, like the grain that grows [on the hills] in Lebanon. I hope/desire that the cities [in Israel] will be full of people like the fields are full of grass. 17 I desire that the names of our kings will never be forgotten. I hope/desire that people will remember them as long as the sun shines. I hope/desire that people of all nations will ask (God to bless them/that they will be blessed by God) just like he has blessed the kings [of Israel]. 18 Praise Yahweh, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship]; he is the only one who does wonderful things. 19 Praise him forever! I desire that (his glory will fill the whole world/people all over the world may see that he is very great) [MTY]! Amen! May it be so! 20 That is the end of this group of prayers/songs written by David, the son of Jesse.

73 God truly is good to [us] Israeli people, to those who totally want to do all that God desires. 2 As for me, I almost [stopped trusting in God]; [it was as though] my feet slipped and I stumbled [MET], 3 because I envied those who proudly [said that they did not need God], and I saw that they prospered [even though] they were wicked. 4 Those people do not have any pains; they are [always] strong and healthy. 5 They do not have the troubles/difficulties that other people have; they do not have problems like others do. 6 So they are proud, and their being proud is [like] a necklace [that they show to others], and they show off their violent actions like people show off their beautiful robes. 7 From their inner beings they (pour out/do) evil deeds, and they are always thinking about more evil things to do. 8 They scoff at [other people], and they talk about doing evil things to

them; they are proud while they plan to oppress others. 9 They say evil things about [God who is in] heaven [MTY], and they talk boastfully/proudly about things [that they have done] here on the earth. 10 The result is that people listen to what they say and praise them and do not think that they have done anything that is wrong. 11 Wicked people say [to themselves], "God will certainly not [RHQ] know [what we have done]; [people say that] he is greater than any other god, but he does not know [everything]." 12 That is what wicked people are like; they never worry about anything, and they are always becoming richer. 13 [So, God], I think it is useless that I have [RHQ] always done what you want me to, and that I have not sinned. 14 All day long I have problems, and every morning you punish me. 15 If I had said the things that the wicked people say, I would have been sinning against your people. 16 And when I tried to think about all this, it was very difficult for me [to understand it]. 17 But when I went to your temple, [you spoke to me], and I understood what will happen to the wicked people [after they die]. 18 [Now I know that] you will surely put them in slippery places, and they will fall down and die. 19 They will be destroyed instantly; they will die in terrible ways. 20 They [will disappear as quickly] as a dream disappears when a person awakes in the morning; Lord, when you arise, you will (cause them to disappear/forget all about them). 21 When I felt sad/bitter, and brokenhearted, 22 I was stupid and ignorant, and I behaved like an animal toward you. 23 But I am always close to you, and you hold my hand. 24 You guide me by teaching me, and (at the end [of my life]/when I die), you will receive me and honor me. 25 You are in heaven and I belong to you [RHQ], and there is nothing on this earth that I desire more than that. 26 My body and my mind may become very weak, but God, you continue to enable me to be strong; I belong to you forever. 27 Those who remain far from you will be destroyed; you will get rid of those who abandon you. 28 But [as for] me, it is wonderful to be near to God and to be protected by Yahweh, and to proclaim to others all that he has done [for me].

74 God, why have you abandoned/rejected us? Will you keep rejecting us forever [RHQ]? Why are you angry with us, since we are like sheep in your pasture [and you are like our shepherd]? [MET, RHQ] 2 Do not forget your people whom you chose long ago, the people whom you freed [from being slaves in Egypt] and caused to become your tribe. Do not forget Jerusalem, which was (your home/where you dwelt) [on this earth]. 3 Walk along [and see] where everything has been totally ruined; our enemies have destroyed everything in the sacred temple. 4 Your enemies shouted triumphantly in this sacred place; they erected their banners [to show they had defeated us]. 5 They cut down all the [engraved objects in the temple] like woodsmen cut down trees. 6 Then they smashed all the carved wood with their axes and hammers. 7 [Then] they burned your temple to the ground; they caused that place where you were worshiped to be unfit for people to worship in. 8 They said to themselves, "We will destroy the Israelis completely," and they [also] burned down all the other places where we gathered to worship God. 9 All our sacred symbols (OR, miracles) are gone; there are no prophets now/any more, and no one knows how long [this situation will continue]. 10 God, how long will our enemies make fun of you [RHQ]? Will they insult you [MTY] forever [RHQ]? 11 Why do you refuse to help [MTY, RHQ] us? Why do you keep your hand inside your cloak [instead of using it to destroy our enemies] [RHQ]? 12 God, you have been our king [all the time] since we came out of Egypt [HYP], and you have enabled us to defeat [our enemies] in the land [of Israel]. 13 By your power you caused the [Red] Sea to divide; [it was as though] you smashed the heads of the [rulers of Egypt who were like] huge sea dragons [MET]. 14 [It was as though] you crushed the head of the king of Egypt [MET] and gave his body to the animals in the desert to eat. 15 You caused springs and streams to flow, and you [also] dried up rivers that had never dried up previously. 16 You created the days and the nights, and you put the sun and the moon in their places. 17 You determined where the oceans end and the land begins, and you created the summer/hot season and the winter/cold season. 18 Yahweh, do not forget that your enemies laugh at you, and that it is foolish people who despise you [MTY]. 19 Do not let your helpless people [MET] fall into the hands of their cruel enemies; do not forget your suffering/persecuted people. 20 Do not forget the agreement that you made with us; remember that there are violent people in every dark place on the earth. 21 Do not allow your oppressed people to be disgraced; help those poor and needy people in order that they will [again] praise you [MTY]. 22 God, arise and defend yourself [by defending your people]! Do not forget that foolish people laugh at you (all day long/continually)! 23 Do not forget that your enemies shout angrily [at you]; the uproar that they make [while they oppose you] never stops.

75 We give thanks to you; our God, we thank you. You are close to us, and we proclaim to others the wonderful things that you have done [for us]. 2 [You have said], "I have appointed a time when I will judge people, and I will judge [everyone] fairly. 3 When the earth shakes and all the creatures on the earth tremble, I am the one who will (keep its foundations steady/prevent it from being destroyed). 4 I

say to people who (boast/talk proudly about themselves), 'Stop bragging!' and I say to wicked people, 'Do not proudly [do things to] show how great you are [IDM]! **5** Do not be arrogant, and do not speak so boastfully!'" **6** The one who judges people does not come from the east or from the west, and he does not come from the desert. **7** God is the one who judges people; he says that some have sinned and must be punished, and that others have not done what is wrong. **8** [It is as though] Yahweh holds a cup in his hand; it is filled with wine that [has spices] mixed in it [to cause those who drink it to become more drunk]; and when Yahweh pours it out, he will force all the wicked people to drink it; they will drink every drop of it, [which means that he will give them all the punishment that they deserve]. **9** But [as for me], I will never stop saying what the God whom Jacob [worshiped has done]; I will never quit singing to praise him. **10** He will destroy the power [IDM] of wicked people, but he will cause righteous people to become more powerful.

76 People in Judah know God; the Israeli people honor him [MTY]. **2** His home is in Jerusalem; he lives on Zion [Hill]. **3** There he broke the flaming arrows [that his enemies shot], [and he also broke] their shields and swords and other weapons that they used in battles. **4** God, you are glorious! You are like a king [as you return from] the mountains [where you defeated your enemies]. **5** Their brave soldiers [were killed, and then those who killed them] took away everything that those soldiers had. Those enemies died [EUP], [so] they were unable to use their weapons [any more]! **6** When you, the God whom Jacob [worshiped], rebuked [your enemies], [the result was that their] horses and their riders fell down dead. **7** But you cause everyone to be afraid. When you are angry [and you punish people], no one can [RHQ] endure it. **8** From heaven you proclaimed that you would judge people, [and then everyone on] the earth was afraid and did not say [anything more], **9** when you arose to declare that you would punish [wicked people] and rescue all those whom they had oppressed. **10** When [you punish those] with whom you are angry, your people will praise you, and [your enemies] who (survive/are not killed) will worship you on your festival days. **11** [So] give to Yahweh the offerings that you promised to give to him; all the people of nearby people-groups should also bring gifts to him, the one who is awesome. **12** He humbles [IDM] princes, and [even] causes [great] kings to be terrified.

77 I cry out to God; I cry aloud to him, and he hears me. **2** Whenever have trouble, I pray to the Lord; all during the night I lift up my hands while I pray, [but] nothing causes me to be comforted. **3** When I think about God, I (despair/think that he will never help me); when I meditate about him, I am discouraged. **4** [All during the night] he prevents me from sleeping; I am very worried, with the result that I do not know what to say. **5** I think about days that have passed; I remember [what happened in] previous years. **6** I spend the whole night thinking [about things]; I meditate, and this is what I ask myself: **7** "Will the Lord always reject us? Will he never again be pleased with us? **8** Has he stopped faithfully loving us? Will he not do for us what he promised to do? **9** God promised to be merciful to us; has he forgotten that? Because he is angry [with us], has he decided to not be kind to us?" **10** Then I said, "What causes me to be [very] sad is that [it seems that] God, who is greater than any other god, is no longer powerful." **11** [But then], Yahweh, I recall/remember your great deeds; I remember the wonderful things that you did in the past. **12** I meditate on all that you have done, and I think about your mighty acts. **13** God, everything that you do is holy; there is certainly no god [RHQ] who is great like you are! **14** You are God, the one who performs miracles; you showed to people of many people-groups that you are powerful. **15** By your power [MTY] you rescued your people [from Egypt]; you saved those who were descendants of Jacob and [his son] Joseph. **16** [It was as though] the waters [of the Red Sea] saw you and became very afraid, and even the deepest part of the water shook. **17** Rain poured down from the clouds [PRS]; it thundered [very loudly] [PRS], and lightning flashed in all directions. **18** Thunder crashed in the whirlwind, and lightning (lit up/flashed across) the entire sky [HYP]; the earth shook violently [DOU]. **19** [Then] you walked through the sea on a path that you made through the deep water, but your footprints could not be seen. **20** You led your people like [a shepherd leads his] flock [of sheep], while Moses and Aaron were the leaders [of your people].

78 My friends, listen to what I am going to teach you; pay careful attention [IDM] to what I say. **2** I am going to give you some sayings that wise people have said. They will be sayings about things that happened long ago, things that were difficult to understand [MET], **3** things that we have heard and known previously, things that our parents and grandparents told us. **4** We will tell these things to our children [LIT], and we will also tell to our grandchildren [about] Yahweh's power and the glorious/great things that he has done. **5** He gave laws and commandments to the Israeli people, [those who are the descendants of] Jacob [DOU], and he told our ancestors to teach them to their children **6** in order that their children would [also] know them and then they would teach them to their children. **7** In that way, they also would trust in God, and not forget the things that he has

done; instead, they would obey his commandments. 8 They would not be like their ancestors, who were very stubborn and kept rebelling [against God]; they did not continue firmly trusting in God, and they did not worship only him. 9 [The soldiers of] the tribe of Ephraim had bows [and arrows] but they ran away [from their enemies] on the day that they fought a battle with their enemies. 10 They did not do what they had agreed with God that they would do; they refused to obey his laws. 11 They forgot what he had done; they forgot about the miracles that they had seen him perform. 12 While our ancestors were watching, God performed miracles in the area around Zoan [city] in Egypt. 13 [Then] he caused the [Red] Sea to divide, causing the water [on each side] to pile up like a wall, with the result that [our ancestors] walked through it [on dry ground]. 14 He led them by a [bright] cloud during the day and by a fiery light during the night. 15 He split rocks open in the desert, giving to our ancestors plenty of water from deep inside the earth. 16 He caused a stream of water to flow from the rock; the water flowed like a river [DOU]. 17 But [our ancestors] continued to sin against God; in the desert they rebelled against the one who is greater than any other god. 18 By demanding that God give them the food that they desired, they tried to find out if he would always do what they requested him to do. 19 They insulted God by saying, "We don't think he can supply food for us [here] in this desert! 20 [It is true that] he struck the rock, with the result that water gushed/flowed out, [but] (can he also provide bread and meat for [us], his people?/we doubt that he can also provide bread and meat for us, his people.)" [RHQ] 21 So, when Yahweh heard that, he became very angry, and he sent a fire to burn up [some of] his Israeli [people]. [MTY, DOU] 22 [He did that] because they did not trust in him, and they did not believe that he would rescue them. 23 But God spoke to the sky above them; he commanded it to open [like] a door, 24 and [then food] fell down like rain, [food which they named] 'manna'; God gave them grain from (heaven/the sky). 25 [So] the people ate the food that angels eat, [and] God gave to them all the manna that they wanted. 26 [Later], he caused the wind to blow from the east, and by his power he also sent wind from the south, 27 and the wind brought birds which were as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore. 28 God caused those birds to fall [dead] in the middle of (their camp)/the area where the people had put up their tents. [There were dead birds] all around their tents. 29 [So] the people [cooked the birds and] ate the meat and their stomachs were full, because God had given them what they wanted. 30 But before they had eaten all that they wanted, and while they were still eating it, 31 God was [still] very angry with them, and he caused their strongest men to die; he got rid of [many of] the finest [young] Israeli men. 32 In spite of all that, the people continued to sin; in spite of all the miracles that God had performed, they still did not trust that he [would take care of them]. 33 So, he caused their lives to end as quickly as a puff of wind ends; they died when disasters suddenly struck them. 34 When God caused [some of] them to die, [the others] turned to God; they repented and earnestly asked God [to save them]. 35 They remembered that God is [like] a huge rock ledge [under which they would be safe] [MET], and that he, who was greater than any other god, is the one who protected/rescued them. 36 But they [tried to] deceive God by what they said [MTY]; their words [MTY] were [all] lies. 37 They were not loyal to him; they disregarded/ignored the agreement that he had made with them. 38 But God was merciful to his people. He forgave them for having sinned and did not get rid of them. Many times he refrained from becoming angry [with them] and restrained from furiously/severely [punishing them] [MTY]. 39 He remembered/considered that they were only humans who die; they [disappear quickly] [SIM], like a wind that blows by and then is gone. 40 Many times our ancestors rebelled against God in the desert and caused him to become very sad. 41 Many times they did evil things, to find out [if they could do those things without God punishing them]. They frequently caused the holy God of Israel to become disgusted/sad. 42 They forgot about his [great] power, and they (forgot/did not think) about the time when he rescued them from their enemies. 43 They forgot about when he performed many miracles in the area near Zoan [city] in Egypt. 44 He caused the [Nile] River (OR, their sources of water) to become [red like] blood, with the result that the people of Egypt had no water to drink. 45 He sent among the people of Egypt swarms of flies that bit them, and he sent frogs that ate up everything. 46 He sent locusts to eat their crops and the other things that grew in their fields. 47 He sent hail that destroyed the grapevines, and sent frost that ruined the figs. 48 He sent hail that killed their cattle and sent lightning that killed their sheep and cows. 49 Because God was fiercely angry with the people of Egypt, he caused them to be very distressed. The disasters that struck them were like a group of angels that destroyed [everything]. 50 He did not lessen his being angry [with them], and he did not (spare their lives/prevent them from dying); he sent a (plague/serious illness) that killed [many of] them. 51 He also caused all the firstborn sons of the people of Egypt to die. 52 Then he led his people out [of Egypt] like [a shepherd leads] his sheep [SIM], and he guided them [while they walked] through the desert. 53 He led them safely, and they were

not afraid, but their enemies were drowned in the sea. **54** [Later] he brought them to [Canaan], his sacred land, to [Zion] Hill (OR, the hilly area) and by his power [MTY] he enabled them to conquer [the people who were living there]. **55** He expelled the people-groups while his people were advancing; he allotted part of the land for [each tribe] to possess, and he gave to the Israeli people the houses of those people who had been expelled. **56** However, the Israeli people rebelled against God, who is greater than any other god, and they did many evil things to see if they could do those things without God punishing them, and they did not obey his commandments. **57** Instead, like their ancestors did, they rebelled against God and (were not loyal to/did not faithfully [obey]) him; they were as [unreliable as] a crooked arrow [that does not go straight] [SIM]. **58** Because they [worshiped] carved images of their gods on the tops of hills, they caused God to become angry [DOU]. **59** He saw what they were doing and became very angry, so he rejected the Israeli people. **60** He no longer appeared to them at Shiloh in the tent where he had lived among them. **61** He allowed their enemies to capture [the sacred chest], [which was the symbol of] his power and his glory. **62** Because he was angry with his people, he allowed them to be killed [MTY] [by their enemies]. **63** Young men were killed in battles, with the result that the young women had no one to marry. **64** [Many] priests were killed by [their enemies'] swords, and (the people did not allow the priests' widows/the priests' widows were not allowed) to mourn. **65** Later, [it was as though] the Lord awoke from sleeping; he was like a strong man who (became stimulated/felt that he was strong) by (OR, became sober after) [drinking] a lot of wine [SIM]. **66** He pushed their enemies back and caused them to be [very] ashamed for a long time [HYP] [because they had been defeated]. **67** [But] he did not set up his tent where [the people of] the tribe of Ephraim lived; he did not choose their area [to do that]. **68** Instead he chose [the area where] the tribe of Judah [lived]; he chose Zion Hill, which he loves. **69** He [decided to have] his temple built [there], high up, like [his home in] heaven; he caused it to be firm, [and intended that] his temple would last forever, like the earth. **70** He chose David, who served him [faithfully], and took him from the pastures **71** where he was taking care of his [father's] sheep, and appointed him to be the leader [MET] of the Israeli people, the people who belong to God. **72** David took care of the Israeli people sincerely and wholeheartedly, and guided them skillfully/wisely.

79 God, other people-groups have invaded your land. They have (desecrated your temple/caused your temple to be unfit for worship), and they have destroyed all the buildings in Jerusalem. **2** [Instead of burying] the corpses of your people [whom they killed], they allowed vultures and wild animals to eat the flesh of those corpses, **3** When they killed your people, your people's blood flowed like water through [the streets of] Jerusalem, and there was [almost] no one [HYP] left to bury their corpses. **4** The people-groups that live in countries that surround our land insult us; they laugh at us and deride/belittle us. **5** Yahweh, how long [will this continue]? Will you be angry with us forever? Will your being angry [destroy us like] a burning fire [destroys things]? **6** [Instead of being angry with us], be angry with the people-groups that do not know/worship you! Be angry with kingdoms whose people do not pray to you, **7** because they have killed Israeli people and they have ruined your country. **8** Do not punish us because of the sins that our ancestors committed! Be merciful to us now/quickly, because we are very discouraged. **9** God, you have saved/rescued [us many times], [so] help us [now]; rescue us and forgive us for having sinned in order that other people will honor you [MTY]. **10** It is not right that [RHQ] other people-groups say [about us], "If their God [is very powerful], (surely he should help them/why does he not [help them])?" Allow us to see you punishing the people of other nations in return for their shedding our blood; they have killed many of us, your people. **11** Listen to your people groaning while they are in prison, and by your great power free those whom our enemies say that they will certainly execute. **12** In return for their having [often] insulted you, punish them seven times as much! **13** After you do that, we, whom you [take care of like a shepherd takes care of] his sheep, will continue praising you; we will continue to praise you forever [HYP].

80 [Yahweh], you [who lead us like] a shepherd leads his flock [of sheep], listen to us Israeli people. You sit on your throne [in the Very Holy Place in the temple], above the [carvings of] winged creatures. **2** Show yourself to [the people of the tribes of] Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh! Show us that you are powerful and come and rescue us! **3** God, cause our nation to be strong like it was before; be kind to us [IDM] in order that we may be saved [from our enemies.] **4** Yahweh, you who are the commander of the armies of heaven, how long will you be angry with us, your people, when we pray to you? **5** [It is as though] the only food and drink that you have given us is a cup full of our tears! **6** You have allowed the people-groups that surround us to fight with [each other to decide which part of our land each of them will take]; our enemies laugh at us. **7** God, commander of the armies of heaven, cause our nation to be strong like it was before! Be kind to us in order that we may be saved! **8** [Our ancestors were like] a grapevine

[MET] that you brought out of Egypt; you expelled the other people-groups [from this land], and you put your people in their land. 9 [Like people] clear ground to plant a grapevine [MET], [you cleared out the people who were living in this land for us to live in it]. [Like] the roots of a grapevine go deep down into the ground and spread [MET], [you enabled our ancestors to prosper and start living in towns all over this land]. 10 [Like huge] grapevines cover the hills with their shade and their branches are taller than big cedar [trees] [MET, HYP], 11 [your people ruled all of Canaan], from the [Mediterranean] Sea [in the west] to the [Euphrates] River [in the east]. 12 So why have you abandoned us and [allowed our enemies to] tear down our walls [RHQ]? [You are like] someone who tears down the fences [around his vineyard], with the result that all [the people] who pass by [can] steal the grapes, 13 and wild pigs [can] trample [the vines], and wild animals [can also] eat [the grapes]. 14 You who are the commander of the armies of heaven, (turn to/stop abandoning) us! Look down from heaven and see [what is happening to] us! Come and rescue [us who are like] [MET] your grapevine, 15 who are [like] the young vine that you [SYN] planted and caused to grow! 16 Our enemies have torn down and burned everything in our land; look at them angrily and get rid of them! 17 But strengthen [us] people whom you have chosen [IDM], [us] Israeli people whom you [previously] caused to be very strong. 18 When you do that, we will never turn away from you again; (revive us/cause us to be again like we were previously), and [then] we will praise/worship you. 19 Yahweh, commander of the armies of heaven, restore us; be kind to us in order that we may be rescued [from our enemies]!

81 Sing [songs] to praise God, who enables us to be strong [when we fight our enemies]; shout joyfully to God, whom we (descendants of Jacob/Israeli people) [worship]! 2 Start [playing] the music, and beat the tambourines, and play nice music on the harps and (lyres/other stringed instruments). 3 Blow the trumpets [during the festival to celebrate] each new moon and each time the moon is full and during our [other] festivals. 4 [Do that] because that is a law for [us] Israeli [people]; God commanded it for us descendants of Jacob. 5 He commanded us Israeli [people to obey it] when he punished [the people of] Egypt. I heard someone [MTY] whose voice I did not recognize, saying, 6 "[After the rulers of Egypt forced you Israelis to work as slaves], I took those [heavy] burdens off your backs, and I enabled you to lay down those [heavy] baskets [of bricks that you were carrying]. 7 When you were [greatly] distressed, you called [out to me], and I rescued you; I answered you out of a thundercloud. [Later] I tested [whether you would trust me to give you] water [when you were in the desert] at Meribah. 8 [You who are] my people, listen while I warn you! I wish that you Israeli [people] would pay attention to what I [say to you]! 9 You must not have any idols of other gods among you; you must never bow to worship any of them! 10 I am Yahweh, your God; It was [not any of those other gods] who brought you out of Egypt, I am the one who did it! [So] ask me what you want me to do for you [MTY], and I will do it. 11 But my people would not listen to me [SYN]; they would not obey me. 12 So even though they were very stubborn, I allowed them to do whatever they wanted to do. 13 I wish that my people would listen to me, that the Israeli [people] would behave as I want them to do. 14 [If they did that], I would quickly defeat their enemies; I would strike/punish [all of] them [DOU]. 15 [Then all] those who hate me would (cringe before/bow down to) me, and [then I] would punish them [MTY] forever. 16 [But] I would give you [Israelis] very good wheat/grain, and I would fill your stomachs with wild honey."

82 God gathers all the [rulers and judges who think they are] gods for a meeting in heaven; and he tells them that he has decided this: 2 "You must [RHQ] stop judging [people] unfairly; you must no longer make decisions that favor wicked [people]! 3 You must defend [people who are] poor and orphans; you must act fairly toward those who are needy and those who have no one to help them. 4 Rescue them from the power [MTY] of evil [people] [DOU]!" 5 [Those rulers] do not know or understand anything! They are very corrupt/evil, and [as a result of their corrupt/evil behavior], [it is as though] the foundation of the world is being shaken! 6 I [the all-powerful God, previously] said to them, "You think you are gods! [It is as though] you are all my sons, 7 but you will die like people do; your lives will end, like the lives of all rulers end." 8 God, arise and judge [everyone on] [MTY] the earth, because all the people-groups belong to you!

83 God, do not continue to be silent! Do not be quiet and say nothing, 2 because your enemies are rioting against you; those who hate you are rebelling against you! 3 They are secretly planning to do things to harm [us], your people; they are (conspiring together against/planning how to defeat) the people whom you protect. 4 They say, "Come, we must destroy their nation, with the result that no one will remember that Israel ever existed!" 5 They have agreed on [what they want to do to destroy Israel], and they have formed an alliance against you. 6 [The people who have done that are] the people of Edom [region], the descendants of Ishmael [who live on the east side of the Jordan River], the Moab [people-group], the descendants of Hagar [who also

live on the east side of the Jordan River], 7 Gebal [people-group], the Ammon [people-group], the Amalek [people-group], the Philistia [people-group], and the people of Tyre [city]. 8 [The people of] have joined them; they are strong allies of the [Moab and Ammon people-groups, who are] descendants of [Abraham's nephew] Lot. 9 [God], do to those people things like you did to the Midian [people-group], like [you did] to Sisera and Jabin at Kishon River. 10 You destroyed them at Endor [town], and their corpses [lay on] the ground and decayed. 11 Do to them things like you did to [Kings] Oreb and Zeeb; defeat their leaders like you defeated Zebah and Zalmunna, 12 who said, "We will take for ourselves the land that [the Israelis say] belongs to God!" 13 My God, cause them [to disappear quickly] like whirling dust, like chaff that the wind blows away! 14 Like a fire completely burns a forest and like flames burn in the mountains, 15 expel them by sending storms; cause them to be terrified by your big storms/hurricanes! 16 Cause them [SYN] to be very ashamed in order that they will admit that you are very powerful. 17 Cause them to be forever disgraced [because of being defeated], and cause them to die while they are still disgraced. 18 Cause them to know that you, whose name is Yahweh, are the supreme ruler over everything on the earth.

84 Lord, you who are the Commander of the armies of angels, your temple is very beautiful! 2 I [SYN] would like to be there; Yahweh, I desire that very much [DOU]. With all of my inner being I sing joyfully to you, the all-powerful God. 3 Even sparrows and swallows have built nests [near your temple, where you protect them] [DOU]; they take care of their young babies near the altars [where people offer sacrifices to] you, who are the commander of the armies of heaven, and my king and my God. 4 (Happy are/You are pleased with) those who (live/continually worship) in your temple, constantly singing to praise you. 5 Happy are those who [know that] you are the one who causes them to be strong, those who strongly desire to (make the trip/go) to Zion [Hill]. 6 While they travel through the [dry] Baca Valley, [you cause] it to become a place where there are springs of water, where the rains (in the autumn/before the cold season) fill the valley with pools of water. 7 [As a result, those who travel through there] become stronger/refreshed [knowing that] they will appear in your presence (on Zion [Hill]/in Jerusalem). 8 Yahweh, commander of the armies of heaven, listen to my prayer; God, who [is worshiped by us (descendants of] Jacob/Israeli people), hear [IDM] what I am saying! 9 God, be kind to [IDM] our king, the one who protects us [MTY], the one whom you have chosen [MTY] [to rule us]. 10 [For me], spending one day in your temple is better than spending 1,000 days somewhere else; [standing] at the entrance to your temple, [ready to go inside], is better than living in the tents/homes where wicked [people live]. 11 Yahweh our God is [like] the sun [that shines on us] and [like] a shield [that protects us] [MET]; he is kind to [us] and honors [us]. Yahweh does not refuse to give any good thing/blessing to those who do what is right. 12 Yahweh, commander of the armies of heaven, (happy are/you are pleased with) those who trust in you!

85 Yahweh, you have been kind to [us people who live in] this land; you have enabled [us] Israeli people to become prosperous again. 2 You forgave [us], your people, for the sins that we had committed; you pardoned [us] for all our sins [DOU]. 3 You stopped being angry [with us] and turned away from severely punishing [us]. 4 Now, God, the one who saves/rescues us, (restore us/make us prosperous again) and stop being angry with us! 5 (Will you continue to be angry with us forever?/Please do not continue to be angry with us forever.) [DOU, RHQ] 6 Please enable us [RHQ] to prosper again in order that [we], your people, will rejoice about what you [have done for us]. 7 Yahweh, by rescuing us [from our troubles/difficulties], show us that you faithfully love us. 8 I want to listen to what Yahweh [our] God says, because he promises/says that he will enable [us], his people, to live peacefully, if we do not return to doing foolish things. 9 He is surely ready to save/rescue those who revere him, in order that [his] glory/splendor will be seen in our land. 10 [When that happens], he will both faithfully love us and faithfully [do for us what he promised to do] [PRS]; and we will act/behave righteously, and he will give us peace, which will be like a kiss that he gives us. 11 Here on earth, we will (be loyal to/continually believe in) God, and from heaven, God will act justly/fairly [toward us]. 12 Yes, Yahweh will do good things [for us], and there will be great harvests in our land. 13 [Yahweh always acts] righteously [PRS, MET]; he acts righteously wherever he goes.

86 Yahweh, listen [IDM] to what I say and answer me, because I am weak and needy. 2 Prevent me from dying now, because I (am loyal to/continue to believe in) you; save/rescue me, because I serve you and I trust in you, my God. 3 Lord, be kind to me, because I cry out to you all during the day. 4 Lord, cause me to be glad, because I (pray to/worship) [IDM] you. 5 Lord, you are good [to us], and you forgive [us]; you faithfully love very much all those who (pray/call out) to you. 6 Lord, listen to my prayer; hear me when I cry out to you to help me. 7 When I have troubles, I call out to you, because you answer me. 8 Lord, among all the gods [whom the heathen nations worship], there is no one like you; not one of them has done [the great things]

that you have done. 9 Lord, [some day, people from] all the nations that you have established will come and bow down in front of you and they will praise you [MTY]. 10 You are great, and you do wonderful/marvelous things; only you are God. 11 Yahweh, teach me what you want me to do in order that I may conduct my life according to what you say, which is true. Cause/Teach me to revere you. 12 Lord, my God, I [will] thank you with all my inner being, and I will praise you forever. 13 You faithfully love me very much; you have prevented me from [dying and going to] the place where dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** 14 But God, proud men are [trying to] attack me; a gang/group of cruel men are wanting to kill me; they are men who do not have any (respect for/interest in) you. 15 But Lord, you always are mercifully and kind; you do not become angry quickly, you faithfully love us very much and always do for us what you have promised to do. 16 Look down toward me and be merciful to me; cause me to be strong and save/rescue me who serves you [faithfully] like my mother did. 17 Yahweh, do something to show me that you are being good to me in order that those who hate me will see that you have encouraged me and helped me, and as a result they will be ashamed.

87 The city that Yahweh established is on his sacred hill. 2 He loves that city, Jerusalem, more than he loves any other city in Israel. 3 [You people in] [APO] the city that God (owns/lives in), people say wonderful things about your city. 4 [Some of those who know about God are the people of] Egypt and Babylonia, and also [the people of] Philistia and Tyre and Ethiopia; [some day they all] will say, "[Although I was not born in Jerusalem], [because I belong to Yahweh, it is as though] I was born there." 5 And concerning Jerusalem, people will say ["It is as though] everyone was born there, and Almighty God will cause that city to remain strong/safe/secure." 6 Yahweh will write a list of [the names of] the people of various groups [who belong to him], and he will say that [he considers them] all to be citizens of Jerusalem. 7 They will all dance and sing, saying, "Jerusalem is the source of all our blessings."

88 Yahweh God, you who rescues me, all during each day I call out [to you] to help me, and I cry out to you during each night also. 2 Listen [IDM] to my prayer [DOU], while I cry out to you [for help]! 3 I have experienced many troubles/difficulties, and I am about to die [MTY] and go where dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** 4 Because I have no more strength, [other people also] consider that I will soon die. 5 I am like a corpse that has been abandoned; I am like dead people who lie in their graves, people who have been completely forgotten, because you do not take care of them any more. 6 [It is as though] you have thrown me into a deep, dark pit, into a place where they throw corpses. 7 [It seems like] you are very angry with me, and [it is as though] you have crushed me like [ocean] waves [crash down on people] [MET]. 8 You have caused my friends to (avoid/stay away from) me; I have become repulsive to them. [It is as though] I am in a prison and cannot escape. 9 My eyes cannot see well because I cry very much. Yahweh, every day I call out to you [to help me]; I lift up my hands to you [while I pray]. 10 You certainly do not [RHQ] perform miracles for dead people! Their spirits do not [RHQ] arise to praise you! 11 Corpses in the grave certainly do not tell about your faithfully loving us [RHQ], and in the place where people are finally destroyed, no one tells about what you faithfully [do for us] [RHQ]. 12 No one in the deep dark pit ever sees the miracles that you perform [RHQ], and no one in the place where people have been completely forgotten tells about your being good to us. 13 But [as for me], Yahweh, I cry out to you [to help me]; each morning I pray to you. 14 Yahweh, why do you reject me [RHQ]? Why do you turn away from me [RHQ]? 15 All the time since I was young, I have suffered and have often almost died; I am (in despair/very discouraged) because of enduring the terrible things that you have done to me. 16 [I feel that] you have crushed me because of your being angry with me; the terrible things that you are doing to me are almost destroying me. 17 [I feel as though] they surround me like a flood [SIM]; they are (closing in on/crushing) me from all sides. 18 You have caused [even] my friends and others whom I love to avoid me, and [it is as though] the only friend that I have is darkness.

89 Yahweh, I will sing forever about the ways you faithfully love me; people not yet born will hear that you faithfully [do all that you have promised]. 2 I will tell people that you will faithfully love us forever, and that your being faithful [to do what you have promised] is as permanent as the sky. 3 Yahweh said, "I have made an agreement with David, whom I chose [to serve me]. I have made this solemn (agreement with/promise to) him: 4 'I will enable various ones of your descendants to always be kings; the line of kings descended from you [MTY] will never end.'" 5 Yahweh, I desire that all [those beings who are in] [MTY] heaven will praise you for the wonderful things that you do, and that all your holy angels will sing about how you faithfully [do what you promise]. 6 There is no one [RHQ] in heaven who can be compared with you, Yahweh. There are no angels [RHQ] in heaven who are equal to you. 7 When your holy angels gather together, they declare that you must be revered; they say that you are more awesome than all the angels that surround your throne! 8 O Yahweh, God Almighty, there is no one [RHQ]

who is powerful like you are; your faithfully doing [all that you promise] is [like a cloak that] [MET] [always] surrounds you. **9** You rule over the powerful seas; when their waves rise up, you calm them. **10** You are the one who crushed [and killed the great sea monster named] Rahab. You [defeated and] scattered your enemies with your great power [MTY]. **11** The heavens are yours, and the earth is yours; and everything on the earth is yours, because you created it all. **12** You created [everything from] the north to the south. Tabor [Mountain] and Hermon [Mountain] joyfully praise you [MTY]. **13** (You/Your arms) are very powerful; (you/your hands) are extremely strong. **14** (Your rule [MTY] over us is based on/As you rule over us, you are always) treating people fairly and justly, and on/are always faithfully loving us and doing [what you promised]. **15** Yahweh, happy are the people who worship you with joyful shouts, who live knowing that you are always watching over them. **16** Every day, throughout the day, they rejoice in what you [MTY] [have done], and they praise you for being very good [to them]. **17** You give us your glorious strength; because you act in our favor, we defeat [MET] [our enemies]. **18** Yahweh, you gave us [the one who] protects us [MET]; you, the holy God whom we Israelis worship, chose a king for us. **19** Long ago you spoke in a vision to one of your servants/prophets, saying, "I have helped a famous soldier; I chose him from among all the people to be a king. **20** That man is David, the one who will serve me [faithfully], and I anointed him with sacred olive oil [to make him king]. **21** I [MTY] will always strengthen him; with my power [MTY] I will make him strong. **22** His enemies will never find ways to defeat him, and wicked people will never defeat him. **23** I will crush his enemies in front of him and get rid of those who hate him. **24** I will always be loyal to him and faithfully love him and enable him to defeat [MET] [his enemies]. **25** I will cause (his kingdom/the area that he rules) to include all the land from the [Mediterranean] Sea to the [Euphrates] River. **26** He will say to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the one who protects [MET] and saves me.' **27** I will give him [the rights/privileges that a man's] firstborn son has [MET]; he will be the greatest king on the earth. **28** I will always be loyal to him, and my agreement [to bless] him will last forever. **29** I will establish a line of his descendants that will never end, various ones of his descendants will always be kings. **30** But, if [some of] his descendants disobey my laws, and do not not behave like my commands say that they should, **31** if they disregard my requirements and do not do the right things that I have told them to do, **32** I will punish them severely [MTY] and cause them to suffer for doing wrong. **33** But I will not stop faithfully loving [David], and I will always do what I promised him. **34** I will not break the agreement that I made with him; I will not change even one word that I spoke [to him]. **35** Once I made a solemn promise to David, and that will never change, and because I am God, I will never lie to David. **36** [I promised that] the line of kings descended from him will go on forever; it will last as long as the sun [shines]. **37** That line will (be as permanent/last as long) as the moon that is always watching everything from the sky. **38** But [Yahweh], now you have rejected [DOU] David! You are very angry with the king whom you appointed. **39** [It seems that] you have broken the agreement that you made with your servant, [David]; it seems as though you [have signaled that he is no longer the king by] throwing his crown into the dust/dirt. **40** You have torn down the walls [that protect] his [city], and allowed all his forts to become ruins. **41** All those who pass by plunder/steal his possessions; his neighbors (laugh at/ridicule) him. **42** You have enabled his enemies to defeat him; you have made them all happy. **43** You have caused his sword to become useless, and you have not helped him in his battles. **44** You have caused his splendor to end (OR, You have taken away his power by knocking his throne to the ground. **45** You have caused him to look old when he is still young and caused him to be very shamed/disgraced. **46** O Yahweh, how long [will this continue]? Will you hide yourself forever? How long will your anger burn like a fire? **47** Do not forget that life is very short; have you created all us people in vain? **48** No one can [RHQ] keep on living and never die; (No one can [RHQ] avoid going/Everyone will go) to the place of the dead. **(Sheol h7585)** **49** Yahweh, you promised long ago that you would faithfully love us; why are you not doing that? You solemnly promised that to David! **50** Yahweh, do not forget that people insult me! (Heathen people/People who do not know you) curse me! **51** Yahweh, your enemies insult your chosen king! They insult/ridicule him wherever he goes. **52** I hope/desire that Yahweh will be praised forever! Amen! May it be so!

90 Lord, you have always (been [like] a home for us/protected us) [MET]. **2** Before you created the mountains, before you formed the earth and everything that is in it, you were eternally God, and you will be God forever. **3** [When people die], you cause their corpses to become soil again; you change their corpses to become dirt like [the first man] was created from. **4** When you (consider/think about) time, 1,000 years are [as short as] [SIM] one day which passes; [you consider that] [HYP] they are as short as a few hours in the night. **5** You cause people suddenly to die [MET]; they [live only a short time], like a dream lasts only a short time. They are like grass/weeds [SIM] that grow up. **6** In the morning [DOU] the grass sprouts and grows well, but in the evening it dries up and (completely withers/dies). **7**

[Similarly], [because of the sins that we have committed], you become angry with us; you terrify us and then you destroy us. **8** [It is as though] you place our sins in front of you, you spread out even our secret sins where you can see them. **9** Because you are angry with us, you cause our lives to end; the years that we live pass as quickly as a sigh does. **10** People live for only 70 years; but if they are strong, some of them live for 80 years. But even during good years we have much pain and troubles; our lives soon end, and we die [EUP]. **11** No one [RHQ] has fully experienced the powerful things you can do to them when you are angry with them, and people are not afraid that you will greatly punish them because of your being angry with them. **12** So teach/help us to realize that we live for only a short time in order that we may [use our time] wisely. **13** Yahweh, how long [will you be angry with us]? Pity us who serve you. **14** Each morning show us that your faithfully loving us is enough for us in order that we may shout joyfully and be happy for the rest of our lives. **15** Cause us to now be as happy for as many years as you (afflicted us/caused us to be sad) and we experienced troubles. **16** Enable us to see the [great] things that you do and enable our descendants to [also] see your glorious power. **17** Lord, our God, give us your blessings and enable us to be successful; yes, cause us to be successful in [everything] that we do [DOU]!

91 Those who live under the protection of God Almighty, will be able to rest [safely] under his care. **2** I will declare to Yahweh, "You protect me; [you are like] a fort [MET] in which I am safe. You are my God, the one in whom I trust." **3** Yahweh will rescue you from all hidden traps and save you from deadly diseases. **4** He will shield/protect you [like a bird shields/protects its chicks] [MET] with/under her wings. You will be safe (in his care/because he takes care of you). His faithfully doing what he has promised is like a shield [MET] that will protect you. **5** You will not be afraid of things that happen during the night that could (terrorize you/cause you to be very afraid), or of arrows that [your enemies will shoot at you] during the day. **6** You will not be afraid of (plagues/widespread sicknesses) that demons cause when they attack people at night, or of other [evil forces] that kill people at midday. **7** Even if 1,000 people fall [dead] alongside you, even if 10,000 [people are dying] around you, you will not be harmed. **8** Look and see that (wicked people are being punished/God is punishing wicked people)! **9** If you allow Yahweh to protect you, if you trust God Almighty to (shelter/take care of) you, **10** nothing evil will happen to you; no plague will come near your house, **11** because Yahweh will command his angels to protect you wherever you go. **12** They will hold you up with their hands, with the result that you will not hurt your foot on a big stone. **13** You will be [kept safe from being harmed by your enemies] [MET]; [it will be as though] you are stepping on lions and poisonous snakes [without them harming you!] **14** [Yahweh says], "I will rescue those who love me, I will protect them because they (acknowledge that I am Yahweh/know me). **15** When they call out to me, I will answer them. I will help them when they are experiencing trouble; I will rescue them and honor them. **16** I will reward them by enabling them to live a long time, and I will save them."

92 Yahweh, it is good for people to thank you and to sing to praise you [MTY] who are greater than any other god. **2** It is good to proclaim every morning that you faithfully love us, and each night [to sing songs that] declare that you always do what you have promised to do, **3** accompanied by [musicians playing] harps that have ten strings, and by the sounds made by a lyre. **4** Yahweh, you have caused me to be glad; I sing joyfully because of what you [SYN] have done. **5** Yahweh, the things that you do are great! But it is difficult for us to understand [all] that you think. **6** There are things [that you do] that foolish people cannot know about, things that stupid people cannot understand. **7** They do not understand that although the number of wicked [people] increases [like blades of] grass do [SIM], and they prosper, they will be completely destroyed. **8** But Yahweh, you [will] exalted/be honored/rule) forever. **9** Yahweh, your enemies will [certainly] die, and those who do wicked things will be defeated/scattered. **10** But you have caused me to be as strong [MTY] as [SIM] a wild ox; you have caused me to be very joyful [MTY]. **11** I [SYN] have seen you defeat my enemies; d I have heard those evil men wail/scream while they were being slaughtered. **12** But righteous [people] will prosper like [SIM] palm trees that grow well, or like [SIM] cedar [trees] that grow in Lebanon. **13** [They are like the trees] that grow near the temple of Yahweh [in Jerusalem], those trees that are close to the courtyard of the temple of our God. **14** [Even] when righteous people become old, they do many things [IDM] [that please God]. They remain strong and full of energy, [like trees that] [MET] remain full of sap. **15** That shows that Yahweh is just; he is [like a huge] rock [under which I am safe/protected], and he never does anything that is wicked/wrong.

93 Yahweh, you are the King! You are majestic, and the power that you have is [like] [MET] a robe that a king wears. You put the world firmly in place, and it will never be moved/shaken. **2** You ruled as king a very long time ago; you have always existed. **3** Yahweh, [when you created the world, you separated] the water from [the chaotic mass

and formed oceans], and the waves of the waters [of those oceans] still roar, 4 [but] you are greater than the roar of those oceans, more powerful than the ocean waves! You are Yahweh, the one who is greater than any other god! 5 Yahweh, your laws never change, and your temple has always been holy/sacred. And that will be true forever.

94 Yahweh, you are able to get revenge [on your enemies]. [So] show them that you are going to punish them! 2 You are the one who judges all [people on] the earth; [so] arise, and give/punish the proud [leaders of our] people like they deserve. 3 Yahweh, how long will those wicked [people] be glad/happy? It is not right that [RHQ] they continue being glad! 4 They do evil things, and they boast about doing them; how long will they [be allowed to] continue doing that? 5 Yahweh, [it is as though] those wicked people crush [us], your people; they (oppress/treat cruelly) those who belong to you [DOU]. 6 They murder widows and orphans and people from other countries who [think it is safe to] live in our land. 7 Those wicked people say, "Yahweh does not see anything; [so] the God whom those Israelis [worship] does not see [the evil things that we do]." 8 You evil people [who rule Israel], you are foolish and stupid; when will you become wise [RHQ]? 9 God made our ears; so [do you think that] he cannot hear [what you say] [RHQ]? He created our eyes; so do you think that he cannot see [the evil things that you do] [RHQ]? 10 He also scolds [the leaders of other] nations; so do you think that he will not punish [you] [RHQ]? He is the one who knows everything; [so why do you think that he does not know what you do] [RHQ]? 11 Yahweh knows [everything] that people are thinking; he knows that what they think ([is useless/vanishes as quickly as]) smoke [MET]. 12 Yahweh, you are pleased with people who [want you to] discipline/correct them, those who [want you to] teach them your laws. 13 When those people have had troubles, you cause those troubles to cease, and some day [it will be as though] you will dig pits for wicked people, and they will fall into those pits [and die]. 14 Yahweh will not abandon his people; he will not desert like that those who belong to him [DOU]. 15 [Some day] judges will decide matters fairly for people, and all honest/righteous people will be pleased about that. 16 But when wicked [people] ([oppressed me/treated me cruelly]), (who defended me?/no one defended me.) [RHQ] No one stood up to testify for me against those evil people [RHQ]. 17 If Yahweh had not helped me [at that time], [I would have been executed], [and] my soul/spirit would have gone to the place where [dead people] say nothing. 18 I said/thought [to myself], "I am about to die," but Yahweh, you held me up by faithfully loving me. 19 Whenever I am very worried, you comfort/encourage me and cause me to be happy. 20 You have nothing to do with wicked judges, who establish laws that allow people to do what is not legal. 21 They plan to get rid of righteous [people], and they declare that (innocent people/people who have not done what is wrong) must be executed. 22 But Yahweh (has become [like] my fortress/protects me) [MET]; my God is [like a huge] rock under which I am protected/safe [MET]. 23 He will punish those wicked leaders in return for the wicked things that they have done, and will get rid of them for the sins that they have committed; [yes], Yahweh our God will (wipe them out/destroy them completely).

95 Come, sing to Yahweh; sing joyfully to the one who protects us [MET] and saves us! 2 We should thank him as we come before him, and sing (joyful songs/joyfully) as we praise him. 3 Because Yahweh is the great God, he is a great king [who rules] over all [other] gods. 4 He rules over the whole earth, from the deepest places/caves to the highest mountains. 5 The seas are his, because he made them. He is [also] the one who [SYN] formed/made the dry land. 6 We should come, worship, and bow down before him. We should kneel before Yahweh, the one who made us. 7 He is our God, and we are the people whom he takes care of [MET]; like sheep [that a shepherd] takes care of. Today, listen to what Yahweh is saying to you. 8 He says, "Do not become stubborn [IDM] like [your ancestors] did at Meribah, and like [they did] at Massah in the desert. 9 There your ancestors (wanted to see/tried to determine) if they could do many very evil things [without my punishing them]. Even though they had seen me perform [many] miracles, they tested whether I [would continue to be patient with them]. 10 For 40 years I was angry with those people, and I said, 'Those people say that they want to please me, but they do things that I detest. They refuse to obey my commands.' 11 So because I was very angry, I solemnly said/declared about them: 'They will never enter [the land of Canaan] where I would have allowed them to rest!'"

96 Sing to Yahweh a new song! [You people] throughout the earth, sing to Yahweh! 2 Sing to Yahweh and praise him [MTY]! Every day proclaim [to others] that he has saved/rescued us. 3 Tell about his glory/greatness to all people-groups; tell all people-groups the marvelous [things that he has done]. 4 Yahweh is great, and he deserves to be praised very much; he should be revered more than for all the gods, 5 because all the gods that other people-groups [worship] are [only] idols, but Yahweh [is truly great]; he created the skies! 6 Those who are in his presence honor him and can see that he is a great king. They can see in his temple that he is very powerful and is very beautiful. 7 You people in nations all over the earth, praise Yahweh! Praise

Yahweh for his glorious power [HEN]! 8 Praise Yahweh like he deserves to be praised, Bring an offering and come to his temple. 9 Bow down before Yahweh [when he appears] in his holy/sacred temple; everyone on the earth should tremble in front of him, because he is majestic and holy. 10 Say to all the people-groups, "Yahweh is the king! He put the world in its place, and nothing will ever be able to move/shake it. He will judge [all] the people-groups fairly." 11 [All the beings that are in] [MTY] the heavens should be glad, and all [the people on the] earth should rejoice. The oceans and all the creatures that are in the oceans should roar [to praise Yahweh]. 12 The fields and everything that grows in them should rejoice. When they do that, [it will be as though] all the trees in the forests will sing joyfully 13 in front of Yahweh. That will happen when he comes to judge [everyone on] [MTY] the earth. He will judge all the people fairly/justly, according to [what he knows is] true.

97 Yahweh is the king! I want [everyone on] the earth to be glad/happy, and the [people who live on] the islands in the oceans to [also] rejoice [about that!] 2 There are very dark clouds around him [to hide him]; he rules [MTY] righteously/justly and fairly. 3 He [sends] fire in front of him, and he completely burns all his enemies in that fire. 4 All around the world he causes lightning to flash; [people on] the earth see it, and it causes them to [be afraid and] tremble. 5 The mountains/hills melt like wax in front of Yahweh, the one who is the Lord, [who rules] over all the earth. 6 The [angels in] [MTY] heaven proclaim that he acts righteously, and all the people-groups see his glory. 7 Everyone who worships idols should be ashamed; all those who are proud of their false gods [should realize that their gods are useless], [It is as though] all those gods bow down [to worship] Yahweh. 8 [The people] [MTY] of Jerusalem hear [about Yahweh] and are glad/happy, and [people in the other] [MTY] cities in Judah [also] rejoice, because Yahweh judges [and punishes wicked people]. 9 Yahweh is the supreme [king] over all the earth; he has very great power, and all the [other] gods have no power at all. 10 Yahweh loves those who hate what [people do that] is evil; he protects the lives of his people, and he rescues them when the wicked [people try to harm them]. 11 His light shines on righteous [people]; he causes those who are righteous to rejoice. 12 You righteous [people], rejoice about what Yahweh [has done], and thank him, our holy God!

98 Sing to Yahweh a new song, because he has done wonderful things! By his power [MTY] and his great strength [DOU] he has defeated [his enemies]. 2 Yahweh has declared to people that he has defeated his enemies; he has revealed that he has punished [them], and [people in] all the world have seen that he has done it. 3 Like he promised to us Israeli people [MTY], he has faithfully loved us and (been loyal to/not abandoned) us. [People who live] in very remote places in all the earth have seen that our God has defeated [his enemies]. 4 All you [people] [MTY] everywhere should sing joyfully to Yahweh; praise him while you sing and shout joyfully! 5 Praise Yahweh while you play the lyres/harps, playing [delightful] music. 6 [Some of you should] blow trumpets and other horns, [while others] shout joyfully to Yahweh, [our] king. 7 The oceans and all [the creatures] that are in the oceans should roar [to praise Yahweh]. Everyone on the earth should sing! 8 [It should seem as though] the rivers are clapping their hands [to praise Yahweh] and that the hills are singing together joyfully in front of Yahweh, 9 because he will come to judge [everyone on] [MTY] the earth! He will judge [all] the people-groups [in the world] justly and fairly [DOU].

99 Yahweh is the [supreme] king, so [all] the people-groups should tremble ([in his presence/in front of him])! He sits on his throne [in the temple] above the [statues of] winged creatures, [so] the earth should quake/shake! 2 Yahweh is a mighty [king] in Jerusalem; [but] he is [also] the supreme ruler of all people-groups. 3 [So] they should praise him because he is very great/powerful; and he is holy! 4 He is a mighty king who (loves/is pleased with) what is just/right; he has acted justly and fairly [DOU] in Israel. 5 Praise Yahweh our God! Worship him [in front of the Sacred Chest in his temple] [MTY], where he rules people. He is holy! 6 Moses and Aaron were two of his priests; Samuel also was someone who prayed to him. Those [three] cried out to Yahweh [to help them], and he answered them. 7 He spoke to Moses and Aaron from the cloud [that was like a huge] pillar; they obeyed [all] the laws and commandments [DOU] that he gave to them. 8 Yahweh, our God, you answered [your people] [when they cried out to you to help them]; you are a God who forgave them [for those sins that they had committed], even though you punished them for the things that they did that are wrong. 9 Praise Yahweh, our God, and worship him [at the temple] on his sacred hill; [it is right to do that] because Yahweh, our God, is holy!

100 Everyone in the world should shout joyfully to Yahweh! 2 We should worship Yahweh gladly! We should come before him singing joyful songs. 3 We should acknowledge/recognize that Yahweh is God; it is he who made us, [so] we belong to him. We are the people that he takes care of [MET]; we are [like] sheep that are cared for by their shepherd. 4 Enter the gates [of his temple] thanking

him; enter the courtyard [of the temple] singing songs to praise him! Thank him and praise him, 5 because Yahweh always [does] good [things for us]. He faithfully loves us, and (is faithful/is loyal to us forever/will never forsake us).

101 Yahweh, I will sing to you! I will sing about [your] faithfully loving [us] (OR, my being loyal to you and acting justly/fairly [toward people]). 2 [I promise that] while I rule people [MTY], I will behave in such a way that no one will be able to criticize me. Yahweh, (when will you come to [help] me?/I need you to come to [help] me.) [RHQ] I will do things that are right. 3 I will not allow stay away from those who do what is evil [SYN]. I hate the deeds of those who ([turn away from/sin against]) you; I will (completely avoid those people/not allow those people to come near me). 4 I will not be dishonest, and I will not have anything to do with evil (OR, evil people). 5 I will get rid of anyone who secretly slanders someone else, and I will not (tolerate/allow to be near me) anyone who is proud and arrogant [DOU]. 6 I will approve of [IDM] people in this land who (are loyal to/faithfully [obey]) [God], and I will allow them to (live with/work for) me. I will allow those who behave in such a way that no one can criticize them to (serve me/be my officials). 7 I will not allow anyone who deceives others to work in my palace; no one who tells lies will be allowed to continually come to [work for] me. 8 Every day I will [try to] get rid of all the wicked people in this land; I will [do that by] expelling them from [this] city, which is Yahweh's city.

102 Yahweh, listen to what I am praying; hear me while I cry out to you! 2 Do not (turn away/hide yourself) from me when I (have troubles/am distressed)! Listen to me, and answer me quickly now, when I am calling out to you! 3 My life is ending, like smoke that disappears [SIM]; I have [a high fever which] burns my body like a fire burns [SIM]. 4 [I feel like] I am drying up like grass [SIM] that has been beaten/trampled down, and I no longer have a desire to eat food. 5 I groan loudly, and my bones can be seen under my skin [because I have become very thin]. 6 I am like a [lonely and despised] vulture in the desert, like an owl by itself in the abandoned ruins [of a building/city]. 7 I lie awake [at night]; [because there is no one to comfort me], I am like a lonely bird [sitting] on a housetop [SIM]. 8 All during the day my enemies insult me; those who make fun of me mention my name [and say, "May you be like him"] when they curse people. 9 Because you are very angry [DOU] with me, now [I sit in] ashes [while I am suffering greatly]; and those ashes [fall on] the bread/food that I eat, and what I drink has my tears mixed with it. [It is as though] you have picked me up and thrown me away! 11 My time to remain alive is like an evening shadow [that will soon be gone] [SIM]. I am withering like grass withers [in the hot sun]. 12 But Yahweh, you are our king who rules [MTY] forever; people who are not yet born will remember you. 13 You will arise and be merciful to [the people of] [MTY] Jerusalem; it is now time for you to do that; this is the time for you to be kind to them. 14 Even though (the city has been destroyed/our enemies have destroyed our city), we who serve you still love the stones that [were formerly] in the city walls; because now there is rubble everywhere, we, your people, are very sad when we see it. 15 Yahweh, [some day the people of other] nations will revere you [MTY]; all the kings on earth will see that you are very glorious/great. 16 You will rebuild Jerusalem, and you will appear there with your glory/brightness. 17 You will listen to the prayers of your people who are homeless, and you will (not ignore them/do what they request) [LIT] when they plead with you to help them. 18 Yahweh, [I want to] write these words in order that people in future years [will know what] you have done, in order that people who are not born yet will praise you. 19 They will know that you looked down from your holy/sacred place in heaven [DOU] and saw [what was happening on] the earth. 20 They will know that you hear prisoners groaning and that you will set free those who have been told, "You will be executed." 21 As a result, people in Jerusalem will praise you [DOU] for what you [have done] 22 when many people [from other people-groups] and [those who are citizens of other] kingdoms gather to worship you. 23 [But now] you have caused me to become weak while I am still young; [I think that] I will (not live much longer/ very long/soon die). 24 I say to you, "My God, do not cause me to die now, before I become old! You live forever! 25 You created the world long ago, and you made (the heavens/everything in the sky) with your own hands. 26 The earth and the heavens/sky will disappear, but you will remain. They will wear out like clothes wear out. You will get rid of them like [people get rid of] old clothes, and they will no longer exist, 27 but you are [not like the things that you created], [because you are] always the same; you never die. 28 [Some day] our children will live safely [in Jerusalem], and their descendants will be protected in your presence."

103 [I tell] myself that I should praise Yahweh. I will praise him [MTY] with all of my inner being, [because] he [MTY] is holy. 2 [I tell] myself that I should praise Yahweh and never forget all the kind things he has done for me: 3 He forgives all my sins, and he heals me from all my diseases/sicknesses; 4 he keeps me from dying [MTY], and blesses me by faithfully loving me and acting mercifully to me. 5 He gives me good things during my entire life. He makes me feel young and strong like eagles. 6 Yahweh

judges justly and (vindicates/does what is right for) all those who have been treated unfairly. **7** [Long ago] he revealed to Moses what he planned to do; he showed to the [ancestors of us] Israeli people the mighty things that he was able to do. **8** Yahweh acts mercifully and kindly; he does not quickly (get angry/punish us) [when we sin]; he is always [showing us that he] faithfully loves us. **9** He will not keep rebuking us, and he will not remain angry forever. **10** He punishes us for our sins, but he does not punish us [severely] as we deserve [DOU]! **11** The skies are very high above the earth, and Yahweh's faithful love for all those who revere him is just as great. **12** He has taken away [the guilt for] [MTY] our sins, taking it as far from us as the east is from the west. **13** Just like parents act mercifully toward their children, Yahweh is kind to those who revere him. **14** He knows what our bodies are like; he remembers that [he created us from] dirt, and so we quickly fail [to do what pleases him] [MET]. **15** We humans do not live forever [SIM]; we are like grass [SIM] [that withers and dies]. We are like wild flowers: They bloom [for a short while], **16** but then the [hot] wind blows over them, and they disappear; no one sees them again. **17** But Yahweh will faithfully keep loving forever all those who revere him. He will act fairly to our children and to their children; **18** he will act that way to all those who obey the agreement he made with them [to bless them if they did what he told them to do], to all those who obey what he has commanded. **19** Yahweh made/caused the heavens to be the place where he rules [MTY]; from there he rules over everything. **20** You angels who belong to Yahweh, praise him! You are powerful creatures/beings who do what he tells you to do; you obey what he commands. **21** Praise Yahweh, you armies/thousands of angels who serve him and do what he desires! **22** All you things that Yahweh has created, praise him; praise him in every place where he rules, everywhere! And I [also] will praise Yahweh!

104 [I tell] myself that I should praise Yahweh. Yahweh, my God, you are very great! Like a king has on his royal robes [MET], you have honor and majesty/greatness all around you! **2** You [created/caused] light to be like your robe [MET]. You spread out the sky like [a man sets up] a tent. **3** You made/put your home [in heaven], above the rain clouds in the sky, [like a man puts the] rafters of his house in place [MET]. You made/caused the clouds to be like chariots [to carry you]. **4** You caused the winds to be [like] your messengers [MET], and flames of fire to be [like] your servants. **5** You placed the world firmly on its foundation so that it can never be moved/shaken. **6** [Later], you covered the earth with a flood, like a blanket, with the water that covered the mountains. **7** [But] when you rebuked the water, the oceans receded; your voice spoke like thunder, and then the waters rushed away. **8** Mountains rose up [from the water], and the valleys sank down to the levels that you had determined for them. **9** [Then] you set a boundary for the oceans, a boundary that they cannot cross; their water will never again cover the [whole] earth. **10** You make/cause springs to pour [water] into ravines; their [water] flows down between the mountains. **11** Those [streams] provide water for all the animals [to drink]; the wild donkeys [drink the water and] are no longer thirsty. **12** Birds make their nests alongside [the streams], and they sing among the branches [of the trees]. **13** From (your home in heaven/the sky) you send rain down on the mountains, and you fill the earth with many good things that you create. **14** You make/cause grass to grow for the cattle [to eat], and you make/cause plants to grow for people. In that way [animals and people] get their food from [what grows in] the soil. **15** We get [grapes to make] [MTY] wine to [drink and] make us cheerful, and we get [olives to make] [MTY] olive oil to [put on our] skin and cause it to shine, and we get [grain to make] [MTY] bread to give us strength. **16** Yahweh, you [send plenty of rain to] water your trees, the cedar [trees] that you planted in Lebanon. **17** Birds make their nests in those [trees]; even storks make their nests in pine/fir trees. **18** High up in the mountains the wild goats live, and hyraxes/badgers live in the crags/crevices in the rocks. **19** [Yahweh], you made the moon to indicate the times for our festivals, and you made the sun that knows when to go down. **20** You bring darkness, and it becomes night, when all the animals in the forest prowl around, [looking for food]. **21** At night the young lions roar as they seek their prey, [but] they depend on you to give them food. **22** At dawn, they go back to their dens and lie down. **23** And during the daytime, people go to their work; they work until it is evening. **24** Yahweh, you have made so many different kinds of things! You were [very] wise as you made them all. The earth is full of the creatures that you [made]. **25** [We see] the ocean which is very large [DOU]! It is full of many kinds of living creatures, big ones and little ones. **26** We see the ships which sail along! We see the huge sea monster, which you made to (splash around/play) in the sea. **27** All of those creatures depend on you to give them the food that they need. **28** When you give them the food that they need, they gather it. You give them what you have in your hand, and they [eat it and] are satisfied. **29** [But] if you refuse to give food to them, they become terrified. And when you cause them to stop breathing, they die; their bodies [decay and] become soil again. **30** When you cause newborn creatures to begin to breathe, they start to live; you give new life to all the living creatures on the earth. **31** I want

the glory of Yahweh to last forever. I want him to rejoice about [all] the things that he has created. **32** He causes the earth to shake [just] by looking at it! By [merely] touching the mountains he makes/causes them to pour out fire and smoke! **33** I will sing to Yahweh (as long as I live/throughout my entire life). I will praise my God until the day that I die. **34** I want Yahweh to be pleased by all those things that I have thought [about him], because I rejoice about [knowing] him. **35** [But] I desire that sinners will disappear from the earth, so that there will be no more wicked [people]! [But as for] me, I will praise Yahweh! (Praise him/Hallelujah)!

105 Give thanks to Yahweh, and tell others that he is very great! Tell everyone in the world what he has done! **2** Sing to him; praise him as you sing to him; tell others about his wonderful miracles. **3** Be happy because [you know that] he [MTY] is holy! You people who worship Yahweh, rejoice! **4** Ask Yahweh to help you and give you his strength, and continue to ask him! **5** You people who are descendants of God's servant Abraham, you descendants of Jacob, the man God chose, think about [all] the wonderful things that he has done: He performed miracles, and he punished [all our enemies]. **7** He is Yahweh, our God. He rules and judges [people] throughout the earth. **8** He never forgets the agreement that he made; he made a promise that will last for 1,000 generations; **9** that is the agreement that he made with Abraham, and he repeated that agreement with Isaac. **10** [Later] he confirmed it [again] to Jacob as an agreement for the Israeli [people] that would last forever. **11** What he said was, "I will give you the Canaan region; it will belong to you [and your descendants forever]." **12** [He said that to them] when there were only a few of them, a tiny group of people who were living in that land like strangers. **13** They continued to wander from one place to another, from one kingdom to another. **14** But he did not allow others to oppress them. He warned those kings by saying to them, **15** "Do not do harm the [people] whom I have chosen! Do not harm my prophets!" **16** He sent a famine to Canaan, and [as a result all the people] had no food to eat. **17** So his people went to Egypt, but first he sent someone there. He sent Joseph, who had been sold to be a slave. **18** [Later, while Joseph was in prison in Egypt], they put his legs in shackles that bruised his feet, and they put an iron collar around his neck. **19** There, Yahweh (refined Joseph's character/tested Joseph to see if Joseph would continue to trust him), until what Joseph predicted would happen (came true/happened). **20** The king [of Egypt] summoned him, and he set Joseph free; this ruler of many people-groups released Joseph [from prison]. **21** [Then] he appointed him to take care of everything in the king's household, to take care of everything that the king possessed. **22** (Joseph was permitted/He permitted Joseph) to command the king's servants to do anything that Joseph wanted them to do, and [even] to tell the king's advisors the things that they should do [for the people of Egypt]. **23** Later, [Joseph's father] Jacob arrived in Egypt. He lived like a foreigner in the land that belonged to the descendants of Ham. **24** And [years later] Yahweh caused the descendants of Jacob to become very numerous. [As a result], their enemies, [the Egyptians], considered that the Israelis were too strong. **25** [So] Yahweh caused the rulers of Egypt to (turn against/hate) the Israeli people, and they planned ways to get rid of his people. **26** [But then] Yahweh sent his servant Moses along with [Moses' older brother] Aaron, whom Yahweh had [also] chosen [to be his servant]. **27** Those two performed amazing miracles among the people of Egypt, in that land where the descendants of Ham lived. **28** Yahweh sent darkness, so that the people of Egypt could not see anything [DOU], but the rulers of Egypt refused [RHQ] to obey when [Moses and Aaron] commanded [them to let the Israeli people leave Egypt]. **29** Yahweh caused [all] the water in Egypt to become (blood/[red like] blood), and [his doing that] caused all the fish to die. **30** [Then he caused] the land to become full of frogs; the king and his officials even had frogs in their bedrooms. **31** [Then] Yahweh commanded that flies come, and swarms of them descended [on the people of Egypt], and gnats [also] swarmed across the whole country. **32** Instead of sending rain, Yahweh sent [terrible] hail, and lightning flashed throughout the land. **33** The hail ruined their grapevines and fig trees and shattered all the [other] trees. **34** He commanded locusts to come, and swarms of them came; [so many that] they could not be counted. **35** The locusts ate every green plant in the land, ruining all the crops. **36** [Then] Yahweh killed the oldest son in every house [of the people of Egypt] [DOU]. **37** Then he brought the Israeli [people] out [from Egypt]; they were carrying loads of [jewelry made of] silver and gold [that the women of Egypt had given to them]. No one was left behind because of being sick. **38** [The people of] Egypt were glad when the Israeli people left, because they had become very afraid of the Israelis. **39** [Then] Yahweh spread a cloud to cover the Israelis; and [at night it became] a big fire [in the sky] to give them light. **40** [Later] the Israelis asked for [meat to eat], and Yahweh sent [flocks of] quail to them, and he gave them plenty of manna [food] from the sky [each morning]. **41** [One day] he caused a rock to open up and water poured out [for them to drink]; it was like a river flowing in that desert. **42** [He did that] because he kept thinking about the sacred promise [that he had given] to his servant, Abraham. **43** So his people were joyful as he

brought them out from Egypt; those people whom he had chosen were shouting joyfully as they went. **44** He gave to them the land that belonged to the people-groups [that lived there in Canaan], and the Israelis harvested crops that [other] people had planted. **45** [Yahweh did all these things] in order that his people would do all the things that he had commanded them to do [DOU]. Praise Yahweh!

106 Praise Yahweh! Praise Yahweh, because he does good things [for us]; he faithfully loves [us] forever/continually! **2** [Because Yahweh has done many great things], no one can [RHQ] tell all the great things that Yahweh has done, and no one can praise him enough/sufficiently. **3** (Happy are/He is pleased with) those who act fairly/justly, with those who always do what is right. **4** Yahweh, be kind to me when you help your people; help me when you rescue/save them. **5** Allow me to see it when your people become prosperous again and when [all the people of] your nation, [Israel], are happy; allow me to be happy with them! I want to praise you along with [all] those [others] who belong to you. **6** We and our ancestors have sinned; we have done things that were very wicked [DOU]. **7** When our ancestors were in Egypt, they did not pay attention to the wonderful things that Yahweh did; they forgot about the many times that he showed that he faithfully loved them. Instead, when they were at the Red Sea, they rebelled against God, who is greater than any other god. **8** But he rescued them for the sake of his own [reputation] in order that he could show that he is very powerful. **9** He rebuked the Red Sea and it became dry, and [then] while he led our ancestors across it, they walked through it as though it were as dry as a desert [SIM]. **10** In that way he rescued them from the power [MTY] of their enemies who hated them [DOU]. **11** [Then] their enemies were drowned in the water [of the Red Sea]; not one of them was left. **12** When that happened, our ancestors believed [that Yahweh had truly done for them] what he had promised to do, and they sang to praise him. **13** But they soon forgot what he had done for them; they [did things] without waiting to find out what Yahweh wanted them to do. **14** They intensely wanted [food like they formerly ate in Egypt]. They [did evil things to] find out [if they could do those things without God punishing them]. **15** [So] he gave them what they requested, but he [also] caused a terrible disease to afflict them. **16** [Later] when [some of] the men became jealous of Moses and [his older brother] Aaron, who was dedicated [to serve Yahweh by being a priest], **17** the ground opened up and swallowed Dathan and [also] buried Abiram and his family. **18** And [God sent] a fire down [from heaven] which burned up [all] the wicked [people who (supported them/agreed with) them]. **19** Then the [Israeli leaders] made a gold statue at Sinai [Mountain] and worshiped it. **20** Instead of worshiping [our] glorious God, they [started to] worship a statue of a bull that eats grass! **21** They forgot about God, who had rescued them by the great miracles that he performed in Egypt. **22** They forgot about the wonderful things that he did for them in Egypt and the amazing/awesome things that he did for them at the Red Sea. **23** Because of that, God said that he would get rid of the Israelis, but Moses, whom God had chosen [to serve him], pleaded with God [not to get rid of them]. And as a result God did not destroy them. **24** [Later], our ancestors (refused/were afraid) to enter beautiful [Canaan] land because they did not believe [that God would enable them to take the land from the people who were living there, as] he had promised. **25** They stayed in their tents and grumbled and would not pay attention to what Yahweh said that they should do. **26** So he solemnly [MTY] told them that he would cause them to die [there] in the desert, **27** and that he would scatter their descendants among the [people of other] nations/people-groups [who did not believe in him], and that he would allow them to die in those lands. **28** Later the Israeli people [started to] worship [the idol of] Baal [who they thought lived] at Peor [Mountain], and they ate [meat that had been] sacrificed to [Baal and those other] lifeless gods. **29** Yahweh became [very] angry because of what they had done, [so again] he sent a terrible disease to attack/strike them. **30** But Phinehas stood up and punished/killed [the ones who had sinned greatly], and as a result the (plague/serious disease) ended. **31** People have remembered that righteous thing that Phinehas did, and in future years people will remember it. **32** [Then] at Meribah Springs our ancestors caused Yahweh to become angry, and as a result Moses had trouble. **33** They caused Moses to become very angry [IDM], and he said things that were foolish. **34** Our ancestors did not destroy the people [who did not believe in Yahweh] like he told them to do. **35** Instead, they mingled with people from those people-groups, and they started to do the evil things that those people did. **36** Our ancestors worshiped the idols of those people, which resulted in their being destroyed/exiled/taken to another country [MET]. **37** [Some of] the Israelis sacrificed their sons and daughters to the demons [that those idols represented]. **38** They killed [MTY] their own children, who (were innocent/had not done things that were wrong), and offered them as sacrifices to the idols in Canaan. [As a result], Canaan land was polluted by those murders [MTY]. **39** So by their deeds they caused themselves to become unacceptable to God; [because they did not faithfully worship only God], [they became like] women who sleep with other men [instead of sleeping only with their husbands] [MET].

40 So Yahweh became very angry with his people; he was completely disgusted with them. 41 [As a result] he allowed people-groups [who did not believe in him] to conquer them, so those who hated our ancestors started to rule over them. 42 Their enemies (oppressed them/treated them cruelly) and completely controlled them [MET]. 43 Many times Yahweh rescued them, but they continued to rebel against him, and they were finally destroyed because of the sins that they committed. 44 However, Yahweh [always] heard them when they cried out to him; he listened to them when they were distressed. 45 For their sake, he thought about the agreement/promise that he had made [to bless] them, and because he never stopped loving them very much, he changed his mind [about punishing them more]. 46 He caused all those who had taken the Israelis [to Babylonia] to (feel sorry for/pity) them. 47 Yahweh our God, rescue/save us and bring us back [to Israel] from among those people-groups in order that we may thank you [MTY] and joyfully praise you. 48 Praise Yahweh, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], praise him now and forever! And I want everyone to say, "Amen/May it be so!" Praise Yahweh!

107 Give thanks to Yahweh, because he always does good [things for us] His faithful love [for us] lasts forever! 2 Those whom Yahweh has saved should tell others that he has rescued them from their enemies. 3 He has gathered [those of you] who were [(exiled/taken forcefully)] to many lands; [he has gathered you together from] the east and the west, from the north and from the south. 4 Some of those [who returned from those countries] wandered in the desert; they were lost and had no homes to live in. 5 They were hungry and thirsty, and they were very discouraged. 6 When they were in trouble, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from (being distressed/their difficulties). 7 He led them along a straight road [where they walked safely] to cities [in Canaan] where they could live. 8 They should praise/thank Yahweh for loving them faithfully and for the wonderful things that he does for people. 9 He gives thirsty people plenty [of water] to drink, and he gives hungry people plenty of good things [to eat]. 10 Some of them were in very dark [HEN] (places [in Babylonia/other countries]); they were prisoners, suffering because of chains [fastened to their hands and feet]. 11 They were in prison because they had (rebelled against/not obeyed) the message of God; they were there because they had despised the advice given by God, who is greater than all other gods. 12 [That is why] their bodies were worn out from hard labor; when they fell down, there was no one who would help them. 13 In their troubles, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from their being distressed. 14 He broke the chains that were on their hands and feet; and brought them out of those very dark [prisons]. 15 He broke down the [prison] gates that were made of bronze, and cut through the [prison] bars that were made of iron. [So they also] should praise/thank Yahweh for faithfully loving [them], and for [all] the wonderful things that he does for people. 17 Some of them foolishly rebelled [against God], so they suffered for their sins. 18 They did not want to eat any food, and they almost died. 19 In their troubles, they [also] called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from their being distressed. 20 When he commanded that they be healed, they were healed; he saved them from dying. 21 They [also] should praise/thank Yahweh for faithfully loving them, and for [all] the wonderful things that he does for people. 22 They should give offerings to him to show that they are thankful, and they should sing joyfully about the miracles that he has performed. 23 Some of them sailed in ships; they were selling things [in ports] throughout the world. 24 [As they were sailing], they also saw the miracles that Yahweh performed, the wonderful things that he did [when they were] on very deep seas. 25 He commanded the winds, and they became strong and (stirred up high waves/caused waves to rise high). 26 The ships [in which they were sailing] were tossed high in the air, and [then] they sank into the (troughs/low places) [between the high waves]; then the sailors were terrified. 27 They stumbled about and staggered like drunken men, and they did not know what to do. 28 In their troubles, they [also] called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from their distresses. 29 He (calmed the storm/caused the wind to stop blowing), and he caused the waves to completely subside. 30 They were [very] glad when it became calm; and Yahweh brought them safely into a harbor. 31 They [also] should praise/thank Yahweh for faithfully loving [them], and for [all] the wonderful things that he does for people. 32 They should praise him among the [Israeli] people when they have gathered together, and they should praise him in front of the leaders [of the country]. 33 [Sometimes] Yahweh causes rivers [to become dry], [with the result that the land] becomes a desert, and springs of water become dry land. 34 [Sometimes] he causes land that has produced lots of crops to become salty wastelands, [with the result that they do not produce crops]. He does that because the people who live there are [very] wicked. 35 [But sometimes] he causes pools of water to appear in deserts, and he causes springs to flow in very dry ground. 36 He brings hungry [people] into that land, to live there and build cities [there]. 37 They plant seeds in their fields, and they plant grapevines that produce big crops [of grapes]. 38 He blesses the people, and the women give birth to many children, and they have large herds of

cattle. 39 When the number of people becomes smaller and they have been humiliated [by their enemies] by being oppressed and caused to suffer [DOU], 40 Yahweh shows contempt for the leaders who oppress them, and causes them to wander in deserts where there are no roads. 41 But he rescues poor [people] from (being in misery/suffering), and causes their families [to increase in number] like flocks of sheep. 42 Godly/Righteous [people will (see/hear about)] these things, and they will rejoice, and wicked people [will hear about these things, too], [but] they will have nothing to say in reply. 43 Those who are wise should think carefully about those things; they should consider [all the things] that Yahweh [has done to show that he] faithfully loves [them].

108 God, I am (very confident/trusting completely) [IDM] in you. I will sing to praise [you]. with all my inner being. 2 I will arise before the sun rises, and I will [praise you while I play] my [big] harp and my (lyre/small harp). 3 [I prayed], "Yahweh, I will thank you among [all] the people-groups; I will sing to praise you among the nations, 4 because your faithful love for us reaches up to the heavens, and your faithfully doing what you promise [is as great as the distance] up to the clouds. 5 Yahweh, [show] in the heavens that you are very great! And [show] your glory [to people] all over the earth! 6 Answer our [prayers] and by your power help us [MTY] [to defeat our enemies] in order that we, the people whom you love, may be saved/rescued." 7 And [Yahweh answered our prayers and] spoke from his temple, saying, "Because I have conquered [your enemies], I will joyfully [everything in] [city] and I will distribute among my people [the valuable things] in Succoth Valley. 8 The Gilead [region] is mine; the [people of the tribe of] Manasseh are mine; [the tribe of] Ephraim is [like] my war helmet, and [the tribe of Judah] is like the (scepter/stick that I hold which shows that I am the ruler) [MET]; 9 the Moab [region] is [like] my washbasin [MET]; I throw my sandal in the Edom [area to show that it belongs to me]; I shout triumphantly because I have defeated [the people of] the Philistia [area]." 10 [Because we want to attack the people of] Edom, (who will lead my [army triumphantly] to their [capital] city that has strong walls around it?/I want someone to lead my [army triumphantly] to their [capital] city that has strong walls around it.) [RHQ] 11 God, we [hope that] [RHQ] you have not abandoned us, and that you will go with us when our army marches out [to fight our enemies]. 12 [We need you to] help us when we fight against our enemies, because the help that humans can give us is worthless. 13 [But] with you [helping us], we shall win; you will [enable us to] defeat our enemies.

109 God, you are the one whom I praise, [So please] answer [my prayer], 2 because wicked people slander me and tell [MTY] lies about me. 3 They are constantly saying that they hate me, and they say evil things about me for no reason. 4 I show them that I want to be their friends and I pray for them, but [instead of being kind to me], they say that I have done evil things. 5 In return for my doing good things for them and loving them, they do evil things to me and hate me. 6 They said, "Appoint a wicked [judge] who will judge him, and bring in one of his enemies who will stand up and accuse him. 7 And cause that when the trial [ends], [the judge will] declare that he is guilty, and that [even] his prayer will be considered to be a sin. 8 [Then], cause that he will soon die and that someone else will have his job/work (OR, possessions). 9 Cause that his children will not have a father any more and that his wife will become a widow. 10 Cause that his children will be forced to leave the ruined homes that they have been living in and wander around begging for food. 11 Cause that all the people to whom he owed money will seize all his property; Cause that strangers will take away everything that he worked to acquire. 12 Cause that [while he is still living] no one will be kind to him, and [after he dies], cause that no one will pity his children. 13 Cause that all his descendants will die and that his grandchildren will not remember who he [MTY] was. 14 Yahweh, remember [and do not forgive] his ancestors for the evil things that they did, and do not [even] forgive the sins that his mother committed; 15 think about his sins continually, and cause that his name will be completely forgotten. 16 He never was kind to anyone; he (persecuted/cause problems for) poor and needy [people] and even killed helpless [people]. 17 He liked to curse [people]. [So] cause those terrible things that he requested to happen to others to happen to him! He did not want to bless [others], [so] cause that no one will bless him! 18 He cursed other people [as often/easily] as he put on his clothes [SIM]; cause that the terrible things that he wanted to happen to others will [happen to him and] enter his body like water [that he drinks] [SIM], like [olive] oil soaks into a person's bones [when it is rubbed on his skin] [SIM]. 19 Cause that those terrible things will cling to him like his clothes and be around him like the belt that he wears every day." 20 Yahweh, I want you to punish all my enemies that way, those who say evil things about me. 21 But Yahweh, my God, do good things for me in order that I may honor you; rescue me [from my enemies] because your faithfully loving me is good. 22 [I ask you to do this] because I am poor and needy and my inner being is (full of pain/very troubled/discouraged). 23 [I think that] my time [to remain alive] is short, like an evening

shadow [that will soon disappear] [SIM]. I will be blown away like a locust/grasshopper is blown [by the wind]. **24** My knees are weak because I have (fasted/abstained from eating food) very often, and my body has become very thin. **25** The people who accuse me make fun of me; when they see me, they [insult me by] shaking their heads [at me as though I were an evil man]. **26** Yahweh, my God, help me! Because you faithfully love [me], rescue me! **27** [When you save me], cause my enemies to know that you are the one who has done it! **28** They may curse me, but I ask that you bless me. Cause those who (persecute/cause problems for) me [to be defeated and as a result] to be disgraced/ashamed, and cause me to be glad/happy! **29** Cause those who accuse me to be completely disgraced; cause [other people to see] that they are disgraced, as [easily as they see] the clothes that they wear [SIM]! **30** But I will thank Yahweh very greatly; I will praise him [when I am] among the crowd [of people who are worshiping him]. **31** [I will do that] because he defends [MTY] needy [people like me], and saves us from those who have decided/declared that we must be executed.

110 Yahweh said to my lord [the king], "Sit [here], close to me, in the place of highest honor [MTY] until I [completely defeat] your enemies [MET] [and] make [them like] a stool for your feet!" **2** Yahweh [also said to him], "I will extend your power as king from Jerusalem [to other lands]; you will rule over all your enemies. **3** On the day that you lead your armies into battle, many of your people will volunteer [to join your army]. Like the dew refreshes the earth early in the morning, young men will [encourage you by] coming to help you." **4** Yahweh has made a solemn promise, and he will never change his mind; he has said to the king, "You will be a priest forever [serving Yahweh] like Melchizedek did." **5** Yahweh stands [in the place of highest honor] your right side; when he becomes angry, he will defeat [many kings]. **6** He will judge and punish the people of [many] nations; he will fill the land with their corpses. He will crush the heads of other kings all over the earth. **7** But my lord the king will drink from streams near the road; he will be refreshed after defeating his enemies.

111 Praise Yahweh! I will thank Yahweh with my entire inner being, every time I am with a large group of godly/righteous people. **2** The things that Yahweh has done are wonderful! All those who are delighted/pleased with those things desire to (study/think about) them. **3** [Because of everything] that he does, people greatly honor him and respect him because he is a great king; the righteous/just things that he does will endure forever. **4** He has [appointed/established festivals in which] we remember the wonderful things that he has done; Yahweh [always] is kind and merciful. **5** He provides food for those who revere him; he never forgets the agreement that he made [with our ancestors]. **6** By enabling his people to capture the lands that belonged to other people-groups, he has shown to [us], his people, that he is very powerful. **7** He [MTY] faithfully [does what he has promised] and always does what is just/fair, and we can depend on him [to help us] when he commands us to do things. **8** What he commands must be obeyed forever; and he acted in a true and righteous manner when he gave us those commands. **9** He rescued [us], his people, [from being slaves in Egypt], and he made an agreement [with us] that will last forever. He [MTY] is holy and awesome! **10** Revering Yahweh is the way to become wise. All those who obey [his commands] will know what is good [for them to decide to do]. We should praise him forever!

112 Praise Yahweh! (Happy are/He is pleased with) those who revere him, those who happily obey his commands. **2** Their children will prosper in their land; and their descendants will be blessed [by God]. **3** Their families [MTY] will be very wealthy [DOU], and [the results of] their righteous deeds will endure forever. **4** Godly/Righteous people are [like] lights [SIM] that shine in the darkness on those who are kind, merciful and righteous. **5** Things [will] go well for those who generously lend money to others and who conduct their businesses honestly. **6** Righteous people will not be overwhelmed/worried/distressed [because of their troubles], and they will never be forgotten [by other people]. **7** They are not afraid of [receiving] bad news; they confidently/completely trust in Yahweh. **8** They are confident and not afraid, because they know that they will see [God defeat] their enemies. **9** They give things generously to poor/needy [people]; [the results of] their kind deeds will endure forever, and they [will] be exalted and honored. **10** Wicked people see those things and are angry; they gnash their teeth [angrily], but they [will] disappear [and die]. The [wicked] things that they want to do [will] never happen.

113 Praise Yahweh! You people who serve Yahweh, praise him! Praise (him/his name)! **2** Yahweh should be praised now and forever! **3** People who live in the east and people who live in the west, everyone, should praise Yahweh [MTY]! **4** Yahweh rules [MTY] over all the nations, and high in the heavens he shows that his glory is very great. **5** There is no one [RHQ] who is like Yahweh, our God, who lives/sits/rules in the highest heaven, **6** and looks far down through the heavens and sees the [people on] the earth. **7** [Sometimes] he lifts poor people up [so that they no longer sit in] the dirt; he helps needy [people so that they

no longer sit on] heaps of ashes 8 and causes them to [be honored] by sitting next to princes, the sons of the kings [who rule] their people. 9 He also enables women who have no children to have a family; he causes them to be happy mothers. Praise Yahweh!

114 When the Israeli [people] left Egypt, when they who were descendants of Jacob left people who spoke a foreign/different language, 2 [the land of] Judah became the place where people worshiped God; and Israel became the land (OR, the [Israeli people] became the people) that he ruled over. 3 [When they came to] the [Red] Sea, [it was as though the water] saw [them] and ran away! When they came to the Jordan [River], that [water in the] river stopped flowing [so that the Israelis could cross it]. 4 [When they came to Sinai Mountain and there was a big earthquake], [it was as though] the mountains skipped/jumped like goats do and the hills jumped around like lambs do. 5 [If someone asks], "What happened at the [Red] Sea that caused the water to run away? What happened that caused [the water in] the Jordan [River] to stop flowing? 6 What happened that caused the mountains to skip like goats and caused the hills to jump around like lambs?" 7 [I would reply that] it was the presence of the Lord that caused those things to happen! [Everyone/Everything on] the earth should tremble in the presence of God, whom (Jacob [worshiped]/the Israeli people [worship])! 8 He is the one who caused pools of water [for the Israeli people to drink to flow] from a rock; he caused a spring [to flow] from a solid rock cliff!

115 Yahweh, people should praise [only] you [MTY]; they must praise you, not us, because you faithfully love us and always do what you have promised to do. 2 It is not right that [RHQ] [other] people-groups should say about us, "[They claim that] their God [is very powerful], but [if that is true], why does he not [help them]?" 3 Our God is in heaven, and he does whatever he wants to! 4 [But] their idols are only [statues made of] silver and gold, things that humans have made. 5 Their idols have mouths, but they cannot say [anything]; they have eyes, but they cannot see [anything]. 6 They have ears, but they cannot hear [anything]; they have noses, but they cannot smell [anything]. 7 They have hands, but they cannot feel [anything]; they have feet, but they cannot walk, and they have throats but cannot [even] make any sounds! 8 The people who make those idols are [as powerless] as those idols, and those who trust in those idols [can accomplish nothing], just like their idols! 9 You, [my fellow] Israeli people, trust in Yahweh! He is the one who helps you and [protects you like] [MET] a shield. 10 You priests [MTY], trust in Yahweh! He is the one who helps you and [protects you like] [MET] a shield. 11 [All] you who revere Yahweh, trust in him! He is the one who helps you and [protects you like] [MET] a shield. 12 Yahweh has not forgotten us; he will bless us Israeli people [MTY]! He will bless the priests, 13 and he will bless [all] those who revere him; he will bless important [people] and people [who are considered to be] unimportant, [everyone!] 14 I desire that Yahweh will give many children to you [my fellow-Israeli people], and to your descendants. 15 I desire that Yahweh, the one who made heaven and the earth, will bless [all of] you! 16 The [highest] heavens belong to Yahweh, but he gave [everything that is on] the earth to [us] people. 17 Dead [people] are not [able to] praise Yahweh; when they descend into the place where dead people are, they are unable to speak and cannot praise him. 18 But we [who are alive] will thank/praise him, now and forever. Praise Yahweh!

116 I love Yahweh, because he hears me when I cry for him to help me. 2 He listens to me, so I will call out to him all during my life. 3 Everything around me [MET] caused me to think that I would die; I was very afraid that I would [die and go to] the place where dead people are. I was very distressed/worried and afraid. **(Sheol h7585)** 4 [But] then I called out to Yahweh, saying, "Yahweh, I plead with you to save/rescue me!" 5 Yahweh is kind and does what is right; he is our God, and he acts mercifully [to us]. 6 He protects those who (are helpless/cannot defend themselves); and when I thought that I would die, he saved me. 7 I must encourage/tell myself to (have inner peace/not worry any more), because Yahweh has done very good things for me. 8 Yahweh has saved me [SYN] from dying, and has kept/protected me from [troubles that would cause me to] cry. He has kept/protected me from stumbling. 9 [So here] on the earth, where people are still alive, I live knowing that Yahweh is [directing] me. 10 I continued to believe/trust [in Yahweh], even when I said, "I am greatly afflicted/troubled." 11 [Even] when I was distressed/worried and said, "I cannot trust anyone," [I continued to trust in Yahweh]. 12 So now [I will tell you] [RHQ] what I will offer to Yahweh, because of all the good things that he has done for me. 13 I will offer to him a cup [of wine] to thank him for saving/rescuing me. 14 When I am together with many [HYP] people who belong to Yahweh, I will give to him the offerings that I solemnly promised to give to him. 15 Yahweh is very grieved/sad when one of his people dies. 16 I am one of those who serve Yahweh; I serve him like my mother did. He has freed/saved me from dying (OR, from being fastened by chains). 17 [So] I will offer to him a sacrifice to thank him, and I will pray to him. 18 When I am together with many of [HYP] the people who belong to Yahweh, [in the courtyard] outside his temple

in Jerusalem, I will give to him the offerings that I solemnly promised to give to him. Praise Yahweh!

117 You [people of] all nations, praise Yahweh! All you people-groups, extol/praise him, **2** because he faithfully loves us [very] much. and he will forever faithfully do [for us] what he promised that he would do. Praise Yahweh!

118 Tell Yahweh that you thank him very much for the good [things that he has done for you] He faithfully loves [us, his people], forever. **2** You Israeli [people] should [repeatedly] shout, "He faithfully loves [us, his people], forever!" **3** You [priests] who are descendants of Aaron should repeatedly shout, "He faithfully loves us, his people, forever!" **4** All you who revere him should repeatedly shout, "He faithfully loves [us, his people], forever!" **5** When I was distressed, I called out to Yahweh, and he answered me and set me free [from my worries/troubles]. **6** Yahweh is (on my side/helping me), so I will not be afraid [of anything]. No one [RHQ] can do anything that will [prevent God from blessing] me forever. **7** [Yes], Yahweh is (on my side/helping me), [so] I will look triumphantly at my enemies [while he defeats them]. **8** It is better to trust in Yahweh than to (depend on/trust in) people. **9** It is better to trust Yahweh to protect [us] than to trust [that influential/important] people [will protect us]. **10** Armies of [MTY] many nations surrounded me, [but] Yahweh enabled me to defeat them by his power [MTY]. **11** They completely surrounded me, [but] I defeated them all by the power of Yahweh. **12** They swarmed around me like [angry] bees; they were like a fire that blazes strongly, but only briefly, in a thornbush, [but] I defeated them by the power [MTY] that Yahweh gave me. **13** [My enemies] attacked me fiercely and almost defeated me, but Yahweh helped me. **14** Yahweh is the one who makes me strong, and he is the one about whom I [always] sing; he has saved me [from my enemies]. **15** Listen to the joyful songs of victory being sung in the tents of godly/righteous people! They sing, "Yahweh has defeated our enemies by his mighty power [MTY]; **16** he has raised his strong right arm [to show he has defeated his enemies]. Yahweh has completely defeated them!" **17** I will not be killed [in battle]; I will live to proclaim the great things that Yahweh has done. **18** Yahweh has punished me severely, but he has not allowed (me to die/[my enemies] to kill me). **19** [You gatekeepers], open for me the gates of the temple in order that I may enter and thank Yahweh. **20** Those are the gates [through which we enter the temple to worship] Yahweh; godly/righteous people enter those gates. **21** [Yahweh], I thank you that you answered my prayer, and you saved me [from my enemies]. **22** [Yahweh's promised/chosen king is like] [MET] the stone which the builders rejected [when they were building a house], [but that stone] became the (cornerstone/most important stone in the building). **23** (This was done by Yahweh/Yahweh has done this), and it is a wonderful thing for us to see. **24** This is the day in which [we remember that] Yahweh acted [powerfully to defeat our enemies]; we will rejoice and be glad/happy today. **25** Yahweh, we plead with you to [keep] rescuing us [from our enemies]. Yahweh, please help us (accomplish/do well) [what we want to do]. **26** Yahweh, bless the one who will come with your authority [MTY]. And from the temple we (bless/[ask Yahweh to] bless) all of you. **27** Yahweh is God, and he has caused his light to shine on us. Come, carrying [palm] branches, and join the people [who are starting] the festival as they go to the altar. **28** [Yahweh], you are the God whom I [worship], and I will praise you! You are my God, and I will tell [everyone] that you are great! **29** Thank Yahweh, because he does good things [for us] He will faithfully love [us] forever.

119 (Yahweh is pleased with/Happy are) those about whom no one can say truthfully that they have done things that are wrong, those who always obey the laws of Yahweh. **2** Yahweh is pleased with those who (obey his requirements/do what he has instructed them to do), those who request him with their entire inner beings to help them [to do that]. **3** They do not do things that are wrong; they behave like Yahweh wants them to. **4** Yahweh, you have given [us] (your principles of behavior/all the things that you have declared that we should do), [and you told us] to obey them carefully. **5** I desire that I will faithfully/always obey all (your statutes/that you have said that [we] should do). **6** If I continually (heed/pay attention to) all (your commands/that you have commanded), I will not be disgraced/ashamed. **7** When I learn [all of] (your regulations/the rules that you have given [to us)], I will praise you with a pure inner being [IDM]. **8** I will obey all (your statutes/that you have decreed that [we] should do); do not desert/abandon me! **9** [I know] [RHQ] how a youth can (keep his life pure/avoid sinning); it is by obeying what you have told us to do. **10** I try to serve you with my entire inner being; do not allow me to (wander away from obeying/disobey) (your commands/what you have commanded). **11** I have (memorized/stored in my mind) [many of] (your words/what you have promised) in order that I will not sin against you. **12** Yahweh, I praise you; teach me (your statutes/what you have declared). **13** I [MTY] tell others (the regulations/the rules that you have given [to us)]. **14** I like to obey (your requirements/what you have instructed [us to do)]; I enjoy that more than being very rich. **15** I will (study/think about) (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do), and I

will pay attention to what you have showed [me]. **16** I will be happy [to obey] (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do), and I will not forget your words. **17** Do good things for me, who serve you, in order that I may continue to live and obey (your words/what you have told us to do) during all my life. **18** Open my mind in order that I may know the wonderful things that [are written] in your laws. **19** I am living [here] on the earth for only a short time; (do not prevent me from [understanding]/help me to understand) [LIT] (your commands/what you have commanded). **20** In my inner being I strongly desire to know (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us) all the time. **21** You rebuke those who are proud; cursed are those who disobey (your commands/what you have commanded). **22** Do not allow them to continue to insult and scorn me; [I request this] because I have obeyed what you have instructed us to do. **23** Rulers gather together and plan ways to harm me, but I will (meditate on/study) (your statutes/what you have decreed). **24** I am delighted with (your requirements/what you have instructed [us to do)]; [it is as though] they are my advisors. **25** [I think that] I will soon die [IDM]; revive/heal me, as you have told me that you would. **26** When I told you about my behavior, you answered me; teach me (your statutes/what you have decreed that we should do). **27** Help me to understand (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do), and [then] I will (meditate on/think about) the wonderful things that you [have done]. **28** I am very sad/sorrowful [IDM], with the result that I have no strength; enable me to be strong [again], like you promised me that you would do. **29** Prevent me from doing what is wrong, and be kind to me by teaching me your laws. **30** I have decided that I will faithfully/always [obey you]; I have (paid attention to/heeded) (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us). **31** Yahweh, I try to carefully hold fast to what you have instructed [us to do]; do not [abandon me, with the result that] I would become disgraced. **32** I will eagerly obey [IDM] (your commands/what you have commanded), because you have enabled me to understand more [what you want me to do]. **33** Yahweh, teach me the meaning of (your statutes/the things that you have decreed that we should do), and [then] I will obey them, every one of them. **34** Help me to understand your laws in order that I may obey them with all my inner being. **35** I am happy with (your commands/what you have commanded), so (lead me along the paths/enable me to walk on the road) that you [have chosen for me]. **36** Cause me to want to obey your rules and not to want to become rich. **37** Do not allow me to look at things that are worthless, and allow me to continue to live, like you promised that you would do. **38** [Because] I serve you, do what you promised to do for me, which is what you also promise to do for [all] those who revere you. **39** [People] insult me; protect me from those insults, [because] I hate them. The (regulations/rules that you have given [to us]) are [very] good! **40** I very much desire [to obey] (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do); because you are righteous, allow me to continue to live (OR, be good to me). **41** Yahweh, show me that you faithfully love me, and rescue/save me, like you have said/promised that you would. **42** After you do that, I will be able to reply to those who insult me, because I trust in (your word/what you have promised that you would do). **43** Always enable me to [LIT] speak your truth, because I have confidence in (your regulations/the rules that you have given us). **44** I will always obey your laws, forever. **45** I will be free [from (affliction/my enemies' attacks)], because I have tried [to obey] (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **46** I will tell to kings (your requirements/what you have instructed us to do); and [because I did not abandon you], those kings will not cause me to be ashamed. **47** I am delighted to [obey] (your commands/what you have commanded), and I love them. **48** I respect/revere [IDM] (your commands/what you have commanded), and I love them, and I will (meditate on/think about) (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **49** Do not forget what you said/promised to do for me, who serve you, [because] what you have said has caused me to confidently expect [good things from you]. **50** When I have been suffering, you comforted me; you did what you promised me, and that [PRS] revived me. **51** Proud people are always making fun of me, but I do not (turn away from/stop) [obeying] your laws. **52** Yahweh, when I think about (your regulations/the rules) that you gave to us long ago, I am comforted/encouraged. **53** When [I see that] wicked people have disregarded your laws, I become very angry. **54** While I have been living here for a short time on the earth, I have written songs about (your statutes/what you have decreed that we should do). **55** Yahweh, during the night I think about you [MTY], and [so] I obey your laws. **56** What I have always done is to obey (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **57** Yahweh, you are the one whom I have chosen, and I promise to (obey your words/do what you have told us to do). **58** With all my inner being I plead with you to be good to me; be kind to me, like you promised/said that you would do. **59** I have thought about my behavior, and I [have decided to] return to [obeying] (your requirements/what you have instructed us to do). **60** I hurry to obey (your commands/what you have commanded); I do not delay [at all]. **61** Wicked people have

[tried to] seize me, [like a hunter tries to catch an animal] with a net [MET], but I do not forget your laws. **62** In the middle of the night I wake up, and I praise you for (your commands/the rules that you have given us to do); they are fair/just. **63** I am a friend of all those who revere you, those who obey (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **64** Yahweh, you faithfully/always love [people] all over the earth; teach me (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **65** Yahweh, you have done good things for me, like you promised/said that you would do. **66** Teach me to think carefully before I decide what to do, and [teach me other things that I need to] know, because I believe [that it is good for us to obey] (your commands/what you have commanded). **67** Before you afflicted/punished me, I did things that were wrong, but now I obey (your words/what you have told us to do). **68** You are [very] good, and what you do is good; teach me (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **69** Proud people have told many lies about me, but [the truth is that] with all my inner being I obey (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **70** Those proud people (are stupid/do not understand your laws) [IDM], but [as for me], I am delighted with your laws. **71** It was good for me that [you] afflicted/punished me, because the result was that I learned (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **72** The laws that you [MTY] gave/told [to us] are [worth] more to me than gold, more than thousands of pieces of gold and silver. **73** You created me and formed my body (OR, kept me safe); help me to be wise in order that I may learn (your commands/what you have commanded). **74** Those who have an awesome respect for you will see [what you have done for] me, and they will rejoice, because [they will see that] I have trusted in (your words/what you told us). **75** Yahweh, I know that (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us) are right/fair and that you have afflicted/punished me because you faithfully do [what you have promised]. **76** Cause me to be comforted/encouraged by [knowing that] you faithfully love [me], like you said to me that you would do. **77** Be merciful to me in order that I may [continue to] live, because I am delighted with your laws. **78** Cause the proud people who falsely accuse me to be ashamed, [but] as for me, I will [continue] (meditating on/thinking about) (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **79** Cause those who revere you to come [back] to me in order that they may (OR, specifically, those who) know (your requirements/what you have instructed [us to do]). **80** Enable me to perfectly [obey] (your statutes/what you have decreed that we should do) in order that I may not be ashamed [because of not doing that]. **81** I am very tired/exhausted while I wait for you to save [me from my enemies]; [but] I confidently expect that you will tell [me what you will do]. **82** My eyes are tired from waiting a long time for you to do what you promised/said that you would do, and I ask, "When will you help/encourage me?" **83** I have become [as useless as] [MET] a wineskin that is [shriveled from hanging a long time] in the smoke [inside a house], but I have not forgotten (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **84** How long must I wait? When will you punish those who (persecute/cause trouble for) me? **85** [It is as though] proud people have dug deep pits for me [to fall into], people who do not obey your laws. **86** All (your commands are/what you have commanded is) trustworthy; [but] people are (persecuting/causing trouble for) me by telling lies [about me, so please] help me! **87** Those people have almost killed me, but I have not stopped [obeying] (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **88** Because you faithfully love [me], allow me [to continue] to live in order that I may [continue to] obey (your rules/what you have instructed [us to do]). **89** Yahweh, your words will last forever; they will last as long as heaven lasts. **90** You will faithfully [continue doing] ([for people who are not yet born/in every generation]) what you have (promised/said that you would do); you have put the earth in its place, and it remains firmly [there]. **91** To this day, [all things on the earth] remain because you decided that they should remain; everything [on the earth] serves you. **92** If I had not been delighted [in obeying] your laws, I would have died because of what I was suffering. **93** I will never forget (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do), because as a result of [my obeying them] you have enabled me to [continue to] live. **94** I belong to you; save/rescue me [from my enemies], because I have tried to obey (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **95** Wicked [men] are waiting to kill me, but I [will] think about what you have instructed [us to do]. **96** I have learned that there is a limit/end for everything, but what you command (has no limits/never ends). **97** I love your laws very much. I (meditate on/think about) them all during the day. **98** Because I know (your commands/what you have commanded), and because I think about them all the time, I have become wiser than my enemies. **99** I understand more than my teachers do, because I (meditate on/think about) (your requirements/what you have instructed us to do). **100** I understand more than [many] old people do, because I obey (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **101** I have avoided all evil behavior in order that I may obey (your words/what you have told us to do). **102** I have not (turned away from/quit)

[obeying] (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us), because you have taught me [while I have studied them]. **103** [When I read] your words, they are like [MET] sweet things that I taste/eat, [yes], they are even sweeter than honey. **104** Because [I have learned] (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do), I am able to understand [many things]; therefore, I hate all evil things [that some people do]. **105** Your words are [like] [MET] a lamp to guide me; they are [like] a light [MET] to show me the path [that I should walk on]. **106** I have solemnly promised, and I am solemnly promising it again, that I will [always] obey your (regulations/rules that you have given to us), and they are [all] fair/just. **107** Yahweh, I am suffering very much; cause me to be strong/healthy [again], as you have promised to do. **108** Yahweh, when I thank you while I pray, it is [like] [MET] a sacrifice to you; [please] accept it, and teach me your (regulations/rules that you have given to us). **109** [My enemies are] often trying to kill me [IDM], but I do not forget your laws. **110** Wicked [people] have tried to seize me [like a hunter tries to catch an animal] with a trap [MET], but I have not disobeyed (your principles of behavior/what you declared that we should do). **111** (Your requirements/What you have instructed us to do) are my possession forever; because of them [PRS], I am joyful. **112** I (have decided/am determined) [IDM] to obey (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do) until the day that I die [MTY]. **113** I hate people who are [only] partly committed to you, but I love your laws. **114** You are [like] a place where I can hide [from my enemies], and you are [like] a shield [MET] [behind which I am protected from them], and I trust in your promises. **115** You evil people, stay away from me in order than I may obey (my God's commands/what my God has commanded)! **116** Enable me to be strong, as you promised/said that you would do, in order that I may [continue to] live. I am confidently expecting [that you will restore me]; (do not disappoint me/do not allow me to be disappointed). **117** Hold me up, in order that I will be safe and always (pay attention to/heed) (your statutes/what you have decreed that we should do). **118** You reject all those who disobey (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do); but what they deceitfully plan to do will be (useless/in vain). **119** You get rid of all the wicked [people] on the earth like [SIM] [people throw away] trash; therefore I love what you have instructed us to do. **120** I [SYN] tremble because I am afraid of you; I am afraid [because you punish those who do not obey] (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us). **121** [But] I have done what is right and fair/just; [so] do not allow people to oppress/mistreat me. **122** Promise me that you will do good things for me and do not allow proud [people] to oppress me. **123** My eyes are tired from waiting a long time for you to rescue [me], for you to save [me] like you promised/said that you would. **124** Do something for me to show that you faithfully love [me], and teach me (your statutes/what you have decreed that we should do). **125** I am one who serves you; enable me to understand [what you want me to know] in order that I will know (your requirements/what you have instructed us to do). **126** Yahweh, now is the time for you to [punish people] because they have disobeyed your laws. **127** Truly, I love (your commands/what you have commanded) more than I love gold; I love them more than I love [very] pure gold. **128** So I conduct my life by (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do), and I hate all the evil things that [some people do]. **129** (Your requirements are/All the things that you have instructed us to do are) wonderful, so I obey them with all my inner being. **130** When someone explains (your words/what you have said), [it is as though] they are lighting a light; what they say causes [even] people who have not learned your laws to be wise. **131** I eagerly desire to know (your commands/what you have commanded), like [SIM] a [dog] that pants with its mouth open [wanting to be fed]. **132** Listen to me and act kindly to me, like you do to [all] those who love you [MTY]. **133** Guide me as you promised/said that you would do and help me not to fall/sin; do not allow evil [people] to control what I do. **134** Rescue/Save me from those who oppress me in order that I may obey (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **135** Be kind to me and teach me (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **136** I cry very much because [many] people do not obey your laws. **137** Yahweh, you are righteous and (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us) are just/fair. **138** (Your requirements/All the things that you have instructed us to do) are true and are all very right and fair. **139** I am (furious/very angry) because my enemies disregard (your words/what you have told us to do). **140** (Your promises are/All the things that you have said that you will do are) dependable and I love them. **141** I am not important and people despise me, but I do not forget (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **142** You are righteous and you will be righteous forever, and your laws will never be changed. **143** I [constantly] have troubles/difficulties and I am worried, but (your commands cause/what you have commanded causes) me to be happy. **144** (Your requirements are/All the things that you have instructed us to do are) always fair; help me to understand them in order that I may [continue to] live. **145** Yahweh, with all my inner being I call out to you; answer me and I will

obey (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **146** I call out to you; save/rescue me in order that I [can continue to] obey [all] (your requirements/the things that you have instructed us to do). **147** [Each morning] I arise before dawn and call to you to help me; I confidently expect you to do what you have (promised/said that you will do). **148** All during the night I am awake, and I (meditate on/think about) what you have (promised/said that you would do). **149** Yahweh, because you faithfully love me, listen to me [while I pray], and keep me safe because of [my obeying] (your regulations/what you have told us to do). **150** Those evil people who oppress/persecute me are coming closer to me; they do not pay any attention to your laws. **151** But Yahweh, you are near to me, and [I know that] (your commands/what you command) will never be changed. **152** Long ago I found out about (your requirements/all the things that you have instructed us to do), and [I know that] you intended them to last forever. **153** Look at me and see that I am suffering [very much], and heal me, because I do not forget your laws. **154** Defend me [when others accuse me], and rescue me [from them]; allow me to [continue to] live, as you promised/said that you would. **155** Wicked [people] do not obey (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do), so you will certainly not save them. **156** Yahweh, you are very merciful; allow me to [continue to] live because of [my obeying] (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us). **157** Many [people] are my enemies and [many people] (cause me to suffer/persecute me), but I (do not turn aside from/have not stopped obeying) [LIT] (your requirements/what you have instructed us to do). **158** When I look at those who are not faithful to you, I am disgusted because they do not obey (your requirements/what you have instructed [us] to do). **159** [Yahweh], notice that I love (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do); because you faithfully love [me], allow me to [continue to] live. **160** All that you have said is truth, and all (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us) will endure forever. **161** Rulers persecute me for no reason, but in my inner being I revere (your words/what you have said). **162** I am happy about (your words/what you have promised [to do for me)], as happy as someone who has found a great treasure. **163** I thoroughly hate [DOU] [all] lies but I love your laws. **164** Seven/Many times each day I thank you for (your regulations/the rules that you have given to us), and they are [all] just/fair. **165** Things go well for those who love your laws; there is nothing adverse/bad that will happen to them. **166** Yahweh, I confidently expect that you will rescue me [from my troubles], and I obey (your commands/what you have commanded us). **167** I obey (what you require/what you have instructed) us to do; I love it [all] very much. **168** I obey (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do), and you see everything that I do. **169** Yahweh, listen while I pray [for you to help me]; help me to understand [(your words/what you have told us to do)]. **170** Hear me while I pray and rescue/save me as you promised/said that you would. **171** I [MTY] will always praise you because you teach me (your statutes/what you have decreed that [we] should do). **172** I will sing about (your words/what you have promised to do) because (all your commands are/everything that you have commanded is) just/fair. **173** I ask you [SYN] to [always] be ready to help me because I have chosen [to obey] (your principles of behavior/what you have declared that we should do). **174** Yahweh, I eagerly desire for you to rescue/save me [from my enemies]; I am delighted with your laws. **175** Allow me to [continue to] live in order that I can [continue to] praise you, and that your regulations/rules [that you have given to us] will continue to help me. **176** I have [wandered away from you] like [SIM] a sheep that has become lost; search for me, because I have not forgotten (your commands/what you have commanded us).

120 When I had troubles, I called out to Yahweh and he answered me. **2** [I prayed], "Yahweh, rescue/save me from people [SYN, MTY] who lie to me and [try to] deceive me!" **3** You people who lie to me, [I will tell you] [RHQ] what [God] will do to you and what he will do to punish you. **4** He will shoot sharp arrows at you like soldiers do, and he will [burn you with] red-hot coals from [the wood of] a broom tree. **5** It is terrible for me, living among cruel/savage [DOU] people [like those who live] in Meshech [region] and Kedar [region]. **6** I have lived for a long time among people who hate [to live with others] peacefully. **7** Every time I talk about living together peacefully, they talk about starting a war.

121 [When we travel toward Jerusalem], I look up toward the hills [and I ask myself], "Who will help me?" **2** [And my answer is] that Yahweh is the one who helps me; he is the one who made heaven and the earth. **3** He will not allow us to fall/stumble; God, who protects us, will not fall asleep. **4** The one who protects us Israeli people never gets sleepy, nor does he sleep [LIT]. **5** Yahweh watches over us; he is like the shade [MET] [that protects us from the sun]. **6** [He will not allow] the sun to harm us during the day, and [he will not allow] the moon to harm us during the night. **7** Yahweh will protect us from being harmed in any manner; he will keep us safe. **8** He will protect us from the time that we leave [our houses in the morning] until we

return [in the evening]; he will protect us now, and he will protect us forever.

122 I was glad/happy when people said to me, "We should go to the temple of Yahweh [in Jerusalem]!" **2** And now we are here, standing inside the gates/city of [APO] Jerusalem. **3** Jerusalem is a city that has been rebuilt, with the result that people can gather together in it. **4** We [people of the] tribes of Israel who belong to Yahweh can now go up there as Yahweh commanded that we should do, and we can thank him. **5** There the kings of Israel who were descendants of [King] David sit on their thrones and decide cases [fairly when the people have disputes]. **6** Pray that there will be peace in Jerusalem; I desire that those who love Jerusalem will (prosper/live peacefully). **7** I desire that there will be peace inside the walls of the city and that [people who are] inside the palaces will be safe. **8** For the sake of my relatives and friends, I say, "My desire is that that inside Jerusalem [people will live] peacefully." **9** And because I love the temple of Yahweh our God, I pray that things will go well for the people who live [in Jerusalem].

123 Yahweh, I look up toward you, up to heaven, from where you rule. **2** Like servants ask [IDM] their masters [for what they need] and like maids ask t their mistresses [for what they need], we ask you, Yahweh our God, [for what we need], and we ask you to be merciful to us. **3** Yahweh, be very merciful [DOU] to us because [our enemies] have acted very contemptuously toward us. **4** Rich people have made fun of us for a long time, and proud [people] who have (oppressed/acted cruelly toward) us have acted toward us as though we were worthless.

124 You Israeli [people], [answer this question]: What [would have happened to us] if Yahweh had not been (helping/fighting for) us? **2** When [our enemies] attacked us, if Yahweh had not been fighting for us, **3** we would have all been killed [IDM] because they were very angry with us! **4** [They would have been like] [MET] a flood that swept/carried us away; [it would have been as though] the water would have covered us, **5** and we would [all] have drowned in the flood that was (raging/flowing very fast). **6** [But] praise Yahweh, because he has not allowed our [enemies to destroy us] [like wild animals] [MET] tear apart [the creatures that they capture]. **7** We have escaped [from our enemies] like a bird escapes from the trap that hunters have set; [it is as though] the trap [that our enemies set for us] was broken and we have escaped from it! **8** Yahweh is the one who helps us [MTY]; he is the one who made heaven and the earth.

125 Those/We who trust in Yahweh are [as secure/steadfast] [SIM] as Zion Hill, which cannot be shaken and can never be moved. **2** Like the hills that surround Jerusalem [protect the city], Yahweh protects [us], his people, and he will protect us forever. **3** Wicked people [MTY] should not [be allowed to] rule over the land where righteous [people] live. If they did that, those righteous [people] might [(be encouraged to imitate them and]) do things that are wrong. **4** Yahweh, do good things to those who do good things to others and to those who sincerely obey your commands [IDM]. **5** But when you punish the wicked people [who are not Israelis], also punish those [Israelis] who turn away from walking on the good roads [MET] that you have shown them! I wish that things will go well for [people in] Israel!

126 When Yahweh brought [us Israeli people] back to Jerusalem (OR, enabled us Israelis to prosper again), [it was wonderful]; it seemed as though [SIM] we were dreaming. **2** We were extremely happy, and we [SYN] continued shouting joyfully. Then the [other] people-groups said about us, "Yahweh has done great things for them!" **3** [And we say, "Yes], Yahweh [truly] has done great things for us, and we are [very] happy." **4** Yahweh, when it rains, water flows in the streams again [after they were dry] [SIM]. Similarly, enable our nation to become great again like it was before. **5** We cried when we planted [seeds because it was hard work preparing the soil that had not been plowed for many years]; [now we want to] shout joyfully because we are gathering a [big] harvest. **6** Those who cried as they carried the [bags of] seeds [to the fields] will shout joyfully when they bring the crops [to their houses at harvest time].

127 If people are building a house without [knowing whether] it is Yahweh's [will to build it], they are building it in vain. [Similarly], if Yahweh does not protect a city, it is useless for guards/sentries to stay awake [to tell people if their enemies come to attack it]. **2** It is [also] useless to arise very early and go to sleep late at night in order that you can work hard [all day] to [earn money to buy] food, because Yahweh gives food to those whom he loves. **3** Children are a gift [that comes to parents] from Yahweh; they are a reward/blessing from him. **4** If a man has sons while he is still young, [when they grow up, they will be able to help him defend his family] like [SIM] a soldier [can defend himself if] he has [a bow and] arrows in his hand. **5** A man [who has many sons] is [very] happy, like [MET] [a soldier who has many arrows] in his quiver is very happy. If a man [with his many grown sons is taken] by his enemies to the place where they decide matters, his enemies will never

be able to defeat that man, [because his sons will help to defend him].

128 (Happy are/Yahweh is pleased with) those of you who revere him and do what he wants you to do [IDM]. **2** You will [be able to earn the money] that you [MTY] need to buy food; you will be happy and you will be prosperous. **3** Your wife will be like a grapevine that bears many grapes [SIM]; she will give birth to many children. Your children who sit around your table will be like a strong olive [tree that has many] shoots [growing up around it] [SIM]. **4** Every man who reveres Yahweh will be blessed like that. **5** I wish/hope that Yahweh will bless all of you from [where he dwells] (on Zion [Hill]/[in Jerusalem]) and that you will see [the people of] Jerusalem prospering every day that you live! **6** I desire that you will live many years, long enough to see your grandchildren. I desire/hope that things will go well for [the people in] Israel!

129 [I say that] my enemies have (afflicted/caused trouble for) me ever since I was young. [Now I ask you, my fellow] Israelis, to repeat those same words: **2** "Our enemies have afflicted us since our nation began, but they have not defeated us! **3** [Our enemies struck us with whips] that cut into our backs [MET] like a [farmer uses a] plow to cut deep furrows into the ground." **4** [But] Yahweh is righteous, and he has freed [me] from being a slave [MTY] of wicked [people]. **5** I wish/hope that all those who hate Jerusalem/Israel will be ashamed because of being defeated. **6** I hope/wish that they will be [of no value], like grass that grows on the roofs of houses that dries up and does not grow tall; **7** [as a result] no one [cuts it and] puts it in bundles and carries it away. **8** People who pass by [and see men harvesting grain usually greet them by saying to them], "We wish/hope that Yahweh will bless you!" But this will not happen [to those who hate Israel]. We, acting as Yahweh's representatives, bless you [Israelis.]

130 Yahweh, I have a lot of troubles/many difficulties, so I call out to you. **2** Yahweh, hear me, while I call out to you [SYN] to be merciful to me! **3** Yahweh, if you kept a record of the sins [that we have committed], not one [of us] [RHQ] would escape from being condemned [and punished] **4** But you forgive us, with the result that we greatly revere you. **5** Yahweh has said [that he would help/rescue me]; I trust what he said, and I wait eagerly for him to do that. **6** I wait for Yahweh [to help me] more than watchmen wait for the light to dawn; yes, I wait more eagerly than they do! **7** You [my fellow] Israelis, confidently expect that Yahweh [will bless us]. [He will bless us] because he faithfully loves [us], and he is very willing to save/rescue [us]. **8** And he will save us Israeli [people] from [being punished for] all the sins that [we] have committed.

131 Yahweh, I am not proud and I have not thought highly about (myself/the things that I have done). And I do not concern myself about things [that you have done] that are very big or very wonderful. **2** Instead, I am calm and peaceful, like a [small] child who lies quietly in its mother's arms [SIM]. In the same way, I am peaceful. **3** You [my fellow] Israelis, confidently expect that Yahweh [will do good things for you], now and forever!

132 Yahweh, do not forget [King] David and all the hardships/troubles he endured! **2** He made a solemn promise to you, the mighty God whom [our ancestor] Jacob [worshiped]. **3** He said, "I will not go home, I will not [rest] on my bed, **4** I will not sleep at all **5** until I build a place for Yahweh, a home for the mighty God whom Jacob [worshiped]." **6** In Bethlehem we heard news about the sacred chest. We [went and] found it in the fields of Jearim [city, and we took it to Jerusalem]. **7** [Later we said], "Let's go to the temple of Yahweh [in Jerusalem]; let's worship [there] in front of the throne [where he sits]." **8** Yahweh, come to the place where you live eternally, to the place where your sacred chest is, to that place that shows that you are very powerful. **9** I want/desire that the righteous behavior of your priests [will always be evident], [just like the beautiful] robes that they wear [MET], and that your people will [always] shout joyfully. **10** You chose David to serve you [as king of Israel]; do not reject/abandon him! **11** Yahweh, you made a solemn promise to David, a promise that you will not break. You said, "I will cause your descendants to rule [MTY] as kings like you. **12** If they keep my agreement with them and obey [all] the commands that I will give them, the line of kings descended from you will never end." **13** Yahweh has chosen Jerusalem; he has wanted to make that city his home; **14** he said, "This is the city where I will live forever [DOU]; this is the place where I wanted to stay. **15** I will give to the people of Jerusalem all that they need; I will give [enough] food [even] to satisfy the poor people there. **16** I will cause the priests [to behave in a manner worthy of] being ones whom I have saved; [that will be as evident as the beautiful] robes that they wear [MET]; and all my people who live there will shout joyfully. **17** There [in Jerusalem] I will cause one of David's descendants [MET] to become a great king; he also will be my chosen king, and he will be [like a bright] lamp [MET] [that shines continually]. **18** I will [defeat his] enemies and cause them to be very ashamed/disgraced; but the crown that my king wears will [always] shine."

133 It is very good and very pleasant for God's people to gather together harmoniously. **2** It is [as delightful as] the precious/expensive ([olive] oil/perfume) that runs down from [the Supreme Priest] Aaron's head onto his beard [when he is anointed] and runs down onto the collar of his robes. **3** Gathering together harmoniously [is as delightful] as the dew [that falls] on Hermon [Mountain] and the dew that falls on the hills near Zion [Hill]. Yahweh has promised to bless [his people there in Jerusalem] [by giving them] everlasting (OR, a long-lasting) life.

134 All you people who serve Yahweh, who stand up and (serve/pray to) him at night in his temple, come and praise him! **2** Lift up your hands/arms [to pray to him] in the temple and praise him! **3** And I want Yahweh, who created heaven and the earth, to bless you from [where he lives in the temple] on Zion [Hill.]

135 Praise Yahweh! You who (do work for/serve) Yahweh, praise him! **2** You who stand in the temple of Yahweh our God and in the surrounding courtyard, praise him [MTY]! **3** Praise Yahweh, because he does good things [for us]; sing to him [MTY], because he is kind [to us]. **4** He has chosen [us, the descendants of] Jacob; he has chosen [us] Israelis to belong to him [DOU]. **5** I know that Yahweh is great; he is greater than all the gods. **6** Yahweh does whatever he desires to do, in heaven and on the earth and in the seas/oceans, [down] to the bottom of the seas. **7** He is the one who causes clouds to appear from very distant places on the earth; he sends lightning with the rain, and he brings the winds from the places where he stores them. **8** He is the one who killed [all] the firstborn [males] in Egypt, the firstborn of people and of animals. **9** There he performed many kinds of miracles [DOU] to punish the king and all his officials. **10** He destroyed many nations and the powerful kings [who ruled them]: **11** Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group, and Og, the king of Bashan [region], and all the other kings in Canaan [land]. **12** Then he gave their land to [us] Israeli people to belong to us [forever]. **13** Yahweh your name will endure forever, and people who are not yet born will remember the great things [that you have done]. **14** Yahweh, [you] declare that we your people (are innocent/have not done things that are wrong), and you are merciful to us. **15** But the idols that the [other] people-groups [worship] are only [statues made of] silver and gold, things that humans have made. **16** Their idols have mouths, but they cannot say [anything]; they have eyes, but they cannot see [anything]. **17** They have ears, but they cannot hear [anything], and they are not [even able to] breathe. **18** The people who make those idols are as [powerless as] those idols, and those who trust in those idols [can accomplish no more than] their idols can! **19** [My fellow] Israelis, praise Yahweh! You [priests] who are descended from Aaron, praise Yahweh! **20** You [men] who are descended from Levi, [you who assist the priests], praise Yahweh! [All] you who revere Yahweh, praise him! **21** Praise Yahweh in [the temple on] Zion [Hill] in Jerusalem, where he lives! Praise Yahweh!

136 Thank Yahweh, because he does good things [for us]; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **2** Thank God, the one who is greater than all other gods; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **3** Thank the Lord who is greater than all other lords/rulers; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **4** He is the only one who performs great miracles; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **5** He is the one who by being very wise created the heavens; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **6** He is the one who caused the ground to rise up above the deep waters; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **7** He is the one who created great lights [in the sky]; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **8** He created the sun to shine in the daytime; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **9** He created the moon and stars to shine during the nighttime; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **10** He is the one who killed the firstborn [males] in Egypt; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **11** He led the Israeli people out of Egypt; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **12** With his (strong hand/great power) he led them out; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **13** He is the one who caused the Red Sea to divide; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **14** He enabled the Israeli people to walk through it [on dry land]; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **15** But he caused the king of Egypt and his army to drown in it; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **16** He is the one who led his people [safely through the desert]; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **17** He killed powerful kings; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **18** He killed kings who were famous; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **19** He killed Sihon, the king of the Amor people-group; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **20** He killed Og, the king of Bashan [region]; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **21** He gave their lands to us, his people; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **22** He gave those lands to us people of Israel, who serve him; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **23** He is the one who did not forget about us when we were defeated [by our enemies]; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **24** He rescued us from our enemies; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **25** He is the one who gives food to all living creatures; his faithful love [for us] endures forever. **26** [So] thank God, [who lives in]

heaven, [for all those things], because his faithful love [for us] endures forever!

137 When we [had been taken to] Babylonia, [far from Jerusalem], we sat down by the rivers there, and we cried when we thought about [the temple on] Zion [Hill in Jerusalem]. **2** On the willow trees [alongside the rivers] we hung our harps [because we did not want to play them any more because we were very sad]. **3** The [soldiers] who had captured us [and taken us to Babylonia] told us to sing [for them]; they told us to (entertain them/make them happy), saying, "Sing for us one of the songs [that you previously sang in] Jerusalem!" **4** But [we thought], "We [are sad because we have been punished by Yahweh and brought to this] foreign land, so we cannot [RHQ] sing songs about Yahweh while we are here!" **5** If I forget about Jerusalem [APO], let my right hand wither [with the result that I will be unable to play my harp] **6** Do not allow me to sing again [MTY], if I forget about Jerusalem, if I do not consider that Jerusalem causes me to be more joyful than anything else does. **7** Yahweh, [punish] the people of the Edom people-group for what they did on the day that the army of Babylon captured Jerusalem. Do not forget that they said, "Tear down all the buildings! Destroy them completely! Leave only the foundations!" **8** And you people of Babylon, you will certainly be destroyed! Those who punish you in return for what you did to us will be happy; **9** they will take your babies and completely smash them on the rocks.

138 Yahweh, I thank you with all my inner being. I sing to praise you in front of [the idols of false] gods [to ridicule/belittle them]. **2** I bow down while I look towards your sacred temple, and I thank you [MTY] because you faithfully love [us] and faithfully do all that you have promised. You have shown that both you [MTY] and what you have promised to do are greater than anything else. **3** On the day when I called out to you, you answered me; you enabled me to be strong and brave. **4** Yahweh, [some day] all the kings of this earth will praise you, because they will have heard what you have said. **5** They will sing about what you have done; they will sing and say that you are very great. **6** Yahweh, you are supreme, but you take care of people [who are considered to be] unimportant. And you know what proud people [are doing], even though they are far away [from you and think that you do not see them]. **7** When I am in the midst of [many] troubles/difficulties, you save/rescue me. With your hand/power [MTY] you rescue me from my enemies who are angry at me. **8** Yahweh, you will do for me everything that you promised; you faithfully love [us] forever. Finish what you started to do [for us, your Israeli people.]

139 Yahweh, you have examined me, and you know [everything about] me. **2** You know when I sit down and when I stand up. [Even though you are] far away from me, you know what I am thinking. **3** When I travel and when I lie down, you know everything that I do. **4** Yahweh, even before I say [MTY] anything, you know everything that I am going to say! **5** You protect me on all sides; you put your hand on me [to protect me with your power] [MTY]. **6** I am not able to understand that you know [everything about me]. That is too great for me to really understand. **7** (Where could I go to escape from your Spirit?/I could not go anywhere to escape from your Spirit.) [RHQ] (Where could I go to get away from you?/I could not go anywhere to get away from you.) [RHQ] **8** If I went up to heaven, you would be there. If I lay down in the place where the dead people are, you would be there. **(Sheol h7585)** **9** If I had wings and flew very far east [MTY], or if I flew west and made a place to live [on an island] in the ocean, **10** you would be there also, to lead me by your hand, and you would help me. **11** I could request the darkness to hide me, or I could request the light around me to become darkness, **12** but even [if that happened], the darkness would not be darkness for you! For you, the night is [as bright] as the daytime is, because for you, daylight and darkness are (not different/the same). **13** You created [all] the parts of my body; you put [the parts of] my body together when I was still in my mother's womb. **14** I praise you because you made my [body in a very] awesome and wonderful way. Everything that you do is amazing! I know that very well. **15** When my body was being formed, while it was being put together where no one else could see it, you saw it! **16** You saw me before I was born. You wrote in your book the number of days that you had decided that I would live. You did that before any of those days had [even] started! **17** God, what you think about me is very precious (OR, is very hard to understand). There is a great number of things that you think about. **18** If I could count them, [I would see that] they are more than the grains of sand [at the seashore]. And when I wake up, I am still with you [and I know that there are still more of your thoughts about me to count]. **19** God, I desire that you would kill all the wicked people! And I wish that violent [MTY] men would (leave/go away from) me. **20** They say wicked/malicious things about you; they slander your name. **21** Yahweh, I certainly [RHQ] hate those who hate you! And I despise [RHQ] those who rebel against you. **22** I hate them completely, and I consider that they are my enemies. **23** God, search my inner being; find out what I am thinking! **24** Find out whether there is anything evil in my [inner being], and lead me along the road [that leads to my being with you] forever.

140 Yahweh, rescue/save me from [being attacked by] evil men; and [even more], (keep me safe/protect me) from being attacked by violent people. **2** They are always planning to do evil things and they are always inciting/urging people to start quarrels. **3** By what they say [MTY] [they injure people like] poisonous snakes do; the words that they speak [MTY] [can kill people as easily as] cobras/vipers do. **4** Yahweh, protect me from the power [MTY] of wicked [people]. Keep me safe from violent men who plan to destroy me [SYN]. **5** [It is as though] proud people have set a trap for me; [it is as though] they have spread their nets to catch me; [it is as though] they have put those things along the road to catch/seize me. **6** I say to you, "Yahweh, you are my God;" [so] listen to me while I cry out to you to help me. **7** Yahweh, my Lord, you are the one who defends me strongly; you have [protected me] during battles [MET] [as though you had put a helmet on] my head. **8** Yahweh, do allow wicked [people] to do the things that they desire, and do not allow them to do the [evil things that] they plan to do. **9** [Do not allow] my enemies to (become proud/defeat me); cause the evil things that they say [MTY] they will do to me to happen to them, [instead]. **10** Cause burning coals to fall on their [heads]! Cause them to be thrown into deep pits, from which they cannot climb out! **11** Do not allow those who slander others to succeed; cause evil things to happen to violent men and destroy them! **12** Yahweh, I know that you defend those who are oppressed, and that you do what is just/fair for those who are needy/poor. **13** Righteous [people] will surely thank you [MTY], and they will live (in your presence/with you).

141 Yahweh, I call out to you; [please] help me quickly! Listen to me when I am calling to you. **2** Accept my prayer as though it were incense [being burned as an offering] [SIM] to you. And accept me while I lift up my hands [to pray] to you like you accept sacrifices [that I offer to you each] evening [SIM]. **3** Yahweh, do not allow me to say [MTY] things that are wrong; guard my lips. **4** Prevent me from wanting to do anything that is wrong, and from joining with wicked men when they want to do evil deeds [DOU]. Do not [even] allow me to share in eating delightful food with them! **5** It is all right if righteous people strike/hit me or rebuke me because they are trying to act kindly toward me [to teach me to do what is right], but I do not want wicked [people] to [honor me by] anointing my head with [olive] oil; I am always praying [that you will punish them because of] the wicked deeds [that they do]. **6** When their rulers are thrown down from the top of rocky cliffs, people will know that what you, Yahweh, said [about them] is true. **7** Like a log that is split and cut into small pieces [SIM], their shattered bones will be scattered [on the ground] near [other] graves. **(Sheol h7585)** **8** But Yahweh God, I [continue to] ask you [to help me]. I ask you to protect me; do not allow me to (die/be killed) [now]! **9** [It is as though] people have set traps for me; protect me from falling into those traps, [It is as though] they have spread nets to catch me; keep me from being caught in those nets. **10** I desire that wicked [people] will fall into the traps they have set [to catch me] while I escape [from them].

142 Yahweh, I cry out to you; I plead [with you to help me]. **2** I am bringing to you [all] my problems; I am telling you [all] my troubles/difficulties. **3** When I am very discouraged, you know what I should do. Wherever I walk, [it is as though] my enemies have hidden traps for me [to fall into]. **4** I look around, but there is no one who pays attention to me, no one who will protect me, no one who cares about [what happens to] me. **5** [So] Yahweh, I cry out to you [to help me]; you are the one who protects me; and you are all that I need while I am alive. **6** Listen to me while I cry out to you [for help], because I am very distressed. Rescue/Save me from those who are pursuing me, because they are very strong, with the result that I cannot [escape from them]. **7** Free/Rescue me from my troubles/difficulties [MET] in order that I may thank you. If you do that, when I am with godly/righteous [people], [I will praise you] for having been very good to me.

143 Yahweh, hear me while I pray to you! Because you are righteous and because you faithfully do what you have promised, listen to what I am pleading that you [do for me]. **2** I am one who serves you; do not judge me, because you know that everyone has done things that are wrong). **3** [My] enemies have pursued me; they have completely defeated me. [It is as though] they have put me in a dark [prison], where I [have nothing good to] ([hope for/expect]), like those who died long ago [SIM]. **4** So I am very discouraged; I am very dismayed/worried. **5** I remember what has happened previously: I (meditate on/think about) all the things that you have done; I consider [all] the [great] deeds that you [SYN] have performed. **6** I lift up my hands/arms to you while I pray; I [SYN] need you, like very dry ground [needs rain] [SIM]. **7** Yahweh, I am very discouraged, [so] please answer me right now! Do not hide from me, because if you do that, I will [soon] be [SIM] among those who descend to where the dead people are. **8** [Every] morning cause me to remember that you faithfully love [me], because I trust in you. I (pray/send my prayers up [IDM]) to you; show me what I should do. **9** Yahweh, I have gone/run to you to be protected, [so] rescue me from my enemies. **10** You are my God; teach me to do what you want me to do. I want your good Spirit to lead me on a path that is

not difficult to walk on. 11 Yahweh, restore me when I am close to dying, as you promised to do. Because you are righteous/good, rescue me from my troubles/difficulties! 12 I am one who serves you; so because you faithfully love [me], kill my enemies and get rid of all those who (oppress/cause trouble for) me.

144 I praise Yahweh, who is [like an overhanging] rock [under which I] ([get refuge/am protected])! He trains my hands so that I can use them to fight battles; he trains my fingers so that I can [shoot arrows in a war]. 2 He is the one who protects me; he is [like] a fortress [DOU] in which I am safe, he protects me [like] [protect soldiers] [MET], and he gives me refuge. He defeats [other] nations and [then] puts them under my power. 3 Yahweh, [we] people are [very insignificant/unimportant], so why (are you concerned/do you care about us) [RHQ]? [It is amazing to me that] you pay attention to humans. 4 [The time that we live is as short] as [SIM] a puff of wind; our time to live disappears like a shadow does. 5 Yahweh, (tear open/open up) the sky and come down! Touch the mountains in order that smoke will pour out from them! 6 Cause lightning to flash with the result that [your enemies] will run away! Shoot your arrows [at them] and cause them to (run away/scatter). 7 [It is as though my enemies surround me like] a flood; reach your hand down from heaven and rescue me from them [SYN]. They are men from other countries 8 who [SYN] [always] tell lies. [Even in a courtroom where they swear to tell the truth] they tell lies. 9 God, I will sing a new song to you, and I will play my ten-stringed harp [while I sing] to you. 10 You enable kings to defeat [their enemies]; and you rescued me, your servant David, from [being killed by] my enemies' swords. 11 [So I ask you to] save me from [being killed by] the swords [that those] evil [people carry]. Rescue me from the power [MTY] of those foreigners who [SYN] [always] tell lies, and [who raise] their right hands [in courtrooms when they solemnly declare that they will tell the truth]. 12 I wish/hope that our young sons will grow up to be like strong plants [SIM], and I wish/hope that our daughters will [grow up to] be [straight and tall] like the pillars [SIM] that stand in the corners of palaces. 13 I wish/hope that our barns will be full of many different crops. I wish/hope that the sheep in our fields will give birth to tens of thousands of baby lambs. 14 I wish/hope that our cows will give birth to many calves without having any miscarriages or deaths when they are born (OR, that no enemies will break through our city walls and take us (into exile/to their own countries)). I wish/hope that [there will not be a time when the people in] our streets cry out in distress [because foreign armies are invading]. 15 If good things like that happen to a nation, the people will be very happy. The people whose God is Yahweh are the ones who will be happy!

145 My God and King, I will proclaim that you are very great/glorious; I will praise you [MTY] now and forever. 2 Every day I will praise you; [Yes], I will praise you [MTY] forever. 3 Yahweh you are great, and (you ought to be praised/people should praise you) very much; [we] cannot fully realize how great you are. 4 Parents should tell their children the things that you have done; they should tell their children about your mighty deeds. 5 They should tell them that you are very glorious and majestic [DOU], and I will (meditate on/think about) [all] your wonderful deeds. 6 People will speak about your powerful and awesome deeds, and I will proclaim that you are [very] great. 7 People will remember and proclaim that you are very good [to us], and they will sing joyfully that you [always act] justly/fairly. 8 Yahweh, you [are] kind and merciful [to us]; you do not quickly become angry; you faithfully love [us] very much. 9 Yahweh, you are good to everyone, and you are merciful to everything that you have made. 10 Yahweh, [all] the creatures that you [made] will thank you, and all your people will praise you. 11 They will tell [others] that you rule gloriously as [our] king and that you are [very] powerful. 12 [They will do that] in order that everyone will know about your powerful deeds and that you rule [over us] gloriously. 13 You will never stop being king; you [will] rule (throughout all generations/forever). Yahweh, you faithfully do all that you have promised to do, and all that you do, you do mercifully. 14 Yahweh, you help all those who are discouraged and you lift up all those who (stumble and fall down/are distressed). 15 All of the creatures that you made expect that you [will provide food for them], and you give them food when they need it. 16 You give food to all living creatures generously [IDM], and you cause them to (be satisfied/have all the food that they need). 17 Everything that Yahweh does, he does justly/fairly, and all that he does, he does mercifully. 18 Yahweh (comes near to/is ready to help) all those who call out to him, to those who call to him sincerely. 19 To all those who revere him, he gives them what they need. He hears them when they cry out to him, and saves/rescues them. 20 Yahweh protects all those who love him, but he will get rid of all the wicked [people]. 21 I [SYN] will always praise Yahweh; [He is] holy; and I wish/hope that everyone will praise him [MTY] forever.

146 Praise Yahweh! With my whole inner being I will praise Yahweh. 2 I will praise Yahweh as long as I am alive; I will sing to praise my God for [the rest of] my life. 3 [You people], do not trust in your leaders; do not trust humans because they cannot save/rescue you

[from your difficulties/problems]. 4 And when they die, their corpses [decay and] become soil again. After they die, they can no longer do the things that they planned to do. 5 But those whose helper is the God whom Jacob [worshiped] are happy. The one whom they confidently expect [to help them] is Yahweh, their God. 6 He is the one who created heaven and the earth and the oceans and all [the creatures] that are in them. He always does what he has promised to do. 7 He decides matters fairly for those who are (treated unfairly/oppressed), and he provides food for those who are hungry. He frees those who are in prison. 8 Yahweh enables those who are blind to see again. He lifts up those who have fallen down. He loves righteous [people]. 9 Yahweh takes care of those from other countries who live in our land, and he helps widows and orphans. But he gets rid of wicked [people]. 10 Yahweh will [continue to] be our king forever; you people of Israel, your God will rule forever! Praise Yahweh!

147 Praise Yahweh! It is good to sing to praise our God. It is a delightful thing to do and the right thing to do. 2 [Jerusalem was destroyed, but] Yahweh is [enabling us to] build Jerusalem again. He is bringing back the people who were taken [to Babylonia]. 3 He enables those who were very discouraged to be encouraged again; [it is as though] they have wounds and he bandages them. 4 He has determined how many stars there will be, and he gives names to all of them. 5 Yahweh is great and very powerful, and no one can measure how much he understands. 6 Yahweh lifts up those who have been oppressed, and he throws the wicked down to the ground. 7 Thank Yahweh while you are singing to him to praise him; on the harps, play music to our God. 8 He covers the sky with clouds, [and then] he sends rain to the earth and causes grass to grow on the hills. 9 He gives to animals the food that they [need], and gives food to young crows/birds when they cry out [because they are hungry]. 10 He is not pleased with strong horses or with men who can run [MTY] fast. 11 Instead, what pleases him are those who revere him, those who confidently expect him to continue to faithfully love them. 12 [You people of] [APO] Jerusalem, praise Yahweh! Praise your God! 13 He [guards your city] by keeping its gates strong. He blesses the people who live there. 14 He protects the borders [of your country, so that enemies from other countries cannot attack you]. He gives you plenty of very good wheat/grain to eat. 15 He commands what he wants to be done on the earth, and his words quickly come to the place to which he sends them. 16 He sends snow which [covers the ground] like a white wool blanket [SIM], and he scatters frost [on the ground] like [wind scatters] ashes [SIM]. 17 He sends hail down like (pebbles/tiny stones); [when that happens], (it is very difficult to endure because the air becomes very cold./who can endure because the air becomes very cold?) [RHQ] 18 [But] he commands the wind to blow, and it blows. [Then the hail] melts and [the water] flows [into the streams]. 19 He sent his message to [the descendants of] Jacob; [he tells to his] Israeli people the laws and regulations that he had decreed. 20 He has not done that for any other nation; the other nations do not know his laws. Praise Yahweh!

148 Praise Yahweh! Praise him, from up in heaven; praise him from way up in the sky! 2 All you angels who belong to him, praise him! All you who are in the armies of heaven, praise him! 3 Sun and moon, [you also] praise him! You shining stars, you praise him! 4 You highest heavens, praise him! And you waters that are high above the sky, praise him! 5 I want [all of] these to praise Yahweh [MTY] because by commanding [them to exist], he created them. 6 He determined the places where they should be [in the sky], and he commanded that they should be there forever. They cannot disobey that command! 7 And everything on the earth, praise Yahweh! You [huge] sea monsters and [everything else that is] deep [in the ocean], 8 and fire and hail, and snow and frost, and strong winds that obey what he commands, [I tell] all of you to praise Yahweh! 9 Hills and mountains, fruit trees and cedar [trees], 10 all the wild animals and all [you] cattle, and the (reptiles/creatures that scurry across the ground), and [all] the birds, [I tell all of them to praise Yahweh]! 11 You kings on this earth and all the people [that you rule], you princes and all [other] rulers, 12 you young men and young women, you old people and children, [everyone, praise Yahweh!] 13 I want them [all] to praise Yahweh [MTY] because he is greater than anyone else. His glory is greater than [anything on] the earth or [in] heaven. 14 He caused us, his people, to be strong in order that we, his people, we Israeli people (who are very precious to him/whom he loves very much), would praise him. So praise Yahweh!

149 Praise Yahweh! Sing a new song to Yahweh, praise him whenever [his] faithful [people] gather together! 2 [You] Israeli people, be glad because of [what God], who created you, [has done for you]! You people of Jerusalem, rejoice because of [what God] your king [has done for you]! 3 Praise Yahweh by dancing, by beating/playing tambourines, and by playing harps to praise him! 4 Yahweh is pleased with his people; he honors humble [people] by helping them to defeat [their enemies]. 5 God's people should rejoice because they have won battles and they should sing joyfully all during the night! 6 They [MTY] should shout loudly to praise God; but [they should also hold] sharp swords in

their hands, 7 [ready to use them] to defeat the [soldiers of] nations [that do not worship God], and to punish the people [of those nations], 8 and to fasten the arms and legs of their kings and other leaders with iron chains, 9 to judge [and punish] the people of those nations, like [God] wrote/declared [should be done]. It is (a privilege/an honor) for God's faithful people to do that! Praise Yahweh!

150 Praise Yahweh! Praise God in his sacred temple! And praise him in his fortress in heaven! 2 Praise him for the mighty deeds that he has performed; praise him for his being extremely great! 3 Praise him by [blowing] trumpets loudly; praise him by [playing] harps and (small lyres/other instruments that have many strings)! 4 Praise him by [beating] drums and by dancing. Praise him by [playing] stringed instruments and by [playing] flutes! 5 Praise him by [clashing] cymbals together; praise him by clashing [together very] loud cymbals! 6 I want all living creatures to praise Yahweh! Praise Yahweh!

Proverbs

1 These are the (proverbs/wise sayings) that come from Solomon, the King of Israel, who was the son of [King] David. **2** (These proverbs [PRS] can teach people/By studying these proverbs, people can learn) how to be wise and how to obey what these proverbs teach them. They will [also] help people to understand which teachings are wise. **3** These proverbs [PRS] will teach you how to discipline/control yourselves, how to conduct your lives, and how to do what is right and just [DOU]. **4** They will show [people] who do not [yet] know much how to do things that are smart. They will show young people how to become wise and how to make good plans/decisions. **5** Those who are wise should also pay attention [to these proverbs], in order to become more wise, and those who understand [these teachings] will receive good advice/guidance. **6** Then they will be able to understand the meaning of proverbs and parables/metaphors, these wise sayings and (riddles/sayings that are difficult to understand). **7** If [you want to be] wise, you must begin by revering Yahweh. [Only] foolish people despise wisdom and good advice/discipline. **8** My son, pay attention to what [I], your father, am teaching you. And do not reject what your mother teaches you. **9** What we teach you [will make you respected like having] a lovely turban around your head and [like] a [beautiful] necklace to put around your neck. **10** My son, if sinners tempt/entice you [to do what is wrong], say "No" to them. **11** They may say, "Come with us! Join us! We will hide and then kill [MTY] someone [who passes by]. We will ambush some helpless/innocent people. **12** We will kill them [HYP] and get rid of them completely, [just] like [people who are buried in] graves are gone forever. While they are in good health, we will send them to the place where dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** **13** And we will seize all the things that they own. We will fill our houses with these things! **14** [So], come with us! Join our group! We will share with you the things that we steal." **15** My son, do not accompany them! Do not walk on the roads with them! **16** They rush to do evil deeds! They hurry to murder [MTY] people. **17** It is useless to put out a (trap/net to catch a bird) because when a bird sees it, [it stays away from it]. **18** But those wicked people are not like the birds, [because they do not realize] that when they prepare to ambush someone to kill him, they will be killed themselves! **19** That is what happens to people who eagerly try to get things [by violently attacking others]. They will only destroy themselves! **20** Wisdom [PRS] shouts to people in the streets, and calls out to people in the (plazas/town squares). **21** Wisdom calls out in noisy places, and at the entrances to cities. **22** [Wisdom says], "How long will you stupid people continue to enjoy doing foolish things [RHQ]? How long will you people who ridicule God enjoy doing that [RHQ]? How long will you foolish people refuse to know [what things are right] [RHQ]? **23** If you pay attention to me when I rebuke you, I will tell you what I am thinking in my inner being; I will give you some good advice. **24** But when I called to you, you refused to listen. I beckoned to you to come to me, but you ignored me. **25** I tried to advise you, but you refused to listen to me. I tried to correct you, but you rejected what I told you. **26** So [now], when you are experiencing troubles/disasters, I will laugh at you. When things happen that cause you to be afraid, I will make fun of you. **27** When calamities strike you like a big storm, when disasters hit you like a violent wind, when [all kinds of things] distress you and give you trouble, [I will ridicule you!] **28** [Wisdom also says], "When foolish people call to me [to help them], I will not answer them. They will search for me diligently/everywhere, but they will not find me. **29** They refused to know [what things are right], and they decided not to revere Yahweh. **30** They would not accept my advice, and they did not pay attention when I tried to correct them. **31** So they will endure what will result [MET, DOU] from the evil way they have lived/behaved and the evil things they have planned to do. **32** Those who turn away from me are stupid/foolish; they will die because of doing that. **33** But those who pay attention to me will live peacefully and safely, and they will not be afraid that something will harm them."

2 My son, listen to what I say, and [consider my instructions to be as valuable as] [MET] a treasure. **2** Pay attention to wisdom and try hard to understand it. **3** Call out [to God] to get insight; plead with him to help you to understand more [of what he wants you to know]. **4** Search [eagerly] for wisdom, like you would search for silver, like you would search for a treasure that someone has hidden. **5** If you do that, you will understand how to revere Yahweh, and you will succeed in knowing God. **6** Yahweh is the one who gives us wisdom. He is the one who tells us things that we need to know and understand. **7** He gives good advice to those who conduct their lives as they should. He protects [MET] those who do what is right. **8** He guards those who act justly/fairly [toward others], and he watches over those who are faithful/loyal [to him]. **9** [If you ask God for wisdom], you will understand what is right and just [DOU] [to do], and [you will know] the right way to conduct your life, **10** because you will be wise in your inner being; and knowing [what God wants you to know] will cause you to be joyful. **11** If you know [PRS] how to choose what is right to do and if you understand [what God wants] you to do, God will protect you and guard you and keep you safe. **12** If you are wise [PRS],

you will not do what evil people do, and you will not [believe what] deceitful people say. 13 Deceitful people have stopped acting fairly/justly [toward others] and (walk on dark and evil paths/do what evil people do) [MET]. 14 They enjoy doing what is wrong; they like to do what is evil and to deceive [people]. 15 They (walk on crooked paths/always deceive others) and are always dishonest. 16 If you are wise [PRS], you will [also] be saved from (immoral women/prostitutes); you will not pay attention when adulterous women try to (seduce/entice you by what they say.) 17 Those women have left the husbands whom they married when they were young; they have disregarded the solemn promise they made to God [not to commit adultery]. 18 If you go into houses of women who are like that, you will die [when you are still young]; the road [to their houses] leads to hell. **(questioned)** 19 No man who (visits/sleeps with) a woman like that will again [live harmoniously with his family]. He will never have a [happy] life again. 20 If [you are wise], you should behave like good men behave. You should (stay on the paths that righteous [people] walk on/do what godly people do) [MET], 21 because only godly people will live in this land [and receive God's blessings]; [only] those who have not done wrong will stay here [for a long time]. 22 Wicked [people] will be expelled from this land, and [people] who are not trustworthy will be thrown {God will throw them} out of it.

3 My son, do not forget what I have taught you. Keep my commands in your inner being, 2 because [if you obey them] you will live a long time and things will go well for you 3 Always faithfully love others and (be faithful/do what you say that you will do); doing those things [will cause others to be pleased with you]; it will be as though you are wearing a beautiful necklace. Keep those things in your mind/inner being. 4 If you do, God and people will approve of you and think highly of you [MTY]. 5 Trust in Yahweh completely, and do not rely on what you yourself understand. 6 Always allow him to lead you. If you do that, he will (show you the right path/direct your life). 7 Do not be proud of being wise. [Instead], revere Yahweh and turn away from doing evil. 8 If you do that, your body will be healthy/strong; it will be [like] medicine for you. 9 Honor Yahweh by [what you do with] your money; and [by giving him] the first part of your harvest. 10 If you do that, [you will have a good harvest]. Yahweh will fill your barns [with grain], and your vats/containers will be overflowing with [grape juice for making] wine. 11 My son, when Yahweh disciplines/corrects you, do not despise it, and if he rebukes you, do not resent it. 12 [I say that] because it is the people whom Yahweh loves that he corrects/reproves, [just] like parents correct/reprove their sons whom they love. 13 [Yahweh] is pleased with those who become wise and have good understanding. 14 Being wise and having good understanding is worth more than silver, better than gold. 15 Being wise is more precious than (jewels/precious stones); there is nothing that you could desire [that would be as valuable] as wisdom. 16 On the one hand, wisdom [PRS] enables [you] to live a long life, and on the other hand, wisdom enables [you] to become rich and to be honored. 17 If [you] are wise, [your] life will be pleasant, and things will go well [for you]. 18 Wisdom is [like] a tree that gives long life to those who [eagerly] take hold of it, and [Yahweh] is pleased with those who hold onto it tightly. 19 By his wisdom Yahweh created the earth, and by his understanding he put everything in the skies. 20 By his knowledge [he caused] the water that was beneath the earth to burst forth, and he caused rain to fall from the clouds. 21 My son, [always] keep doing things that are right and things that are smart. If you do that, 22 you will live [many years] and be honored and respected {people will honor and respect you}. 23 If you do what is right and wise, you will [be able to] walk safely, and you will not (stumble/do things that are wrong) [MET]. 24 You will [be able to] lie down [at night] and not be afraid [of anything], and you will sleep peacefully. 25 You will not be afraid that something disastrous will happen to you or that storms that strike the wicked will strike you, 26 because you will be confident that Yahweh [will take care of you]. He will not let your foot be caught in a trap/snare. 27 If you are able to help people who deserve it, do not refuse to help them. 28 If you are able to help someone you interact with, do not say, "Come back later; [perhaps] I can help you tomorrow." 29 Do not make plans to harm those you interact with regularly, [because] they live near you, and they trust you. 30 If someone has not harmed you, do not accuse him [by saying that he has harmed you]. 31 Do not envy people who [obtain things by] violent actions, and do not imitate/do what they do. 32 [I say that] because Yahweh considers such people to be abominable/detestable; but he is a friend to [all] those who do what is right. 33 Yahweh curses the families [MTY] of those who are wicked, but he blesses the families of those who are good/righteous. 34 Yahweh makes fun of those who make fun [of others], but he kindly helps those who are humble. 35 Wise [people] will be honored {people will honor wise people}, but foolish people will be dishonored/disgraced.

4 My children, listen to what I am teaching you. If you pay attention, you will understand what is wise. 2 What I am teaching you is good, so do not turn away from it. 3 When I was a young boy, loved by my mother, 4 my father told me, "Remember my words; if you obey my commandments, you will live [a long time]. 5 Obtain wisdom and understanding,

and (do not abandon/hold fast to) [LIT] what I have taught you. **6** Do not turn away from wisdom, because if you are wise, you will be protected [from all evil/danger]. If you love wisdom, wisdom [PRS] will guard you. **7** The most important thing that you can do is to get wisdom. Even if you obtain many other things, the best thing is to know what things are wise. **8** If you consider being wise to be very valuable, [people] will think very highly of you. If you cling to wisdom [like you would cling to a woman you love], [many people] will honor you. **9** If you become wise, that will for you be [like] a beautiful wreath that is put {someone puts} on your head; it will be [like] a king's glorious crown." [That is what my father told me]. **10** [So now I say], "My son, heed what I say. If you do that, you will live a [good] long life. **11** I am teaching you the way to live wisely; I am showing you how to act justly [toward others]. **12** If you live wisely, when you decide to do something, you will succeed [LIT]. **13** Hold fast to the things I have taught you to do, and do not let them go. Guard them, because they [will be the source of a good] life. **14** Do not do the things that wicked people do; [do not behave like they do]; do not even walk on the roads that evil [people] walk on [MET]. **15** Stay away from those roads; turn aside and walk on other roads; **16** because evil people cannot sleep if they have not done some evil deed [on that day]. They cannot rest if they have not harmed someone. **17** What they eat and what they drink are things that they have obtained by acting wickedly and violently." **18** The behavior of good/righteous [people] is like the light [that begins to shine] at dawn and then [continues to] shine brighter until the brightest time of day. **19** [But] the behavior of wicked [people] is like deep/thick darkness. [Because it is very dark], they cannot see the things that cause them to stumble. **20** My son, pay attention to what I am saying. Listen to my words carefully. **21** Keep them close to you; let them penetrate your inner being, **22** because you will have [PRS] [a good] life and [good] health if you [search for them and] find them. **23** It is very important that you be careful about what you think, because what you think controls [MET] the things that you do. **24** Do not say anything that deceives [others] and never say what is not true. **25** Keep looking straight ahead toward the events that are before you, and do not turn aside. **26** Plan carefully where you will go and what you will do, and then stay on that road. Then what you do will be right. **27** Do not leave the straight road by turning to the left or to the right. [Do only what is right] and keep yourself from [doing what is] evil.

5 My son, listen carefully to some [more] wise things that I will tell you. Listen well to what I am going to teach you. **2** If you do that, you will be able to choose wisely [what to do], and you will know [the right things] to say [MTY]. **3** What an immoral woman says [to you may be] as sweet as honey, and sound smoother than olive oil [feels on your skin], **4** but the result [of being with her] will be bitter like gall and [injure you as badly], like being cut with a sharp two-edged sword. **5** If you go where she goes [MTY], you will go down to where the dead people are. Her steps will lead you straight to the grave. **(Sheol h7585)** **6** She is not concerned about the roads that lead to a [long] life. She walks [down] a crooked path, and she does not realize [that she is on the wrong road]. **7** So now, my sons, listen to me. (Never turn aside from/always remember) [LIT] what I am about to tell you. **8** Run away from immoral women! Do not go near the doors of their houses! **9** If you enter the home of one of them, you will lose your (self-respect/good reputation) and [that woman's husband] will not act mercifully toward you; he will [kill you and] take everything that you have acquired during your life! **10** Foreigners will take your money, and [all] the good things that you have worked for will (end up in their hands/become their possessions). **11** And when you are about to die, you will groan [with severe pain] because diseases [that you have gotten from being immoral] will be destroying your body. **12** Then you will say, "I hated it [when people tried to] correct me. I despised [people when they] reproved/rebuked me. **13** I did not heed what my teachers said! I paid no attention to those who [tried to] teach me [something about my behavior]. **14** [Now] I am almost ruined, and I will be disgraced in public gatherings." **15** Like a man is refreshed by drinking water from his own well [MET], enjoy [having sex] [EUP] only with your own wife. **16** Like you would not waste good water by pouring it into the street, [you should not have sex with other women]. [MET, EUP] **17** Enjoy [having sex] only with your wife; do not [have sex with] other women. **18** Let your wife be a source of great pleasure to you. (Be happy/[Enjoy sex]) with the woman whom you married when you were both young. **19** She is as pretty and graceful [as] a young female deer. Allow her breasts to always satisfy you. Allow her lovemaking to excite you. **20** My son, do not be [RHQ] captivated/charmed by an immoral woman! Do not fondle the breasts of another man's wife! **21** [I say that] because Yahweh sees clearly everything that we do; he knows [where we are going on] the roads that we walk on. **22** Evil men's sinful desires hold them fast; their sins are [like] ropes that bind them. **23** Evil men [will] die because they are unable to say "No" to their desires; they [will] (go astray/be lost) because of the foolish things that they do.

6 My son, if someone has borrowed money from a friend or a stranger, and if you have promised that you will pay the money back if that person is unable to pay back the

money he borrowed, 2 you may be trapped by what you have agreed to do, [because if the one who borrowed the money is not able to pay it back, you will have to pay it]. What you have said that you will do will be like a snare to you. 3 So, my son, I will tell you what you should do to escape from your difficulty, so that the moneylender does not get control over your [wealth:] Humbly go to your friend and plead with him [to cancel the agreement]! 4 Do not wait until tomorrow; [go immediately]! Do not rest until you [go and talk with him]. 5 Save yourself, like a deer that escapes from a deer hunter [or] like a bird that flees from a bird hunter. 6 You lazy individual, learn something from [watching] the ants. Become wise from observing what they do. 7 They do not have a king or a governor or any [other] person who rules them [and forces them to work], 8 [but] they work hard [all] during the summer, gathering and storing food to eat during the winter. 9 [But], you lazy loafer, how long will you [continue to] sleep [RHQ]? Are you never going to get up from sleeping [and go to work]? 10 You sleep a for a little time; [you say, "I will take] just a short nap." You lie down and fold/lay your hands [across your chest] and rest; 11 and suddenly you will become poor. It will be as though a bandit suddenly comes and takes all that you have. 12 [I will describe for you what] worthless and evil people [are like]. They constantly lie; 13 by winking their eyes and moving their feet and making signs with their fingers, they signal [to their friends what they are intending/planning to do]. 14 They plan to do evil things. They constantly cause strife/trouble. 15 But disasters will hit them suddenly; they will be crushed/ruined and nothing will be able to heal them. 16 There are six, [maybe] seven, kinds of people that Yahweh hates. [They are]: 17 People who show by their eyes that they are very proud; people who lie [MTY]; people [SYN] who kill others [SYN] who have done nothing wrong; 18 people who plan to do evil deeds; people [SYN] who run quickly to do wrong things; 19 people who easily tell lies in court; and people who cause strife between family members. 20 My son, obey my commands, and do not ignore what your mother has taught you. 21 Remember the things that we have said. Those things should be [like a beautiful necklace] around your neck. 22 [If you follow our advice, it will be as though] what we have taught you [PRS] will lead you, wherever you go. When you sleep, they will protect you. And when you wake up in the morning, they will teach/instruct you. 23 These commands and what we teach you [will be like] a lamp to light your path [MET]. When we rebuke you and correct/punish you, we will be showing you the road to having [a good] life. 24 Heeding [PRS] these commands and things that we have taught you will enable you to keep away from immoral women and from [listening to] the enticing words of an adulterous woman. 25 [Even] if such a woman is beautiful and has lovely eyes, do not desire to go with her. Do not let her persuade you to go with her (with her eyes/by the way she looks at you). 26 [Do not forget that] you can hire a prostitute for only a loaf of bread, but [if you sleep with] another man's wife, (it may cost you/you may lose) your life. 27 Can you carry hot coals in your pocket and not be burned [RHQ]? 28 Can you walk on burning coals and not scorch/burn your feet? 29 [No]! And in the same way, anyone who (sleeps with/has sex with) another man's wife will [suffer for doing that]. [He will certainly] [LIT] be punished severely. 30 We do not despise a thief if he steals some food because he is very hungry. 31 But [if he steals something and then] is caught [by the police], he will have to pay back (seven times as much as/much more than) he stole. He may need to sell everything that is in his house [to get enough money to pay it back]. 32 [But] a man who commits adultery with some woman is very foolish, [because] he is destroying his own self/soul [by what he is doing]. 33 [That woman's husband] will wound him badly, and [other people] will despise him. His shame will never end. 34 Because that woman's husband will (be jealous/not want anyone else to sleep with her), he will become furious, and when he gets revenge, he will not act mercifully [toward the man who slept with his wife]. 35 And he will not accept any bribe/money, even if it is a big bribe, to (appease him/cause him to stop being angry).

7 My son, heed my advice, and guard my instructions [as you would] [MET] [guard] a treasure. 2 Obey my commands, and [as a result you will] live [a good life]. Consider the things that I teach you [to be very precious]; guard them, [just] like you protect your eyes. 3 Tie my commands around your fingers [in order that they will remind you to obey them]. Always keep them in mind [MET]. 4 [Love] wisdom [like you love] your sister. Understand what is wise, [and let that be as dear to you as] members of your family. 5 If you are wise and if you understand what is wise [PRS], you will not [sleep with] an immoral woman; you will not listen to a woman who tries to entice you [to sleep with her] by what she says. 6 One day, I was standing at the window inside my house, and I looked outside. 7 I saw some young men who did not have good sense. Among them was a man who was very foolish. 8 He crossed the street near [the house of] an immoral woman. He was walking along the path toward her house 9 at twilight, when it was getting dark [DOU]. 10 Suddenly the woman came out to see/meet him. She was dressed (seductively/like a prostitute), wanting to persuade him to sleep with her. 11 She was a loud talker, one who was rebellious; she [SYN] never stayed at home. 12 She

often went into the city streets and plazas/markets, waiting to trap some man. 13 [When she saw that young man], she put her arms around him and kissed him. Then without being a bit ashamed, she said, 14 "I have [some meat that is left over from] a sacrifice that I made today [to maintain fellowship with Yahweh]; I have fulfilled/done what I promised him that I would do. 15 And now I have come out to meet/see you. I was searching for you, and [now] I have found you! 16 I have put on my bed sheets/bedspreads that were made from [very fine] linen [that were imported] {[people brought]} from Egypt. 17 I have sprinkled [sweet-smelling] perfumes on my bed— myrrh and aloes and cinnamon. 18 Come [with me]; let us enjoy having sex until [tomorrow] morning. Let's enjoy making love. 19 My husband is not at home; he has gone away on a long journey. 20 He is carrying a wallet filled with money, and he will not return until the middle of this month." 21 [So] she persuaded him by [her] enticing/tempting words. She allured him by her smooth/sweet talk. 22 [And] he went with her immediately, like an ox that was going to where it would be slaughtered, or like a deer (OR, a fool) that is stepping into a noose/trap, 23 where it will remain/stay until someone shoots an arrow into its liver [and kills it]. [He was] like a bird that flew into a trap. He did not know that (it would cost him his life/he would die as a result). 24 My son, listen to what I say; pay [careful] attention to my words. 25 Do not allow anything to arouse/persuade you to go with an immoral woman like that. Do not go where she goes. 26 She has caused many men to be ruined; truly, no one can count the men she has killed. 27 The road to her house is the road to the grave. Those who enter her bedroom [PRS] will die as a result. **(Sheol h7585)**

8 It is as if wisdom, with great understanding [of many things], is calling [PRS] out [to people]. 2 Wisdom stands on hilltops and at crossroads. 3 [Wisdom also stands] at the city gates and shouts loudly, 4 "I am calling to everyone! I am shouting loudly to all people! 5 You people who do not know how to do things that are smart to do, get sound judgment; you foolish people, get good understanding! 6 Listen to me, because I have some excellent/important things to say. What I say is what is fair/right. 7 I speak what is true; I detest speaking [MTY] what is false/deceptive. 8 Everything that I say is honest; there is nothing that I say that deceives [people]. 9 My words are clear to those who have good sense; those who are wise know that what I say is right. 10 [If someone offers you the kind of teaching I give] or offers you silver, choose my teaching. [If he offers to show you how to be wise] or offers you gold, choose to know how to be wise, 11 because wisdom is more valuable than jewels. Nothing that you desire [is as valuable] as being wise. 12 I, wisdom, and understanding of what is smart to do, cannot be separated. We are like two people who live in the same house. I know how to be wise and how to make smart decisions. 13 [All the people] who revere Yahweh hate evil. I, wisdom, hate [people who are] proud and [people] who think they are more important [than others]. I hate [people who] behave in an evil way and those who say things to deceive [others]. 14 I give [people] good advice and I enable them to do things that are wise. I understand how things really are, and I am strong. 15 When kings are wise, they rule [well]; and when rulers are wise, they make laws that are just/fair. 16 Rulers govern their people with the help of me, wisdom, and those who have authority decide things fairly/just with my help. 17 I, [wisdom], love [all] those who love me, and [all] those who truly seek me [will] find me. 18 I enable [people] to become rich and to be honored; [I enable them to have] wealth that will last and to be successful. 19 What I can give people is more valuable than fine/pure gold and the best silver. 20 I always do what is righteous and just/fair. 21 I give wealth to those who love me; I fill their houses with valuable things. 22 Yahweh created me, [wisdom], when he began [to create the world]; he created me [to do my work] before he created anything else. 23 He appointed me long ago, before he created the earth. 24 I was born before the oceans were [created], when there were no springs from which water flowed. 25 I was born before the hills and mountains were formed; 26 [I, wisdom], was born before Yahweh made the earth, before he made the fields and the soil on the earth. 27 I was there when Yahweh put the sky in place, when he marked the place [in the distance] where the sky and the oceans [seem to] come together. 28 I was there when Yahweh put the clouds above [the earth] and when he caused the water that is inside the earth to be secure. 29 I was there when he fixed a boundary for the seas, so that the water in the seas would not go past those boundaries, and when he put down the foundations which support the earth. 30 I was at the side of Yahweh, the master worker (OR, as though I was his child). I caused him to be happy every day, and I was always rejoicing when I was with him. 31 I was delighted with the world that he created; I was happy with the people whom he created, too. 32 So, [you people who are like] my sons, listen to me. [I am] pleased with [all] those who obey my teachings. 33 Listen [carefully] to what I teach you and become wise. Do not reject my teaching! 34 [I am] pleased with those who listen to me, those who are outside my house every day, waiting [for me to come out]. 35 Those who find me will have [a long] life, and Yahweh [will] be pleased with them. 36 But those

who stray away from me [just] harm themselves. All those who hate me, [it is as though] [IRO] they are loving death."

9 [It is as though] wisdom [is a woman who] has built a [big] house for herself, and has set up seven columns [to support the roof], **2** and has slaughtered an animal [and cooked the meat], and has mixed [nice spices] in the wine, and has put [the food] on the table. **3** [It is as though then] she sent out her servant women to call out from the highest place in the town, **4** "You people who need to understand more, come in!" And to those who are ignorant, [it is as though] she calls out, **5** "Come and eat the food that I [have prepared], and drink the [good] wine that I have mixed! **6** (Leave/Go away from) [other] foolish people, and [if you do that, you will continue to] live. Walk on the road that will enable you to (have knowledge/know what is true and what is not true)." **7** If you rebuke someone who will not allow others to correct him, he will insult you. If you reprove/scold an evil man, he will hurt you. **8** Do not rebuke someone who will not allow others to (correct him/tell him what he has done is wrong), because he will hate you for doing that. [But] if you rebuke a wise person, he will respect you. **9** If you give instruction to wise people, they will become wiser. And if you teach righteous people, they will learn more. **10** If you want to be wise, you must start by revering Yahweh, and if you know God, the Holy One, you will understand [which teachings are wise/true]. **11** If you become wise, you will live many years [DOU]. **12** If you are wise, you are the one who will benefit from it; if you ridicule [becoming wise], you are the one who will suffer. **13** Foolish women talk loudly; they are ignorant and are never ashamed [of the wrong things that they do]. **14** They sit at the doors of their houses [or] they sit on the top [of the hills] in the town, **15** and they call out to the men who are passing by, who are trying to be concerned with their own affairs, **16** "You people who need to understand more, come into [my house]!" And to those who are ignorant, they call out, **17** "[Just as] water which you have stolen tastes very good and food that you eat by yourself tastes the best, [if you have sex secretly with someone to whom you are not married, you will enjoy it very much]." **18** But men who go to those women's houses do not know that those who have gone there are now dead; they have descended down into the deepest parts of the place where dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)**

10 These [are more] proverbs/wise sayings from Solomon: If children are wise, they cause their parents to be happy; but if children are foolish, they cause their parents to be very sad. **2** Money that you get by doing dishonest/wicked things will really not benefit you; but by living righteously you will live for (a long time/many years). **3** Yahweh does not allow righteous [people] to starve, but he will prevent wicked [people] from getting what they want. **4** Lazy people [soon] become poor; it is those who work hard who become rich. **5** Those who are wise, harvest the crops when they are ripe; it is shameful/disgraceful to sleep [and not work] during harvest time. **6** Righteous [people will] be blessed [by God]; [the nice things] that wicked [people] say [MTY] [sometimes] conceal the fact that they [are planning to] act violently. **7** After righteous [people die], other people are blessed as they remember [what those people did before they died]; but we will soon forget wicked people [MTY] after they die. **8** Wise people heed good instruction/advice, but people who talk foolishly will ruin themselves. **9** Honest people will be safe, but [others] (OR, God) will find out those who are dishonest. **10** Those who signal with their eyes [that they are about to do something that is wrong] cause trouble, but those who rebuke others truthfully cause them to be peaceful. **11** What righteous [people] say [MTY] is [like] a fountain that (gives life/enables people to live many years) [MET], but what wicked [people] say [MTY] hides [the fact] that they intend to act violently. **12** When we hate others, it causes quarrels, but if we love others, we forgive them [for the wrong things that they do]. **13** Those who have good sense say [MTY] what is wise, but people who do not have good sense must be punished. **14** Wise people continue to learn all that they can, but when foolish people speak, they soon cause trouble. **15** The wealth that rich people have [protects them like a city is protected by a] strong wall around it [MET], but people who are poor suffer much [because they have no one to help them]. **16** If you are righteous, your reward will be a good life, [but] all that sinful people gain is to sin more. **17** Those who pay attention when others try to (correct them/teach them what they are doing that is wrong) will live (happily/for many years); but those who reject being rebuked will not find the road to life (OR, cause others to go astray). **18** Those who will not admit that they hate [others] are liars, and those who slander [others] are foolish. **19** When people talk a lot, that will lead them to sin a lot [by what they say]; if you are wise, you will refuse to say very much. **20** What righteous/good [people] say [MTY] is [as valuable as] pure silver [MET]; what wicked [people] think is worthless. **21** What righteous [people] say [MTY] benefits many [people], but foolish people die because of the stupid [things that they do]. **22** Yahweh blesses [some people] by enabling them to become rich, and working hard will not make them to become richer (OR, and he will not also cause them to become sad). **23** Foolish people (have fun/enjoy) doing what is wrong, but wise/sensible people

enjoy doing what is wise. **24** Righteous [people] will get the good things that they want/desire, but what wicked [people] are afraid of is what will happen to them. **25** When storms come, the wicked will (be blown away/never be safe), but righteous [people will] be safe forever. **26** We do not like a lazy person who refuses to do the job that he is given to do, [just] like we do not like vinegar in our mouths or smoke in our eyes. **27** If you revere Yahweh, you will live for a long time; but wicked [people] die before they become old. **28** Righteous [people] confidently expect [that good things will happen to them], and that causes them to be happy/joyful; but when wicked [people] confidently expect something good to happen, it does not happen. **29** Yahweh protects [MET] those who live righteously, but he destroys those who do what is evil. **30** Righteous [people] will always be secure [LIT], but wicked people will be removed from their land (OR, from this earth). **31** Righteous people [MTY] say things that are wise, but [God] will shut the mouths of people [MTY] who say what is not true. **32** Righteous people [MTY] know what to say that is acceptable, but wicked [people] [MTY] are [constantly] saying things that are not true.

11 Yahweh detests [people who use] scales that do not weigh correctly; he is delighted with [those who use] correct weights on the scales. **2** [People who are] proud will [eventually] be disgraced; it is wise to be humble. **3** [People who are] good are guided by [doing what is] honest; those who are not honest will be ruined because of the wrong things that they do. **4** [Your] money will not help [you] on the day that [God] judges [and punishes people]; but if you live righteously, you will live a long time. **5** When people are honest and good, that will (direct their paths/show them what is right for them to do); but wicked [people will] experience disasters because of the evil things that they do. **6** [God] rescues/protects righteous [people] because they (are honest/do what is right), but those who (are treacherous/cannot be trusted) will be trapped because of their being greedy. **7** When wicked [people] die, they cannot confidently expect to receive anything [that is good]; they expect that [their money] will help/save them, but it will not. **8** [Yahweh] rescues righteous [people] from their troubles/difficulties; instead, it is the wicked who will have troubles. **9** Godless people can ruin others by what they say [MTY], but righteous [people will] be saved by [their (own) good sense/being wise). **10** When things go well for righteous [people], [the people in] [MTY] their city are happy, and they shout joyfully when wicked [people] die. **11** When righteous [people request God to] bless a city, that city will become great, but cities are ruined by what wicked [people] say [MTY]. **12** It is foolish to despise others; those who (have good sense/are wise) do not say anything [to criticize others]. **13** Those who (spread gossip/tell bad things about others) will tell your secrets [to others], but if there is someone whom you can trust, you can trust him to not tell your secrets [to others]. **14** A nation will be destroyed/ruined if it does not have [leaders] who guide it [wisely]; but if there are many [good] advisors, the nation remains secure. **15** If you promise a stranger that you will pay his debt [if he cannot pay it himself], you will regret it. You will be safe if you refuse to guarantee that you will pay someone else's debts. **16** [People] honor/respect women who are kind/gracious; ruthless/violent people may get a lot of money, [but that is all that they will get]. **17** Those who are kind benefit themselves [because others will be kind to them], but those who are cruel will hurt themselves [because others will be cruel to them]. **18** If wicked people earn a lot of money, that will deceive them [because they will not keep it for very long], but those who do what is right will surely be rewarded [by God forever]. **19** Those who always do what is right will live [a long/happy life], but those who insist on doing what is wrong will not live [very long]. **20** Yahweh hates those who are always thinking about doing evil things, but he is delighted with those who always do what is right. **21** It is certain that [Yahweh] will punish evil people and that righteous people will escape [from being punished]. **22** [It is] ([unsuitable/not proper/disgusting]) for a beautiful woman not to know what is right to do, like [SIM] [it is unsuitable/disgusting] for a pig to have a gold ring in its snout/nose. **23** When the things that righteous people want happen, it brings good [to them and to others], but when the wicked get what they want, it causes everyone else to become angry. **24** Some people give [their money] generously [to poor people], but they become richer [in spite of that], and some people hold tightly to their money, but they still become poor [in spite of that]. **25** Those who give generously [to others] will prosper; if you help others, [they/someone] will help you, too. **26** People curse/despise someone who hoards his grain [and does not sell it], waiting to get a higher/bigger price for it, but they praise someone who sells it [when people need it, even when the price is not high]. **27** If you sincerely want to [do what is] right, [people] will respect you, but if you are wanting to cause trouble, trouble is what you will get. **28** Those who trust in their money will [disappear like the] withered [leaves that fall from the trees], but righteous [people] will keep going strong, like green leaves [in the summer]. **29** Those who bring troubles to their families will inherit nothing [MET] [from them], and those who do foolish things [like that] will [some day] become the servants of wise [people]. **30** Those who live righteously will live [for a long time], but [those who act]

violently will destroy [their own] lives (OR, those who are wise will have many people come and live with them). **31** [Sometimes] righteous [people] are rewarded [here] on the earth, but it is much more certain that very wicked people [DOU] [will be rewarded by being punished].

12 Those who want to know [what is right to do] want to be (disciplined/corrected) when they do what is wrong; it is foolish to not want to be (corrected/told that what you did is wrong). **2** Yahweh is pleased with good people, but he condemns those who plan to harm [others]. **3** People do not become secure/safe by doing what is wicked; righteous [people] will be very safe and secure [LIT] like [MET] a tree that has deep roots. **4** A good wife is one who causes her husband to be greatly honored, but a wife who does things that cause her husband to be ashamed [will destroy him] like [SIM] cancer [destroys] his bones. **5** What righteous [people] want to do is [to treat people] fairly; what wicked [people] want to do is to deceive people. **6** What wicked [people] say is like a trap [MET] that kills [MTY] people [who pass by], but what righteous [people] say [MTY] rescues those whom [wicked people threaten to harm]. **7** Wicked [people] will die [before they become old and we will see] them no more, but righteous people will live [for many years] and have many descendants. **8** [People will] praise those who have good sense, but [people will] despise those (who are always thinking about doing evil things/whose thinking is twisted). **9** It is better to be a humble/ordinary person who has only one servant than to think that you are very important while you have nothing to eat. **10** Righteous people take care of their domestic animals, but wicked people act cruelly [toward their animals]. **11** Farmers who work hard in their fields will [produce good crops] that will give them plenty to eat, but those who waste their time working on worthless projects are foolish. **12** Wicked [people] desire to take away what [other] evil people have, but [Yahweh] enables righteous/godly [people] to be steadfast and productive [MET]. **13** Evil people are trapped by the evil things that they say [MTY], but righteous [people] escape from trouble. **14** People are rewarded for [the good things] that they say [to others], and people are [also] rewarded for the good work that they do [MTY]. **15** Foolish people [always] think that what they are doing is right; wise people heed [other people when they give them good] advice. **16** Foolish people quickly become angry when someone does something that they don't like; but those who have good sense ignore it when others insult them. **17** [In the courtroom], honest people say what is true, but untruthful/dishonest people tell [nothing but] lies. **18** What some people say [hurts people badly], as much as [SIM] a sword can; but what wise [people] say (heals [others' souls]/comforts others). **19** When people tell [MTY] lies, others soon realize that what they said is not true [IDM]; but when people say what is true, others will remember that forever. **20** Those who plan to do what is evil are always wanting to deceive [others], but things will go well for those who plan [to do] good things. **21** Bad things [usually] [HYP] do not happen to righteous [people], but wicked [people] always have troubles. **22** Yahweh detests those [MTY] who tell lies, but he is delighted with those who faithfully do what they promise that they will do. **23** Those with good sense do not reveal [all] that they know; foolish people show [clearly] by what they say that they (are ignorant/have not learned much). **24** Those [SYN] who work hard become rulers [of others]; those who are lazy become slaves [of others.] **25** When people are anxious/worried, they become depressed/dejected, but when others speak kindly to them, it causes them to be cheerful again. **26** Godly/Righteous people try to [give good advice to] their friends (OR, try to make friends with others), but the manner in which wicked [people] live misleads their friends. **27** Lazy people do not even [cook the meat of] the animals that they catch/kill, but those who work hard will acquire (OR, are like) a valuable treasure. **28** Those who (live righteously/continually do what is right) are [walking] on the road to a long life; (it is not a road to death/they will not die when they are still young).

13 Children who are wise (pay attention/heed it) when their parents discipline/correct them; but foolish children do not pay attention when someone rebukes them [for their bad behavior]. **2** Good people are rewarded [IDM] for the good things [MET] that they say, but those who desire to deceive others are [very] eager to act violently. **3** Those who are [very] careful about what they say [MTY] will live a long life; those who talk (without thinking/too much) will ruin themselves. **4** People who are lazy want things very much, but they will not get anything [HYP]. People who work hard will get all that they want. **5** Righteous/Honest people hate/detest lies, but what wicked people do (is very disgraceful/stinks) [DOU]. **6** The behavior [PRS] of those who always do what is right will protect them, but sinful [behavior will] ruin wicked people. **7** Some people who have nothing pretend to be rich, but other people who are very rich pretend to be poor. **8** Rich people are able to pay people who want to kill them, [with the result that they will be protected, not killed], but poor people [do not have to worry about that because] no one threatens to kill them. **9** Righteous [people] are like a lamp [MET] that shines brightly, but wicked [people] are like [MET] a lamp that will [soon] be extinguished. **10** [People] who are arrogant/proud [always] cause strife; those who are wise ask [other people] for good

advice. **11** Those who acquire a lot of money quickly [by doing what is wrong, probably] will lose it [quickly], but if people earn money slowly, the amount of money they have will increase. **12** When people do not receive the things that they are expecting to receive, (it causes them to despair/they become very sad); but if you receive what you are desiring to get, that [will be like a tree] [MET] [whose fruit gives you] life (OR, that will cause you to be joyful). **13** Those who despise [the good] advice [that others give them] are bringing ruin on themselves; those who pay attention to that advice will (be secure/succeed). **14** What wise [people] teach is [like] a fountain whose [water] gives life [MET]; what they teach you will help you to escape when something dangerous is threatening to kill you [MET]. **15** [People] respect those who have good sense, but those who cannot be trusted are on the road to being ruined/destroyed (OR, will have a lot of difficulties/troubles). **16** Those who have good sense always think carefully/wisely before they do something; foolish people show [by what they say and do] that they are foolish. **17** Messengers who are not reliable cause trouble, but those who faithfully [deliver their messages] cause people to act peacefully. **18** Those who refuse to pay attention when others discipline/correct them will become poor and disgraced; [people] respect those who accept it when they are rebuked [for their bad behavior]. **19** It is delightful to receive what we desire; foolish people hate/refuse to turn away from doing evil. **20** Those who habitually associate with wise people become wise; those who (are close friends of/associate with) foolish people will (regret it/be ruined). **21** Sinners have trouble [PRS] wherever they go, but things will go well for righteous [people]. **22** When good people [die], their grandchildren inherit their money; but when sinners [die], the money that they had will end up in the hands of righteous [people]. **23** [Sometimes] poor [people's] fields produce plenty of food, but unjust people take away all that food. **24** Those who do not punish their children [for bad behavior] do not [really] love them; those who love their children start to discipline them when the children are still young. **25** Righteous [people] have enough food to eat and be satisfied, but the stomachs of wicked [people] [SYN] are [always] empty.

14 Wise women [PRS] hold their families together [by the wise things that they do], but foolish women ruin their families by the foolish things that they do. **2** By [continually] behaving/acting righteously, [people show that they] greatly revere Yahweh; those who (walk on crooked paths/always deceive others) [show that they] despise him. **3** Foolish people will be punished [MTY] for what they say, but wise [people] will be protected by what they say [MTY]. **4** If [a man has] no oxen [to plow his field], he does not [need to put] grain [in their feedbox], but if [he has] oxen, they will enable [him to produce] an abundant crop. **5** Witnesses who are reliable [always] say what (is true/really happened), but witnesses who are not reliable constantly tell lies [about what happened]. **6** Those who make fun [of being wise] will never become wise, but those who understand [what is right] learn things easily. **7** Stay away from foolish people, because they will not be able to teach you anything [useful]. **8** Those who have good sense are wise, so they know what they should do [and what they should not do]; foolish people do not know what is right to do, but because they think that they do, they are deceiving themselves. **9** Foolish people make fun of their committing sins; but God is pleased with those who do what is right. **10** If you are very sad or if you are joyful, only you know what you are experiencing; no one else [can] know what you are feeling. **11** Houses built by wicked [people] will be destroyed, but houses built by good/righteous [people] will last for a long time. **12** There are some kinds of behavior [MET] that [some] people [falsely] think are right, but (walking on those roads/continually doing those things) causes [those people] to die. **13** [Sometimes] when people laugh, they are [really] sad, and when they stop laughing, they are still sad. **14** Those who stubbornly continue to do what is wrong will get what they deserve, and those who continually do what is good will [also] get what they deserve. **15** Foolish people believe everything [that people tell them]; those who have good sense think carefully about what will be the result of their actions. **16** Wise people are careful and avoid [doing things that will give them] trouble; foolish people are careless and act (too quickly/without thinking). **17** Those who quickly become angry [IDM] do foolish things; [people] hate those who plan to do wicked things (OR, those who have good sense remain calm/patient). **18** Foolish people get what they deserve for doing foolish things; those with good sense are rewarded [MET] by being able to learn a lot. **19** [Some day] evil [people] will bow down in front of righteous [people to show that they respect them]; they [will humbly stand] at the gates of [the houses of] righteous [people and request their help]. **20** [No one likes] poor [people]; even their friends/neighbors do not like them; rich [people] have many friends, but [only while the rich people still have money]. **21** It is sinful to despise your [poor] neighbors; [God] is pleased with those who do kind things for the poor. **22** Those who plan to do things that are evil/wrong are walking on the wrong road; people faithfully love, respect and are loyal to those who plan to do what is good. **23** If you work hard, you will (accomplish something good/get a good income), but if all you do is to talk [and not work], you will remain poor. **24**

One of the rewards [MET] of being wise is to become rich;
the reward of acting foolishly is to become more foolish. 25
By saying [in court] what is true, you [can] save the life [of
the one who is being falsely accused]; if you tell lies, you
are abandoning someone who needs your help [to defend
him]. 26 Those who revere Yahweh are confident [that he
will protect them], and their family will [also] be protected.
27 Having an awesome respect for Yahweh is [like] [MET]
[having] a fountain that gives life; it will help you to escape
when something dangerous is threatening to kill you [MET].
28 If a king rules over many people, many people will [be able
to] honor him; if he has only a few people in his kingdom,
he will have very little [HYP] power. 29 Those who do not
quickly become angry are very wise; by quickly becoming
angry, people show that they are foolish. 30 Having a mind
that is peaceful results in having a healthy body; having a
mind that is [often] in turmoil is [like] [MET] cancer in [a
person's] bones. 31 Those who oppress poor people are
insulting God, the one who made those poor people, but
acting kindly toward them is respecting God. 32 Wicked
[people] ruin themselves by the evil things that they do, but
righteous/good [people] are kept safe/protected even when
they die (OR, because of their continually doing what is
right). 33 Those who have good sense always think what is
wise; foolish people do not know anything about being wise.
34 [When] the people of a nation [continually act] righteously,
it causes that nation to be great; [continually doing what is]
evil causes a nation to be disgraced. 35 Kings are pleased
with officials who do their work competently/skillfully, but
they punish [MTY] those who [do their work in a manner
that] causes the kings to be disgraced.

15 When people are angry with you, reply to them gently,
and it will calm them; but if you reply harshly to them, it
causes them to become more angry. 2 When wise [people]
speak [MTY], it causes those who hear what they say to
want to know more; foolish people continually say [MTY]
what is foolish. 3 Yahweh sees [MTY] [what is happening]
everywhere; he observes what bad [people do] as well as
what good [people do]. 4 Those who speak [MTY] kindly
to people are [like] [MET] trees [whose fruit gives] life;
speaking what is false causes people to (despair/feel very
discouraged). 5 Foolish children despise their parents when
their parents correct/discipline them; wise children accept it.
6 There are many valuable things in the houses of righteous
[people]; the wealth of wicked [people] causes them to have
troubles/difficulties. 7 What wise [people] teach [MTY] causes
others to know much more, [but] foolish people cannot teach
others what is useful. 8 Yahweh detests the sacrifices that
are offered by wicked [people]; what delights/pleases him
very much are the prayers of righteous/good [people]. 9
Yahweh hates/detests the behavior of wicked [people], but
he loves those who always do what is righteous/just/fair.
10 Those who do what is wrong will be severely punished;
those who do not want to be corrected will die. 11 Yahweh
knows [what is happening in] the place where dead people
[DOU] are, so he certainly knows [RHQ] what people are
thinking. (Sheol h7585) 12 Some people do not want to be
corrected; they never go to wise [people to seek good advice
from them]. 13 When people are happy, they have smiles
on their faces; but when they are sad, [by looking at their
faces we can see that] they are sad. 14 Those who have
good sense want to learn more; foolish people [MTY] are
very satisfied with being foolish/ignorant. 15 Those who are
oppressed constantly have difficulties, but those who (OR, if
they) are happy, [it is as though] [MET] they are having a big
feast every day. 16 Being poor and revering Yahweh is better
than being rich and having a lot of troubles. 17 Eating meals
with [people whom you] love and having only vegetables to
eat is better than eating with [people who] hate [each other
and] having lots of good meat [to eat]. 18 Those who quickly
become angry cause arguments/quarreling, but those who
do not quickly become angry cause people to act peacefully.
19 Lazy people constantly [have difficulties] [MET]; [it is as
though they are] walking through thorns; but those who
are honest and hard-working [will have few difficulties; it
is as though they are walking] on a level highway [MET].
20 Children who are wise cause their parents to be happy;
it is foolish children who despise their parents. 21 Foolish
people are happy to [continually] act foolishly; those who
have good sense do what is right. 22 If there is no one to
give us good advice, we will not accomplish what we are
planning to do; but when we have many [good] advisors,
we will succeed. 23 People rejoice when they are able to
reply well to what others have asked them; [truly], it is very
delightful to be able to say the right thing at the right time.
24 Wise people walk on a road that leads up to a long life;
they do not walk on a road that leads down to the place
where dead people are. (Sheol h7585) 25 Yahweh tears down
the houses of proud [people], but he protects the property
of widows. 26 Yahweh detests what wicked [people] are
thinking [about doing]; [but] when people say what is kind,
he considers those words to be pure. 27 Those who try hard
to get money by acting dishonestly cause trouble for their
family; those who refuse to accept bribes will live [for a long
time]. 28 Righteous/Good [people] think carefully before they
answer [what others ask them]; wicked [people] very quickly
say what is evil. 29 Yahweh does not listen [MTY] to what
wicked [people request him to do]; he listens to righteous

[people] when they pray. **30** If people have a smile on their faces, it makes them/others happy, and [when people hear] good news, it refreshes their spirits [MTY]. **31** If people pay attention when [people] correct/warn them, they will become wise. **32** If people refuse to listen [when others try] to correct them, they are despising/hurting themselves; those who (pay attention/heed) when [others] warn them (become wiser/acquire good sense). **33** If you revere Yahweh, you will learn how to become wise, but [only] after you become humble will [people] honor you.

16 People plan what they want to do, but Yahweh is the one who decides [MTY] what really will happen. **2** People may think that their actions are right, but Yahweh really knows why people do what they do. **3** (Request/Rely on) Yahweh to direct what you plan to do; [if you do that], you will succeed in what you plan. **4** Yahweh knows why he does everything that he does; he has even prepared the wicked for the time that he will punish them. **5** Yahweh hates/detests everyone who is proud [IDM]; you can be certain [IDM] that they will be punished [LIT]. **6** Be loyal to Yahweh and faithfully [obey] him; if you do that, he will forgive you for having sinned. If we revere him, nothing evil will happen to us (OR, he will prevent evil things from happening to us). **7** When our behavior pleases Yahweh, he even causes our enemies to act peacefully toward us. **8** It is better to have a small amount of money that is earned honestly than to have a lot of money that is acquired dishonestly. **9** People plan what they want to do, but Yahweh directs/determines what they will [really] be able to do. **10** [If] God directs what a king says, what he decides is [always] right/fair. **11** Yahweh wants us to use scales that are correct; the weights in his bag are correct, [because] he made them. **12** Kings detest those who do evil, because [it is people doing what] is fair/right that causes their governments to be [MTY] strong. **13** Kings are delighted to hear people say [MTY] what is true; they love those who say what is right/honest. **14** If a king becomes angry, he [may] command that someone be executed, [so] wise people will [try to] cause him to be calm. **15** If a king has a smile [MTY] on his face, he will enable people to have a [long] life (OR, he will not order people to be executed); his being pleased [with people] is [as delightful] as rain in the springtime [when seeds are planted]. **16** Becoming wise is better than aquiring gold; getting good understanding/insight is better than acquiring silver. **17** Those whose behavior [MET] is good/right turn away from doing evil; those who guard their conduct [MTY] protect their lives. **18** Being proud will (lead to your having/cause you to have) disasters; despising others will result in your being ruined. **19** It is better to be humble and poor than [to associate with] proud [people] and [to become rich by] dividing with them (plunder/goods captured in a battle). **20** Those who heed good teaching/instruction will prosper; happy are those who trust in Yahweh. **21** People say that those who are wise learn what is right/good behavior, and those who talk pleasantly [are able to] influence others [to do what is right]. **22** Being wise is [like having] a fountain that gives life [MET], but foolish people are punished as a result of their acting foolishly. **23** Those who are wise think carefully before they talk, and as a result they are able to influence/persuade others [to do what is right]. **24** Kind words are like honey [SIM]: We enjoy them both, and both cause our bodies to be healthy/strong. **25** There are some kinds of behavior [MET] that people think are right, but (walking on those roads [MET]/continually doing those things) causes those people to die. **26** If a worker (has an appetite/is hungry), that urges him to work hard because he [SYN] wants to [earn money to buy things to] eat. **27** Worthless people plan [ways to cause] trouble [for others], and [even] what they say [injures people] like a hot fire does [SIM]. **28** Deceitful people cause strife/quarreling among other people; those who say false things about other people cause people who are friends to become enemies. **29** Those who act violently entice/encourage others [to also act violently] and lead them along a road that will end in disaster. **30** People [sometimes] show with [one of] their eyes [to signal to their friends that they are] planning to do something to harm [others]; they smirk when they are about to do something evil. **31** Gray hair is [like] a glorious crown [MET] that is given to people who have always behaved righteously. **32** Those who do not become angry quickly are better than those who are powerful; it is better to (control your temper/keep yourself from becoming very angry) than to conquer a city. **33** People (cast lots/throw marked stones) [to decide what should be done], but God is the one who truly decides what will happen.

17 It is better [to eat] a dry piece [of bread] and not have strife/quarrels than to have a big feast in a house where [everyone] is quarreling. **2** A slave who acts wisely will [some day] be the boss of his master's disgraceful son and when his master dies, the slave will receive part of his master's possessions. **3** [Workers put] silver and gold in a very hot furnace [to burn out what is impure], and Yahweh [similarly] examines people's inner beings [to see if they are pure]. **4** Those who do what is evil pay attention to people who say [MTY] what is evil, and liars pay attention to [other people's] lies. **5** Those who make fun of poor [people] insult God, the one who made the poor [people], [and] those who are happy when [someone else has] troubles will certainly

be punished [LIT] [by God]. 6 Old [people] are [usually] proud of [MET] their grandchildren, [just like] children are [usually] proud of their parents. 7 Fine/Eloquent speech is not suitable for foolish people to say, just like lies are not suitable for rulers [to say]. 8 People think that a bribe is like a magic stone [to persuade someone to do what they want him to do]; they think that because of the bribe, that person will do whatever they want him to do. 9 If you want people to like/love you, forgive them for the wrong things that they do to you. If you continue to remind them about those wrong things, they will no longer be your friends. 10 Rebuking people who have good sense will accomplish more for them than hitting them 100 times [with a stick]. 11 [Because] wicked people are always trying to cause trouble, someone will be sent to severely punish them. 12 A mother bear whose cubs have been taken away from her is dangerous, but it is more dangerous to confront a foolish person who is doing something foolish. 13 If someone does something evil in return for something good being done to him, evil/trouble will never leave that person's family. 14 Starting a quarrel is like allowing water to start to leak out of a dam; they both need to be stopped before they get worse. 15 There are two things that Yahweh hates: (Condemning innocent [people]/Saying that people who have done nothing wrong must be punished), and declaring that people who have done wicked things should not be punished. 16 It is useless to allow foolish people [RHQ] to try to become wise by paying for it, because they do not have enough good sense to become wise. 17 Friends love [others] all the time, and relatives are able to help us when we have troubles. 18 [If someone borrows money from another person], it is foolish for you to promise [IDM] that you will pay the money back if that other person is unable to pay back the money that he borrowed. 19 Those who like to sin [also] like to cause strife/trouble; [and] those who build fancy doors in their houses [to show that they are very wealthy] (OR, speak proudly) are inviting disaster. 20 Those who (have perverse minds/are always thinking about doing evil things) will not prosper, and disasters will happen to those who always tell lies. 21 Children who are foolish [soon] cause their parents to be very sad; their parents will not be joyful at all. 22 Being cheerful is [like swallowing] good medicine; being discouraged/gloomy [all the time will] (drain away your energy/cause you to become weak) [MTY]. 23 Wicked people/judges accept bribes that are given to them secretly, and as a result they do not decide matters justly/fairly. 24 Those who have good sense determine to do what is wise, but foolish people are always thinking about many different things [and never decide what they should do]. 25 Children who are foolish cause their father to be sad and [also] cause their mother to be very sorrowful. 26 It is not right to force someone who has done nothing wrong to pay a fine; it is wrong to punish good/respected people. 27 Those who have good sense do not talk a lot, and those who (control their tempers/keep themselves from becoming very angry) are [truly] wise. 28 People [may] think that foolish people who do not say anything are wise; if foolish people (do not say anything/keep their mouths shut), others will think that they are [very] intelligent.

18 Those who separate themselves [from other people] think [only] about those things that they are interested in; [if they would continually associate with] those who have good judgment/sense, they would constantly disagree/quarrel with them. 2 Foolish people do not want to understand [anything]; they only want to (express their [own] opinions/say what they think) [IDM]. 3 Whenever people do wicked things, others will despise them; when people do things that cause themselves to no [longer] be honored, they will be disgraced [also]. 4 What wise people say is [like] a deep ocean [that you can never get to the bottom of] [MET], and it [refreshes us like water from] a rapidly flowing stream. 5 It is not good [for a judge] to decide matters in favor of those who (are guilty/have done wicked things) and to not do what is just for those who (are innocent/have not done what is wrong). 6 When foolish people [SYN] start arguments, [it is as though] they [SYN] are requesting/inviting someone to flog/whip them. 7 What foolish people [MTY] say causes them to be ruined; their [own] words are [like] a trap [MET] [that catches/seizes] them. 8 [People enjoy listening to] what gossips say like [SIM] [they enjoy] tasty food; they [accept what gossips tell them like] [MET] they swallow tasty food. 9 People who are lazy while they work are [just as bad] as [IDM] those who destroy things. 10 Yahweh [MTY] is [like] a strong tower [MET]; righteous people [can] go to him and be safe [like they can run to a tower to be safe]. 11 Rich people [are protected because they have] a lot of money [PRS] like a city is protected because it has a high wall surrounding it [SIM]. 12 Proud people are on the road to being ruined, but being humble leads to being honored. 13 Those who reply to someone before that person has finished speaking are foolish; doing that is disgraceful. 14 A desire to [continue to] live can sustain someone when he is sick; if he loses that desire, he (cannot endure it/will become very discouraged) when he is sick [RHQ]. 15 Intelligent people [are always wanting to] learn more; wise people [SYN] are not content with what they already know. 16 If you take a gift to an important person, that will open the way to allow you to talk to him. 17 The first person to present his case in

court seems right, but when (someone else/his opponent) begins to ask him questions, [it may become clear that what he said was not true]. **18** If two influential/important people are arguing, [someone can] settle the matter by (casting lots/throwing marked stones to decide who is right). **19** If you help relatives, they will [protect you] like [SIM] a strong wall [protects a city], but if you quarrel with them, [that will separate you from them] like bars on a city gate [separate the city from those who want to enter it] [MET]. **20** People are happy when they hear others say [MTY] something that is good, [like] they are happy when they eat food that is good [MET]. **21** What you say can cause others to be killed or it can cause them to [continue to] live; [so] those who like [to talk a lot] must (accept the consequences/realize that what they say can cause much harm). **22** If you marry a [good] woman, that is [like] finding a wonderful thing; [it shows that] Yahweh is pleased with you. **23** [It is necessary for] poor [people] to speak politely when they request [rich people to do something for them], but rich [people] reply very impolitely when poor people speak to them. **24** There are [some] people who [only] pretend to be friends [with us], but there are [some] friends who are more loyal than members of our families.

19 Conducting our lives as we should [even though] we are poor is better than being foolish and telling lies. **2** Being enthusiastic but not thinking carefully [about what we are about to do] is not good; doing things hastily can cause us a lot of trouble [IDM]. **3** Some people are ruined as a result of their [own] foolish actions, and when that happens, they [SYN] angrily say that it is Yahweh's fault. **4** Those who are rich easily find people who want to be their friends, but when [people become] poor, their friends [often] desert them. **5** Those who tell lies in court will surely be punished [LIT]; they will not escape it. **6** Many [people] try to persuade important people to do favors for them; everyone [wants to] be a friend of those who give gifts. **7** [Even] the relatives of someone who becomes poor hate him, and his friends certainly stay away from him, too; [even] if he tries to talk with them, they will not be his friends [again]. **8** Those who become wise [IDM] are doing a favor for themselves; those who get good sense will prosper. **9** Those who tell lies in court will certainly be punished [LIT]; they will be ruined. **10** It is not appropriate for foolish people to live (luxuriously/like rich people), and it is even less appropriate for slaves to rule important officials. **11** Those who have good sense do not quickly become angry; people respect those who ignore offensive [things that people say to them]. **12** When a king is angry, [that causes people to be afraid of him], like the roar of a lion [causes people to be afraid] [SIM], but if he acts kindly toward people, [they like it just] like [they like] dew on the grass [in the morning]. **13** Foolish children [can] cause disasters to happen to their parents. A wife who constantly (nags/quarrels with) [her husband is as annoying as] water that continually drips [MET]. **14** We [can] inherit a house or money from our parents [when they die], but only Yahweh [can] give someone a sensible wife. **15** Those who are lazy sleep soundly, but if they are lazy, they will be hungry [because of not earning money to buy food]. **16** Those who obey [God's] commandments will remain alive [for a long time]; those who despise/disobey them (OR, those who do not control their own conduct) will die [while they are still young]. **17** When we give things to poor [people], [it is as though] we are lending to Yahweh, and he will (pay us back/reward us for what we did). **18** Discipline your children while [they are young], while you still hope that [they will learn to behave as they should]; [if you do not discipline them], you are helping them to destroy [themselves]. **19** Those who (do not control their temper/quickly become very angry) will have to endure what happens as a result; [but] if we rescue them [from those troubles once], we will have to continue rescuing them. **20** Pay attention when [people give you good] advice and learn from them, in order that you will become wise for the rest of your life. **21** People plan to do many [kinds of things], but what will happen is what Yahweh has decided will happen. **22** People want others to be loyal to them; it is better to be poor than to tell a lie [to a judge in court in order to get money]. **23** [Those who have] an awesome respect for Yahweh will live [a long life]; they rest peacefully and are not harmed [during the night]. **24** Some people are extremely lazy; they put their hand in a dish [to take some food] but do not even lift the food up to their mouths. **25** If you punish someone who makes fun of those who are wise, those who (are naive/need to be instructed) will learn to do what is smart; if you rebuke those who are wise, they will [listen to what you say and] become wiser. **26** Anyone who mistreats/abuses his father or forces his mother to leave the home is a child who is acting shamefully and disgracefully. **27** My son, if you stop learning things, you will [soon] forget what [you already] know. **28** Worthless witnesses [in court] make fun of [judges who try to] make fair decisions, and wicked people [enjoy] doing evil [like] they enjoy eating [good food] [MET]. **29** [God] is ready to punish those who make fun [of him/religion]; those who do foolish things deserve to be flogged/whipped.

20 Drinking a lot of wine or [other] strong drinks causes people to start fighting; it is foolish to become drunk/intoxicated. **2** Being afraid of a king when he is angry is like [SIM] being afraid of a lion when it growls/roars;

if you cause the king to become angry, he may execute you. 3 [People] respect those who stay away from disputes/arguments; foolish people [love to] quarrel. 4 [If] a lazy man does not plow [his fields at the right/proper time], he will look for [crops] at harvest [time], but there will be nothing there. 5 [Just] as it is difficult to bring up water from a deep well, it is difficult to know what people are thinking, but someone who has good sense/insight will be able to find out what people are thinking. 6 Many people proclaim that they can be trusted [to do what they say that they will do], but it is very difficult to find [RHQ] someone who can really be trusted. 7 If parents conduct their lives as they should, [God] blesses their children (OR, their children are very happy/fortunate). 8 A king who sits on his throne to judge people can [easily] [MTY] find out what things that people have done are good and what things are evil. 9 There is no one [RHQ] who can truthfully say, "I do not know of any wrong things that I have done; I have (gotten rid of all my sinful behavior/quit doing what is sinful)." 10 Yahweh detests people who use weights that are not right and measures that are not correct. 11 Even children show by what they do whether they are good or not; they show whether (what they do/their behavior) is honest and right [or not]. 12 Two of the things that Yahweh has created [for us] are ears to hear things and eyes to see things. 13 If you want to sleep [all the time], you will become poor; if you stay awake [and work], you will have plenty of food. 14 People [look at things that they are about] to buy, [and in order to get it for a lower price sometimes they] say, "(It is no good/It is poor quality)," but [after they buy it], they go and boast [about having bought it for a cheap price]. 15 Gold and precious stones are [valuable], but wise words [MTY] are more valuable. 16 If you foolishly promise to a stranger that you will pay what he owes if he is unable to pay it [DOU], [you deserve to] have someone take your coat from you. 17 People [may] think that food that they acquire by doing what is dishonest will taste very good, but later [they will not enjoy what they have done any more than they would enjoy] eating gravel/sand. 18 When people give you good advice, [if you do what they suggest], your plans will succeed; so be sure to get good advice from wise people before you start fighting a war. 19 Those who go around telling gossip are [always] telling secrets to [others]; so stay away from people who foolishly talk [too much]. 20 If someone curses his father or his mother, his life will be ended, [just] like a lamp is extinguished. 21 If you very quickly take the property that your parents promise will be yours after they die, you will not receive any good/blessing from it. 22 Do not say, "I will do evil to those who do evil to me;" wait for Yahweh [to do something about it], and he will (help you/[do what is right]). 23 Yahweh detests [those who use] dishonest scales and weights that are not accurate/correct. 24 Yahweh is the one who has decided what will happen to us, so (how can we (understand/know) what will happen before it happens?/we humans certainly cannot (understand/know) what will happen before it happens.) [RHQ] 25 You should think carefully before you solemnly promise to dedicate something to God, because later you might be sorry you have promised to do it. 26 Wise kings find out [MET] which people have done what is wrong, and they punish them very severely [IDM]. 27 Our consciences are [like] lamps that Yahweh [has given to us to enable us to know what we are thinking] [MET]; they reveal what is hidden deep in our (minds/inner beings). 28 Kings will continue to rule as long as they faithfully love their people and are loyal to them and as long as they rule righteously/fairly. 29 We honor/admire young people because they are strong, but we respect [MTY] old people more because they are wise. 30 When we are beaten or whipped, it [can] cause us to quit doing what is evil in our lives; when someone wounds us [by punishing us], it [can] cause our behavior to become good.

21 Yahweh controls what kings do [MTY] [like] he controls how streams flow; he causes kings to do just what he wants them to do. 2 People always think that what they do is right, but Yahweh judges our (motives/reasons [for doing things)] [MTY]. 3 Doing what is right and fair is more acceptable to Yahweh than [bringing] sacrifices [to him]. 4 Being proud and arrogant [DOU] is [like] a lamp [MTY] [that guides] wicked people; being proud and arrogant characterizes (wicked people's whole behavior/everything that wicked people do). 5 People who plan carefully will surely have plenty [of what they need]; those who act too quickly [to become rich] will become poor. 6 Money that people acquire [by cheating others] by lying [MTY] to them will soon disappear [like] a mist, and doing that will [soon] lead to their death. 7 Wicked [people] refuse to do what is right/just, but they will be ruined because of the violent things [PRS] that they do. 8 Guilty [people continually do what is evil; it is as though] [MET] they are walking on a crooked road; but righteous/innocent people [always] do what is right. 9 It is better to live in the corner of an attic/housetop [by yourself] than to live inside the house with a wife who is always nagging. 10 Wicked [people] [SYN] are always wanting [to do what is] evil; they never act mercifully toward anyone. 11 When those who ridicule [others] are punished, [even] those who do not have good sense [see that, and] they become wise, and when those who are wise are taught, they become wiser. 12 [God], the one [who is completely]

righteous, knows [what happens inside] the houses of wicked [people], and [he will cause] those people to be completely ruined/destroyed. **13** There are people who refuse to listen when poor people cry out [for help]; [but some day] they themselves will cry out [for help], and no one will hear them. **14** When someone is angry [with you], if you secretly give him a gift, he will stop being angry. **15** Good/Righteous [people] are happy when they [see others do] what is just/fair, but those who do what is evil are terrified [when they think about what may happen to them]. **16** Those who stop behaving like those who have good sense behave will [soon] discover that they have gone to the place where dead people are. **17** Those who spend their money to buy (things that give them pleasure/things that cause them to feel happy) will become poor; those who love [to spend money to buy] wine and nice/fancy food [MTY] will never become rich. **18** Wicked [people] bring on themselves the sufferings that they were trying to cause righteous [people] to experience [DOU]. **19** It is better to live [alone] in a desert than [to live] with a wife who is [always] nagging and complaining. **20** Wise people have many valuable things in their houses, but foolish people [quickly] spend/waste [all their money]. **21** Those who [always] try to act in a fair and kind way [toward others] will live [a long time] and be honored/respected. **22** A wise army commander [helps his troops] climb over a wall [to attack] a city that is defended by a strong army, with the result that they are able to (get over/destroy) the high walls that their enemies trusted [would protect them]. **23** Those who are very careful about what they say [MTY] are [able to] avoid trouble. **24** Those who make fun of [everything that is good] are proud and conceited [DOU]; they [always] act in an inconsiderate way [toward others]. **25** Lazy people, who refuse to work, [will] die [of hunger] because they [SYN] do not earn [money to buy food]. **26** All during the day [wicked people] desire to obtain things, but righteous [people] have plenty, [with the result that] they [are able to] give things generously to others. **27** [Yahweh] detests the sacrifices that wicked [people] offer [to him]; [but he] detests it even more when they [think that they will escape being punished for] their evil deeds because of the sacrifices that they bring. **28** Those who tell lies in court will be punished; no one stops/silences witnesses who say what is truthful/reliable. **29** Wicked people pretend [that they know everything], but righteous people think carefully about [what will happen because of] what they do. **30** [Thinking that we are] wise, and that we understand many things, and that we have good insight, does not help us if Yahweh is (acting against/not pleased with) us. **31** We [can] get horses ready to fight in a battle, but Yahweh is the one who enables us to (win victories/defeat our enemies).

22 (Having a good reputation/Being honored by people) is better than having a lot of money; being well respected is better than having plenty of gold or silver [DOU]. **2** There is one thing that is true about both rich people and poor people: Yahweh is the one who created all of them. **3** Those who have good sense realize [that there is something] dangerous ahead, and they avoid it; those who do not have good sense just keep going and later they will suffer because of doing that. **4** The reward that Yahweh gives to those who are humble and who revere him is that he causes them to be rich and honored and to live for a long time. **5** Because of the things that wicked people do, [they have difficulties/troubles] that will be like thorns and traps on the roads that they walk on [MET]; people who are careful/cautious will be able to stay away from those difficulties. **6** If you train/teach children to do what is right, all during their life they will act/behave in that manner. **7** Rich people rule over poor people harshly, and those who borrow money become like slaves [MET] of the people who lend [money to them]. **8** [If you plant corn or rice, corn or rice will grow]; [similarly], if you act unjustly, you will have disasters [MET]; and if you try to harm/oppress people [because you are angry with them], you will not be able to harm them. **9** [God] will bless those who are generous [IDM], those who give some of their food to poor [people]. **10** If you get rid of those who make fun of [everything that is good], there will no more arguing or quarreling or insulting [other people]. **11** If you always act sincerely [IDM] and always speak kindly, the king will be your friend. **12** Yahweh [SYN] (watches over/takes care of) [those who have] good understanding/sense, but he ruins the plans/affairs of those who always try to deceive others. **13** Lazy people [remain in their houses]; they say, "A lion might attack me if I go out into the street [to go to work]!" **14** What (wives who commit adultery/immoral women) say [to men] [MTY] is [like] a deep pit [MET] [into which those men fall]; those with whom Yahweh is angry will fall into that pit. **15** Children [SYN] naturally do things that are foolish, but if you punish/spank them [PRS], they [will] (stop doing foolish things/learn to behave as they should). **16** Those who oppress poor [people] in order to become rich, and those who give [a bribe] to rich [people in order that the rich people will do a favor for them], will just lose their money. **17** [Now] listen [MTY] to what wise [people] have said; think carefully about what I am teaching you. **18** It will be good to (keep these things in your minds/always remember them), because if you do that, you will be able to quote/recite them [to others]. **19** [I want you to] trust in Yahweh, and that is the reason that I am telling them to you, now. **20** I have written [RHQ] 30 (sayings/things that wise people have said) from

which you will receive good advice and you will be able you to know [many good/useful things]. **21** From them, you will learn what is right and what is true, in order that you will be able to bring back a good report to those who sent you [to school] (OR, give a good answer [to those who ask you questions]). **22** [It is easy to] rob poor [people] who are helpless [and cannot defend themselves, but] never [do that]; and do not oppress in court those who are needy/afflicted, **23** because Yahweh will speak to defend them, and he will punish those who steal things from others—by causing them to die. **24** Do not become friends with those who often become angry, and do not associate with those who cannot control their temper/anger, **25** because you might start to act like they do and not be able to stop doing that. **26** If someone borrows money, do not be one of those who promises to pay what that person owes he cannot pay it back, **27** because if you cannot pay it back, people will surely [RHQ] [come and] take away [everything you own], even your bed. **28** Do not [steal some of your neighbors' land by] removing the boundary lines/markers that your ancestors placed/set. **29** Know/Learn [RHQ] this about those who do their work very skillfully: They will quit working for ordinary people and will start working for kings [because the kings will want people like that to work for them].

23 When you sit down to eat a meal with a (government official/king), think carefully about what (OR, who) is in front of you. **2** [Even] if you (have a big appetite/want to eat a lot of food), restrain yourself. **3** Do not want to eat [a lot of] his fine food, because he may be trying to trick you. **4** Do not [cause yourself to become very tired by] working very hard to become rich; be wise and stop doing that, **5** because as soon as you look [MTY] at [all the money that you have acquired], it will be gone; it will [disappear as if it] suddenly grew wings [SIM] and flew up into the sky like an eagle. **6** [If] someone who is stingy [invites you to a meal], do not eat [a lot of] his fine food, **7** because he will be thinking about how much [the food cost that you are eating]. He [will] say to you, "Eat and drink all that you want!", but that is not what he [will] really be thinking. **8** [When you realize what he is really thinking, it will cause you to want to] vomit what you have eaten; and your kind words [telling him that you are enjoying the meal] will be wasted. **9** (Do not [waste time by]/It is useless) talking to foolish people; they will [only] despise the wise things that you say. **10** Do not [steal someone's property by] removing a boundary marker that has been there for a long time, and do not take for yourself the land that belongs to orphans, **11** because Yahweh is strong, and he is [like] a relative that has the responsibility to defend them, he will [stand up in court and] argue for them and against you. **12** Pay attention to what [your teachers] teach you, and try to learn from the wise things that they say. **13** Do not refuse to discipline your children; if you punish/spank them, it will not cause them to die, **14** and it may save them from [going to] the place where dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** **15** My son/child, if you [SYN] become wise, I [SYN] will be very happy. **16** I [SYN] will rejoice when I hear you [SYN] say what is right/wise. **17** Do not envy sinful people; instead, revere Yahweh all of your life. **18** [If you do that], you will be happy in the future, and [God] will certainly [do for you what you are] confidently expecting him to do. **19** My son/child, listen carefully to me and become wise, and think about (all that you do/your behavior). **20** Do not associate with those who drink a lot of (wine/strong drink) or with those who (are gluttons/eat more than they should), **21** because drunkards and gluttons will become poor; and if all that you do is eat and sleep, you will [soon] (be wearing rags/not have any money to buy clothes). **22** Pay attention to what your father tells you, and (do not neglect/take care of) [LIT] your mother when she is old. **23** Try to know/learn what is wise, and get good instruction and understanding; and do not throw those things away. **24** Righteous [children] will cause their parents to be very happy; those whose children are wise are proud of them. **25** [Do what will] cause your father to be glad and enable your mother [also] to be happy. **26** My son, heed what I say to you, and allow what I do to be an example for you. **27** Prostitutes and immoral women [DOU] are [like] [MET] a deep pit or a well [that you may fall into]. **28** They wait [for you] like robbers [SIM], and they cause many men to (be unfaithful to/have sex with women who are not) their wives. **29** I will tell you [RHQ] what kind of people are always miserable and sad. I will tell you [RHQ] which people are always causing arguments/quarrels and who are always complaining. I will tell you [RHQ] who are injured in fights and whose eyes are always red/bloodshot. **30** [It is] those who drink a lot of wine, who try drinking other kinds of strong drinks. **31** Do not look with pleasure at red wine that looks nice, and which sparkles when it is [poured out] into cups, and which tastes good as you drink it, **32** because the next morning [you will feel like] you have been bitten by a poisonous snake [DOU]. **33** You [SYN] will [think that you are] seeing strange/weird things, and you [SYN] will not be able to think clearly or speak clearly. **34** You will think you are in a ship that is tossing on the sea; you be like [SIM] someone who is trying to sleep when the ship is rolling from one side to the other. **35** You will say, "[I think that] someone struck me, but he did not hurt me; he hit me, but I did not feel it. When will I (wake up/feel normal again) in order that I can drink some more wine?"

24 Do not envy evil people; do not desire to associate with
them, **2** because they are [constantly] thinking about
acting violently, and whenever they speak [MTY], they talk
about (causing trouble/hurting someone). **3** People make
good houses (OR, families) by doing what is wise, and they
make their houses (OR, families) strong by [heeding] good
advice. **4** By using good sense, [they are able to buy] valuable
and beautiful things and put them in the rooms of their
houses. **5** Being wise is better than being strong/powerful;
those who know [many things can accomplish more] than
those who are [very] strong. **6** Leaders can fight battles if they
have wise advisors, and they win those battles if they have
many good advisors. **7** Foolish people cannot understand
wise sayings/talk; at public meetings they are not [able to]
say anything [that is useful]. **8** Those who are [always]
planning to do evil things will be called troublemakers. **9** It is
sinful to plan to do foolish things, and people hate those
who make fun of [everything that is good]. **10** If you [act as
though] you are helpless when you have troubles, you are
[truly very] weak. **11** [If it is unjustly decided] that someone
must be executed, [try hard to] rescue them [DOU]. **12** If
you say, "I did not know anything about it, [so (it is not my
concern/I did not try to help him)]," remember that God
knows what we have done, and he knows what we were
thinking [IDM, RHQ], and he will certainly [RHQ] repay us as
we deserve for what we have done or for not doing what we
should have done. **13** My child/son, eat honey, because it
is good [for you]; the honey that drips from honeycombs
tastes [very] sweet. **14** Similarly, being wise is good for
your soul; if you become wise, you will be [happy in] the
future, and [God] will certainly [do for you what you are]
confidently expecting him to do [LIT]. **15** Do not be like
wicked people who [hide and] wait to break into the houses
of righteous/good [people] and rob/steal things. **16** [Even
if] good people fall down seven/many times, they [always]
stand/get up again, but when a disaster happens to wicked
[people], it ruins/destroys them. **17** Do not be happy when
something bad happens to one of your enemies; do not
rejoice when he stumbles and falls, **18** because Yahweh
will know what you are thinking, and he will not like it, and
[as a result] he will not punish that enemy of yours. **19** Do
not become angry/upset about those who do what is evil,
and do not [SYN] envy them, **20** because [nothing good]
will happen to wicked people; they are [like] a lamp that
will soon be extinguished [MET]. **21** My child/son, revere
Yahweh and [also] honor the king, and do not associate with
people who want to rebel against either of them, **22** because
those people will suddenly experience disasters; and no
one knows [RHQ] what great disasters that God or the king
can cause to happen to them. **23** Here are more things that
wise [people] have said: It is wrong for judges to decide
matters unfairly [IDM]. **24** If they say to people who are guilty,
"You (are innocent/have not done something that is wrong),"
[even] people in other nations will curse and despise them,
25 but if judges say that guilty people must be punished,
things will go well for those judges, and (they will receive
blessings/God will bless them). **26** Those who answer others
honestly show that they are truly their friends [IDM]. **27** First,
do the work [that needs to be done] outside [your house],
and prepare your fields, [and then plant things], and after
you finish doing that, build your house. **28** [In the courtroom]
do not testify against someone when you have no reason to
do that, and do not [try to] deceive [people] by what you say
[MTY]. **29** Do not say, "I will do to him what he did to me; I
will pay him back for [the bad things that] he did to me." **30**
One day I walked by the vineyards of a lazy man, a man
who did not have good sense. **31** I was surprised to see that
the fields were full of all kinds of thorny bushes, and the
stone wall [around the garden] had (collapsed/fallen down).
32 When I saw that, I thought about it, and I learned this: **33**
[If you spend a lot of time] sleeping and napping and folding
your hands while you rest, **34** [soon] you will become poor;
[it will be as though] [PRS, SIM] a bandit who had a weapon
in his hand [attacked you and stole all that you had].

25 Here are more wise sayings/words that Solomon
[wrote]. Some men who worked for Hezekiah, the king
of Judah, copied them [from a scroll that Solomon had
written]. **2** [We consider] God to be great because he (acts
in mysterious ways/does things that we cannot understand);
[we consider] kings to be great because they explain things.
3 [It is not possible for anyone to measure] how high the
sky is or how deep the earth/ocean is; likewise [SIM], it
is not possible for us to know [all] that kings are thinking.
4 [If workers] burn out the impure bits that are in silver, a
man who makes things from silver can make something
beautiful from the silver. **5** [Similarly, if] wicked [advisors] are
taken away from a king, his government will remain secure,
because [the king will be able to] act justly. **6** When you
stand in front of a king, do not try to (impress him/honor
yourself) and do not (act like you are important/ask to sit
where important people sit;) **7** it is better if someone tells you
to sit closer [to the king] than for [someone to tell you], while
the king is listening, to sit further away in order that someone
who is more important [may sit closer to the king]. **8** Do not
quickly go to a court [to tell the judge about] something that
you have seen, because another witness may later [say
something that proves that you are wrong, and as a result]
you will be disgraced/ashamed. If that happens, (what will

you do?/you will not know what to do.) [RHQ] **9** If you and someone else think differently about some matter, settle it between yourselves, and do not tell others any secret [that he has told you]. **10** If others find out that you have told secrets, you will be ashamed, and from that time on, (you will have a bad reputation/people will think badly about you). **11** Something that is said that is [very] appropriate is [as delightful as seeing] [SIM] gold apples/ornaments in a silver bowl. **12** When a wise person rebukes/warns someone [SYN] who is willing to listen, that is [as valuable as] [SIM] a gold ring or a gold chain. **13** A messenger who (is reliable/tells someone else exactly what he was told to say) refreshes [the spirits of] his bosses who sent him like [SIM] (snow/cold water) refreshes [the ground] at the time that [people] harvest crops. **14** When someone promises to give a gift to us but never gives it, [that disappoints us] as much as [SIM] clouds and wind that come but do not bring any rain. **15** If someone keeps requesting a ruler long enough to do something, he will [often] agree to do it; similarly, by speaking [MTY] gently we can [often] convince [others that what we say is right] [IDM]. **16** If you find some honey, do not eat a lot of it, because doing that may cause you to vomit. **17** Do not go to your neighbor's house very often [to talk with him]; if you go [very] often, he will get tired of listening to you and start to hate you. **18** To falsely accuse others [in court] is like [SIM] [attacking them with] a war-club or a sword or a sharp arrow. **19** Depending on unreliable people when you have troubles is [as bad] as [trying to eat when] you have a bad/hurting tooth or [trying to walk when] your foot is crippled. **20** Singing to someone who is depressed [just causes him to feel worse]; it is like [SIM] taking off clothes on a very cold day or like putting vinegar on a wound. **21** If your enemies are hungry, give them something to eat; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; **22** doing that will cause them to feel ashamed [IDM], and Yahweh will reward you for doing that. **23** When wind blows from the right direction, it will rain; [similarly] [SIM], if we gossip about others, that causes them to look at us very angrily. **24** It is better to live ([alone/by yourself]) in the corner of an attic/housetop than to live inside the house with a wife who is [always] nagging. **25** Receiving good news from a country far away refreshes our spirits like [SIM] cold water refreshes us when we are very thirsty. **26** When a righteous/good person (gives in/yields) to wicked [people], that is [as bad] as [SIM] a spring that becomes muddied or a fountain that becomes polluted. **27** It is not good to eat too much honey, and trying to get people to praise you is also not good. **28** People who (cannot control their tempers/quickly become very angry) [are unable to defend their behavior]; that is like [having] a city without a wall around it, [with the result that no one can defend it].

26 Just [like] [SIM] [it is not appropriate for] snow [to fall] in summer time, or rain [to fall] at harvest time, it is not appropriate to praise/honor foolish people. **2** Like [SIM] birds that fly by [and do not alight/land on anything], if someone curses you, it cannot hurt you if you (do not deserve them/have not done to him what is wrong). **3** It is necessary to whip a horse and to put a bridle on a donkey [to force them to go where we want them to go], and similarly [SIM] [it is often necessary to strike] foolish people with a stick [to cause them to do what is right]. **4** If a foolish person asks a foolish question, [do not answer him], because [if you answer his question], you are just as foolish as he is. **5** If you give a foolish answer to someone who asks a foolish question, he will realize that he is (not very wise/foolish). **6** Anyone who asks a foolish person to take a message to someone [is himself doing something as foolish as] cutting off his own feet or drinking poison. **7** A lame man cannot use his legs, and similarly [SIM] [it is useless for] a foolish person to speak [MTY] (proverbs/wise sayings). **8** Tying a stone in a sling [so that it cannot be thrown at a target] is [as foolish as] [SIM] honoring a foolish person. **9** If a drunk person waves some thorns/brambles with his hand, [he is not able to accomplish anything useful by doing that] (OR, [he does not feel it when a thorn sticks in his hand]); similarly, if foolish people speak [MTY] proverbs, [they do not help anyone who hears them]. **10** A man who shoots arrows [to try] to wound everybody who is near [is foolish]; similarly, anyone who hires a foolish person [who passes by is very foolish]. **11** A foolish person will foolishly do something stupid a second time; it is [like] [SIM] a dog returning to [eat] what it has vomited. **12** [God] can help/bless foolish people more easily than he can help/bless people who are not wise [RHQ], but think that they are wise. **13** Lazy people [just stay inside their houses and do nothing]; [they keep] saying "[I think] there is a lion in the street!" **14** A door [continually] swings back and forth on its hinges [and does not go anywhere]; similarly [SIM], lazy people [just continually turn over] in their beds [and never do anything]. **15** Some people are extremely lazy; they put their hand in a dish [to get some food] but do not [even] lift the food up to their mouths. **16** Lazy people think that they are wiser than seven/several people who can answer [others' questions] with good sense. **17** Anyone who (meddles/involves himself) in a quarrel that does not concern him is [as foolish as] [SIM] someone who tries to grab a passing dog by its ears. **18** Crazy people who shoot burning arrows to kill people **19** are as foolish as those who deceive someone else and [then] say, "I was only

joking." 20 If there is no [more] firewood [to put on the fire], the fire will go out; similarly [SIM], if there are no people who (gossip/tell people things that are not true), quarreling will end. 21 [Putting] charcoal on burning coals or [putting] wood on a fire [causes the fire to keep burning]; similarly, people who like to quarrel cause people to keep arguing. 22 People [enjoy listening to what gossips say about others just like] [SIM] they enjoy tasty food; they [enjoy listening to what gossips tell them like] they enjoy swallowing tasty food. 23 People who say nice things when they are thinking about doing evil things are like a nice glaze/covering on a [cheap] clay pot. 24 Those who hate someone and are saying [MTY] something very different from what they are thinking are hypocrites; they are only planning [to harm that person]. 25 When they say nice things, do not believe them, because in their inner beings are many things that [Yahweh] hates. 26 They try to deceive people to cause them to think that they do not hate [that person], but in a public meeting, the people will find out the evil things [that they have done]. 27 Those who dig a deep pit [for other people to fall into] will fall into it themselves; rocks will roll down on those who start to cause rocks to roll down [to crush someone]. 28 Those [MTY] who tell lies to others [really] hate them, and those who deceive [others] ruin them.

27 Do not boast about [what you will do] tomorrow, because you do not know what will happen [PRS] on any day. 2 Do not praise yourself [MTY, PRS]; allow others to praise you. If someone else praises you, that is okay. 3 [It causes pain to our bodies to carry heavy] stones or [a pail full of] sand, but doing something stupid/foolish [can cause] great [pain to other people's spirits.] 4 It is cruel to be angry [with others], and our being angry sometimes destroys [others], but being jealous of someone is [RHQ] often more cruel than that. 5 It is better to correct someone openly than to show that you l don't love that person [by not correcting him]. 6 If a friend criticizes you, [he is a good friend and] you can trust him; but if one of your enemies kisses you, he is [probably wanting to] deceive you. 7 When someone's stomach is full, he does not want to eat honey; but when someone is [very] hungry, he thinks that [even] bitter things taste sweet. 8 Anyone who wanders [far] from his home/family is like [SIM] a bird that is far from its nest. 9 [Putting olive] oil and perfume on a person's skin causes him to feel good, but having a friend [who gives] good advice [is even better]. 10 Do not neglect your friends or your parents' friends; and at a time when you are experiencing a disaster, do not go to a relative [who lives far away to request his help]; someone who lives near you can help you more than relatives who live far away. 11 My child/son, cause me to be happy by becoming wise, in order that I will [know how to] reply to those who would criticize me [about your behavior]. 12 Those who have good sense will realize that there is something dangerous ahead, and they will hide; those who do not have good sense [just] keep going, and later they will suffer because of [doing] that. 13 [You deserve to] have your property taken from you if you [foolishly] promise to a stranger (OR, a strange woman) that you will pay what she owes if she is unable to pay it [DOU]. 14 If you rise early in the morning and call out a greeting to your neighbor [while he is still sleeping], he will consider it to be a curse, [not a blessing]. 15 [Having] a wife that is [constantly] nagging is as [bad as listening] to rain continually dripping on a rainy day. 16 [Trying] to restrain/stop her [from doing that] is as [difficult] [SIM] [as trying] to stop the wind or [trying] to hold oil in your hand. 17 [We can use one] iron tool to sharpen [another] iron [tool]; similarly [SIM], [when one person shares] what he is thinking, it can help other people [to think more clearly]. 18 Those who take care of fig trees will have figs to eat; [similarly], servants who protect their master will be honored [by him]. 19 [When a person looks] in the water, he sees his own face; similarly [SIM], [when we look at] a person's behavior, we know what he is thinking. 20 [It is as though] the place where the dead people are is always wanting more people to [die and] come there; and humans [SYN] are always wanting to acquire more things, [too]. **(Sheol h7585)** 21 [Workers put] silver and gold in a very hot furnace [to burn out what is impure], and [SIM] people learn [what we are really like when they see how we react when people] praise us. 22 Even if you beat/crush a fool severely [like] [MET] you pulverize grain with a pestle, you [probably] will not be able to cause him to stop (being foolish/doing foolish things). 23 Take good care of your flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, 24 because the money [that you acquired from selling animals previously] will not (last/stay with you) forever; similarly [SIM], governments [MTY] certainly do not [RHQ] last forever. 25 After you cut the hay [DOU] and [store it to feed the animals in the winter while] a new crop of hay is growing, 26 you will be able to [shear the sheep and] make clothes from the wool, and you will get money from selling [some of] the goats to buy [more] land, 27 and you will get enough milk from the [other] goats for you and your family and your female servants.

28 Wicked [people] run away [even] when no one is pursuing them, but righteous/good [people are not afraid]; they are as brave as lions. 2 When [the people of] a nation sin, they will have one ruler after another; but when their leaders are wise and have good sense, their government will last for a long time. 3 A poor person

who oppresses [other] poor [people] is [like] [MET] a very heavy/hard rain that [destroys the crops], with the result that there is no food [for people to eat]. **4** Those who reject/disobey [God's] laws always speak well of wicked [people]; but those who obey [God's] laws [always] oppose what wicked people do. **5** Evil people do not understand what it means to act justly, but those who try to obey/worship Yahweh understand that very well. **6** It is better to be honest [even] though you are poor than to be dishonest [even] though you are rich. **7** Young people who obey the laws are wise [IDM]; parents whose children associate with those who (carouse/go to wild parties) are humiliated/disgraced because of what their children do. **8** When people become very rich by charging very high interest [DOU], their money will [eventually] go to someone who does kind things for the poor. **9** If people do not obey [MTY] [God's] laws, [God] (detests their prayers/considers that their prayers stink). **10** Those who cause honest/good [people] to do what is evil will fall into their own pits/traps, but good things will happen to those who (are innocent/have not done what is wrong). **11** [Many] rich people think that they are wise, but poor people who have good sense will find out whether rich people really are wise or not. **12** When righteous/good [people] (succeed/win [elections]), everyone (celebrates/is happy); but when wicked [people win], everyone hides [because they are afraid of what the wicked people will do]. **13** Those who refuse to confess/admit their sins will not prosper, but [God] acts mercifully/kindly toward those who confess their sins and turn away from their sinful behavior. **14** [God] is pleased with those who always revere him, but those who are stubborn [IDM] will experience disasters. **15** Wicked people who [mistreat] poor people whom they rule are [as dangerous to them as] [SIM] a lion roaring [at them] or a bear springing up [to attack them]. **16** Rulers who do not have good sense cruelly oppress [the people they rule], but rulers who do not want to become rich by cheating/deceiving [people] will live (OR, rule) for a long time. **17** Those who are guilty of murdering [MTY] another person will (be fugitives/keep running away) until they die; do not help them to escape. **18** Those who [continually] do what is right will be safe/protected, but those who are dishonest will [suddenly] be ruined. **19** Farmers who work [hard] in their fields will [produce good crops and always] have plenty of food [to eat], but those who spend all their time (on useless projects/doing things that do not benefit anyone) will become very poor. **20** [God] will greatly bless those who (are trustworthy/always do what they say that they will do), but he will certainly punish [LIT] those who try to become rich quickly. **21** It is not good [for judges] to decide matters unfairly/unjustly, but [some] people will do what is wrong [even] if they receive [only] a very small bribe [HYP] [for doing it]. **22** Selfish people [IDM] are very eager to become rich quickly; they do not realize that they will [soon] become poor. **23** Those who rebuke someone will be appreciated/thanked more than those who [say nice things to others merely] to (flatter them/cause them to feel good). **24** Anyone who steals things from his father or his mother and says "That is not sinful" is as bad as a bandit. **25** Greedy people cause trouble/strife; those who trust in Yahweh will prosper [IDM]. **26** Those who believe that what they think [is always right] are foolish; those who act wisely will (escape danger/be safe). **27** Those who give things to poor [people] will not become poor, but many [people] will curse those who refuse to help [IDM] poor people. **28** When wicked [people] become rulers, people hide [because they are afraid of what those wicked people will do]; but when wicked people are no longer rulers, good/righteous [people will] become the rulers.

29 Some people remain stubborn [IDM] [even] though they are often reproved/warned [about doing what is wrong], [but some day] they will be crushed/ruined, and nothing will be able to heal them. **2** When righteous [people] are rulers, people are happy, but when wicked [people] rule, people (groan/are miserable). **3** Those who are eager to become wise cause their parents to be glad; those who spend their time with prostitutes will end up giving all their money to them. **4** When a king rules justly/fairly, he causes his nation to be strong, but a king who is concerned [only] with getting more money from the people ruins his nation. **5** Those who (flatter others/say nice things to others [merely] to cause them to feel good) are really setting a trap for them (OR, for themselves) [SYN]. **6** Evil people will be trapped by the sins that they commit, but righteous/honest people will sing and be joyful/happy. **7** Righteous/Good people know that poor [people] should be treated fairly/justly, [but] wicked people (are not concerned about/do not pay attention to) those matters at all. **8** Those who make fun of [everything that is good say things that] cause [everyone in] the city to (be agitated/in turmoil); those who are wise enable [people] to remain calm. **9** If a wise person sues a foolish person, the foolish person merely laughs [at him] and yells [at him] and will not be quiet (OR, [the dispute will] not be resolved). **10** Those who murder others hate people who (are honest/always do what is right), but righteous [people] try to protect them. **11** People who are wise are patient and restrain/control themselves when they are angry, but foolish people (quickly show others that they are very angry/do not restrain themselves at all). **12** If a ruler (pays attention to/believes) [people who tell] lies, all his officials will [also]

become wicked. **13** There is one thing that is true about both poor people and those who oppress them: Yahweh enables all of them to see. **14** If kings judge poor [people] fairly, they will continue to rule for a long time. **15** If children are punished/spanked and reproved/warned, they become wise; but if they are allowed to do whatever they want to do, they [do things that] cause their mothers to be ashamed of them. **16** When wicked [people] rule, there are more crimes committed {people commit more crimes}, but [some day] those wicked people will (be defeated/no longer rule), and righteous [people] will see that happen. **17** If you discipline your children, they will no longer [do things that] will cause you to be worried; instead, they [will do things that] will delight you [SYN]. **18** When the people [of a nation] do not receive messages that come directly from God, they do not control their behavior. [God] is pleased with those who obey his laws. **19** It is not possible to correct/discipline servants only by talking to them; they understand what you are saying, but they do not pay attention to it. **20** [God] can help/bless foolish people more easily [RHQ] than he can help/bless people who speak without thinking first. **21** If someone gives his servants everything that they want, starting from when they are young, some day those servants will take from him everything that he owns. **22** Those who [quickly] become angry cause [many] arguments, and they [also] commit many sins. **23** Proud people will be disgraced; those who are humble will be respected. **24** Those who help thieves [to steal] only hurt themselves; [when they are in court], they solemnly ask [God] to curse them [if they do not tell the truth], but they do not tell the truth [about the crime that was committed], [and as a result, God will curse them]. **25** It is [like] a dangerous trap [MET] [for people] to be (afraid of/worried about) what others will think about them, but those who trust in Yahweh are safe/protected. **26** Many [people] request rulers to do things to help them, but Yahweh is [the only one] who surely does for people what is fair/just. **27** Righteous [people] hate/detest those who do what is evil, and wicked [people] hate [those whose behavior is always] good.

30 These are sayings/messages that God gave to Agur, the son of Jakeh. [Agur wrote them] for Ithiel and Ucal. **2** It seems that I am very stupid; I do not deserve to be considered to be a human; I do not have the good sense that humans should have. **3** I have not learned [how to become] wise and I do not know [much] about God. **4** [But let me say this]: No one [RHQ] has ascended to heaven [to find out what God is like] and returned [to tell us]. No one [RHQ] has gathered/held the wind in his hand. No one [RHQ] has wrapped the water [in the ocean] in [a piece of] cloth, and no one [RHQ] has established the boundaries of the earth. [If you know who has done those things, tell me] [RHQ] his name, and the names of his children [SAR]! [But you do not know who has done those things, so you cannot speak with authority about what God is like]. **5** Everything that God has said is true; he is [like] a shield [MET] for all those who request him to protect them. **6** Do not add to (OR, change) what God has said; if you do that, he will rebuke you and show that you are lying. **7** [God], I ask you to do two things for me; [please] do them before I die: **8** Help me never to lie or deceive [people] and do not cause me to become poor or to become rich. [Just] give me the food that I need; **9** because if I become rich, I might say that I do not [RHQ] know you and that I do not need you; and if I become poor, I might dishonor you by stealing things. **10** Do not (slander/say bad things about) a worker to his boss; if you do that, the worker will curse you, and cause you to have trouble. **11** [I will list four kinds of evil things that people do]: Some people curse their fathers and do not [ask God to] bless their mothers. **12** Some people think that they are perfect, but [really] they have never been cleansed from their guilt for committing disgusting sins. **13** Some people are very proud; they think that they are very good and they despise others. **14** Some people [act very cruelly toward others]; [it is as though] [MET] they have teeth that are [like] sharp knives; they severely oppress poor [people] and try to cause them to disappear from the land. **15** Leeches [are always wanting more blood to suck]; [similarly, greedy people are always] saying "Give [me some]!" or "Give [me more]!" [MET] There are four things that are never (satisfied/content with what they have); they always want more [LIT]: **16** The place where the dead people are; women who do not have any children; ground that needs water/rain; and a fire that always needs more wood. **(Sheol h7585)** **17** Those who [SYN] make fun of their fathers or refuse to obey their mothers (OR, despise their aged mothers) should [die and] have their eyes pecked out by crows, and the [rest of their corpses should be] fed to the vultures. **18** There are four things that are wonderful to me, [but] I do not understand any of them: **19** How eagles fly in the sky, how snakes [are able to] move/crawl across a big rock, how ships sail on the seas, and how a man falls in love with a woman. **20** This is what a woman who (is not faithful to/does not have sex only with) her husband does: She commits adultery [EUP], and [then] bathes and says, "I have not done anything that is wrong!" **21** There are four things that no [one in] the world can tolerate: **22** [What] a slave [does who] becomes a king, a foolish person eating [too much] food, **23** [what] a woman who is hated [does when she] gets married, and [what] a female servant [does

when she] becomes the boss instead of her mistress. **24** [There are] four animals on the earth that are small, but they are very wise: **25** Ants are not strong, but they store up food during the summer [in order to have it during the winter]. **26** Rock badgers [also] are not strong, but they make their homes among the rocks [where they will be safe]. **27** Locusts do not have a king, but they march like [the soldiers in] an army. **28** Lizards/Geckos [are very small and] you can hold them in your hand, but they are [cleverly able to get] inside kings' palaces. **29** [There are] four animals that strut around and look very impressive while they walk [DOU]: **30** Lions, which are stronger than all other animals and are not afraid of any of them; **31** male goats, strutting roosters, and kings who (parade/walk proudly back and forth) in front of the people whom they rule. **32** If you have acted foolishly, exalting yourself, or if you been planning [to do something] evil, stop it immediately [IDM]! **33** If you churn milk, it produces butter/curds, and if you hit [someone hard on his] nose, [his nose] bleeds; similarly, if you do something to cause [people to become] angry, strife [usually] results.

31 These are sayings/messages that [God gave to] King Lemuel's mother, and which his mother taught him: **2** You are my son; I gave birth to you [RHQ]; you are the son that [God gave me] in answer to my prayers. **3** Do not exhaust your energy [having sex] [EUP] with women [to whom you are not married], with women who ruin kings [by having sex with them]. **4** Lemuel, kings should not be [constantly] drinking wine or [greatly] desire [to drink other] strong/alcoholic drinks. **5** If they do that, they forget the laws [that they have made], and they do not do what is right for poor/afflicted [people]. **6** Give strong/alcoholic drinks to those who are dying and to those who are (greatly distressed/suffering very much). **7** If they drink, they will forget that they are poor, and they will not think about their distress/troubles any more. **8** Speak [MTY] to defend people who are unable to defend themselves; speak to encourage others to do what is right for those who are helpless. **9** Speak [MTY] (on their behalf/to help them) and try to cause judges to decide matters fairly/justly; try to cause others to do for poor and needy [people] what should be done for them. **10** It is very difficult [for a man] to [RHQ] find a wife who is good and who is capable [of doing many things]. [Any woman who is like that] is worth more than jewels. **11** Her husband completely trusts her, and [because of her], he has everything that he needs [LIT]. **12** She never does anything that would harm him; she does good things for him all the days of her life. **13** She finds wool and flax [in the market], and she enjoys spinning it [to make yarn]. **14** She is like [SIM] a ship that brings from far away goods/merchandise to sell, [because] she buys food that comes from far away. **15** She gets up before dawn to prepare food for her family. [Then] she plans the work that her servant girls will do on that day. **16** She [goes out and] looks at a field [that someone wants to sell]; and [if it is a good field], she buys it. She [buys] grapevines [MTY] with the money that she has earned, [and then] she plants them. **17** She works very hard [IDM]; she makes her arms strong [by the work she does]. **18** She knows when she is getting a good profit from her business. [When it is necessary], she works [MTY] until it is late at night. **19** She holds the (spindle/rod which twists the thread that she is making), and [then] she spins the thread [MTY] [that she will use]. **20** She generously helps [MTY] those who are poor and needy [DOU]. **21** She is not worried that [the people in her house will be cold in] the winter, because [she has made] warm clothes for all of them. **22** She makes bedspreads/quilts for the beds. She wears fine linen clothes that are dyed purple, [like queens wear]. **23** Her husband is [well] known by the important people of the town; he sits with the [other] town leaders in the meetings of the town council. **24** She makes clothes from linen cloth and sells them. She sells sashes to shop owners. **25** She is strong in her character and respected/dignified, and she (laughs at/is not afraid of) [what will happen in] the future. **26** When she speaks, she says what is wise. When she gives instructions, she speaks [MTY] kindly (OR, faithfully). **27** She watches over everything that is done in her household, and she [IDM] is never lazy. **28** Her children all together speak highly of her, and her husband also praises her. **29** [He says to her], "There are many women who do admirable things, but you surpass them all!" **30** Some women who are attractive [are not really good women], [but] they can deceive us [regarding what they are really like]. Furthermore, women's beauty does not last; but women who revere Yahweh should be honored. **31** Reward women who are like that, and praise them in public [MTY] for what they have done.

Ecclesiastes

1 [I am Solomon], the son of [King] David. [I rule] in Jerusalem [and people call me] 'The (Preacher/Religious Teacher)'. **2** I say that everything is mysterious; everything is hard for me to understand; it is difficult to understand why everything happens. **3** (What do people gain from all the work that they do here on the earth?/It seems that people gain no lasting benefit from all the work that they do here on the earth.) [RHQ] **4** [Each year] old people die and babies are born, but the earth never changes. **5** [Each morning] the sun rises, and [each evening] it sets, and [then] it hurries around to where it started from. **6** The wind blows south, and then it [turns around to start blowing towards] the north. It goes around and around in circles. **7** All the streams flow into the sea, but the sea is never full. The water returns [to the sky], and [when it rains], the water returns to the rivers, and it flows again to the sea. **8** Everything is boring, [with the result that] we do not even want to talk about it. We [SYN] see things, but we always want to see more. We [SYN] hear things, but we always want to hear more. **9** [Everything continues to be the same as it has always been]; things that happen have happened previously, and they will happen again. What has been done before will be done again. There is nothing [really] new in this world [MTY]. **10** Sometimes people say, "Look at this! This is something new [RHQ]!" But it has existed previously; it existed before we were born. **11** [People] do not remember the things [that happened] long ago, and in the future, people will not remember what we are doing now. **12** I, the Religious Teacher, have been the king of Israel [for many years, ruling] in Jerusalem. **13** By being wise, I concentrated on understanding everything that was being done on the earth [MTY]. [But I found out that] God causes [all of] us to experience things that cause us to be unhappy/miserable. **14** It seems that nothing that happens on the earth really enables us to do anything useful. It is [like] [MET] chasing the wind. **15** [Many] things that are crooked cannot be caused to become straight; we cannot count things that do not exist. **16** I said to myself, "[Hey], I am wiser than any of the kings that ruled in Jerusalem before I [became the king]. I am wiser and I know more than any of them!" **17** [So] I determined to learn [more] about being wise and to learn about knowing about many things, and [also] to learn about [doing things that are] very foolish [DOU]. [But] I found out that trying to understand those things was also [useless, like] chasing the wind. **18** The wiser I became, the more disappointed I became. The more things I knew about, the sadder I became.

2 [Then] I said to myself, "Okay, I will try to do everything that I enjoy. I will find out whether doing what I enjoy can truly enable me to be happy." But I found out that doing that was also useless/senseless. **2** [So] I said [to myself], "It is foolish to laugh [all the time], and continually doing what I enjoy does not seem to bring any lasting benefit." **3** [So], after thinking a lot about it, I decided to (cheer myself/cause myself to be happy) by drinking [a lot of] wine. [So] while I was still trying to be wise, I decided to do things that [many] people do to be happy during the short time that they are alive on the earth. **4** I did great things: I [caused] houses to be built for myself and vineyards to be planted. **5** I [told my workers] to make gardens and parks. [Then] I [told them to] fill the gardens with many kinds of fruit trees. **6** I [told them to] build reservoirs to store water to irrigate the fruit trees. **7** I bought male and female slaves, and babies [who later became my slaves] were born in my palace. I also owned more livestock than any of the previous kings in Jerusalem had owned. **8** I also accumulated large amounts of silver and gold [that were paid to me] from the treasures of kings and rulers of provinces. [I hired] men and women to sing for me, and I had many (concubines/slave wives) who gave me [much] pleasure [EUP]. **9** So, I became greater than anyone else who had ever lived in Jerusalem, and I was [very] wise. **10** I got everything [LIT] that I [SYN] saw and wanted. I did everything [LIT] that I thought would enable me to be happy. All those things that I [SYN] enjoyed were [like] a reward for all my hard work. **11** [But] then I thought about all the hard work that I [SYN] had done [to get all those things], and none of it seems to bring any lasting benefit [DOU]. It was all [like] chasing the wind. **12** Then I started to think about being wise, and [also about] being foolish [DOU]. [I said to myself, "I certainly do not think that] [RHQ] the next king will be able to do anything better than I can." **13** And I thought, "Surely it is better to be wise than to be foolish, like light is better than darkness, **14** [because] wise people [walk in the daylight and] [IDM] can see where they are going, but foolish people walk in the darkness [and cannot see where they are going]." But I [also] realized that both wise people and foolish people eventually die. **15** So I said to myself, "I am very wise, but I will [die at the end of my life], like foolish people do. So (how has it benefited me to be very wise?/it certainly has not benefited me to be very wise [RHQ]). I do not understand why [people consider that] it is valuable to be wise. **16** Wise people and foolish people all die. And after we die, we will all eventually be forgotten [DOU]." **17** So I hated being alive, because everything that we do here on the earth [MTY] distresses me. It all seems to be useless [like] chasing the wind. **18** I [also began to] hate all the hard

work that I had done, because [when I die], everything [that I have acquired] will belong to the next king. 19 And (who/no one) knows [RHQ] whether he will be wise or whether he will be foolish. But even if he is foolish, he will acquire all the things that I worked very hard and wisely to get. 20 I thought about all the hard work that I had done. [It seemed useless], and I became depressed/discouraged. 21 Some people work wisely and skillfully, using the things that they have learned. But [when they die], they leave everything, and someone who has not worked hard acquires those things. And that also [seemed to] be senseless and caused me to be discouraged. 22 So, it seems that people do not [RHQ] get much for all the hard work that they do and for worrying. 23 Every day the work that they do causes them to experience pain and to be worried. And during the night, their minds are not able to rest. That also is very frustrating. 24 [So I decided that] the best thing that we can do is to enjoy what we eat and drink, and [also] enjoy our work. And I realized that those things are what God intends for us. 25 There is absolutely no one [RHQ] who is able to enjoy those things if God does not give those things to him. 26 God enables those who please him to be wise, to know [many things], and to enjoy [many things]. But if sinful people work hard and become rich, God [can] take their money away from them and give it to those who please him. But that also is something that is difficult for me to understand. [Their working hard seems] useless, [like] chasing the wind.

3 There is a right/correct time for everything, a time for everything that we do in this world. 2 There is a time to be born, and there is a time to die. There is a time to plant [seeds], and there is a time to harvest crops. 3 There is a time to kill [people], and there is a time to heal [people]. There is a time to tear things down, and there is a time to build things. 4 There is a time to cry, and there is a time to laugh. There is a time to mourn, and there is a time to dance [joyfully]. 5 There is a time to throw away stones [from a field], and there is a time to gather stones [to build walls/houses]. There is a time to embrace [people], and there is a time to not embrace [people]. 6 There is a time to search for things, and there is a time to stop searching for things. There is a time to keep/save things, and there is a time to throw things away. 7 There is a time to tear [our old clothes], and there is a time to mend [clothes]. There is a time to say nothing, and there is a time when we should speak. 8 There is a time when we should love [things that people do], and there is a time when we should hate [things that people do]. There is a time for war, and there is a time for peace. 9 (What do people gain from all the work that they do?/It seems that people gain very little from all the work that they do [RHQ]). 10 I have seen the work that God has given people to do. 11 God has appointed a time that is right/correct for everything to happen. He has [also] caused people to realize that there are things that will endure forever. But in spite of that, no one can completely understand everything that God has done, from the time that he starts doing things until he finishes them. 12 I know that the best [LIT] thing for us people to do is to rejoice and to do good things [all] during the time that we are alive. 13 And I also know that everyone should eat and drink, and enjoy the work that they do. Those are things that God gives to us. 14 I [also] know that what God does endures forever. No one can add to what God does, and no one can take away from the things that God does. God does those things in order that people would revere him. 15 Things that exist now have already existed previously, and things that will happen in the future have already happened previously; God causes the same things to happen many times. 16 Furthermore, I saw that on this earth [MTY], even in the courts where we expect judges to make right decisions about what people had done, they did many wicked [DOU] things. 17 [So] I said to myself [SYN], "God will judge [both] righteous [people] and wicked [people]; there is a time [for him to do that], because there is a time for him to do everything." 18 And regarding humans, I [also] said to myself, "God is testing us, to show us that [in one way] people are no different than animals, 19 because what happens to people happens to animals. Animals die, and people die. We all must breathe [to remain alive]. [With regard to that], people have no advantage over animals, so I have a difficult time understanding that. 20 [People and animals] all die and are buried. We are all made of soil, and [when we die], our corpses become soil again. 21 No one knows [RHQ] for sure that when we die, our souls/spirits go up to heaven and the souls/spirits of animals go down to the place where the dead are." 22 So I concluded that the best thing for [us] people to do is to be happy about the work that we do, because that is what God has given to us. I say that because no one of us [RHQ] knows what happens to us after we die.

4 I thought some more about all the suffering that people are caused to experience on the earth [MTY]. I saw the tears of people who were (oppressed/treated cruelly) and who had no one to comfort/encourage them. Those who oppressed them had power, and there was absolutely no one who was able to comfort those who were being oppressed. 2 [So] I thought that those who are already dead are more fortunate than those who are still alive. 3 And those who have not been born yet are more fortunate than those who are still alive and those who have died, [because] those who

have not been born have not seen all the evil things that are done on the earth. 4 I also thought about all the hard work that people do and the skills that they have. And I thought about how they compete with each other because they are envious of others, [and I concluded that] this also is something that is not accomplishing anything useful, [like] chasing the wind. 5 Foolish people [refuse to work]; they sit idly, with their hands folded, [and do not work]. [So] they ruin themselves. 6 [So I say], "It is better to be content with not having much money, than to work very hard and try to get a lot of money, which is [as useless as] chasing the wind." 7 I thought about something else that happens on the earth [MTY] that seems senseless. 8 There are men who live alone; they do not have a wife or children or any brothers living with them; every day they work [very hard], without stopping, to get a lot of money, but they are never satisfied with the things that they have. They never ask [themselves], "Why am I working very hard to earn more money? Why am I not doing things that would cause me to be happy?" What they do also seems senseless. 9 Having someone [work] with you is better than being by yourself [all the time]. If you have a friend, he can help you to do your work. 10 If you fall down, he can help you get up again. But if you fall down when you are alone, it will be difficult for you, because there will be no one to help you stand up. 11 Similarly, if two people sleep together, they can keep each other warm. But someone who sleeps alone will certainly not [RHQ] be warm. 12 Someone who is alone can easily be attacked and defeated by another person, but two people can help each other and (resist/defend themselves against) someone who attacks them. [Three people can defend themselves even more easily], [like] a rope that is made from three cords is harder to break [than a rope made from two cords]. 13 A young man who is poor but wise is a better person than a foolish old king who refuses to pay attention when people try to give him good advice. 14 It is possible for a young man like that to succeed and some day become king, even if his parents were poor or even if he was in prison some of the time. 15 But then some other young man becomes king, and everyone (starts to support/is pleased with) him. 16 Large crowds of people crowd around him. But after a few years, they will reject him, [too]. So it is all senseless, [like] chasing after the wind.

5 When you enter God's temple, you should be sure to listen carefully. Doing that is better than offering sacrifices to God [and then not obeying him], which is foolish. 2 Think carefully before you speak [MTY] or before you promise God that you will do something [IDM]. [Do not forget that] God is in heaven [and he is all-powerful] and you are here on the earth, so think carefully before you [make any promises to God]. 3 If you are continually thinking [and worrying] about things, you will have bad dreams about them and not rest [well]. And the more you talk, the more likely it will be that you will say things that are foolish. 4 When you solemnly promise God that you will do something, do not be foolish by delaying in doing it, because God is not pleased with foolish people. Do [all] the things that you promise God that you will do. 5 It is better to not promise [anything] than to promise to do something, and [then] not doing it. 6 Do not sin by promising to do something and then not doing it. And [when you promise God to do something and do not do it], do not say to God's priest that it was a mistake for you to promise to do that. If you do that, God will certainly [RHQ] become very angry with you, and he will take from you everything that you [SYN] have worked to acquire. 7 Promising to do something and not doing it is like [SIM] a dream that has no value; instead, revere God [by doing what you promised him that you would do]. 8 Do not be surprised if you see poor [people] being (oppressed/treated cruelly) [by powerful/influential people], or if you see judges making unjust decisions throughout the land. [That happens] because the people who do that are supervised [and cheated by] more important officials [DOU], 9 and even the king forces the people to give him some of the crops that they harvest. 10 Everyone who tries to [get as much] money as they can will never think that they have enough. They will never be satisfied with the money that they have. That also is senseless. 11 The more money that we have, the more people want us to spend our money to buy things for them. So people who have a lot of money do not [RHQ] benefit from it; they see [MTY] it when they get it, but it soon (disappears/is completely spent). 12 Those who work hard sleep peacefully [at night], even if they do not have much food to eat. But rich [people] do not sleep well, because [they worry] about their money. 13 I have seen [another] terrible thing that happens here on the earth [MTY]: People save [up all] their money and become rich, [but] they are not helped by saving a lot of money, 14 [because] something happens that causes their money to be gone, and when they die, there is no money for their children to get/inherit. 15 When we are born, we do not bring anything with us, and when we die, we take nothing with us from all that we have earned by our working hard. 16 That also seems senseless. People bring nothing [into the world when they are born], and they leave [this world] taking nothing with them. They have worked hard, but they receive no lasting benefit [MET]. 17 [Furthermore, rich people] are always miserable [MET] and sad, and depressed/discouraged and often sick and

(resentful/thinking that what has happened to them is unfair). **18** So, the best thing for people to do here on the earth during the few years that God allows them to be alive is to eat and drink and to enjoy their work, because those are the things that God has given to them. **19** If people are rich and have a lot of possessions, and are able to (enjoy/be happy with) the things that they have and to enjoy their work, those things are [also] gifts from God. **20** Those people do not worry much about [everything that has happened] during the time that they have been alive, because God enables them to be happy doing everything that they do.

6 I have seen something [else here] on this earth that troubles people. **2** God enables some people to get a lot of money and possessions and to be honored; they have everything [LIT] that they want. But God [sometimes] does not allow them to continue to enjoy those things. Someone else gets them and enjoys them. That seems senseless and unfair. **3** Someone might have 100 children and live for many years. But if he is not able to enjoy the things that he has acquired, and if he is not buried [properly after he dies], [I say that] a child that is dead when it is born is more fortunate. **4** That dead baby's birth is meaningless; it does not even have a name. It goes directly to the place where there is only darkness. **5** It does not [live to] see the sun or know anything. But it finds more rest than rich people do [who are alive]. **6** Even if people could live for 2,000 years, if they do not enjoy the things that God gives to them, [it would have been better for them never to have been born]. [All people who live a long time] certainly [RHQ] all go to the same place— [to the grave]. **7** People work hard to [earn enough money to buy] food to eat [MTY], but [often] they never get enough to eat. **8** So it seems that [RHQ] wise people do not receive more lasting benefits than foolish people do. And it seems that [RHQ] poor people do not benefit from knowing how to conduct their lives. **9** It is better to enjoy the things that we already have [MTY] than to constantly want more things; continually wanting more things is [senseless], [like] the wind. **10** All the things that exist [on the earth] have been given names. And everyone knows what people are like, [so] it is useless to argue with someone (OR, with God) who is stronger than we are. **11** The more [that we] talk, the more [often we say things that are] senseless, so it certainly does not [RHQ] benefit us to talk a lot. **12** We live for only a short time; we disappear like [SIM] a shadow disappears [in the sunlight]. No one [RHQ] knows what is best for us while we are alive, and no one [RHQ] knows what will happen to us after we die [EUP].

7 [Having] a good reputation [MTY] is better than fine perfume, and the day that we die is better than the day that we are born. **2** It is better to go to a house where people are mourning [about someone who has died] than to go to a house where people are feasting, because everyone will die some day, and people who are alive should think seriously [IDM] about that. **3** It is better to be sad than to be [always] laughing, because being sad can cause us to think more about how we should conduct our lives [IDM]. **4** Wise [people] who go to where others are mourning think about [the fact that some day they also will] die, but foolish people [PRS] [do not think about that]; they are always [MTY] laughing. **5** It is better to pay attention to [someone who is wise] you than to listen to the songs of a foolish person. **6** By [listening to] foolish people laughing we will not [learn any more than by listening to] the crackling of thorns [being burned] under a pot. Listening to fools is senseless. **7** When wise people say to others, "You must pay me a lot of money for me to protect you," that causes those wise people to become foolish, and [accepting] bribes causes people to become unable to do what is fair/just. **8** Finishing something is better than starting something, and being patient is better than being proud. **9** Do not quickly (lose your temper/react to things angrily), because it is foolish people [SYN] who become very angry. **10** Do not say, "Things were a lot better [RHQ] previously," because it is people who are not wise who say that. **11** Being wise is better than inheriting [valuable things]; being wise provides lasting benefits for every person on the earth [MTY]. **12** We are [sometimes] protected by being wise like we are [sometimes] protected by having a lot of money, but being wise is better [than having a lot of money], [because] being wise prevents us from [doing foolish things that would] cause us to die. **13** Think [carefully about] what God has done. Certainly no one can [RHQ] cause to become straight the things that God has caused to be crooked. **14** When things are going well for you, be happy, and when things are not going well for you, remember that God is the one who causes good things to happen and who also causes disasters. **15** During all the time that I have been alive I have seen a lot of [HYP] things that seem senseless. I have seen righteous people die [while they are still young], and I have seen wicked people remain alive for a very long time in [spite of] their continuing to be wicked. **16** [So] do not think that you are very righteous and do not think that you are very wise, [because if you think those things], you will destroy yourself. **17** If you do what is evil or do what is foolish, you might die while you are still young. **18** Continue to avoid doing what is evil and doing what is foolish; avoid doing both of those things by continually revering God. **19** If you are wise, you will be more powerful/influential than the ten most powerful/influential men in your city. **20** There is

no one in this world who [always] does what is right and who never sins. **21** Do not pay attention [IDM] to everything that people say, because if you do that, you might hear your servant cursing you. **22** You know that you have also cursed other people. **23** I said [to myself] that I would use my wisdom to study all the things [that I have written about], but I was not able to do it successfully. **24** Wisdom seems to be far from me; there is no one [RHQ] who can truly understand everything. **25** But I decided to investigate things and by my wisdom try to understand the reason for everything. I also wanted to understand why people act wickedly and why they act very foolishly. **26** [One thing I learned was that] (allowing a woman to seduce you/having sex with a woman to whom you are not married) is worse than dying. A woman who tries to seduce men is [as dangerous as] a trap [MET]. [If you allow her to put] her arms [around you, it will be as though she will be fastening you with] chains. Women like that will capture sinful men, but men who please God will escape from such women. **27** This is what I have learned: I tried to learn more and more about things to try to find out the reason for everything, **28** and I continued to try to learn more, but I could not find [all that I was searching for]. [But] one thing that I found out was that among 1,000 [people] I found one righteous man, but I did not find even one righteous woman. **29** [But] I did learn one thing: When God created people, they were righteous, but they have found many ways to do many evil things.

8 [I will tell you about] those who are truly wise [RHQ] with the result that they can explain why everything happens. Being wise enables people to be happy [MTY] and enables them to smile. **2** You solemnly promised God that you would obey what the king commands, so do that. **3** Do not quickly disobey the king. And do not join those who want to rebel against him, because the king will do what he wants to do. **4** We need to obey what the king says more than we need to obey what anyone else says; no one can say to the king, "(Why are you doing that?/You should not be doing that.) [RHQ]" **5** If you obey what the king commands, he will not harm you. [So] be wise, and know the correct/right time to do things and the right way to do them. **6** Although people experience many troubles/difficulties, there is a right/correct time to do things, and there is a right/correct way [to do them]. **7** No one knows what will happen in the future, so there is no one [RHQ] who can tell us what is going to happen. **8** We cannot control the wind, and we cannot control when we will die. Soldiers are not permitted to go home during a battle, and evil people will not be saved by [doing what is] evil. **9** I thought about all those things, and I thought about all [HYP] the other things that happen on this earth. I saw that [sometimes] people cause those whom they control to suffer. **10** I also saw that [sometimes] after evil [people] die, they are highly honored at their funerals by the people in the cities where they had done [evil] deeds. It seemed to be difficult to understand why that happens. **11** If evil people are not immediately punished, it causes [other] people [SYN] to [also] want to do evil things. **12** But even if sinful people commit 100 crimes, and [even if they] live for a long time, I know that things will go better for those who greatly respect and revere God. **13** [I also know] that things will not go well go for those who are evil, because they do not revere God. Shadows [do not last a long time]. Similarly [SIM], evil people will not live a long time. **14** Another thing that [sometimes] happens on this earth is that bad things happen to righteous people, and good things happen to evil people. It is difficult to understand why that happens. **15** [So] I decided that I would recommend that people be happy while they are alive, because the best thing that people can do here on this earth is to eat and drink and be happy. Enjoying doing those things will help people while they do their work, all the time that God has given to them to remain alive here on the earth. **16** I thought about being wise and about people who work very hard, working day and night and not taking time to sleep. **17** Then I thought about everything [HYP] that God has done, and I realized that no one can understand everything that happens here on this earth. Truly, people are not able to fully understand everything [that God understands], even if they try hard to do that. Even if wise people claim that they understand it all, they cannot.

9 I thought about all those things, and I concluded that God controls [what happens to] everyone, even those who are wise and those who are righteous. No one knows whether [others] will love them or whether they will hate them. **2** [But we know that some time in the future] we will all die; it does not matter whether we act righteously or wickedly, whether we are good or whether we are bad, whether we are acceptable for [worshiping God] or whether [we have done things to cause us to be] unacceptable; it does not matter if we offer sacrifices [to God] or if we do not; it does not matter if we do what we have promised God that we will do or if we do not; [we all die]. The same thing will happen to good people and to sinful people, to those who solemnly promise [to do things for God] and to those who are afraid to make such promises. **3** It seems wrong that the same thing happens to everyone on this earth: Everyone dies [EUP]. Furthermore, people's inner beings are full of evil. People do foolish things while they are alive, and then they die and join those who are already dead. **4** While we are alive, we confidently expect [that good things will happen to us]. [We

despise] dogs, but it is better to be a dog that is alive than to be a [majestic] lion that is dead. **5** We who are alive know that [some day] we will die, but dead people do not know anything. Dead people do not receive any more rewards, and people soon forget them. **6** [While they were alive], they loved [some people], they hated [some people], they envied [some people], but that all ends when they die. They will never again be a part of anything that happens here on the earth. **7** [So I say], be joyful [DOU] while you eat your food and drink your wine, because that is what God wants you to do. **8** Wear nice [MTY] clothes and make your face look nice. **9** Enjoy living with your wife whom you love, all during the time that God has given to you to be alive here on this earth. And even though it is difficult to understand why many things happen, enjoy doing the work that you do here on this earth. **10** Whatever you are able to do, do it with all your energy, because [some time you will die], and in the place of the dead where you are going, no one works or plans to do anything or knows anything or is wise. **(Sheol h7585)** **11** I have seen something else here on the earth: The person who runs fastest does not [always] win the race, the strongest soldiers do not [always] win the battle, the wisest people do not [always] have food, the smartest people do not [always] become rich, and people who have studied a lot are not [always] (honored/treated very specially) by others; we cannot [always] control what things will happen to us and where they will happen. **12** No one knows when he will die [EUP]; fish are cruelly caught in a net, and birds are caught in snares/traps; similarly [SIM], people experience disasters at times when they do not expect them to happen. **13** Once I saw something that a wise man did that impressed me. **14** There was a small town, where only a few people lived. The army of a great king came to that town and surrounded it. They built dirt ramps up against the walls in order to climb up and attack the town. **15** In that town there was a man who was poor but very wise. Because of doing what that man [suggested], the town was saved; but people [soon] forgot about him. **16** So I realized that although being wise is better than being strong, if you are poor, no one will appreciate what you do, and people will soon forget what you said. **17** Speaking quietly what is [very] wise is [much] more sensible than a king shouting to foolish people. **18** Being wise is more useful than [a lot of] weapons; but if you do one foolish thing, [it is possible that] because of doing that, you will ruin all the good things that you have done.

10 [A few] dead flies in [a bottle of] perfume cause [all] the perfume to stink. Similarly [SIM], a small amount of acting foolishly can have a greater effect than acting wisely. **2** If people think sensibly, it will lead them to do what is right; if they think foolishly, it causes them to do what is wrong. **3** Even while foolish people walk along the road, they show that they do not have good sense; they show everyone that they are not wise. **4** Do not quit working for a ruler when he is angry with you; if you remain calm, he will [probably] stop being angry. **5** There is something [else] that I have seen here on this earth, something that rulers sometimes do that is wrong/inappropriate: **6** They appoint foolish people to have important positions, while they appoint rich [people] to have unimportant positions. **7** They allow slaves [to ride] on horses [like rich people usually do], [but] they force officials to walk [like slaves usually do]. **8** [It is possible that] those who dig pits will fall into one of those pits. [It is possible that] someone who tears down a wall will be bitten by a snake [that is in that wall]. **9** If you work in a quarry, [it is possible that] a stone [will fall on you and] injure you. [It is possible that] men who split logs will be injured by one of those logs. **10** If your axe is not sharp [DOU], you will need to work harder [to cut down a tree], but by being wise, you will succeed. **11** If a snake bites a man before he charms/tames it, his ability to charm snakes will not benefit him. **12** Wise people say [MTY] what is sensible, and because of that, people honor them; but foolish people are destroyed by what they say [MTY]. **13** When foolish people start to talk, they say things that are foolish, and they end by saying things that are both wicked and foolish. **14** They talk (too much/without ceasing). None of us knows what will happen in the future, or what will happen after we die. **15** Foolish people become [so] exhausted by the work that they do that they are unable to find the road to their town/homes. **16** Terrible things will happen to the people of a nation whose ruler is a foolish young man, and whose [other] leaders continually eat, all day long, every day. **17** [But] a nation will prosper if its ruler is from a (noble/well-educated) family, and if its [other] leaders feast [only] at the proper times, and [if they eat and drink only] to be strong, not to become drunk. **18** Some men are very lazy [and do not repair the rafters], with the result that the rafters sag [and collapse]; and if they do not repair the roof, water will leak into the house [when it rains]. **19** Eating food and drinking wine causes us to laugh and be happy, [but] we are able to enjoy those things only if we have money [to buy them]. **20** Do not even think about cursing the king, or cursing rich [people, even] when you are [alone] in your bedroom, because [it is possible that] a little bird will hear [what you are saying], [and] tell those people what you said [about them].

11 Give generously to others [some of] the money [MET] that you have; if you do that, later you will get back an equal amount. **2** Share some of what you have with (seven

or eight/several) [others], because you do not know when you will experience a disaster, [and if you give some of what you have to others], [when you experience that disaster, they will kindly help you]. **3** [It is always true that] when clouds are full of water, they pour rain on the earth. [Similarly], wherever a tree falls on the ground, that is where it will remain. **4** If farmers see in what direction the wind is blowing, they will know whether it is wise at that time to plant things or not. [It is also true that] if farmers look at the clouds [and see that they are blowing from the west, which means that it will probably rain,] they will not [try to] harvest their crops on that day. **5** We do not know where the wind comes from or where it goes, and we do not know how bodies are formed in women's wombs. Similarly [SIM], God is the one who made everything, and we cannot [fully] understand what God does. **6** [Start] planting your seeds in the morning, and do not stop planting them until the evening, because you do not know which ones will grow better, the ones you plant in the morning or the ones you plant later in the day, or whether both will grow well. **7** It is very delightful to be alive and see [MTY] the sun [rise every morning]. **8** [Even] if people live for many years, they should enjoy all of them. But they should not forget that [some day they will die] and then they will never be able to see any light again, and we do not know what will happen to us after we die. **9** You young people, be happy while you are still young. Enjoy [IDM] doing the things that you want to do. But do not forget that [some day] God will judge you concerning all the things that you do. **10** [So when you are young] [MTY], do not worry about anything, and do not pay attention to the pains that you have in your body, because we will not remain young and strong forever.

12 While you are still young, keep thinking about [God], who created you. Do that before [you are old] and you experience many troubles, during the years when you say "I no [longer] enjoy being alive." **2** [When you become old], the light from the sun and moon and stars will [seem] dim [to you], and [it will seem that the rain] clouds [always] return [quickly] after it rains. **3** Then your [arms that you use to protect] [MET] your bodies will shake/tremble, and your [legs that support] [MET] your bodies will become weak. Many of your [teeth that you use to] grind/chew [your food] will fall out, and your [eyes that you use to] look out of windows will not see clearly. **4** Your [ears] [MET] will not hear the noise in the streets, and you will not be able to hear clearly the sound of people grinding grain with millstones. You will be awakened in the morning by hearing the birds singing/chirping, [but] you will not be able to hear well the songs that (the birds/people) sing. **5** You will be afraid to be in high places and afraid of dangers on the roads that you walk on. [Your hair] will become [white like] [MET] the flowers of almond trees. [When you try to walk], you will drag yourself along like [MET] grasshoppers, and you will no longer desire [to have sex]. Then you will [die and] go to your eternal home, and people who will mourn for you will be in the streets. **6** [Think much about God now, because] soon our lives will end, [like] [MET] silver chains or golden bowls that break easily, or like pitchers/jugs that are broken at the water fountain, or like broken pulleys at a well. **7** Then our corpses will [decay and] become dirt again, and our spirits will return to God, the one who gave us our spirits. **8** [So] I say [again] that it is difficult to understand why everything happens; everything is mysterious. **9** I was considered to be a very wise man, and I taught the people many things. I assembled/collected and wrote down many proverbs, and I carefully thought about and studied them. **10** I searched for the right words, and what I have written is reliable and true. **11** The things that [I and other] wise people say [teach people what they should do]; they are like [SIM] (goads/sharp sticks that people use to strike animals to direct where they should go). They are like [SIM] nails that stick out of pieces of wood. They are given to us by [God, who is like] [MET] our shepherd. **12** [So], my son, pay careful attention to what I have written, and choose carefully what you read that others have written, [because] writing proverbs/books is endless, and [trying to] study them all will cause you to become exhausted. **13** [Now] you have heard all [that I have told you], and here is the conclusion: Revere God, and obey his commandments, because those commandments summarize everything that people should do. **14** And do not forget that God will judge everything that we do, good things and bad things, [even] things that we do secretly.

Song of Solomon

1 This is [King] Solomon's most beautiful song. **2** Kiss me
[on my lips], because your love [for me] is more delightful
than wine. **3** The fragrance of the cologne on your [skin] is
[very] sweet/pleasing [CHI]. And your reputation is [very]
good and spreads, [like] [SIM] the fragrance of the special oil
spread on your skin. That is why the [other] young women
are attracted to you. **4** Take me quickly; take me to your
home. [It is as though] you are my king; take me into your
room. We are very happy [DOU] about you; we say that your
love [for each other] is better than wine. It is not surprising
that the other young women adore you. **5** You women of
Jerusalem, I am dark but beautiful; my dark skin is like
[SIM] the tents in Kedar, [or] like the beautiful curtains in
Solomon's palace. **6** [But] do not stare at me because of the
sun having caused my skin to become dark; my brothers
were angry with me, [so] they forced me to work [out in
the sunshine] in the vineyards, so I was not able to take
good care of my body/skin [CHI, MET]. **7** You whom I [SYN]
love, where will you take your flock of sheep today? Where
will you allow them to rest at noontime? I want to know
because it is not right [RHQ] for me to wander around like a
prostitute looking for you among the flocks that belong to
your friends. **8** You who are the most beautiful of all the
women, if you [search for me and] do not know [where I will
take my sheep], follow the tracks/footprints of the sheep.
[Then] allow your young goats to (graze/eat grass) near
the shepherds' tents. **9** You [are beautiful], my darling, like
the young female horse that pulls the chariot of the king of
Egypt. **10** Your cheeks are decorated with jewelry, and there
are strings of beads/pearls around your neck. **11** We will
make for you [some] gold earrings that are decorated/inlaid
with silver. **12** While the king was on his couch, the smell of
my perfume spread [around the room]. **13** The man who
loves me is [as delightful as [MET]] a (sachet/small cloth
bag) of myrrh between my breasts. **14** He is like [MET] a
bunch of flowers from the vineyards at En-Gedi. **15** You
whom I love, you are beautiful; you are very beautiful! Your
eyes are [as delightful/charming as] doves. **16** You who love
me, you are very delightful/handsome, you are wonderful!
This green grass will be [like] a couch [where we lie down].
17 [Branches of] cedar [trees] will shade us; [it is as though
branches of] juniper/pine [trees] will be like [MET] a roof
[over our heads].

2 I am [like] [MET] a flower/rose from the Sharon [Plain],
and [like] [MET] a lily [that grows] in a valley. **2** Among
the [other] young women, the one whom I love is like [MET]
a lily [growing] among thorns! **3** And among [the other] men,
you, the man who loves me, are like [MET] an apple/fruit
tree [that grows] in the forest. [You are like a tree whose]
shadow [protects me from the sun], and your [being close to
me] [EUP] is like [MET] eating sweet fruit. **4** You led me to
the (banquet room/room where we could make love), and it
is evident that you love me very much. **5** Refresh me and
strengthen me [with your lovemaking] [like I am refreshed by
eating] [MET, EUP] raisins and other fruit, because I very
much desire that you love me even more. **6** Put your left arm
under my head and with your right arm hold me close. **7** You
young women of Jerusalem, solemnly promise me, while the
does and gazelles [are listening], that you will not disturb us
while we are making love until we are ready to quit. **8** I hear
the voice of the man who loves me. [It is as though] [MET]
he is leaping over the mountains and skipping over the hills
9 like [SIM] a deer or a gazelle. Now he is standing outside
the wall of our house, looking in the window, and peering
through the (lattice/wooden strips inside the window frame).
10 He spoke to me and said, "You whom I love, get up; my
beautiful one, come with me [CHI]! **11** Look, the (winter/cold
season) is ended; the rain has stopped; **12** flowers are
blooming throughout the country/land. It is now time to sing;
we hear the doves cooing. **13** There are young/new figs
on the fig trees, and there are blossoms on the grapevines
and their fragrance fills the air. You whom I love, get up;
my beautiful one, come with me! **14** [You are like] [MET] a
dove that is hiding [far from me] in an opening/crack in the
rocky cliff. Show me your face, and allow me to hear your
voice, because your voice is sweet-sounding and your face
is lovely [CHI]." **15** [There are other men who are like] [MET]
little jackals/foxes that ruin vineyards; do not allow [those
men to attack me]. **16** You who love me, I belong to you and
you belong to me, and you [experience pleasure when you
kiss] my lips [like] [MET] a shepherd enjoys taking care of
his sheep. **17** You who love me, come and be like [SIM]
a gazelle or like a young deer on the hills of Bether, and
then flee like a deer at dawn [tomorrow morning], when the
darkness fades.

3 All through the night [while I lay] on my bed, I longed
for the one whom I love. I desired for him [to come], but
he did not come. **2** [So I said to myself], "I will get up now
and walk around the city, through the streets and plazas, to
search for the one whom I love." [So] I [got up and] searched
for him, but I could not find him. **3** The city watchmen saw
me while they were patrolling/walking around the city. [I
asked them], "Have you seen the one whom I love?" **4** As
soon as I walked past them, I found the one whom I love. I
clung to him and would not let him go until I had brought
him to my mother's house, to the room where my mother

had conceived me (OR, where I was born). **5** You women of Jerusalem, solemnly promise me, while the does and gazelles [are listening], that you will not disturb us while we are making love until we are ready to quit. **6** Who is it that is coming from the desert, who is [stirring up dust] like a column of smoke from burning myrrh and incense [made from] spices [imported by] merchants? **7** It is [Solomon], [sitting in] his portable chair surrounded by 60 bodyguards chosen from the strongest/greatest warriors in Israel. **8** They all have swords and they [all] (are trained to/know well how to) use them. Each one has his sword [strapped to] his side and [is prepared to defend Solomon from] dangers that might occur even during the night. **9** King Solomon [commanded his servants] to make that portable chair for him; [it was made] with wood from Lebanon. **10** The [canopy that covered it] was (held up/supported) by posts made of silver, and the back of the chair was [embroidered] with gold. The seat/cushion was covered with purple cloth lovingly made/woven by the women of Jerusalem. **11** You women of Jerusalem, come and look at King Solomon wearing the headdress that his mother put on his head on the day when he was married, the day when he [SYN] was very happy.

4 My darling, you are beautiful, you are very beautiful! Underneath your veil, your eyes are [as gentle as] [MET] doves. Your [long black] hair [moves from side to side] like [SIM] a flock of [black] goats moving down the slopes of Gilead Mountain. **2** Your teeth are [very white] like [SIM] a flock of sheep [whose wool] has [just] been (shorn/cut off) and that have come up from being washed [in a stream]. You have all of your teeth; none of them is missing. **3** Your lips are like [SIM] a scarlet ribbon, and your mouth is lovely. Beneath your veil, your [round, rosy/red] cheeks are like [SIM] the halves of a pomegranate. **4** Your [long] neck is [beautiful] like [SIM] the tower of [King] David that was built using layers/rows of stone. [The ornaments on your necklaces are like] 1,000 [HYP] shields that are hanging [on the walls of a tower]; each one belongs to a warrior. **5** Your breasts are [as beautiful] [SIM] as two (fawns/young gazelles) that eat [grass] among lilies. **6** Until dawn [tomorrow morning] and the nighttime shadows/darkness disappear, I will [lie close to your breasts] that are [like] [MET] hills that are covered with incense [DOU]. **7** My darling, you are completely beautiful; your body is perfectly [formed]! **8** My bride, [it is as though you are in] [MET] Lebanon [far away, where I cannot reach you]; come back to me. [It is as though you are inaccessible] [MET] on the top of Hermon Mountain or the nearby peaks. Come from where the lions have their dens and where the leopards live on the mountains. **9** My bride [DOU], you who are dearer to me than my sister, you have captured my affection [IDM] by only once quickly looking at me, and by one [strand of] jewels in your necklace. **10** My bride, your love for me is delightful! It more delightful than wine! And the fragrance of your perfume is more pleasing than any spice! **11** Being kissed by you is [as enjoyable as eating] [MTY] honey; your kisses are as sweet as milk [mixed with] honey. The aroma of your clothes is like [SIM] the aroma of [cedar trees in] Lebanon. **12** My bride, [you who are dearer to me than] [MET] my sister, you are [like] [MET] a garden that is locked [in order that other men cannot enter it]; [you are like] [MET] a spring or a fountain that is covered [in order that others may not drink from it]. **13** You are [like] [MET] an orchard of pomegranate trees full of delicious fruit, and plenty of [plants that produce] henna and nard [spices], **14** and saffron and calamus and cinnamon and many other kinds of incense, and myrrh and aloes and many [other] fine spices. **15** [You are like] [MET] a fountain in a garden, [like] [MET] a spring of clear water that flows [down] from [the mountains of] Lebanon. **16** [I want] the north wind and the south wind to come, and blow on my garden, [in order that] the fragrance [of the spices will] spread through the air. [Similarly], I want the one who loves me to come and enjoy [cuddling up to me] [like] [MET, EUP] someone comes into a garden and enjoys eating the fruit [that grows there].

5 My bride, [you who are dearer to me than] my sister, I have come [to cuddle up to you] [MET, EUP]; [it will be as though] I will be gathering myrrh with my other spices, and eating my honey and my honeycomb, and drinking my wine and my milk. You two who love each other, enjoy your lovemaking; enjoy all that you want to. **2** I was partially asleep, but my mind was [still] awake. Then I heard the one who loves me knocking [at the door]. [He said], "My darling, [you who are dearer to me than] my sister, my dear friend, my perfect one, my dove [MET], open the door for me! My hair is wet from the dew, from the mist [that has fallen during] the night." **3** [But] I had already taken off my robe; I did not [RHQ] want to put it on again [to open the door]. I had [already] washed my feet; I did not [RHQ] want them to become dirty again. **4** The one who loves me put his hand through the opening [in the wall], and I was thrilled [that he was there]. **5** I got up to open [the door] for the one who loves me, [but first I put a lot of] myrrh on my hands. The myrrh was dripping from my fingers while I unlatched the bolt. **6** I opened [the door] for the man who loves me, but he had left. He had turned away and was gone! I was very disappointed [IDM]; I searched for him, but I could not find him. I called him, but he did not answer. **7** The city watchmen saw me while they were walking around the city. They beat me and wounded me [because they thought I

must be a prostitute]; those men who were guarding the city walls took my robe. 8 You young women of Jerusalem, I plead with you, if you see the man who loves me, tell him [DOU] that I am very disappointed that we did not make love. 9 You who are the (fairest/most beautiful) among women, why [do you think that] the one who loves you is better than other men? In what way is the man who loves you better than other men with the result that you ask us to tell him that? 10 The man who loves me is handsome and healthy, (outstanding among/better than) (10,000/an uncountable number of) [other men]. 11 His head is [beautiful, like] [MET] purest gold; his hair is wavy and as black as [SIM] a raven/crow. 12 His eyes [are as gentle] as [SIM] doves along the streams; [the white parts of] his eyes are as white as [MET] milk, [with what resembles] jewels inlaid in them. 13 His cheeks are like [SIM] a garden full of spice trees that produce [sweet-smelling] perfume. His lips are [like] [SIM] lilies that have myrrh/perfume dripping from them. 14 His arms are like [MET] gold bars/rods that are decorated with precious stones/jewels. His body is like [SIM] [a column/pillar of] ivory that is decorated with (sapphires/valuable [blue] stones). 15 His legs are [like] [MET] pillars of marble that are set in bases made of pure gold. He is [majestic, like the mountains of] [SIM] Lebanon, as delightful/beautiful as [SIM] cedar [trees]. 16 His kisses [MTY] are extremely sweet; he is very handsome. You young women of Jerusalem, all that tells you why the one who loves me and who is my friend [is better than other men].

6 You who are the most beautiful of all the women, where has the one who loves you gone? [If you tell us] which [RHQ] direction he went, we will go with you to search for him. 2 The one who loves me has now come [to me, who am like] [MET, EUP] his garden, He has come to [enjoy my (charms/physical attractions) which are like] [MET, EUP] spices, to enjoy cuddling up to me [EUP, MET], and [kissing my lips, which are like] [MET] lilies. 3 I belong to the one who loves me, and the one who loves me belongs to me; he [enjoys kissing] my lips like [MET] [a shepherd enjoys] taking care of [his sheep]. 4 My darling, you are beautiful, like [SIM] Tirzah [the capital city of Israel] and Jerusalem [the capital city of Judah are beautiful]; you are as exciting [MET] as a [group/battalion of] troops holding up their banners. 5 Quit looking at me like that, because your eyes excite me very much. Your [long black] hair [moves from side to side] like [SIM] a flock of [black] goats [moving down the slopes] of Gilead [Mountain]. 6 Your teeth are [very white] like [SIM] a flock of sheep [whose wool] has just been shorn and that have come up from being washed [in a stream]. You have all of your teeth; none of them is missing. 7 Beneath your veil, your cheeks are like [SIM] the halves of a pomegranate. 8 Even if a king had 60 queens and 80 (concubines/slave wives) and more young women than anyone can count, 9 [none of them would be like] my dove, who is perfect, you who are your mother's only daughter, whom your mother considers to be very precious. [Other] young women who see you say that you are fortunate, and the queens and concubines recognize that you [are very beautiful]. 10 Who is [RHQ] this woman who is [as delightful] as [SIM] the dawn, as fair/delightful [to look at] as [the light of] the moon, as exciting as a [group/battalion of] troops holding up their banners? 11 I went down to some walnut trees to look at the new plants that were growing in the valley. I wanted to see if the grapevines had budded or if the pomegranate trees were blooming. 12 [But] before I realized it, my desire [to make love caused me to be as excited as] a prince riding in a chariot. 13 You who are the perfect one, come back [to us], in order that we may see you! Why do you want to look at this woman who is perfect, like [SIM] you like to watch two rows/lines of people dancing?

7 You who are the daughter of a prince/king, you have lovely feet in your sandals. Your curved hips/thighs are like [SIM] jewels that have been made by a (skilled craftsman/man who shapes jewels very well). 2 Your navel is [like] [MET] a round bowl that is always full of wine mixed [with spices]. Your waist is [like] [SIM] a mound/bundle of wheat with lilies [growing] around it. 3 Your breasts are as [as beautiful] as [SIM] two (fawns/young gazelles). 4 Your neck is like [SIM] a tower [made of] ivory. Your eyes [sparkle/shine like] [MET] the pools in Heshbon [city], near the Bath-Rabbim gate. Your nose is [is as lovely] as [SIM] the tower of Lebanon which faces toward Damascus. 5 Your head is [majestic] like [SIM] Carmel Mountain. Your long hair is shiny [SIM] and black; [it is as though] I, your king, am captured by your tresses. 6 You whom I love, who have many charming features that attract me, are very beautiful and pleasant/pleasing. 7 You are stately like [SIM] a palm tree, and your breasts are like [SIM] clusters/bunches of dates/fruit. 8 I said [to myself], "I will climb that palm tree and take hold of those clusters of dates." To me, your breasts are like clusters of grapes [that I can feel] and your breath is like the sweet fragrance of apples 9 and your kisses are like very good wine. My kisses [MTY] go to the one who loves me and flow [like wine] over his lips and his teeth. 10 I belong to the man who loves me, and he desires me. 11 You who love me, let's go to the countryside, and sleep among the henna bushes (OR, in one of the villages). 12 And let's go early to the vineyards to see if the grapevines have budded and if there are blossoms on them that have opened, and to see if the pomegranate

[trees] are blooming, and there I will make love to you. **13** The mandrakes/love-apples are producing a fragrant odor, and we are surrounded by delightful [pleasures] [MET, EUP], new ones and old ones, pleasures that I have been saving to give to you, who love me.

8 I wish that you were my brother who (nursed at/drank milk from) my mother's breasts [when you were a baby], [because, if you were my brother], if I saw you when you were outside [the house], I could kiss you, and no one would say that my doing that was wrong. **2** [No one would object if] I led you to my mother's house, to where my mother, who taught me [many things], lives. I would like to take you to my mother's house because I would [like to make love to you] [EUP], [and that would be as delightful as] [MET] juice [squeezed] from pomegranates. **3** You would put your left arm under my head and with your right arm hold me close. **4** [I would say to] you women of Jerusalem, "Solemnly promise me that you will not disturb us while we are making love until we are ready to quit." **5** Who is that [woman] who is coming up from the desert, (leaning on/clinging close to) the man who loves her? I woke you up [when you were] under the apple tree at the place where your mother conceived you, which is the same place where she gave birth to you. **6** Keep me [close to you], like [SIM] a seal on your heart, [or] like [SIM] a bracelet on your arm. Our love [for each other] is as powerful as death, it is as enduring as the grave. [It is as though] our love [for each other] bursts into flames and burns like a hot fire. **(Sheol h7585)** **7** Nothing can extinguish our love [for each other], not [even] a flood. If a man tried to cause a woman to love him by saying he would give her everything that is in his house, she would refuse. **8** We have a younger sister, and her breasts are still small. So this is [RHQ] what we should do for her on the day that we promise [some young man] that he can marry her: **9** If [her chest is flat like] [MET] a wall, we will [decorate it by] putting silver [jewels that are like] [MET] towers on it. Or, if she is [flat like] [MET] a door, we will decorate her with bits/pieces of cedar wood. **10** My [chest was previously flat like] [MET] a wall, [but now] my breasts are [big] like [SIM] towers. So the one who loves me is delighted with me. **11** [King] Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-Hamon, and he rented it to people for them to take care of it. He required each one to pay him 1,000 pieces of silver [each year] for the grapes [that they harvested]. **12** [But my body is like] [MET] my own vineyard, and Solomon, I am giving it to you. [You do not need to pay me] 1,000 pieces of silver [to enjoy my body], but I will give 200 pieces of silver to those who take care of me [MET]. **13** You are staying in the gardens and my friends are listening to your voice; [so] allow me to hear it, [too.] **14** You who love me, come [to me] quickly; [run to me] [MET, EUP] as fast as [SIM] a gazelle or young deer runs across [MET] hills of spices.

Isaiah

1 [I am] Isaiah, the son of Amoz. [Yahweh showed me] visions about Jerusalem and [all the other places in] Judah. He showed me these visions during the years that Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah. **2** This is what Yahweh says: "All you [angels in] [APO] heaven and [all you people on] [APO] earth, listen to me! The people that I caused to exist and took care of [DOU] have rebelled against me. **3** Oxen know their owners, and donkeys know who provides food for them, but my Israeli people do not know [me]; they do not realize [that I am the one who takes care of them]." **4** Terrible things will happen to that sinful nation, to those people who are guilty of sinning greatly. They are a group of very evil people, who act very unjustly. They have abandoned Yahweh, the holy one of Israel; they have (abandoned/turned away from) him. **5** Why do you [RHQ] continue to [do things for which] you should be punished? Why do you continue to rebel against Yahweh? [You are like] [MET] someone whose head is badly injured and whose mind is sick/corrupt. **6** [It is as though] [MET] from the soles/bottoms of your feet to the [tops of your] heads nothing is healthy; there are only open wounds and cuts and sores that have not been cleaned or bandaged, and no [olive] oil has been put on them [to heal them]. **7** [It is as though] your country is ruined/desolate; your towns have been burned. Foreigners plunder/steal the crops in your fields while you watch; they destroy everything [that they see]. **8** The city of Jerusalem has [already] been abandoned, it is like [SIM] a shelter in a vineyard that has been abandoned by the watchmen; it is like [SIM] a watchman's hut in a field of melons that has been deserted. It is a city surrounded by its enemies who are waiting to attack it. **9** If the Commander of the armies of angels had not allowed a few of us [his people] to (survive/remain alive), we would have [all] been [destroyed], like [the cities of] Sodom and Gomorrah [were destroyed]. **10** You [leaders of Judah are as wicked as] the rulers of Sodom were, and you [other people in Jerusalem areas are as wicked as] the people in Gomorrah [were]. Listen to this message from Yahweh, [all of you]! **11** He says, "You continue to bring many sacrifices to me, but I do not [RHQ] want them [because you do not worship me sincerely]! You bring me many offerings to be completely burned [on the altar], [but] I (am tired/do not want any more) of your burning all those offerings, the burning rams and the fat from fat cattle. I am not pleased with the blood of bulls and lambs and goats that [the priest] pours [against the altar]. **12** When you come to my temple to worship me, no one [RHQ] told you to trample on my courtyard while you perform all those rituals. **13** Stop bringing to me those offerings, because they are useless [to me]; I am disgusted with the incense that [the priests burn]. And [your feasts to celebrate] the new moon [each month] and your (Sabbath [days]/days of rest) and your [other] festivals— I detest them because of the wicked things [that you do]. **14** I [SYN] hate [all] your celebrations of each new moon and the [other] festivals that you celebrate each year. They are [like] [MET] a heavy burden that I am tired of carrying. **15** [So], when you lift up your hands when you pray [to me], I will not [even] look at you. Even if you pray [to me very] frequently, I will not listen [to you], [because it is as though] your hands are covered with the blood [of people whom you have killed]. **16** Cleanse your inner beings, and become [spiritually] clean! Stop your evil behavior! Stop doing things that are wrong! **17** Learn to do [things that are] good! [Try to] cause people to do what is just. Help people who are (oppressed/treated cruelly). Defend orphans and widows [when people take them to court]." **18** Yahweh says, "You need to think about the results of what you do. Even though [the guilt of] your sins be [as evident and as difficult to get rid of] as [SIM] red [stains on a white garment] [DOU], [I will get rid of them completely] [like someone who can make that stained garment] become as white as snow or wool [DOU]. **19** If you are willing to obey [me], [I will enable] you to have plenty to eat. **20** But, if you turn away [from me and] rebel against me, you will be killed [by your enemies'] swords. [That will surely happen, because I,] Yahweh, have said it." **21** "[You people of Jerusalem previously] faithfully [worshiped only] me, but now you have become like [MET] prostitutes [who are not faithful to any husband]. Previously, people there always acted justly/fairly and righteously, but now your city [is full of] murderers. **22** Previously, you were [like] [MET] pure silver, but now you have become [like] [MET] the scum that is left [when silver is purified]. Previously you were [like pure] wine, but you have become [like] [MET] wine that has [a lot of] water mixed with it. **23** Your leaders are rebels; they spend time with thieves. They all want to get bribes and force others to give them gifts [in order that they do good things for them]. They do not defend orphans [in court], and they do not do all they can to enable widows to get what they should receive. **24** Therefore [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, the mighty God of Israel, say to my enemies, 'will get revenge on you; you will not cause me any more trouble. And I will pay you back for the evil things that you did. **25** I will raise my fist to strike you. I will [punish you severely] [MET], as though [MET] you were silver [and I needed to heat you very greatly to] melt you and get rid of the impurities. **26** [After that happens,] I will give you good judges like you had previously; you will

have [wise] counselors like you had long ago. Then people will call your city "a city where people [act] righteously, a city where people are loyal to me."" **27** Because the people of Jerusalem will do what is fair/just, their city will be restored; those who repent [will be saved] because of [their acting] righteously. **28** But rebels and sinners will be crushed by Yahweh, and those who forsake him will disappear. **29** You will be ashamed because [you worshiped] idols under the oak trees [that you considered to be] sacred; you will be disgraced because [you worshiped idols] in the gardens where you chose [to worship them]. **30** You will be like [SIM] a very large tree which has withered leaves, like [SIM] a garden that [is dried up because] it has no water. **31** Those among you who are [very] strong will become [like] [MET] dry wood, and the work they do will be [like] [MET] a spark; both they and the evil things that they do will burn up completely, and no one will be able to put out the fire.

2 This is the message that [Yahweh showed me in a vision], concerning Jerusalem and [the rest of] Judea: **2** [I saw that] in the future, the hill on which Yahweh's temple is built will be the most important place on the earth; it will be [as though it is] the highest mountain, [as though] it has been raised up above all other hills; and people from all over the world will come there. **3** People from many people-groups will say [to each other], "Come, let's go up to the hill, to the temple of Yahweh, to worship the God whom Jacob [worshiped]. [There] Yahweh will teach us what he [desires us to know], in order that our behavior will [please] him. His teaching will be given [to us] in Jerusalem, and [we will take] his message from Jerusalem [to other places/nations]. **4** Yahweh will listen to the disputes between nations and he will settle their arguments. [Then, instead of fighting against each other], they will hammer their swords into plow blades, and they will hammer their spears into pruning knives. [The armies of] nations will no longer fight against each other, and they will not [even] train men to fight in battles/wars." **5** You Israeli people, let's walk in the light [MET] that comes from Yahweh! **6** [Yahweh,] you have abandoned [us] your people who are descendants of Jacob, because everywhere your people practice the customs of people who live east [of Israel]. Your people also perform rituals to find out what will happen in the future, like the people in Philistia do. They make agreements/treaties with (pagans/people who do not know you). **7** Israel is full of silver and gold; there are very many (treasures/valuable things) here. The land is full of war horses and war chariots. **8** [But] the land is [also] full of idols; the people worship things that they have made with their own hands. **9** So now they will be humbled and they will be caused to become disgraced— Yahweh, do not forgive them! **10** All you people should crawl into [the caves in] the rock cliffs! You should hide [in pits/holes] in the ground because of being afraid of Yahweh and of his glorious and awesome power. **11** Yahweh will cause you people to no longer be arrogant, and he will stop you from being proud. Only Yahweh will be praised/honored on that day. **12** The Commander of the armies of angels has chosen a day when [he will judge] those who are proud, every one of them [DOU], and he will humble them. **13** [He will get rid of all those who think they should be admired like] [MET] the tall cedar trees in Lebanon, and [like] all the great oak trees in the Bashan [region]. **14** He will [get rid of all those who think they are as great as] [MET] all the high hills and even the high mountains. **15** He will [get rid of all those who think that they are] high towers and high strong walls [inside of or behind which they will be safe]. **16** He will destroy all [those who are rich because they own] big ships that carry goods [to other countries] and [they own other] beautiful ships. **17** He will cause people to no longer be arrogant and he will cause them to stop being proud. Only Yahweh will be praised/honored on that day. **18** All idols will (disappear/be destroyed). **19** When Yahweh comes to shake/terrify the people on the earth, they will run to hide in caves in rock cliffs and in holes/pits in the ground, because of being afraid of Yahweh and of his glorious and awesome power. **20** On that day, people will get rid of all their gold and silver idols that they made to worship, and they will throw them to the bats and rats. **21** Then they will crawl into caves and hide in the crags in the cliffs. [They will do that to escape from] the dreadful [punishments] that Yahweh will cause them to endure, from [what he will do because] he is glorious and awesome, when he comes to shake/terrify the people on the earth. **22** [So,] do not trust that people [will save you], because people are [as powerless as] [MET] their own breath. People certainly cannot help you [RHQ]!

3 The Commander of the armies of angels is about to take away from Jerusalem and [other places in] Judea everything that you depend on— all your food and water. **2** He will take away your heroes and your [other] soldiers, your judges and your prophets, people who do rituals to find out what will happen in the future and the elders, **3** army officers and [other] officials, advisors and skilled craftsmen and those who perform rituals to predict the future. **4** He will appoint boys to be your leaders; your children will rule you. **5** People will treat each other cruelly: people will fight against their neighbors. Young people will insult older people, and vulgar/dishonorable people will sneer at people who should be honored. **6** At that time, someone will grab one of his brothers in his father's house and say to him, "You have a

coat, [which shows that you are respected]. [So] you be our leader! You rule this [city, which is now] a pile of ruins!" **7** [But] his brother will reply, "[No], I cannot help you, [because] I do not have [any extra] food or clothes in this house. [So] do not appoint me to be your leader!" **8** Jerusalem and [the other towns in] Judah will be destroyed, because [everything] that the people do and say there opposes Yahweh, who is powerful and glorious, and they refuse to obey him. They rebel against him. **9** They even show on their faces that [they oppose Yahweh]. They are proud of their sins, like [the people of] Sodom were [long ago]; they do not try to hide their sins. [Because of their sins], terrible things will happen to them, [but] they will bring those disasters on themselves. **10** [Yahweh told me to] tell the righteous people that good things will happen to them; they will enjoy the blessings that they will receive for their good deeds. **11** [But] terrible things will happen to wicked people; they will be (paid back/punished) for [the evil things that] [MTY] they have done. **12** [Now], youths [who have become leaders] treat my people cruelly, and women rule over my people. My people, your leaders are misleading you; they are causing you to go down the wrong road [MET]. **13** [It is as though] Yahweh has sat in his place in a courtroom and is ready to judge his people. **14** He will stand up to declare why the elders and rulers of his people should be punished: [he says], "The people of Israel are [like] [MET] a vineyard that I planted, but you have ruined it! Your houses are full of things that you have stolen from poor people. **15** You should stop [RHQ] crushing my people! [It is as though] you are pushing the faces of poor people into the dirt!" [That is what] the Commander of the armies of angels says. **16** Yahweh says this: "The women of Jerusalem are haughty/proud; they walk around sticking their chins out, and flirting [with men] with their eyes. They walk with tiny steps with bracelets on their ankles that jingle. **17** So I, Yahweh, will cause sores to be on their heads, and I will cause those beautiful women in Jerusalem to become bald." **18** At the time [that Yahweh does that], he will strip away everything that the women of Jerusalem wear to make themselves beautiful—the ornaments on their ankles and their headbands, their crescent necklaces, **19** their earrings and bracelets and veils, **20** their scarves and ankle bracelets and sashes, their perfumes and (charms/little things that they wear thinking that those things will protect them from evil), **21** their signet rings and nose rings, **22** their nice robes and capes and cloaks and purses, **23** their mirrors and nice linen clothes and shawls. **24** Instead of their having a nice smell from perfume, they will stink; instead of nice sashes, they will have ropes [around their waists because they will be captives]. Instead of having fancy hairdos, they will be bald. Instead of fancy/beautiful robes, they will wear rough sackcloth, and instead of being beautiful, they will be branded. **25** Their husbands will be killed by [their enemies'] swords, and their soldiers [will also die] in battles. **26** People [PRS] will mourn and cry at the gates [of the city]. The city will [be like] [MET] a woman who sits on the ground because everything that she owned is gone.

4 When that happens, [there will be very few unmarried men still alive]. [As a result], seven [unmarried] women will grab one man, and say, "Allow us [all] to marry you [IDM]! We will provide our own food and clothing. All that we want is to no longer be disgraced [because of not being married]." **2** [But] some day, Israel [MTY] will be [very] beautiful and great/glorious. The people of Israel who will still be there will be very proud of the wonderful fruit that grows in their land. **3** All the people who will remain in Jerusalem, who were not killed when Jerusalem was destroyed, whose names are listed among those who live there, will be [called] holy. **4** [That will happen when] Yahweh washes away the guilt of the women of Jerusalem, and when he stops the violence [MET] [on the streets of Jerusalem] by punishing [the people of Jerusalem]. When he does that, it will be like a fire to burn up all the impure things. **5** Then Yahweh will send a cloud of smoke every day and a flaming fire every night to cover Jerusalem and [all] those who gather there; it will be [like] a glorious canopy over the city **6** that will shelter the people from the sun during the daytime and protect them when there are windstorms and rain.

5 [Now] I will sing a song about my dear friend, and about his vineyard. The vineyard was on a very fertile hillside. **2** My friend plowed the ground and cleared away the stones. Then he planted very good grapevines on that ground. In the middle of the vineyard, he built a watchtower, and he dug a (winepress/pit for squeezing the grapes). Then he waited [each year] to harvest some good grapes, but the vines produced [only] sour grapes. **3** Now [this is what Yahweh says]: "You people of Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah, I [am like the friend, and you are like] my vineyard; [so] you judge which of us [has done what is right]. **4** What more could I have done for you than what I have already done? I expected you to be doing good deeds [MET], so it is disgusting that [RHQ] you were [doing only evil things] like the vineyard that produced only sour grapes! **5** [So], I will now tell you what I will do to [Judah, the place that is like] my vineyard. I will cut down the hedges, and they will be destroyed. I will tear down the walls [of the cities] and allow [wild animals] to trample the land. **6** I will cause it to become a wasteland where the vines are not pruned and the ground

is not hoed. It will be a place where briers and thorns [DOU] grow. And I will command that no rain will fall on it." **7** The nation of Israel is [like] [MET] the vineyard of the Commander of the armies of angels. The people of Judah are [like] the garden that was pleasing to him. He expected you to be doing what is just/fair, but instead, [what he saw was people] murdering [MTY] others. [He expected that you would be doing] righteous deeds, but instead, he heard cries from people who were being [attacked] violently. **8** Terrible things will happen to you who continually [illegally] acquire houses and fields. You force one family after another to leave their homes until you are the only ones [HYP] [still] living in the land. **9** [But] I heard the Commander of the armies of angels solemnly declare this: "[Some day], many of those huge houses will be empty/deserted; no one will be living in those beautiful mansions. **10** The vines on ten acres of land will not produce enough grapes to make (six gallons/22 liters) [of juice/wine], and ten baskets of seed will produce only one basket [of grain]." **11** Terrible things will happen to those who get up early [each] morning to begin drinking alcoholic drinks, and who stay awake until late at night [drinking a lot of wine] until they are completely drunk. **12** They have [big parties and provide lots of] wine. At their parties, there are [people playing] harps and lyres and tambourines and flutes, but they never think about what Yahweh does or appreciate what he has created. **13** So, my people will be (exiled/taken to other countries) [far away] because they do not know [about me]. Those who are [now very important and] honored will starve, and the other people will die from thirst. **14** [It is as though] [PRS] the place where the dead people are is eagerly looking for more Israeli people, opening its mouth to swallow them, and a huge number of people will be thrown into that place, including their leaders as well as a noisy crowd of people who enjoy living in Jerusalem. **(Sheol h7585)** **15** [Yahweh] will get rid of a huge number of people; and he will humble [many more] people who [now] are proud/arrogant. **16** But the Commander of the armies of angels will be exalted/praised because of his acting justly. God will show that he is holy by doing righteous/just deeds. **17** Then lambs and fat sheep will [be able to] find good grass to eat, [even] among the ruins [of the houses of rich people]. **18** Some people constantly tell lies, and [it is as though] they are dragging behind them the wrong things that they have done. Terrible things will happen to them! **19** They [make fun of God and] say [to him,] "Go ahead, do something [to punish us]! We want to see what you will do. You, the Holy One of Israel, should do what you are planning to do, because we want to know what it is." **20** Terrible things will happen to those who say that evil is good, and that good is evil, that darkness is light and that light is darkness, that what is bitter is sweet and what is sweet is bitter. **21** Terrible things will happen to those who think that they are wise and that they (are very clever/know everything). **22** Terrible things will happen to those who [think that] [IRO] they are great/heroes because they are able to drink [lots of] wine, and boast about being able to mix good alcoholic drinks. **23** If people offer them bribes in order that they will enable wicked people not to be punished, they accept those bribes, and they cause people who are innocent to be punished. **24** Therefore, just like [SIM] fires burn up stubble and dry grass shrivels up and quickly burns in flames, [it will be as though] those people have roots that will rot and have flowers that will wither. [That will happen] because they rejected the laws of the Commander of the armies of angels; they have despised the messages of the Holy One of Israel. **25** That is why Yahweh is [extremely] angry [with his people]; [it is as though] his hand is raised [and he is ready to smash them]. [When he does that], the mountains will shake, and the corpses of people will be scattered in the streets like [SIM] manure. But even when that happens, Yahweh will still be very angry; he will be ready to punish his people [MET] again. **26** Yahweh will send a signal to summon [armies of] nations far away; [it is as though] he will whistle [to summon those soldiers who are] in very remote places on the earth. They will come very swiftly [DOU] [to Jerusalem]. **27** They will not get tired or stumble. They will not [stop to] rest or to sleep. None of their belts will be loose, and none of them will have sandals with broken straps, [so they will all be ready to fight in battles]. **28** Their arrows will be sharp, and their bows will be ready [to shoot those arrows in a battle]. [Because their horses pull the chariots fast], sparks will shoot out from their hooves, and the wheels of the chariots will spin like a whirlwind. **29** They will roar like [very strong] lions [DOU] that growl and [then] pounce on the animals they want to kill and carry them off, and no one is able to rescue them. **30** [Similarly, your enemies] will roar when they see the people they are about to kill, like [SIM] the sea roars. [On that day], if someone looks across the land, he will see [only people who are in] darkness and distressed; [it will be as though] even the sunlight is hidden by dark clouds.

6 During the year that King Uzziah died, [Yahweh showed me a vision. In the vision], I saw Yahweh sitting on a throne, high above everyone. He [was wearing a very long] robe that covered [the floor of] the temple. **2** Above him were standing [several] winged creatures. Each of them had six wings. They covered their faces with two of their wings, they covered their feet with two of their wings, and they flew using two of their wings. **3** They were calling to each other,

saying, “The Commander of the armies of angels is holy; he is completely holy! The entire earth is filled with his glory.” 4 When they spoke, it caused the doorposts of the temple to shake, and the temple was filled with smoke. 5 Then I said, “Terrible things will happen to me, because everything that I say [MTY] is sinful, and I live among people who constantly say [MTY] sinful things. I will be destroyed because I have seen the Commander of the armies of angels!” 6 Then one of the winged creatures took a hot coal from the altar, using a pair of tongs. He flew to me 7 and touched my lips with the coal. Then he said, “Look [at what I have done]. I have touched your lips [with this coal]. [Now] your guilt is ended, and your sins are forgiven [DOU].” 8 Then I heard Yahweh asking, “Whom shall I send [to be a messenger to my people]? Who will go [and speak] for us?” I replied, “I will. Send me!” 9 Then he said, “[Okay], go, and say to the [Israeli] people, ‘You will listen carefully [to what I say], but you will not understand it. You will look very carefully [at the things that I am doing], but you will not understand them.’ 10 [What you(sg) say will] cause these people to become stubborn [IDM]; [it will cause them] to not be able to hear [what I say] and see [what I do]. [As a result, they will not] see [what I want them to see] or hear [what I want them to hear], and they will not understand it, and they will not turn to me and be saved [from being punished].” 11 Then I said, “How long [do you want me to continue to do that]?” He replied, “[Do it] until their cities are ruined [by their enemies], [until] no one is living in their houses, [do it until] all the crops are stolen from their fields and the fields are ruined. 12 [Do it] until I have (exiled everyone/forced everyone to go to their enemies’ lands) far away, and the whole land [of Israel] is deserted. 13 If [even] one tenth [of the people survive and] stay there, [their enemies] will [invade the land again and] burn everything. [But, just] like [MET] when an oak [tree] is cut down, a stump is left [from which new shoots will grow], the people who remain [in this land will be a group that will become large again] and be (set apart for/dedicated to) me.”

7 Ahaz was the son of Jotham and grandson of Uzziah. During the time that Ahaz was the king of Judah, King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah of Israel marched [with their armies] to attack Jerusalem. But they could not conquer it. 2 [But before they attacked], everyone in the palace heard a report that the armies of Syria and Israel were [now] (allies/joined [to attack Jerusalem)]. So Ahaz and the people over whom he ruled were extremely afraid; they were shaking from fear like trees shake in a windstorm. 3 Then Yahweh said to me, “Take your son Shear-Jashub, and go to talk with [King] Ahaz. He is at the end of the (aqueduct/water channel) that brings water into the upper reservoir, near the road to the place where women wash clothes. 4 Tell Ahaz to stop worrying [DOU]. Tell him that he does not need to be afraid of those two kings, Rezin and Pekah. They are very angry [with Judah], but they are [unable to harm his country any more than] completely burned-out coals [can harm him]. 5 Yes, they are planning to attack this land and saying, 6 ‘We will attack Judah and conquer it. Then we will appoint Tabeel’s son to be the king of Judah.’ 7 But this is what Yahweh, the Lord, says: ‘It will not happen; they will not [conquer Jerusalem]! 8 The capital of Syria is Damascus, but Damascus is ruled [only] by its [unimportant/insignificant] king king Rezin. And as for Israel, within 65 years it will be conquered and completely destroyed. 9 Israel’s capital is Samaria, and Samaria is ruled only by its [insignificant/unimportant] king king Pekah. [So you do not need to be afraid of those two countries]! [But you must trust me, because] if you do not trust me fully, you will be defeated.’” 10 [Later], Yahweh gave [me another message to tell to] King Ahaz. 11 [He said to tell him], “Request me, Yahweh your God, to do something that will enable you to be sure [that I will help/protect you]. What you request can be [from a place that is] as high as the sky or as low as the place where the dead people are.” **(Sheol h7585)** 12 But [when I told that to the king, he refused]. He said, “[No], I will not request Yahweh to do something to prove [that he will help/protect us]!” 13 Then I said [to him], “You people who are descendants of King David, listen! You are causing me to be tired of being patient. Are you also going to cause my God to stop being patient with you [RHQ]? 14 Yahweh himself will do something for you [to prove that he will help/protect you]. Listen to this: A young woman will become pregnant and give birth to a son. She will name him Immanuel, [which means ‘God is with us’]. 15 And by the time that child is old enough to eat curds/yogurt and honey, he will be able to reject what is evil and choose what is good. 16 And before that child is old enough to do that, the lands of the two kings that you(sg) are very (afraid of/worried about) will be deserted. 17 [But then] Yahweh will cause you and your family and your entire nation to experience [terrible disasters]. Those disasters will be worse than any disasters that have occurred since the country of Israel separated from Judah. Yahweh will cause [the army of] the king of Assyria to attack you!” 18 At that time, [it will be as though] Yahweh will whistle to summon the army from the south of Egypt as well as the army of Assyria. They will [come and surround your country like] [MET] flies and bees. 19 They will all come and settle/live [everywhere]—in the narrow valleys and caves in the rock cliffs, on land where there are thornbushes as well as on the fertile land. 20 At

that time Yahweh will hire the king of Assyria to come [with his army] from east of the [Euphrates] River. [They will get rid of everything in your land—the crops and the people. They will destroy everything thoroughly]; it will be like [MET] a barber shaving not only a man's hair but his beard and the hair on his legs. **21** When that happens, a farmer will be able to have only one cow and two goats/sheep. **22** [However], those animals will give plenty of milk, with the result that the farmer will have curds/yogurt to eat. And [because there will not be many people left] in the land, all the people who remain there will have plenty of milk and honey. **23** Now there are many areas where there are vineyards that are worth 1,000 pieces of silver, but at that time there will be only briers and thorns [DOU] in those fields. **24** There will be only briers and thorns in the entire land, [and wild animals], with the result that men will take their bows and arrows and go there [to hunt and kill animals]. **25** No one will go to where there previously were gardens on fertile hillsides, because briers and thorns will cover those hillsides. They will be areas where [only a few] cattle and sheep and goats wander around [searching for something to eat].

8 Then Yahweh said to me, "Make a large signboard. And write clearly on it, 'Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz' [which means 'quickly (plunder/take by force) and steal everything']." **2** [So] I requested Uriah the [Supreme] Priest and Jeberekiah's son Zechariah, men who were both honest/trustworthy witnesses, to watch me as I was doing that. **3** Then I had sex with [EUP] [my wife, who was] a prophetess, and she became pregnant and [then] gave birth to a son. Then Yahweh said to me, "Give him the name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (which means 'suddenly attacked, quickly conquered'), **4** because before he is old enough to say 'papa' or 'mama', the King of Assyria will [come with his army and] quickly take away all the valuable things in Damascus and in Samaria." **5** Yahweh spoke to me again and said, "[Tell the people of Judah,] **6** '[I have taken good care of] you people, but you have rejected that, [thinking that] my help was very little, like [MET] the little canal through which water flows from the Gihon Spring into Jerusalem. Instead, you have been happy [to request help from] King Rezin and King Pekah. **7** Therefore, I will cause the people of Judah to be attacked by [the powerful army of] the King of Assyria, which will be [like] a great flood from the [Euphrates] River. Their soldiers will [be everywhere in your country, like] a river that overflows all its banks. **8** Those soldiers will go all over Judah— [like a river whose water] [MET] rises as high as a person's neck. Their army will spread over the land [quickly], like an eagle, and they will cover your entire land! But I will be with you!'" **9** Listen, all you [people in] distant countries! [You can] prepare to attack Judah. [You can] prepare [for battle, and shout your] war-cries, but your [armies will] be crushed/shattered! **10** [You can] prepare for what you will do [to attack Judah], but what you plan to do will not happen! You will not succeed, because God is with us! **11** Yahweh strongly warned me [MTY] not to act like the [other] people in Judah did. He said to me, **12** "Do not say that everything that people do is conspiring/rebelling [against the government], like [other] people say, and do not (be afraid of/worry about) the things that other people are afraid of. **13** [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, am the one you should consider to be holy. And I am the one you should fear, the one you should revere. **14** I will protect you(sg). [But as for] the [other] people [MTY] in Israel and Judah, I will be [like] [MET] a stone that causes people to stumble, a rock that causes them to fall down. [And as for] the people of Jerusalem, I will be [like] [MET] a trap or a snare [DOU]. **15** Many [people] will stumble and fall down and never get up again. They will experience great troubles; they will be captured [by their enemies]." **16** [So, I say to you who are my disciples], seal up this scroll on which I have written the messages that God has given to me, and give his instructions to [others] who have accompanied me. **17** I will wait to see what Yahweh [will do]. He has rejected the descendants [MTY] of Jacob, but I will confidently expect him to help me. **18** I and the children that Yahweh has given to me are [like] signs to warn [the people of] Israel; we are warnings from the Commander of the armies of angels the one who lives [in his temple] on Zion Hill [in Jerusalem]. **19** Some people may urge you(pl) to (consult/go and talk with) those who talk with the spirits of dead people or with those who say that they receive messages from those spirits. They whisper and mutter [about what we should do in the future]. But God is [RHQ] the one whom we should ask to guide us! It is ridiculous [RHQ] for people who are alive to request spirits of dead people to tell us [what we should do]! **20** Pay attention to God's instructions and teaching! If people do not say things that agree with what God teaches us, [what they say is worthless]. [It is as though] those people are in darkness. **21** They will wander through the land, worried/discouraged and hungry. And when they become [very] hungry, they will become very angry. They will look up [toward heaven] and curse God and [will also] curse their king. **22** They will look around the land and see only trouble/distress and darkness and things that cause them to despair. And [then] they will be thrown into the very black darkness [of hell]. **(questioned)**

9 However, those in Judah who have been distressed/worried will not [continue to] suffer. Previously, Yahweh humbled [the people in] the land [where the tribes

of] Zebulun and Naphtali [live]. But in the future he will honor [the people who live in] that Galilee region, along the road between the Jordan [River] and the [Mediterranean] Sea, where [many] foreigners live. **2** [Some day, it will be as though] [MET] the people who walked in darkness will see a great light. A [great] light will shine on those who live in a land where they have great troubles/distress. **3** [Yahweh], you will cause us people in Israel to rejoice; we will become very happy. We will rejoice about what you [have done] like [SIM] people rejoice when they harvest their crops, [or] like soldiers rejoice when they divide up among themselves the things that they have captured in a battle. **4** You will cause us to no longer be slaves [MET] [of those who captured us]; you will lift the heavy burdens from our shoulders. [It will be as though] you will break the rods of those who oppressed us, like you did when you destroyed [the army of] the Midian people-group. **5** The boots that the enemy soldiers have worn and their clothing which has stains of blood on them will all be burned up; they will only be fuel for a [big] fire. **6** Another reason that we will rejoice is that a [special] child will be born for us; [a woman will give birth to] a son, who will be our ruler. And his names will be 'Wonderful Counselor', 'Mighty/Powerful God', '[Our] Everlasting Father', and 'Prince/Ruler [who enables us to have] Peace'. **7** His rule, and the peace that he [brings/causes], will never end. He will rule [MTY] fairly and justly [DOU], like [his ancestor King] David did. This will happen because the Commander of the armies of angels greatly desires that it happen. **8** The Lord has warned the people of Israel, the descendants of Jacob; he has said that [he will punish] them. **9** And all the people in Samaria and [other places in] Israel know that, [but] they are very proud and arrogant [DOU]. They say, "Our city has been destroyed, but we will [take away the broken bricks from the ruins] [and] replace them with carefully cut stones. Our sycamore-fig trees have been cut down [by our enemies], but we will plant cedar trees [in their place]." **11** But Yahweh brought the armies of [Assyria], the enemies of King Rezin [of Syria, to fight] against Israel and incited [other] nations [to attack Israel]. **12** [The army of] Syria [came] from the east, and [the army of] Philistia [came] from the west, and they destroyed Israel [like a wild animal tears another animal apart and] [MET] devours it. But even after that happened, Yahweh was still very angry with them. He was ready to strike them with his fist again. **13** [But even though] Yahweh punished his people [like that], they [still] did not return to him [and worship him]. They [still] did not request the Commander of the armies of angels [to assist them]. **14** Therefore, in one day Yahweh will get rid of [those who are like] Israel's head and [those who are like] its tail; the [ones who are like] the top of the palm tree and the [ones who are like] the bottom. **15** The leaders [DOU] of Israel are the head, and the prophets who tell lies are the tail. **16** The leaders of the people have misled them; they have caused the people that they are ruling to be confused. **17** For that reason, Yahweh is not pleased with the young men [of Israel], and he does not [even] act mercifully toward the widows and orphans, because they are all ungodly and wicked, and they all say things that are foolish. [But] Yahweh still is angry with them; he is ready to strike them with his fist again. **18** When people do wicked things, it is like [SIM] a brushfire [that spreads rapidly]. It burns up [not only] briers and thorns; it starts a big fire in the forests from which clouds of smoke will rise. **19** [It is as though] the [whole] land is burned [black] because the Commander of the armies of angels is extremely angry with the Israeli people. They will become like [SIM] fuel for that great fire, and no one will try to rescue even his [own] brother [from that fire]. **20** Israeli people will attack their neighbors on the right [to get food from them], but they will still be hungry. They will [kill those who live in houses] on the left and eat their flesh, but their stomachs will still not be full. **21** [People of the tribes of] Manasseh and Ephraim will attack each other, and [then] they will both attack the people of Judah. But even after that happens, Yahweh will still be very angry with them. He will be ready to strike them with his fist again.

10 Terrible things will happen to you judges who are unjust and who make unfair laws. **2** You refuse to help poor people, and you do not allow them to get the things that they should get. You [allow people to] steal things from widows and do unfair things to orphans. **3** When I punish you by sending people from distant lands to cause you to experience disasters, (to whom will you run to get help?/there will be no one who can help you.) [RHQ] Your valuable possessions will certainly [not be safe] [RHQ] anywhere. **4** You will be able only to stumble along as you are taken away with other prisoners, or [else] your corpses will lie on the ground with others who have been killed. But even after that happens, Yahweh will still be very angry with you. He will still be ready to strike you again with his fist. **5** [Yahweh says], "Terrible things will happen to Assyria. [It is true that their army] is like a rod/club [DOU] with which I [punish other nations] because I am very angry with those nations [DOU]. **6** [Sometimes] I send the armies of Assyria to attack a godless nation, to fight against [other] people who have caused me to be angry. I send them to capture people and to seize and take away their possessions, and to trample them like [SIM] people walk on mud in the streets. **7** But the [king of Assyria] does not understand, he does not realize

[that he is only like a weapon in my hand]. He wants [only] to destroy people, to get rid of many nations. **8** He says, 'All of my army commanders will soon be kings [of these nations that I conquer]! **9** We destroyed Calno [city] like we destroyed Carchemish [city], We destroyed Hamath [city] like we destroyed Arpad [city]; we destroyed Samaria just like we destroyed Damascus. **10** We were able to destroy [all] those kingdoms [that were full] of idols, kingdoms whose idols were greater than the idols in Jerusalem and Samaria. **11** So we will defeat Jerusalem and destroy the idols that are there, just like we destroyed Samaria and the idols that were there!' **12** [But, I, Yahweh, say that] after I [have used Assyria to] finish what I want to do to punish the people in Jerusalem [DOU], I will punish the king of Assyria because he has been very proud and arrogant/boastful [DOU]. **13** He says, 'By my own great power [MTY] I have done these things. I have been able to do them because I am very wise and very intelligent. My army removed the barriers [at the borders] of nations and carried away all their valuable things. My army has knocked down their kings like [SIM] a ferocious bull would. **14** Like [MET] a farmer reaches into a bird's nest [to take away the eggs], we have taken away the treasures of other countries [DOU]. The people were not like birds that would flap their wings or chirp loudly [to protest about their eggs being stolen]; the people did not object at all [to their treasures being stolen].' **15** [But I, Yahweh, say that] an axe certainly cannot [RHQ] boast about being stronger than the person who uses it, and a saw is not greater than the person who uses it. A rod cannot control the one who holds it [RHQ], and a wooden club cannot lift up a person [RHQ]. [So the king of Assyria should not boast that he has done these things with his own wisdom and strength]. **16** And [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, will send a plague among the proud soldiers of Assyria; it will be like [MET] a fire that will kill them and get rid of their glory/wealth. **17** [I], Yahweh, who am like [MET] a light for the people of Israel, will be the fire; [I], the Holy One, will be like a flame. [The soldiers of Assyria are like] [MET] thorns and briers, and I will burn them up in one night. **18** There are glorious forests and fertile farmlands in Assyria, but I will completely destroy them; they will be like [SIM] a [very] sick person who shrivels up and then dies. **19** There will be very few trees left in those forests; even a child will be able to count them." **20** In the future there will be only a few people left in Israel; not many descendants of Jacob will still be alive. [But] they will no longer rely on [the king of Assyria], [the king of the nation] that tried to destroy them. Instead, they will faithfully/sincerely trust in Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel. **21** Those Israelis will return to their mighty God. **22** [Now], the people of Israel are as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, but only a few of them will return [from the countries to which they were exiled]. Yahweh has decided to destroy [most of the Israelis] and that is what [he must do because he is completely] just/righteous. **23** [Yes,] the Commander of the armies of angels has [already] decided to destroy the entire land [of Israel]. **24** This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "My people in Jerusalem, do not be afraid of the army of Assyria when they beat you with rods and clubs, like the men of Egypt did [to your ancestors long ago]. **25** Soon I will no longer be angry with you, and [then] I will be angry with the people of Assyria and destroy them!" **26** The Commander of the armies of angels will whip them. He will do to them like he did when he helped Gideon [and his 300 soldiers] to defeat the [army of the] Midian people-group, and like he did when he showed his mighty power [MTY] [by causing the army of Egypt to drown] in the [Red] Sea. **27** Some day, Yahweh will cause the army of Assyria to stop oppressing you, [his people]; he will end your suffering and your being slaves of the people of Assyria [MET]; he will take away the load that you people of Judah have been carrying, and cause things to go well for you. **28** [The army of Assyria will enter northern Judah] near Aiath [town], they will go through Migron [town] and store their supplies at Micmash [town north of Jerusalem]. **29** They will cross through a mountain pass and set up their tents at Geba [town]. [People in] Ramah [town] will tremble [because of being afraid]. [The people of] Gibeah [town], where King Saul [was born], will [all] run away. **30** You people of Gallim [town] will cry out [for help]. You will shout to [the people of] Laish [city near Jerusalem] to warn them! [The people of] Anathoth [town] will suffer a lot. **31** [The people of] Madmenah [town north of Jerusalem will all] be running away, and [the people of] Gebim [town close to Jerusalem] will be trying to hide. **32** The soldiers of Assyria will stop at Nob [city outside Jerusalem]. They will shake their fists [as they threaten the people] on Zion Hill in Jerusalem. **33** But listen to this! The Commander of the armies of angels with his great power will destroy [MET] the mighty army of Assyria. [It is as though they are] a huge tree [MET] that he will cut down. **34** He will destroy the [soldiers of Assyria] like men use big axes to cut down the tall trees in the forests of Lebanon.

11 [Like] [MET] a [new] shoot [often] grows from the stump [of a tree], there will be a descendant of King David who will be a new king. **2** The Spirit of Yahweh will always be with him. The Spirit will enable him to be wise and to understand [much about many things]. The Spirit will enable him to decide what is good to do, and will enable him to be

very powerful. The Spirit will enable him to know Yahweh and to revere him. 3 He will be glad to obey Yahweh. He will not decide [whether someone is righteous or not only] by seeing what that person looks like, or by listening to [what others say about that person]. 4 He will judge [the cases of] needy people fairly; and he will act justly toward poor people. He will punish evil people as a result of what he decides [MTY]; he will get rid of wicked people because of [MTY] [their behavior]. 5 He will always act righteously; his doing that will [accompany him like] [MET] a belt [around his waist]. He will always speak what is true; his doing that will [accompany him like] [MET] a sash [around his waist]. 6 [When he becomes king], wolves and lambs will live together [peacefully]; leopards, [instead of killing] baby goats, will lie down with them. [Similarly], calves and lions will eat food together; and a young child will take care of them. 7 Cows and bears will eat [together]; bear cubs and calves will lie down together. Lions will [not eat other animals]; [instead], they will eat hay like cows do. 8 Babies will play [safely] near the holes where cobra snakes [live]; small children will [even] put their hands into nests of poisonous snakes, [and the snakes will not harm them]. 9 No creatures will harm or kill other creatures on [Zion Hill], my holy hill; and the earth will [be filled with people who] know Yahweh like [SIM] the seas are full of water. 10 At that time, a descendant of King David will [hold up] a flag to signal to the people of all people-groups [that they should gather around him]; they will come to him to get his advice, and the place where he lives will be glorious. 11 At that time, Yahweh will (reach out his hand/use his power) as he did long ago; he will enable those who had been (exiled from/forced to leave) Israel to return home, from Assyria, from northern Egypt, from southern Egypt, from Ethiopia, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath, and from all the distant countries near the sea. 12 Yahweh will raise his flag among [all] the people-groups, and he will gather together the people of Israel who had been exiled [long ago]. He will gather from very distant places [IDM] on the earth the people of Judah who [(had been scattered to/are living in) those places]. 13 [Then], the people of Israel and the people of Judah will not be jealous of each other [any longer], and they will no [longer] be enemies of each other. 14 Their [armies] will [join together to] attack the people of Philistia to the west. And together they will attack nations to the east; they will [defeat those nations and] take away all their valuable possessions. They will capture [the areas of] Edom and Moab, and the people of the Ammon people-group will be controlled/ruled by the people of Israel and Judah. 15 Yahweh will make a dry road through the sea near Egypt. And [it will be as though] he will wave his hand over the [Euphrates] River and send a strong wind to cause it to divide into seven streams, with the result that people will be able to walk across [those streams]. 16 And because he will make a highway for his people who are living in Assyria, they will be able to return [to their own land], just like [long ago] he made a path for [the people of] Israel [so that they could go through the water] when they left Egypt.

12 At that time, you [people of Jerusalem] will sing [this song]: "Yahweh, we praise you! [Previously], you were angry with us, but you are not angry now and you have comforted us. 2 Amazingly, you [have come to] save us, [so] we will trust [in you] and not be afraid. Yahweh our God, you enable us to be strong; you are [the one about whom] we sing; you have rescued us [from our enemies]." 3 You(pl), [his people], will greatly enjoy being saved like [MET] you enjoy drinking water from a fountain. 4 At that time you [all] will say, "We should thank Yahweh! We should praise him [MTY]! We should tell [the people of all] the people-groups what he has done; we should enable them to know that he [MTY] is very great! 5 We should sing to Yahweh, because he has done wonderful things. We should enable everyone in the world to know it! 6 You people of Jerusalem, shout joyfully to praise Yahweh, because he is the great Holy One whom we Israeli [people worship], and he lives among us!"

13 [I], Isaiah, the son of Amoz, received [from Yahweh] this message about Babylon [city]: 2 Lift up a flag on the bare [top of a] hill, to signal [that an army should come to attack Babylon]. Shout to them and wave your hand [to signal to them] that they should march through the city gates into the palaces of the proud [rulers of Babylon]! 3 [Yahweh says], "I have commanded those soldiers to do that; I have summoned the warriors whom I have chosen to punish [the people of Babylon] because of my being very angry with them, and those soldiers will be very proud [when they do that]." 4 Listen to the noise on the mountains, which is the noise of a huge army marching! It is the noise made by people of many people-groups shouting. The Commander of the armies of angels has summoned this army to gather together. 5 They come from countries that are far away, from the most remote places [IDM] on the earth. They are [like] [SIM] weapons that Yahweh will use [to punish the people with whom] he is very angry, and to destroy the entire country [of Babylonia]. 6 [You people of Babylon] will scream because you will be terrified, because it will be the time that Yahweh [has determined/chosen], the time for the all-powerful [God] to destroy [your city]. 7 All of your people will be very afraid [DOU], with the result that they will be unable even to lift their arms. 8 All of you will be terrified.

You will have [PRS] severe pains like [SIM] a woman has when she is giving birth to a baby. You will look at each other helplessly, and it will show on your faces that you feel horror. **9** Listen to this: The day that Yahweh has appointed/chosen is near, the day that he will furiously and fiercely [punish you] because he is very angry [with you]. He will cause your land [of Babylonia] to be desolate/barren, and he will destroy [all] the sinners in it. **10** [When that happens], none of the stars will shine. When the sun rises, it will be dark, and there will be no light from the moon [at night]. **11** [Yahweh says], "I will punish [everyone in] the world for the evil things that they do; I will punish the wicked people for the sins that they have committed. I will stop arrogant/proud people from being proud, and I will stop ruthless people from acting cruelly. **12** [And because I will cause most people to die], people will be harder to find than gold, harder to find than fine gold from Ophir [in Arabia]. **13** I will shake the sky, and the earth will [also] move out of its place. That will happen when [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, punish [wicked people], when [I show them that] I am extremely angry [with them]. **14** And all [the foreigners in Babylon will run around] like [SIM] deer that are being hunted, like sheep that do not have a shepherd. They will try to find other people from their countries, and [then] they will escape [from Babylon] and return to their own countries. **15** Anyone who is captured [in Babylon] will be killed by [their enemies'] swords [DOU]. **16** Their little children will be dashed to pieces on the rocks while [their parents] watch; [their enemies] will steal everything valuable from their houses and will rape their wives. **17** Look! I am going to incite the people of Media to attack Babylon. The [army of Media] will attack Babylon, even if they are offered [DOU] silver or gold [if they promise to not attack it]. **18** [With] their arrows, the [soldiers of Media] will shoot the young men [of Babylon]; they will not [even] act mercifully [DOU] toward infants or children!" **19** Babylon has been a very beautiful [MTY] city; [all] the people of Babylonia have been very proud of Babylon, [their capital city]; [but] God will destroy Babylon, like [SIM] he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. **20** No one will ever live in Babylon again. It will be deserted forever. (Nomads/People who travel from place to place to live) will refuse to set up their tents there; shepherds will not bring their flocks of sheep to rest there. **21** Instead, animals that live in the desert will be there; jackals/wolves will live in [the ruins of] the houses. Owls (OR, Ostriches) will live in [the ruins], and wild goats will romp/jump around [there]. **22** Hyenas will howl in the [ruined] towers, and jackals/wolves will make their dens in [the ruins of] the palaces that [were previously] very beautiful. The time when [Babylon will be destroyed] is very near; Babylon will not exist much longer.

14 [But] Yahweh will act mercifully toward the Israeli people; he will choose [the people of] Israel [to be his people again], and he will allow them to [return here and] live in their own land again. Then people from [many] other countries will come here and unite with the Israeli people. **2** People of other nations will help them to return to their [own] land, and those who come from other countries will (work for/become the servants of) the Israeli people. Those who captured people of Israel will be captured by Israeli soldiers, and the people of Israel will rule over the people who [previously] oppressed them. **3** Some day Yahweh will free you [Israeli people] from suffering and trouble and from being afraid, and from being cruelly treated as slaves [MTY]. **4** When that happens, you will make fun of the King of Babylon by saying this: "You treated us cruelly, but that has ended! Your insolently causing others to suffer is finished! **5** You evil ruler, Yahweh will get rid of your power, and you will oppress people no longer! **6** You attacked people many times because you were very angry with them, and you subdued/conquered [other] nations by causing them to suffer endlessly. **7** [But soon] everything will be quiet and peaceful on the earth. Everyone [PRS] will sing [again]! **8** [It will be as though] even the trees in the forests will joyfully sing this song, the cyprus/pine [trees] and the cedar [trees] in Lebanon will sing it: 'You (have been overthrown/are no longer a ruler), and now no one comes to get rid of us [MET].' **9** The dead people are [PRS] are eagerly waiting for you to come to the place where they are. The spirits of the world leaders will be delighted to welcome you; those who were kings of many nations [before they died] will stand up [to welcome you]. **(Sheol h7585)** **10** They will all shout to you [together], 'Now you are as weak as we are!' **11** You were very proud and powerful, [but all] that ended when you died, along with the sounds of harps [being played in your palace]. [Now in your grave] maggots will be under you [like a sheet] [MET], and worms will cover you [like a blanket] [MET]. **(Sheol h7585)** **12** You have [disappeared from the earth like] [MET] a star which has fallen from the sky; you [were very well-known] [like] [MET] the morning star [which is seen by everyone]; you destroyed [many] nations, but now you have been destroyed. **13** You [proudly] said to yourself, 'I will ascend to heaven, to my throne above God's stars. I will rule on the mountain where [the gods] gather together, far in the north. **14** I will ascend above the clouds and become like the highest/greatest god!' **15** [But you were not able to do that]; instead, you were carried down to your grave, and you went to the place where the dead people

are. (Sheol h7585) 16 The [other dead] people there stare at you; they wonder what happened to you. [They say], 'Is this the man who caused the earth to shake and caused the [people in many] kingdoms to tremble? 17 Is this the man who [tried to] cause the world to become a desert, who conquered its cities and did not allow the people whom he captured to return to their homes?' 18 All the kings of the earth [who have died] were greatly honored when they were buried, 19 but your [corpse will] not be buried; it will be thrown away like [SIM] a worthless branch [of a tree]. Your corpse will be under a heap of other corpses of soldiers that were killed by [their enemies'] swords, and [their corpses] were not buried; you will be with those who have gone down to the stony ground in a big pit. 20 Your [corpse] will not be buried because you have destroyed your nation and have caused your people to be killed. The descendants of wicked people [like you] will never be honored again. 21 [People will say], 'Slaughter this man's children because of the sins that their ancestors committed! Do not allow them to become rulers and conquer [all the nations in] the world, and fill the world with the cities [that they rule]!'" 22 [This is what] the Commander of the armies of angels says: "I [myself] will cause Babylon to be conquered. I will get rid of Babylon and its people and their descendants. 23 I will cause Babylon to be a place where owls live, a place full of swamps; I will get rid of it completely [as though] [MET] I were sweeping it with a broom. [That is what I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say." 24 The Commander of the armies of angels has [also] solemnly promised this: "The things that I have planned will surely happen [DOU]. 25 [When the army of] Assyria is in my land [of Israel], I will crush them. [It will be as though] I will trample them on my mountains. My people will no longer be the slaves [MET] of the people of Assyria; [it will be as though] [MET] I will take away the burdens that are on their shoulders. 26 I have a plan for everyone on the earth, a plan to show my power [MTY] to punish all the nations. 27 [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, have spoken, and no one can [RHQ] change my mind. When I raise my fist [to strike Assyria], no one [RHQ] will be able to stop me [from doing that]." 28 I received this message [from Yahweh] during the year that King Ahaz died: 29 You people of Philistia, do not rejoice that the enemy army [MET] that attacked you has been defeated and that their king is dead. He was [as dangerous as] [MET] a snake, but there will be another king, who will be more [dangerous] than a cobra; he will be [like] [MET] a quick-moving poisonous snake. 30 Those of my people who are very poor will take care of their flocks of sheep, and the needy people will lie down safely, but I will cause you people [of Philistia] who are still alive [DOU] to die from famine. 31 [So], you people of Philistia, wail at the gates of your cities! You should be extremely afraid, because [a very powerful army] will come from the north [to attack you]; [their chariots will stir up the dust like] [MET] a cloud of smoke. Each of their soldiers is ready to fight. 32 If messengers [from Philistia] come to us [Israeli people], this is what we must [RHQ] tell them: "Yahweh has established Jerusalem, [not Philistia], and his people who are oppressed will be safe inside [the walls of] Jerusalem."

15 [I received] this message [from Yahweh] about the Moab [people-group]: In one night [two of your important cities], Ar and Kir, will be destroyed. 2 The people of Dibon, [your capital city,] will go to their temple to mourn/weep; they will go to [their shrines] on the hilltops to weep. They will wail because of [what happened to] Nebo and Medeba [towns in the south]; they will all shave the hair of their heads, and the men will cut off their beards [to show that they are grieving]. 3 In the streets people will wear rough sackcloth, and on their [flat] rooftops and in the [city] plazas everyone will wail, with tears streaming down their faces. 4 [The people of] Heshbon [city] and Elealeh [towns in the north of Moab] will cry out; people as far away as Jahaz [town in the south] will hear them wailing. Therefore the soldiers of Moab will tremble and cry out and they will be very afraid [IDM]. 5 I feel very sorry for [the people of] Moab; they will flee to Zoar and Eglath-Shelishiyah [towns in the far south]. They will cry as they walk up to Luhith [town]. All along the road to Horonaim [town] people will mourn because their country has been destroyed. 6 The water in Nimrim [Valley] will have dried up. The grass there will be withered; the green plants will [all] be gone, and there will be nothing left that is green. 7 The people will pick up their possessions and carry them across Willows Brook. 8 Throughout the country of Moab, [people] will be crying; people as far away as Eglaim [in the south] and Beer-Elim [in the north] will hear them wailing. 9 The stream near Dimon will become red from the blood [of people who have been killed], but I will cause the people of Moab to experience even more [trouble]: Lions will attack those who [are trying to] escape from Moab and will [also] attack the people who remain in that country.

16 [The rulers of Moab will say to each other,] "We must send some [lambs] from Sela [city] as a gift to the ruler of Judah [to persuade him to not allow his army to attack us any more]. We should send them through the desert to the king. 2 The women of Moab will be left alone at the (fords of/places where people can walk across) the Arnon [River]; they will be like [SIM] birds that have been pushed out of their nests. 3 They will cry out, 'Help us! Tell us what we should do! Protect us completely [MET], we who are

running away [from our enemies], and do not (betray us/tell our enemies where we are). 4 Allow [those of us] who are fleeing from Moab to stay with you; hide/protect us from [our enemies who want to] destroy us!' [Some day] there will be no one to oppress us, and our enemies will stop destroying [our land]. 5 Then [Yahweh] will appoint someone to be king who will be [a descendant of King] David. As he rules [MTY], he will be merciful and truthful. He will always do what is fair/just and quickly do what is righteous." 6 We [people of Judah] have heard about [the people of] Moab; we have heard that they are very proud and conceited [DOU]; they are insolent, but what they proudly say about themselves is not true. 7 [Some day all the people in] Moab will weep. They will all mourn, because [there will be no more] raisin cakes in Kir-Hareseth [city]. 8 The [crops in] the fields at Heshbon [city] will wither, and the vineyards at Sibmah [town] will wither also. The armies of [other] nations will destroy Moab, which is [like] [MET] a beautiful grapevine whose branches spread [north] to Jazer [town] and [east] to the desert. Its branches spread very far [west], to the west side of the [Dead] Sea. 9 So I will weep for Jazer and for the grapevines of Sibmah. I will shed tears for all of you. I will cry because people will no longer shout joyfully, like they usually do when they gather the fruit that ripens in the (summer/hot season) and the other crops that they harvest. 10 People will no longer be glad at harvest time. No one will sing in the vineyards, no one will shout joyfully. No one will tread on grapes [to get grape juice for wine]; there will be nothing to shout about [joyfully]. 11 I cry inwardly for Moab; my groaning is like [SIM] [a sad song played on] a harp. I am sad about Kir-Hareseth. 12 [The people of] Moab will go and pray at their sacred shrines, but that will not help them. They will cry out to their gods in their temples, [but] none of them will be able to rescue the people. 13 Yahweh has already spoken those things about Moab. 14 But now he says that exactly three years from now, he will destroy all the things that [the people of] Moab have been proud of. Even though they have a huge number of people in Moab now, only a few people will remain alive, and they will be weak/helpless.

17 [I received] this message [from Yahweh] about Damascus [the capital of Syria]: "Listen carefully! Damascus will no longer be a city; it will be [only] a heap of ruins! 2 The towns near Aroer [city] will be abandoned. Flocks [of sheep] will [eat grass in the streets and] lie down there, and there will be no one to chase them away. 3 The cities in Israel will not have walls around them [to protect them]. The power of the kingdom of Damascus will be ended, and the few people who will remain in Damascus will be disgraced like the people in Israel were disgraced." [That is what] the Commander of the armies of angels says. 4 "At that time, Israel will become insignificant. It will be [like] [MET] a fat person who has become very thin. 5 The entire land will be like [SIM] a field where the harvesters have cut all the grain; there will be nothing left, like [SIM] the fields in the Rephaim Valley after all the crops have been harvested. 6 Only a few of the Israeli people will remain [MET], like [SIM] the few olives that remain on the top of a tree after the workers have caused all the other olives to fall [to the ground]. [There will be only] two or three olives in the top branches, [or] four or five olives on the other branches." [That is what] the Commander of the armies of angels says. 7 [Then], at that time, [you] people [of Israel] will (turn for help to/look up to) God, your creator, the Holy One of Israel. 8 You will no [longer] seek to get help from your idols or worship the idols that you have made with your own hands [DOU]. You will never again bow down in front of the poles [where you worship the goddess] Asherah. You will never again worship at the shrines [that you have built for burning incense]. 9 The largest cities in Israel will be abandoned, like the land that the Hiv and Amor people-groups abandoned (OR, like the forests that the [Canaan people-group] abandoned) when the Israelis [attacked them long ago]. No one will live there. 10 [That will happen] because you have stopped worshiping God who is [like] [MET] a huge rock under which you can be safe. You have forgotten that he is the one who can hide/protect you. So, [now] you plant very nice grapevines and [even] plant very expensive ones that come from other countries. 11 [But] even if they sprout leaves on the day that you plant them, and even if they produce blossoms on that same morning, at harvest time, there will not be any grapes for you to pick. All that you will get is a lot of agony/misery. 12 Listen! [The armies of] many nations will roar like the sea roars. It will sound like the noise of crashing waves. 13 But even though their loud roaring will be like the sound of crashing waves, when Yahweh rebukes them, they will run far away. They will flee like [SIM] chaff on the hills scatters when the wind [blows], like tumbleweeds scatter when a windstorm blows. 14 And, even though you people of Israel will be terrified, in the morning [your enemies] will all be gone/dead. That is what will happen to those who invade our land and [then] steal our possessions.

18 Terrible things will happen to [you people] of Ethiopia! In your land there are many sailboats at the upper part of the Nile River. 2 Your rulers send ambassadors that sail [quickly] down the river in papyrus boats. You messengers to Ethiopia, go quickly! Go [up the river] to people who are tall and who have smooth skin. People everywhere are afraid of those people, because they conquer and destroy [other

nations]; they live in a land that is divided by branches of one large river. 3 [You messengers] must tell people everywhere, to people everywhere, "Look when I lift up my battle flag on top of the mountain, and listen when I blow the ram's horn [to signal that the battle is about to begin]." 4 [Listen] because Yahweh has told me this: "I will watch quietly from where I live. I will watch as quietly as [SIM] the heat waves shimmer as they rises on a hot summer day, as quietly as the dew forms [on the ground] during harvest time." 5 But [even] before the army of Ethiopia starts to attack, while their plans are [slowly forming] like [SIM] grapes that are ripening, Yahweh will [get rid of them like a farmer who] [MET] cuts off the new shoots of the grapevines with his shears, and prunes the branches that have become very long. 6 All [the soldiers in the army of Ethiopia] will be killed, and their corpses will lie in the fields for vultures to eat their flesh in the (summer/hot season). Then wild animals will [chew on their bones] all during the (winter/cold season). 7 At that time, the people of that land that is divided by the branches of that one big river will take gifts to Yahweh in Jerusalem. Those tall people who have smooth/dark skin, whom people everywhere are afraid of, because they conquer and destroy many countries, will take gifts to Jerusalem, the city where the Commander of the armies of angels lives.

19 [I received] this message [from Yahweh] about Egypt:
"Listen to this! I, Yahweh, am coming to Egypt, riding on a fast-moving cloud. The idols in Egypt will tremble when [I appear], and the people of Egypt will be extremely afraid [IDM]. 2 I will cause the people of Egypt to fight against each other: men will fight against their brothers, neighbors will fight against each other, people of one city will fight against the people of another city, people of one province will fight against the people of another province. 3 The people of Egypt will become very discouraged, and I will cause their plans not to be successful. They will plead with idols and sorcerers and those who talk with spirits of dead people to tell them what they should do. 4 Then I will enable someone who will treat them very cruelly to become their king [DOU]." That is what I, the Commander of the armies of angels, say. 5 [Some day] the water in the [Nile] River will dry up, and the riverbed will become very dry [DOU]. 6 The branches of the river will all dry up [DOU] The canals along the river will stink because of the rotting reeds and (bulrushes/tall grass). 7 All the plants along the river and all the crops will dry up; then they will blow away and disappear. 8 The fishermen will throw into the river lines with hooks on them and nets, and then they will groan and be very discouraged; they will be sad [because there will be no fish in the river]. 9 Those who weave cloth from flax will not know what to do, because there will be no thread for them to weave. 10 They will all despair and be very discouraged. 11 The officials in Zoan [city in northern Egypt] are foolish. The advice that they gave to the king was worthless. Why do they continue to tell the king that they are wise, that they are descendants of wise kings who lived long ago [RHQ]? 12 King, (where are your wise counselors now?/You have no wise counselors now!) [RHQ] If you had any wise counselors, they could tell you what the Commander of the armies of angels has planned to do to Egypt [SAR]! 13 [Yes], the officials of Zoan have become foolish, and the leaders in Memphis [city in northern Egypt] have deceived themselves. [All] leaders of the people have (caused their people to do wrong things/led their people astray). 14 Yahweh has caused them to be very foolish, with the result that in everything that they do, [it is as though the people of] Egypt stagger like [SIM] a drunken person staggers [and slips] in his own vomit. 15 There is no one in Egypt, rich or poor, important or unimportant, [who will be able to help them]. 16 At that time, the people of Egypt will be [as helpless] as [SIM] women. They will tremble, being terrified [because they know that] the Commander of the armies of angels has raised his fist, [ready to strike/punish them]. 17 The people of Egypt will be afraid of the people of Judah, and anyone who mentions Judah to them will cause them to be terrified, because [that will remind them] of what Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels, is planning to do to them. 18 At that time, [people in] five cities in Egypt will solemnly declare that they will serve Yahweh. They will [learn to] speak the Hebrew language. One of those cities will be called 'City of the Sun'. 19 At that time, there will be an altar for worshiping Yahweh in the center of Egypt, and there will be a (pillar/large rock) to honor Yahweh at the border [between Egypt and Israel]. 20 That will be a sign to indicate that the Commander of the armies of angels is worshiped in the land of Egypt. And when the people cry out to Yahweh to help them because others are (oppressing them/causing them to suffer), he will send to them someone who will defend and rescue them. 21 Yahweh will enable the people of Egypt to know who he is, and at that time they will have a close relationship with Yahweh and worship him and bring to him offerings of grain and other sacrifices. They will solemnly promise to do things for Yahweh, and they will do what they promise. 22 After Yahweh has punished Egypt, he will cause their troubles to end. The people of Egypt will turn to Yahweh, and he will listen when they plead to him [for help], and he will cause their troubles to cease. 23 At that time, there will be a highway between Egypt and Assyria. [As a result], the people of Egypt will [be able to] travel [easily] to Assyria, and the people of Assyria [will

be able to travel easily] to Egypt. And the people of both countries will worship [Yahweh]. **24** And Israel will be their ally. All three nations will be [friendly to] each other, and the people of Israel will be a blessing to the people of the entire world. **25** The Commander of the armies of angels will bless them, saying, "[You people of] Egypt are now my people. You people of Assyria, I have established your country. You people of Israel are the people whom I have chosen to belong to me."

20 One year King Sargon of Assyria sent the chief commander of his army [to take his soldiers] to capture Ashdod [city in Philistia]. **2** At that time, Yahweh told me, "Take off the rough sackcloth that you have been wearing and take off your sandals." [So] I did what he told me to do, and [then] I walked around naked and barefoot [for three years]. **3** [Then] Yahweh said this [to the people of Judah]: "My servant Isaiah has been walking around naked and barefoot for the past three years. That is to show the terrible disasters that [I will cause the people of] Egypt and Ethiopia to experience. **4** What will happen is that the [army of the] King of Assyria will [invade those countries and capture many of the people and] take them away as their prisoners. They will force all them, including both the young ones and the old ones, to walk naked and barefoot. They will [also] force them to have no clothes around their buttocks, which will cause [the people of] Egypt to be ashamed. **5** Then the people of other countries who trusted that the armies of Egypt and Ethiopia would be able to help them will be very dismayed/confused and afraid/disappointed. **6** They will say, 'We trusted that the armies of Egypt and Ethiopia [would help us and defend us, but they have been destroyed], so there is no way [RHQ] that we can escape from [being destroyed by the army of] the King of Assyria!'"

21 [I received] this message [from Yahweh about Babylonia], [a land that is] near the [Persian] Gulf [but which will soon be] a desert. [An army] will soon come from the desert to invade that land; it is an army that causes its enemies to be terrified, an army that will come like a whirlwind from the south. **2** Yahweh showed me a terrifying vision. [In the vision I saw an army] that will betray/deceive people and steal their possessions [after they conquer them]. [Yahweh said], "You armies from Elam and Media, surround [Babylon] and prepare to attack it! I will cause the groaning [and suffering] that Babylon caused to cease!" **3** Because of that, my body is full of pain; my pain is like the pain that women who are giving birth experience. When I hear about and see [what God is planning to do], I am shocked. **4** I cannot think straight/correctly, and I tremble. I was eager for it to be nighttime, but now it is night, and I am horrified. **5** [In the vision I saw that the leaders of Babylonia] were preparing a great feast. They had spread rugs [for people to sit on]; everyone was eating and drinking. [But] they should get up and prepare their shields, [because they are about to be attacked]! **6** Then Yahweh said to me, "Put a watchman [on the wall of Jerusalem], and tell him to shout/proclaim what he sees. **7** Tell him to watch for chariots pulled by pairs of horses, and [men riding] camels and donkeys, [coming from Babylon]. Tell the watchman to watch and listen carefully!" **8** [So I did that], and one day the watchman called out, "Day after day I have stood on this watchtower, and I have continued to watch during the day and during the night. **9** Now, I saw a man riding in a chariot pulled by two horses. [I called out to him], and he answered/shouted, 'Babylon has been destroyed! All the idols in Babylon lie in pieces on the ground!'" **10** My people [in Judah], [the army of Babylon has caused] you to suffer greatly [as though] [MET] you were grain that was threshed and (winnowed/thrown up into the air for the wind to blow away the chaff). [But now] I have told you what the Commander of the armies of angels the God whom we Israelis [worship], told me [about Babylon]. **11** [I received] this message [from Yahweh] about Edom: Someone from Edom has been calling/shouting to me saying, "Watchman, how long will it be before the night is ended? [DOU]" **12** [I], the watchman, replied, "It will [soon] be morning, but after that, it will [soon] be night again. If you want to inquire [again about what will happen in our country], come back and inquire again." **13** [I received] this message about Arabia: Give this message to people traveling in caravans from Dedan [town in northwest Arabia], who camp in the scrub there. Tell them to bring water for those who are thirsty. **14** And you people who live in Tema [city in northwest Arabia], must bring food for the (refugees/people who are fleeing from their enemies). **15** They are fleeing in order not to be killed by [their enemies'] swords and not to be shot in battles by arrows. **16** Yahweh said to me, "Exactly one year from now, all the greatness of the Kedar [area in Arabia] will end. **17** Only a few of their soldiers who know well how to shoot arrows will remain alive. [That will surely happen] because [I], Yahweh, have said it."

22 [I received] this message [from Yahweh] about Jerusalem, about the valley where [Yahweh showed me] this vision. Why is everyone foolishly running up to their [flat] rooftops? **2** Everyone in the city [seems to] be shouting. [There are a lot of] corpses [in the city], [but they] were not killed by [their enemies'] swords. They did not die in battles; [instead, they died from diseases and hunger]. **3** All the leaders of the city fled. [But then] they were captured

because they did not have bows [and arrows to defend themselves]. Your [soldiers tried to] flee while the enemy [army] was still far away, but they also were captured. **4** That is why I said, "Allow me to cry alone; do not try to comfort me [about my people being slaughtered]." **5** The Commander of the armies of angels has [chosen] a time when there will be a great uproar, [soldiers] marching, and people being terrified in the valley [where I received this] vision. [It will be a time when our city] walls will be battered down and [the people's] cries [for help] will be heard in the mountains. **6** The armies from Elam and Kir [in Media] will attack, driving chariots and carrying shields. **7** Our beautiful valleys will be filled with [our enemies'] chariots and the men who drive the chariots will stand outside [our city] gates. **8** The walls that protect [the cities in] Judah will fall down. You [people of Jerusalem] will run to get the weapons [that are stored in the building called] "the Hall of the Forest". **9** You will see that there are many breaks/holes in the walls of Jerusalem. You will store water in the lower pool [in the city]. **10** You will inspect the houses in Jerusalem, and [some of] them you will tear down to use the stones to repair the [city] wall. **11** Between the walls [of the city] you will build a reservoir to [store] water from the old pool. But you will never request help from the one who made the city; you have never depended on Yahweh, who planned this city long ago. **12** The Commander of the armies of angels told you to weep and mourn; he told you to shave your heads and to wear rough sackcloth to show that you were sorry for the sins that you had committed. **13** But instead of doing that, you were happy and celebrating; you slaughtered cattle and sheep, [in order to cook their] meat and eat it and drink wine. You said, "Let's eat and drink [all that we want to], because [it is possible that] we will die tomorrow!" **14** [So] the Commander of the armies of angels revealed this to me: "I will never forgive my people for sinning like this!" **15** The Commander of the armies of angels said this [to me]: "Go to Shebna, the official who supervises the workers in the palace, and give this message to him: **16** '[Who do you think you are?] Who gave you the authority to build a beautiful tomb where you will be buried, chiseling it out of the rocky cliff high above this valley? **17** You [think that you are] [IRO] a great man, but Yahweh is about to hurl you away. [It will be as though] he will seize you, **18** and roll/crumple you into a ball and throw you away into a large distant land. You will die [and be buried] there, and your beautiful chariots will stay there [in the hands of your enemies]. And [because of what happens to you], your master, [the king], will be [very] ashamed/disgraced. **19** Yahweh will force you to quit working in the palace; you will be demoted from your important position. **20** Then I will summon Hilkiah's son Eliakim, who has served serve me [well], to replace you. **21** I will allow him to wear your robe, and to fasten your sash around him, and I will give to him the authority that you had. He will be like [MET] a father to the people of Jerusalem and [all the other] towns in Judah. **22** I will give to him authority [MTY] over [what happens in] the palace where King David [lived]; when he decides something [MET], no one will be able to oppose it; when he refuses to do something, no one will be able to force him to do it. **23** I will cause his family to be greatly respected, because I will put him firmly in his position [as supervisor of the workers in the palace], like [SIM] a nail that is firmly hammered into a wall. **24** Others will enable him to have much responsibility, with the result that all the members of his family, even the most insignificant ones, will be honored.'" **25** [But] the Commander of the armies of angels also says, "[Shebna is like] [MET] a peg that is firmly fastened to the wall. But there will be a time when I will [remove him from his position]; he will lose his power/influence, and everything that he promoted [MET] will fail. [That will surely happen] because [I], Yahweh, have said it."

23 [I received] this message [from Yahweh] about Tyre [city]: You [sailors on] [APO] ships from Tarshish, weep, because [the harbor of] Tyre and all the houses [in the city] have been destroyed. The reports that you heard in Cyprus [island] about Tyre [are true]. **2** You people who live along the coast [near Tyre], and merchants of Sidon [city], mourn silently. Your sailors went across the seas [to many places like Tyre]. **3** They sailed across deep seas to buy grain in Egypt and [other] crops that are grown along the Nile [River]. Tyre became the city where people from [all] nations bought and sold goods. **4** But now you people in Sidon should be ashamed, because [you trusted in Tyre], which has been a strong fortress [on an island] in the sea. [Tyre is like a woman who is saying], "[Now it is as though] I have not given birth to [any] children, or raised [any] sons or daughters." **5** When [the people of] Egypt hear what has happened to Tyre, they will grieve very much. **6** Sail to Tarshish [and tell them what happened]; weep, you people who live along the coast. **7** [The people in] the very old city [of Tyre] were [RHQ] previously joyful. Traders [PRS] from Tyre established colonies in many distant nations. **8** People from Tyre appointed kings [over other places]; their traders were wealthy; they were [as powerful and wealthy as] [MET] kings. [So], who [RHQ] caused the people of Tyre to experience this disaster? **9** It was the Commander of the armies of angels who did it; he did it in order to cause [you people in] Tyre not to be proud any more, to humiliate you men who are honored all over the world. **10** You people

of Tarshish, you must grow crops in your land [instead of trading]; spread out over your land like [SIM] the Nile [River] spreads over the land [of Egypt] when it floods, because there is no harbor [in Tyre for your ships] now. **11** [It is as though] Yahweh stretched out his hand over the sea and shook the kingdoms of the earth. He commanded that in Phoenicia/Canaan all its fortresses must be destroyed. **12** He said to the people of Sidon, "You will never rejoice again, because you will be crushed; even if you flee to Cyprus [island], you will not escape destruction." **13** Think about what happened in Babylonia: the people who were in that land have disappeared. [The armies of] Assyria have caused that land to become a place where wild animals from the desert live. The Assyrians built dirt ramps to the top of the walls [of the city of Babylon]; [then they entered the city and] tore down the palaces and caused the city to become [a heap of] rubble. **14** [So] wail, you [sailors on the] ships of Tarshish, because the harbor [in Tyre where your ships stop] is destroyed! **15** For seventy years, which is as long as kings usually live, people will forget about Tyre. [But then it will be rebuilt]. What will happen there will be like what happened to a prostitute in this song: **16** "You harlot, whom people had forgotten, play your harp well, and sing many songs, in order that people will remember you again." **17** [It is true that] after seventy years Yahweh will restore Tyre. Their merchants will again earn a lot of money by buying things from and selling things to many [other] nations [HYP]. **18** [But] their profits will be given to Yahweh. [The merchants] will not hoard their money; instead, they will give it to Yahweh's priests in order that they [can] buy food and nice clothes.

24 Some day, Yahweh is going to destroy everything on the earth. He will devastate it and cause it to become a desert and scatter its people. **2** He will scatter everyone—priests and common people, servants and their masters, maids and their mistresses, buyers and sellers, lenders and borrowers, people who owe money and people who are owed money. **3** Nothing that is worth anything will be left on earth; everything valuable will be destroyed. [That will surely happen because] Yahweh has said it. **4** [Everything on] the earth will dry up and die [DOU]; its important people will become weak and unimportant. **5** The earth has become unacceptable to Yahweh because the people who live on it have disobeyed his laws; they have rejected the agreement that he intended to last forever. **6** Therefore, [Yahweh] will curse the earth; the people who live on it must be punished because of the sins that they have committed. They will be destroyed by fire, and [only a] few people will remain [alive]. **7** The grapevines will wither, and there will be no [grapes to make] wine. All [the people] who were previously happy will then groan and mourn. **8** People will no longer play cheerful songs with tambourines, people will no longer play joyfully on their harps, and people will no longer shout noisily [during their celebrations]. **9** People will no longer sing while they drink wine, and [all] their alcoholic drinks will taste bitter. **10** [Towns and] cities will be desolate; every house will be locked to prevent thieves from entering. **11** [Mobs] will gather in the streets, wanting wine; no one on the earth will be happy [DOU] any more. **12** Cities will be ruined and [all] their gates will be battered/broken into pieces. **13** It will be like that all over the earth: [there will only be a few people still alive], like what happens when [workers] beat all the olives off a tree [and there are only a few left], [or] when they harvest the grapes and there are only a few left [on the vines]. **14** But [those who are left alive] will sing joyfully; people [in nations] to the west [of Israel] will declare that Yahweh is very great; **15** people in nations to the east [of Israel will also] praise Yahweh [MTY]; in countries across the sea, people will praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis [worship]. **16** We will hear [people] in the most distant places on the earth singing praise to [Yahweh], the [truly] righteous one. But [now], I am [SYN] very sad. Weep for me, [because] I have become thin and weak. Terrible things are happening! Treacherous [people still] betray/deceive others everywhere [DOU]. **17** You people all over the earth, you will be terrified, and you will fall into deep pits and traps/snares. **18** Those who [try to] flee because they are terrified will fall into [deep] pits, and those who climb out of the pits will be caught by traps/snares. The sky will split open and torrents [SIM] [of rain will fall]; the foundations of the earth will shake. **19** The earth will split apart and be shattered; it will shake violently. **20** [It will be as though] the earth will stagger like [SIM] a drunk; it will shake like [SIM] a hut [shakes in a windstorm]. It will collapse and not [be able to] rise again, [because] the guilt of the people who rebel [against Yahweh] is very great. **21** At that time, Yahweh will punish the [wicked] powerful beings in the skies and the wicked kings on the earth. **22** They will [all] be gathered together and thrown into a dungeon/pit. They will be shut/locked in that dungeon/pit, and later they will be punished. **23** At that time the light of the moon and the sun will be lessened; [it will be as though] they are ashamed [in the presence of] Yahweh, because he, the Commander of the armies of angels, will rule gloriously (on Zion Hill/in Jerusalem), in the presence of the leaders [of his people].

25 Yahweh, you are my God; I will honor you and praise you [MTY]. You do wonderful things; you said long ago that you would do those things, and now you have done them like you said that you would. **2** [Sometimes] you

have caused cities to become heaps of rubble, cities that had strong walls around them. You have caused palaces in foreign countries to disappear; they will never be rebuilt. **3** Therefore, people in powerful nations will declare that you are very great, and people in nations [whose leaders are] ruthless/cruel will revere you. **4** Yahweh, you are [like] [SIM] a strong tower where poor people can (find refuge/be safe), a place where needy people can go when they are distressed. [You are like] [MET] a place where people can find refuge in a storm and where they can be shaded from the hot sun. Ruthless/Cruel [people] oppress us; they are like [SIM] a storm beating against a wall, **5** and like [SIM] [the intense] heat in the desert. [But] you cause the roaring of people in foreign nations to cease. Like the air cools when a cloud comes overhead, you stop ruthless/cruel [people] from singing songs boasting about their being very great. **6** Here in Jerusalem, the Commander of the armies of angels will prepare a wonderful feast for all the people [of the world]. It will be a banquet with plenty of good meat and fine well-aged [DOU] wine. **7** [People here are] sad; their being sad is [like] a dark cloud that hangs over them, like they experience when someone dies. But Yahweh will enable them to quit being sad. **8** He will get rid of death forever! Yahweh our God will cause people to no longer mourn because someone has died. And he will stop other people insulting and making fun of his land and [us] his people. [That will surely happen because] Yahweh has said it! **9** At that time, [people] will proclaim, "Yahweh is our God! We trusted in him, and he rescued us! Yahweh, in whom we trusted, has done it; we should rejoice because of his saving/rescuing [us]!" **10** Yahweh [MTY] will protect and bless Jerusalem. [But] he will crush [the people in the land of] Moab; they will be like [SIM] straw that is trampled in the manure [and left to rot]. **11** Yahweh will push down the people of Moab like [SIM] a swimmer pushes [the water] with his hands. He will cause them to cease being proud, and he will show that all the things that they have done are worthless. **12** The high walls [around the cities] in Moab will be torn down; they will be demolished and fall into the dust/dirt.

26 Some day, [people in] Judah will sing this song: Our city [of Jerusalem] is strong! Yahweh protects our city; He is like [MET] a wall that surrounds it. **2** Open the gates of the city for people who are righteous; allow people who faithfully [obey Yahweh] to enter the city. **3** Yahweh, those who trust in you, those who firmly resolve to never doubt you, you will enable them to feel perfectly peaceful. **4** [So] always trust in Yahweh, because Yahweh, [our God], is forever [like] [MET] a huge rock [under which we are sheltered/protected/safe]. **5** He humbles proud people and destroys cities whose people are arrogant. He causes those cities to collapse into the dust/dirt. **6** [When that happens], poor and oppressed people will trample on the ruins. **7** [But as for] righteous people, Yahweh, you do what is right; [it is as though] you cause the paths where they walk to be level and smooth. **8** Yahweh, by obeying your laws we show that we trust you to help us; and what we desire is that you will be honored/praised/exalted. **9** [All] through the night I [SYN] desire to know you better, and each morning I still want to be with you. [Only] when you come to judge [and punish] people who live on the earth will they learn to do what is right. **10** [But] your acting kindly toward wicked people does not cause them to do what is good. [Even] in places where people do what is right, the wicked people continue to do what is evil, and they do not realize that you, Yahweh, are great. **11** Yahweh, [it is as though] your fist is raised up [ready to strike them], but they do not realize that. Show them that you are very eager to help your people. If your enemies would realize that, they would be ashamed; allow your fire to burn them up [because they are] your enemies. **12** Yahweh, [we desire that] you will allow things to go well for us; everything that we have done is what you have enabled us to do. **13** Yahweh, our God, others have ruled over us, but you [MTY] are the only one whom we honor. **14** Those who ruled us are [now] gone; they are dead; their spirits have left this earth, and they will not become alive [again]. You punished those rulers and got rid of them, and people do not even remember them any more. **15** Yahweh, you have enabled our nation to become great; we are more in [now], and we have more land, [so we] thank/praise you. **16** Yahweh, when we were distressed, we asked you [to help us]; when you disciplined/punished us, we were able only to whisper when we prayed to you. **17** Like pregnant women writhe and cry out when they are giving birth, we suffered very much, too. **18** We had severe pain, but nothing good resulted [MET] from it. We have not rescued our people [from being conquered by our enemies], and we have not given birth to children [who will rule the world correctly] (OR, not defeated the armies [that have attacked other nations]. **19** But Yahweh's people who have died will become alive [again], their corpses will become alive! Those whose bodies lie in graves will rise and shout joyfully! His light will be [like] dew that falls on his people who have died, who are [now] in the place where the dead people are, [and will cause them to become alive again]. **20** But now, my people/fellow-citizens, go home and lock your doors! Hide for a short time, until [Yahweh] is no longer angry. **21** Listen to this: Yahweh will come from heaven to punish [all] the people on the earth for the sins that they have committed. People will be able to

see [PRS] the (blood of those/the people) who have been murdered; their murderers will no longer be able to hide.

27 At that time, Yahweh will punish Leviathan, the swift-moving monster/dragon, that coiling serpent that lives in the sea. Yahweh will kill it with his sharp, huge, and powerful sword. **2** At that time, [Yahweh will say], "You [Israeli people, who are like] [MET] a fruitful vineyard, must sing! **3** I will [protect you] [like a farmer] [MET] waters his crops carefully [in order that they will grow well]. I will guard you day and night, in order that no one harms you. **4** I am no [longer] angry [with my people]; [if any of your enemies try to injure you like briers and thorns injure people] [MET], I will attack them [in battles]; I will get rid of them completely, **5** unless they request me to protect them; I strongly invite them to make peace with me [DOU]!" **6** There will be a time when the (descendants of Jacob/Israeli people) will [prosper like] a plant that has good roots; they will be like [MET] trees that bud and blossom and bear a lot of fruit; [what they do will bless] all the people in the world. **7** [But now I ask], has Yahweh punished us Israelis like he punished our enemies? Has he punished us as much as he punished them? **8** [No, he has not done that], [but] he punished us Israeli people and (exiled us/forced us to leave our country); we were taken away from our land as though [SIM] we were struck by a windstorm from the east. **9** Yahweh did that in order to punish us for our sins, and remove our guilt. As a result [of our being exiled], all the altars to other gods [in Israel] will be demolished, and we will be forgiven for the sins that we have committed. There will be no more poles for worshiping the goddess Asherah, or altars for burning incense to other gods; they will all be torn down. **10** The cities that have strong walls around them will be empty; like the desert, they will have no one living in them. The houses will be abandoned, and the streets will be full of weeds. Calves will eat grass there and lie down there; they will chew up all the leaves on the trees. **11** [The Israeli people are like] [MET] dry branches on a tree; women break them off and use them to make fires [under their cooking pots]. Our Israeli people do not have any sense; so Yahweh, who created them, will not act mercifully toward them or be kind to them. **12** [However], there will be a time when Yahweh will gather them together [again; he will separate them from the people who have conquered them, like people] separate wheat from chaff. He will bring them [back to Israel], one by one, from [the land between] the Euphrates River [in the northeast] and the brook at the border of Egypt [in the southwest]. **13** At that time, a trumpet will be blown very loudly. And those who were exiled to Assyria and Egypt and who almost died there will return to Jerusalem, to worship Yahweh on [Zion], his holy hill.

28 Terrible things will happen to [Samaria city, the capital of Israel]! It is on a hill above a fertile valley; the people who live there, who get drunk by drinking too much wine, are very proud; it is a beautiful and glorious city, but some day that beauty will disappear like [MET] a flower that wilts and dries up. **2** Listen to this: Yahweh will cause a great army to attack Samaria. Their soldiers will be like [SIM] a huge hailstorm [or] a very strong wind; they will be everywhere, like the water of a huge flood, and they will smash to the ground [the buildings in Samaria]. **3** The people of Samaria are proud, but everything that the drunks who live there think is wonderful/glorious will be trampled on by their enemies. **4** [Yes], Samaria is beautiful, set on a hill above a fertile valley, but that beauty will disappear like [MET] a flower that wilts and dries up. Whenever someone sees a good fig at the beginning of the season [when figs become ripe], he quickly picks and eats it; [similarly, when the enemies of Israel see all the beautiful things in Samaria], [they will quickly conquer the city and take away all those things]. **5** At that time, the Commander of the armies of angels will be [like] a glorious wreath of flowers for [us] Israeli people who are still alive [after being exiled]. **6** He will cause our judges to want to do what is fair/just when they decide people's cases. He will enable the soldiers who stand at the city gates to strongly defend [the city when our enemies attack it]. **7** [But now,] our leaders stagger/stumble because they have drunk a lot of wine and [other] alcoholic drinks. The priests and prophets also stagger because of drinking a lot of wine and other alcoholic drinks. They are not able to think right; they see visions but they cannot understand what they mean; they are unable to decide things correctly. **8** All their tables are covered with [their] vomit; filth is everywhere. **9** They ridicule Yahweh saying, "Who does he think that he is teaching? Why is he talking to us like this? [Does he think that] we are little children who have recently been weaned? **10** [He continually tells us], 'Do this, do that;' first he tells us one rule, then another rule, he tells us only one line at a time." **11** So now, Yahweh will need to force them to listen to [Assyrians] speaking to them in a language that they do not understand. **12** Yahweh told his people [long ago], "[This is] a place where you can rest; you are exhausted [from all your travels through the desert], but you will be able to rest [in this land]." But they refused to pay attention to what he said. **13** So Yahweh continues to tell the people of Samaria, one line at a time, "Do this, do that," first one rule and then another rule. But because [of their ignoring what God said], they will be attacked and defeated; they will be wounded and snared

and captured. 14 Because of [what will happen in Samaria], you rulers in Jerusalem who make fun of me, listen to this message from Yahweh: 15 You [boast] saying, "We have made an alliance with [the leaders of Egypt], so we will not be killed [in battles]; we will never go to the place where the dead people are. When the [army of Assyria] attacks us, they will never defeat us, because we have made [an agreement with Egypt] to protect us!" [But that agreement consists of] a lot of lies [DOU]. **(Sheol h7585)** 16 Therefore, Yahweh [our] Lord says this: "Listen to this! I am going to place in Jerusalem [someone who is like] [MET] a foundation stone, [he is like] a stone that has been tested [to determine if it is solid]. [He will be like] a valuable cornerstone around which it will be safe to build a house; and whoever trusts in him will never be disappointed. 17 I will test you [people of Jerusalem] to find out if you will act justly and righteously [like] [MET] someone uses a plumb line [to determine if a wall is straight and vertical]. But because your agreement [with Egypt] to protect you [was made by leaders] lying to each other and deceiving each other, you will be defeated and taken away [from your country] by [an army that will come against you like] [MET] a flood. 18 I will annul/destroy the agreement that you made [with the leaders of Egypt]. You thought that [because of that agreement] you would not be killed, and you would not go to the place where the dead are. [But] when the vast [army of Assyria] overwhelms you like a flood, they will trample you into the ground. **(Sheol h7585)** 19 Their soldiers will come during the morning, at noontime, and at night, and they will carry you all away." And when you understand this message, you will be terrified. 20 [You have heard people say], "Your bed is very short, you will not be able to sleep in it; your blankets are very narrow; they will not cover you!" [That means for you that your agreement with Egypt is not going to save you]. 21 Yahweh will come [and cause you to be defeated]; he will do to you like he did to the army of Philistia at Perizim Mountain and like he did to the Amor people-group at Gibeon Valley. What he will do will be [very] strange and unusual [DOU]. 22 The Commander of the armies of angels has told me that he is going to destroy the entire land. So do not ridicule [what I say any more], because if you do that he will punish you [even] more severely. 23 Listen [IDM] to what I say; pay attention carefully. 24 When a farmer plows some ground, does he never plant seeds [RHQ]? Does he continue to plow it and never plant anything [RHQ]? 25 No, he makes the ground very level, and then he plants seeds— dill and cumin and wheat and barley. He plants each kind of seed in the correct manner. 26 [He does that] because God has taught him the correct way to do it. 27 [Farmers] never thresh caraway/dill with a heavy sledge/club; instead, they beat it only with a stick. [Farmers] never thresh cumin by driving a cart over it; instead, they hit it [only] with a rod. 28 And grain for baking bread is crushed easily, so the farmers do not continue to pound it for a long time. They sometimes cause their horses to pull a cart over it [to thresh it], [but] doing that does not grind the grain. 29 The Commander of the armies of angels gives [us] wonderful advice [about how to do things]; he causes [us] to be very wise. [So what the farmers do is very smart/wise, but what your leaders are doing is very stupid].

29 [This is a message from Yahweh:] Terrible things will happen to Jerusalem, the city where [King] David lived. You people continue to celebrate your festivals each year. 2 But I will cause you to experience a great disaster, [and when that happens], people will weep and lament [very much]. Your city will become like [MET] an altar [to me] [where people are burned as sacrifices]. 3 I will cause your enemies [to come to your city]; they will surround it by [building] towers and putting in place other things with which to attack you. 4 Then you will talk [as though you were] buried deep in the ground [DOU]; it will sound like someone whispering from under the ground, like [SIM] a ghost speaking from a grave. 5 But, suddenly your enemies will be blown away like dust; their armies will disappear like [SIM] chaff that is blown away [by the wind]. [It will happen] very suddenly. 6 The Commander of the armies of angels will come [to help you] with thunder and an earthquake and a very loud noise, with a strong wind and a big storm and a fire that will burn up everything. 7 [Then] the armies of all the nations that will be attacking Jerusalem will quickly disappear like a dream in the night [DOU]. Those who will be attacking Jerusalem will suddenly vanish/disappear. 8 People who are asleep dream about eating food, [but] when they wake up, they are still hungry. People who are thirsty dream about drinking something, [but] when they wake up they are still thirsty. It will be like that when your enemies come to attack Zion Hill; [they will dream about conquering you, but when they wake up,] [they will realize that they have not succeeded]. 9 You [people of Jerusalem], be amazed and surprised [about this] [IRO]! Do not believe [what I have said] [SAR]! And continue to be blind [IRO] [about what Yahweh is doing]. You are stupid, but it is not because you have drunk a lot of wine. You stagger, but not from drinking alcoholic drinks. 10 Because Yahweh has prevented the prophets [DOU] from understanding [and telling you his messages], [it is as though] he has caused you to be fast/deeply asleep. 11 [Yahweh gave me] this vision; [but] for you, it is only words on a scroll that is sealed shut. If you give it to those who can read [and request that they read it], they will say, "We

cannot read it because the scroll is sealed." 12 When you give it to [others] who cannot read, they will say, "[We cannot read it because] we do not know how to read." 13 [So] the Lord says, "These people say that they belong to me. They honor me by what they say [MTY], but they do not think [IDM] about what I [desire]. When they worship me, all they do is recite rules that people have made and that they have memorized. 14 Therefore, again I will do something to amaze these people; I will perform many miracles. And [I will show that] the people [who tell others that they] are wise are not really wise, and [I will show that] the people [who tell others that they] are intelligent are not really intelligent. 15 Terrible things will happen to those who try to conceal from me, Yahweh, the [evil] things that they plan to do; they do those things in the darkness and they think, 'Yahweh certainly cannot [RHQ] see us; he cannot [RHQ] know what we are doing!' 16 They are extremely foolish! [They act as though] they were the potters and I was the clay! Something that was created should certainly never [RHQ] say to the one who made it, 'You did not make me!' A jar should never say, 'The potter who made me did not know what he was doing!'" 17 Soon [the forests in] Lebanon will become fertile fields, and abundant crops will grow in those fields, and that will happen very soon. 18 At that time, deaf people will [be able to hear]; [they will be able to] hear when someone reads from a book; and blind people will [be able to see]; [they will be able to] see things when it is gloomy and [even] when it is dark. 19 Yahweh will enable humble people to be very joyful again. Poor people will rejoice about what the Holy One of Israel [has done]. 20 There will be no more people who ridicule [others] and no more arrogant people. And those who plan to do evil things will be executed. 21 Those who testify falsely in order to persuade judges to punish innocent people will vanish/disappear. Similar things will happen to those who by lying in court [persuade judges to] make unjust decisions. 22 That is why Yahweh, who rescued Abraham, says about the people of Israel, "My people will no longer be ashamed; no longer will they show on their faces that they are ashamed. 23 When they see that I have blessed them by giving them many children and doing many other things for them, they will realize that I am the Holy One of Israel, and they will revere me, the God to whom they, the descendants of Jacob, belong. 24 When that happens, those who have not been able to think well will think clearly, and those who complain [about what I am doing] will accept what I am teaching them."

30 Yahweh says, "Terrible things will happen to you, my people who rebel against me. You make plans, but what you plan is not what I want. You have made an alliance [with the rulers of Egypt], but you did not ask my Spirit [if that was what you should do]. By doing that, you have increased the number of your sins. 2 You went to Egypt [to ask their rulers for help], without asking for my advice. You have trusted in [the army of] the king of Egypt to protect you; you have [trusted in them] [like] people sit in the shade [to protect themselves from the sun] [MET]. 3 [But] the result of your trusting in the king of Egypt is that you will be [disappointed and] disgraced; because of trusting in him, you will be humiliated. 4 Officials/ambassadors [from Judah] have gone to Zoan and Hanes [cities in Egypt to make treaties], 5 but all those [who trust in the King of Egypt] will be humiliated, because that nation will not be able to help you; the treaty that you have made [requesting help from them] will be useless; instead, the result will be that you will be humiliated and disgraced [DOU]." 6 [I received from Yahweh] this message about the animals in the southern part of Judah: That area is one where [people experience a lot of] troubles and difficulties, an area where there are male and female lions and various kinds of poisonous snakes. Caravans go through that area taking donkeys and camels loaded with valuable goods. [They are taking them] to Egypt to seek for protection [by the army of Egypt], [but] it will be useless. 7 The promises made by [the king of] Egypt are worthless; therefore I call Egypt 'the sea monster/dragon that does nothing'. 8 Yahweh told me to write on a scroll a message, in order that it would be a witness [to the people of Judah] that would endure forever. 9 [It would remind them] that they are deceitful and always rebelling against Yahweh; they refuse to pay attention to what he tells/teaches them. 10 They tell the people who see/receive visions [from Yahweh], "Stop seeing visions!" They tell the prophets, "Do not reveal to us what is right! Tell us pleasant things; do not tell us visions about things that are true! 11 Stop doing what you have been doing [DOU]; stop telling us what the Holy One of Israel [says to us]!" 12 Therefore, this is what the Holy One of Israel says: "You have rejected my message, and you are relying on those who oppress and deceive others. 13 Therefore, the result of your sin [of rejecting me] will be that you will [suddenly experience disasters]; what will happen to you will be like [SIM] a cracked wall that suddenly collapses [DOU]. 14 You will be smashed like a clay jar is smashed [when it is dropped], and it shatters completely, with the result that there is not one piece big enough to carry some coals from a stove or to carry a little bit of water from a well." 15 Yahweh, [our] God, the Holy One of Israel, [also] says this: "You will be rescued [from your enemies only] if you repent and trust [in what I will do for you]; you will be strong [only] if you quit worrying and trust in me. But you do not want [to do

that]. 16 You said, 'No, we will escape on horses [that the army of Egypt will give us]!' So, you will [try to] flee. You said, 'We will [escape from the army of Assyria] by riding on swift horses!' [But] those who pursue you will [also ride] swiftly. 17 [As a result], 1,000 [of you] will flee when [only] one of them pursues you! When only five [of their soldiers] threaten [to kill you], [all of] will flee. [Only a few of] you will be left, like [SIM] a [single] flagpole on top of a mountain with one signal flag on the pole." 18 [But] wants to be kind to you; he desires to show you that he is merciful. [Do not forget that] Yahweh is a God who acts justly; he is pleased with those who patiently trust in him. 19 You people who live in Jerusalem [DOU], [some day] you will not cry any more. Yahweh will be kind to you when you call out to him for help. He will answer/help you as soon as he hears you call. 20 Although [now] Yahweh has caused you to [daily] experience [MET] great troubles and suffer much, [he], your teacher, will not hide himself from you. He [SYN] will teach you many things clearly. 21 And you will hear him speak to you to guide you. [Right] behind you he will say, "This is the road on which you should walk; walk on this road!" 22 When that happens, you will destroy [all] your idols that are covered with silver or gold. You will throw them away like you throw away a filthy rag, and you will say to them, "We do not need you any more!" 23 [If you do that], Yahweh will bless you by giving you good rain at the time that you plant your crops. You will have good harvests, and plenty of pasture with grass for your cattle to eat. 24 After the wind [blows away the chaff], the oxen and donkeys that [pull the plow to] plow your ground will have good grain to eat. 25 At that time, when [your enemies] have been slaughtered and their towers have (collapsed/been destroyed), there will be streams flowing down every hill and mountain [in Judah]. 26 The moon will seem to shine as brightly as the sun, and the sun will seem to shine seven times as brightly as previously. That is what it will be like when Yahweh causes [the suffering of] his people [to cease; it will be as though] [MET] he will be putting bandages on their wounds and healing them. 27 [It is as though] we see Yahweh coming from far away; he is extremely angry, and there are thick clouds of smoke around him. By what he says [MTY] he shows that he is angry; what he says is like [SIM] a devastating/destructive fire. 28 His breath is like [SIM] a flood that covers [his enemies] up to their necks. He will separate [MET] the nations in order to destroy [some of them]; [it is as though] he will put hooks in their mouths and take them away. 29 But [his people] will sing joyfully like they sing during the nights when they celebrate a holy festival. They will be very joyful, like [SIM] [a large group of his people] are joyful when they go up to Zion Hill in Jerusalem, along with men playing flutes [when they are all going there to worship Yahweh]. He is [like] [MET] a huge rock under which [we] Israeli people [are safe]. 30 And Yahweh will enable [us] to hear him speaking powerfully/majestically. He will show us that he [SYN] is very powerful. [We] will see him [SYN] smash [his enemies]. Being very angry, he will descend with a big rainstorm and thunder and hail [to punish them]. 31 [The soldiers of] Assyria will be terrified when they hear the voice of Yahweh and when he strikes them with his rod. 32 And while Yahweh strikes them to punish them, [his people] will [celebrate by] playing tambourines and harps. [It will be as though] Yahweh will lift up his powerful hand/arm and defeat the Assyrian army in battle. 33 [The valley of] Topheth [outside Jerusalem] has been prepared for a long time; it is ready for the king [of Assyria]; the (funeral pyre/pile of wood) [for burning his body] is wide and high, and [it will be as though] Yahweh will light the fire with his breath, which will come out like a stream of burning sulfur.

31 Terrible things will happen to those who reply on Egypt to help them, trusting in their soldiers' horses and their many chariots and their strong chariot-drivers, instead of trusting that Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, will help them. 2 Yahweh is [very] wise, [but] he also causes people to experience disaster! And [when he decides to do that], he does not change his mind! He will strike/punish the wicked people and [all] those who help them. 3 The soldiers of Egypt [that you people of Judah are relying on] are humans, not God! And their horses are only horses; they are not [powerful] spirits! So when Yahweh raises his fist to strike/punish the [soldiers of Egypt whom you thought would help you], he will also strike [you who thought that you would be helped], and you and they will stumble and fall down; all of you will die together. 4 But this is what Yahweh said to me: "When a huge lion stands over the body of a sheep that he has killed and growls, even if a large group of shepherds comes [to chase/shoo away the lion], even if they shout loudly, the lion will not be afraid and will not leave. Similarly, I, the Commander of the armies of angels, will come down to fight [my enemies] on Zion Hill, [and nothing will hinder me]. 5 [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, will protect Jerusalem like [SIM] a [mother] bird protects [the baby birds in] her nest: I will defend the city and rescue it from its enemies." 6 My people, [even though] you have greatly rebelled against Yahweh, return to him. 7 When you do that, each of you will throw away the idols that you [SYN] have sinned by making, idols that are [covered with] silver and gold. 8 [Many of the] Assyrian [soldiers] will be killed, but not by swords that men use. They will be destroyed by the sword of God; and [those who are

not killed] will (panic/be very afraid) and flee. And some of them will [be captured] and forced to become slaves. **9** [Even] their very strong soldiers [MTY] will be terrified; they will abandon their battle flags and run away! Yahweh will cause his enemies who attack Jerusalem to be destroyed. Yahweh's presence on Zion Hill is [like] a fire, [like] a furnace that blazes in Jerusalem; and that is what Yahweh says [about what will happen to the Assyrian army]!

32 Listen to this! Some day there will be a righteous king, and his officials will help him to rule justly/fairly. **2** Each [of them] will be like [MET] a shelter from the wind and a (refuge/place to be protected) from the storm. They will be like [SIM] streams of water in the desert, like the shade under a huge rock in a very hot and dry land. **3** When that happens, [those leaders will enable] people who have not understood [MET] [God's truth] to understand it, and [they will enable] those who have not paid attention to [MET] [God's truth] to pay attention to it. **4** [Even] those who act very hastily will have good sense, and those who cannot speak well will speak fluently and clearly. **5** [At that time], people who are foolish/unwise will no longer be (admired/looked up to), and scoundrels will no longer be respected. **6** Foolish people say things that are foolish, and they plan to do evil things. Their behavior is disgraceful, and they say things about Yahweh that are false. They do not give food to those who are hungry, and they do not give water to those who are thirsty. **7** Scoundrels do things that are evil and that deceive people; they plan to do evil things; by telling lies [in court] they cause poor people to (have trouble/be convicted), even when what the poor [people] are requesting is fair/just. **8** But honorable people plan to do honorable/good things, and they do the honorable/good things that they plan to do. **9** You women [of Jerusalem] who think that you are very secure/safe and think that everything is going well, listen to [IDM] what I say! **10** One year from now, you who now (are not worried about anything/think that everything is going well) will tremble, because there will be no grapes for you to harvest and no [other] crops to harvest. **11** [So] tremble [now], you women who are not worried about anything! Take off your [fancy] clothes and put rough sackcloth around your waists. **12** Beat/Hit your breasts to show that you are grieving about [what will happen in] your fertile fields and to your fruitful grapevines, **13** because [only] thorns and thistles will grow in your soil. Your houses where you had joyful parties and your city where you have been happy will be gone. **14** The [king's] palace will be empty; there will be no people in the city that [now] is very noisy. Wild donkeys will walk around and flocks of sheep will eat grass in the empty forts and watchtowers. **15** [It will be like that] until God pours his Spirit out on us from heaven. [When that happens], the deserts will become fertile fields, and abundant crops will grow in those fertile fields. **16** People [PRS] will act/rule justly/fairly in those desert areas, and people will act/rule righteously in those fertile fields. **17** And the result of their acting righteously will be that there will be peace, the land will be tranquil/quiet, and people will be secure/safe forever. **18** My people will live in their homes peacefully, and safely, and calmly, in places of rest. **19** [Even if a severe] hailstorm knocks down [the trees in] the forest, and [all the buildings in] the city are blown down, **20** Yahweh [will greatly] bless you; you will plant [seeds in fields] alongside the streams [and there will be abundant crops]. Your donkeys and cattle will easily find grass to eat.

33 Terrible things will happen to you [people of Assyria]! You have destroyed [others], [but] you have not been destroyed [yet]. You have betrayed/deceived [others], [but] you have not been betrayed/deceived [yet]. When you stop destroying [others], others will destroy you. When you stop betraying/deceiving others, [others] betray you. **2** Yahweh, be kind to us, because we have patiently waited for you [to help us]. Enable us to be strong every day, and rescue us when we have troubles. **3** Our enemies run away when they hear your voice. When you stand up and show that you are powerful [IDM], the people of all nations flee. **4** [And after our enemies have been defeated], we, your people, will take away all our enemies' possessions like [SIM] caterpillars and locusts strip off all the leaves of plants. **5** Yahweh is greater than anyone else, and he lives in heaven, and he will rule justly and righteously in Jerusalem. **6** [When that happens], he will enable you to live securely/safely; he will fully protect your possessions, he will enable you to be wise and to know [all that you need to know]; and revering Yahweh will be [like] [MET] a valuable treasure for you. **7** [But now], look, our brave men are crying out in the streets; our ambassadors [have gone to other countries to make peace treaties], [but they will] cry bitterly [because they will not succeed]. **8** No one travels on our roads [DOU]. [The leaders of Assyria] have broken/disregarded their peace treaty [with us]; they despise the people who made those treaties, and they do not respect anyone. **9** The land [of Judah] is dry and barren. The [cedar trees in] Lebanon are drying up and decaying. The Sharon [Plain along the coast] is now a desert. There are no more leaves on the trees in the Bashan and Carmel [areas]. **10** Yahweh says, "Now I will begin to show that I am very powerful [DOU]. **11** You [people of Assyria] make plans that are [as useless as] [MET] chaff and straw. Your breath will become a fire that will burn you up. **12** [Your] people will be burned until only ashes remain [MET] like [SIM] thornbushes are cut down and burned up in a fire. **13** You people who live

far away and you people who live nearby, pay attention to what I have done and realize that I am [very] powerful." 14 The sinners in Jerusalem will tremble because of being very afraid; godless people will be terrified. [They say], "None of us can [RHQ] remain alive because this fire is burning everything; it is like the fire on Yahweh's altar that will burn forever!" 15 Those who act honestly and say what is right, those who do not try to become rich by (extortion/forcing people to give them money), those who do not try to get bribes, those who refuse to listen to people who are planning to murder someone, those who do not join others who urge them to do what is wrong, 16 they are the people who will live safely [MTY]; they will find places to be safe in the caves in the mountains. They will have plenty of food and water. 17 You [SYN] [people of Judah] will see the king wearing all his beautiful [robes], and you will see that he rules a land that extends far away. 18 When you see that, you will think about when you were previously terrified, [and you will say], "[The officers of Assyria] who counted the tax money that we were forced to pay to them [have disappeared] [RHQ]! Those men who counted our towers [are gone] [RHQ]! 19 Those arrogant people who spoke a language that we could not understand are no longer here!" 20 [At that time], you will see Zion Hill, the place where we celebrate our festivals; you will see that Jerusalem has become a place that is calm and safe. It will be [secure], [like] [SIM] a tent [that cannot be moved because] its ropes are tight and its stakes are firmly in the ground. 21 Yahweh will be our mighty God; he will be [like] [SIM] a mighty river that will protect us because [our enemies] will not be able to cross it; no one will be able to row across it and no ships will be able to sail across it. 22 Yahweh is our judge; he is the one who gives us laws, and he is our king. He will rescue us. 23 The ropes on our enemies' boats will hang loose, their masts will not be fastened firmly, and their sails will not be spread out. The treasures that they have seized will be divided [among us, God's people], and even lame [people among us] will get some. 24 And the people in Jerusalem will no [longer] say, "We are sick," [because Yahweh] will forgive the sins that have been committed by the people who live there.

34 You people of all nations, come near and listen and pay careful attention. I want the world and everything that is in it to hear what I say. 2 Yahweh is angry with [the people of] all nations; he is (furious/very angry) with all their armies. He has decided that they must be destroyed, and he will slaughter them. 3 Their corpses will not be buried, and [as a result] their corpses will stink, and their blood will [fill the streams that] flow down the mountains. 4 The sky will disappear like [SIM] a scroll that is rolled up [and thrown away]. Stars will fall [from the sky] like [SIM] [withered] leaves fall from grapevines, [or] like [SIM] shriveled figs fall from fig trees. 5 When Yahweh has finished his work of destroying objects in the sky, he will punish [the people of] Edom, that people-group that he has said must be destroyed/exterminated. 6 [It is as though] Yahweh has a sword that is covered with blood and fat— the blood of lambs and goats and the fat of the kidneys of rams to be sacrificed. [It is as though] Yahweh will offer a sacrifice in [the city of] Bozrah [and kill many people] in other cities in Edom. 7 [Even] wild oxen will be killed, as well as young calves and big bulls. The ground will be soaked with blood, and the dirt will be covered with the fat of those animals. 8 That will be the time when Yahweh gets revenge for what those people did to the people of Judah. 9 The streams in Edom will be full of burning pitch/tar, and the ground will be covered with burning sulfur. 10 Yahweh will never finish punishing Edom with fire; the smoke will rise forever. No one will ever live in that land, and no one will [even] travel through it. 11 Ravens and various kinds of owls and small animals will live there. Yahweh will measure that land carefully: He will measure it to [to decide where] to cause chaos and destruction. 12 There will be no princes; the people who have authority will have no kingdom to rule. 13 The deserted palaces and fortified buildings will be full of thorns and thistles. The ruins will be a place for jackals/wolves and owls to live. 14 Animals that live in the desert and hyenas/wolves will be there, and wild goats will bleat/call to each other. There will also be creatures/animals that [roam around] at night. 15 Owls will make their nests there and lay their eggs in the nests; and when the eggs hatch, the mother birds will cover them [with their wings]. There will also be falcons/hawks there, each with its mate. 16 If you read what is written in the book that contains messages from Yahweh, you will find out what he will do [in Edom]. All of those animals and birds will be there, and each one will have a mate, because that is what Yahweh has promised, and his Spirit will cause them [all] to gather [there]. 17 He has decided what parts of the land [of Edom] each will live in, and those are the places where each bird or animal will live. Their descendants will possess those areas forever, throughout all generations.

35 [Some day, it will be as though] the desert [and other very] dry areas are glad [DOU]; the desert will rejoice and flowers will blossom. Like crocuses/daffodils, 2 the desert will produce flowers abundantly; [it will be as though] everything is rejoicing and singing! The deserts will become as beautiful as [SIM] [the trees in] Lebanon, as fertile [SIM] as the plains of the Sharon and Carmel [areas]. [There] people will see the glory of Yahweh; they will see that he

is magnificent. 3 [So], encourage those who are tired and
weak. 4 Say to those who are afraid, "Be strong and do
not be afraid, because our God is going to come to get
revenge [on his enemies]; he will (pay them back/punish
them) for what they have done, and he will rescue you."
5 When he does that, [he will enable] blind people to see
and [enable] deaf people to hear. 6 Lame people will leap
like deer, and those who have been unable to speak will
sing joyfully. Water will gush out [from springs] in the desert;
streams will flow in the desert. 7 The very dry ground will
become a pool of water, and springs will provide water for
the dry land. Grass and reeds and papyrus will grow in
places where the jackals/wolves lived previously. 8 And
there will be a highway through that land; it will be called 'the
Holy Highway'. People who are not acceptable to God will
not walk on that road; it will be only for those who conduct
their lives as God wants them to; foolish people will become
lost while walking on that road. 9 There will not be any lions
there or any other dangerous animals along that road. Only
those who have been freed [from being slaves in Babylonia]
will walk on it. 10 Those whom Yahweh has freed will return
to Jerusalem; they will sing as they enter the city; they will
be extremely joyful [MET, PRS] forever. No longer will they
be sad or mourn; they will be [completely] joyful [DOU].

36 When King Hezekiah had been [ruling Judah] for
almost 14 years, King Sennacherib of Assyria came
[with his army] to attack the cities in Judah that had walls
around them. [They did not conquer Jerusalem, but] they
conquered all the other cities. 2 Then the king of Assyria
sent a large army with some of his important officials from
Lachish [city] to [persuade] King Hezekiah [to surrender].
When they arrived at Jerusalem, they stood in their positions
alongside the aqueduct/channel in which water flows into the
upper pool [into Jerusalem], near the road to the field where
the women wash clothes. 3 The Israeli officials who went
out of the city to talk with them were Hilkiah's son Eliakim,
the (palace administrator/man who supervised the workers
in the palace), Shebna the king's secretary, and Asaph's
son Joah, who wrote down the government decisions. 4
Then one of Sennacherib's important officials told them to
take this message to Hezekiah: This is what the King of
Assyria, the great king, says: "What are you trusting in to
rescue you? 5 You say that you have weapons to fight us
and some country's promises [to help you], [and that will
enable you to defeat us], but that is only talk [RHQ]. Who do
you think will help you to rebel against my [soldiers from
Assyria]? 6 Listen to me! You are relying on [the army of]
Egypt. But [that will be like] [MET] using a broken reed for a
walking stick on which you could lean. [But] it would pierce
the hand of anyone who would lean on it! That is what the
King of Egypt would be like for anyone who relied on him
[for help]. 7 But perhaps you will say to me, '[No], we are
relying on Yahweh our God [to help us].' [I would reply],
'Is he not the one whom [you insulted by] tearing down
his shrines and altars and forcing everyone in Jerusalem
and [other places in] Judah to worship [only] in front of the
altar [in Jerusalem]?' 8 So I suggest that you make a deal
with my master/boss, the king of Assyria. I will give you
2,000 horses, but [I do not think that] you can find 2,000 of
your men who can ride on them! 9 You are expecting the
king of Egypt to send chariots and men riding horses [to
assist you]. But they certainly would not [RHQ] be able to
resist/defeat even the most insignificant/unimportant official
in the army of Assyria! 10 Furthermore, [do not think that]
[RHQ] we have come here to attack and destroy this land
without Yahweh's orders! It is Yahweh himself who told us to
come here and destroy this land!" 11 Then Eliakim, Shebna,
and Joah said to the official from Assyria, "Please speak
to us in [your] Aramaic language, because we understand
it. Do not speak to us in [our] Hebrew language, because
the people who are standing on the wall will understand it
[and become frightened]." 12 But the official replied, "Do you
think that my master sent me to say these things [only] to
you, and not to the people standing on the wall [RHQ]? [If
you reject this message], the [people in this city] will soon
need to eat their own dung and drink their own urine, just
like you will, [because there will be nothing more for you
to eat or drink]." 13 Then the official stood up and shouted
in the Hebrew language [to the people sitting on the wall].
He said, "Listen to this message from the great king, the
King of Assyria! 14 He says, 'Do not allow Hezekiah to
deceive you! He will not be able to rescue you! 15 Do not
allow him to persuade you to trust in Yahweh, saying that
Yahweh will rescue you, and that [the army of] the King of
Assyria will never capture this city!' 16 Do not pay attention
to what Hezekiah says! This is what the king [of Assyria]
says: 'Come out of the city and surrender to me. [If you do
that, I will arrange for] each of you to drink the juice from
your own grapevines and to eat figs from your own trees,
and to drink water from your own well. 17 [You will be able to
do that] until we come and take you to a land that is like
your land—a land where there is grain to make bread and
[vineyards to produce grapes for making] new wine and, and
where we make lots of bread.' 18 Do not allow Hezekiah
to mislead you by saying, "Yahweh will rescue us." The
gods that people of other nations worship have never [RHQ]
rescued any of them from the power [MTY] of the King of
Assyria! 19 Why were the gods of Hamath and Arpad [cities],

and the gods of Sepharvaim unable to rescue Samaria from my power [MTY]? 20 No, no god [RHQ] of any nation has been able to rescue their people from me. So why do you think that Yahweh will rescue you people of Jerusalem from my power [MTY]?'" 21 But the people [who were listening] were silent. No one said anything, because King [Hezekiah] had commanded, "[When the official from Assyria talks to you], do not answer him." 22 Then Eliakim and Shebna and Joah returned to Hezekiah with their clothes torn [because they were extremely distressed]. They told him what the official from Assyria had said.

37 When King Hezekiah heard what they reported, he tore his clothes and put on clothes made of rough sackcloth [because he was very distressed]. Then he went into the temple of Yahweh [and prayed]. 2 Then he sent Eliakim, Shebna, and the (older/most important) priests, who were also wearing clothes made of rough sackcloth, to talk to me. 3 He said to them, "Tell this to Isaiah: 'King Hezekiah says that this is a day when we are greatly distressed. Other nations are causing us to be insulted and disgraced. We are like [SIM] a woman who is about to give birth to a baby, but she does not have the strength that she needs to do it. 4 [But] perhaps Yahweh our God has heard what the official from Assyria said. Perhaps he knows that his boss, the King of Assyria, sent him to insult the all-powerful God, and that Yahweh will punish the King of Assyria for what he said. And the king requests that you pray for the few of us who are still alive [here in Jerusalem].'" 5 After those men gave me that message, 6 I replied, "Tell the King, 'This is what Yahweh says: "Those messengers from the King of Assyria have said evil things about me. But do not be disturbed by what they said. 7 Listen to this: I will cause Sennacherib to hear a rumor [that the armies of Babylon are about to attack his country], and that will worry him. So he will return to his own country, and there I will cause him to be assassinated by [men using] swords."'" 8 The official from Assyria found out that the King of Assyria [and his army] had captured Lachish [city] and that they were attacking Libnah, [which is a nearby city]. So the official left Jerusalem and went to Libnah [to report to the king what had happened in Jerusalem]. 9 Soon after that, King [Sennacherib] received a report that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia was leading his army to attack them. So before King Sennacherib left Libnah [with his army to fight against the army from Ethiopia], he sent other messengers to Hezekiah in Jerusalem with a letter. [In the letter he wrote this] to Hezekiah: 10 "Do not allow your god, on whom you are relying, to deceive you by promising you that Jerusalem will not be captured by my army. 11 You have certainly heard what the armies of the kings of Assyria have done to all the other countries; our armies have destroyed them completely. So, (do you think that you will escape?/do not think that your god will save you!) [RHQ] 12 Did the gods of the nations that were about to be destroyed by the armies of the previous kings of Assyria rescue them? Did those gods rescue Gozan [region], and Haran and Rezeph [cities in northern Syria], and the people of Eden [region] who were forced to go to Tel-Assar [city]? 13 What happened to the King of Hamath and the King of Arpad? What happened to the kings of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah [cities]? [Did their gods rescue them] [RHQ]?" 14 Hezekiah received the letter that the messengers gave him, and he read it. Then he went up to the temple and spread out the letter in front of Yahweh. 15 And [then] Hezekiah prayed this: 16 "O Yahweh, Commander of the armies of angels, the God to whom [we] Israelis belong, you are seated on your throne above the statues of the creatures with wings, [above the Sacred Chest]. Only you are [truly] God. You rule all the kingdoms on this earth. You are the one who created everything on the earth and in the sky. 17 [So], Yahweh, [please] listen to what I am saying, and look at [what is happening]! And listen to what Sennacherib has said to insult you, the all-powerful God! 18 Yahweh, it is true that [the armies of] the kings of Assyria have completely destroyed many nations and ruined their land. 19 And they have thrown all the idols of those nations into fires and burned them. But they were not [really] gods. They were only idols made of wood and stone, [and that is why they were destroyed easily]. 20 So now, Yahweh our God, [please] rescue us from the power [MTY] of [the King of Assyria], in order that [the people in] all the kingdoms of the world will know that you, Yahweh, are the only one who is [truly] God." 21 Then I sent this message to Hezekiah: "This is what Yahweh, the God to whom [we] Israelis belong, says: Because you prayed about what King Sennacherib of Assyria [said], 22 this is what I say to him: 'The people of Jerusalem despise you and make fun of you. They will wag/shake their heads to mock you while you flee from here. 23 Whom do you think you have been despising and ridiculing? Whom do you think you were shouting at? Whom do you think you were looking at [very] proudly/arrogantly? [It was I], the Holy One whom the Israelis worship! 24 The messengers whom you sent made fun of me. You said, "With my many chariots I have gone to the highest mountains, [even] to the highest mountains in Lebanon. We have cut down its tallest cedar [trees] and its nicest pine/cypress [trees]. We have been to the most distant/remote peaks and to its densest forests. 25 We have dug wells [in many countries] and drunk water [from them]. And by marching through [MTY] the streams of Egypt, we dried them all up

[HYP]!" 26 [But I, Yahweh, reply], "Have you never heard that long ago I determined [those things]; I planned them long ago, and now I have been causing those things to occur. I planned that your army would destroy cities and cause them to become piles of rubble. 27 The people in those cities have no power, and as a result they are dismayed and discouraged. They are [as frail as] [MET] grass and plants in the fields, as frail as grass that grows on the roofs of houses and is scorched by the hot east wind. 28 [But] I know [everything about you]; I know when you are [in your house and] when you go outside; I also know that you are (raging/speaking very angrily) against me. 29 [So], because you have raged against me and because I have heard you speak very proudly/arrogantly, [it will be as though] I will put a hook in your nose and I will put an iron (bit/metal bar) in your mouth [in order that I can lead you where I want you to go], and I will force you to return [to your own country], on the same road on which you came [here, without conquering Jerusalem].'" 30 [Then I said to Hezekiah], 'This will prove to you [that what I said will happen]: "This year, you(pl) will eat [only the crops] that grow by themselves, and next year the same thing will happen. But in the third year you will plant [crops] and harvest them; you will take care of your vineyards and eat the grapes. 31 And [you] people who are still [here] in Judah, will be strong and prosper again [MET]. 32 A small number of my people will survive, and they will spread out from Jerusalem [DOU]." That will happen because [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, am desiring very much to accomplish it.' 33 And this is what [I], Yahweh, say about the King of Assyria: 'His [armies] will not enter Jerusalem; they will not [even] shoot arrows into it. His soldiers will not [march outside] the city gates holding their shields, and they will not build high mounds of dirt against the walls of the city [to enable them to attack the city]. 34 And their king will return [to his own country] on the same road on which he came [here]. He will not enter this city!' [That will happen because I], Yahweh, have said it! 35 For the sake of my own reputation and because of what I promised King David, who served me [well], I will defend this city and prevent it from being destroyed." 36 [That night], an angel from Yahweh went out to where the army of Assyria had set up their tents and killed 185,000 of their soldiers. When [the rest of the soldiers] woke up the next morning, they saw that there were corpses everywhere. 37 Then King Sennacherib left and returned home to Nineveh [in Assyria], and stayed there. 38 [One day], when he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his two sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, killed him with their swords. Then they escaped and went to the Ararat [region northwest of Nineveh]. And another of Sennacherib's sons, Esarhaddon, became the King of Assyria.

38 About that time, Hezekiah became [very] ill and was close to dying. [So] I went to see him. And I gave him this message: "This is what Yahweh says: 'You should tell the people in your palace what you want them to do after you die, because you will not recover from this illness. You are going to die'" 2 Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed this: 3 "Yahweh, do not forget that I have always served you very faithfully, and I have done things that pleased you!" Then Hezekiah [started to] cry loudly. 4 [I left his room, but] Yahweh gave me this message: 5 "Go [back] to Hezekiah and tell him that this is what I, the God to whom your ancestor King David belonged, say: 'I have heard what you prayed, and I have seen you crying. So listen: I will enable you to live 15 years more. 6 And, I will rescue you and this city from the power [MTY] of the King of Assyria. I will defend this city. 7 And this is what I will do to prove that I will do what I have just now promised. I will cause the shadow of the sun to move ten steps backward on the sundial that was built by King Ahaz.'" 8 So the shadow of the sun on the sundial moved backward ten steps. 9 When King Hezekiah was almost well again, he wrote this: 10 I thought to myself, "Is it necessary for me to die and go to the place where the dead people are during this time of my life when I am still strong? Is Yahweh going to rob me of the remaining years that I [should live]?" **(Sheol h7585)** 11 I said, "I will not see Yahweh [again] in this world where people are alive. I will not see my friends again, or be with others who [now] are alive in this world. 12 [It is as if] my life has been taken away like [SIM] a tent [whose pegs] have been pulled up by a shepherd and taken away. My time to live has been cut short, like a piece of cloth that a weaver [cuts and] rolls up [after he has finished weaving a cloth]." Suddenly, [it seemed that] my life was ending. 13 I waited patiently all during the night, but [my pain was as though] [MET] I was being torn apart by lions. [It seemed that] my life was finished. 14 [I was delirious, and] I chirped like a swift or a swallow, and moaned like a dove. My eyes became tired looking up [toward heaven] for help. I cried out, Lord, help me, [because] I am distressed!' 15 But there was really nothing [RHQ] that I could say and ask him to reply to me, because it was Yahweh who sent this illness. [So now] I will live humbly during my [remaining] years because I am very anguished. 16 Yahweh, the sufferings (OR, the promises) that you give are good, [because] what you do and what you say bring [new] life and health to us. And you restore/heal me and allow me [to continue] to live! 17 Truly, my suffering was good for me; you loved me, and as a result you have

rescued me from dying and have also forgiven all my sins. 18 Dead people [MTY] cannot praise you; they cannot sing to praise you. Those who have descended to their graves cannot confidently expect you to faithfully [do things for them]. (Sheol h7585) 19 Only people who are still alive, like I am, can praise you. Fathers tell their children how you are faithful, [and if I remain alive, I will do the same thing]. 20 [I know that] Yahweh will fully heal me, [so] I will sing to praise him while others praise him playing musical instruments; I will do that every day of my life, in the temple of Yahweh." 21 I had [previously] said to Hezekiah's servants, "Prepare an ointment from [mashed] figs, and spread it on his boil, and then he will recover." [So they did that, and Hezekiah recovered]. 22 And Hezekiah had [previously] asked, "What will Yahweh do to prove that I will [recover and be able to] go to his temple?"

39 Soon after that, Baladan's son Merodach-Baladan, the King of Babylon, heard a report that Hezekiah had been very sick but that he had recovered. So he wrote some notes and gave them to some messengers to take to Hezekiah, along with a gift. 2 [When the messengers arrived], Hezekiah welcomed them gladly. [Then] he showed them everything that was in his (treasure houses/places where very valuable things were kept)—the silver, the gold, the spices, and the nice-smelling [olive] oil. He also took them to see the place where they kept their soldiers' weapons, and he showed them the other valuable things that were in the storehouses. Hezekiah showed them everything [LIT] that was in the palace or in other places [HYP]. 3 Then I went to King Hezekiah and asked him, "Where did those men come from, and what did they want?" He replied, "They came from the far away land of Babylon." 4 I asked him, "What did they see in your palace?" Hezekiah replied, "They saw everything. I showed them absolutely everything that I own—all my valuable things." 5 Then I said to Hezekiah, "Listen to this message from the Commander of the armies of angels: 6 'There will be a time when everything in your palace, all the valuable things that your ancestors stored there up until the present time, will be carried away to Babylon. Yahweh says that there will be nothing left. 7 Furthermore, some of your sons will be forced to go to Babylon. They will be castrated in order that they can become servants in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" 8 Then Hezekiah replied to me, "That message from Yahweh that you have given to me is good." He said that because he was thinking, "Even if that happens, there will be peace, and people in this country will be safe during the time that I am alive."

40 Our God says, "Encourage my people! Encourage them! 2 Speak kindly to [the people of] Jerusalem; tell them that their suffering is ended, and that I have forgiven them for the sins that they have committed; I [SYN] have fully punished them for their sins." 3 I hear someone who is shouting, "Prepare in the desert a way for Yahweh to come [to you]; make a smooth road for our God (OR, Prepare yourselves to receive Yahweh when he comes, like people make a straight road for an important official [MET]). 4 Fill in the valleys; flatten every hill and every mountain. Make the uneven ground smooth, and make the rough places smooth. 5 [If you do that], it will become known that Yahweh is glorious/great, and all people will realize it at the same time. [Those things will surely happen] because it is Yahweh who has said [MTY] it." 6 Someone said to me, "Shout!" I replied, "What should I shout?" [He replied], "[Shout that] people are like [SIM] grass; their influence fades as quickly as flowers in the field. 7 Grass withers and flowers dry up when Yahweh causes a hot wind from the desert to blow on them. And people are [MET] like that. 8 The grass withers and the flowers dry up, but what our God promises will last forever." 9 You [people of] Jerusalem, you have good news to tell to people, so, shout it from the top of a high mountain! Shout it loudly, and do not be afraid! Tell the people in the towns of Judah, "Your God is coming here!" 10 Yahweh your God will be coming with power; he will rule powerfully [MTY]. And when he comes, he will bring with him the people whom he has freed [MET] [from being slaves in Babylonia]. 11 He will take care of his people like [SIM] a shepherd takes care of his sheep, and carries the young lambs in his arms. He carries them close to his chest and he gently leads the female sheep that are nursing their young lambs. 12 [There is no one like Yahweh]! (Who else has measured the water in the oceans in the palm of his hand?/No one else has measured the water in the oceans in the palm of his hand!) [RHQ] (Who else has measured the sky with his fingers?/No one else has measured the sky with his fingers!) [RHQ] (Who else knows how much the earth weighs?/No one else knows how much the earth weighs!) [RHQ] (Who else has weighed the mountains and hills on scales?/No one else has weighed the mountains and hills on scales!) [RHQ] 13 And (who else can advise Yahweh's Spirit?/No one else can advise Yahweh's Spirit!) [RHQ] (Who can teach him or advise/tell him what he should do?/No one can teach him or advise/tell him what he should do!) [RHQ] 14 (Has Yahweh consulted anyone else to get advice?/Yahweh has certainly not consulted anyone else to get advice!) [RHQ] (Does he need someone to tell him what is right to do and how to act justly?/He certainly does not need someone to

tell him what is right to do and how to act justly!) [RHQ] **15** [Yahweh considers that] the nations are [as insignificant as] [MET] one drop from a bucket [full of water]. They are [as insignificant as] dust on scales. He is able to weigh islands [as though they weighed no more than] grains of sand. **16** There would be [not] enough wood from all the trees in Lebanon to make a suitable fire for [sacrificing animals to] him, and there are not enough animals in Lebanon to offer as sacrifices to him. **17** The nations of the world are completely insignificant/unimportant to him; he considers that they are worthless and less than nothing [HYP, DOU]. **18** So, to whom can you compare God? What image resembles him? **19** Can you compare him to an idol that is made in a mold, and then is covered with [a thin sheet of] gold and decorated with silver chains? **20** A man who is poor [cannot buy silver or gold for his idol]; [so] he selects a piece of wood that will not rot, and he gives it to a craftsman to carve an idol that will not fall down! **21** Have you(pl) not heard this? Do you not understand it? Are you unable to hear what God said long ago— [messages that he gave] before he created the earth? **22** God sits [on his throne] above the earth, and the people [on the earth] below seem to be [as small] as [SIM] grasshoppers. He spreads out the sky like a curtain; it is like [SIM] a tent for him to live in. **23** He causes kings to have no more power, and he causes the rulers to be worth nothing. **24** They start to rule, like small plants start to grow and form roots; but then [he gets rid of them] as though [MET] they withered when he blew on them, like [SIM] chaff that is blown away by the wind. **25** The Holy One asks, "To whom will you compare me? Is anyone equal to me?" **26** Look up toward the sky: Consider who [RHQ] created all the stars. [Yahweh created them], and at night he causes them to appear; he calls each one by its name. Because he is extremely powerful [DOU], all of the stars are there [LIT] [when he calls out their names]. **27** You people of Israel [DOU], why do you complain that Yahweh does not see the [troubles that you are experiencing]? Why do you say that he does not act fairly toward you? **28** Have you never heard and have you never understood that Yahweh is the everlasting God; he is the one who created the earth, [even the] most distant places on the earth. He never becomes weak or weary, and no one can find out how much he understands. **29** He strengthens [DOU] those who feel weak and tired. **30** Even youths become faint and weary, and young men will fall when they are exhausted. **31** But those who trust in Yahweh will become strong again; [it will be as though] they will soar/fly high like [SIM] eagles do. They will run [for a long time] and not become weary; they will walk [long distances] and not faint.

41 [Yahweh says], "You [people who live on] [APO] islands in the ocean, be silent in front of me [while I ask you some questions]! Then you can be courageous and talk to me. We will meet together and decide [which one of us is right]. **2** Who has urged this king to come from the east? Who has enabled his [army] to righteously defeat many nations and to trample their kings under their feet? With their swords they cut [their enemies] into tiny pieces [HYP]; with their arrows they cause their enemies to scatter like [SIM] the wind scatters chaff. **3** Even though they march through areas where they have not gone previously, they pursue [their enemies] and continue to march, and nothing stops them. **4** Who has enabled rulers to do [DOU] mighty things like that? Who has done that throughout all generations? It is I, Yahweh; I was the first [one to do things like that], and I will be the last one [to do them]." **5** [People who live on] [PRS] islands in the ocean are afraid while they watch. People in remote areas tremble and gather together. **6** They encourage each other and say to each other, "Be strong!' **7** The craftsmen encourage those who make things from gold, and the men who flatten metal encourage those who hammer metal (on an anvil/into shape). They all say, "The idol has been well made!" And then they carefully nail down the idol in order that it will not topple over! **8** [Yahweh says], "[You people of] Israel [are like] my servants; you are [descendants of] Jacob, whom I chose; [you are] descendants of Abraham, who [I said is] my friend. **9** I summoned you from very distant places [DOU] on the earth, and I said 'I [want you to] serve me; I have chosen you, and I will not reject you.' **10** Do not be afraid, because I will (be with/help) you. Do not be discouraged, because I am your God. I will enable you to be strong, and I will help you; I will hold you up with my powerful arm by which you will be rescued. **11** It is certain that all those who are angry with you [Israeli people] will be disgraced [DOU]. Those who oppose you will be wiped out; they will all die. **12** If you search for those who tried to conquer you, you will not find them, [because they will all have disappeared]. Those who attacked you will not exist [any more]. **13** [It will be as though] I will hold you up by your right hand. I am Yahweh, your God, and I say to you, 'Do not be afraid, [because] I will help you.' **14** Although you people of Israel [DOU] [think that you are as insignificant as] worms, do not be afraid [of your enemies], because I will help you. I am Yahweh, the one who rescues you; I am the Holy One of Israel. **15** [I will cause] you to be like [MET] a (threshing sledge/big piece of metal that has sharp teeth for separating grain from chaff). You will tear [your enemies to bits], causing them to be like bits of chaff on the mountains. **16** You will toss them up into the air, and a strong wind will blow them

away [DOU]. [When that happens], you will rejoice about what I [have done for you]; you will praise me, the Holy One of Israel. **17** When poor and needy people need water and they have no water, and their tongues are very dry because they are very thirsty, I, Yahweh, will come and help them. I, the God to whom you Israeli people belong, will never abandon them. **18** I will cause rivers to flow for them on the barren hills. I will give them fountains in the valleys. I will fill [HYP] the desert with pools of water. Water from springs will flow into rivers, and the rivers will flow across the dry ground. **19** I will plant [trees] in the desert— cedar [trees], acacia [trees], myrtle [trees], olive [trees], cypress [trees], fir [trees], and pine [trees]. **20** [I will do that] in order that people who see it will think about it, and they will know and understand [DOU] that it is [I], Yahweh, who have done it; it is what [I], the Holy One of Israel, have done. **21** [I], Yahweh, the true king of Israel say [to you nations], "Tell what your idols can do for you! **22** Bring them here to tell us what is going to happen! Ask them to tell us what things happened long ago, in order that we may think about those things, and learn if those things that they predicted really happened. Or, ask them to tell us about the future, in order that we can know what will happen. **23** [Yes], those idols should tell us what will happen in the future. If they do that, we will know that they are really gods. Tell them to do something—either something good or something bad! Tell them to do something that will cause us to be amazed and afraid! **24** But [that is impossible, because] idols are absolutely worthless [HYP]; they can do nothing, and I detest those who decide [to worship] idols." **25** "[But] I have incited/urged a ruler who will come [with his army] from the north. I have summoned him to come from [his country, which is] east [of Israel], and I have given him my authority [MTY]. I will [enable his army to conquer other rulers]; they will trample those leaders like [SIM] a man who makes clay pots first tramples the clay. **26** (Who told you people long ago that this would happen?/No one told you people long ago that this would happen!) [RHQ] (Who predicted it, with the result that we can say, 'What he predicted was correct!'?/No one predicted it, with the result that we can say, 'What he predicted was correct!') [RHQ] No one else said that it would happen. **27** I was the first one to tell [the people of] Jerusalem, 'Listen to this! I have appointed a messenger to tell good news to you!' **28** None of your idols told you that [DOU]. And when I asked them questions, none of them was able to give me any answers. **29** Think about it: Those idols are all useless, worthless [DOU] things. They are [as meaningless as] [MET] the wind."

42 [Yahweh says, "I want you people to know about] my servant, whom I encourage. I have chosen him, and I am pleased with him. I have given him my Spirit, and he will make certain that all the people-groups do what is right/just. **2** He will not [show his power by] shouting [DOU] or by talking very loudly. **3** He will not get rid of [anyone who is weak like] [MET] a smashed reed, and he will not [end the life of anyone who is helpless like] [MET] someone would extinguish a dimly burning wick [of an oil lamp]. He will faithfully/continually make sure that judges decide cases justly. **4** He will not become exhausted or discouraged all during the time that he is causing things to be done justly throughout the earth. Even [people living on the islands in] [MTY] the oceans will confidently wait for [him to teach them] his laws." **5** Yahweh our God created the sky and spread it out. He also created the earth and everything on it. He gives breath to all the people on the earth; he causes them to live [DOU]. [And he is the one who says to his special servant], **6** "I, Yahweh, have chosen you to show people that I always act righteously/fairly. I will grasp your hand and protect you, and I will present you to [my Israeli] people to be the one who will put into effect my agreement with them. [You will be like] a light to the [other] nations. **7** You will enable blind [IDM] people to see, you will free those who are in prison (OR, who are bound [by the guilt of their sins]) [MET] and release those who are in dark dungeons. **8** I am Yahweh; that is my name. I will not allow anyone else to receive the honor that only I deserve. And I will not allow idols to be praised like only I should be praised. **9** Everything that I have prophesied has happened, and now I will tell about other things that will happen. I will tell you things that will happen before they happen." **10** Sing a new song to Yahweh! Sing to praise him throughout the world! All you people who sail across the oceans, and all you creatures that live in the oceans, and all you people who live on islands far away, sing! **11** You people who live in towns in the desert, sing loudly! You people who live in the Kedar [area in the north of Arabia], you rejoice also! You people in Sela [city in Edom], you also should sing joyfully; shout [to praise him] from the tops of your mountains! **12** Even people who live on distant islands should honor Yahweh and sing to praise him. **13** [It will be as though] Yahweh will march out like [SIM] a mighty soldier; he will show that he is very angry. He will shout a battle-cry, and [then] he will defeat all his enemies. **14** [He will say], "I have remained silent [DOU] for a long time; I have restrained myself [from doing what I need to do]. But now, like [SIM] a woman who is giving birth to a baby, I will cry out and gasp and pant. **15** I will level off the hills and mountains, and I will cause all the plants and trees to dry up. I will cause the rivers to become small streams, and little islands will appear in them, and I

will cause all the pools to become dry. **16** [My people who have been taken to Babylonia are like] [MET] blind people, [but] I will lead them along a road on which they have not walked before, on a road that they have not seen before. They have felt [very helpless, as though] they were walking in the darkness, but I will take away that darkness and I will make smooth the road that is in front of them. Those are the things that I will do for them; I will not abandon them. **17** But those who trust in carved idols, and say to images, 'You are our gods,' will be completely humiliated/disgraced." **18** You [Israeli people who have acted toward God like] deaf [people], listen [to what Yahweh says]! "You [who have been like] [MET] blind [people], look! **19** No people are [RHQ] as blind as my people, who [should have been] serving me. No people are [RHQ] as much like [MET] deaf people as [the Israelis, who should have been] my messengers. No people are [RHQ] as much like [MET] blind people as those whom I chose to serve me. **20** You see and know what are the right things to do, but you do not do them. You hear [what I say to you], but you do not pay attention." **21** Because Yahweh is righteous, he has honored his glorious laws. **22** But [the armies of Babylon have destroyed Jerusalem] and have completely (plundered/taken away) [DOU] all the valuable things, and they have captured Yahweh's people and taken them away and put them in prison. They have been captured easily, because there was no one to protect them; there was no one to say that they should be allowed to return home. **23** Who among you will listen carefully to these things? Who will pay attention from now on? **24** Who allowed the valuable possessions of the people of Israel to be stolen [RHQ, DOU]? It was Yahweh, because he is he one against whom we had sinned; we did not conduct our lives like he wanted us to, and we did not obey his laws. **25** Therefore, he was extremely angry with us, and he caused our soldiers to be destroyed in battles. [It was as though] [MET] he lit a fire around us, but we did not understand [what he was trying to tell us]. [His being angry with us was like] a fire that would burn us up, but we did not pay attention [IDM].

43 But now, you people of Israel, listen to Yahweh, the one who established your nation. The one who caused you to become a nation [DOU] says this: "Do not be afraid, because I previously rescued you. I enabled you to have a personal relationship with me [MTY], and you belong to me. **2** When you [experience dangerous situations], and [you feel like] [MET] you are crossing deep rivers, I will be with you. When you have very big troubles/difficulties, you will [LIT] be able to endure them. When [people try to kill you like they tried to kill Daniel's three friends by] throwing them in a fire, you will not [die, just like Daniel's three friends were not] burned up, **3** because I am Yahweh, your God, the Holy One of Israel, the one who rescues you. I will enable [the army of the emperor of Persia] to conquer Egypt instead of conquering you; similarly I will enable them to conquer Ethiopia, and Seba [in Arabia], in order that you can be saved. **4** I will cause other countries to be conquered, instead of your country; I will trade them for you, in order that you will not be killed, because you are very precious [DOU] to me and because I love you. **5** Do not be afraid, because I am with you. [Some day] I will gather your descendants from the east and from the west. **6** I will command the [rulers of the nations to] the north and to the south, 'Allow all the people of Israel to return [to their country], from the most distant places on the earth. **7** Allow all those who belong to me [MTY] to return, because I have caused them to become a nation in order that they would honor me; I am the one who has done that [DOU].' **8** Summon the people who have eyes but [it is as though] they are blind; summon those who have ears but [because they do not listen to me, it is as though] they are deaf. **9** Gather people of all nations together, ones from all people-groups, [and ask them this]: 'Has any of their idols foretold the things that are happening now? And can any of them predict what will happen in the future?' Then bring people who will testify and say 'I heard them predict things, and what they predicted was what happened,' [but they will be lying]." **10** But Yahweh says, "You people of Israel (are my witnesses/know what I have done), and you are the ones who serve me. I chose you in order that you would know me, believe in me, and understand that I am the only one who is [truly] God. There is no other [true] God. There was no other [true] God previously, and there will never be another [true] God. **11** I, [only] I, am Yahweh, and there is no other one who can save you. **12** I said that I would rescue [your ancestors], and then I rescued them, and I proclaimed [that I had done it]. No foreign god among you did that! And you are witnesses that only I, Yahweh, am God. **13** I am God, the one who has existed forever and who will exist forever; no one can snatch people from my hand, and no one can alter/change what I have done." **14** Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, is the one who rescues you; and this is what he says: "For your sake, I will send [an army] to [attack] Babylon. They will force the people of that city to flee in ships which they have been proud of. **15** I am Yahweh, your Holy One, the one who caused Israel to become a nation, and the one who is really your king. **16** I am Yahweh, the one who opened a path through the water, making a road through the [Red] Sea. **17** Then I summoned the great army [of Egypt] to come with all their chariots and horses. [But when they tried to pursue my people], I caused the waves to flow over

them [and they drowned]; their lives ended [like the light of a candle ends when someone] [MET] snuffs out the wick. **18** But do not think [only] about what happened in the past, long ago [DOU]. **19** Instead, consider the new thing that I am going to do. I have already started to do it; can you see it? I am going to make a road through the desert. And I will cause there to be streams in the wasteland/desert. **20** The jackals/wolves and owls and other wild creatures will thank me for giving them water in the desert. I will cause streams to appear in the dry desert in order that my people, the ones whom I have chosen, will have water; **21** I will do that for the people whom I have created [and chosen] to belong to me, and [some day] they will cause many others to praise me. **22** But now, you descendants of Jacob, you refuse to request my help. It seems that you people of Israel have become tired of worshiping me. **23** You have not brought to me sheep or goats for offerings that will be completely burned [on the altar]; you have not honored me by [bringing to me any] sacrifices, even though the offerings of grain and incense [that I asked you] to bring to me were not a burden to you. **24** You have bought for me fragrant reeds, and you have brought me the fat from your sacrifices. But these have not pleased me, because you have burdened me by all the sins that you have committed, and made me weary because of all (your iniquities/the wrong things that you have done). **25** I am the one who is able to forgive you for all your sins; I am the only one who can do that, with the result that I will never think about them again. **26** Tell me what I have done that you do not like. Do you think that when you state your case, you will prove that you (are innocent/have done nothing wrong) [IRO]? **27** No, [what has happened is that] the first ancestor of you Israelis sinned [against me], and since then, all your leaders have rebelled against me. **28** That is why I have caused your priests to be disgraced; and I have allowed others to destroy you people of Israel and caused you to be despised."

44 But now, you people of Israel whom Yahweh has chosen to serve him, listen to me. **2** Yahweh, the one who created you and helps you, says this: "You dear people of Israel whom I have chosen, you who serve me, do not be afraid. **3** I will pour water on your dry land and cause streams to flow. And I will pour out my Spirit on your descendants and greatly bless them. **4** They will grow up like [SIM] grass grows along the water, like [SIM] willow/poplar [trees] grow well along a riverbank. **5** Some of them will say, 'I belong to Yahweh,' and others will say, 'We are descendants of Jacob,' and others will write on their hands, 'We belong to Yahweh,' and others will say, 'We are Israelis.'" **6** Yahweh, the King of Israel, the one who saves us, the Commander of the armies of angels, says this: "I am the one who begins everything and who ends everything; there is no other God. **7** If there is anyone like me [RHQ], he should proclaim it! He should speak and tell me [now]! He should tell what has happened since I caused my people [of Israel] to become a nation long ago, and he should also tell what things will happen; he should predict what will happen in the future. **8** [My people], do not be afraid. Long ago I told you things that would happen [RHQ]; I predicted them, and you can testify that I did that. There certainly is not [RHQ] any other God. There is no other God who is able to protect you [MET]; I know that there is no other God!" **9** All those who make idols are foolish, and the idols that they (think highly of/greatly respect) are worthless. And the people who worship those idols— [it is as though] they are blind, and they will be ashamed [for having worshiped those idols]. **10** Only [foolish people] [RHQ] would make idols in a mold, idols that would never help them at all. **11** Those who make idols and those who worship them will be ashamed. Those who make idols are only human beings, [but they claim that they are making gods]! They should stand in front of God in a court, and [when they hear what he says], they will be terrified, and they will all be disgraced. **12** Metalworkers stand in front of hot coals in order to make idols. They pound them strongly with hammers, and shape them. Because they work very hard, they become hungry and weak; they become very thirsty and feel exhausted. **13** Then a woodcarver takes a big block/piece of wood and he measures it; then he marks it to show where he will cut it. He uses a chisel and other tools to carve it to resemble a human. He causes it to become a very beautiful [idol], and then he puts it in a shrine. **14** [Before he carves an idol from that block of wood], he has cut down a cedar tree, or he has selected a cypress tree or an oak tree and allowed it to grow tall in the forest. Or, he has planted a pine/evergreen tree and the rain has watered it [and caused it to grow tall]. **15** [And after he uses part of the tree to make an idol], he uses the other part of the tree to make a fire, either to warm himself or to bake bread. But he uses [part of the same tree] to make for himself an idol to worship! He makes an idol and then he bows down to worship it. **16** He burns part of the wood of the tree to cook his meat and eats the meat and his stomach becomes full, and he burns part of the wood to warm his body, and he says, "I feel warm while I am watching the flames in the fire." **17** Then he takes the rest of the wood and makes an idol which is his god. He bows down to it and worships it, and prays to it and says, "You are my god, so save me!" **18** Those people are very stupid and ignorant [SAR]. [It is as though] they are blind and cannot see, and their minds are closed

and they cannot think well. 19 They do not think about what
they are doing, that they are taking a block of wood and
burning half of it to warm themselves and using some of the
rest to bake bread and roast some meat! [They do not say
to themselves], "It is stupid [RHQ] to take the rest of the
wood to make a detestable idol! It does not make sense to
bow down to a block of wood!" 20 They are very stupid to
[worship something that if you burn it, it becomes] ashes!
They trust in something that cannot save them; they do not
admit, "In my hand I hold something that is not really a god!
[RHQ]" 21 [Yahweh says, "You descendants of] [MTY] Jacob,
you people of Israel who should be serving me, I created
you, and I will not forget you. 22 I have gotten rid of your sins
like [SIM] [the wind blows away] a cloud. [It is as though]
your transgressions were a morning mist [SIM] that I have
blown away. Return to me because I have rescued you." 23
[The sun and moon and stars] in the sky should sing, and all
the things that are beneath the ground should shout joyfully!
All the mountains and forests, and all you trees, should sing
loudly, because Yahweh has rescued [the descendants of]
[MTY] Jacob; [the people of] Israel will praise/honor him. 24
Yahweh, who saved you and created you, says this: "I am
Yahweh, the one who created everything. I am the only one
who stretched out the sky. There was [RHQ] no one who
(was with/helped) me when I created the earth. 25 I show
that the false prophets are liars, and I show that those who
perform rituals to predict the future are fools. Some people
who [falsely think that they] are [IRO] wise [say that they]
know a lot, but I show that they are foolish. 26 But I always
cause to happen what my prophets predict [DOU]. [I tell
them to] say to [the people of] [MTY] Jerusalem, '[Some day]
people will live here again.' [And I tell them to] say to [the
people in other] towns in Judah [that Yahweh says], 'Your
towns will be rebuilt; I will cause the places that are only
ruins to be rebuilt.' 27 When I say to the rivers, 'Dry up!',
they will become dry. 28 When I say about King Cyrus, 'He
will [take care of my people like] [MET] a shepherd [takes
care of his sheep], he will do what I want him to do,' he will
say about Jerusalem, 'We must rebuild it!', and he will also
say, 'We must rebuild the temple!'"

45 Cyrus is the one whom Yahweh has appointed [to be
the emperor of Persia] and to whom he will give great
power [IDM]; Yahweh will enable him to defeat other nations
and to take away the power of their kings. He will cause
gates of cities to be opened, and no one will ever be able to
shut them. 2 This is what Yahweh says to him: "Cyrus, I will
go ahead of you and level the mountains. I will smash down
bronze gates and cut through iron bars. 3 I will give you
treasures [that people have hidden] in dark secret places
[DOU]. I will do that in order that you will know that I am
Yahweh, the God to whom the Israelis belong, the God who
calls you by your name. 4 I have summoned you, calling
out your name, for the sake of [the people of] Israel [DOU]
whom I have chosen, who serve me. Even though you do
not know me, I will give you a title which has great honor.
5 I am Yahweh, and there is no other God [DOU]. Even
though you do not know me, I will give you power 6 in order
that everyone in the world, from the east to the west, will
know that there is no other [God]. I am Yahweh, and there
is no other [God]. 7 I created the light and the darkness. I
cause there to be peace and I cause there to be disasters. I,
Yahweh, do all those things." 8 [And Yahweh also says, "I
want my] rescue [of my people] [MET] to fall from the sky
like rain. Just like the earth opens wide to accept rain, I
will rescue/save my people and cause them to be treated
justly. I, Yahweh, am the one who will cause both of those
things to happen. 9 Terrible things will happen to those who
argue with me, the one who created them. [They are like]
[MET] a clay pot and [I am like] the one who made it; so they
certainly cannot [RHQ] criticize me. A lump of clay certainly
cannot [RHQ] argue with the one who shapes it [to form a
pot], saying, 'Why are you making me like this?' The pot
cannot say '[You have no skill, because] what you made has
no handles!' 10 And it would be terrible if an unborn baby
would say to its father, 'Why are you [RHQ] causing me to
be born?' or if it said to its mother, 'The result of your labor
pains will be useless?'" 11 Yahweh, the Holy One of the
Israeli people, the one who created Israel, says this to them:
"(Why do you ask questions about [what I do for you], my
children?/You should not ask questions about [what I do
for you], my children.) [RHQ] (Why do you tell me about
the work that I should do?/You should not tell me about the
work that I should do.) [RHQ] 12 I am the one who created
the earth and created people to live on it. I stretched out
the sky with my hands, and I put the stars in their places.
13 And I will appoint Cyrus to do things that are right/just,
and I will enable him to do all those things easily [MET]. His
[workers] will rebuild my city, and he will free my people who
have been (exiled/forced to leave their country). And he will
do it without my rewarding/paying him! [Those things will
surely happen because] I, the Commander of the armies of
angels, have said it. 14 And this is [also] what [I], Yahweh,
say [to you, my people]: 'You will rule the people of Egypt
and Ethiopia, and the tall people of Seba [in Arabia] will
become your slaves. They will come to you bringing all the
things that they sell, and it will all be yours. [As prisoners],
they will have chains on their arms as they follow you. They
will prostrate themselves in front of you and say, "God is

with/helping you and he is the only God; there is no other God." '" **15** God, although we cannot see you, you are the one to whom [we] Israeli people belong, the one who saves us. **16** All those who make idols will be humiliated. They will all be disgraced together. **17** But you, Yahweh, will rescue [us, your] Israeli people, and we will be free forever. Never again will we again be humiliated and disgraced. **18** Yahweh is God; he is the one who created the sky and created and formed the earth. He did not want it to remain with nothing living on it; he wanted people to live on it. [He says], "I am Yahweh; there is no other [God]. **19** [What I proclaimed], I did not speak secretly or [hide what I was saying by speaking] in a dark place. When I spoke to the descendants of Jacob, I did not tell them 'It will be useless for you to (seek for/pray to) me!' I, Yahweh, speak [only] what is true and what is right. **20** You people who are still alive after experiencing great disasters, should come and gather together [and listen to this]: The people who carry around their wooden idols and pray to them are foolish, because those idols cannot rescue them! **21** Talk among yourselves, and decide what you will say to prove that [your praying to idols is good]. [And when you do that, I will ask you], 'Who predicted long ago [what has now happened]? Did any idol tell you [that those things would happen] [RHQ]?' No, it was [RHQ] only I, Yahweh, who told you, because I am the only God; there is no other God. I am a God who acts righteously and saves people; there is no other one [who does these things]. **22** Everyone in the world should ask me to save them, because I am the only God who can do that; there is no other one. **23** I have solemnly declared, using my own name; I [SYN] have spoken what is true, and I will never change what I have said: [Some day], everyone [SYN] will bow in front of me, and they will all solemnly promise to be loyal to me. **24** They will declare, 'Yahweh is the one who enables us to live righteously and to be strong.'" And all those who have been angry at him will come to him, and they will be ashamed [for having been angry with him]. **25** Yahweh is the only one who will enable [us] Israeli people in the future to defeat our enemies, [and then] we will boast about what he [has done for us].

46 [It is as though] Bel and Nebo, the statues of the gods [of Babylonia], are bowing down as those statues are put on animals and carried away! The statues are heavy burdens and will cause the animals to become tired [SAR]! **2** [It seems like] both gods are bowing down; not only can they not save themselves, but they themselves are being (exiled/taken to another country)! **3** [Yahweh says], "You descendants of Jacob who were exiled, [I am not like the gods of Babylonia that must be carried]; [instead, it is as though] I have carried you since you first became a nation [MET]. I carried you [even] before you became a nation. **4** I will be your God, and I will carry you for many years, until [it is as though] [MET] your nation is an old man with gray hair. I caused [you to become a nation], and I will sustain you and rescue you. **5** There is certainly [RHQ] no one to whom I can be compared. There is [RHQ] no one who is equal to me [DOU]. **6** [So it is stupid/ridiculous that] some people pour out gold and silver from their bags and weigh it on a scale. [Then] they hire a man who makes things from gold to make an idol from it. [After he makes an idol], they bow down and worship it! **7** They lift it up and carry it on their shoulders. They put it in a [special] place, and it stays there. It cannot move! And when someone prays to it, it does not answer. So [obviously] it cannot rescue anyone from his troubles! **8** [You people of Judah], do not forget this; keep thinking about it, you sinful people! **9** Think about the things [that I did] long ago. Only I am God; I am God, and there is no one like me. **10** Only I can tell what will happen in the future before it occurs; I tell it long before it happens. I will accomplish everything that I plan to accomplish, and I will do everything that I want to do. **11** So I will summon [someone to come] from the east [like a swift and powerful] eagle; he will come from a distant country. He will accomplish what I want him to. [He is the one who] will do what I have said that I want him to do, what I have planned. **12** You stubborn people [of Israel], [you think that] it will be a long time before you are allowed to return to your own country. **13** But I will rescue you, and it will not be a long time [before that happens]. I will do it soon. I will rescue Jerusalem and show to you Israeli [people] that I am glorious."

47 [Yahweh also says], "You people of Babylon, you should go and sit in the dust/dirt [to show that you are mourning], because your time to rule [MTY] [other countries] is almost ended. People will never again say that Babylonia is beautiful [like] a very attractive/beautiful young woman. **2** [You will be slaves, so] take heavy stones and grind grain [like slave women do]. Take off your [beautiful] veils and take off your robes [as you prepare to cross streams to go where you will be forced to go]. **3** You will be naked and [very] ashamed. I will get vengeance on you and not pity you." **4** The one who frees us [people of Judah], whom we call 'the Commander of the armies of angels', is the Holy One of Israel. **5** [Yahweh says], "You people of Babylon, sit silently in the darkness, because people will never again say that your city is [like] [MET] a queen that rules many kingdoms. **6** I was angry with the people whom I chose [to belong to me], and I punished them. I allowed you [people of Babylon] to conquer them. But [when you conquered them],

you did not have mercy on them. You (oppressed/treated cruelly) [MET] even the old people. 7 You said, 'We will rule [other nations] forever; [it is as though our city] will be the queen [of the world] forever!' But you did not think about the things [that you were doing], or think about what would result. 8 You people [of Babylon] who enjoy pleasure and sex, listen to this: You enjoy a luxurious life and you feel secure. You say, 'We are [like gods], and there are no others like us. Our women will never become widows, and our children will never be killed [in wars].' 9 But both of those things will happen to you suddenly: Many of your women will become widows and many of your children will die, even though you perform much sorcery and many kinds of magic [to prevent bad things from happening to you]. 10 You felt protected even though you were doing many wicked things, and you said, 'No one will see what we [are doing]!' [You thought that] you were very wise and knew many things, and you said, 'We are gods, and there are no others like us,' but you deceived yourselves. 11 So you will experience terrible things, and you will not be able to prevent them by working magic. You will experience disasters, and you will not be able to pay anyone to prevent those things from happening. (A catastrophe/Something terrible) will happen to you suddenly, something that you will not realize [is about to happen]. 12 So you can continue to perform all your magic spells [IRO]! You can perform the many kinds of sorcery that you have practiced for many years! Perhaps [doing those things will enable you to] be successful; perhaps you will be able to cause your enemies to be afraid of you! 13 But [all that has resulted from your] doing all the things that the magicians have told you to do is that you have become tired! The men who look at the stars every month and predict what will happen should come forward and rescue you [from the disasters that you are about to experience]. 14 But [they cannot do that, because] they are like [SIM] straw that is burning in a fire; they cannot save themselves from being burned up in the flames. Those men are unable to help you [MET]; they are as useless as stubble [that burns quickly and produces no heat] for you. 15 The people whom you have associated with and worked with since you were young [will not help you], because they will just continue doing their own foolish things, and they will not pay any attention to you [when you cry out for help]."

48 [Yahweh says], "You descendants [MTY] of Jacob, who are [also] descendants of Judah and are now called [the people of] Israel, Listen to me! You make solemn promises using my name, Yahweh, and you request that I, the God to whom you Israeli people belong, [will hear you], but you do not do it sincerely. 2 You say that you live in the holy city [of Jerusalem], and [you insincerely say] that you are relying on me, the God to whom you [people of] Israel belong, the one who is the Commander of the armies of angels. 3 Long ago I [MTY] predicted what would happen [DOU]. And then suddenly, I caused those things to happen. 4 I knew that you people are very stubborn; I knew that your heads are [MET] [as hard as] iron or brass [DOU]. 5 That is why I told you those things long ago. Long before they occurred, I announced that they would occur, in order that [when they happened] you could not say 'Our idols did it; our statue made of wood and our idol made of metal caused them to happen.' 6 You have heard those things [that I predicted] and now you have seen that they have all occurred, so why do you not admit it [RHQ]? Now I will tell you new things, things that you have not known previously. 7 I am causing them to happen now; they are not things I did long ago. So you cannot say, 'We already knew about those things.' 8 [I will tell you about] things that you have never heard about or understood before. Even long ago you did not pay attention to me [IDM]. I know that you act very deceitfully/treacherously; you have rebelled against me since you first became a nation [MTY]. 9 But, for my own sake, in order that I will be honored, I will not punish [MTY] you immediately and I will not completely get rid of you. 10 I have purified you, but not the way [people refine] silver. Instead, I have caused you to suffer very much [to get rid of your impure behavior], like [MET] [people put metal in a very hot] furnace [to get rid of the impurities]. 11 But for my [MTY] own sake I will delay punishing you more; I will do it for my own sake in order that my reputation will not be damaged [RHQ]. I will not allow any [person or any idol] to be honored as I [deserve to be] honored." 12 "You descendants [MTY] of Jacob, you people of Israel whom I have chosen, listen to me! [Only] I am God; I am the one who begins everything and who causes everything to end. 13 I [SYN] am the one who laid the foundation of the earth. I stretched out the sky with my hand. And when I tell [the stars] to appear, they all do what I tell them. 14 All of you, gather together and listen to me. None of your idols has [RHQ] told this to you: I, Yahweh, have chosen [Cyrus] to assist me, and he will do to Babylon what I want him to do, and his army will get rid of [the army of] Babylonia. 15 I have said it; I have summoned [Cyrus]. I have appointed him, and he will accomplish everything that he attempts to do. 16 Come close to me and listen to what I say. Long ago [MTY] I told you plainly/clearly [LIT] [what would happen], and when those things occurred, I was [causing them to happen]." And now Yahweh the Lord and his Spirit have sent me [to give you a message]. 17 This is what Yahweh, the

one who saves you, the Holy God of [us] Israelis, says: "I am Yahweh, your God; I teach you what is important for you [to know]; I direct you and lead you to the roads that you should walk on [MET]. **18** I wish that you had paid attention to my commands! If you had done that, things would have gone well for you like [SIM] a river that flows gently; you would have been successful again and again, like [SIM] waves that come without ceasing. **19** Your descendants would have been [as many as] [MET] the grains of sand [on the seashore] [which no one can count]. I would not have needed to get rid of you; the country of [MTY] [Israel] would not have been destroyed." **20** [However, now I tell you], leave Babylon! Flee from [being slaves of the people of] Babylonia! Proclaim this message joyfully; send it to the most remote/distant places on the earth: Yahweh freed the people of Israel [from being slaves in Egypt]. **21** They were not thirsty when he led them through the desert, because he split open the rock and caused water to gush/flow out for them [to drink]. **22** "But things will not go well [like that] for wicked people," says Yahweh.

49 All you people who live on islands [in the ocean] and in other distant areas, pay attention [DOU] to what I will say! Yahweh called/chose me before I was born; he chose/appointed me when I was still in my mother's womb. **2** [When I grew up], he caused my messages to be like [SIM] a sharp sword. He has protected me with his hand [SYN]. [He protects me] [MET] like someone protects sharp arrows in a quiver. **3** He said to me, "You will serve my Israeli [people], and you will cause people to honor me." **4** I replied, "My work has been useless; I have used my strength, but I have accomplished nothing worthwhile; everything that I have done has been (in vain/useless). However, Yahweh can honor me as he pleases; my God is the one who will reward me [as I deserve]." **5** Yahweh formed me when I was in [my mother's] womb in order that I would serve him; he appointed me to bring [the people of] Israel back to himself [DOU]. Yahweh has honored me, and he is the one who has caused me to be strong. **6** He says to me, "It is not enough for you to serve me by bringing the descendants of Jacob back to worship me again [DOU]; I also want you to be like [MET] a light for the non-Jews; I want you to take my [my message] about how to be saved to [people] all over the world." **7** Yahweh, the one who saves us, the Holy God of us Israeli [people], says to the one who was despised and rejected by the [people of many] nations, the one who is the slave of rulers, "[Some day] kings will stand up to respect you when they see you, and princes will bow down before you because [you serve] me, Yahweh, the one who faithfully [does what I promise]. I am the Holy God to whom you Israelis belong, the one who has chosen you." **8** This is also what Yahweh says: "At a time when it pleases me, I will answer your prayers. On the day when you will be rescued [from your oppressors], I will help you. I will protect you and enable you to establish an agreement with other nations. And by what you do, I will re-establish your nation of Israel and allow you to live/settle again in your land that was abandoned. **9** I will say to those who were captured [and (exiled/taken to Babylonia)], 'Leave [Babylonia] and return to your own country!' And I will say to those who are in dark prisons, 'Come out into the light!' When that happens, they will again be like [MET] sheep that eat grass in green pastures, on hills where [previously] there was no grass. **10** They will not be hungry or thirsty [any more]; the hot sun will not beat upon them again [DOU]. I, Yahweh, will act mercifully toward them and lead them; I will lead them to where there are springs of cool water. **11** And I will cause the mountains to become [as though they were] level roads, and I will prepare good highways [for my people to travel on, to return to Jerusalem]. **12** My people will return from far away; some will come from the north, some from the west, some from southern Egypt." **13** [Because of what Yahweh has promised to do], everything should shout joyfully— the sky and the earth and the mountains should sing, because Yahweh comforts his people, and he will pity those who are suffering. **14** [The people of] Jerusalem say, "Yahweh has abandoned us; he has forgotten about us." **15** But [Yahweh replies], "That is not true! (Can a woman forget the infant that she is nursing?/A woman certainly cannot forget the infant that she is nursing!) [RHQ] (Can she stop being kind to the child to whom she has given birth?/She certainly cannot stop being kind to the child to whom she has given birth!) [RHQ] But even if a woman would do that, I will not forget you! **16** Note that I have written your [names] on the palms of my hands; in my mind I can always see the walls of your city. **17** Soon your children will be returning there (OR, Those who rebuild your city will work more quickly than those who destroyed it), and all those who destroyed your city will leave. **18** You will look around and see all of your children coming back to you. As surely as I live, they will be around you [for you to show to people] like [SIM] a bride shows her wedding ornaments! **19** Your land has been ruined and caused to become desolate/abandoned [DOU], but [some day] it will be filled with people, and those who conquered you will be far away. **20** The children who were born while you were (exiled/in Babylonia) [MET] will return [to Jerusalem] and say, 'This city is too small for us; We need more space to live in!' **21** Then you will think to yourselves [MTY], 'It is amazing that we have [RHQ] all these children! Most of

our children were dead, and the rest were exiled. We were left here alone; so we do not know [RHQ] where all these children have come from! Who raised them?'" **22** This is what Yahweh our God says: "Watch! [It is as though] I will lift up my hand to signal to those who are not Israelis. And they will carry your little sons and daughters on their shoulders and bring them back to you. **23** Kings will serve you and will tutor/teach your children, and their queens will take care of your young children. They will prostrate themselves in front of you and [humble themselves by] licking the dust off your feet. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]; and those who trust in me will never be disappointed." **24** There is no one [RHQ] who can snatch valuable things from a soldier who has captured those things [in a war]; there is no one [RHQ] who can force a (tyrant/cruel man) to free the people whom he has captured. **25** But Yahweh says this: "[Some day], those who have been captured will be freed, and the valuable things that (tyrants/cruel men) have snatched from others will be returned, because I will fight against those who fight against you, and I will rescue your children. **26** And I will cause your enemies to destroy themselves [MET] instead of murdering others. When that happens, everyone [in the world] will know that I, Yahweh, am the one who saves you, the one who rescues you from your enemies; everyone will know that I am the mighty God to whom [you descendants of] [MTY] Jacob belong."

50 This is [also] what Yahweh says: "You [Israeli children], do not think [RHQ] that I [forced your parents to be exiled/taken to Babylonia] [MET] like some men send away their wives after giving them a paper on which they state that they were divorcing them! I certainly did not [RHQ] get rid of you like a man who sells his children to get money to pay what he owes. No, the reason that I forced you to be exiled [was to punish you] because of the sins that you have committed [DOU]. **2** When I came to you [to rescue you], why did no one answer when I called out to you [RHQ]? Was there no one there [RHQ]? Or, did you think that I do not have the power [MTY] to rescue you [DOU]? Think about this: I can speak to a sea and cause it to become dry! I can cause rivers to become deserts, with the result that the fish in the rivers die from thirst and they rot. **3** I cause the sky to become dark, [as though] [MET] it was wearing black clothes [because it was mourning because someone had died]." **4** Yahweh our God has given me his wise message [MTY] in order that I may encourage those who are weary. Each morning he awakens me, in order that I [SYN] may listen to what he teaches [SIM] me. **5** Yahweh our God has spoken to me [IDM], and I have not rejected what he told me; I have accepted [LIT] it. **6** I allowed people to beat me on my back and to pull out the whiskers in my beard [because they hated me]. I did not turn away [MTY] from them when they made fun of me and spat on me. **7** But, because the Lord our God helps me, I will never be humiliated. Therefore, I am strongly determined [IDM] to face/endure difficulties, and I know that nothing will cause me to be ashamed. **8** God, the one who vindicates me, is near to me; so if anyone [RHQ] stands in front of me and accuses me in a court, he will not be able [to show that I have done anything that is wrong]. **9** The Lord our God defends me [in court], so no one [RHQ] will be able to (condemn me/declare that I am guilty). All those who accuse me will disappear like [SIM] old clothes that have been eaten by ([larvae of] moths/cockroaches). **10** If you revere Yahweh and do what his servant tells you to do, even if you are (walking in darkness/enduring suffering), and it seems that [MET] there is no light, trust in Yahweh your God [DOU] [to help you]. **11** But you people who [oppose me], [who would like to throw] me into a blazing fire, walk in your own fires and burn yourselves with your own torches! This is what Yahweh will cause to happen to you: You will be enduring great torment when you die [EUP]!

51 [Yahweh says], "You people who desire to act righteously/justly, who want to do what I want you to do, listen to me! Think about Abraham! [It is as though] [MET] he was a huge rock cliff; and when you [people of Israel became a nation], [it was as though] [MET] you were cut from that rock [DOU]. **2** Think about your ancestor Abraham and [his wife] Sarah, of whom [all of] you are descendants. When I first spoke to Abraham, he had no children. But after I blessed him, he had a huge number of descendants. **3** [Some day I], Yahweh, will encourage his descendants [again], and I will comfort all [the people who live in] the ruins [of Jerusalem]. The desert in that area will become like Eden, like the garden that I, Yahweh, [made/planted]. All the people there will be joyful and happy; they will thank me and sing. **4** My people of Judah, listen carefully [DOU] to me, because [I want you to] proclaim my laws; the just/right things that I do will be [like] [MET] a light for the people of the nations. **5** I will soon/quickly rescue you [DOU]; by my power [MTY] I will bring you back [from being exiled in Babylonia] [DOU]. The people who live on islands in the ocean will wait for me [to help them], confidently expecting for me to use my power [MTY]. **6** Look up at the sky, and look at the earth, [and see what they are like now], because [some day] the sky will disappear like [SIM] smoke, and the earth will wear out like [SIM] old clothes wear out, and people on the earth will die like gnats/flies. But I will rescue/save you, and you will remain free forever, and I will rule you

righteously/fairly forever. 7 You people who know what things are right to do, and who know in your inner beings [what is written in] my laws, listen to me! Do not be afraid of people who taunt/insult you; do not be disturbed/upset when people revile you, 8 because [some day they will be destroyed] like [MET] clothing that is eaten by ([larvae of] moths/cockroaches), like wool garments that have been eaten by worms. I will save you people, and you will be saved forever." 9 Yahweh, wake up [and do something for us]! Show your power! Do mighty things like you did long ago, when you stabbed [RHQ] that sea monster/dragon Rahab and cut it into pieces. 10 Surely you are [RHQ] the one who caused the [Red] Sea to become dry and made a path through that deep water in order that your people could cross it! 11 And those whom Yahweh will rescue [from being exiled in Babylonia] will [similarly] return to Jerusalem, singing. Their being joyful forever will be [like] [MET] a crown on their heads. They will not be sad or mourn any more; they will be [completely] joyful and happy. 12 [Yahweh says], "I am the one who encourages you. So (why are you/you should not be) [RHQ] afraid of humans who will [wither and disappear like] [MET] grass. 13 (Why have you/You should not have) [RHQ] forgotten [me], Yahweh, the one who created your nation, the one who stretched out the sky and laid the foundations of the earth. (Why are you/You should not be) [RHQ] continually afraid of those who are angry with you and (oppress you/treat you cruelly) and want to get rid of you. [You should not be afraid of them now], because those angry people have now disappeared! 14 Soon you people who have been caused to be slaves [in Babylonia] will be freed! You will not remain in prison, and you will not die of hunger, 15 because I am Yahweh, your God, the one who stirs up the sea and causes the waves to roar; I am the Commander of the armies of angels! 16 I have given you my message [MTY] to proclaim, and I have protected you with my hand [MTY]. I stretched out the sky and laid the foundation of the earth. And I am the one who says to you Israeli people, 'You are my people!'" 17 [You people of] [APO] Jerusalem, wake up [DOU]! You have experienced Yahweh severely punishing [MTY] you. Yahweh has caused you to suffer much, all that he wanted you to suffer, like [MET] someone who causes another person to suffer by forcing him to drink every drop of [MTY] a cupful of bitter liquid. 18 [Now] you do not have any children who are alive [DOU] and able to take your hand and guide you. 19 You have experienced several disasters: Your country has become desolate/deserted; [your cities have been] destroyed; [many people have] died from hunger; [many people have been] killed by your enemies' swords. Now, there is no one [RHQ] left to console/comfort you and sympathize with you. 20 Your children have fainted and lie in the streets; they are [as helpless as] [SIM] an antelope [that has been caught] in a net. What has happened to them is because Yahweh has been very angry with them; he has rebuked them severely. 21 So now, you people who have suffered much, [you act as though] you are drunk, but it is not because you have drunk a lot of wine. 22 Yahweh, your Lord and your God, the one who argues/pleads your case, says this: "Note this: [It is as though] [MET] I have taken that cup of bitter liquid from your hands; I will not be angry with you and cause you to suffer any more. 23 Instead, I will cause those who have tormented you to suffer; [I will severely punish] those who said to you, 'Prostrate yourselves in order that we may walk on you; [lie down on your stomachs] in order that your backs will be like [SIM] streets that we can walk on.'"

52 [You people who live in the] holy city of Jerusalem [APO], wake up! Be strong again! Show that [MTY] your city is beautiful and glorious; foreigners who do not believe in God will not enter your city again [to attack you]. 2 People of Jerusalem, get up from [humbly] sitting in the dust and sit in places where people are honored! You people who have returned from being exiled, take off from your neck the chains which were fastened around you [as slaves in Babylonia], 3 because this is what Yahweh says: "[When you were taken to Babylonia], no one paid me for doing that. So now I will bring you back without [being required to] pay for you!" 4 Yahweh [our] Lord [also] says this: "Long ago, my people went to Egypt to live there. [Later] they were being (oppressed/treated cruelly) by [the soldiers of] Assyria. 5 But now think about what is happening: My people are being forced to be slaves again, this time by the [people of Babylonia]. And [those who have conquered them this time have also] paid me nothing, and they despise me [MTY] continually [DOU]. 6 But my people will then have a close relationship with [MTY] me, and when that happens, they will know that I am the one who predicted/promised [that it would happen]. It is I, [Yahweh, who will do it]." 7 It is a wonderful thing when messengers [MTY] arrive on the mountains/hills, bringing good news, the news about [God giving us] peace and saving us, the news that the God to whom we [Israeli people] belong is now ruling/king! 8 The watchmen [who are guarding the city] will shout and sing joyfully, because while they are watching they will see Yahweh returning to Jerusalem. 9 Jerusalem has been ruined, but the people who are there now should start to sing joyfully, because Yahweh will encourage his people; he will set his people free and bring them back to Jerusalem. 10 Yahweh will show all the nations that he is holy and powerful. People in the most

remote/distant places on earth will know that he has rescued his people. 11 So, leave [the places where you were taken to when you were captured], where [everything is] unacceptable to God. You men who carry the items used for the worship of Yahweh, leave there [and return to Jerusalem], and purify yourselves [in order to be acceptable to worship God]. 12 But it will not [be necessary] for you to leave suddenly, to flee in panic, because Yahweh will (go in front of/lead) you; and he will [also] protect you [from being attacked] at the rear [while you travel]. 13 [Yahweh says], "Listen carefully! My servant will act wisely (OR, do the right things to accomplish what he wants to), and I will highly exalt him." 14 But many people will be appalled when they see what has happened to him. [Because of his being beaten very badly], his appearance will be changed; people will hardly recognize that he is a human. 15 But he will cause [people of] many nations to be surprised; [even] kings will be silent when they stand in front of him, because they will see someone that no one had told them about [previously], and they will understand things that they had not heard about [before].

53 (Who will believe what we will tell them [about God's servant]?/Hardly anyone will believe what we will tell them [about God's servant].) [RHQ] (Who will see what Yahweh does by his great power?/Very few people will see what Yahweh does by his great power.) [MTY, RHQ] 2 While God watches, his servant will grow up [appearing/seeming to be very insignificant/unimportant], like a weak young plant that shoots up from a root [of a tree that is growing] in dry ground. There will be nothing beautiful or majestic about him, nothing that would cause us to want to be with him. 3 People will despise and reject him. {He will be despised and rejected.} He will endure much pain, and he will suffer much. [Because his face will be very disfigured], people will not [want to] look at him; people will despise him and think that he is not worth paying any attention to. 4 But he will be [punished for] the sicknesses [of our souls]; he will endure great pain for us. But we will think that he is being punished by God, afflicted/punished [for his own sins]. 5 But his body will be bruised because of the evil things that we did, wounded because of our sins. He will be beaten in order that things will go well for our [souls]; and because he will be whipped, [our souls] can be healed. 6 All of us have gone away [from God] like [SIM] sheep who have strayed away [from their shepherd]. We have turned away [from doing the things that God wants in order] to do the things that we wanted [MET]. [We deserve to be punished, but] Yahweh will punish him instead of punishing us for all of our sins. 7 He will be abused and caused to suffer, but he will not say anything [to complain]. They will lead him [to where they will execute him], [like they lead] a lamb to where it will be slaughtered. And like a sheep does not (bleat/make any noise) when the shearer [cuts off its wool], he will not say anything [MTY] [to defend himself when he is killed]. 8 After he is arrested and put on trial, he will be taken away [and executed]. And no one [RHQ] will be able to talk about his descendants, because he will die [EUP] [without being married and having children]. He will be (afflicted/caused to suffer) for the wrong things that we have done. 9 Although he will never have done any wrong or deceived [MTY] anyone, people will plan to bury his corpse where wicked people are buried, but instead, a rich man will [bury him] after he dies. 10 But it will be Yahweh's will that he be afflicted and caused to suffer. And [when he dies], Yahweh will cause him to be an offering to remove the guilt of sinners. But later he will have many [spiritual] children, and he will live (a long time/forever) after he [dies and] becomes alive [again], and he [MTY] will accomplish everything that Yahweh has planned. 11 When he sees all that he will accomplish because of his suffering, he will be satisfied. And because of what will have happened to him, Yahweh's righteous servant will cause the guilt of many people to be ended, because he will remove [the guilt for] their sins. 12 So Yahweh will consider him to be one of the truly great people; he will [be like a king who] divides up [among his soldiers] the (spoils/things they took from their enemies after defeating them) [MET], because he will sacrifice himself and die. [Even though people] will consider him to be a sinner, he will remove the guilt of many [people], and he will intercede/pray that those who have done things that are wrong [will be forgiven].

54 Yahweh says, "You [people of Jerusalem] [MET], start to sing! You [who are like] [MET] women who have never given birth to children, sing loudly and shout joyfully, because you, [who are like] [MET] childless women who have been abandoned [by their husbands], will [soon] have more children than women who have never had any children. 2 Make your tents larger; make them wider, and fasten them firmly with tent pegs. 3 [You will need to make your city much larger] because [soon] you and your descendants will spread all over the land. They will force the people of [other] nations [who now live in your cities] to leave, and you will live [again] in those cities [that were previously abandoned]. 4 Do not be afraid; you will no [longer] be ashamed. Previously you were ashamed [because your enemies conquered you] and caused many of your women to become widows, but [soon] you will not even remember that. 5 [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the Holy one of Israel, who rules over the whole earth, the one who created you, will be [like] [MET] a husband to you. 6 You were like a woman whose husband

left her, and caused you to be very sad; you were like a young woman who got married when she was [very] young, and then her husband abandoned her. **7** I abandoned you [people of Jerusalem] for a while, but [now] I am saying, 'I will take you back.' **8** I was very angry with you for a while, and I turned away from you. But I will act mercifully toward you and I will faithfully love you forever. That is what [I], Yahweh, your protector, say to you. **9** During the time that Noah lived, I solemnly promised that I would never again allow a flood to cover the earth. So [now] I solemnly promise that I will not be angry with you again and (rebuke you/threaten to punish you). **10** Even if the mountains and hills shake and collapse, I will not stop faithfully loving you, and I will not cancel my agreement to cause things to go well for you. That is what [I], Yahweh, who act mercifully, say. **11** You [people of Jerusalem] [APO], [your enemies acted very violently toward you]; [it was as though] your city was battered by a severe storm, and no one helped you. But [now] I will cause your city to be rebuilt with stones made of (turquoise/valuable stones), and I will cause the foundations of the city to be made of (sapphires/valuable blue stones). **12** I will cause the towers on the city wall to be made of (rubies/valuable red stones), and all the gates of the city will be made of [other] very valuable stones. **13** I will be the one who will teach you people and cause things to go well with you. **14** Your [government] will be strong because of acting justly/fairly; no one will (oppress you/cause you to suffer); you will not be afraid, because there will be nothing [PRS] that will (terrorize you/cause you to become extremely afraid). **15** If any army attacks you, it will not be because I have incited them to do that, and you will defeat any group that attacks you. **16** Think about this: (Blacksmiths/Men who make things from metal) fan the coals to make a very hot flame in order to produce weapons that can be used [in battles], but I am the one who has produced blacksmiths! And I am also the one who created people who destroy [other people and cities]. **17** [But I am promising you that I will] not allow you to be defeated/injured by soldiers using weapons that have been made to attack you, and when others try to accuse you, you will (refute them/show that they are wrong). That is the reward that I will give to the people who serve me; I will defend them; that is what [I], Yahweh, promise."

55 "All you [people who are in exile], listen to me! [It is as though] [MET] you are thirsty, so come and get water from me! [It is as though] you have no money, but you can come and get things from me [that are like] wine and milk! You can get [what you need from me], [and] you will not need to give me any money for them! **2** [What you really need is to have a close relationship with me], so (why do you spend money to buy things that do not supply what you really need?/you should not spend money to buy things that do not supply what you really need.) [RHQ] (Why do you work hard to get money to buy things that do not (satisfy your [inner beings]/cause you to be happy)?) [RHQ] Pay attention to what I say and acquire what is really good [MET]! If you do that, then you will truly be happy [MET]. **3** Listen to me and come to me; pay attention to me, and if you do that, you will have new life in your souls. I will make an agreement with you that will last forever to faithfully love you like I loved [King] David. **4** By what he did, I showed [my power to many] people-groups; I caused him to be a leader and commander [DOU] over [the people of many nations]. **5** And similarly, you will summon people of other nations to come to you, nations that previously you have not heard about, and they had not heard about you; and they will come to you quickly because [they will have heard that I], Yahweh, your God, the Holy One of Israel, have honored you. **6** Seek [to know] me while it is still possible for you to do that; call to me while I am near! **7** Wicked [people] should abandon their wicked behavior, and evil people should stop thinking what is evil. They should turn to me, and if they do that, I will act mercifully toward them; they should turn to me, their God, because I will fully pardon them [for all the wicked things that they have done]. **8** I, Yahweh, declare that what I think is not the same as what you think, and what I do is very different from what you do. **9** Just as the sky is far above the earth, what I do is far greater than what you do, and what I think is much greater than what you think. **10** Rain and snow come down from the sky, and they cause the ground to be moist before the moisture returns [to the sky and produces more clouds]. When the ground becomes moist, it causes plants to sprout and grow, with the result that the soil produces seed for the farmer [to plant] and [grain to produce flour to make] bread for people to eat. **11** And similarly the things that I promise to do, I will [always] cause to happen; my promises will [always] be fulfilled [LIT]. They will accomplish the things that I gave them to accomplish [DOU]. **12** You will leave [Babylon] joyfully, you will have peace as I lead you out. [It will be as though] the hills and mountains will sing joyfully, and the trees in the fields will clap their hands. **13** Instead of thornbushes and briers, pine/cypress [trees] and myrtle [trees] will grow [in your land]. As a result of that, people will honor me much more; and what I do will remind everyone that [I do what I have promised]."

56 Yahweh says [to all the people of Judah], "Do the things that are fair and just, because I will soon come to rescue [DOU] you. **2** I will bless those who faithfully obey my laws about the Sabbath/rest days. I will bless those

who (keep sacred/honor) my Sabbath/rest days, and who do not do any work on those days, and who refrain from [MTY] doing anything that is evil. 3 And foreigners who have believed in me should not say, 'Yahweh will surely not allow me to belong to his people.' And eunuchs should not say, '[Because I am unable to have children, I cannot belong to Yahweh]; I am like [MET] a tree that has completely withered.' 4 They should not say that, because [I], Yahweh, say this to the eunuchs who obey my laws about the Sabbath, and who choose to do the things that please me, and who obey all [the other laws of] the agreement that I [made with the Israeli people]: 5 I will cause to be put inside the walls of my temple a monument [DOU] to them; because of that monument, they will be honored more than they would have if they had children; they will be honored forever. 6 I will also bless those who are not Israelis, who (join themselves to/believe in) me, and who serve me and worship and love me, and who obey my laws about the Sabbath, and who faithfully obey [all the other laws of] the agreement that I [made with the Israeli people]. 7 I will bring them to my sacred hill [in Jerusalem], I will cause them to be [very] joyful in my temple where people pray to me, and I will accept the sacrifices that they completely burn [on my altar] and other sacrifices that they offer. I will do those things for them because I want my temple to be a building where people of all nations pray to me. 8 [I], Yahweh, the Lord, the one who will bring back the people of Israel who have been (forced to go/exiled) to other countries, say this: 'I will bring [from other countries] many more people to join those Israelis whom I have brought back.'" 9 "You [surrounding nations have armies that are like] [MET] animals in the forest; come and attack/destroy [Israel]! 10 The Israeli leaders [should be like] watchdogs to protect the people, but [it is as though] they are blind. They are stupid. They are all [like] [MET] dogs that cannot bark. [Good watchdogs bark when strangers approach], [but the Israeli leaders do not warn the people that their enemies are coming]. Instead, they just want to lie down and sleep and dream. 11 [And they are like] greedy dogs; they never get all that they want. They are [supposed to lead the people, like good] shepherds [lead their flocks], but they are ignorant, and they each do whatever they want to do. 12 They say to each other, 'Come, let's go and get some wine and [other] alcoholic/strong drinks, and let's become drunk! And tomorrow we will enjoy drinking even more!'"

57 Righteous people [sometimes] die [when they are still young], and no one is concerned about it. Godly people [sometimes] die because of disasters, and no one understands why. They are taken away in order that they will not endure more calamities, 2 and now they have peace. They [continually] lived righteously, and [now] they rest [peacefully] in their graves. 3 [Yahweh says,] "But you who practice sorcery, come here! You who worship idols [MET], [listen to me]! 4 Do you realize [RHQ] whom you are ridiculing, and whom you are insulting? Do you realize [RHQ] to whom you are sticking out your tongues? [You are insulting me, Yahweh]! You are [RHQ] always rebelling against me and always lying. 5 You are eager to have sex under every [big] green tree where you worship your gods. You kill your children as sacrifices [to your idols] in the dry riverbeds, and [also] offer them [as sacrifices to your idols] in the rocky caves. 6 [You take big] smooth stones from the riverbeds and worship them as your gods. You pour out [wine] to be an offering to them, and you bring grain [to burn for] an offering to them. Do you think that I should not punish you for doing all those things? 7 You have sex [EUP] [with cult prostitutes] on every hill and mountain, and you go there to offer sacrifices [to your gods]. 8 You have put (fetishes/pagan symbols) behind your doors and doorposts, and you have deserted me. You have taken off your clothes [EUP] and climbed into your bed and invited more [of your lovers] to come to bed with you. You have paid them to have sex with you, and you have fondled their sexual organs. 9 You have given [fragrant] oil and lots of perfume to your god Molech, and you sent messengers to distant countries [to find other gods to worship]; you [even tried to] send [messengers] to the place of the dead [to search for new gods]. **(Sheol h7585)** 10 You became weary because of doing all those things, but you never said, 'It is useless [for us to do that].' You found new strength for worshiping idols, so you continued to do that [LIT]. 11 Was it because you were afraid [of those idols more than you were afraid of me] that you lied [about what you were doing], and you do not even think about [DOU, RHQ] me? Was it because I did not punish you for a long time that you are not afraid of me [RHQ]? 12 You [think that] [IRO] the things that you have done are right, but I will tell the truth. It will not help you to do any of those things. 13 When you cry out [for help] to your collection of idols, they will not rescue you. The wind will blow them away [DOU]. But those who trust in me will live in the land [of Israel], and [they will worship me on Zion], my sacred hill." 14 Yahweh will say, "Prepare [yourselves to receive] me, [like] [MET] people build and prepare a road [for a king to come on]. Get rid of [the things that are causing you to sin] [like] [MET] people remove from a road (obstacles/things that cause people to stumble). 15 Because this is what [I], Yahweh, who am holy and greatly honored and who live forever, say: I live in the highest heaven, where [everything] is holy, but I also am with those who are humble and who are sorry for the sinful things

that they have done. I will greatly encourage [DOU] those who have repented. **16** I will not accuse [people] forever; I will not always be angry [with them], because [if I did that], people would become weak/discouraged; all the people whom I created and caused to live would die. **17** I was angry [with my people] because they sinned by wanting the things that others had. So because I was angry, I punished them and turned away from them, but they continued sinning. **18** I have seen the evil things that they continually do, but I will restore them and lead them. I will encourage/comfort them. And to those who are mourning, **19** I will enable them to sing songs to praise me. I will restore [all my people], those who live near [Jerusalem] and those who live far away, and I will cause things to go well for them. **20** Wicked [people do not have peace in their inner beings]; they are like [SIM] a sea [whose waves are] always churning up mud, **21** and [I], Yahweh, say that things will never (go well/be peaceful) for those who are evil."

58 [Yahweh said to me], "Shout loudly! Shout like [SIM] a loud trumpet! Shout to warn my Israeli people about their sins [DOU]! **2** They worship me every day; [they come to my temple because they say that] they are eager to know what I want them to do. They act as though they are a nation that does things that are righteous, who would never abandon their God. They request me to decide matters justly, and they delight to come to worship me. **3** [They say], 'We have (fasted/abstained from eating food) to please you, but you did not [RHQ] notice our doing that. We humbled ourselves, but you did not [RHQ] pay any attention!' I will tell you why I did not pay attention. It is because when you fast, you do it only to please yourselves, and you act cruelly toward all your workers. **4** You fast, but you also quarrel and fight [with each other] with your fists. [Doing things like that while] you fast will [certainly] not cause [me] to hear your prayers [where I am], high in heaven. **5** You [act as though] [IRO] you humble yourselves [RHQ] by bowing your heads like [SIM] [the tops of] reeds bend [when the wind blows], and you wear [RHQ] rough clothes and cover your heads with ashes [like people do when they are grieving]. That is what you do when you are fasting, but do you really think [RHQ] that will please me? **6** No, that is not the kind of fasting that I desire. What I really want [RHQ] is for you to free those who have been unjustly put in prison [DOU], and to encourage those who are (treated cruelly/oppressed); I want you to free those who have been oppressed in any way. **7** I want you to [RHQ] share your food with those who are hungry and to allow those who have no houses to stay in your houses. Give clothes to those who do not have clothes, and do not hide from your relatives who need help from you. **8** If you do those things, [what you do for others will be like] [SIM] a light that shines when it dawns. The troubles [that have been caused by your sins] will end quickly. Others will know about your righteous behavior, and with my glorious presence I will protect you from behind [like I protected the Israeli people when they left Egypt]. **9** Then you will call out to me, and I will [quickly] answer [and say that I will help you].' Stop (oppressing people/treating people cruelly); stop falsely accusing people; and stop saying evil [things about people]. **10** Give food to those who are hungry, and give to people who are afflicted/suffering the things that they need. [Your doing that will be like] [MET] a light that shines in the darkness; instead of doing evil to people [MET], [the good things that you do for them will be like] [SIM] sunshine at noontime. **11** [I], Yahweh, will guide you continually, and I will give you good things to satisfy you. I will enable you to remain strong and healthy. You will be like [SIM] a garden that is well watered, like [SIM] a spring that never dries up. **12** [Your people] will rebuild the cities that were destroyed long ago; they will build [houses] on top of the old foundations. People will say that you are the ones who are repairing the holes [in the city walls], and who are repairing the streets where people live. **13** Do not travel [MTY] long distances on Sabbath/rest days, and on Sabbath days do not do only the things that you delight to do. Enjoy the Sabbath days, and consider them to be delightful. The Sabbath days are my holy days. Honor me, Yahweh, in everything that you do [on the Sabbath days]. Do not talk about and do things [only] to please yourselves. If you do all the things that I have just now told you to do, **14** I will enable you to be joyful. I will greatly honor you; [I will honor you everywhere!] I will give to you the [blessings] that I gave to your ancestor Jacob. [Those things will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it."

59 Listen to this! Yahweh's power [MTY] is not ended/gone, with the result that he cannot save [you]. He has not become deaf [MTY], with the result that he cannot hear [you when you call to him for help]. **2** But, you have separated yourselves from your God by the sins that you have committed. Because of your sins, he has turned away from you, with the result that he does not pay attention to what you request him to do. **3** You do violent things [MTY] [to others], with the result that your hands are stained with their blood. You [constantly] tell [MTY] lies, and you say [MTY] evil things [about others]. **4** When you accuse someone in court, what you say is not fair and it is not true. You accuse people falsely. You are [constantly] planning to cause trouble for others, and then you do those evil things that you planned. **5** What you plan to do to harm people

[MET] is as dangerous as the eggs of a (cobra/poisonous snake), because cobras will hatch from those eggs. You trap people like [MET] spiders trap/catch insects in their webs. **6** We people cannot hide/cover our skin with clothes made of spider webs [MET], and similarly you cannot hide the evil things that you have done. You are [constantly] acting [MTY] violently. **7** You [SYN] are very quick to go and do evil things, and you hurry to murder people [MTY] who are innocent. You are [continually] thinking about sinning. Wherever you go, you destroy things and cause people to suffer. **8** You do not know how to act peacefully or to treat others fairly. You always are (dishonest/deceiving others) [MET], and those who imitate your behavior never have any inner peace. **9** Because of that, God does not rescue us [from our enemies]; [it seems that] he is not acting fairly/righteously toward us. We expect [God to give us] light, but all [he gives us] is darkness [DOU]. **10** We are like [SIM] blind people who have to feel along a wall to be able to walk anywhere. We stumble [and trip] at noontime like [SIM] we would when it is dark. We are like [SIM] dead people who are among healthy people. **11** We growl like [SIM] [hungry] bears; we continually moan like [SIM] doves. We seek [people who do] what is just/fair, but we cannot find any [anywhere]. [We want God] to rescue us, but [it seems that] he is far away. **12** [But these things are happening] because [it is as though] our sins are piled high in the presence of God, and that they testify [PRS] against us. We cannot deny it; we know that we have done many wrong things. **13** [We know that] we have rebelled against Yahweh; we have turned away from him. We (oppress people/treat people cruelly) by what we testify [against them]; we do not allow them to get what they have a right to get. We [SYN] think about the lies that we can tell, and then we tell them. **14** [In our courts, the judges] do not decide cases/matters fairly; no one is acting righteously. In plazas where people gather together, no one tells the truth [PRS]; [it seems that people] are not allowed to say what is true. **15** No one tells the truth, and people try to ruin [the reputations of] those who quit doing evil. Yahweh looked around, and he saw that no one was doing what is just/fair, and he was [very] displeased. **16** He was disgusted when he saw that no one tried to help [those who were being treated cruelly]. So he used his own power [MTY] to rescue them; it is because he is always righteous that he did that [PRS]. **17** [It is as though he is a soldier who] [MET] puts on his armor and a helmet; his continually doing what is right is like [MET] his armor, and his ability to rescue people is [like] his helmet. His being extremely angry and his being ready to get revenge [on those who do evil] are like [MET] his robes. **18** He will repay his enemies for the evil things that they have done. He will severely punish [MTY] even those who live far [from Jerusalem]. **19** When that happens, people everywhere, from the east to the west, will respect and honor Yahweh [MTY], because he will come like [SIM] a rushing river that is pushed along by the strong wind that Yahweh sent. **20** And Yahweh says that he will come to Jerusalem to free [his people]; he will come to rescue those in Judah who have quit (doing sinful things/their sinful behavior). **21** This is what Yahweh says to his people: "This is the agreement that I will make with you: My Spirit will not leave you, and you will always have my message. You will [be able to] declare it [MTY], and your children and grandchildren will [be able to] declare it forever."

60 [You people of] Jerusalem [PRS], stand up! Yahweh has done glorious things for you, and he has acted powerfully for you; so show others that he is very great! **2** [But spiritual] darkness has covered [all the other people-groups on] the earth, complete darkness, but Yahweh will show you how great he is, and other people will also see it. **3** By seeing what he has done for you, [people of all] people-groups will see that he is very great, and kings will come to see the wonderful things that have happened to you. **4** [Yahweh says], "Look around and you will see the people who will be returning from (exile/countries to which they have been forced to go)! Your sons will come from distant countries; others will carry your [little] daughters home. **5** When you look at this happening, you will be very joyful [DOU], because people will bring valuable goods to you [from all around the world]. They will bring in ships valuable things from [many] nations. **6** People will [also] bring valuable goods to you on herds/caravans of camels: Camels from the Midian and Ephah [areas of northern Arabia]. And from Sheba [in southern Arabia] they will come, bringing gold and frankincense; they will all come to praise [me], Yahweh. **7** They will bring flocks [of sheep and goats] from Kedar [in northern Arabia and give them] to you. [They will bring] [PRS] rams from Nebaioth for you [to sacrifice] on my altars, and I will accept them [happily]. [At that time] I will cause my temple to be very beautifully decorated. **8** And what are those things that are moving swiftly like [SIM] clouds? They resemble [SIM] doves [returning] to their nests. **9** But they are really ships from Tarshish that are bringing your people back here. When your people come, they will bring with them [all] the valuable possessions that they have acquired, and [they will do that] to honor [me], Yahweh, your God, the Holy One of Israel, because I will have greatly honored you. **10** Foreigners will [come and] rebuild the walls of your [cities], and their kings will serve/help you. Although I punished you because I was angry with you, these things will happen now

because I will act mercifully toward you because I am kind. **11** The gates of your [cities] will be open during the day and [also] during the night, in order that people will be able to bring into your cities valuable things from [many] countries, with their kings being led to you in the processions. **12** And the kingdoms and nations whose [people] refuse to allow you to rule them will be completely destroyed [DOU]. **13** The glorious/beautiful things in Lebanon will be brought to you—[lumber from] cypress [trees] and fir [trees] and pine [trees]—to be used to make my temple beautiful. When that is done, my temple [MTY] will [truly] be glorious! **14** The descendants of those who (oppressed you/treated you cruelly) will come and bow down to you; those who despised you will prostrate themselves in front of your feet. They will say that your city on Zion Hill is the City of Yahweh, where the Holy One of Israel lives. **15** Previously everyone hated you and ignored you, but now your [city] will be majestic/honored forever; and [I will cause you to be] joyful forever. **16** People of all nations and their kings will gladly bring [MET] their wealth to you. And [when that happens], you will realize that I truly am Yahweh, the one who saves you and rescues you [from your enemies], and that I am the mighty one to whom you Israeli people belong. **17** Instead of [metals that are not valuable, like] bronze and iron, I will bring to you silver and gold. Instead of wood and stones, I will bring you bronze and iron [for your buildings]. There will be peace in your country, and your rulers will do what is fair/just. **18** People in your country will no longer act violently, and people will no longer destroy your land and cause it to become desolate/ruined. The people in the city will be safe, and everyone there will praise me [MTY]. **19** And you will no longer need the sun and moon to give you light, because [I], Yahweh, will give you more light [than the sun and moon]; I will be a glorious light for you forever. **20** [It will seem as though] the sun and moon will always be shining [LIT], because [I], Yahweh, will be an everlasting light for you. You will never again be sad [because of things that happen to you]. **21** Your people will all be righteous, and they will occupy the land forever, because I myself have put you there [like people plant trees] [MET] in order that you will show others that I am very great. **22** At that time, the [groups that are] very small now will become [very large] clans, and small clans will become great nations. [All those things will happen because], I, Yahweh, will cause them to happen at the right time."

61 The Spirit of Yahweh [our] Lord is on me; he has appointed [MTY] me to bring good news to those who are oppressed, to comfort those who are discouraged, to free [all] those who are [as though they are chained/tied] [DOU] [by the wrong things that they continually do]. **2** He has sent me to tell those who mourn [about the members of their families who died] (OR, [who are still in Babylonia)] that now is the time when Yahweh will act kindly [toward his people]; now is the time when our God will (get revenge on/punish) [their enemies]. **3** To [all] those in Jerusalem who mourn, he will give flower necklaces [to wear]; instead of ashes [that they put on their heads to show that they are sad]; he will cause them to rejoice [MTY] instead of being sad; he will enable them to be [MET] happy instead of being discouraged. They will be called "people who continually do what is right, people who are [like tall/strong] oak [trees] that Yahweh has planted" to show others that he is very great. **4** [Those who return from Babylon] will rebuild the cities that [the soldiers from Babylon] tore down. [Even though] those cities have been destroyed and abandoned for many years, they will be restored/rebuilt. **5** Foreigners will be the ones who will take care of your flocks [of sheep and goats], and plow your fields and take care of your grapevines. **6** But you [are the ones who] will be like the priests to serve Yahweh, to work for God. You will enjoy valuable goods [that are brought] from other nations, and you will be happy that those things have become yours. **7** Previously you were shamed and disgraced, but now you will have great blessings; previously [your enemies] humbled you, but now you will have many good things; you will be happy because of being in your land again, and you will rejoice forever. **8** "I, Yahweh, am very pleased with those/judges who decide matters fairly; I hate [those who illegally] take things from other people. I will surely repay my people (for/because of) all that they have suffered [in the past]. And I will make an everlasting agreement with them. **9** Their descendants will be honored by people of other nations [DOU]. Everyone who sees them will know that they are a nation that [I], Yahweh, have blessed." **10** I greatly rejoice because of what Yahweh [has done]! I am happy, because he has saved me and declared that I am righteous; [those blessings are like] [MET] a robe that he has put on me. I am [as happy as] [SIM] a bridegroom in his wedding suit, or a bride wearing jewels. **11** Just as [seeds sown in] a garden sprout from the soil and grow [DOU], Yahweh [our] God will cause [people of] all nations to act righteously, with the result that they will praise him for doing that.

62 Because I am very concerned about [the people of] Jerusalem [DOU], I will do something to help them. I will not stop praying for them until they are rescued/freed [from their oppressors], until that becomes as apparent to everyone as the dawn [every morning], until people can see it as clearly as [SIM] they see a torch shining brightly [at night]. **2** [Some day] the [people of many] nations will know

that Yahweh has rescued you, [his people]. Their kings will see that your city is [very] great/glorious. And Yahweh [MTY] will give your [city] a new name. **3** [It will be as though] Yahweh will hold you up in his hands in order that everyone can see you. Under his authority [MTY], you will be [like] a glorious headband/turban worn by a king. **4** Your [city] will never again be called "the deserted/abandoned city" and your country will never again be called "the desolate land"; it will be called "the land that Yahweh delights in", and [it will also be called] "married to Yahweh". It will be called that because Yahweh will be delighted with you, [and it will be as though] you are his bride [MET]. **5** You people will live in all the country of Judah like [SIM] a young man lives with his bride. And our God will be happy that you [belong to] him like [SIM] a bridegroom is happy that his bride [belongs to him]. **6** [You people of] Jerusalem, I have placed watchmen on your walls; they will [LIT] earnestly pray to Yahweh day and night. You watchmen, you must not stop [praying] [and] reminding Yahweh [about what he has promised to do]! **7** And tell Yahweh that he should not rest until he causes Jerusalem to be [a city that is] famous throughout the world. **8** Yahweh has raised his right hand to solemnly promise [to the people of Jerusalem], "I will use my power [MTY] and never again allow your enemies to defeat you; [soldiers from other nations will never come again] to take away your grain and the wine that you worked hard [to produce]. **9** You yourselves grew the grain, and you will be the ones who will praise [me], Yahweh, while you eat [the bread made from] that grain. Inside the courtyards of my temple you yourselves will drink the wine made from the grapes [that you harvested]." **10** Go out through the [city] gates! Prepare the highway on which people [will return from other countries]! Cause the road to become smooth; clear off [all] the stones; set up signal flags to help the people-groups to see [where the road to Jerusalem is]. **11** This is the message that Yahweh has sent to [the people of] every nation: "Tell the people of Israel, 'The one who will rescue/save you is coming! Look! He will be bringing to you (your reward/what you deserve [for the good things that you have done]); those whom he is setting free will be going ahead of him.'" **12** They will be called "Yahweh's own people, the ones whom he rescued". And Jerusalem will be known as the city that [Yahweh] loves, the city that is no [longer] abandoned.

63 [I ask], "Who is this who is coming from Bozrah [city] in Edom, whose clothes are stained red [from blood]? Who is this who is wearing beautiful robes?" [He replies], "It is I, [Yahweh], declaring that I have defeated [your enemies], and I am able to rescue you!" **2** [I ask him], "What are those red spots on your clothes? It appears that [SIM] you have been treading/tramping on grapes [to make wine]." **3** [He replies], "I have been treading on [my enemies, not] on grapes. I did it myself; no one helped me. I punished them because I was very angry with them, and my clothes became stained with their blood. **4** I did that because it was time for me [SYN] to get revenge; it was time to rescue [my people from those who had oppressed them]. **5** I searched for someone who would enable me to help [my people], but I was amazed/shocked that there was no one to help me. So I defeated [their enemies] with my own power/strength [MTY]; I was able [PRS] to do that because of my being very angry. **6** Because I was extremely angry, I punished the nations; I caused them [to stagger like] [MET] drunk men, and I caused their blood to pour out on the ground." **7** I will tell about Yahweh faithfully loving his people, and I will praise him for all that he has done. Yahweh has done good things for [us] people [MTY] of Israel; he has acted mercifully toward us, and he has steadfastly and faithfully loved us. **8** Yahweh said, "These are my people; they will not deceive me;" so he rescued us. **9** When we had many troubles, he was sad [also]. He sent his angel to rescue us. Because he loved us and was merciful to us, he saved us; [it was as though] he picked our ancestors up and carried them all those years [during which they were oppressed in Egypt]. **10** But we rebelled against him, and we caused his Holy Spirit to be sad. So he became [like] [MET] an enemy who fought against us. **11** Then we thought about [what happened] long ago, during the time when Moses led [our ancestors out of Egypt]. We cried out, "Where is the one who brought our ancestors through the [Red] Sea while Moses led them? Where is the one who sent his Holy Spirit to be among our ancestors? **12** Where is the one who showed his glorious power [MTY], and caused the water to separate when Moses lifted his arm above it, with the result that he will be honored/praised forever? **13** Where is the one who led our ancestors while they walked through the sea bed? They were like [SIM] horses that were racing along and never stumbled. **14** They were like [SIM] cattle that walk down into a valley [to rest], and the Spirit of Yahweh enabled them to go to a place where they could rest. Yahweh, you led your people, and you caused yourself [MTY] to (get a wonderful reputation/be greatly honored)." **15** [Yahweh], look down from heaven; look down on us from your holy and glorious home. You were [RHQ] previously very concerned [about us], and you acted powerfully [to help us]. But it seems that you do not act mercifully and zealously for us any more. **16** You are our father. Abraham does not know [what is happening to] us, and Jacob is not concerned about us, [either], but Yahweh, you are our father; you rescued us long ago. **17**

Yahweh, why did you cause us to wander away from your road [RHQ]? Why did you cause us to be stubborn, with the result that we no [longer] revere you [RHQ]? Help us like you did previously, because we are the people who serve you and belong to you. **18** We, your holy people, possessed your sacred temple for only a short time, [and now] our enemies have destroyed it. **19** Now it seems as though we never were ruled by you, as though we were never part of your family [MTY].

64 "[Yahweh], I wish that you would tear open the sky and come down, and cause the mountains to shake in your presence. **2** [Be] like a fire that burns twigs and causes water to boil! [Come down] in order that your enemies will know who you are, and the [people of other] nations will tremble in your presence. **3** You have done awesome things which we were not expecting you to do; the mountains shook when you came down [at Horeb Mountain]. **4** Since (long ago/the world began), no one [SYN] has [ever] seen or heard about a God like you; you help those who (depend on/trust in) you. **5** You help those who joyfully do what is right, those who conduct their lives as you want them to. But [we did not do that]; we continued to sin, and so you became angry with us. We have been sinning for a long time, so only if we continually do what you want us to do will we be saved. **6** We have all become people who are not fit to worship you; all of the good things that we have done are only like [SIM] filthy/blood-stained rags. Because of our sins, we are like [SIM] leaves that dry up and are blown away by the wind. **7** None [of our people] worships you, and no one is completely dedicated to [IDM] you. You have turned away from us. [It is as though] you have caused us to be forced to continue our sinful behavior. **8** Yahweh, you are our father. We are [like] [MET] clay, and you created us, [like] [MET] a potter [creates pottery]. **9** Yahweh, do not continue to be angry [with us]; do not keep thinking about [our] sins forever. Do not forget that we are all your people. **10** [All of] your towns [in Judah] have become like [MET] deserts; [even] Jerusalem has been destroyed. **11** Your glorious temple on Zion Hill, where our ancestors worshiped you, has been destroyed by fire. And all our [other] beautiful things have been ruined. **12** Yahweh, you see all those things, so we worry that you will refrain [from helping us], and that you will cause us to suffer much more.

65 [This is what Yahweh said]: "I was ready to reply [to my people], but no one requested me [to help them]. I was ready to help [even] those who did not call out to me. I continued to say, 'I am here [to help you]!' **2** [It is as though] I have continually held out my arms [to show that I am ready to help] my people who rebel [against me], and who [continually] do the evil things that they want to do. **3** They boldly continue to do things that cause me to be angry: They offer sacrifices [to their idols] in their gardens, and they burn incense [to them] on [altars made of] bricks. **4** They secretly remain awake at night in burial caves, [talking with the spirits of] ([dead people/their ancestors]). They eat the meat of pigs, and their pots are full of [other] meat that is [also] unacceptable to me. **5** [Then] they say [to others], 'Stay away from me; do not come near me, because I am very holy, [with the result that you should not touch me].' People like that are [like] [MET] smoke in my nose [from] a fire that burns continually. **6** I have written [a record of all the evil things that they have done]. And I will not do nothing about all those things; I will certainly punish them **7** for the sins that they and their ancestors have committed. They have mocked/insulted me by burning incense [to their idols] on the hilltops. So I will punish them like they deserve for doing those things." **8** This is [also] what Yahweh said: "When there is a cluster of nice grapes on a vine, people do not throw them away, because they know that there is good juice in those grapes. Similarly, because there are some people [in Judah] who faithfully serve/worship me, I will not get rid of all of them. **9** I will spare some of the descendants of Jacob who are living on the hills of Judah. I have chosen them, and they will possess that land; they will worship/serve me, and they will live there. **10** [Then all the land from the] Sharon [Plain near the Mediterranean Sea] and [as far east as] Achor Valley [near Jericho] will become pastureland where their cattle and sheep will rest. **11** But [it will be different] for you who have abandoned me, you who do not worship me on [Zion], my sacred hill, you who worship Gad and Meni, [the gods who you think will bring you] good luck and good fortune. **12** [It is I, not Meni, who will decide/say what will happen to you]; you will all [be slaughtered by] swords. [That will happen] because you did not answer when I called out to you. I spoke to you, but you did not pay attention. Instead, you did things that I said are evil; you chose to do things that do not please me. **13** I, Yahweh the Lord, will give to those who worship and obey me things to eat and drink, and they will be happy; but [all] you evil people will be hungry and thirsty, and you will be [sad and] disgraced. **14** Those who worship and obey me will sing joyfully, but you [evil people] will wail loudly because you will be suffering in your inner beings. **15** Those whom I have chosen will use your names when they curse people; [I], Yahweh the Lord, will get rid of you. But I will give to those who worship and obey me a new name [that they will use when they bless people]. **16** The people in this land have had many troubles, but I will cause those troubles to

occur no more. Therefore those who ask me to bless them and those who solemnly promise to do something should never forget that I am God, who faithfully [do what I promise to do]." **17** "Note this: [Some day] I will create a new heaven and a new earth. [They will be very wonderful, with the result that] you will no longer think about all [the troubles] you had previously. **18** Be glad and always rejoice because of what I will do: Jerusalem will be a place where [people] rejoice; the people who live there will always be happy. **19** I will rejoice about Jerusalem, and I will be delighted with my people. [People] will no longer weep or cry because of being distressed. **20** No child will die when it is still an infant; all people will live until they are very old. [People will consider that] anyone who is 100 years old is still young; [they will consider that] anyone who dies who is younger than that has been cursed. **21** My people will build houses and [then] live in them. They will plant vineyards and then eat grapes from those vineyards. **22** As for the houses that they build, no one will [take those houses away from them and] live in them. No one will take a vineyard away from its owner. My chosen people will live a long time, like trees do, and they will enjoy what they have accomplished— [the houses that they have built and the crops that they have planted]. **23** They will not work hard in vain, and their children will not die from some (calamity/terrible thing happening to them). I will [certainly] bless their children and their grandchildren. **24** Before they call to me [to help them], I will answer; I will answer their prayers while they are still praying [for me to do something for them]. **25** No one will be harmed or injured anywhere on [Zion], my sacred hill: Wolves and lambs will eat grass together [peacefully]; lions will eat hay like oxen do, [and they will not attack people]. Snakes will [not hurt anyone; they will lie on the ground and] eat [only] dirt. [That is surely what it will be like because I], Yahweh, have said it."

66 Yahweh [also] said this: "[All of] heaven is [like] my throne, and the whole earth is [like] my footstool. So you could certainly not [RHQ] build a house [that would be adequate] for me to live in and rest! **2** I [MTY] have created everything; all things exist because I made them. [That is true because I], Yahweh, have said it. The people I am [most] pleased with are those who are humble, who [patiently endure it when they] (suffer/are afflicted), and who tremble when they hear me [rebuking them]. **3** You have enjoyed [continually] doing the things that you want to do: [Some of] you slaughter oxen [to sacrifice them to me], but you also bring human sacrifices [to your idols]! You sacrifice lambs [to me], but you kill dogs [to offer them to your gods]. You offer grain to me, but you also bring pigs' blood [to your idols]. You burn incense [to me], but you also praise your idols. You enjoy doing those disgusting things. **4** When I called [out to you], you did not answer. When I spoke, you did not pay attention. You did [many] things that I say are evil; you chose [to do] things that I did not like. So [now] I will punish you by causing you to experience the things that you are [very] afraid of." **5** But you people who tremble when you hear what Yahweh says, listen to what he says [now]: "Some of your people hate you and reject you because you belong to me. They make fun of you, and they say, 'Yahweh should show his glorious power! We want to see him [do something to cause] you to be truly happy.' But [some day] those people will be [very] disgraced." **6** [At that time], you will listen to the noise in the city. You will hear the shouting in the temple. It will be the sound of Yahweh shouting while he is punishing his enemies! **7** No one [RHQ] ever heard that a woman gave birth to a baby when she was just starting to have birth pains. **8** Certainly no one [RHQ] ever heard about such a thing happening, and no one has ever seen it happen. [Similarly], no one ever [RHQ] heard that a nation was created in one instant, not even in one day. But Jerusalem is like [MET] [a woman who] gives birth to children as soon as she starts to have birth pains. **9** Women certainly do not [RHQ] bring infants to the time when they are ready to be born and then do not allow them to be born. [Similarly, he will do for Jerusalem] [MET] [what he has promised to do]: [He will cause Jerusalem to be full of people again]. [That will happen because] Yahweh has said it. **10** You people in [APO] Jerusalem, rejoice! And all you people who love Jerusalem should also be happy. You people who were sad because of [what happened to Jerusalem], you should now be glad. **11** [You people in Jerusalem] will [have everything that you need] like [MET] a baby that gets all it needs from its mother's breasts. You will enjoy all the abundant and glorious things [MET] in the city. **12** Yahweh has promised, "I will cause Jerusalem to be full of valuable things that come from other nations; those things will pour into Jerusalem; it will be like [SIM] a big flood. I will take care of the people of Jerusalem like women care for the babies that they nurse. **13** I will comfort you people in Jerusalem like [MET] mothers comfort their children." **14** When you see [those things happen], you [SYN] will rejoice. Your [old] bones will become strong [again] like [SIM] grass [that grows quickly/well in the springtime]. [When that happens, everyone] will know that Yahweh has power [MTY] to help those who worship and obey him, but that he is angry with his enemies. **15** Yahweh will come down with flames of fire, and his chariots [will come down] like [SIM] a whirlwind; he will be extremely angry, and he will punish [his enemies] by burning them in a fire. **16** [It is as though] [MET] Yahweh has

a [big] sword, and he will judge and execute many people. **17** Yahweh says, “Some of you people purify/bathe yourselves and [then] go to a garden to worship your gods. You eat the meat of pigs and lizards and mice, [and other things that I have forbidden you to eat]. So I will get rid of you [for doing that]. **18** I know [all] the [evil] things that you think and do. [It is now time] for me to gather together the people who live in all nations and who speak all languages, and to show them that I am very great. **19** I will put a mark on them, and those whom I have spared will go to various [distant] countries: to Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Tubal, Javan, and to distant islands. I will send them to proclaim to nations that have never heard about me that I am very great and glorious. **20** Then they will bring back here your relatives [who have been (exiled/forced to go to other countries)], to be like [SIM] an offering to me. They will come on horses, in chariots, on mules, and on camels. They will come to [Zion,] my sacred hill in Jerusalem. That will be like [SIM] the offerings that [my] Israeli people used to bring in the correct manner to the temple. **21** [I solemnly promise that] I will appoint some of them to be priests, and others to do other work in my temple. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it. **22** I [also] promise that just like the new heaven and the new earth will last forever, you will always have descendants, and you [MTY] will always be honored. **23** At every festival to celebrate the Sabbath [each week] and the new moon [each month], everyone will [come and] worship me. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it. **24** Then they will go out [of Jerusalem] and look at the corpses of those who rebelled against me. The maggots in those corpses will never die, the fire will never stop burning them, and everyone [who sees their corpses] will detest them.”

Jeremiah

1 [I], Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, [am writing] these messages. [I am] a priest, from Anathoth [town] in the area where the tribe of Benjamin [lives]. **2** Yahweh started to give me these messages when Josiah had been ruling Judah for almost 13 years. **3** Yahweh continued to give me more messages when Josiah's son Jehoiakim was the king, and he continued to do that until Zedekiah had been the king of Judah for almost eleven years. It was in August of that year that the people of Jerusalem were (exiled/taken as prisoners) [to Babylonia]. **4** [One day] Yahweh gave me this message: **5** "I knew you before I [finished] forming you in your mother's womb. Before you were born, I (set you apart/chose you) and I appointed you to be [my] prophet [whose messages would be] for [all] nations." **6** I replied, "O, Yahweh my God, I am [not qualified to] speak [for you], because I am very young!" **7** Yahweh replied, "Do not say that, because you must go to everyone to whom I will send you, and you must tell them everything that I tell you to say. **8** And you must not be afraid of the people [to whom you will speak], because I will protect you [from being harmed by them]. [This will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it!" **9** Then [it was as though] Yahweh touched my mouth and said, "Listen to me! I am (putting my message into your mouth/telling you what you must speak). **10** Today I am appointing you to warn nations and kingdoms. You will tell them that I will completely destroy and get rid of [DOU] some of them and that I will establish [MET] others and cause them to be strong." **11** Then Yahweh said to me, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" I replied, "I see a branch from an almond tree." **12** Yahweh said, "That is correct. And [because the word for 'almond' resembles the word for 'watching'], it means that I am watching [what will happen], and I will make certain that what I have said to you [about destroying nations] will happen." **13** [Then] Yahweh spoke to me again and said, "What do you see [now]?" I replied, "I see a pot full of boiling [water] [MTY]. It is tipping [toward me] from the north." **14** Yahweh replied, "[Yes! It means that] from the north great trouble/destruction will [spread] [MET] over this land, [like boiling water] [MET] pouring [from a pot]. **15** Listen to what I say: I am summoning [the armies of] kingdoms that will come from the north [of Judah] to Jerusalem. Their kings will set up their thrones at the gates of this city [to indicate that they are now the kings of Judah]. [Their armies] will attack [and break down] the walls of this city, and [they will do the same thing to] all the [other] towns in Judah. **16** I will punish [MTY] my people because of all the evil things that they have done; they have abandoned me and they worship gods/idols. They worship idols that they have made with their own hands! **17** So, get up and put on your clothes [to get ready for action]! Then go to the people of Judah and tell them everything that I tell you to say. Do not be afraid of them, because [if you are afraid of them], I will cause you to be truly terrified in front of them! **18** But listen! I will cause you to be [strong, like] [MET] a city that has strong walls around it. You will be [as strong as] [MET] an iron pillar or a bronze wall. None of the kings or officials or priests will be able to defeat you. **19** They will oppose you, but they will not be able to defeat you, because I will be with you and will protect you. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it!"

2 Yahweh gave me another message **2** [to proclaim to everyone in Jerusalem. He said that I should tell them this] [MET]: "I, Yahweh, remember that you very much wanted to please me [long ago]. [You tried to please me like] a bride [tries to please her husband]; You loved me, and you followed me through the desert [DOU]. **3** [At that time you] Israelis (were set apart/belonged only) to me; [you belonged to me like] the first part of the harvests belong to me [MET]. I promised to punish all those who harmed you, my people, and truly I did send disasters on them. [That happened because I], Yahweh, said [that it would happen]." **4** So, you [descendants of] [MTY] Jacob, all you people of [MTY] Israel, **5** listen to what Yahweh says: "(What sin did I commit [RHQ] that caused your ancestors to turn far away from me?/Though your ancestors found no fault in me, they turned far away from me.) They worshiped worthless idols, and they themselves became worthless. **6** They did not say, 'Yahweh brought us [safely] out of Egypt, and he led us through a desert where there were a lot of pits; he led us where there was no water and where it was very dangerous, through a land where no one lives, and no one even travels. (So where is Yahweh now?/So he should be helping us now!) [RHQ]' **7** And when I brought you into a very fertile land, in order that you could enjoy [all] the fruit and [other] good things that you would harvest, you caused the land that I promised to give to you to be unfit for me and to become disgusting/detestable to me. **8** [Your] priests also did not say, '(Where is Yahweh now?/Yahweh should be helping us now!)' [RHQ] Those who teach/explain my laws do not [want to] know me, and [your] leaders have rebelled against me. [Your] prophets gave you messages from [their god] Baal, and they worship worthless idols." **9** "So, I will accuse you in court. [In future years], I will say what your children and your grandchildren have done that is wrong. [That will happen because I], Yahweh, have said [that it will happen]. **10** If you go [west] to the island of Cyprus, or if you go [east] to Kedar [land,] and if you ask people in those places, they will tell

you that no people [from their countries] have ever done the wicked things that you people have done! **11** The people of no other nation have ever [RHQ] abandoned their gods that they thought were glorious and started to worship gods that are not really gods, but you people have abandoned me, your glorious God, and are worshiping gods that are useless. **12** [It is as though everything in] the sky is surprised and dismayed/appalled [about what you have done]; [it is as though] they tremble because they are very horrified. **13** [You], my people, have done two evil things: You have rejected me, the one who is [like] [MET] a fountain [where you can obtain] fresh water, and you [are worshiping gods that are like] [MET] pits in the ground that are cracked and which are not able to hold any water. **14** You Israeli people, you were certainly not [RHQ] slaves when you were born; you were captured [by your enemies]. **15** [Your enemies] [MET] roared [like] lions, and they destroyed your land. [Now] your towns have been burned, and no one lives in them. **16** Soldiers from Memphis and Tahpenes, [cities in Egypt], have [defeated you] [and] shaved your heads [to show that you are their slaves]. **17** But it is [RHQ] because you abandoned [me], Yahweh, that these disasters have happened to you. **18** So (why are you trying to make an alliance with [MET] the rulers of Egypt?/it certainly will not help you to make an alliance with the rulers of Egypt) [RHQ]. Why are you trying to make an alliance with [MET] the rulers of Assyria who live near the [Euphrates] River? **19** [It is because] you have been [very] wicked that I [PRS] will punish you. It is because you have turned away from me that I [PRS] will condemn you. [When I do that], you will realize that painful and evil [DOU] things will happen to you because you have forsaken [me], Yahweh, your God, and you no [longer] revere me. [That will certainly happen because] I, Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels in heaven, have said it. **20** Long ago, you stopped obeying [me] [MET], and you would not allow [me] to lead you [MET]; you refused to worship [me]. Instead, you worship idols that are under trees on the top of every hill, and your young women have sex with [EUP] [men at those places]. **21** [It is as though] [MET] you were a grapevine that I planted when it was a cutting from a very good vine. So now it is disgusting that [RHQ] you have become [like] a rotten worthless vine. **22** Your guilt from your sins is like [MET] very bad stains on a cloth, and you cannot get rid of those stains even by using very strong soap. [This is true because I], Yahweh, have said it. **23** You say that you have not sinned. You say 'We have not become unacceptable to God; we have not worshiped Baal.' But think about [the disgusting things that you do very eagerly] in [Hinnom] Valley [outside Jerusalem]. You are like desperate female camels, running here and there [to find male camels to have sex with]. **24** You are [like] wild female donkeys in the desert. They sniff the air to find where the male donkeys are, and no one can [RHQ] restrain them. The male donkeys that want them do not become tired searching for them, because at mating time they find them [easily]. **25** You constantly run here and there [to find idols to worship], with the result that your sandals are worn out, and your throats have become dry. [I told you to stop doing that], but you said, 'We cannot stop, because we love foreign gods, and we must worship them.'" **26** [Yahweh says this]: "A robber is disgraced when he is caught. And all of you, including your kings and priests and prophets, are similarly disgraced. **27** You say to [a piece of] wood [that is carved to become a sacred idol], 'You are our father!' And you say to a stone [that you have set up], 'You are our mother!' You have rejected [IDM] me, but when you experience troubles, you cry out to me to rescue you. **28** Why do you not [RHQ] cry out to the gods that you made? You have as many gods as you have cities [and towns] in Judah. So why do you not plead with them to rescue you when you experience disasters? **29** You complain that it was wrong for me [not to have rescued you], but you have all rebelled against me. **30** I punished some of you, but you did not learn anything from my doing that. You have killed many of the prophets that I [sent to you], like [SIM] fierce lions kill [other animals]. **31** You people of Israel, pay attention to what I say. I have certainly [RHQ] never [abandoned you] in a desert; I have never [left you] in a land full of darkness. So, why do you, my people, say 'We are free from God's control; we will not return to [worship] God any more'? **32** A young woman would certainly never [RHQ] forget [to wear] her jewelry, and a bride would never [RHQ] forget to wear her wedding dress, but you my people have forgotten me for many years. **33** You know how to easily find [gods from other countries] whom you can love. You can find them as easily as a prostitute [can find men to sleep with]. **34** Although you have on your clothes the blood of poor people whom you have murdered, people who (were innocent/had not done things that are wrong), **35** you say 'We have not done anything that is wrong; so surely [Yahweh] is not angry with us.' But I will punish [MTY] you [severely] for saying 'We have not sinned.' **36** Previously you requested [the army of] Assyria to help you, but they were not able to help you. Now you have requested [the army of] Egypt to help you, but they will not be able to help you, either. **37** They will capture you, and you will be [their prisoners] [MTY], led to Egypt, [very ashamed] with your hands on your heads. That will happen because I, Yahweh, have rejected those [nations] that you are relying on, and they will not be able to help you at all."

3 "[Moses wrote that] if a man divorces his wife and then she marries another man, her first husband certainly must not [RHQ] take her back again [to be his wife], because that would certainly [RHQ] cause the whole nation to become unacceptable to me. But you have more [idols than] prostitutes have men whom they have slept with! So, [why should I accept you if] you return to me?" [RHQ] says Yahweh. **2** "Look up at the barren hilltops. On every hilltop there are [RHQ] [idols that you have worshiped]. [It is as though] they are all lovers with whom you have had sex. [It is as though] you have sat along the roadsides like an Arab, waiting [to attack and steal things from] those who pass by. Because of worshiping idols and all the other wicked things that you have done, you have caused the [entire] land to become unacceptable to me. **3** That is why I have not sent you any rain at the times of the year when you needed it. But you are like prostitutes [MET] who are not at all ashamed [for what they have done]. **4** Now each of you says to me, 'You are my father! You have loved me ever since I was young! **5** So surely you will not [RHQ] be angry with me forever!' But you will not quit sinning!" **6** [One day] when Josiah was the king of Judah, Yahweh said to me, "Have you seen what the people of Israel have done? They have turned away from me, like a woman who has abandoned her husband and sleeps with other men. They have gone up on every hilltop and under every big tree and worshiped idols there [MET]. **7** I thought that they would return to me, so I said to them, 'Come back to me!' But they refused. So I sent them away [to other countries, like a man] writes a note saying that he is divorcing his wife and then sends his wife away because she has committed adultery [MET]. **8** The people of Judah saw what I did to them. But they are just like the people of Israel. They are not afraid [of what I will do to them]. They also [have turned away from me and are worshiping idols like] women who abandon their husbands and go to other men [MET]. **9** They thought that worshiping idols did not matter to me, so they have made the [entire] land unacceptable to me by worshiping idols of wood and stone. **10** The people of Judah have pretended to return to me, but they have not really done that. [This is true because I], Yahweh, have said it." **11** Then Yahweh said to me, "The people of Israel have turned away from me, but what the people of Judah have done is worse. **12** So go and tell this to the people of Israel: 'Yahweh says this to you Israeli people who have turned away from him: I am merciful. I will not continue to be angry with you forever. So return to me. **13** But you must admit/say that you are guilty, and that you have rebelled against me, Yahweh, your God, that you have worshiped idols under big trees everywhere, and you have not obeyed me. You have turned away from me. **14** But you belong to me. So I will take you, one from [each] city and two from [each] clan, and bring you [back] to Jerusalem [from the countries to which you were exiled]. **15** [If you do that], I will appoint for you leaders with whom I am pleased, leaders who will guide you [well] because they will know and understand [what pleases me]. **16** And when you become very numerous [DOU] in your land, you will not need to talk about the Sacred Chest that contained the Ten Commandments. You will not think about it, and you will not want to make a new one. **17** At that time people will say, "Jerusalem is [the place where] Yahweh's throne is." [People from] all nations will come there to worship me. And they will no longer stubbornly do the evil things that they desire. **18** At that time you people [MTY] of Israel and the people of Judah will return from [being (exiled/forced to live) in] lands to the northeast. You will return to the land that I gave to your ancestors to belong to them [forever]. **19** You people of Israel, I wanted to accept you to be my children. I wanted to give you [this] delightful land. It is a land more desirable/pleasant than the land of any other nation! I wanted you to call me 'father', and I wanted you to never turn away from me. **20** But you have abandoned me like wives who have abandoned their husbands.'" [That is what] Yahweh said, and [I told it] to the people of Israel. **21** People will hear a noise on the barren hilltops. It will be the noise made by people weeping and pleading [for God to be merciful to them]. They will be admitting/saying that they have forgotten Yahweh their God, and that they turned away from behaving as God wanted them to. **22** Yahweh will say to them, "You Israeli people, come back to me! [If you do that], I will cause you to never turn away from me again." [The people will reply], "We are returning to you, because you are Yahweh, our God. **23** We did not get any help from [the idols that we worshiped on] the hilltops; we did not get any help from making all that noise up there. **24** From the time when we were young, the shameful [god Baal] has taken away [from us] everything that our ancestors worked hard to acquire. He has taken away their flocks [of sheep] and herds [of cattle], their sons and their daughters. **25** So, now we should lie down feeling very ashamed [DOU], because we and our ancestors have sinned against Yahweh our God, and we have never obeyed him."

4 Yahweh says, "You Israeli [people], come back to me! If you get rid of those detestable idols and do not turn away from me [again], **2** and if you declare, 'Just as surely as Yahweh lives, what he says is true,' and if you [start to] always say what is true and act justly/fairly and righteously, then the [people in the other] nations [of the world] will

request that I bless them [as I have blessed you], and they will [all come and] honor/praise me." 3 This is what Yahweh says to the people of Jerusalem and [the other cities in] Judah: "[Prepare yourselves to receive my messages] like farmers plow up hard ground [in order that they can plant seed in it]. Just as farmers do not [waste good seed by] sowing seeds among thorny plants, [I do not want to waste my time telling you messages that you are not ready to receive]. 4 Purify your inner beings and your minds for me. If you do not do that, my being angry with you [MTY] because of [all] the sins that you have committed will be like a fire that will be impossible to extinguish." 5 "Declare this [DOU] to [all the people in] Jerusalem and [the rest of] Judea; blow the trumpets everywhere in the land [to warn the people]. Tell them that they should flee to the cities that have high walls around them. 6 Shout to the people of Jerusalem, 'Run away [now]! Do not delay, because I am about to cause you to experience a terrible disaster [DOU] that will come from the north. 7 [An army] that has destroyed [many] nations will attack you [like] [MET] a lion that comes out of its den [to attack other animals]. [The soldiers of that army] have taken down their tents and they are ready to march toward your land. They will destroy your cities and leave them without any people still living in them.' 8 So, put on sackcloth/rough clothes and weep and beat your chests [to show that you are very sorry for what you have done], because Yahweh is still very angry with us. 9 Yahweh said that at the time [he punishes you], the King of Judah and [all his] officials will be very afraid. The priests and the prophets will be terrified. 10 Then I replied, "Yahweh [my] God, you completely deceived the people by telling them that there would be peace in Jerusalem, but now [our enemies] [PRS] are ready to slaughter us with their swords!" 11 When that happens, [Yahweh] will say to the people of Jerusalem, ["A huge army will come to attack you]. They will not [be like a gentle breeze that] separates wheat from chaff. [They will be like] a very hot wind [that blows in] from the desert [MET]. 12 [They will be like] [MET] a strong blast that I will send. Now I am declaring that I will punish/destroy you." 13 [Our enemies] are about to rush down on us; their chariots are like [SIM] whirlwinds. Their horses are faster than eagles. It will be terrible for us! 14 [You people of] Jerusalem [APO], purify your hearts/inner beings, in order that Yahweh will rescue you. How long will you continue to think about [doing] evil things? 15 From Dan [city in the far north] to the hills of Ephraim [a few miles/kilometers north of Jerusalem] messengers are proclaiming that disasters are coming. 16 Tell this to the [people in other] nations [but also] announce it in Jerusalem: [Yahweh says], "An army is coming to Jerusalem from far away; they will shout [a battle-cry] against the cities in Judah. 17 They will set up tents around Jerusalem like people set up temporary shelters [SIM] around a field [at harvest time]. That will happen because the people of Judah have rebelled against me. 18 You will be punished very severely; it will [be as though a sword] has stabbed your inner beings. But you are causing those things to happen to you because of the evil things that you have done." 19 I am extremely anguished/sad; the pain in my inner being is very severe. My heart beats wildly. But I cannot remain silent because I have heard [our enemies] blowing their trumpets to announce that the battle [against Judah will start immediately]. 20 Disasters will occur one after another until the whole land is ruined. Suddenly [all] our tents will be destroyed; [even] the curtains [inside the tents] will be ripped apart. 21 How long will this battle continue? How long will I continue to see the enemy battle flags and hear the sound of their trumpets being blown? 22 [Yahweh says], "My people are [very] foolish! They do not have a relationship with me. They are [like] [MET] stupid children who do not understand [anything]. They very cleverly do what is wrong, but they do not know how to do what is good." 23 [God gave me a vision in which] I saw that the earth was barren and without form. I looked at the sky, and there was no light there. 24 I looked at the mountains and hills, and they shook and moved from side to side. 25 I looked and saw that there were no [more] people, and all the birds had flown away. 26 I looked and saw that the fields that previously were fertile had become a desert. The cities were all ruined; they had all been destroyed by Yahweh because he was extremely angry. 27 This is what Yahweh is saying: "The entire land [of Judah] will be ruined, but I will not destroy it completely. 28 I will do to my people what I said that I would do, and I will not change my mind. So [when that happens, it will be as though] the earth will mourn and the sky will become very dark." 29 [When the people hear] the sound of the [enemy] army marching, [they will be terrified as] they flee from their cities. Some of them will find places to hide in the bushes, and others will run toward the mountains/hills [to escape being killed by their enemies]. All the cities [in Judah] will be abandoned; not one person will remain in them. 30 So you who will surely be destroyed, [why are you doing the things that you are doing now]? Why are you wearing beautiful clothes and jewelry? Why are you putting paint around your eyes? Doing those things will not help you, because the people [in other countries that you think] love you [actually] despise you, and they will try to kill you. 31 [It is as though] I already hear [the people in Jerusalem] crying very loudly, like [SIM] a woman cries when

she is giving birth to her first child; she gasps for breath and pleads for someone to help her. [It is as though Jerusalem] is crying, "Something terrible is happening to me! They are about to murder me!"

5 [Yahweh said to the people of Jerusalem], "Go up and down every street. Search in the marketplaces to find people who do what is fair/right, who try to be faithful to me. [If you find even one person like that], I will forgive [the people of Jerusalem and not destroy] their city. **2** But when people there say, 'I solemnly declare that as surely as Yahweh lives, [I will do what he says],' they are lying." **3** Yahweh, you are certainly [RHQ] searching for [people who tell the] truth. You struck/punished your people, but they did not pay any attention. You crushed them, but they ignored what you were telling them to do. They were extremely stubborn [IDM] and refused to return to you. **4** I thought, "[We cannot expect] these [people to act righteously, because they] are poor; they do not have any sense. They do not know the way Yahweh wants them to conduct their lives; they do not know what God requires them to do. **5** So, I will go and talk to their leaders, because they [surely] know how God wants them to conduct their lives." But they also have stopped obeying Yahweh [MET], and they will not allow him to lead them. **6** Because of that, lions will come out of the forests and kill them; wolves from the desert will attack them; leopards that lurk/wait outside their cities will maul anyone who walks outside the cities. [Those things will happen] because the people have sinned very much against God and have turned away from him very frequently. **7** Yahweh says, "I cannot [RHQ] forgive these people; [even] their children have abandoned me. When they solemnly declare something, they ask their gods [to show that what they say is true]. I gave my people everything that they needed, but they often went to [the shrines of their idols] and committed adultery there. **8** [Just like] [MET] well-fed male horses neigh, wanting sex with female horses, each of the men desires to have sex with his neighbor's wife. **9** (Should I not punish them for this [RHQ]?/I will certainly get revenge on this nation for this!) I will certainly get revenge [RHQ] on this nation whose people behave like that! **10** [I will say to your enemies], 'The people [of Judah and Israel are like a vineyard]. Go along the rows in their vineyards and get rid of [most of] the people, but do not kill all of them. These people do not belong to me, [so get rid of them], [like a gardener] [MET] lops/cuts off branches from a vine. **11** The people of Israel and Judah have turned away from me completely.' **12** They have lied about me and said, 'He will not punish us! He will not cause us to experience disasters! We will not experience wars or famines! **13** What [God's] prophets say is nothing but hot air! They do not have messages [from God]! We would like [the disasters that they predict] to happen to them!'" **14** So, this is what Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels in heaven, has said to me: "Because my people are saying those things, I will give you a message to tell them [MTY] that will be [like] [MET] a fire, and [these people will be like] [MET] wood that the fire will burn up. **15** Listen to this, you people of Israel: I will bring [the army of] a distant nation to attack you. It is a very powerful nation that has existed for a long time. They speak a language that you do not know and which you will not be able to understand. **16** Their soldiers are all very strong, and the arrows from their quivers [MET] will (send many Israeli men to their graves/cause many Israeli people to die). **17** They will eat the food that you have harvested from your fields, and eat your bread. They will kill your sons and daughters, and they will kill your flocks [of sheep] and herds [of cattle]. They will eat your grapes and your figs. They will [also] destroy your cities that have high walls around them and kill the people with their swords. **18** But even when those things happen, I will not get rid of all of you. **19** And when the survivors ask, 'Why is Yahweh our God doing this to us?' you will tell them, 'You rejected him and worshiped foreign gods in your [own] land, so [now] you will become slaves of foreigners in a land that is not your land.'" **20** [Yahweh said to me], "Proclaim this to the people of Israel and Judah: **21** Listen to this, you people who are foolish and who do not have any sense: You have eyes, but [it is as though] you cannot see; you have ears, but [it is as though] you cannot hear. **22** Why do you not revere me [RHQ]? You should [RHQ] tremble when you are in my presence! I, Yahweh, am the one who put a barrier along the shores so that the waters of the ocean cannot cross it [and flood the land]. The waves roll and roar, but they cannot go past that barrier. **23** But you people [are not like the waves that obey me]. You people are very stubborn and rebellious. You have constantly turned away from me. **24** You do not say to yourselves, 'We should revere Yahweh our God, the one who sends us rain at the times when we need it, the one who causes the grain to become ripe at the harvest season.' **25** It is because of the wrong things that you have done, that those good things have not happened; it is because of the sins that you have committed that you have been prevented from receiving those blessings. **26** Among my people are wicked people who hide along the roads to ambush/attack people like [SIM] men who hunt birds (put out nets/set traps) to catch them. **27** Like [a hunter has] a cage full of birds [that he has captured], their homes are full of things that they have gotten by deceiving others. So now they are [very] rich and powerful. **28** They are big

and fat, and there is no limit to the evil things that they have done. They do not try to defend orphans in the courtrooms, and they do not help poor people to get what they have a right to receive. **29** So I will certainly [RHQ] punish them for doing those things. I will certainly [RHQ] (get revenge on their nation/do to their nation what they deserve). **30** Very appalling/horrible and terrible [DOU] things are happening in this country: **31** Prophets speak [only] lies and priests rule by their own authority, and you people like that! But when you [start to] experience disasters, what will you do [RHQ]?"

6 "You people in Jerusalem who are from [the tribe of] Benjamin, flee from this city! Blow the trumpets in Tekoa [city south of Jerusalem]! Send up a [smoke] signal in Beth-Haccherem [town] [to warn the people of the coming danger]! A powerful [army] will come from the north, and they will cause great destruction. **2** Jerusalem is [like] a beautiful pasture [full of sheep], but it will soon be destroyed. **3** [Enemy kings, not] shepherds [MET], will come [with their armies] and set up their tents around the city, and each [king will choose a part of the city for his soldiers to destroy like] [MET] shepherds divide their pastures for their flocks of sheep. **4** [The kings will tell their troops], "Get ready for the battle. We should attack them before noontime. But [if we arrive there late in the afternoon] when the shadows are becoming long, **5** we will attack them at night and tear down their fortresses." **6** Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels in heaven, says this: "[I will command those soldiers to] cut down the trees [outside Jerusalem] and to build dirt ramps up to the top of the city walls [in order that they can enter the city]. This city must be punished because everyone there continually oppresses others. **7** [It is as though] the wicked things that the people do pour out of the city like [SIM] water flows out of a spring. [The noise from people doing] violent and destructive actions is heard everywhere. I continually see [people who are] suffering and wounded. **8** Listen to what I am warning you, [you people of] [APO] Jerusalem, because if you do not listen, I will reject you and cause your land to become desolate, a land where no one lives." **9** Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels in heaven, also says this: "[I will tell your enemies] to cause your country to become as desolate [SIM] as a vineyard from which all the grapes have been completely stripped from the vines. [Their soldiers will seize the possessions of] those who remain in Israel [after the others have been exiled] like [SIM] farmers go to the vines again to pick any grapes [that were (left/not picked)]." **10** [Then I said, "If I speak to the Israeli people] to warn them, (who will listen to me?/No one will listen to me.) [RHQ] [It is as though] their ears are closed, [and as a result] they cannot hear [what I say]. They scorn Yahweh's messages; they do not want to listen to them at all. **11** So [now] I am extremely angry, like Yahweh is angry, and I cannot restrain it any longer." [So] Yahweh said [to me], "Tell everyone that you are very angry with them. Tell the children in the streets and the young men who gather together. Tell the men and their wives; tell the very old people [DOU], also. **12** [Tell the men that] I will give their houses to [their enemies], and I will give their property/fields and their wives to them, also, when I punish [IDM] the people who live in this land. **13** Everyone is trying to get money by tricking others, from the most [important people] to the least [important people]; even the prophets and the priests are trying to deceive [people to get money]. **14** [They act as though the sins of my people are like] [MET] small wounds that they do not need to put bandages on. They continually [greet people by] saying 'I hope things are going well with you,' when things are not going well. **15** They should be [RHQ] ashamed about the disgusting things that they do, but they are not ashamed at all. They do not [even] know how to (blush/show on their faces that they are ashamed). So, they also will be among those who will be killed. They will be destroyed when I punish them." **16** This is [also] what Yahweh said [to the Israeli people]: "Stand at the crossroads and look [at the people who pass by]. Ask them what was the good behavior [that their ancestors had] long ago. [And when they tell you], behave that way. If you do that, you will find rest for your souls." But you replied, 'We do not want to do that!' **17** I sent [my prophets who were like] [MET] watchmen. They said, 'Listen carefully when we blow the trumpets [to warn you that your enemies are approaching],' but you said, '[No], we do not want to listen.' **18** Therefore, you people in the other nations, listen to this: Pay attention to what is going to happen to the [Israeli people]. **19** Listen, all of you! I am going to cause the [Israeli] people to experience disasters. That is what will happen to them because they have refused to listen to what I told them. They have refused to obey my laws. **20** [You Israeli people], when you burn frankincense that came from [far away in] Sheba, and [when you offer to me] sweet-smelling anointing oil that came from far away, I will not [RHQ] be pleased with your sacrifices. I will not accept the sacrifices that are completely burned on the altar; I am not pleased with [any of] your sacrifices. **21** Therefore, I will put obstacles on the roads on which my people will travel. Men and their sons and people's neighbors and friends will stumble over those obstacles and fall down; everyone will die." **22** Yahweh [also] says this: "You will see a [huge] army marching [towards you] from the north. [An army of] a great nation very far away is preparing [to attack you]. **23** They have bows [and arrows]

and spears; they are [very] cruel, and do not act mercifully [to anyone]. As they ride along on their horses, the horses' feet sound like the roaring of the ocean [waves]; they are riding in battle formation to attack you people of Jerusalem." **24** [The people of Jerusalem say], "We have heard reports about the enemy; [so] we are very frightened, with the result that we feel weak. We are very afraid, and worried, like [SIM] women who are about to give birth to babies. **25** [So one person says to another], 'Do not go out into the fields! Do not go on the roads, because the enemy [soldiers] have swords [and they are everywhere]; they are coming from all directions, and we are extremely afraid.'" **26** [So I say], "My dear people, put on (sackcloth/rough clothes) and sit in ashes [to show that you are sorry for your sins]. Mourn and cry very much, like [SIM] [a woman would cry] if her only son had died, because your enemies are very near, and they are going to destroy [everything]." **27** [Then Yahweh said to me], "[Jeremiah], I have caused you to become [like] [MET] someone who heats metal very hot [to completely burn the impurities]. You will examine my people's behavior. **28** You will find out that they are very stubborn rebels, they are always slandering others. [Their inner beings] are as hard as bronze or iron; they all [continually] deceive others. **29** [A metalworker causes] the bellows to blow very hard to [make the fire very hot to] completely burn up the impurities [MET]. [But just as] a fire does not cause all the waste material to run off, it is impossible to separate [the righteous people from the wicked people, and punish only] the wicked people. **30** [I], Yahweh, have rejected them; I say that they are [like] [MET] worthless silver."

7 Yahweh gave me another message. He said to me, **2** "Go to the entrance of my temple, and give this message to the people: You people of Judah who worship here, listen to this message from Yahweh! **3** The Commander of the armies of angels says to you, ['If you] stop doing evil things and start doing what is right, I will allow you to remain living in your land.' **4** [But some people] are repeatedly saying to you, 'The temple of Yahweh is here, [so we will be safe]; [he will not allow us and the temple to be destroyed].' But do not pay attention to what they say, because they are deceiving you. **5** [I will act mercifully to you only] if you change your behavior and stop doing evil things, and if you [start to] act fairly/justly toward others, **6** and if you stop oppressing foreigners [who live in your country], and orphans and widows, and if you stop murdering people, and if you stop worshiping (foreign gods/idols). However, if you continue to do those things, you will be destroyed. **7** If you do what I have told you, I will allow you to stay in this land that I promised to your ancestors that it would belong to them [and their descendants] forever. **8** [People are repeatedly] telling you, ['The temple is here, so we are safe]', and you are trusting/believing [that what they are saying is true], but it is a lie. [Those people are deceiving you, and what they say is] worthless. **9** You think that [RHQ] you can steal things, murder people, commit adultery, tell lies in court, and worship Baal and all those other gods that you did not know about previously, **10** and then come here and stand in front of this temple, which is my temple, and say 'Nothing bad will happen to us!', while you continue to do all those abominable things. **11** Do you realize that you are causing this temple, which is my temple, to become like [MET] a den where bandits hide [RHQ]? Do you not know that I see [all the evil things that you people do there]? **12** [Long ago] I put my Sacred Tent at Shiloh [city], to be a place where people would worship me [MTY]. Think about how I [destroyed it] because my people, the Israeli people, did [many] wicked things there. **13** And while you were continually doing those wicked things, I told you about it many times, but you refused to listen. I called out to you, but you refused to answer [me]. **14** Therefore, just like I destroyed Shiloh, I will [now] destroy this temple that was built for people to worship me [MTY], this temple that you trust in, that is in this place that I gave to you and your ancestors. **15** And I will expel you from this land and send you [to other countries] far away from me, just like I did to your relatives, the people of Israel." **16** [Yahweh said to me, "Jeremiah], do not pray for these people [any longer]. Do not cry for them or plead for [me to help] them, because I will not pay any attention to you. **17** Do you see [the wicked things] that they are doing in the streets of Jerusalem and in the [other] towns in Judah? **18** The children gather firewood and their fathers use it to make fires [on the altars to burn sacrifices]. The women knead/make dough to make cakes to offer to [their goddess Astarte who is called] the Queen of Heaven. And [on their altars] they pour out offerings of wine to [their] other idols. All of those things cause me to become extremely angry! **19** But I am not [RHQ] the one whom they are hurting; they are really [RHQ] hurting themselves [by doing these things for which they should be] very ashamed!" **20** So Yahweh the Lord says this: "Because I am extremely angry with [what happens at] this place, I will punish these people severely [MTY]; my being very angry will be [like] [MET] a fire that will not be extinguished, and I will destroy the people, [their] animals, [their] fruit trees, and [their] crops." **21** Therefore, this is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "Take away [IRO] your offerings that you bring to burn completely on your altars and your [other] sacrifices; [don't give them to me]; eat them [yourselves]! **22** When I led your ancestors out of Egypt, it was not offerings

to be completely burned on the altar or [other] sacrifices that I wanted from them. **23** What I told them was, 'Obey me; [if you do that], I will be your God and you will be my people. If you do the things that I want you to do, everything will go well for you.' **24** But your ancestors would not pay any attention [DOU] to me. They continued to do [the evil things] that they wanted to do, everything that in their stubborn inner beings they desired to do. Instead of coming closer to me, they went further away from me. **25** From the day that your ancestors left Egypt until now, I have continued to send my prophets to you. **26** But you, [my people], have not listened to me or paid attention to what I said; you have been stubborn, and you have done more sinful things than your ancestors did." **27** [Then Yahweh said to me], "When you tell all this to my people, they will not listen to you. When you call to them, they will not answer. **28** Say to them, 'You people [of Judah] have not obeyed Yahweh, your God; you have not accepted it when he tried to correct you. No one among you is truthful; you do not say anything that is true; [you speak only lies].' **29** [So, tell them to] cut off their hair [to show that they are mourning]; tell them to go up into the hills and sing a sad funeral song, because I have completely rejected [DOU] this generation [of people] who have made me angry." **30** Yahweh says this: "The people of Judah have done many things that I say are evil. They have set up their disgusting idols in my temple, causing it to become an unacceptable [place to worship me]. **31** They have built altars at Topheth in Ben-Hinnom Valley [outside Jerusalem], and they sacrifice their sons and daughters on those altars. I never commanded them to do that; I never even thought that anyone would do that. **32** So they should beware! There will be a time when that place will no longer be called Topheth or the Hinnom Valley; instead, it will be called the Valley of Slaughter. There will be a huge number of people who will be buried there, with the result that there will be no space to bury more bodies. **33** The corpses of my people that are [not buried and are] left on the ground will be eaten by vultures and wild animals, and there will be no one to shoo/chase them away. **34** There will be no one singing and laughing any more in the streets of Jerusalem; there will be no more joyful voices of bridegrooms and brides in Judah, because the land will be completely destroyed."

8 Yahweh says, "At the time [that your corpses are scattered on the ground], [your enemies will] break open the graves of your kings and [other] officials who lived in Judah, and the graves of your priests and prophets and other people who lived there. **2** They will take out their bones [from their graves] and [dishonor them by] scattering them on the ground under the sun and the moon and the stars—those are the gods which my people loved and served and worshiped. No one will gather up their bones and bury them [again]; they will remain scattered on the ground like dung. **3** And all the people of this wicked nation [who are still alive and] whom I have exiled to other countries will say, 'We would prefer to die than to continue to stay alive [here in these countries].' [That will be true because I], Yahweh, have said it." **4** [Yahweh said to me, "Jeremiah], tell the people that this is what [I], Yahweh, am saying to them: 'When people fall down, they get up again, do they not [RHQ]? When people are going along a road and find out that they are walking on the wrong road, they go back [and find the correct road], do they not [RHQ]? **5** [Yes, they do], so why do these people [of Judah] continue [trusting in those idols that have deceived them]? They continue turning away from me, [even though I have warned them]. **6** I have listened carefully [DOU] [to what they say], but they do not say what they should say. Not one of them is sorry for having sinned. No one says, "I have done [RHQ] wicked things." They are [sinning and] doing what they want to as fast as [SIM] a horse that is running into a battle. **7** All the birds [that fly south for the (winter/cold season)] know the time that they need to fly south, and they all return at the right time the following year. But my people [are not like those birds]! They do not know what [I], Yahweh, require them to do. **8** Your men who teach you [the laws that Moses wrote] have been saying false things [about those laws]. [So], why [RHQ] do they [continue] saying, "We are [very] wise [because] we have the laws of Yahweh"? **9** Those teachers, who think that [IRO] they are wise, will be ashamed/disgraced and dismayed when they are taken [to other countries by their enemies] because they sinned by rejecting what I told them. Truly, they were not [RHQ] very wise to do that! **10** So, I will give their wives to other men; I will give their fields to [the enemy soldiers] who conquer them. All the people, including those who are important and those who are not important, deceive [others] in order to obtain their possessions. Even [my] prophets and my priests do that. **11** [They act as though the sins of my people] are not serious, [like] [MET] wounds that do not need to be cleaned and bandaged. They tell the people that everything will go well with them, [but that is not true]; things will not go well with them. **12** They should be [RHQ] ashamed when they do disgusting things [RHQ], but they do not even know how to show on their faces that they are ashamed [about their sins]. So, [they will be killed, and] their corpses [also] will lie among the corpses of others who have been slaughtered [by their enemies]. They will be killed when I punish them. **13** I will [allow their enemies to] take away the figs and grapes that the people would

have harvested from their fields. Their fruit trees will all wither. They will not receive [all] the blessings that I prepared for them. [This will certainly happen because I], Yahweh, have said it.'" **14** [Then the people will say], "(Why should we wait here [in these small towns]?/We should not wait here [in these small towns].) [RHQ]! We should go to the cities that have high walls around them, [but even if we do that] we will be killed there, because Yahweh our God has decided that we must be destroyed; [it is as though] [MET] he has given us a cup of poison to drink, because we sinned against him. **15** We hoped/desired that things would go well for us, but things have not gone well. We hoped that bad things would not happen to us any more, but only things that terrify us [are happening to us]. **16** People [far north in Israel] in [the city of] Dan can already hear the snorting of the horses of their enemies [who are preparing to attack us]. [It is as though] the entire land [of Judah] is shaking as their army approaches; they are coming to destroy our land and everything in it, the people and the cities." **17** [Yahweh says], "I will send [those enemy soldiers to Judah], and they will be like [MET] poisonous snakes among you. No one will be able to stop them from attacking you [MET]; they will attack you like snakes do, [and kill you]." **18** I grieve very much [for the people of Judah], and my grieving does not end. I am very sad [IDM]. **19** Throughout our land, the people ask, "Has Yahweh abandoned Jerusalem? Is [he], our city's king, no longer there?" [Yahweh replies], "Why do the people cause me to become very angry by [worshiping] idols and foreign gods?" [RHQ] **20** [The people say], "The harvest [season] is finished, the (summer/hot season) has ended, [and we hoped that we would receive blessings from Yahweh], but he has not rescued us [from our enemies]." **21** I cry because my people have been crushed. I mourn, and I am completely dismayed. **22** [I ask], "Surely there is [RHQ] medicinal balm in the Gilead [region]! Surely there are [RHQ] doctors there!" But my people have been badly wounded [in their spirits], and nothing can heal them.

9 I wish that my head was [like] [MET] a spring of water, and that my eyes were [like] a fountain of tears. Then I would cry night and day for all of my people who have been killed [by our enemies]. **2** I wish that I could leave my people and forget them, and go and live in a shack/shelter in the desert, because they have not remained faithful [MET] [to Yahweh]; they are a mob of people who deceive others. **3** [Yahweh replied to me], "They use their tongues [to tell] [MET] lies like people shoot [arrows] with bows. It is because they tell lies that they have become more powerful in this land, and they do not know me. **4** Do not trust your neighbors and [even] your brothers! They all are as deceitful [as Jacob was]. They slander [each other] and tell lies [about each other]. **5** They deceive their friends and never tell the truth. They lie continually and, because of that, they have become skilled liars; they do one oppressive thing after another, and are unable to stop doing it. **6** They habitually lie and deceive [each other], and no one will admit/say that I am God. **7** Therefore [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say this: Listen carefully to what I say: I will [cause my people to experience great afflictions,] [like a metalworker puts metal in a hot fire] [MET] to completely burn out the impure bits. Because of all [the evil things] that my people have done, there is absolutely nothing else [RHQ] that I can do. **8** What they say [MTY] [injures people like] [MET] poisoned arrows do. They say to their neighbors, 'I hope things will go well for you,' while they are planning to kill them. **9** Should I not punish them for doing that [RHQ]? Yes, I should certainly (get revenge on/give what they deserve to) [the people of] a nation that does things like that!" **10** So, I will weep and wail for [the people who live in] the mountains and in the (pastures/places where the livestock eat the grass), because those areas will be desolate, and no one will live there. There will be no cattle there to call to each other, and all the birds and wild animals will have fled [to other places]. **11** [Yahweh also says], "I will cause Jerusalem to become a heap of ruins, and [only] jackals/wolves will live there. I will destroy the towns of Judah, with the result that they will be completely deserted; no one will live there." **12** [I said], "Only people who are very wise [RHQ] can understand these things. Only those who have been taught by Yahweh can [RHQ] explain these things to others. The wise people are [RHQ] the only ones who can explain why the land will be completely ruined with the result that everyone [RHQ] will be afraid to travel through it." **13** Yahweh replied, "[These things will happen] because my people have rejected my laws which I gave to them; they have not obeyed me or my instructions. **14** Instead, they have stubbornly done the things that they wanted to do. They have worshiped the idols that represent the god Baal, which is what their ancestors did. **15** So now listen to what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God of the Israelis, say: [What I will do will be like] [MET] giving these people bitter things to eat and poison to drink: **16** I will scatter them to many nations which neither they nor their ancestors have known [anything about]; I will [enable their enemies to] strike them with swords until I have destroyed them." **17** This is also what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "Think [about what is happening], [then] summon those women who mourn [when someone has died]. **18** Tell them to come quickly and start to wail, with the result that tears will stream down from your(pl) eyes. **19**

Listen to [the people of] Jerusalem crying/lamenting, saying, 'We have been ruined/destroyed! We have experienced a terrible disaster! Now we are very ashamed, because our houses have been destroyed [by our enemies], and we [are being forced to] leave our land.'" **20** You women, listen to what Yahweh says [MTY]. Pay attention to his words [DOU]. Teach your daughters to wail. Teach each other how to sing funeral songs, **21** because people will be dying [PRS] in your houses and in palaces. There will be no more children playing in the streets, there will be no more young men [gathering] in the city squares/marketplaces. **22** There will be corpses scattered across the fields like dung; their dead bodies will lie there like [SIM] grain that has been cut by reapers/farmers, and there will be no one [still alive] to bury them. **23** Yahweh says this: "Wise men should not boast about their being wise, strong men should not boast about their being strong; and rich people should not boast about their being rich. **24** Instead, those who want to boast should boast about their knowing me and about understanding that I am Yahweh, that I am kind and just and righteous, that I faithfully love [people], and that I am delighted with [people who act] that way. **25** There will be a time when I will punish all those people of Egypt and of the Moab people-group and of the Edom [people-group] and of the Ammon [people-group], all those people who live close to desert areas (OR, who cut their hair short [to please their gods]) far from Judah, all those people who have [changed their bodies by] circumcising them [MET] but who have not [changed] their inner beings. I will punish the people of Judah also, because they have not changed their inner beings, [either]."

10 You people of Israel, listen to what Yahweh says: **2** "Do not act like the people of [other] nations act, and do not be terrified by strange/unusual things that you see in the sky, even though they cause the [people of other] nations to be terrified. **3** The customs of the people [of other nations] are worthless. [For example], they cut down a tree in the forest. Then a [skilled] worker/craftsman [cuts a section of it and] uses his chisel to carve an idol from that section. **4** [Then] people decorate the idol with silver and gold. [Then] they fasten it securely with nails in order that it will not topple/fall over. **5** [Then] the idol [stands there] like [SIM] a scarecrow in a field of cucumbers/melons! It cannot speak, and people must carry it, because it cannot walk. Do not be afraid of idols, because they cannot harm [anyone], and they cannot do [anything] good [to help anyone]." **6** Yahweh, there is no one like you. You [MTY] are great, and you are very powerful. **7** You are the king of all the nations! Everyone should [RHQ] revere you, because that is what you deserve. Among all the wise people on the earth and in all the kingdoms where they live, (there is no one like you./who can compare with you?) **8** Those people who [think that they are] very wise [IRO] are stupid and foolish [DOU]. The idols that they worship are only made of wood! Those idols certainly cannot teach them anything. **9** People hammer into thin sheets silver from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz, and then they give those sheets of silver and gold to skilled workers/craftsmen to cover the idols. Then they put on those idols expensive purple robes that are made by skilled workers. **10** But Yahweh is the [only] true God; he is the all-powerful God, the king [who rules] forever. When he is angry, [all] the earth shakes/quakes; and [the people of] the nations cannot endure [what he does] when he is angry [with them]. **11** [You Israeli people], tell this to those people: "Those idols did not make the sky and the earth, and they will disappear from the earth." **12** But [Yahweh] made the earth by his power; he established it [firmly] by his wisdom and stretched out the sky by his understanding. **13** When he speaks [loudly], there is thunder in the sky; he causes clouds to form over every part of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and releases the winds from his storehouses. **14** People are senseless and know very little [HYP]; those who make idols are always disappointed because their idols do nothing for them. The images/statues that they make are not real [gods]; they are lifeless. **15** Idols are worthless; they deserve to be ridiculed; there will be a time when they [all] will be destroyed. **16** But the God whom we Israelis worship is not like those idols; he is the one who created everything [that exists]; we, the tribe/people of Israel, belong to him; he is the Commander of the armies of angels. **17** [Yahweh says this to the people of Jerusalem]: "The army of your enemies surrounds your city, so gather up your possessions [and prepare] to leave the city. **18** I will soon throw you out of this land and cause you to experience great troubles, with the result that you will have severe pain (OR, none of you will be left here)." **19** [The people replied, "It is as though] we have been [badly] wounded, and we are very grieved; [It is as though] we have a very serious illness, and we must endure the pain. **20** [It is as though] our [great] tent is destroyed; the ropes [that held it up] have been cut; our children have gone away from us and will not return; there are no people left to rebuild our great tent. **21** Our leaders [MET] no [longer] have any sense; they no [longer] ask Yahweh [to (guide them/tell them what to do)], so they will no [longer] prosper, and all those over whom they rule [MET] will be scattered. **22** Listen! [Our enemies' armies] in the north are making a [very] big noise/commotion [as they march toward us]. The towns in Judah will be destroyed, [and they will become] a place where jackals/wolves live." **23** Yahweh, I know that no person

controls what will happen to him; no one is able to direct the events that he will experience. **24** [So] correct/discipline us, but do it gently. Do not correct/punish us when you are angry, because we would die if you did that. **25** Punish [MTY] [all] the nations whose people do not acknowledge/say that you are God; punish all the nations whose people do not worship you, because they are completely destroying [DOU] [us people of] Israel and they are causing our land to soon be only a desert.

11 This is [another] message that Yahweh told me: **2** "Listen to the agreement that I made with [the ancestors of] the people of Jerusalem and [the other cities in] Judah. Then remind them of [that agreement]. **3** Then tell them that [I], Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli [people worship], said that I will curse everyone who does not obey what was written in that agreement that I made with them. **4** It is the same agreement that I made with their ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt. [What happened to them in Egypt was terrible; it was as though they were] living in a hot furnace [MET]. When I brought them out of Egypt, I told them to obey me, and to do everything that I had commanded them to do. [I also told them] that if they obeyed me, they would be my people and I would be their God. **5** [Now tell these people that if they obey me], I will do what I promised to do for their ancestors. I will enable them to continue living in this very fertile [IDM] land in which they now live." I replied, "Yahweh, I hope that what you said will happen." **6** Then Yahweh said to me, "Go into the streets of Jerusalem and to the [other] cities in Judah. Proclaim my message to the people. Tell them to listen to the agreement [that I made with their ancestors], and to obey it. **7** When I brought their ancestors out of Egypt, I solemnly pleaded with them many times to obey me, and I am still pleading with them now. **8** But they did not obey me or [even] pay any attention to me. Everyone continued to be stubborn and to do the evil things that they wanted to do. I commanded them to do what was written in the agreement, but they refused. So I punished them in all the ways that I promised that I would." **9** Then Yahweh said to me, "The people of Jerusalem and [the other cities in] Judah are rebelling against me. **10** Their ancestors refused to do what I told them to do, and [now] these people have returned to committing the sins that their ancestors committed. They are worshiping other gods. The people of Israel disobeyed the agreement that I made with their ancestors, and [now] the people of Judah have done the same thing. **11** So now I, Yahweh, am warning them that I will cause them to experience disasters, and they will not escape them. And when they cry out for me [to help them], I will not pay attention. **12** When that happens, the people in Jerusalem and [other] cities in Judah will [offer sacrifices and] burn incense to their gods and ask for their help, but those gods will not be able to save them when those disasters come to them. **13** There are more gods in Judah than there are towns in Judah, and the people of Jerusalem have erected as many altars to burn incense [to those gods] as there are streets in Jerusalem. **14** Jeremiah, do not pray for these people, and do not plead with me to rescue them. If you plead with me, I will not pay attention; and if they cry out to me for help when they are in distress, I will not listen to them." **15** Then Yahweh said, "The people [of Judah] whom I love certainly no longer have [RHQ] a right to come to my temple, because they continually do many evil things. [They think that] continually making sacrifices of meat to me certainly will [RHQ] protect them from disasters, with the result that they will be able to rejoice. **16** I previously said that they were like an olive tree full of green leaves with a lot of good olives on it, but [now I will send their enemies to attack] them furiously; [it is as though] I will break off their branches, and [their city] will be destroyed by fire. **17** [It is as though] the people of Judah and Israel were a beautiful olive tree that I, the Commander of the armies of angels, planted, but [now], by burning incense to [their god] Baal, they have caused me to become [very] angry. So [now] I have decided to destroy them." **18** Yahweh revealed to me that [my enemies] were planning to kill me. **19** [Before he did that], I was like a lamb that was being led away to be slaughtered; I did not know what they were planning to do. I did not know that they were saying, "Let's get rid of this tree and its fruit," so [I did not know] that they intended to kill me, in order that no one would remember me [MTY]. **20** [Then I prayed], "Commander of the armies of angels, you judge people justly/fairly, and you examine everything that we are thinking [DOU]. Allow me to watch you getting revenge on the people [who want to kill me], because I trust that you will do for me what is right." **21** It was the men of [my own town], Anathoth, who wanted to kill me, and they told me that they would kill me if I did not stop prophesying what Yahweh told me to say. **22** So the Commander of the armies of angels said [about them], "I will punish them. Their young men will be killed in wars, and their children will die because they have no food. **23** I have set a time when I will bring disasters to the people of Anathoth, and when that happens, none of them will remain alive."

12 Yahweh, whenever I tell you that I am unhappy [about what is happening to me], you [always] act justly/fairly. So now allow me to ask about one more thing [that I do not understand]: Why are wicked people [often] very prosperous? Why do things go very well for dishonest/wicked people? **2**

You allow them to prosper like [MET] trees that grow tall and bear [a lot of] fruit. They [always] say [MTY] good things about you, but their hearts are [really] far from you. **3** But Yahweh, as for me, you know what is in my inner being. You see what I [do] and you are able to know what I am thinking. So drag away those [wicked] people, like [people drag away] sheep that they are going to butcher. Set them aside like sheep that are about to be slaughtered! **4** This land is [RHQ] becoming very dry and even the grass is withering. The wild animals and the birds have [all] died because the people are [very] wicked. [All that has happened] because the people have said, "Yahweh does not know what we are doing (OR, what will happen to us)!" **5** [Then to show me that I needed to be prepared to endure even greater difficulties, Yahweh said to me], ["It is as though] you have become exhausted from racing against men; so how will you be able to race against horses? If you [stumble and] fall when you are running on open/bare/smooth ground, what will happen to you when you are running through the thornbushes near the Jordan [River]? **6** [Already] your brothers and [other members of] your own family oppose you. They (plot against/plan to do evil things to) you and they say bad things about you. So even if they say nice things about you, do not trust them! **7** I have abandoned my [Israeli] people, the people whom I chose to belong to me. I have allowed their enemies to conquer the Israeli people, whom I love. **8** My people have become to me like [SIM] a lion in the forest. [It is as though] they roar at me like a lion, so now I hate them. **9** My chosen people have [RHQ] become like speckled hawks that are surrounded by vultures [waiting to eat their flesh after they are dead]. Tell all the wild animals to come and eat [the flesh of their corpses]. **10** Many rulers [from other countries have come with their armies and] devastated/destroyed my people [whom I care for like a farmer takes care of his] vineyard. They have caused my beautiful land to become a barren desert where no one lives. **11** They have caused it to become completely empty; [it is as though] I hear the land crying sadly/mournfully. The whole land is desolate, and no one (worries about/pays any attention to) it. **12** The soldiers [of our enemies] have marched across all the barren hilltops. But [I], Yahweh, am using those armies [MTY] to punish your land from one end to the other, and no one will escape. **13** [It is as though] my people planted wheat, but now they are harvesting thorns. They have become very tired [because of much hard work], but they have gained nothing [from all that work]. They will be very disappointed because their harvests [will be very small], [and that will happen] because [I], Yahweh, am extremely angry [with them]." **14** This is [also] what Yahweh said to me: "[I will punish] the evil nearby nations that have been trying to take away the land that I gave to my Israeli people, and I will force them to leave their own land. But I will throw the people of Judah out of their land, also. **15** But later I will act mercifully toward those nations again, and I will bring them back to their own lands again. Each [clan] will come back to its own land. **16** And if the people [of the other nations whose armies have invaded Israel] learn the [religious] customs of my people, and if they learn that I [am listening] when they solemnly promise that they will do something good, like they taught my people to believe that [their god] Baal [was listening] when they made solemn promises, I will cause them to become prosperous, and they also will be my people. **17** But I will expel any nation whose people refuse to obey me, and I will destroy that nation and its people. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it."

13 [One day] Yahweh said to me, "Go and buy a linen waistcloth. Put it on, but do not wash it." **2** So I bought a [very nice] waistcloth, which is what Yahweh told me to do, and I put it on. **3** Then [later] Yahweh gave me another message. **4** He said, "Go to the small Perath Stream [near Jerusalem] and hide your waistcloth in a crevice/hole in the rocks." **5** So I went to the stream and did what Yahweh told me to do. **6** A long time later, Yahweh said to me, "Go [back] to that stream and get the waistcloth that I told you to hide there." **7** So I went to the Perath Stream and dug out the waistcloth from the crevice/hole in which I had hidden it. But it was ruined, and useless. **8** Then Yahweh gave me this message: **9** "[What happened to your waistcloth] shows that I will destroy the things that [the people of] Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah are very proud of. **10** Those wicked people refuse to pay attention to what I say. They stubbornly do just what they desire to do; they worship other gods. Therefore, they will become completely useless, like your waistcloth. **11** Just like a waistcloth clings closely/tightly to a man's waist, I wanted the people [MTY] of Israel and Judah to cling closely to me. I wanted them to be my people, people who would praise me and honor me. But they would not pay attention [to me]. " **12** "[So], tell this to them: 'Yahweh, the God whom you Israeli [people worship], says that every leather wineskin should be filled with wine.' And [when you tell that to them], they will reply, '(Of course/Certainly) we know [RHQ] that all wineskins should be filled with wine!' **13** And then you must tell them, 'No, that is not what Yahweh means. What he said means that he will cause this land to be filled with people who are drunk. [That will include all of you]—the king who sits on the throne that King David previously sat on, the priests and the prophets, and even the common people of Jerusalem.' **14** [He is saying], 'I will

cause you to bash each other. [Even] parents will bash their children. I will not pity you or act mercifully toward you at all; pitying you will not prevent me from getting rid of you.'" **15** [You people of Judah], pay very careful attention [DOU]. Do not be proud, because Yahweh has spoken to you. **16** [It is as though] he is ready to bring darkness on you and to cause you to stumble and fall [as you walk] on the hills when it is becoming dark. [So] praise/honor Yahweh your God before that happens. If you do not do that, you will look for light, but all you will see is darkness and gloom. **17** And if you [still] refuse to heed what he says, [what will happen to you because of] your being proud will cause me to cry when I am alone. My eyes will be filled with tears because [you], Yahweh's people, [whom he takes care of like a shepherd takes care of] [MET] his flock, will [all] be [captured by your enemies and] taken to other countries. **18** [You people of Judah], say to the king and to his mother, "Come down from sitting on your thrones and [humbly] sit in the dust, because [your enemies] will soon snatch from your heads your glorious crowns." **19** The towns in the southern part of Judah will be surrounded by your enemies, and no one will be able to get through their lines [to rescue the people in those towns]. [You people of] Judah will be captured and taken away; you will all be (exiled/taken [to foreign countries)]. **20** [You leaders of Jerusalem], open your eyes and look: [The enemy armies are ready to] march down from the north. [When that happens], what will happen to [RHQ] the [people of Judah who are like] a beautiful flock of sheep, people that he gave to you to take care of? **21** What will you say [RHQ] when Yahweh appoints people from other countries to rule over you, people who you [mistakenly] thought were your friends? You will [RHQ] suffer very much pain, like a woman who is about to give birth to a baby. **22** You will ask yourselves, "Why is this happening to us?" [I will reply that] it is because of your many sins. That is why [soldiers of the invading armies] will lift up the skirts [of your women] and rape them. **23** A man from Ethiopia certainly cannot [RHQ] change the color of his [black] skin, and a leopard certainly cannot [RHQ] change its spots. Similarly, you cannot start doing what is good, because you have always done what is evil. **24** [Yahweh says], "I will scatter you like chaff that is blown away by the wind from the desert. **25** That is what is certainly going to happen to you; the things that I have determined will happen to you, because you have forgotten me, and you are trusting in false [gods]. **26** [It is as though] I myself will pull your skirts up over your faces and cause you to be very ashamed because everyone will be able to see your sex organs. **27** I have seen that you [act like men who are eager to commit adultery]; you are like male horses that whinny when they desire [to have sex with] a female horse. I have seen that you worship disgusting idols in the fields and on the hills. [You people of] Jerusalem, terrible things will happen to you! How long will it be [RHQ] until you are acceptable to me [again]?"

14 After there had been no rain [in Judah] for a long time, Yahweh gave me this message: **2** [The people in] Judah are very distressed; people [are sitting] on the ground and mourning; [in all of] Jerusalem people are crying loudly. **3** The rich people send their servants to [wells] to get water, but [all] the wells are dry. The servants return with empty pitchers; they cover their heads [because they are ashamed and humiliated/disappointed and sad]. **4** The ground is extremely dry and cracked open because there has been no rain. The farmers are very worried, [so] they [also] cover their heads. **5** Even the (does/female deer) abandon their newborn babies/fawns because there is no grass in the fields [for them to eat]. **6** The wild donkeys stand on the barren hills, panting like [SIM] [thirsty] jackals/wolves. They become blind because there is no grass [to eat]. **7** [The people say], "Yahweh, we have turned away from you and sinned many times, and now we know that we are being punished because of our sins, but please help us in order that everyone can see that you are very great [MTY]. **8** You are the one whom [we] Israelis confidently expect [to do good things for us] when we have [many] troubles/difficulties. So, why do you [not help us]? You act as though you are a stranger in our land, like you are someone who is staying here for only one night. **9** Are you also surprised [about the terrible things that are happening to us]? Why do you act like you are unable to save anyone, even though you are a strong warrior? Yahweh, you are [here] among us, and [others know that] we are your people, [so] do not abandon us!" **10** And this is what Yahweh says to those people: "You love to wander away [from me]; you run [MTY] from one [idol] to another. Therefore, now I will no [longer] accept you, and I will punish you for your sins." **11** [Then] Yahweh said to me, "Do not pray for these people [any more]. **12** When they (fast/abstain from food in order to honor me), I will not pay any attention. When they bring [to me] their offerings [of animals] to be completely burned [on the altar] and their offerings of grain, I will not accept them. Instead, I will get rid of them by wars, by famines, and by diseases." **13** Then I replied to him, "Yahweh [my] God, [their] prophets are telling the people that they will not experience wars [MTY] or famines. They are telling the people that you will surely allow us to have peace in our land [for many years]." **14** Yahweh replied to me, "Those prophets say that they are speaking what I tell them to say [MTY], but they are telling

lies. I did not send them, [so] what they are saying is false. They say that they have received visions from me, and that they are telling things that I have revealed to them, but that is not true. They are saying foolish things that they have only thought of themselves. **15** So this is what I say about those prophets who are predicting what will happen, saying that I told them those things: They are saying that we Israelis will not die from wars or famines, but I did not send those prophets. And they themselves will die from wars or from famines. **16** And the people to whom they are predicting these things, they and their wives and their sons and their daughters, will [also die] from wars or from famines. [Their corpses will] be thrown into the streets of Jerusalem, and there will not be anyone to bury them. I will punish them like they deserve to be punished. **17** [So, Jeremiah], tell this to them [about yourself]: 'Day and night my eyes are full of tears. I cannot stop crying. I cry for my people, who are [very precious to me, as if they were] [MET] my daughters. I cry for them because they have been severely wounded; they have been severely crushed [DOU]. **18** If I go out into the fields, I see [corpses of] people who have been slaughtered by our enemies. If I walk along the streets of the city, I see [corpses of people who died] from hunger. The prophets and the priests travel through the land, preaching to people, but they do not know [what they are doing] (OR, [in a land] that they know nothing about).'" **19** [Then I prayed this]: "[Yahweh], have you completely rejected [the people of] Judah? Do you really despise [the people of] Jerusalem [MTY]? Why have you [RHQ] wounded us very badly, with the result that we will never be healed? We hoped that we would have peace, but there was no peace. We hoped that there would be a time when we would be healed, but all that we received were things that terrified us. **20** Yahweh, we admit/know that we are wicked people, and that our ancestors [also] did many wicked things. We have [all] sinned against you. **21** But [Yahweh], in order that we may honor [MTY] you, do not despise/abandon us. Do not dishonor [the city where] [MTY] your glorious throne is. [Please] do not forget [us], and do not (break your agreement with us/stop doing what you agreed to do for us). **22** Those idols that [have been brought from] other nations certainly cannot [RHQ] bring rain [to us], and the sky certainly cannot [RHQ] cause rain to fall. Yahweh our God, you are the only one who can do things like that. So we will confidently expect you [to help us]."

15 Then Yahweh said [this] to me: "Even if Moses and Samuel could [come back from their graves and] and stand in front of me [and plead with me for these Israeli people], I would not act mercifully [IDM] toward these people. [I would tell you], 'Send them away from me. Cause them to leave me!' **2** And if they ask you, 'Where shall we go?', tell them, 'This is what Yahweh says: The ones that I say must die, will die: The ones that I say must die in wars [MTY], will die in wars. The ones that I say must die from hunger, will die from hunger. The ones that I say must be captured [and taken to other countries], will be captured [and taken to other countries]. **3** I will send four things that will get rid of them: I will send [enemy soldiers using] swords to kill them. I will send wild dogs to drag away [their corpses]. I will send vultures to eat [their corpses]. And I will send [other] wild animals to eat what remains [of their corpses]. **4** Because of [the wicked things that] King Manasseh did in Jerusalem, I will cause [people in] all the kingdoms of the earth to be horrified about [what will happen in Judah to] my people. **5** You [people of], no one will [RHQ] feel sorry for you. No one will [RHQ] weep/cry for you. No one will [RHQ] ask (how you are/if you are well). **6** You people have abandoned me; you have continued to walk away [from me] [DOU]. So, I will lift up my fist to smash you; I will not act mercifully toward you any longer. **7** At the gates of your cities, I will [scatter you like a farmer scatters the chaff from his grain by] (winnowing it/throwing it up to allow the wind to blow the chaff away) [MET]. You, my people, have refused to turn away from your evil behavior. [So], I will get rid of you, and I will even cause your children to be killed. **8** I will cause there to be more widows [in Judah] than [there are grains of] sand on the seashore [HYP]. At noontime, [when people will not be expecting it to happen], I will cause [an enemy army] to attack you, an army that will destroy your young men and cause their mothers to weep. I will cause you to suddenly experience great suffering/pain and become very terrified. **9** A woman who has seven children will become faint and (gasp for breath/be hardly able to breathe); [it will be as though] daylight will become darkness for her, [because most of] her children will be dead, and she will be disgraced and humiliated [DOU]. And her children who are still alive, I will enable your enemies to kill them. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it.'" **10** [I said to] my mother, "I am very sad; I wish that you had not given birth to me; everyone in this land opposes me and quarrels with me. I am not a person who lends [money to people and threatens to sue/harm them if they do not pay me back when they should], and I am not a person who borrows [money from others and then refuses to pay it back], but everyone [HYP] curses me." **11** But Yahweh replied to me, "[Jeremiah], I will take care of you. And at times when your enemies have troubles and disasters, they will [come to you and] plead for you [to help them]." **12** [Yahweh also told me to say to the people] of Judah, "Your

enemies, who are [as strong as] iron or bronze, [will attack you] from the north; no one will be able to stop them. **13** I will give all the valuable possessions [of the people of Judah] to their enemies, without them paying for it. Their valuable possessions will be the payment/reward [that I will give them] because of all the sins that you have committed throughout your country. **14** I will tell your enemies to force you to become their prisoners, and to take you to other lands that you do not [even] know about, and force you to become their slaves. [That will happen] because I am extremely angry [with you]; my being angry is [like] [SIM] a fire that will burn forever." **15** [Then I said], "Yahweh, you know [what is happening to me]. [Please] come and (help me/take care of me). Punish those who are (persecuting me/causing me to suffer). [Please] do not continue to be patient with them and do not allow me to die now. It is (for your sake/because I serve you) that I am suffering. **16** Yahweh my God, you are the Commander of the armies of angels; and when you spoke to me, I was delighted with your message; it caused me to be joyful, and I eagerly accepted [MET] what you said because I belong to you. [IDM, MTY] **17** When the people were carousing together, I never joined them; I sat alone, because you [MTY] are the one who controls what I do. I was very angry [with those people because of their sins]. **18** So, (why do you [allow] me to continue to suffer?/I do not understand why you allow me to continue to suffer.) [RHQ] It seems that [RHQ] my wounds cannot be healed. [Sometimes you help me, sometimes you do not help me]. It seems that you are as undependable as a brook that has water in it only during certain seasons; you are like a spring that has dried up." **19** Then Yahweh [replied], "If you begin again to [trust in] me, I will restore you, in order that you can continue to serve me. If you proclaim good/valuable messages and not worthless ones, you will continue to be the one who speaks what I tell you to say. You must cause the people to pay attention to what you say; you must not pay attention to what they say. **20** They will fight against you, but I will protect you, like [SIM] people are protected from their enemies by a bronze wall. They will not defeat you, because I will be with you, and I will protect and rescue [DOU] you. **21** [Truly], I will keep you safe from those wicked people, I will rescue you when you are seized by cruel people. [That will happen because I], Yahweh, have said it."

16 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said to me], **2** "Do not get married and have children in this land, **3** because this is what [I], Yahweh, say about the children who are born in this city, and about their mothers and fathers: **4** [Many of] them will die from terrible diseases. And no one will mourn for them. No one will even bury their corpses; the corpses will lie on the ground, [scattered] like manure. [Others] will die in wars or from hunger, and [then] their corpses will become food for vultures and wild animals." **5** This is [also] what Yahweh said to me: "Do not go to funerals to mourn or to show [those whose relatives have died] that you feel sorry for them, because I have stopped protecting them, and I have caused that things will not go well for them. I have stopped faithfully loving them and acting mercifully toward them. **6** [Very many people] will die in this land, [including] those who are important and those who are not important. And no one will mourn for them, or [even] bury [their corpses]. No one will cut himself or shave his head [to show that he is very sad]. **7** No one will bring food to comfort those who are mourning, not even if it is their father or their mother [who has died]. No one will give them a cup [of wine] to cheer them up. **8** And do not go into the houses where people are feasting. Do not eat or drink anything with them. **9** [I want you to do this] because this is what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say: 'While you are still alive and seeing it happen, I will cause there to be no more singing and laughing in this land. There will be no more joyful voices of bridegrooms and brides.' **10** When you tell these things to the people, they will ask, 'Why has Yahweh declared that these terrible things will happen to us? What have we done [for which we deserve to be punished like this]? What sin have we committed against Yahweh our God?' **11** Then this is what you must tell them [that I am replying to them]: 'It is because your ancestors turned away from me, Yahweh. They worshiped other gods and served them. They abandoned me and did not obey my commands. **12** But you [who are living now] have done more wicked things than your ancestors did! Each of you stubbornly does the evil things that he desires and refuses to pay attention to what I say. **13** So, I will throw you out of this land, and I will send you to a land that you and your ancestors have never known about. There you will worship other gods day and night. And I will not act mercifully toward you.' **14** But there will be a time when people [who are solemnly promising to do something] will no longer say, '[I will do this], [just as surely] as Yahweh lives—the one who brought the Israeli people here from Egypt.' **15** Instead, they will say '[I will do this, just as surely] as Yahweh lives—the one who brought [us] Israeli people back to our own land, from the lands to the north and from all the other lands to which he had (exiled us/forced us to go).' [They will be able to say that] because [some day] I will bring your descendants back to this land that I gave to your ancestors. **16** But now I am summoning [your enemies who will seize the people of Judah like] [MET] fishermen [catch fish]. I am summoning those who will

search for them on every mountain and hill, and in every cave, [like] [MET] hunters [search for animals to kill]. **17** I am watching them carefully. I see every sin [that they commit]. They will not [be able to] hide from me [MTY]. **18** Because of all the wicked things that they have done [DOU], I will punish them twice as much [as I would punish other people. I will do that] because they have caused my land to become unacceptable to me because of their [worshiping] lifeless statues of detestable gods, and [also because they] have done many other evil things throughout my land." **19** [Then I prayed, saying], "Yahweh, you are the one who strengthens me and protects me [MET]; you are the one to whom I go when I have [troubles]. [Some day people from] nations all over the world will come to you and say, 'Our ancestors left/gave us only something that was false; [they worshiped idols] that are completely worthless [DOU]. **20** No one can [RHQ] make their own gods; the gods that they make are [only idols]; they are not real gods.'" **21** [Then Yahweh said], "Now I will show my power to [the people of Judah]; I will show them that I am truly very powerful [DOU]. Then, finally, they will know that I, Yahweh, [am the true God]."

17 [Yahweh said, "It is as though a list of] the sins [committed by the people of] Judah is engraved with an iron chisel, or engraved using the fine point of a very hard stone, on the altars [where they worship idols]. And [it is as though] this list is engraved on their inner beings! **2** [Even] their children are happy to go to the altars [to worship their gods], and to the poles [that represent the goddess] Asherah [at which their parents worshiped], shrines that are underneath all the big trees and on [all] the high hills. **3** So, I will allow your enemies to capture [Zion], your holy hill, and all your wealth and your (treasures/valuable things), and [even] the shrines on all those hills, because of the sins that you people have committed throughout your land. **4** The [wonderful] land that I gave to you will no longer belong to you. I will tell your enemies to take you to a land that you do not know about, and you will become their slaves. [I will do that] because I am extremely angry [with you]; my being angry is [like] a fire that will burn forever." **5** This is [also] what Yahweh says: "[I] will curse/condemn those who trust in human beings [to help them], those who rely on their own strength and turn away from me. **6** They are like [dry] bushes in the desert, they are people who will not experience any good things. Those people will live in the barren desert in a salty area, where nothing grows. **7** But I am pleased with those who trust in [me], Yahweh, and who confidently expect [me to take care of them]. **8** Those people are like [SIM] fruit trees that have been planted along a riverbank, trees that have roots that go down into the [wet ground beside] the water. They are trees whose leaves remain green when it becomes hot, trees that continue to bear fruit when there are many months in which there is no rain. **9** Human minds are extremely corrupt/deceitful, and you cannot change that. It is also completely impossible [RHQ] for anyone to understand that. **10** But I, Yahweh, search what is in everyone's inner being, and I examine what they are thinking. I will give all people rewards, what they deserve for what they have done." **11** [I, Jeremiah, agree, because I know that] people who become rich by doing things that are unjust are like birds that hatch eggs that they (did not lay/stole from another nest). So, when those people have lived only half of the years [that they expect to live], their wealth will disappear. Then [other people will realize that] those rich people have been foolish. **12** Yahweh, your temple is [like] a glorious throne that is still on a high hill. **13** You are the one whom [we] Israeli people confidently expect [to bless us], and all those who turn away from you will be disgraced. Their names will be written [only] in the dust, [and will soon disappear], because they have abandoned you, [who are like] [MET] a fountain where people obtain fresh water. **14** Yahweh, [please] heal me, because [if you heal me], I will truly be healed. [If you] rescue me, I will truly be safe, because you are the [only] one whom I praise. **15** People often ridicule me and say, "You tell us messages that you say came from Yahweh, but (why have the things that you predicted not happened?/those predictions have not come true!)" [RHQ] **16** Yahweh, you [appointed me to take care of your people like] a shepherd [takes care of his sheep] [MET]; I have not abandoned that work, and you know that I have not [previously] wanted this time of disaster [to come to people who ridicule me]. And you know everything that I have said [MTY] [to your people]. **17** Do not cause me to be terrified! When disasters come/occur, you are the one to whom I will go to be safe. **18** [So now], cause those who (persecute me/cause me to suffer) to be ashamed and dismayed, but do not [do things to me that will] cause me to be ashamed and dismayed. Cause them to be terrified! Do to them many things that will completely destroy them! **19** This is what Yahweh said to me: "Go to the city gates in Jerusalem. [First] go to the gate where the kings of Judah go in and out of the city, and [then] go to each of the [other] gates. **20** Say to the people [at each gate], 'You kings of Judah and everyone [else] who is living in Jerusalem and all [you other people of] Judah who enter these gates, listen to this message from Yahweh! **21** He says, "Listen to this warning carefully! [Stop doing work] on (Sabbath/our rest) days! Stop carrying loads through these gates [on those days]! **22** Do not carry loads out of your houses or do any

[other] work on Sabbath days! Instead, cause Sabbath days to be (holy/set apart for me). I commanded your ancestors to do that, 23 but they did not listen to me or obey me. When I did things to correct them, they stubbornly [IDM] refused to pay attention to what I said or to accept it. 24 But I say that if you obey me, and if you do not carry loads through these gates [on Sabbath days] or do any other work on Sabbath days, and if you dedicate the Sabbath days to me, 25 kings of Judah [MTY] and [their] officials will [continue to] go in and out of these gates. There will [always] be someone who is a descendant of [MTY] [King] David ruling [here] [MTY] in Jerusalem. Kings and their officials will go in and out of these gates, riding in chariots and on horses, and there will be people living in this city forever. 26 And people will come [to Jerusalem] bringing offerings to be completely burned [on the altar] and [other] offerings. They will bring to the temple grain offerings and incense and offerings to thank [me]. People will bring those offerings from the towns in Judah and the villages near Jerusalem and from the land [where the tribe] of Benjamin [lives] and from the western foothills and from the desert in the south. 27 But if you do not pay attention to what I say, and if you refuse to dedicate the Sabbath days to me, and if you [continue to] carry loads through these gates into the city on Sabbath days, I will burn these gates completely. The fire will spread to the palaces, and no one will be able to put out that fire."""

18 Yahweh gave another message to me. [He said], 2 "Go to the shop of the man who makes clay pots. I will give you a message there." 3 So I went to that shop, and I saw the man who makes pots. He was working at the wheel [that he uses to form pots]. 4 But when he finished making one jar, it was not as good as he hoped/wanted it to be. [So], he took that clay and formed it into another jar, shaping it as he desired. 5 Then Yahweh gave me this message: 6 "Perhaps the people of Israel [think that] I cannot do to them like this man who makes pots has done [RHQ]. [But what they think is wrong]. I [can control what happens to them like] this man [controls what he does with the clay] in his hands. 7 There may be a time when I proclaim that I will get rid of a nation or kingdom, [like someone] pulls up [a plant with its roots], and smashes it, and destroys it. 8 But if [the people of] that nation repent of doing evil things, I will not send to them the disasters that I planned to send. 9 And there may be a time when I proclaim that I will establish a nation or kingdom and cause it to be strong [MET]. 10 But if [the people of] that nation [start to] do evil things and refuse to obey me, then I will not bless them as I said that I would do. 11 Therefore, [Jeremiah, go and warn all] the people in Jerusalem and [in other places] in Judah. Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh says: "I am planning to cause you to experience a disaster [DOU]. [So], each of you should turn from your evil behavior and start doing what is right, [in order that you will not experience that disaster]."'" 12 [So I told that message to the people], but they replied, "It is useless [for you to tell us that]. We will [continue to] be stubborn and behave as we want to." 13 So, this is what Yahweh says: "Ask the [people who live in other] nations if they have [RHQ] ever heard of such a thing. My Israeli people, who [have been pure like] [MET] virgins, have done a terrible thing! 14 The snow certainly never [RHQ] completely disappears/melts from the rocky slopes of the mountains in Lebanon. The cold streams that flow down from those distant mountains never [RHQ] cease flowing. 15 But my people [are not as reliable as those streams:] They have abandoned me. They burn incense to [honor/worship] worthless idols. [It is as though] they have stumbled as they walked along very old roads that are good roads, and now, instead, they are walking on dirt paths. 16 Therefore, their land will become desolate, and people who see it will hiss [to ridicule it]. Everyone who passes by will be appalled; they will shake their heads [to show that they are shocked]. 17 I will scatter the people when their enemies [attack them] like dust is scattered by an east wind. And when they experience all those difficulties/disasters, I will turn my back on them [and refuse] to help them." 18 Then some of the people said, "Come, let's plan to attack Jeremiah. We have [many] priests who teach us God's laws, and wise men who give us good advice, and prophets who tell us [what will happen. We do not need Jeremiah!] So, let's slander him and not pay attention to anything that he says." 19 [Then I prayed], "Yahweh, [please] listen to me! And listen to what my enemies are saying about me. 20 I am doing things that are good, so it is disgusting that [RHQ] they are paying me back by doing evil [things to me]. [It is as though] they have dug a pit for me [to fall into] and die. Do not forget that [one time] I stood in front of you and pleaded for you [to help them], and I tried to prevent you from [punishing them] [MTY], even though you were very angry with them. 21 So [now], allow their children to die from hunger! Or cause them to be killed by [their enemies'] swords! Cause their wives to become widows, whose children are all dead! Cause their [old] men to die in a plague, and cause their young men to be killed in battles! 22 Cause people to scream in their homes when enemy soldiers suddenly come into their houses! [Cause all those things to happen to them] because they [want to kill me]. [It is as though] they have dug a pit for me [to fall into], and they have hidden traps along my path. 23 Yahweh, you know all the things that they are planning to do to kill me. Do not forgive them for their crimes or blot

out [the record of] their sins. Cause them to be destroyed; punish them because of your being angry [with them]!"

19 This is another message that Yahweh gave [to me]: "Go and buy a clay jar from a man who makes them. Then take with you some of the elders of the people and leaders of the priests. **2** Go out [of the city] past the Gate of Broken Pots, to the place [overlooking the dump for broken pottery in] the Ben-Hinnom Valley. Then give them a message. **3** Say to them, '[This message is for] you kings of Judah and [other] people of Jerusalem. Listen to what Yahweh is saying! The Commander of the armies of angels says that he will cause there to be a terrible disaster in [Jerusalem]. Those who hear about it will be stunned/shocked [IDM]. **4** [That will happen] because [you Israeli] people have stopped worshiping me, and have caused this place to be a place where [you worship] foreign gods. You burn sacrifices to gods that neither you nor your ancestors nor [even] the kings of Judah ever heard about. And you have filled this place with the blood of innocent people [whom you have killed]. **5** You have built shrines to honor [your god] Baal, and at those shrines you have [killed] your own children and offered them to be sacrifices to Baal. I never commanded you to do that, I never spoke about doing that, I never even thought about anyone doing that. **6** So, beware, [because I,] Yahweh, say that there will be a time when this garbage dump will no longer be called Topheth or Ben-Hinnom Valley; it will be called Slaughter Valley. **7** In this place I will ruin the plans of [you people who live in] Jerusalem and in [other places in] Judah. I will allow your enemies who want to kill you to kill [many of] you with their swords. [Then] I will allow your corpses to remain on the ground to be food for vultures and wild animals. **8** I will [completely destroy] Jerusalem and cause it to become a heap of ruins that people will despise. All the people who pass by will be appalled, and they will be shocked when they see that the city has been destroyed. **9** I will enable your enemies who want to kill you to surround the city for a long time. [Then the food will be all gone, and you people will be extremely hungry, with the result that] you people in the city will eat the flesh of your own children and your neighbors' children.' **10** [Jeremiah, after you tell that to them], while the people who are with you are watching, smash the jar [that you brought]. **11** Then say to them, 'This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "Just like this jar has been smashed and cannot be repaired, I will smash this city of Jerusalem and other places in Judah. You will bury some of your corpses here in this dump, until there is no more space to bury any more corpses. **12** That is what I will do to this city and to you people who live here. I will cause this city to be desecrated, like [King Josiah caused Topheth to be] a place that was unfit for people to worship me there. **13** The houses in Jerusalem and the palaces of the kings of Judah will be desecrated like this place will be. All the houses where you burned incense on the rooftops to honor the stars [that you worshiped], and where you poured out wine [to be an offering] to your gods, will become (desecrated/unacceptable places for people to worship me)."'" **14** Then I returned from the garbage dump where Yahweh had sent me to tell them that message. Then I stood in the courtyard of Yahweh's temple and said this to all the people [who were there]: **15** "This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: 'I will cause there to be a disaster in this city and in the villages around it like I promised, because you people have stubbornly [IDM] refused to pay attention to what I said to you.'"

20 Pashhur, the son of Immer, was a priest who supervised the temple guards. He heard those things that I had prophesied. **2** [So he arrested me]. Then he [commanded guards to] whip me and fasten my feet in (stocks/a wooden frame) at the Benjamin Gate of Yahweh's temple. **3** The next day, when Pashhur released me, I said to him, "Pashhur, Yahweh is giving you a new name. From now on, your name will be 'Surrounded by Terror', **4** because Yahweh says this [to you]: 'I will cause you and your friends to be terrified. You will watch them being killed by your enemies' swords. I will enable the [army of the] king of Babylon to capture the people of Judah. Those soldiers will take some of the people to Babylon, and they will kill others with their swords. **5** And I will enable their soldiers to take away [other things in] Jerusalem. They will take to Babylon all the very valuable things that belonged to your kings. **6** And [as for] you, Pashhur, they will take you and all your family to Babylon. You and your family and all your friends who have prophesied things that are lies will die there and be buried there.'" **7** [One day I said this to Yahweh]: "Yahweh, [when you chose me to be a prophet,] deceived me, and I allowed you to deceive me. You insisted that I [become a prophet] and you are stronger than I am. And now everyone [HYP] ridicules me. They make fun of me all the day. **8** When I tell [people your messages], I shout saying, '[Yahweh is going to cause you to experience] violence and destruction!' So because I tell them those messages from you, they insult me and scoff at me all day long. **9** But if I would say, 'I will never mention Yahweh or say anything about him, [MTY]' [it would be as though] your message would burn in my inner being like [SIM] a fire; it would be like a fire in my bones. Sometimes I try to remain silent and not proclaim your messages, but I am not able to do that. **10** I hear many people whispering [about me], saying '[He is the man

who proclaims that there will be things that cause us to] be terrified everywhere. We must tell [the authorities what he is saying]! We must denounce him!' [Even] my best friends are waiting for me to say something that is wrong. [They are saying], 'Perhaps we can cause him to say something wrong, and if he does, we will be able to discredit him.' **11** But [you], Yahweh, are helping me like [SIM] a strong warrior, so [it is as though] you will cause those who persecute me to stumble, and they will not defeat me. They will be completely disgraced because of being unable to defeat me; and other people will never forget that they were disgraced. **12** Commander of the armies of angels, you examine [all] those who are righteous; you know [all that is in] their inner beings and what they think. Allow me to see you getting revenge on those [who want to harm me], because I trust that you will do for me what is right." **13** Sing to Yahweh! Praise Yahweh! He rescues [poor and] needy people, from those [SYN] who are wicked. **14** But I hope/desire that the day that I was born will be cursed. I do not want [anyone to] celebrate that day. **15** And [as for] that man who brought to my father the news, and caused him to be very happy, by saying "[You wife] has given birth to a son for you", I hope/desire that he [also] will be cursed. **16** Allow him to be destroyed like the cities that Yahweh destroyed [long ago], without acting mercifully [toward them]. Cause that man to hear the people wailing in the morning, and [to hear the enemy soldiers shout their] battle cries at noon. **17** [I want that to happen to him] because he did not kill me before I was born. I wish that I had died in my mother's womb, and that my mother's body would have been [like] [MET] my grave. **18** I have continually experienced much trouble and sorrow, and I am disgraced now when I am about to die; why was it necessary [RHQ] for me to me born?

21 Yahweh gave me another message when King Zedekiah [of Judah] sent [a man who was also named] Pashhur, the son of Malkijah, and a priest named Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, [to talk to me. They pleaded with me], saying, **2** "[The army of] King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is attacking Judah. Please speak to Yahweh for us. [Ask him if he will help us]. Perhaps he will force Nebuchadnezzar's [army] to leave by performing a miracle for us, like the miracles he performed [previously]." **3** I replied to them, "[Go back to King] Zedekiah. Tell him, **4** 'This is what Yahweh, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says: "I will cause your weapons to be useless in fighting against the king of Babylon and his army that is outside the walls of Jerusalem, attacking. I will enable them to enter into the center of this city. **5** I myself will fight against your [army] with my very great power, [MTY, DOU] because I am very angry with you. **6** I will send a very (terrible plague/big sickness) on the people of this city, and on their domestic animals, and [many of] them will die." **7** And Yahweh says there are many people in this city who want to kill you. So, he will enable [the army of] King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and other people in this city to capture [you], King Zedekiah, and your officials, and [all the other] people who do not die from the plague. His army will slaughter your soldiers; they will not act mercifully toward you(pl) or pity you at all. [DOU]' **8** And tell this to [all] the people: 'Yahweh says that you must decide whether you want to die or to remain alive. **9** Everyone who remains in Jerusalem will die. They will be killed in battles or die from being hungry or from diseases. But those who surrender to the army of Babylon that is surrounding your city will remain alive. They will escape dying. **10** [That will happen] because I, Yahweh, have decided to cause this city to experience disasters, not to experience something good. The army of the king of Babylon will capture this city and will destroy it [completely] by fire.'" **11** [Yahweh also told me to] say this to the family of the king of Judah: "Listen to this message from Yahweh! **12** This is what he says to you descendants of King David: 'Every day, make fair decisions for the people whom you judge. Help those who have been robbed. Rescue/Save them from those [SYN] who (oppress them/treat them cruelly). If you do not do that, I will be angry and punish [MTY] you with a fire that will be impossible to extinguish, because of [all] the sins that you have committed. **13** I will fight against you people [of Jerusalem], you who live on top of a rocky hill above the valley. [I will fight against] you people who boast, saying, "No one can attack us and break through [our defenses]." **14** I will punish you for your wicked deeds like you deserve to be punished; [It will be as though] I will light a fire in your forests that will burn up everything around you!'"

22 This is another message that Yahweh gave [to me]: "Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and say this to him: **2** 'You are the king of Judah. You are the ruler [MTY], like King David was. You and your officials and your people must listen **3** to what Yahweh says: "Act fairly and justly. Do what is right. Help those who have been robbed. Rescue people from those who oppress them. Stop doing evil things. Do not mistreat those who have come here from other countries, and do not mistreat orphans and widows. Stop murdering here [in Jerusalem] [MTY] those who (are innocent/have not done things that are wrong). **4** If you obey those commands carefully, there will [always] be some descendant of King David who will be ruling here [MTY] [in Jerusalem]. The king and his officials and other people will ride through the gates of the city in chariots and on horses.

5 But if you refuse to pay attention to those commands, I, Yahweh, solemnly declare, with myself [MTY] as a witness, that this palace will become a pile of rubble."" 6 And this is what Yahweh says about the king's palace: "[I like] this palace, like I like the forests in the Gilead [region] and the mountains in Lebanon. But I will cause this palace to become a desert, a place that no one lives in. 7 I will summon enemy troops who will destroy this palace; each of their soldiers will use his own tools [to wreck the building]. They will cut into pieces the beautiful big cedar [beams] and throw them into a fire." 8 People from many nations will walk past [the ruins of] this city and say to each other, "Why did Yahweh destroy this city that was [very] great?" 9 And [other] people will reply, "[He did it] because his people stopped obeying the agreement that they had made with Yahweh their God. Instead, they worshiped [DOU] other gods." 10 [Yahweh also says,] "Do not mourn for King [Josiah]; do not cry because he has died. Instead, mourn for [King Jehoahaz, his son], [because] he will be captured and taken to another country, and he will never return to see his own country, [Judah], again." 11 Jehoahaz became king after his father, King Josiah, [died], but Jehoahaz indeed was captured and taken [to Babylonia]. And this is what Yahweh says about him: "He also will never return [to Judah]. 12 He will die in that far-away country and will never see his own country again." 13 [And Yahweh said to me], "Terrible things will happen to [King Jehoahaz's brother, King Jehoiakim]. He unjustly [forced men to] build his palace. The rooms on the upper level were built [by men who were forced] unjustly [to do that work]; he forced his neighbors to work for nothing; he did not pay them anything. 14 He said, 'I will [force my workers to] build a huge beautiful palace with very large rooms and [many] windows. They will cover the walls with [fragrant] cedar panels/timber and paint them bright red.'" 15 But it is certainly not [RHQ] having a beautiful cedar palace that causes a king to be great! Jehoiakim's father, Josiah, also had [RHQ] plenty of things to eat and drink. But Josiah always did things that are right and just, and that is why God blessed him. 16 Josiah acted justly/fairly and helped poor and needy people, so things went well for him. Yahweh says, "That is [RHQ] the way a person should behave who knows me. 17 But [Jehoiakim], you [MTY] are greedy and desire only to obtain things by acting dishonestly. You murder [MTY] innocent people, you oppress poor people, and you treat people cruelly and violently." 18 Therefore, this is what Yahweh says about Jehoiakim, the son of King Josiah: "[When he dies], people will not mourn for him. They will not say to each other, 'It is very sad; we are so sorry!' The people whom he ruled will not mourn for him, saying, 'We are sad that our king is dead; we are so sorry that the wonderful things [that happened while he was king are ended].' 19 [When he dies, people will do to] his corpse what they do to a dead donkey; his [corpse] will be dragged out of Jerusalem and dumped outside the gates! 20 [You people of Judah], go to [the mountains in] Lebanon and weep, shout in the [mountains of the] Bashan [region], cry out in [the mountains of] Moab, because all your friends [in those areas] have been destroyed. 21 When you were prosperous, I warned you, but you replied, 'We will not pay attention [to what you say].' You have been acting like that since you were young; you have never obeyed me. 22 [So, now I will punish] all your leaders; [it will be as though] they have been blown away by the wind. They will be captured [by your enemies] and taken to another country. When that happens, you will [truly] be ashamed and disgraced because of all the wicked things [that you have done]. 23 [Now, your king] enjoys living in the cedar rooms in his palace, but [soon] he will be punished, and then he will groan like [SIM] a woman who is giving birth to a baby." 24 Yahweh says this: "Jehoiachin, son of King Jehoiakim of Judah, as surely as I am alive, [I will punish you]. Even if you were the ring on my finger that shows that I am the king, I would pull you off. 25 You are afraid of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and his huge army, [because] they are wanting to kill you. I will enable them to capture you. 26 I will expel you and your mother [from this land], and you will be taken to another country. Neither of you was born there, but you will both die there. 27 You will never return to this land that you will very much desire to return to." 28 [Someone said,] "Jehoiachin will be [RHQ] like a broken pot that is despised and which no one wants. He and his children will be (exiled/forced to go) to a foreign land. 29 [I want] the people in this land to listen carefully to this message from Yahweh." 30 This is what Yahweh says: "[In the record about the kings of Judah,] write down that [it will be as though] this man [Jehoiachin] had no children, and that he has not been successful during his life, because none of his children/descendants will [ever] become king to rule over [the people of] Judah."

23 Yahweh declares, "Terrible things will happen to [the leaders] [MET] [of my people—those who are like] shepherds of [the people who are like] my sheep—because they have scattered my people and sent them away, and have not taken care of them. 2 So, this is what [I,] Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli [people worship], say to those leaders: 'Instead of taking care of my people and [leading them to places where they are safe, like a shepherd does for] his sheep, you have scattered them. So I will punish you for the evil things that you have done. 3 But later I will

gather those who are still alive, from the countries where I have forced them to go. I will bring them back to their own country, where they will have many children, and their number/population will increase. **4** [Then] I will appoint [other] leaders for my people, leaders who will take care of them. And my people will never be afraid [DOU] of anything again, and none of them will be [like a] lost [sheep].'" **5** Yahweh [also] says, "Some day I will appoint for you a righteous man who will be a descendant of King David. He will be a king who rules wisely. He will do what is just and right throughout the land. **6** At that time, all the Israeli people [DOU] will be saved [from their enemies], and they will be safe. And his name will be 'Yahweh, the one who vindicates/defends us.'" **7** Yahweh [also] says that at that time, people [who are solemnly promising to do something] will no longer say, "[I will do it as surely] as Yahweh lives, who rescued the Israeli people from Egypt." **8** Instead, they will say, "[I will do it] as surely as Yahweh lives, who brought [us] Israeli people back to our own land, from the land to the northeast and from all the [other] countries to which he had exiled us." And they will live in their own land [again]. **9** I am very shocked because of the sacred message that Yahweh has spoken about [what will happen to] the [false] prophets; [it is as though] all my bones shake. I stagger like a man who is drunk after drinking a lot of wine. **10** The land is full of [people who commit] adultery; and [Yahweh] has cursed the land. Even the pastures in the desert are all dried up, because the people do what is evil, and [the false prophets] use their power to do things that are not just/fair. **11** Yahweh says, "[Yes, even] the priests and the prophets are ungodly; they do wicked things even in my temple. **12** Therefore, [it will be as though] the paths that they walk on are slippery. [It will be as though] they are being chased in the darkness, and there they will fall down, because I will cause them to experience disasters at the time that I will punish them. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it." **13** [Previously] I saw that the prophets in Samaria were doing something that was wrong; they were prophesying, saying that Baal [gave them the messages that they were proclaiming], and they were deceiving my people. **14** And [now] I have seen the prophets in Jerusalem doing terrible things. They commit adultery and habitually tell lies. They encourage evil people to continue to do evil things, with the result that the people do not stop sinning. Those prophets are as wicked as the people in Sodom and Gomorrah were. **15** So, this is what the Commander of the armies of angels says about those [false] prophets: "I will give those prophets bitter things to eat and poison to drink, because it is because of them that this land is filled with [people who do] wicked things." **16** This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "Do not pay any attention to what those [false] prophets say to you, because they are just deceiving you. They tell you about visions that they have thought/created [only] in their own minds, not about visions that I have given them. **17** They habitually say to those who hate me, '[Yahweh says that] you will have peace.' And they say to those who stubbornly do what they want to do, 'Nothing bad will happen to you [because of your doing those things].' **18** But none of them has ever been in a council [meeting] in heaven in order to listen to a message from me. None of them has paid attention to anything that [I], Yahweh, have said. **19** So, listen to this: I will punish them; it will be [like] a great storm; it will come down [like] a whirlwind, swirling around the heads of those wicked people. **20** I will not stop being angry until I completely accomplish all that I have planned. In the future, you will understand [all of] this clearly." **21** [Yahweh also says,] "I have not appointed those prophets, but they run [around telling people their messages]. I did not speak to them, but they [continue to] prophesy. **22** If they had been in my council [meetings], they would have been able to speak messages from me, and they would have caused people to turn away from committing evil things." **23** Yahweh [also] says, "Am I a God who is only nearby? No, I am a God who is far away, also. **24** So, no one can hide in some secret place with the result that I cannot see him. I am everywhere, in heaven and on the earth! [That is what I], Yahweh, say! **25** I have heard those prophets prophesy lies, saying that they are telling people messages from me. They say, '[Listen to me tell you] the dream that God gave me last night! I [really] had this dream!' **26** How long will they continue to do this? How long will those lying prophets continue to prophesy things that come only from their own minds? **27** They think that because of the dreams that they tell to each other, people will forget me, like their ancestors forgot about me when they started to worship Baal. **28** Allow those [false] prophets to tell people their dreams, but those who have messages that [really] come from me should proclaim those messages faithfully. I, Yahweh, say [that like] straw and grain are certainly very different, [my messages and the messages from those false prophets are certainly very different]. **29** [It is as though] my messages [burn] like a fire; they [strike people's inner beings like] someone strikes a rock with a hammer and smashes it into pieces. **30** Therefore, [I,] Yahweh say, 'I oppose all those prophets who steal messages from each other and claim that those messages came from me. **31** I oppose those prophets who speak their own messages but claim that those messages came from me. **32** I oppose those prophets who falsely say

that I told them something in a vision, but they are [only] telling lies that cause my people to sin. I did not send those prophets. I did not even appoint them [to be prophets]. And they have no messages that will benefit my people at all.' [That is what I,] Yahweh, declare." **33** [Yahweh said to me], "If one of those prophets or priests or one of the [other] people asks you, 'What problem has Yahweh told you about [now]?', you must reply, 'You are the problem! And Yahweh says that he will abandon you!' **34** And if any prophet or priest or anyone [else falsely] says, '[I have] a prophecy from Yahweh,' I will punish that person and his family. **35** What you should continually ask each other is, '[When you spoke to Yahweh,] what did he reply? What is he saying [to us]?' **36** But stop saying '[I have] a prophecy/message from Yahweh,' because those who say that are doing it only because they want people to accept their ideas, and by doing that they distort/change the messages that are from our God, the Commander of the armies of angels. **37** This is what you should ask each prophet: 'What did Yahweh reply [when you talked to him]? What is he saying [to us]?' **38** If he replies, '[What I told you] is a prophecy/message from Yahweh,' you should say to him, 'You have continued to say, "[I received] a prophecy/message from Yahweh" even though I told you to not claim that you have received prophecies/messages from Yahweh.' **39** So I [, Yahweh,] will get rid of you [false prophets]. I will expel you from my presence. And I will get rid of this city that I gave to you and to your ancestors. **40** I will cause people to make fun of you forever. People will never forget that you were disgraced."

24 [The army of] King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captured Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, and his officials, and all his skilled workers [DOU] and took them to Babylon. After that happened, Yahweh gave me a vision. [In the vision] I saw two baskets of figs that had been placed in front of the temple. **2** One basket was full of good figs, like the kind that ripen first. The other basket was filled with figs that were bad/rotten, with the result that they could not be eaten. **3** Then Yahweh said to me, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" I replied, "[I see some] figs. Some are very good ones, but some are very bad, with the result that no one would eat them." **4** Then Yahweh gave me this message: **5** "This is what [I], Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli people [say that they worship], say: 'The good figs represent [SIM] the people of Judah whom I exiled to Babylonia. **6** I [SYN] will (watch over/take care of) them well, and [some day] I will bring them back here [to Judah]. I will establish them and cause them to be strong. I will cause them to be prosperous [MET], and I will not exile them [again]. **7** I will enable them to desire to know [IDM] that I am Yahweh. They will be my people, and I will be their God, because they will return to me sincerely.' **8** But [I], Yahweh, [also] say, 'The bad figs represent [SIM] Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and his officials, and all the [other] people who remain in Jerusalem, and those who have gone to Egypt. I will do to them like people do to rotten figs. **9** I will [get rid of them], with the result that people in every nation on the earth will be horrified, and will hate them because they are evil people. Wherever I scatter them, people will make fun of them, and say that they are disgraced, and ridicule them, and curse them. **10** And I will cause them to experience wars and famines and diseases, until they have disappeared from this land which I gave to them and to their ancestors.'"

25 After Jehoiakim had been ruling Judah for almost four years, Yahweh gave me this message for all the people of Judah. It was during the year that King Nebuchadnezzar started to rule in Babylon. **2** I spoke this message to all the people in Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah: **3** "Yahweh has been giving me messages for 23 years. He started giving me messages when Josiah, the son of Amon, had been ruling Judah for almost 13 years. And I have faithfully told you those messages, but you have not paid any attention to them. **4** Many times Yahweh has sent to you the prophets who served him, but you have not listened to them or paid any attention to what they said. **5** Each time their message was this: 'Turn from all your evil behavior [MET], from all the evil things that you have continually been doing. If you do that, you will be able to stay in this land that Yahweh gave to you and to your ancestors, [to belong to you] forever. **6** Do not cause Yahweh to become angry by serving and worshiping idols that you have made with your hands. If you do not cause him to be angry, he will not punish/harm you.' **7** And Yahweh says, 'But you would not pay attention to the messages that I [gave to those prophets]. You caused me to become extremely angry by [your worshiping idols] that you had made with your own hands. That resulted in my punishing you. **8** So [now, I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say that because you have not paid attention to what I said, **9** I will gather all [the armies of] the nations that will come from the northeast. I have appointed King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to lead them. I have appointed him to do my work for me. I will bring those [armies] to attack this land and nearby countries. I will completely destroy them, and cause them to be places that people are horrified about, and that people will (ridicule/act contemptuously toward), places that will be ruined forever. **10** I will cause happy singing and laughing to cease in your land. There will no longer be brides and bridegrooms talking [joyfully]. There will not be the sound of people grinding

[grain] with millstones. There will be no lamps lit [in your houses]. 11 All of this land will become a desert where no one will live. And [the people of] Israel and of the nearby countries will [will be exiled to Babylonia and] (work for/be slaves of) the kings of Babylon for seventy years. 12 Then, after [they have been in Babylonia for] seventy years, I will punish the King of Babylonia and his people for the sins that they have committed. I will cause Babylonia to become a wasteland/desert forever. 13 I will cause them to experience all the terrible things that Jeremiah has written about—all the punishments that he predicted will happen to all those nations. 14 The leaders of many nations will cause the people of Babylonia to become their slaves, like the people of Babylonia caused my people to become slaves. I will punish them like they deserve for [having caused my people to suffer].'" 15 Then Yahweh, the God [we] Israelis [worship], gave me [a vision. In the vision he was holding a cup of wine]. He said, "Take from me this cup that is full of [wine that represents] punishment [MTY]. I will cause all [the leaders of] the nations to which I will send you to drink [some of] the wine in this cup. 16 When they drink [the wine], they will stagger and act like crazy people, because [they will realize that] I will (massacre many of their people/cause many of their people to be killed) [MTY] with swords." 17 So, [in the vision,] I took that cup [full of wine] from Yahweh, and I took it to all the nations to which he sent me, and caused [the leaders of those] nations to drink [some of that wine]. 18 [I went to] Jerusalem and the [other] towns in Judah, and the king and [the other] officials drank [some of the wine] from that cup. And, starting from that day, they all [eventually] were removed from having authority, and became [people whom others] (ridiculed/acted contemptuously towards), who were despised, and cursed. 19 [In the vision I went to] Egypt [and gave some of the wine] to the king and his officials and many of his people, 20 and to foreigners who were living there. [In the vision I also went to] Uz land and to Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod [cities and gave some of the wine] to the kings [of those places]. 21 [Then in the vision I went to the] Edom, Moab, and Ammon [people-groups], 22 and to Tyre and Sidon [cities] and to areas across the [Mediterranean] Sea, and [gave some of the wine] to the kings [of those places]. 23 [In the vision I then went] to Dedan, Tema, and Buz [cities in Arabia] and to other distant places (OR, places where people cut their hair short), [and gave some of the wine to leaders in those areas]. 24 [In the vision I also went to other places in] Arabia and to the [kings of tribes] in the desert 25 and to the kings of the Zimri, Elam, and Media [people-groups], 26 and to kings in countries to the north that are near [to Israel] and to countries that are far [from Israel], one after the other— [I went to] all the kingdoms in the world [HYP]. And finally, [in my vision I went to] Babylon, and gave [some of] the wine to the king of Babylon—the wine [that symbolized that Yahweh would punish the people of Babylon because he was angry with them] [MTY]. 27 Then [in the vision Yahweh said to me], "Tell them that this is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom we Israelis [worship], says: 'Drink [from this cup some of the wine that represents the punishment that I will give you]. Drink [a lot of it] and become drunk and vomit. You will fall down and not get up again, because I will cause you to be killed in wars [MTY] that I will send to you. 28 If any of those to whom you give this wine [MTY] refuse to drink it, tell them that the Commander of the armies of angels says that they must drink it. 29 I am starting to cause the people of my own city to experience disaster. [Do you think that] you should not be punished [RHQ]? No, you will surely be punished [LIT] because I am causing there to be wars in all the nations on the earth. [That will surely happen because] I, the Commander of the armies of angels, have said it.' 30 Now tell them all those things that I have said, and also say this to them: 'Yahweh will [shout to them] from his holy dwelling [in heaven] [MTY] and [it will sound like] the roar of a lion. He will shout like [SIM] people shout when they are treading on grapes [to make juice for wine]; he will shout to everyone on the earth. 31 Even people in very remote places around the earth will hear him shouting, because he will say why he will judge and punish all the nations. He will cause the wicked people to be slaughtered with swords. [That will surely happen because] Yahweh has said it.' 32 Then tell them that this is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: 'Listen to this! There will be disasters in one nation after another. [I am preparing to punish them like] [MET] a great storm that starts in the most distant places on the earth. 33 When that happens, [the corpses of] those whom I have [caused to be] slaughtered will fill the earth from the east to the west. And no one will mourn for them, and no one will gather their corpses to bury them. They will be [scattered] on the ground like manure. 34 You [evil] leaders, weep and moan! You who should take care of my people, [fall down and] roll in the dust/dirt. It is time for you to be slaughtered; you will fall down and be shattered like a fragile vase [shatters when it falls to the ground]. 35 You will not find any place to hide, there will be no place to which you can escape. 36 [People will] listen to your leaders crying when [I], Yahweh, am ruining your nation. 37 Your peaceful meadows will become a wasteland/desert because I will be extremely angry. 38 I will leave [my dwelling like] [SIM] a lion leaves its den [to attack other animals], and

I will cause your land to become desolate when I, because I am very angry [with you], cause [your enemies to slaughter you with their] swords.'"

26 Soon after Jehoiakim became the king of Judah, Yahweh gave [me] this message: **2** "This is what [I], Yahweh, am telling you: Stand in the courtyard [in front] of my temple, and speak to all [the people from] the various towns in Judah who come there to worship me. Tell them everything that I tell you; do not omit anything. **3** [If you do tell them everything], perhaps they will pay attention, and each one of them will turn away from his evil behavior. Then I will change my mind, and not cause them to experience the disaster that I was planning to cause them to experience because of the evil things that they have done. **4** Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh says: I sent to you the prophets who serve me, to tell you what you should do. I sent them to you many times, but you have not paid attention to what they said. If you will not pay attention to what I say and do not obey the message that I have given to you, and if you do not pay attention to what the prophets say, **6** I will destroy this temple like I destroyed Shiloh, [the place where the Sacred Tent was put]. And I will cause Jerusalem to be a place whose name [people in] every nation on the earth will say when they curse someone.'" **7** [When I did what Yahweh told me to do,] the priests, the [false] prophets, and many [other] people listened to me as I told them that message outside the temple. **8** But as soon as I finished telling them everything that Yahweh had commanded me to say, they all seized me and said, "You must be executed! **9** Why [RHQ] are you prophesying that this temple will be [destroyed] like Shiloh [was destroyed]? Why are you saying that this city will be destroyed, and that no one will live here [any more]? (OR, You should not be prophesying) [RHQ]" All the people surrounded me [as I stood] in [front of] the temple. **10** When the officials of Judah heard about all this [that was happening], they rushed from the palace and sat down at the gate of the temple named The New Gate, [to judge my case]. **11** The priests and the [false] told the officials and the other people [who were there], "This man should be executed, because he has prophesied that this city [will be destroyed], and you yourselves [MTY] have heard him say that!" **12** Then I replied to the officials and the other people, saying, "Yahweh sent me to prophesy all the things that you heard me say about [what will happen to] this temple and this city. **13** But if you change your behavior and stop sinning, and [start to] obey Yahweh our God, he will change his mind, and not cause you to experience the disasters that he said that he would send. **14** As for me, I am not able to free myself from your grasp. [So you can] do to me whatever you want to do. **15** [But you need to] know that if you kill me, you will be killing a man [SYN] who (is innocent/has not done anything wrong). And you and everyone else in this city will be guilty, because the truth is that it was Yahweh who sent me to speak every word that you have heard me say." **16** Then the officials and the other people said to the priests and the [false] prophets, "This man does not deserve to be executed, because he has spoken to us the message [MTY] that Yahweh gave him!" **17** Then some of the elders stood up and spoke to all the people who were gathered [there]. **18** They said, "([Remember/Think about) what] Micah, [the prophet] from Moresheth [town], prophesied during the years that Hezekiah was the King of Judah. He told the people of Judah this: 'This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: [Some day] Zion [Hill] will be plowed like fields [are plowed]; Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins. There will be a large clump/group of trees on top of the hill where the temple is now.' **19** But did [RHQ] King Hezekiah or anyone else in Judah kill Micah [for saying that]? No! Instead, Hezekiah revered Yahweh, and pleaded that he would (act mercifully toward/not destroy) them. So, Yahweh changed his mind about causing them to experience the terrible disaster that he said he would send. And now [if we kill Jeremiah], we are going to cause ourselves to experience a terrible disaster!" **20** [At that time,] the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-Jearim [city] was also prophesying/proclaiming messages [MTY] from Yahweh. He was predicting that the city and the rest of the land would experience the same disasters that I was predicting. **21** When King Jehoiakim and his army officers and officials heard what Uriah was saying, the king sent someone to kill Uriah. But Uriah heard about it, and became [very] afraid, and he (escaped/ran away) to Egypt. **22** Then King Jehoiakim sent Elnathan the son of Acbor along with several other men to Egypt. **23** They captured Uriah and took him [back to Jerusalem] to King Jehoiakim. The king then [had a soldier] kill Uriah with a sword. Then they buried his corpse in a place where poor people are buried. **24** However, Ahikam the son of Shaphan defended me, and persuaded the officials not to allow [MTY] the mob to murder me.

27 Soon after Zedekiah became the King of Judah, Yahweh gave a message to me. **2** This is what he said to me: "Make a (yoke/set of wooden bars to fasten around the neck of an ox), but fasten it around your own neck with leather straps. **3** [Then] send messages to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon, by telling those messages to the ambassadors from those countries who have come to Jerusalem to [talk to] King Zedekiah. **4** Tell them to give this message to their kings: This is what

the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom the Israeli [people worship,]: **5** 'With my very great power [MTY, DOU] I created the earth and the people and the animals that are on the earth. And I can give my power to anyone whom I want to. **6** And now I am going to enable King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, who does what I want him to do, to control your countries. I am going to enable him to rule everything, even the wild animals. **7** [The people of] all the nations will work for him, and [later] for his son, and [later] for his grandson, until the time for them [to rule] is finished. Then [the armies of] many great kings from many nations will conquer Babylon.' **8** But now I tell you that you must [do what the king of Babylon wants you to do] [MET], [like an ox that has] a yoke on its neck [must do what its master wants it to do]. I will punish any nation that refuses to do that. I will cause those people to experience war and famine and diseases, until [the armies of] Babylon have conquered that nation. **9** So, do not pay attention to your [false] prophets and fortune-tellers and people who predict what will happen by working magic or by talking with spirits of dead people. Those people say that the king of Babylon will not conquer your country. **10** Those people are [all] liars. [If you believe what they say,] it will result in your being exiled from your land. I will cause you to be taken from your land, and you will die far away. **11** But the people of any country who do what the King of Babylon wants them to do will remain in their own country and be able to plant their crops [MTY] [as they always have done. That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it." **12** [After I gave that message to those ambassadors,] I gave the same message to King Zedekiah of Judah. [I said to him,] "If you want to remain alive, do what the King of Babylon and his officials want you to do [MET]. **13** [It would be foolish for you not to do that, because the result would be that] you and your people would die by [your enemies'] swords or by famine or diseases, which Yahweh will cause any nation to experience that refuses to allow the King of Babylon to rule them. **14** Do not pay attention to those prophets who say to you, 'The King of Babylon will not conquer your country.' They are liars. **15** [This is what] Yahweh says: 'I have not appointed those prophets. They are saying that I [MTY] gave them messages, but they are lying. So, [if you believe them,] I will expel you from this land. And you and all those prophets will die [in Babylon]!'" **16** Then I spoke to the priests and the other people, and I said, "This is what Yahweh says: 'Do not believe your prophets who tell you that all the gold items [that were taken] from my temple [by soldiers from Babylon] will soon be returned from Babylon, because what they are prophesying is a lie. **17** Do not pay attention to what they say. Surrender to the king of Babylon. If you do that, you will remain alive. [If you do not do that] [RHQ], this entire city will be destroyed. **18** If they are really prophets who speak messages from me, tell them to plead to me, the Commander of the armies of angels, that [the soldiers from Babylon] will not be allowed to take away to Babylon the valuable items that [still] remain in the temple and in the king's palace and in [the other palaces in] Jerusalem. **19** [I say this] because the [huge] pillars [that are in front of the temple] and the large water tank and the [ten water] carts and all the other items that are used [for offering sacrifices are still in this city]. **20** King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon left those things here when he exiled Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, to Babylon, along with all the [other] leaders of Jerusalem and [the leaders of other places in] Judah. **21** [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom the Israeli [people worship], say this about all those valuable things that are still outside the temple and in the palace of the king of Judah and in [other places in]: **22** They will [all] be carried away to Babylon. And they will stay there until I say that they should be brought back to Jerusalem. Then they will be bought back here. [That is what I,] Yahweh, say.'"

28 When Zedekiah had been the King of Judah for more than three years, late in the (summer/hot season), Azzur's son Hananiah, a prophet from Gibeon [city], spoke to me in the [courtyard of the] temple, while [all] the priests and other people were listening. He said, **2** "This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says: 'I will cause the king of Babylon to stop ruling/controlling [MET] [all of you]. **3** (Within two years/Before two years have ended), I will cause to be brought bring back to this temple all the valuable things that King Nebuchadnezzar's [soldiers] took from this temple and took to Babylon. **4** And I will also cause King Jehoiachin to be brought back here, and all the [other] people who were captured and taken to Babylon. The king of Babylon has [forced you to do what he wants, like someone] puts a yoke [on the neck of an ox to force it to do what he] wants [MET] it to do. But I will cause that to end. [That will happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it.'" **5** I replied to Hananiah in front of [all] the priests and other people who were standing outside the temple. **6** I said, "(Amen/May that happen)! I desire/hope that what you have predicted will happen. I hope/desire that Yahweh will do everything that you have said! I hope/desire that he will cause [men from Babylon] to bring back from Babylon [all] the valuable things that were in this temple, and all the people who were taken [to Babylon]. **7** But now listen to what I say to you while all these people are listening. **8** Many years ago, those who were prophets before you and I

[became prophets] spoke messages about many nations and great kingdoms. They predicted/prophesied that wars and disasters and plagues/diseases would occur in those nations. 9 [So now you or] any other prophet who predicts that things will go well [for us must show that your message is correct. Only] if what you predict actually happens will we know that you were truly appointed by Yahweh." 10 Then Hananiah took the yoke off my neck and broke it. 11 Then he said this to all the people who were there: "This is what Yahweh says: 'Just like Hananiah has broken this yoke, within two years I will cause King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to [stop forcing the people to do what he wants, which has been like] a heavy yoke on all their necks [MET].'" After Hananiah said that, I left the temple area. 12 [Soon] after Hananiah had broken the yoke that was around my neck, Yahweh gave this message to me: 13 "Go and say this to Hananiah: 'Yahweh says that you have broken a wooden yoke, but that he will replace it with an iron yoke. 14 I have forced the people of all these nations to [become slaves of] King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. That is [like] [MET] an iron yoke around their necks. I have put everything, even wild animals, under his control.'" 15 Then I [went to] Hananiah and said to him, "Hananiah, listen [to this]: Yahweh has not appointed you; instead, [you have told] lies to the people, and they have believed your lies. 16 Therefore, this is what Yahweh says: 'You will [soon] die. Before the end of this year, you will die, because you have rebelled against Yahweh.'" 17 Hananiah died two months later.

29 After King Jehoiachin, his mother, his palace officials, other officials in Judah, and all the various kinds of craftsmen [DOU] had been exiled to Babylon, I wrote a letter to the elders, the priests, the prophets and all the other people who had been taken from Jerusalem to Babylon by [soldiers of] Nebuchadnezzar. 3 [I gave] the letter to Elasah the son of Shaphan, and to Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, when they were about to go to Babylon to be ambassadors from King Zedekiah to King Nebuchadnezzar. This is what I wrote in the letter: 4 This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says to all you people who were captured [here] in Jerusalem and taken [there] to Babylon: 5 "Build houses [there], and plan to stay there [because you will be there for many years]. Plant gardens, and eat the food that is produced in the gardens. 6 Get married and have children. Then [when they grow up], choose wives for your sons, and husbands for your daughters, in order that they [also] may have children. [In that way], the number of you people will increase, not decrease. 7 Also, do things that will cause things to go well [for the other people there] in the city where I sent you. Pray that things will go well for [the people in] that city, because if things go well for them, things will go well for you, [also]." 8 This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israeli people [worship], says: "There are [false] prophets and fortune-tellers among you. Do not allow them to deceive you. Do not pay attention to [them when they tell you] their dreams, 9 because they are telling you lies, saying that [MTY] [I have given them the messages that they are telling you]. But, I have not appointed them." 10 This is [also] what Yahweh says: "After you [and your children] have been in Babylon for seventy years, I will help you, and do for you the things that I promised, and I will enable you to return here [to Jerusalem]. 11 I, Yahweh, know what I have planned for you. I am planning to cause things to go well for you, not to cause you to experience disasters. I am planning to give you many things that you confidently expect to receive in the future. 12 At that time, when you pray, I will heed you. 13 If you earnestly desire for me [to bless you], you will experience me [blessing you]. 14 I will make my help available to you [IDM]. I will cause you to no longer be slaves [in Babylon]. I will gather you from all the nations to which I have exiled you, and I will bring you back [here to your own land], to the place from which you were taken." 15 [Some of] you say that Yahweh has appointed prophets for you [there] in Babylon. 16 But this is what Yahweh says about the king who rules [here] in Jerusalem, and about all the other people who are [still] living here—your relatives who were not taken to Babylon with you. 17 The Commander of the armies of angels says this: "I will cause them to experience wars and famines and diseases. I will cause them to become like [SIM] bad figs that are very rotten, with the result that no one can eat them. 18 I will not stop causing them to experience wars and famines and diseases. And I will scatter them all around the world. In every country where I (force them to be taken/exile them), I will cause them to be people whom [others] curse and be horrified about and make fun of [DOU]. 19 [That will happen] because they have refused to pay attention to my messages, messages that I gave to the prophets whom I sent to them. And you [who have been exiled to Babylon] have not paid attention to them, [either]." [That is what] Yahweh says. 20 [Therefore], you people who have been (exiled/forced to go) from Jerusalem to Babylon, listen to this message from Yahweh. 21 This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says about Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and about Zedekiah, the son of Maaseiah, who are telling lies to you, saying that they are giving messages [MTY] from him: "They will be seized and taken to [MTY] King Nebuchadnezzar, who

will cause them to be executed while you are watching. 22 Because of [what will happen to] them, all you people who have been taken from Judah to Babylon will say this when they curse someone: 'I hope/wish that Yahweh will do to you the same thing that he did to Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the King of Babylon caused to be [killed by being] burned in a fire.' 23 They have done terrible things to [my] Israeli people. They have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and they have spoken lies, saying that they were messages [MTY] from me. They have said things that I did not tell them to say, and I, Yahweh, have heard them [say those things]." 24 [Yahweh told me to] send this message to Shemaiah, a man from Nehelam [town who was living in Babylon]: 25 This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says: "You wrote a letter that no one told you to write. You sent it to Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah, and [you sent copies] to the other priests and all the [other] people here in Jerusalem. [This is what] you wrote to him: 26 [Zephaniah], Yahweh has appointed you to be the priest instead of Jehoiada, to supervise those who work in the temple. Anyone who acts like a crazy man and who claims that he is a prophet, you should put his arms and legs and head into (stocks/a wooden frame [so that he cannot move)]. 27 So why have you not done anything to stop Jeremiah, the man from Anathoth [town], who [pretends that he] is a prophet among you? 28 He sent a letter to us [who are here] in Babylon, saying that [we will be here for] a long time. He said that [therefore] we should build houses and plan to stay here, and plant gardens, and eat the food that is produced in the gardens." 29 [But when] Zephaniah the priest [received] the letter from you, he [brought it to me and] read it to me. 30 Then Yahweh gave me this message: 31 "Send this message to all the people [from Judah] who are there [in Babylon]. Say that this is what Yahweh says about Shemaiah, the man from Nehelam: 'I did not appoint him, but he has deceived you and caused you to believe the lies that he prophesied. 32 So, I will punish him and his family. He has incited you to rebel against me. Because of that, all of his descendants will soon die. I will do [many] good things for [you], my people, but he and his descendants will not see those things, [because they will be dead]. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it!'"

30 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, 2 "[I], Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli people [say they belong to], am telling you that you should write down everything that I have said to you. 3 [I want you to know that] some day I will free my people, [the people of] Israel and Judah, from being slaves [in Babylon]. I will bring them back to this land that I gave to their ancestors, and this land will belong to them again. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it." 4 Yahweh gave [to me] another message concerning [the people of] Israel and Judah. 5 This is what he said: "I hear people screaming because they are terrified [DOU]; there is no peace [in the land]. 6 But think about this: Men certainly do not [RHQ] give birth to babies. Therefore, why do strong men stand there, with their faces very white/pale, with their hands pressed against their stomachs, like women who are about to give birth to babies? 7 [Terrible things will soon happen]; that will be a terrible day! There has never been such a time. It will be a time when [my] Israeli people will experience great trouble, but [finally] they will be saved [from their sufferings]." 8 The Commander of the armies of angels says this: "At that time [it will be as though] I will sever/cut the ropes [that are around my people], and I will free them from being (slaves/forced to do what the King of Babylon wants them to do) [MET]. People in other countries will no longer be their bosses. 9 My people will [again] serve me, Yahweh, their God, and [they will serve a king who is a descendant of] King David; [they will serve the king] whom I will appoint for them. 10 So, [you people of] Israel who serve me, do not be dismayed/worried [now], because [some day] I will bring you back from distant places; I will bring your descendants [back home] from the land to which they were exiled. [Then you] Israeli people will [again] live peacefully and safely, and there will not be any [nation] that will cause you to be terrified. 11 I, Yahweh, say that I will be with you and will rescue you; I will completely destroy the nations to which I have scattered you. But I will not completely destroy you. I will punish you [for your many sins], but I will punish you [only] as severely as you deserve: I would be doing wrong if I did not punish you at all." 12 Yahweh [also] says this: "[You have (suffered very much/endured many disasters)]; [it is as though] you have a terrible wound that cannot be cured. 13 There is no one to help you, no one to put a bandage on your wound. There is no [medicine that will] heal you. 14 All your allies [MET] have deserted you and they do not want to help you [any more]. [It is true that] I have punished you severely, [like your] enemies would wound you, because you have committed many sins and you are very guilty. 15 [Because that is true], why do you protest about my punishing you, [as though I had caused] a wound that could not be cured [RHQ]? It was necessary for me to punish you, because you had committed many sins and you were very guilty. 16 But [some day] all those who [are trying to] destroy you will be destroyed; all your enemies will be exiled [to other nations]. All those who have stolen things from you will have their [valuable] possessions stolen, and all those who attack you will be attacked. 17

[Everyone] says that you are (outcasts/people that they no longer associate with), and that [you live in] Jerusalem, a city that no one cares about." But Yahweh says, "I will heal your injuries/wounds and cause you to be healthy again." **18** This is what Yahweh says: "I will bring the people of Israel back from the lands to which they were taken and enable them to possess their land and their houses again. [When that happens], Jerusalem will be rebuilt on top of its ruins, and the [king's] palace will be rebuilt to be like it was before. **19** People will [again] sing joyfully to thank [me], and I will cause there to be more people [in Jerusalem], not fewer; I will cause them to be honored, not despised. **20** Their children will [prosper] like they did before. I will cause them to be a group of people [who worship] me, and I will punish any [nation] that oppresses them. **21** One of their own people will be their king, and I will invite him to come close to me [to worship me], because no one [RHQ] would (dare/have courage) to come close to me [if I did not invite him]. **22** You [Israeli people] will be my people, and I will be your God." **23** Yahweh will punish [MTY] [your enemies]; [it will be like a great] storm; it will come down [like] a whirlwind, swirling around the heads of wicked people. **24** He will not stop being angry until he completely accomplishes [all] that he has planned. In the future, you will understand [all] of this [clearly].

31 Yahweh says that at that time, he will be the God [who is worshiped by] all the clans in Israel, and they will be his people. **2** This is what Yahweh says: "Those [people] who remained alive and were not killed by [their enemies'] swords were blessed [by me even] in the desert; I enabled them to have peace. **3** Long ago [I,] Yahweh, said to [your ancestors,] the Israeli people, 'I have loved you and I will continue to love you forever. By faithfully loving you, I have brought you close to myself.' **4** And [now I tell you], my Israeli people whom I love [MET], that I will cause you to be a nation again. You will [joyfully] dance as you play your tambourines. **5** Again you will plant your vineyards on the hills of Samaria, and you will eat the grapes [that grow there]. **6** There will be a time when watchmen will call out from the hills of Samaria [MTY], 'Come, let's go up to Jerusalem to [worship] Yahweh, our God!'" **7** And now Yahweh also says this: "Sing joyfully about [what I have done for] the people of Israel! Shout about [your nation,] the greatest nation! Shout joyfully, praising me and saying, 'Yahweh, rescue your people, the ones who are still alive!' **8** Do that [because] I will bring them back from the northeast, from the most distant places on the earth. Among them will be blind people and lame people, women who are pregnant and women who are (having labor pains/about to give birth to babies). They will be a huge group of people! **9** They will be crying as they return, and they will be praying [to me]. I will guide them along streams of water, on level paths where they will not stumble. [I will do this] because I am [like] a father to the Israeli people; [it is as though] Israel is my oldest son." **10** Yahweh says, "[You people in the] nations of the world, listen to this message from me. Then proclaim it to [people who live along] the coasts far away. I scattered my people, but I will gather them [again] and will take care of them like [SIM] a shepherd takes care of his sheep. **11** I will buy [my] Israeli people back from those who [conquered them because] they were more powerful [than my people]. **12** My people will return [to Jerusalem] and shout joyfully on the slopes of Zion Hill. They will rejoice about the things that I have abundantly given to them— grain and new wine and [olive] oil and young sheep and cattle. They themselves will be like a well-watered garden, and they will no longer be sad. **13** The young women will dance joyfully, and [all] the men, young ones and old ones, will join with them. I will cause them to rejoice instead of mourning; I will comfort them and cause them to be happy instead of being sad. **14** The priests will have plenty of things to eat and drink, and [all] my people will be filled with the good things that I give them. [That will certainly happen because I], Yahweh, have said it!" **15** Yahweh [also] says this: "Women were weeping in Ramah [town on the border between Israel and Judah]; they were mourning and crying very loudly. [The women who were the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, the two grandsons of] Rachel [the wife of Jacob], were weeping about their children, and no one could comfort them because their children were [all] dead. **16** [But now] this is what [I], Yahweh, say: 'Do not cry [any more], because I will reward you [for the good things you have done for your children]. Your children will return from the land where their enemies [have taken them]. **17** [I], Yahweh, am telling you that there are things that you can confidently expect [me to do for you] in the future. Your children will return to their own land.' **18** I have heard [the people of] Israel grieving very much [and saying to me], 'You punished us severely, like [SIM] calves are beaten [by their owners to train them for pulling a plow]. [So] bring us back [to obey/worship you again], because we are ready to return to you, because you [alone] are Yahweh, our God. **19** We turned away [from you], but we repented; [after you] caused us to realize [that we were guilty]. We beat our chests to show that we were very ashamed [DOU] of the sins that we committed when we were young.' **20** But [I], Yahweh, say this: The Israeli people certainly are [RHQ] still my dear children [DOU]. It is often necessary for me to threaten [to punish] them, but I still love them. That is why I

have not forgotten them, and I will certainly act mercifully toward them. **21** [You Israeli people,] set up road signs; put up posts [along the roads] to mark the road on which you walked [when you were taken from Jerusalem]. My precious/beloved Israeli people, come back to your towns here. **22** You people who have been like [MET] daughters who have forsaken their parents, how long will you continue to wander [away from me] [RHQ]? I, Yahweh, will cause something to happen on the earth that (is new/has not happened before): The women of Israel will be protecting their husbands as they travel [back here]!" **23** This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israeli people [worship], says: "When I bring them back from the countries to which they have been exiled, all the people from the towns in Judah will again say, ['I hope that] Yahweh will bless this my home, the holy place where righteous [people will live]!' **24** [The people of] Judah [who live in] the towns, including the farmers and the shepherds, will all live together [peacefully]. **25** I will enable weary people to rest, and enable people who are very exhausted to become strong again." **26** I, [Jeremiah], woke up [after dreaming all those things], and I looked [around]. I had slept [very] delightfully! **27** [Then] Yahweh said [to me], "There will be a time when I will greatly increase [MET] the number of people and the number of livestock here in Israel and Judah. **28** [Previously], I caused [their enemies to] remove the people from their land and to destroy their land and to cause them to experience many disasters [DOU]. But in the future, I will enable them to build houses and to plant crops [here in Israel again]. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it. **29** [Previously the people often said,] 'The parents have eaten sour grapes, but it is the children's teeth that ache.' [They meant that it was not fair for them to be punished for their ancestors' sins]. But [when I bring them back to their land], they will no longer say that. **30** But now all people will die because of the sins that they themselves have committed. **31** [I], Yahweh, say this: 'There will be a time when I will make a new agreement with the people of Israel and Judah. **32** [This new agreement will] not be like the agreement that I made with their ancestors when I took them by their hands and led them out of Egypt. They broke that agreement, even though I [loved them like] [MET] husbands love their wives.' **33** This is what I, Yahweh, say: 'This is the new agreement that I will make with the people of Israel some day: I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their inner beings. I will be their God, and they will be my people. **34** And it will not be [necessary] for them to teach their neighbors or their relatives and say, "[You need to] know Yahweh," because everyone, including unimportant people and very important people, will [already] know me. And I will forgive them for having been very wicked, and I will never think again about the sins that they have committed.'" **35** Yahweh is the one who causes the sun to give light during the day, and who causes the moon and the stars to give light during the night. He stirs up the seas, with the result that waves roar. His name is the Commander of the armies of angels, and this is what he says: **36** "I will not reject my Israeli people any more than I will get rid of the laws [that control the universe]. **37** And this is what I say: 'No one can measure the sky, and no one can find out what is supporting the earth. Similarly, I cannot reject forever the descendants of Jacob because of all the [evil] things that they have done.' [That is certain, because] I, Yahweh, have said it! **38** [I], Yahweh, also say that there will be a time when [everything in] Jerusalem will be rebuilt for me, from the tower of Hananel [at the northeast corner, west] to [the gate named] the Corner Gate. **39** [Workers] will stretch a measuring line/string over Gareb Hill all the way [southwest] to Goah. **40** And the whole area, including the place where corpses and ashes are thrown in the [Kidron] Valley, and all the fields to the east as far as the Horse Gate, will become set apart for me. And the city [of Jerusalem] will never again be captured or destroyed."

32 After Zedekiah had been ruling Judah for almost ten years, Yahweh gave me another message, during the time that Nebuchadnezzar had been ruling [Babylonia] for almost 18 years. **2** His army was surrounding Jerusalem, and I was in a prison area in the courtyard where the guards of the king's palace stayed. **3** King Zedekiah had put me there. I continued to prophesy there [about what would happen]. I continued to say, "Yahweh says that he is about to allow [the army of] the king of Babylon to capture this city [DOU]. **4** And the soldiers of Babylonia will capture King Zedekiah and (take him to/put him in the hands of) the king of Babylon. **5** Then his [soldiers] will take Zedekiah to Babylon, and he will remain there until I arrange for him to be punished. And if he tries to fight against the soldiers from Babylonia, he will not succeed." **6** [At that time], Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **7** "[Your cousin] Hanamel, the son of Shallum [your uncle], will come to you. He will say to you, 'Buy my field at Anathoth, [your hometown]. [Because you are my closest relative], [it is written in our laws that] you have the right to buy it [before I ask if anyone else wants to buy it].'" **8** And just as Yahweh had predicted, my cousin Hanamel came to see me in the courtyard of the palace. He said, "[Please] buy my field at Anathoth in the area [where the descendants of] Benjamin live. It is written in our laws that you have the right to buy it [before I ask if anyone else

wants to buy it.]" When he said that, I knew that the message that I had received was [truly] from Yahweh. **9** [So], I bought the field at Anathoth. I paid Hanamel 17 pieces of silver for it. **10** I signed the paper/papyrus on which it was written that I was buying it, while others were watching/witnessing it. Then I weighed the silver [and gave it to him]. **11** Then I took two copies of the paper/papyrus. One was sealed and the other was not sealed. On both of them was written the price and conditions of the purchase. I took both copies **12** and I gave them to Baruch, who was the son of Neraiah and the grandson of Mahseiah. I did this while my cousin Hanamel, the [other] witnesses who had signed the paper/papyrus, and other men of Judah who were there in the courtyard, were watching. **13** [Then], while they were [all] listening, I said to Baruch, **14** "This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says: 'Take both copies of this paper/papyrus and put them in a clay jar, to preserve them for a long time. **15** [Do that] because this is what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [you] Israelis [worship], say: "[Some day people will again own property] in this land, and they will buy and sell houses and vineyards and fields.'" **16** After I had given the papers/papyri to Baruch, I prayed to Yahweh, saying this: **17** "Yahweh, [you are my] Lord! You made the sky and the earth by your very great power. [MTY, DOU] Nothing is too difficult for you [to do]. **18** You show thousands of people that you faithfully love them, but you punish people for the sins that their parents have committed. [You are the] great and powerful God, the Commander of the armies of angels. **19** You make wise plans and you do mighty deeds. You see how all people behave [DOU], and you do to them what they deserve. **20** You performed many miracles [DOU] in Egypt, and you continue [to perform miracles here] in Israel and everywhere else in the world. [Because of that], you have (become very famous/caused many people to know that you are very great/powerful). **21** You brought our Israeli ancestors out of Egypt by performing many great miracles [DOU], using your very great power [DOU], causing [our enemies to be] terrified. **22** You gave to us Israeli people this land that you solemnly promised to give to our ancestors, a land that is very fertile [IDM]. **23** Our ancestors came here and conquered this land and started to live in it, but they refused to obey you or to do what you commanded them to do. Because of that, you have caused us to experience all these disasters. **24** And now, [the army] of Babylonia has built ramps up against our city [walls] in order to attack our city. Because of [our enemies'] swords and because of famines and diseases, they will be able to conquer it [easily]. The things that you said would happen have [now] happened. **25** [And it is evident that] the Babylonian army will soon conquer this city. So now, Yahweh my Lord, [I do not understand] why you told me to buy this field with my silver, while others were watching. [It seems that I have just been wasting my money by doing that]!" **26** [Then] Yahweh gave me this message: **27** "I am Yahweh, the God [who rules] all the people [in the world]. There is absolutely nothing [RHQ] that is too difficult for me [to do]. **28** So, this is what I say: [It is true that] I will enable the Babylonian army and King Nebuchadnezzar to capture this city. **29** The soldiers of Babylonia who are [now outside the walls] around the city will enter and burn this city. They will burn down [all] the houses where people caused me to become angry by burning incense on [the tops of] their roofs to [honor] Baal and by pouring out offerings of wine to other gods. **30** The people of Israel and Judah have continually done only evil things from the time that they became a nation. They have caused me to become very angry by all their evil deeds. **31** From the time that this city was built until now, the people of this city have done [only] things that caused me to be very angry [DOU]. So [now] I will destroy it. **32** The people of Israel and Judah, [including] their kings, their officials, the priests, the [false] prophets, and all the other people in Jerusalem have committed many sins that have caused me to become angry. **33** My people have turned away from me and have refused to return to me. Even though I taught them things many times, they would not pay attention to what I taught them, and they would not obey me. **34** They have set up their detestable idols [even] in my own [MTY] temple and (defiled it/caused it to become a place that is unacceptable for people to worship me). **35** They have built shrines to [honor] Baal in Ben-Hinnom Valley [outside Jerusalem], and there they sacrifice their sons and daughters to [their god] Molech. I never commanded them to do such horrible things. I never even thought that anyone might do such a terrible thing. And by doing it they have caused [all the people of] Judah to [be guilty of having] sinned." **36** "But now [I will say something more] about this city. You [people of Jerusalem] have been saying, '[The army of] the King of Babylon will conquer it, either by their swords or because of famines or diseases.' But this is what [I], Yahweh, the God whom you Israeli people [say you belong to], say: **37** 'I will certainly bring my people back here again, from all the countries to which I will force them to go because I am extremely angry [DOU] with them. I will bring them back to this city and allow them to live here safely. **38** They will be my people, and I will be their God. **39** I will cause them to have one way of thinking [IDM] and behaving, in order that they may revere me, for their good and for the good of their descendants. **40** I

will make an agreement with them that will last forever: I will never stop doing good things for them, and I will encourage them to revere me and never turn away from me. **41** I will be happy to do good things for them, and I will surely enable them to return to this land and remain here [MET]; I will do that with all my inner being and all my strength.' **42** And this is [also] what [I], Yahweh, say: 'I have caused them to experience all these disasters. Similarly, [some day] I will do for them all the good things that I have promised. **43** [By buying land you, Jeremiah, have predicted that some day] people will buy and sell fields in this land about which you [people of Jerusalem] now say, "The Babylonian soldiers have destroyed it. It is [now] desolate. [It is a land where] there are no longer any people or animals." **44** [But some day] people will [again] buy [and sell] fields here. People will sign documents [about buying those fields], and [other people] will witness them doing that. [That will happen] in the land where [the descendants of] Benjamin live and [here] in the villages near Jerusalem, in [other] towns in Judah, in the hilly areas and in the foothills [to the west], and in the southern desert area, [too. Some day] I will cause them to prosper again. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it.'"

33 While I was still being guarded in the courtyard of the palace, Yahweh gave me this second message: **2** "This is what I, the one who made the earth, who formed/shaped it and put it in its place, say [to the people of Jerusalem]: 'My name is Yahweh. **3** Call out to me, and [then] I will tell you great and wonderful things that you have not known [before].' **4** This is what [I,] Yahweh, the God whom [you] Israeli people [say you belong to], say: '[The men in this city] have torn down [some of] their houses, and [even parts of] the king's palace, to get materials to strengthen the walls around the city, in order that [the soldiers of Babylonia will not be able to break through the walls after they climb up] the ramps that they have built against the walls, and [kill the inhabitants with] their swords. **5** You are expecting to fight against the army from Babylonia, but [what will happen is that] the houses of this city will be filled with the corpses of the men of this city whom I will [allow to be killed] because I am extremely angry [DOU] with them. I have abandoned them because of all the wicked things that they have done. **6** However, [there will be a time when] I will cause the people in this city to be healthy and strong again. I will enable them to be prosperous and have peace. **7** I will bring the people of Judah and Israel back from the lands to which they were exiled. I will enable them to rebuild their towns. **8** I will get rid of their guilt for all the sins that they have committed against me, and I will forgive them for their sin of rebelling against me. **9** [When that happens], all the nations of the world will rejoice, and they will praise me and honor me. They will hear about all the good things that I have done for this city and, because of that, they will revere me, and they will tremble because I have caused [the people in this city] to have peace and to prosper.' **10** And this is also what [I], Yahweh, say: 'You people have said that this is a land where there are no [longer] any people or animals. But in the streets of Jerusalem that are now completely empty [DOU], and in the [other] towns in Judah, **11** [some day] people will again be happy and laugh. Brides and bridegrooms will [again] sing [joyfully]. And many other people will also sing joyfully as they bring their offerings to me to thank me [for what I have done for them]. [They will sing this song]: "[We] thank you, the Commander of the armies of angels, because you are good [to us]. You faithfully love [us] forever." [They will sing that] because I will cause [the people of] land to be as prosperous as they were before.' **12** This land is [now] desolate. There are no people or animals living here. But [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say this: 'In this land there will again be pastures/fields where shepherds will lead their sheep. **13** Shepherds will again count their sheep as the sheep walk by, outside the towns in the hilly area, in the western foothills, in the southern desert area, in the land [where the descendants] of Benjamin live, around Jerusalem, and outside [all] the [other] towns in Judah.' [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it. **14** Listen to this! [I], Yahweh, say that there will be a time when I will do for the people of Israel and Judah [all the good things that] I promised to do [for them]. **15** At that time [DOU] I will appoint a righteous man who will be a descendant [MET] of King David. Throughout the land, he will do what is just and right. **16** At that time, [the people of] Judah will be rescued [from their enemies], and [the people of] Jerusalem will be safe. And people will say that the name of the city is 'Yahweh [is the one who] vindicates/defends us'. **17** And this is [also] what [I], Yahweh, say: 'There will be descendants of King David ruling [MTY] Israel forever. **18** And there will always be priests who are descendants of Levi who [stand] in front of me and offer sacrifices that will be completely burned [on the altar] and who will burn grain offerings and [other] sacrifices.'" **19** [Then] Yahweh gave me this message: **20** "This is what [I], Yahweh, say: '[You] certainly cannot annul my promise/agreement to cause nighttime to follow daytime each day. **21** Similarly, you cannot annul the promise/agreement [that I made] with King David, who served me [well], that there will always be descendants of his who will rule [Judah]. The same is true for my agreement with the descendants of Levi who are priests who do work

for me. 22 No one can count the stars in the sky, and no one
can count the grains of sand at the seashore. Similarly, I
will cause there to be a huge number of priests who are
descendants of David and descendants of Levi who will
work for me.'" 23 Yahweh gave another message to me.
He said, 24 "Have you noticed/heard that some people are
saying, 'Yahweh chose two groups, the people [of Judah]
and the people [of Israel], and [later] abandoned them.' They
are despising my people and saying that Israel no longer
deserves to be considered a nation. 25 But this is what I say:
'I will not change my laws that control the day and the night,
the sky and the earth. 26 Similarly, I will never abandon the
descendants of David or the [other] descendants of Jacob,
and I will always allow descendants of David to rule the
descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will bring my
people back to their land, and I will act mercifully toward
them.'"

34 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came with the armies
of all the kingdoms that he ruled, and they fought
against Jerusalem and the other towns [in Judah]. At that
time, Yahweh gave me this message: 2 "Go to Zedekiah the
King of Judah, and say to him, 'This is what Yahweh, the
God whom we Israelis [worship], says: "I am about to enable
the army of the King of Babylon to capture this city, and
they will burn it down. 3 You will not escape from them; they
will capture you and take you to the king of Babylon. And
[then] they will take you to Babylon."' 4 But King Zedekiah,
listen to this that Yahweh has promised: 'You will not be
killed in a battle [MTY]; 5 you will die peacefully. [When
you die], people will burn incense to honor/remember you
just as they did for your ancestors who were kings before
you became king. They will mourn for you, crying, "We are
very sad that our king is dead!" I, Yahweh, promise that will
happen.'" 6 [So] I took that message to King Zedekiah. 7 At
that time the army of Babylonia had surrounded Jerusalem
and Lachish and Azekah. Those [three] cities were the only
cities in Judah that had high walls around them that still had
not been captured. 8 King Zedekiah had decreed that the
people must free their slaves. 9 [He decreed that] the people
must free their Hebrew slaves, [both the] men slaves and
the women [slaves]. No one would be allowed to force a
fellow Jew to [continue to] be his slave. 10 The officials and
the rest of the people had obeyed [what the king decreed],
11 but later they changed their minds. They forced the men
and women whom they had freed to become their slaves
again. 12 [So] Yahweh gave me this message [to tell to
them]: 13 "I, Yahweh, the God whom you Israelis [say you
belong to], (made an agreement with/gave this command
to) your ancestors [long ago], when I rescued them from
being slaves in Egypt. 14 I told them that they must free all
their Hebrew slaves after the slaves had worked for them
for six years. But your ancestors did not pay any attention
to what I said. 15 Recently, you obeyed my command and
stopped doing what was wrong and did what was right. You
made a solemn agreement at my temple [that you would
free your slaves], and [then] you freed them. 16 But now you
have disregarded what you solemnly promised, and you
have shown contempt for what I [MTY] said by taking back
the women and men whom you had freed and said they
could live wherever they wanted to. [Now] you have forced
them to be your slaves again. 17 Therefore, this is what [I],
Yahweh, say: 'Because you have not obeyed me by freeing
your fellow Israelis, I will free you to [be destroyed by] the
swords [of your enemies] and by famines and diseases. All
the nations of the earth will be horrified because of [what
happens to] you. 18 Because you have disregarded what
I said in my agreement with you, I will do to you just like
you did to the calves that you cut in half to show that you
would surely do what you solemnly promised that you would
do. I will [enable your enemies to] cut you into pieces, you
officials of Judah and you officials of Jerusalem, and you
officials in the palace, and you priests and all you common
people. I will do that because you have disregarded what
you solemnly promised [about freeing your slaves]. 20 I will
enable your enemies to capture you, and they will kill you.
And your bodies will be food for vultures and wild animals.
21 I will enable the army of the king of Babylon to capture
King Zedekiah and his officials. Although the king of Babylon
and his army have left Jerusalem [for a short time], 22 I will
summon them back again. [This time], they will fight against
this city and capture it and burn it down. I will make [sure]
that all the towns in Judah are destroyed, [with the result
that] no one will live there [any more].'"

35 [Several years earlier,] when Jehoiakim was the King
of Judah, Yahweh gave me this message: 2 "Go to the
place where families of the Rechab clan live. Invite them to
my temple. [When they arrive,] take them into one of the
inside rooms and offer them [some] wine." 3 So I went to see
Jaazaniah and all his brothers and sons who represented
the Rechab clan. Jaazaniah was the son of [another man
named] Jeremiah and grandson of Habazziniah. 4 I took
them to the temple, [and we went] into the room where the
sons of Igdaliah's son Hanan, who was a prophet, stayed.
That room was next to the room that was used by the men
who were in charge of the entrances to the temple. It was
above the room that belonged to Maaseiah, who was the
temple gatekeeper and the son of Shallum. 5 I set jugs of
wine in front of them and urged them to drink some, 6 but

they refused. They said, “We do not drink wine, because our ancestor Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, commanded us, saying ‘You and your descendants must never drink wine. 7 And you must not build houses or plant vineyards or [other] crops. Instead, you must always live in tents. If you obey those commands, you all will live for many years in this land.’ 8 [So] we have obeyed him in all those matters. We have never drunk wine. Our wives and our sons and our daughters [have also never drunk wine]. 9 We have not built houses or planted vineyards or [other] crops or [worked in] fields. 10 We have lived in tents. We have obeyed all the commands that Jehonadab, our ancestor, gave us. 11 But when [the army of] King Nebuchadnezzar attacked this country, we said, ‘We must go to Jerusalem to escape from the armies of Babylonia and Syria.’ So, [we came] to Jerusalem and we are living [here].” 12 Then Yahweh gave this message to me: “This is what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom the Israeli [people say that they belong to], say: 13 'Go and tell this to the people in Jerusalem and in [other places in] Judah: “Why do you not [RHQ] listen to me or learn something about how to obey me? 14 The Rechab clan still do not drink wine, because their ancestor Jehonadab told them to not do that. [In contrast], I have spoken to you many times, but you refuse to obey me. 15 Many times I sent prophets to you. They told you, 'Turn away from your wicked behavior, and do things that you should do. Stop worshiping other gods, in order that you will be able to live [peacefully] in this land that I gave to you and your ancestors.' But you would not pay attention to what I said or obey me. 16 The descendants of Jehonadab have obeyed their ancestor, but you have refused to pay attention to what I told you. 17 Therefore, this is what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom you Israeli people [say you belong to], say: 'You have refused to listen to me and you did not answer when I called you. Therefore, I will cause the people in Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah to experience all the disasters that I said that I would cause to happen.’” ” 18 Then I turned to the Rechab clan and said, “This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [say we belong to], says: ‘You have obeyed what your ancestor Jehonadab told you. You have obeyed all his instructions. 19 Therefore, this is what I say: “There will always be descendants of Jehonadab who will do work for me.”’”

36 When Jehoiakim had been the king of Judah for almost four years, Yahweh gave this message to me: 2 “Get a scroll, and write on it the messages that I have given to you regarding Israel, Judah, and the other nations. Write all of the messages, starting from the time that I gave you the first message, when Josiah was the king, up until now. 3 When the people of Judah hear [again] about all the disasters that I plan to cause them to experience, perhaps each one of them will repent. If they do that, I will be able to forgive them for the wrong/evil things that they have done.” 4 [So] I summoned Baruch, the son of Neraiah. Then, as I dictated to him all the messages that Yahweh had spoken to me, he wrote them on a scroll. 5 Then I said to him, “I am not allowed to [leave here and] go to the temple. 6 So, you go [to the temple] on the [next] day when the people are (fasting/abstaining from food), and read to them the messages from Yahweh that you wrote while I dictated them to you. Read them [aloud] to all the people [who are there, including] the people of Judah who come [there] from their towns. 7 Perhaps they will turn from their evil behavior and request Yahweh [to act mercifully toward them]. [They must do that,] because Yahweh is very angry with them and has threatened to punish them severely.” 8 Baruch did what I told him to do. He [went to the temple and] read [to the people] all those messages from Yahweh. 9 He did it in December on a day when their leaders had proclaimed that all the people in Jerusalem and the people who had come there from [other] towns in Judah should fast to [please/honor] Yahweh. [It was when] Jehoiakim had been king for almost five years. 10 Baruch read to all the people the messages [that he had written] on the scroll. [He read them while he was] in the temple, in the room where Gemariah stayed. He was the son of Shaphan, [who had previously been the king’s] secretary. That room was close to the upper courtyard [of the temple], near the entrance to the temple that is [called] the New Gate. 11 When Micaiah, who was the son of Gemariah and grandson of Shaphan, heard those messages from Yahweh, 12 he went down to the secretary’s room in the palace, where all the king’s officials were meeting. Elishama the [king’s] secretary [was there]. Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, Elnathan the son of Acbor, Gemariah, Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the [other] officials [of the king were also there]. 13 When Micaiah told them about the messages that Baruch had been reading to the people, 14 the officials sent Jehudi, who was the son of Nethaniah and grandson of Shelemiah and great-grandson of Cushi, to tell Baruch to come [and read the messages to them, also]. So Baruch took the scroll and went to them. 15 They said to him, “Please sit down and read it [to us].” So Baruch did what they requested. 16 After they had heard all the messages, they were afraid. They looked at each other and [then] they said, “We must tell these messages to the king!” 17 Then they asked Baruch, “How did you get this scroll? Did Jeremiah dictate to you all the messages on this scroll?” 18 Baruch replied, “[Yes],

Jeremiah dictated them to me, and I wrote them with ink on this scroll." 19 Then the officials told Baruch, "You and Jeremiah must both hide. Do not tell anyone where you are!" 20 They put the scroll in the room of Elishama, the king's secretary. Then they went to the king, who was in the courtyard, and reported to him everything [that Baruch had read to them]. 21 Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll. Jehudi brought it from Elishama's room and read it to the king, while all the [king's] officials were standing there. 22 It was in the cold season, and the king was in a part of the palace where he stayed when it was cold. He was sitting in front of a fire [to keep/be warm]. 23 Each time Jehudi finished reading three or four columns, the king cut off that section of the scroll with a knife and threw it into the fire. He did that, section by section, until the entire scroll was burned up. 24 Neither the king nor his officials showed that they were afraid [that God would punish them]. They did not tear their clothes [to show that they were sorry for what they had done]. 25 Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah pleaded with the king not to burn the scroll, but he did not pay any attention. 26 Then the king commanded his son Jerahmeel, Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch and me. But [they were unable to do that because] Yahweh had hidden us. 27 After the king had burned the scroll on which were written the messages that I had dictated to Baruch, Yahweh said this to me: 28 "Get another scroll, and [tell Baruch to] write everything again, the same messages that he had written on the scroll that the king burned. 29 [Then go to] the king and say to him, 'Yahweh says this: "You burned the scroll [because you did not like] what was written on it, that the king of Babylon would surely [RHQ] come [with his army] and destroy this land and get rid of all the people and the animals. 30 Now this is what [I], Yahweh, say about [you], Jehoiakim: 'None of your descendants will rule this kingdom [MTY]. Your corpse will be thrown out [on the ground and not be buried]; it will be under the hot [sun] during the days and [struck by] frost during the nights. 31 I will punish you and your family and your officials for their sins. And I will cause the people of Jerusalem and the people of the [other] towns in Judah to experience all the disasters that I promised, because you all would not pay attention [to what I said]!'" '" 32 So I took another scroll, and again I dictated the messages to Baruch. He wrote everything that had been written on the [other] scroll, the one that King Jehoiakim had burned in the fire. [But this time, I] added more messages.

37 After Jehoiakim died, [his son Jehoiachin became king for only three months, after which] King Josiah's son Zedekiah became the King of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, appointed him to be the new king. 2 But King Zedekiah and his palace officials and the other people in the land paid no attention to the messages that Yahweh gave me. 3 However, [one day] King Zedekiah sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the priest, who was the son of Maaseiah, to me. They requested me to pray to Yahweh our God for our [nation]. 4 At that time I had not yet been put in prison, so I could come and go wherever and whenever I wanted to, [without being hindered]. 5 [At that time], the army of [Hophra], the King of Egypt, came [to the southern border of Judah]. When the army of Babylonia heard about that, they stopped surrounding Jerusalem and left there [to fight against the army from Egypt]. 6 Then Yahweh gave this message to me: 7 "[I], Yahweh, the God whom [you] Israelis [say you belong to], say this: 'The King of Judah has sent [messengers] to you to ask me [what is going to happen]. Tell the king that even though the army of the King of Egypt came to help him, they are about to return to Egypt. 8 Then the army of Babylonia will return here and capture this city and burn everything in it.' 9 [So], this is what I say [to you Israelis]: 'You should not deceive yourselves, thinking that the army from Babylonia has gone and will not return. That is not true. 10 And even if your soldiers could destroy almost all of the soldiers from Babylonia who are attacking you, and allow only a few of them who were wounded to remain alive in their tents, they would come out [of their tents] and burn this city completely!'"" 11 When the army from Babylonia left Jerusalem because the army from Egypt was approaching, 12 I started to leave the city. I intended to go to the area [where the descendants of] Benjamin live, in order to take possession of my share of the property from my family. 13 But as I was walking out the Benjamin Gate, a guard seized me and said, "You are deserting [us and going] to [the soldiers from] Babylonia!" The man who seized me was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah and grandson of Hananiah. 14 But I [protested and] said, "That is not true! I was not intending to do that!" But Irijah would not pay attention to what I said. He took me to the [king's] officials. 15 They were very angry with me. They [commanded the guards to] beat me and [then to] put me in the house where Jonathan the king's secretary stayed. They had changed Jonathan's house to make it become a prison. 16 They put me in a dungeon/cell in that prison, and I remained there for several days. 17 Then King Zedekiah secretly sent a servant to me, who took me to the palace. There the king asked me, "Do you have any messages from Yahweh?" I replied, "Yes, [the message is that] you will be handed over to the king of Babylon." 18 Then I asked the king, "What crime have I committed [RHQ] against you or

against your officials or against the Israeli people, with the result that you have [commanded that] I be put in a prison? **19** Your prophets predicted that the army of the king of Babylon would not attack you or this land. Why were [RHQ] [their messages] not fulfilled? **20** Your majesty, I plead with you to listen to me. Do not send me back to the dungeon/cell in the house of Jonathan your secretary, because [if you do that,] I will die there." **21** So King Zedekiah commanded that [I not be sent back to the prison cell. Instead,] I was allowed to be watched by the guards in the courtyard [of the palace]. [The king] also [commanded that they should] bring me a loaf of fresh bread every day, until there was no bread left in the city. So [they put me] in that courtyard and I remained there.

38 [Four officials,] Shephatiah the son of Mattan, Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malkijah, heard what I had been telling all the people. **2** [I had been telling them] that Yahweh was saying, "Everyone who stays in Jerusalem will die. They will be killed by [their enemies'] swords or from famines or from diseases. But those who surrender to the Babylonian army, they will be spared. They will not be killed. **3** Yahweh also says that the army of the King of Babylon will certainly capture this city [DOU]." **4** So those officials [went] to the king and said, "This man [Jeremiah] should be executed! Because of what he is saying, he is discouraging our soldiers who remain in the city. He is also discouraging the people. He is not saying things that will help us; he is saying things that will defeat us." **5** King Zedekiah said, "All right, do to him what you want to; I do not have the power to stop you." **6** So those officials took me from my cell and lowered me by ropes into a well in the courtyard. The well belonged to Malkijah, who was a son of the king. There was no water in the well, but there was [a lot of] mud, so I sank [down deep] into the mud. **7** But Ebed-Melech, a palace official from Ethiopia, heard [someone say] that I was in the well. [At that time] the king was deciding/judging people's cases at the Benjamin Gate. **8** Ebed-Melech went out of the palace and said to the king, **9** "Your majesty, those men have done a very evil thing. They have put the prophet Jeremiah in a well. [Almost] all the food in the city is gone, [so they will not be able to bring him any food] and as a result he will die from hunger!" **10** So the king told Ebed-Melech, "Take thirty of my men/soldiers with you, and pull Jeremiah out of the well, in order that he does not die!" **11** So Ebed-Melech took thirty men with him and they went into a room in the palace below the room where they stored very valuable things. There they found some old rags and discarded clothing. They took those things and went to the well. They fastened them to a rope and lowered the rope to me. **12** Then Ebed-Melech called down to me, "Put these rags underneath your armpits, to protect you from [being injured by] the ropes!" So I did that. **13** Then they pulled me out of the well. I [returned] to the courtyard where the palace guards stayed, and I stayed there. **14** [One day] King Zedekiah summoned me, and I was brought to the king, [who was waiting for me] at the entrance of the temple. He said to me, "I want to ask you something. I want you [to answer me truthfully, and] and to not conceal anything." **15** I replied, "If I tell you [the truth], you will [command that I] be executed. And if I give you [good] advice, you will not pay attention to what I say." **16** But King Zedekiah secretly promised me, "[Tell me the truth]! And as surely as Yahweh lives, I will not [cause] you to be executed, and I will not hand you over to those who are wanting to kill you." **17** [So] then I said to Zedekiah, "This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says: 'If you surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, you and your family will (be spared/not be killed), and this city will not be burned. **18** But if you refuse to surrender to them, you will not escape. And the army from Babylonia will capture this city and completely burn it.'" **19** The king replied, "But I am afraid [to surrender to the soldiers from Babylon], because their officers may hand me over to the people of Judah who have already joined the soldiers from Babylonia, and those people from Judah will mistreat me." **20** I replied, "If you obey Yahweh by doing what I tell you to do, they will not hand you over to our people. Things will go well for you, and you will remain alive. **21** But if you refuse to surrender, this is what Yahweh has revealed to me: **22** All the women who remain in your palace will be brought out and given to the officers of the king of Babylon. Then those women will say to you: 'You had friends whom [you thought] you could trust, but they have deceived you and caused you to make a wrong decision. Now [it is as though] you are stuck in mud, and your friends have abandoned you.' **23** All of your wives and children [in the city] will be led out to the soldiers from Babylonia, and you also will not escape. [The soldiers of] the King of Babylon will seize you, and they will burn down this city." **24** Then Zedekiah said to me, "Do not tell anyone what you told me; if you tell anyone, my officials may kill you. **25** If my officials find out that I talked to you, perhaps they will come to you and say, 'Tell us what you and the king were talking about. If you do not tell us, we will kill you.' **26** If that happens, [just] tell them that you pleaded with me not to send you back to the [dungeon/cell in] Jonathan's house, [because you were afraid that] you would die [if you were put there again]." **27** And [that is what happened]. The king's officials came to me and asked [why the king had summoned me. But] I told them

what the king told me to tell them. So they did not ask me any more [questions], because no one had heard what the king and I had said to each other. 28 So I remained being guarded in the courtyard [of the palace], until the day that [the army of Babylonia] captured Jerusalem.

39 After King Zedekiah had been ruling Judah for almost nine years, King Nebuchadnezzar came in January with his army, and they surrounded Jerusalem. 2 One and a half years later, after Zedekiah had been ruling for almost eleven years, on July 18, [soldiers from Babylonia] broke through the city [wall. Then they rushed in and captured the city]. 3 Then all the officers of the king of Babylon came in and sat down at the Middle Gate [to decide what they would do to the city. They included] Nergal-Sharezer from Samgar, Nebo-Sarsekim who was one of the chief army officers, another Nergal-Sharezer, the king's advisor, and many other officials. 4 When King Zedekiah and all his soldiers realized that [the army of Babylonia had broken into the city], they fled. [They waited until] it was dark. Then they went out of the city through the king's garden, through the gate that was between the two walls. Then they started [running] toward the Jordan River Valley. 5 But the soldiers from Babylonia pursued the king, and they caught him on the plains near Jericho. They took him to the King of Babylon, who was at Riblah [town] in the Hamath [region]. There the king of Babylon told [his soldiers what] they should do to punish Zedekiah. 6 They forced Zedekiah to watch while they killed his sons and all the officials from Judah. 7 [Then] they gouged out Zedekiah's eyes. They fastened him with bronze chains and took him to Babylon. 8 [Meanwhile,] the Babylonian army burned the palace and all the other buildings in Jerusalem. And they tore down the city walls. 9 Then Nebuzaradan, the captain of the [king's] bodyguards, forced to go to Babylon [most of] the other people who remained in the city and the Jews who had joined the soldiers of Babylonia. 10 But he allowed some of the very poor people to remain in Judah, and he gave them vineyards and fields [to take care of]. 11 King Nebuchadnezzar had [previously] told Nebuzaradan to find me. He said, 12 "Make sure that no one harms him. Take care of him, and do for him whatever he requests you to do." 13 So he and Nebushazban, who was one of their chief officers, and Nergal-Sharezer the king's advisor, and other officers of the King of Babylon 14 sent [some men] to bring me out of the courtyard outside of the palace. They took me to Gedaliah who was the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. Then Gedaliah took me to my home, and I stayed [in Judah] among [my own] people [who had been allowed to remain there]. 15 While I was [still] being guarded in the palace courtyard, Yahweh gave me this message: 16 "Say this to Ebed-Melech, the official from Ethiopia: 'This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says: "I will do to this city everything that I said that I would do. I will not enable the people to prosper; I will cause them to experience disasters. You will see Jerusalem being destroyed, 17 but I will rescue you from the people whom you are afraid of. 18 You trusted me, so I will save you. You will not be killed by [your enemies'] swords; you will remain alive. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it.'"

40 [The soldiers from Babylonia] captured me and many other people from Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah. They [planned to] take us to Babylon. So they fastened chains around our wrists and took us to Ramah [town north of Jerusalem]. While we were there, I was released. [This is how it happened]: 2 [Nebuzaradan,] the captain of the [king's] bodyguards, [found that I was there]. He summoned me and said to me, "Yahweh your God said that he would cause this land to experience a disaster. 3 And now he has caused it to happen. He has done just what he said [that he would do], because you people sinned against Yahweh and refused to obey him. 4 But today I am going to take the chains off your wrists and release you. If you want to come with me to Babylon, [that will be fine]. I will take care of you. But if you do not want to come with me, do not come. [Stay here]. Look, the entire country is available; you can choose whatever part you want to go to. You can go wherever you wish." [Then he took the chains off my wrists]. 5 He said, "If you [decide to] stay here, go to Gedaliah. The King of Babylon appointed him to be the governor of Judah. [You will be allowed to] stay here with the people [that he is governing]. But you can do whatever you want to." Then Nebuzaradan gave me some food and some money, and he allowed me to go. 6 I returned to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and I stayed in Judah with the people who still remained in the land. 7 The [Israeli] soldiers [who had not surrendered to the army of Babylonia] were roaming around in the countryside. Then their leaders heard someone say that the King of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah to be the governor of the very poor people [who were still in Judah], who had not been taken to Babylon. 8 So they went [to talk] to Gedaliah at Mizpah. [Those who went included] Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai from Netophath, and Jezaniah from Maacah, and the soldiers who were with them. 9 Gedaliah solemnly promised that the soldiers from Babylonia would not harm them. He said, "Do not be afraid to do things for them. Stay [here] in this land and do things for the King of Babylon. If you do

that, things will go well for you. 10 As for me, I will stay [here] at Mizpah to be your representative to the [officials from] Babylonia who come to [talk with] us. But you should [return to your towns, and eat the things that are produced on your land]. Harvest the grapes and the fruit [that ripen in] the (summer/hot season) and the olives, [make wine and olive oil,] and store it." 11 Then the Jews who had fled to Moab, Ammon, Edom, and other [nearby] countries heard people say that the King of Babylon had allowed a few people [to remain] in Judah, and that he had appointed Gedaliah to be their governor. 12 So they [began to] return to Judah. They stopped at Mizpah to [talk with] Gedaliah. Then [they went to various places in Judea, and] they harvested a great amount of grapes and summer fruit. 13 [Some time later,] Johanan and all the [other] leaders of the Israeli soldiers [who had not surrendered to the army of Babylonia] came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. 14 They said to him, "Do you know that Baalis, the king of the Ammon [people-group], has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to assassinate you?" But Gedaliah did not believe what they said. 15 Later Johanan talked with Gedaliah privately. He said, "Allow me to go and murder Ishmael secretly. It would not be good [RHQ] to allow him to come and murder you! If you are killed, what will happen to all the Jews who have returned to this area? They will be scattered, and the other people who remain in Judah will all be killed!" 16 But Gedaliah said to Johanan, "[No], I will not allow you to do that. [I think that] you are lying about Ishmael."

41 Ishmael was a member of the king's family. He had been one of King Zedekiah's important officials. In October of that year, he went to Mizpah with ten other men to [talk with] Gedaliah. While they were eating together, 2 Ishmael and the other ten men jumped up, and with their swords they killed Gedaliah—the man whom the king of Babylon had appointed to be their governor! 3 Ishmael [and the other men] also killed all the Jews and the soldiers from Babylonia who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah. 4 The next day, before anyone had found out that Gedaliah had been murdered, 5 eighty men from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria [cities] came to worship at the temple of Yahweh [in Mizpah]. They had shaved off their beards and torn their clothes and cut themselves [to show that they were mourning]. And they had brought grain offerings and incense [to burn on the altar]. 6 Ishmael went out of the city to meet them, crying as he went. When he reached them, he said, "Come [and see what has happened to] Gedaliah!" 7 But as soon as they had all entered the town, Ishmael and his men killed [most of] them and threw their corpses into a well. 8 There were [only] ten of them whom they (spared/did not kill). They were not killed because they promised to Ishmael that [if he allowed them to remain alive, they would bring him] lots of wheat and barley and olive oil and honey that they had hidden. 9 The well where Ishmael's men had thrown the corpses of the men whom they had murdered was the deep well that King Asa's [men] had dug [in order that they would have water in the city] if the army of King Baasha of Israel would surround the city. Ishmael's men filled that well with corpses. 10 Then Ishmael [and his men] captured the king's daughters and some of the other people who had been left in Mizpah by Nebuzaradan in order that Gedaliah would take care of them. Ishmael and his men took those people and started back toward the Ammon area. 11 But Johanan and all the other leaders of the Israeli soldiers who had not surrendered to the army of Babylonia heard about what Ishmael [and his men] had done. 12 So they [immediately] went with all their men to stop them. They caught up with them at the large pool near Gibeon [city]. 13 When all the people whom Ishmael and his men had captured saw Johanan and the soldiers who were with him, they [shouted] joyfully. 14 So all those who had been captured in Mizpah escaped, and they started to help Johanan. 15 But Ishmael and eight of his men escaped and fled to the Ammon area. 16 Then Johanan and the men who were with him [gathered together] all the people whom they had rescued at Gibeon. They included soldiers and women and children and some of the king's palace officials. They were all people whom Ishmael [and his men] had captured after they had killed Gedaliah. 17 They took them all to Geruth-Kimham [village] near Bethlehem. And they all prepared to go to Egypt. 18 They were worried about what the soldiers of Babylonia [would do to them when they found out] that Ishmael had killed Gedaliah, who had been appointed by the King of Babylonia to be their governor.

42 Then Johanan and Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the [other] leaders of the [Israeli] soldiers [who had not surrendered to the army of Babylonia], and many [HYP] [other] people, including those who were important and those who were not important, came 2 to me. They said, "Please listen to our request and pray to Yahweh our God for all of us. Although we were previously a huge number of people, you can see that now we are only a small number of people [who have survived]. 3 [Pray] that Yahweh our God will show us what we should do and where we should go." 4 I replied, "Okay, I will pray to Yahweh our God, like you have requested, and I will tell you what he says. I will (tell you everything/not hide anything from you)." 5 They replied to me, "We hope/wish that Yahweh our God will be a faithful witness against us if we refuse to do everything that he tells us to do. 6 We are requesting you to ask Yahweh our God

what we should do. [When he replies], we will obey him, whether we like what he says or not. We will do that because [we know that] things will go well for us if we obey him." 7 [So I prayed] to Yahweh, and ten days later he gave me his reply. 8 So I summoned Johanan and all his [other] soldiers and all the [other] people, including those who were important and those who were not important. 9 I said to them, "You told me to tell Yahweh, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], what you were requesting. This is what he replied: 10 'You [should] stay here in this land. If you do that, I will cause your [nation] to be strong and not be weak. I will cause you to prosper and not be exiled [again]. I am sorry about the disasters that I [was forced to] cause you to experience. 11 But do not be afraid of the king of Babylon [any more], because I will (be with/help) you. I will rescue you [DOU] from his power [MTY]. 12 I will be merciful to you by causing him to act kindly toward you. So as a result, he will allow you to stay here in your land.' 13 But if you refuse to obey Yahweh our God, and if you say 'We will not stay here; 14 instead, we will go to Egypt. There we will not experience [any] wars, we will not hear trumpets [signaling our soldiers to prepare for battles], and we will not be hungry,' 15 then listen to what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says: 'If you are determined to go to Egypt, and you go and live there, 16 you will experience those wars and famines that you are afraid of, and you will [all] die there. 17 That is what will happen to all you who are determined to go to Egypt and live there. [Some of you] will be killed by the swords [of your enemies, and others of you will die] from famines and from diseases. None of you will escape the disasters that I will bring on you.' 18 And the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], also says this: 'Because I was very angry, I severely punished [MTY] [all] the people of Jerusalem. I will do the same things to you when you go to Egypt. [The result will be that] people will curse you. They will be horrified about [what has happened to] you. They will make fun of you, and you will never see this land again.' 19 You little group of people of Judah who are still alive, [listen to me]: Yahweh has told you, 'Do not go to Egypt.' [So] do not forget what I have warned you today. 20 I know that you were lying when you requested me to pray to Yahweh our God. 21 And today I have told you exactly what he said, but [I know that] you will not obey Yahweh our God now, just as you have not obeyed him previously. 22 You want to go to Egypt and live there. So now, you can be sure of this: [All of] you will die there. [Some of you will be killed] by the swords [of your enemies and others will die] from famines or from diseases."

43 [So] I finished telling to the people that message from Yahweh our God. 2 But then Johanan and Azariah and some other insolent/arrogant men said to me, "You are lying! Yahweh our God has not told [us] that we should not go to Egypt! 3 [We think that] Baruch has urged/persuaded you to say this, in order that [if we stay here], the soldiers from Babylonia will seize us and kill us or take us to Babylonia." 4 So Johanan and the other leaders of the [Israeli] soldiers and [many of] [HYP] the other people [who were there] refused to obey Yahweh's command to stay in Judah. 5 Johanan and all the [other] leaders gathered together all the people who had returned from the other countries to which they had been scattered. 6 [They included] men, women, children, the king's daughters, and all those whom Nebuzaradan had left with Gedaliah, and they also took Baruch and me. 7 They refused to obey Yahweh, and they took us all [to Egypt], as far as Tahpenes [city]. 8 [While we were] at Tahpenes, Yahweh gave me another message. He said, 9 "While the people of Judah are watching you, take some large rocks and bury them under the brick pavement at the entrance to the king's palace there at Tahpenes. 10 Then say to the people of Judah, 'This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [you] Israelis [say you belong to], says: "I will summon Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, who does my work, to come [with his army] to Egypt. I will set up his throne over these stones that I told Jeremiah to bury. And Nebuchadnezzar will set up his tent there [to show that he has become] the King [of Egypt]. 11 When his [army] comes, they will attack Egypt. Then those will die who [I have determined] must die, those who [I have determined] must be captured will be captured, and those who [I have determined] must be killed by swords will be killed by swords. 12 Nebuchadnezzar's [soldiers] will burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt. [But before they burn the temples], they will take away their idols [as souvenirs]. His [troops] will clean Egypt like a shepherd cleans lice from his cloak. They will tear down the sacred pillars that are in the temple of their sun god. And then Nebuchadnezzar's [troops] will leave there, without having been harmed."'"

44 [This is] the message that Yahweh gave me concerning the Jews who were living in [northern] Egypt—in Migdol, Tahpenes, and Memphis [cities], and in the Pathros [region in southern Egypt]: 2 "This is what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [you] Israelis [say you belong to], say: 'You saw the disaster that I caused [the people in] Jerusalem and the other towns in Judah to experience. Those towns are now ruined and deserted. 3 [That happened] because I was extremely angry with them on account of their being very wicked. They burned incense

to other gods and worshiped them. They were gods that you [previously] did not know about, and your ancestors also [did not know about them]. **4** Many times I sent my prophets who served me, to say to them, "Do not do those abominable things that I hate!" **5** But my people would not pay any attention [DOU] [to what I said to them]. They would not turn away from their wicked behavior, or stop burning incense to [worship/honor] other gods. **6** So I poured out my anger [MTY] on them. I punished people on the streets of Jerusalem and on the [other] towns in Judah. It caused those towns to be ruined and deserted, and they are still like that.' **7** So now [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [you] Israelis [say you belong to], ask you: 'Why are you causing yourselves to experience these disasters? [Do you not realize that because of what you are doing], soon there will be no more men or women or children or infants left among you [who have come here to Egypt] from Judah? **8** Why are you [RHQ] provoking me and causing me to be very angry by burning incense to the idols that you have made here in Egypt? [If you continue doing this,] you will destroy yourselves, and you will cause yourselves to be people whom all the nations on the earth will curse and despise. **9** Have you forgotten [how I punished] your ancestors for the wicked things that they did, and [how I punished] the kings and queens of Judah for what they did, and you and your wives for the sins that you committed in the streets of Jerusalem and [the other towns] in Judah? **10** Up until this day you have not humbled yourselves or revered me. You have not obeyed the laws and decrees [DOU] that I gave to you and your ancestors.' **11** Therefore, this is what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [you] Israelis [say you belong to], say: 'I am determined to cause all of you to experience disasters and to get rid of every one of you. **12** [You] people from Judah who have survived were determined to come and live here in Egypt. So I will get rid of all of you here in Egypt. Every one of you will die, including those who are important and those who are not important. [Some of] you will be killed by [your enemies'] swords, [some will die] from famines. You will become [people whom others] curse, be horrified about, and make fun of. **13** I will punish you here in Egypt like I punished [others in] Jerusalem, [some of whom were killed] by [their enemies'] swords and [some of whom] died from famines or diseases. **14** You people who did not die in Judah fled here to Egypt, hoping that [some day] you would return to Judah. But very few [HYP] of you will survive and escape. You are longing/wanting to remain alive and return to Judah, but only a very few of you will escape and be able to do that.'" **15** Then a large group of the people who had started to live in northern Egypt and southern Egypt, including all the men who knew that their wives had been burning incense to other gods, and all the women who were standing there, said this to me: **16** "You are saying that [MTY] Yahweh gave messages to you, but we will not pay any attention to your messages! **17** We will certainly do everything that we said that we would do. We will burn incense to [worship our goddess Astarte,] the Queen of Heaven, and we will pour out offerings [of wine] to her, just like we and our ancestors and our kings and [their] officials have [always] done in the streets of Jerusalem and in the [other] towns in Judah. At that time, we had plenty of food, and we were prosperous and we did not have any troubles. **18** But ever since we stopped burning incense to the Queen of Heaven and giving her offerings [of wine], we have had many troubles, and [some of our people] have been killed by [our enemies'] swords and [some have died] from hunger." **19** And [the women said], "[Furthermore], we burned incense and poured out [wine] offerings to the Queen of Heaven, and we also made small cakes that resembled her idol, to offer to her. But our husbands certainly knew about [and approved of] [RHQ] what we were doing!" **20** Then I said to all the men and women who had answered me, **21** "Do not think [RHQ] that Yahweh did not know that you and your ancestors and your kings and their officials and all the other people in Judah were burning incense to [worship/honor] idols in the streets of Jerusalem and in the [other] towns in Judah! **22** It was because Yahweh could no longer endure/tolerate your wicked actions and the detestable things that you were doing that he caused your land to be [a place whose name people say when they] curse someone, a land that is ruined and which has no one living in it. And your land is still like that. **23** It is because you burned incense to [worship/honor] idols and committed [other] sins against Yahweh that you experienced [all] those disasters. It is because you have not obeyed him or his laws and decrees and commandments." **24** [Then] I said to all of them, including the women, "All you [people of] Judah who are [here] in Egypt, listen to this message from Yahweh. **25** This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says [to you Israeli men]: 'You and your wives have said that you would continue to do what you promised, to burn incense and pour out wine to the [goddess whom you call] the Queen of Heaven. [And you have proved by your actions that you intend to continue to do that]. So go ahead and continue doing what you have promised to do [for her].' **26** But now, all you people from Judah who are [now] living [here] in Egypt, listen to this message from Yahweh. He says, 'I have solemnly declared, using my great name, that

[soon] none of [you] people from Judah who are here in Egypt will ever again use my name. [There will be none of you who, when you solemnly promise to do something,] will ever again say, "[I will do it as surely] as Yahweh lives." **27** Because I will be watching over you, not to cause good things to happen to you but to cause things to happen that will harm you. [Almost] everyone [HYP] from Judah who is [now here] in Egypt will experience being [killed by their enemies'] swords, or dying from famine. **28** [Only a very] few [of you] will not die, and will return to Judah. [When that happens], all those who came to Egypt will find out whose words (were true/were fulfilled), theirs or mine.' **29** And Yahweh [also] says, 'I will do something that will prove to you that everything that I have said will happen, and that I will punish you [here] in this place. **30** I will cause Hophra, the king of Egypt, to be captured by his enemies who want to kill him, just like I caused King Zedekiah of Judah to be captured by [the soldiers of] King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.'" [And that is what happened several years later].

45 After Jehoiakim the son of King Josiah had been ruling Judah for almost four years, [I,] Baruch, wrote down [all] the messages that the prophet Jeremiah had dictated to me. Then Jeremiah gave me a message. He said, **2** "Baruch, Yahweh, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], has a message for you. **3** You have said, 'Terrible things [are happening] to me! I have endured much pain already. And now Yahweh is causing me to be very sad, in addition to my having pain. I am exhausted from my (groaning/being sad), and I am unable to rest!' **4** But [Baruch], this is what Yahweh says: 'I will destroy this nation that I established. [This nation is like a tree] [MET] that I planted and that I will now pull up with its roots. **5** So, should you [RHQ] desire that people do things to honor you in a special way? Do not desire that. [It is true that] I will cause all these people to experience a great disaster, but wherever you go, I will protect you, and you will not be killed.'"

46 These are messages that Yahweh gave to the prophet Jeremiah about [other] nations. **2** After Jehoiakim, son of King Josiah, had been ruling Judah for almost four years, this message about Egypt was given [by Yahweh]. It was when the army of King Neco of Egypt was defeated by the army of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon along the Euphrates River. [This is what Yahweh said: "The officers of the army of Egypt are saying to their troops], **3** 'Prepare your shields and march out to fight the battle! **4** Put harnesses on your horses, and get on their backs. (Get into your positions/Line up) [for the battle]; put on your helmets. Sharpen your spears, and put on your armor!' **5** But what [RHQ] do I see? I see that the soldiers of Egypt will be terrified and will be fleeing. [Even] the bravest of their soldiers will be running away, without [even] looking backward! [I,] Yahweh, say that [their soldiers] will be terrified on all sides! **6** [Even] the fastest [runners] will try to run away, but [even the greatest of] their warriors will not escape. In the north, by the Euphrates [River], they will stumble and fall. **7** What group is this that will be covering the land like the water of the Nile [River] covers the land when it floods? **8** [It is the army of] Egypt that will be covering the land like a surging/huge flood, and they will boast that they will cover the earth and will destroy cities and the people [who live in them]. **9** You [riders of] horses, charge/rush [into the battle]! You [drivers of] chariots, drive furiously! [All] you warriors from Ethiopia and Libya who carry your shields, you warriors from Lydia who shoot arrows, you come! **10** But, [you need to know that] this is the day when [I], Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels, will get revenge on my enemies. With my sword [PRS] I will kill [my enemies] until I am satisfied; my sword will [be like a monster that] [MET, PRS] drinks the blood [of the animals it kills] until it is no longer thirsty. [The enemy soldiers who will be killed] in the north beside the Euphrates River [will be like] [MET] a sacrifice to [me], the Commander of the armies of angels. **11** You people [IDM] of Egypt, go up to the Gilead [region] to obtain medicine; but it will be useless to take all those medicines; you will not be healed. **12** [People in] the [other] nations will hear how you were humiliated. [People] all over the earth will hear you wailing. [Your mighty] warriors will stumble over each other and they will all fall down together." **13** [Then] Yahweh gave me this message about King Nebuchadnezzar when he planned to attack Egypt [with his army]: **14** "Shout [this message] throughout Egypt! Proclaim it in Migdol, Memphis, and Tahpenes [cities]! '(Get into your positions/Line up) [for the battle]; Prepare to defend yourselves, because [everyone] around you will be killed.' [PRS, MTY] **15** Your god is a bull; Why does he fall down? He will not be able to stand up, because Yahweh will knock him down. **16** The soldiers from other countries will stumble and fall over each other, and [then] they will say to each other, 'Let's get up and go back to our own people, to our own land. Let's get away from the swords of our enemies!' **17** There [in Egypt] they will say, 'The king of Egypt talks loudly, but when our [army] had an opportunity [to defeat our enemies], they failed.' **18** [I,] the King, who am called the Commander of the armies of angels, say this: 'As [surely as] I live, someone's army will be coming [to fight against the army of Egypt]. They will be [extremely powerful], [as though they were as tall] as Tabor Hill, or [as high] as

Carmel [Mountain] close to the [Mediterranean] Sea. **19** [All] you people who live in Egypt, pack your possessions/clothes and prepare to be exiled. Memphis [city] will be destroyed; it will become a ruin, and no one will be living there. **20** Egypt is [like] [SIM] a beautiful young cow, but [the army of a powerful king] from the northeast will come to attack it [like] a horsefly [MET] [bites a cow]. **21** The (mercenaries/soldiers [from other countries] who have been hired) will become like [SIM] fat calves; but they also will turn around and run away; they will not stand [there and fight], because it will be a day when there will be a [great] disaster in Egypt, a day when their people will be [greatly] punished. **22** [The soldiers of] Egypt will run away, as silently as a snake scurries/crawls away. [The army of] the enemy will advance; they will march along carrying their axes like [SIM] men who cut down trees. **23** [I,] Yahweh, say that they will kill the soldiers [of Egypt] as though [SIM] they were a forest of trees, because the enemy soldiers will be as numerous as [a swarm of] locusts. **24** The people of Egypt will be humiliated; they will be conquered by people from the northeast.' **25** [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom the Israelis [worship], say, 'I will punish Amon, [the god whom the people] of Thebes [city] worship, and [all] the [other] gods in Egypt. [I will punish] the King of Egypt and [all] those who trust in him. **26** I will cause them to be captured by those who want to kill them—Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, and his army officers. But many years later, people will live in Egypt again. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it.' **27** But you people of Israel who serve me, do not be at all dismayed [DOU] now, because some day I will bring you back from distant places; I will bring your descendants from the land to which they were exiled. [Then you] Israeli people will again live peacefully and safely, and there will not be any [nation] to cause you to be terrified. **28** [I,] Yahweh, say to you people of Israel who serve me, 'Do not be afraid, because I will be with you. I will completely destroy the nations among whom I have scattered you, but I will not completely get rid of you. I will punish you, but I will punish you only as severely as you deserve: It would be wrong if I did not punish you at all.'"

47 Yahweh gave to the prophet Jeremiah a message about the people of Philistia. [The message was given to me] before Gaza [city in Philistia] was captured by [the army of] Egypt. **2** This is what Yahweh said: "[An army] [MET] will be coming from the northeast that will cover the land like a flood. They will destroy the land and everything in it; [they will destroy] people and cities. People will scream; everyone in the land will wail. **3** [They will hear] the sound of the hooves of the [enemy] horses, and [they will hear] the rumble/noise of the wheels [of their enemies'] chariots. Men [will run away;] they will not stop to help their children; they will be completely weak and helpless [MTY]. **4** It will be the time for all the people of Philistia to be destroyed, and the time to prevent the remaining soldiers from helping [the people of] Tyre and Sidon [cities]. [I,] Yahweh, will get rid of the people of Philistia, those whose ancestors [long ago] came from Crete [island]. **5** [The people of] Gaza will be humiliated; they will shave off all the hair on their heads [to indicate that they are ashamed]. The [people of] [city] will all be silent [because they will be mourning]. [All you people who live] along the coast [of the Mediterranean Sea] who are still alive, how long [RHQ] will you gash yourselves [because you are mourning]?" **6** [The people of Philistia say,] "Yahweh, when [RHQ] will you [tell our enemies to stop killing us with] [PRS] their swords? Tell them to [PRS] put them back into their sheaths and keep them there!" **7** But it would not be right [RHQ] for their swords to stay there, because Yahweh has commanded their enemies [to do something more]; Yahweh intends to tell them to attack [all the people living in] Ashkelon and [in other cities] along the coast.

48 This is a message about Moab. The Commander of the armies of angels said: "Terrible things will happen to Nebo [town]; it will [soon] be ruined. Kiriathaim [city] will be captured and [all its people will be] humiliated; the high wall around their city will be ruined, and [its people] will become ashamed. **2** No one will boast about Moab again; the [enemies of Moab] will plan to destroy [the capital city,] Heshbon. [They will say,] 'Come, let's cause Moab to no longer be a nation.' You people in Madmen [town], you also will be silenced; enemy armies [MTY] will pursue you. **3** Listen to the people of Horonaim [town] screaming; [they will be wailing because their town will have been] devastated and destroyed [DOU]. **4** [All of] Moab will be ruined; [even] the little children will cry [loudly]. **5** They will cry bitterly as they climb up Luhith [Hill]. [Others will wail] on the road down to Horonaim, being very sad because of [their town being] destroyed. **6** [Someone will say to them], 'Flee! Hide in the desert!' **7** But you trusted that because you were rich and powerful, [you would be safe]; so you will be captured. [The statue of your god] Chemosh and all his priests and officials will be taken away to distant lands. **8** All the towns [in Moab] will be destroyed; none of them will escape. [Towns in] the valleys and on the plateau will [all] be destroyed, because [I,] Yahweh, have said that is what will happen. **9** Spread salt on the ground in order that it will become a wasteland with [nothing growing there any more], and no one will be living in it!" **10** Yahweh will curse anyone who will not eagerly

do what he desires, anyone who refrains from using his sword to kill [MTY] others [in Moab]. **11** [The people of] Moab have always felt secure; they have never been (exiled/forced [by their enemies] to go to other countries). They are like [MET] wine that has been left undisturbed [in a container for many days to give it good flavor], so now it smells good, and it tastes good. **12** But Yahweh says that there will be a time when he will send [enemies to attack them]; they will get rid of the people of Moab like people pour out wine [on the ground] and then smash the wine jar. **13** Then [the people of] Moab will be ashamed of [their god/idol] Chemosh [because it did not help them], like the Israeli people were ashamed because their gold statue of a calf [was smashed] at Bethel. **14** [The soldiers of Moab previously] said, "We are warriors; we have fought bravely in battles!" **15** But now our King, who is Yahweh, who is called 'the Commander of the armies of angels', says that [the country of] Moab and all the towns in it will be destroyed. Their fine young men will [all] be slaughtered. **16** Moab will very soon be destroyed. It will soon experience disaster. **17** You [people who live in nations] near Moab, who know that it is very famous, should mourn for Moab, and say, "Its glorious power [MTY, DOU] is [completely] ended/broken." **18** You people of Dibon [city], stop being proud because of being honored, and sit in the dust/dirt, because those who will destroy other places in Moab will attack your [city] and destroy your high walls. **19** You people of Aroer [town], stand along the road and watch. Shout to the men and women who will be fleeing [from Moab], "What has happened [there]?" **20** [They will reply], "Moab is ruined and [we are] disgraced!" [So] weep and wail [DOU]. Proclaim at the Aroer [River] that Moab has been destroyed. **21** [Yahweh] will have punished [the towns in Moab that are on] the (plateau/high level): Holon and Jahaz and Mephaath, **22** Dibon and Nebo and Beth-Diblathaim, **23** Kiriathaim and Beth-Gamul and Beth-Meon, **24** Kerioth and Bozrah, cities that are near [each other] and towns that are far away [from each other]. **25** Yahweh says, "The power [MTY] of Moab will be ended; [it is as though] [MET] Moab will have a broken arm. **26** [You people of] Moab have rebelled against [me,] Yahweh; so [now] I will cause you all to [stagger like] [SIM] drunken people. [You people of] will wallow in your own vomit and be ridiculed. **27** You [people of Moab] ridiculed [the people of] Israel [RHQ]. You treated them as though they were thieves [RHQ]. You shook your head at them scornfully and despised them [RHQ]. **28** You people who live in Moab, you should abandon your towns and go and live in caves. Be like [SIM] doves that make their nests in the entrances of caves." **29** We have [all] heard that [the people of] are very proud; they are extremely proud and conceited/arrogant. [IDM, DOU] **30** But Yahweh says, "I know about that, but it is useless for them to boast [because] it will accomplish nothing. **31** So [now] I will wail for Moab; I will cry about all its people. I will moan for the men of Kir-Hareseth [city], [the old capital of Moab]. **32** You people of Sibmah [city], you have many vineyards. [It is as though] the branches of your vines extend across the [Dead] Sea to Jazer [city]. **33** But no one will be joyful or happy in Moab now; your fruit and grapes that ripen in the (summer/hot season) will soon be destroyed. There will be no grape juice coming from the winepresses, [so] there will be no wine. People will not shout joyfully as they tread on the grapes; people will shout, but they will not be shouting joyfully. **34** Instead, the sound of their wailing will rise from Heshbon [city] to Elealeh [town] and Jahaz [village], from Zoar [city] as far as Horonaim [town] and Eglath-Shelishiyah [village]. Even the water in Nimrim [Stream] will be dried up. **35** [I,] Yahweh, say that I will get rid of the people who offer sacrifices on the hilltops, and burn incense to their gods. **36** I [SYN] moan for the people of Moab and Kir-Hareseth like [SIM] [someone playing a funeral song on] a flute, because [all] their wealth will disappear. **37** The men will shave their heads and their beards [to show that they are mourning]. They all will slash their hands and wear (rough cloth/sackcloth) around their waists. **38** In every home and in the town plazas/centers in Moab there will be [people who are] mourning, because I will have destroyed Moab like [SIM] someone smashes an [old] jar that no one wants [any more]. **39** Moab will be completely shattered! And you will hear the people wailing loudly! They will be disgraced. Moab will become a nation that people ridicule. The people in nearby [countries] will be horrified [about what has happened there]. **40** This is what [I,] Yahweh, say: 'Look! Their enemies will be swooping/rushing down over Moab like an eagle [SIM] swoops down [to seize an animal]. **41** Its cities will be captured, its fortresses will be seized. [Even] their warriors will be [afraid], like [SIM] a woman who is about to give birth. **42** [The leaders of] Moab boasted against [me,] Yahweh, so Moab will be destroyed. **43** [I,] Yahweh, say that you people of Moab will be terrified, and fall into pits and traps. **44** Those who are terrified and try to run away will fall into deep pits. Whoever climbs out of a pit will be caught in a trap, because I will punish them at the time that I have chosen.' **45** The people will flee as far as Heshbon [city], but they will not be able to go any further, because a fire will burn in Heshbon, [which is the city] where [King] Sihon lived [long ago], and it will burn up all the people [SYN] in Moab who noisily/loudly boasted very much. **46** [You people of] Moab, terrible things will happen to you! You people who worship [your god] Chemosh, you will

be destroyed. Your sons and your daughters will be captured and taken away [to other countries]. **47** But some day, I will enable the people of Moab to return to their land again. [That will surely happen because I,] Yahweh, have said it." That is the end of what I prophesied about Moab.

49 [This message is] about the Ammon people-group. This is what Yahweh says: "There are [RHQ] plenty of Israeli people left to occupy [the land of the tribe of] Gad. So, why are [RHQ] [the people who worship the god] Molech living in those towns? **2** There will be a time when I will sound the battle-cry [for their enemies] to attack [their capital city], Rabbah. [Then] it will become a heap of ruins, and [all] the nearby towns will be burned. Then [the people of] Israel will again possess the land that the Ammon people-group took away from them. **3** You people of Heshbon [city] [MTY], wail, because Ai [town nearby] will be destroyed. You people of Rabbah [city], weep; put on (rough clothing/sackcloth) [to show you are mourning]; run back and forth [in confusion] inside the city walls, because [your god] Milcom, along with its priests and officials, will be taken away (in exile/to other countries). **4** You are [RHQ] very proud of your very fertile valleys, [but they will soon be ruined]. You rebellious people, you trusted in your wealth, and you said, 'Certainly no [RHQ] army will be able to attack us!' **5** But listen to this: 'I, the Commander of the armies of angels, will cause you to become terrified. You will all be forced to flee [to other countries], and no one will be able to bring you together [again].' **6** But some day I will enable the Ammon people-group to return to their land. [That will surely happen, because I,] Yahweh, have said it." **7** [This message is] about the Edom people-group. This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "It seems that [RHQ] there are no wise people in Teman [district in Edom]! There are no people left who can give others [good] advice. The people who were wise [PRS] have disappeared. **8** You people of Dedan [city in the south of Edom], turn and flee and hide in deep [caves], because when I cause the Edom people-group to experience disaster, I will punish you, too. **9** Those who harvest grapes always [RHQ] leave some on the vines. When thieves come at night, they surely [RHQ] steal only as much as they want. **10** But I will cause everything in Edom to be destroyed, and there will be nothing left, and there will be no place for people to hide. [Many of] [HYP] the children, their relatives and their neighbors, will die, and Edom will not exist any more. **11** But I will protect the orphans, and the widows [also] will [be able to] depend on me [to help them]." **12** And this is [also] what Yahweh says: "If those who do not deserve to suffer [MET] must suffer, you people of Edom must [RHQ] suffer much more [DOU]! You will not escape being punished. **13** I, Yahweh, have solemnly promised, using my own name, that [your chief city] Bozrah will become a place that people will be horrified about. It will be a heap of ruins. People will make fun of it and use its name when they curse people. All the nearby towns and villages will be a ruins forever." **14** I heard this message from Yahweh: "I have sent an ambassador to [many] nations, [to tell them to] gather together to attack Edom. They must prepare for battle!" **15** [And Yahweh says to the people of Edom,] "I will cause your nation to become very unimportant among the [other] nations. They will all despise your country. **16** You have caused [people of other nations] to be terrified, and you [MTY] have been very proud, but you have deceived yourselves. You live in caves in the rock cliffs; [you think that you are safe there because] you live high up there. But even if you make your homes as high up as the eagles' nests, I will cause you to come [crashing] down. **17** Edom will become a place about which people are horrified; people who pass by will be horrified and will (gasp/be shocked) when they see the destruction. **18** Edom will be destroyed as [completely as] Sodom and Gomorrah and the nearby towns were destroyed [long ago]. [As a result,] no one will live there [any more] [DOU]. **19** I will come to Edom [suddenly] like [SIM] a lion comes out of the jungle and [leaps on the sheep that are] eating in the good pastureland. I will quickly chase the people of Edom from their land. And [then] I will appoint for them a leader whom I will choose; [I can do that] because there is no one [RHQ] like me who can object to what I do. No ruler can oppose me. **20** Listen to what I have planned to do to the people of Teman [town] and [the rest of] Edom: Even the little children will be dragged away, and I will completely get rid of the people [MET] who live there. **21** When Edom is destroyed, the noise [will be extremely great], with the result that the earth will shake, and the wailing of the people will be heard [as far away as] the Red Sea. **22** Look! The enemy troops will swoop/rush down over Bozrah like an eagle spreads its wings when it swoops down [to seize an animal]. On that day, [even the strongest] warriors of Edom will [be afraid] like [SIM] a woman who is about to give birth." **23** [This message is] about Damascus. [This is what Yahweh says]: "[The people in the nearby cities of] Hamath and Arpad are confused, because they have heard bad news [about Damascus]. They are very anxious and restless, like [SIM] a sea in a big storm. **24** The people of Damascus have become very weak, and [they all] have (panicked/fled [because] they are very afraid). The people are anguished and in pain like [SIM] a woman [experiences] who is about to give birth. **25** That famous city, that I was [previously] pleased with, will be abandoned. **26** Its young

men will fall in the streets. Its soldiers will all be killed in one day. 27 And I, the Commander of the armies of angels, will start a fire to burn the walls that surround Damascus, and the palaces of [King] Ben-Hadad will be burned down." 28 [This is a message] about the Kedar [people-group] and the kingdom of Hazor which [the army of] Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon attacked. This is what Yahweh says: "[I will cause an army to] advance to attack Kedar and destroy those people who live east [of Judah]. 29 Their tents and their flocks [of sheep] will be captured. The curtains [in their tents] and their camels and their other possessions will be taken away. [Everywhere] men will shout, 'We are terrified [because terrible things are happening] all around us!' 30 So [I,] Yahweh, say, 'Run away [quickly]! You people who live in Hazor, go and hide in deep [caves], because King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon wants to attack you [with his army]; he is planning to destroy you!' 31 But I say [to Nebuchadnezzar], 'Go up and attack that nation whose people feel secure; they do not have allies [who will help them] and do not have [walls with] gates that have bars in them. 32 Your troops will seize their camels and [other] livestock. I will scatter in every direction [IDM] those people who live in remote places (OR, who cut their hair short). I will cause them to experience disasters from every direction. 33 Hazor will become a place where jackals/wolves live, and it will be deserted forever. No one will live there again; no one will settle there [DOU].'" 34 I received this message from Yahweh when King Zedekiah was starting to rule Judah. 35 This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "The men of Elam are famous (archers/men who shoot arrows well); that is how they have made their country very powerful. But I will get rid of them [MET]. 36 I will bring their enemies from all directions [IDM, DOU], and they will scatter the people of Elam in all directions. The people of Elam will be exiled to every nation on the earth [LIT, HYP]. 37 Because I am very angry with the people of Elam, I will enable their enemies to smash Elam; I will cause the people of Elam to experience great disasters. I will enable their enemies, who want to kill them, to pursue them [and kill them] with swords until I completely get rid of all of them. 38 I, Yahweh, will judge them there [MTY], and [then] I will get rid of their king and [his] officials. 39 But some day, I will enable the people of Elam to return to their land. [That will surely happen because I,] Yahweh, have said it."

50 Yahweh gave to [me,] Jeremiah the prophet, a message about Babylon [city] and the country of Babylonia. 2 [This is what Yahweh says]: "Proclaim [DOU] [a message] among the nations; do not withhold any of it; raise up a signal flag to announce that Babylon will be captured. [Its chief god] Marduk, [whose other name is] Bel, will be completely disgraced, and all the [other] statues and idols will be shattered. 3 [The army of] a nation will come from the north to attack Babylon and destroy the city very thoroughly, [with the result that] no one will live there [again]. Both people and animals will run away." 4 "But [I,] Yahweh, say that in the future, when that is about to happen, the people of Israel and the people of Judah will join together. They will be weeping and wanting [to worship] me, their God. 5 They will inquire about the road to Jerusalem, [and then] they will start traveling [IDM] toward it. They will say [to each other], 'We must return to Yahweh [again]!' They will make an everlasting agreement with me that they will never forget. 6 My people have been [like] [MET] lost sheep. Their [leaders/rulers] have caused them [to abandon me] like [MET] shepherds who have allowed their sheep to wander in the hills and mountains. [My people are like] [MET] sheep that do not know the path to return to the sheepfold. 7 All their enemies who found them attacked them. They said, 'We did not sin [by attacking them], because they sinned against Yahweh; he is the one who provides what they need; he is the one to whom they should have remained faithful; he is the one whom their ancestors confidently expected [to help them].' 8 [But now, I say to the leaders of my people], 'Flee from Babylon! Leave the land of Babylonia! Be like [SIM] male goats [that go] in front of [the rest of] the flock; [lead my people back to their own land]. 9 [Do that] because I am going to gather an army of great nations to the north [of Babylon]. They will join together to attack Babylon and will capture it. Their arrows will be like [SIM] skilled warriors that always hit what they aim at. 10 Babylonia will be conquered, and those who conquer it will take away everything they want. [That will surely happen because I,] Yahweh, have said it.'" 11 "You people [of Babylon] who (plundered/stole everything valuable from) my chosen people, now you are very happy [DOU]. You run around joyfully like [SIM] a calf in a meadow, and are happy like [SIM] male horses are happy when they are neighing. 12 But [soon] your people will be very disgraced [DOU] [as a result of being conquered]. Your country will be the most insignificant nation; it will be a desert, a dry and deserted land. 13 Because [I,] Yahweh, am angry [with you people of Babylon], I will cause your city to become completely deserted. All who pass by will be horrified and will (gasp/be shocked) because of the destruction there. 14 [All you nations that surround Babylon,] prepare to attack it! Tell your archers to shoot at their enemies; shoot all of your arrows at them [LIT], because [the people/leaders of Babylon have sinned against me,] Yahweh. 15 Shout [war-cries] against Babylon from all sides [of the city]. [The soldiers

of] Babylon will surrender; the towers and walls will be torn down. It is [I,] Yahweh, who will be getting revenge [on the people of Babylon], [so help me to] get revenge. Do to [the people of] Babylon what they have done to others! **16** Take away from Babylon those who plant [crops] and those who reap the harvests! Because of the swords carried by those who will attack [Babylon], [those people in Babylon who have come from other countries] should all run away, back to their own countries [DOU]!" **17** "The Israeli [people] are [like] [MET] sheep that have been scattered by lions. First [the army of] the King of Assyria defeated them. Then [the army of] King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon smashed them. **18** So this is what I, the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom the Israeli people [worship], say: 'Now I will punish the King of Babylon and the people of his land, like I punished the King of Assyria. **19** And I will bring the people of Israel back to their own land where they will eat [the food that grows] in the fields of the Carmel and Bashan [regions], and [the people in] the hilly areas of Ephraim and Gilead will have all they want to eat. **20** At that time, there will not be people in Israel and in Judah who [are still guilty for having] sinned [DOU], because I will forgive the small group of people whom I enable to still be alive.'" **21** "[So, I, Yahweh, say to the enemies of Babylonia,]'Attack [the people who live in] the Merathaim [region] and the people in the Pekod [region of Babylonia]. Pursue them, kill them, and completely get rid of them, as I have commanded you to do. **22** Shout your battle cries throughout the land; shout [when you are causing] great destruction. **23** [The army of Babylon is like] [MET] the most powerful hammer on the earth, but it will be completely shattered. Babylon will be deserted among the [other] nations.' **24** You [people of] Babylon, [listen,] [because] I have set a trap for you; you will be caught [in that trap], because you fought against me. **25** [It is as though] I have opened the place where I store my weapons, and I have brought out [all] the weapons [to use against the people with whom] I am angry. [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, have [a lot of] work to do [to punish] the people of Babylonia. **26** [So, you enemies of Babylonia,] come from distant lands and attack it. Break open the places where they store the grain. Crush the walls of the city and the houses and pile up [the rubble like] [SIM] heaps of grain. Destroy everything; do not leave anything that is not destroyed. **27** Destroy all the [young men who are as strong as] [MET] bulls; take them to where you will slaughter them. It will be terrible for them, because it will be time for them to be punished. **28** Listen to the people who have fled and escaped from Babylon while they tell in Jerusalem how [I,] Yahweh, have gotten revenge against those who destroyed my temple [in Jerusalem]. **29** Summon archers [DOU] to come to attack Babylon; surround the city in order that no one will escape. Do to [the people of] Babylon what they have done to others [DOU], because they have defied [me,] the Holy One of the Israeli [people]. **30** The young men of Babylon will fall in the streets; all their soldiers will be killed in one day. **31** [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, say this: 'You arrogant/proud people, it is now the time; it is the time [DOU] when I will punish you. **32** [Your land is full of] proud people, but you will stumble and fall, and no one will lift you up [again]. I will light a fire in the cities in Babylonia that will burn up everything that is nearby.' **33** [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, also say this: 'The people of Israel and Judah were (oppressed/treated cruelly); those who captured them guarded them carefully and would not allow them to leave [Babylon]. **34** But I am strong, and I will free them. I am the Commander of the armies of angels; I will defend my people and enable them [to return to] their land where they will have peace, but the people of Babylonia will not have peace. **35** [I will send enemy soldiers carrying] swords [PRS] to strike the people of Babylonia; they will strike the officials and wise men and all the [other] people who live in Babylon. **36** They will strike their false prophets with swords and they will become foolish. They will strike the [strongest] warriors of Babylonia, and they will all be terrified. **37** They will strike their horses and chariots and the foreigners who are in the army of Babylonia, and they will [all] become [as weak] as [MET] women. They will seize [MTY] all the valuable things there in Babylon and take them away. **38** [I] cause the streams to become dry. [I will do all those things] because the [entire] land [of Babylonia] is filled with idols, and those [horrible] idols have caused the people [who worship them] to become crazy. **39** [Soon only] hyenas and [other] wild creatures will live there; and it will be a place where owls live. People will never live there again; it will be uninhabited forever [DOU]. **40** [I will destroy Babylon] like I destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah and the nearby towns; no one will [ever] live there [again] [DOU]. **41** Look! A [great] army will come from the north. A great nation far away with many kings is preparing [to attack you people of Babylon]. **42** Their [army] has bows [and arrows] and spears; they are [very] cruel, and do not act mercifully [to anyone]. [As] they ride along on [their] horses, the sound of the horses' hooves is like [SIM] the roaring of the ocean [waves]; they are riding in battle formation to attack you, you people of Babylon. **43** The King of Babylon says, "[I] have heard reports about the enemy [approaching]; [so I am very frightened, with the result that] I am weak. I am [very fearful, and] anguished/worried, like [SIM] a woman who is about to

give birth to a baby." **44** I, [Yahweh], will come to Babylon [suddenly] like a lion comes out of the jungle and [leaps on the sheep that are eating] the good pastureland. I will quickly chase the people of Babylonia from their land. And [then] I will appoint for them [a leader] whom I will choose; [I will do that] because there is no one [RHQ] like me who can say that what I have done is not right. No ruler can [RHQ] oppose me. **45** Listen to what I have planned to do to the people of Babylon [city] and the rest of Babylonia: [even] the little children will be dragged away, and I will completely destroy the people [MET] who live there. **46** When Babylon is destroyed, the noise will be extremely loud, with the result that the earth will shake, and the wailing of the people will be heard by the [people of other] nations.'"

51 This is what Yahweh says: "I will inspire/motivate [an army] to destroy Babylon [like a powerful] wind [MET], and [also] to destroy the people of Babylonia. **2** I will send a foreign army to come to get rid of Babylonia [like a strong wind] that blows away chaff. They will attack from every direction on that day of disaster. **3** [I will tell them,] 'Do not allow the archers [of Babylon] to [have time to] put on their armor or draw their bows. Do not spare the young men of Babylon. Completely destroy their army.' **4** Their soldiers will fall dead in Babylonia; [they will die after being] wounded in the streets. **5** [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, the Israelis' God, have not abandoned Israel and Judah. [Even though] their land was full of people who sinned against [me], the Holy God of Israel, I am still their God. **6** [You people of Israel and Judah,] flee from Babylon! Run away from there! Do not stay there and be killed when I punish [the people of Babylon]! It will be the time when I will get revenge; I will do to them what they deserve. **7** Babylon has been [like] [MET] a gold cup in my hand, [a cup that is full of wine] that caused people all over the earth [who drank some of it to become] drunk. [It is as though] the [rulers of] the nations drank the wine from Babylon, and it caused them to become crazy. **8** But suddenly Babylon will be conquered. [You foreigners who live in Babylon,] weep for its people. Give them medicine for their wounds; perhaps they can be healed." **9** We [foreigners] would have [tried to] heal them, but [now] they cannot be healed. [So we will not try to help them;] we will abandon them, and return to our own lands, because [it is as though] the punishment they are receiving is so great that it reaches up to the clouds in sky, [so great that no one can measure it]. **10** Yahweh has (vindicated us/shown that we were right); [so] let's proclaim in Jerusalem everything that Yahweh our God has done [for us]. **11** [You enemy soldiers,] sharpen your arrows! Lift up your shields, [because] Yahweh has incited your kings of Media [and Persia to march with their armies] to Babylon and to destroy it. That is how Yahweh will get revenge on [those foreigners who entered] his temple [in Jerusalem] and defiled it. **12** Lift up a battle flag close to the walls of Babylon! (Reinforce the/Appoint more) guards, and tell the watchmen to stand [in their positions]! Prepare an ambush, because Yahweh is about to accomplish all that he has planned to do to the people of Babylon. **13** Babylon is [a city] near the great [Euphrates] River, a city in which there are many rich people, but it is time for Babylon to be finished; the time [for the city] to exist is ended. **14** The Commander of the armies of angels has solemnly promised, using his own name, "Your cities will be filled with your enemies; I will cause them to be like [SIM] a swarm of locusts; and they will shout triumphantly [when they conquer your city]." **15** Yahweh created the earth by his power; he established it by his wisdom, and he stretched out the sky by his understanding. **16** When he speaks loudly, there is thunder in the sky; he causes clouds to form in every part of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and releases the winds from his storehouses. **17** People are senseless, and they know very little [HYP]; those who make idols are [always] disappointed, because their idols [do nothing for them]. The images/statues that they make are not real [gods]; they are lifeless. **18** Idols are worthless; they deserve to be ridiculed; there will be a time when they will [all] be destroyed. **19** But the God whom [we] Israelis [worship] is not like those [idols]; he is the one who created everything [that exists]; [we], the people of Israel, belong to him; his name is 'the Commander of the armies of angels'. **20** Yahweh says [about the army of Babylonia] (OR, [about a nation that will attack Babylonia)], "You have been [like] [MET] my battle-axe and war-club; with your [power] I have shattered nations and destroyed [many] kingdoms. **21** With your [power] I have shattered armies [of other nations]: I destroyed [their] horses and their riders, [their] chariots and [their] chariot-drivers. **22** With your [power] I shattered men and women, old people and children, young men and young women. **23** With your [power] I shattered shepherds and their flocks [of sheep], farmers and their oxen, governors and [their] officials." **24** But, Yahweh [also] says, "[Soon] I will repay/punish [you] people in Babylon and in the rest of Babylonia for all the evil things that you have done in Jerusalem. **25** [Babylonia is] [APO] like [MET] a great mountain [from which bandits descend] to (plunder/steal things from) people all over the earth. But I, Yahweh, am the enemy of you [people of Babylonia]. I will raise my fist to strike you. I will knock you down from the cliffs and cause you to be [only] a huge pile of burned rubble. **26** Your [city] will be abandoned forever;

[even] the stones in your [city] will never [again] be used for buildings. [Your city will be completely destroyed]." **27** [Tell] the nations to lift up a battle flag! [Tell them to] shout the battle-cry! Gather all their armies to fight against Babylon! Prepare the nations to attack Babylon. Summon [the armies of] the kingdoms [north of Babylonia]—from Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a commander for them, and bring [a great number of] horses; [there must be a huge number of horses]; that [huge number] will resemble [SIM] a swarm of locusts. **28** Prepare the [armies of other nations], armies that will be led by the kings of Media [and Persia], their governors and [their] officials. **29** [When they attack Babylon, it will be as though] the earth will shake and writhe [in pain], because [those armies] will accomplish everything that Yahweh has planned to do to Babylon; they will destroy it completely, [with the result that] no one will live there [again]. **30** [When their enemies attack], the strongest warriors in Babylon will not fight. They will remain in their barracks, without any strength. They will be as timid/weak as [SIM] women. [The enemy soldiers] will burn the buildings in the city and pull down the bars [of the city gates]. **31** Messengers will go quickly, one after another, to tell the king that his city has been captured. **32** The places at which people can cross the river [to escape from the city] will be blocked. The dry reeds in the marshes/swamps will be set on fire, and the soldiers of Babylon will be terrified. **33** This is what the Commander of the armies of angels, the God whom [we] Israelis [worship], says; "Babylon is like [SIM] wheat on the ground where it is about to be threshed by [animals] tramping on it. Very soon [their enemies] will trample on [the city of] Babylon [MET]." **34** [The army of] Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, has attacked and crushed us [Israeli people], and we have no strength [left]. [It is as though] they have swallowed us like a [great] monster that filled its belly with all our tasty parts, and then has spit out [what it did not like]. **35** [So] the people of [PRS] Jerusalem say [to Yahweh], "Cause the people of Babylon to suffer like they caused us to suffer! Cause the people of Babylonia to be punished for killing [MTY] our people!" **36** And this is what Yahweh replies to the people of Jerusalem: "I will [be like your lawyer to] defend you, and I will avenge you. I will dry up the river in Babylon and [all] the springs of water. **37** Babylon will become a heap of ruins, a place where jackals/wolves live. It will become a place that people are horrified about and will ridicule; it will be a place where no one lives. **38** The people of Babylon will [all] roar like young lions; they will growl like baby lions. **39** But while they are extremely hungry, I will prepare a [different kind of] feast for them. [It is as though] I will cause them to drink wine until they are very drunk, [with the result that] they will fall asleep. But they will never wake up from that sleep! **40** I will bring them down to a place where they will be slaughtered, like [SIM] [someone who takes] lambs or rams or goats [to where they will be slaughtered for sacrifices]. **41** People all over the earth [now] (honor/praise) Babylon; they say that it is a great city. But I will cause it to become a [place about which people of all] nations are horrified. **42** The [enemies of Babylon] will cover the city [like] huge waves of the sea [DOU]. **43** The towns in Babylonia will become ruins, Babylonia will become a dry desert area. It will be a land in which no one lives and which no one walks through. **44** And I will punish Bel, [the god that the people] of Babylon [worship], and I will cause the people to give back what they have stolen [MET]. [People of other] nations will no longer come to [worship] Bel. And the walls of Babylon will collapse." **45** [Yahweh also says,] "My people, come out of Babylon! Run away from there! Run, because [I], Yahweh, am extremely angry [MTY] [with the people of Babylon, and I will get rid of them]! **46** Do not be discouraged/worried [IDM] or afraid when you hear reports [about what is happening in Babylon]. People will report rumors like that every year, rumors about violent things being done in the land, and rumors about leaders fighting against each other. **47** But it will soon be the time for me to get rid of the idols in Babylon. [People all over] the land will be ashamed [because of being defeated]; and the corpses of their [soldiers] will lie in the streets. **48** Then all [the angels in] heaven and all the [people on] [PRS] the earth will rejoice, because from the north will come [armies] that will destroy Babylon. **49** Like [the soldiers of Babylon] killed the people of Israel and [also] killed others all over the world [HYP], [the people of] Babylon must also be killed. **50** You [Israeli people] who have not been killed [MTY], get out of Babylon! Do not wait! [Even though you are in a land] far away [from Israel], think about Yahweh, and think about Jerusalem!" **51** [The Israeli people say], "We are ashamed. We are completely disgraced [DOU], because foreigners have entered Yahweh's temple [and (defiled it/caused it to become unfit for worship)]." **52** Yahweh replies, "[That is true], but there will soon be a time when I will destroy the idols in Babylon, and throughout Babylonia there will be wounded people who will groan. **53** Even if [the walls around] Babylon could extend up to the sky, and if its walls/fortifications were extremely strong, I will send [armies] that will destroy the city. [That will surely happen because I,] Yahweh, have said it." **54** Listen to [the people of] Babylon crying [for help]! And listen to the sounds of things being destroyed all over Babylonia! **55** Yahweh will be destroying Babylon. He will cause the loud noises in the city to cease. **56** Enemy troops will surge against the city like [SIM] a great

wave. They will capture the city's mighty soldiers and break their weapons. [That will happen] because Yahweh is a God who punishes [his enemies] justly; he will punish them as they deserve. **57** The king, the Commander of the armies of angels says, "I will cause the city officials and wise men, the army captains and soldiers [in Babylon] to become drunk. They will fall asleep, but they will never wake up [again]!" **58** Yahweh also says, "The thick walls around Babylon will be flattened to the ground. The city gates will be burned. People [from other countries] will work hard [to save the city], but it will be (in vain/useless), because everything [that they have built] will be destroyed by fire." **59** Seraiah was the man who made arrangements for the King of Babylon [whenever he traveled]. He was the son of Neraiah and grandson of Mahseiah. When he was about to go to Babylon with King Zedekiah, after Zedekiah had been ruling Judah for almost four years, the prophet Jeremiah gave him a message. **60** Jeremiah had written on a scroll a list of all the disasters that he had written about, disasters that would soon occur in Babylon. **61** He said to Seraiah, "When you arrive in Babylon, read [aloud] everything that I have written [on this scroll]. **62** Then pray, 'Yahweh, you said that you will thoroughly destroy Babylon, with the result that people and animals will no [longer] live there. You said that it will be desolate forever.' **63** [Then], when you have finished reading [what I have written on] the scroll, tie it to a [heavy] stone and throw it into the Euphrates [River]. **64** Then say, 'In the same way, Babylon [and its people] will disappear and never exist again, because of the disasters that Yahweh will cause to occur there'" That is the end of Jeremiah's messages.

52 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became the King [of Judah]. He ruled in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother was Hamutal, the daughter of [a man named] Jeremiah from Libnah [town]. **2** Zedekiah did [many] things that Yahweh says are evil, like [his father] Jehoiakim had done. **3** [The events that are summarized here happened] because Yahweh was angry with [the people of] Jerusalem and [of other places in] Judah, and finally he (exiled them/forced them to go to other countries) [and said that he did not want to have anything to do with] them any more. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. **4** [So,] on January 15, when Zedekiah had been ruling for almost nine years, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon led his entire army to attack Jerusalem. They surrounded the city and built dirt ramps up to the top of the city walls [to enable them to attack the city]. **5** They continued to surround Jerusalem until Zedekiah had been ruling for almost eleven years. **6** When Zedekiah had been ruling for almost eleven years, by July 18 of that year, the (famine/lack of food) in the city had become very severe, and there was no [more] food for the people [to eat]. **7** Then [the soldiers of Babylonia] broke through [a section of] the city wall, and all the [Israeli] soldiers fled. But because the city was surrounded by soldiers from Babylonia, [Zedekiah and the Israeli] soldiers [waited until] it became dark. Then they left the city through the gate between the two walls behind the king's garden. Then they ran towards the Jordan River Valley. **8** But the soldiers of Babylonia pursued King Zedekiah, and they caught up with him on the plains near Jericho. [He was alone because] all his men had deserted him and had scattered. **9** The soldiers of Babylonia took him to the king of Babylon, who was at Riblah in the Hamath [region]. There the king of Babylon told [his soldiers what] they should do to punish Zedekiah. **10** They forced Zedekiah to watch while they killed his sons and all the officials from Judah. **11** [Then] they gouged out Zedekiah's eyes. They fastened him with bronze chains and took him to Babylon. They put him in a prison, and he remained there until the day that he died. **12** On August 17 of that year, which was when King Nebuchadnezzar had been ruling for almost 19 years, Nebuzaradan, who was the captain of the king's bodyguards and one of the king's officials, arrived in Jerusalem. **13** He [commanded his soldiers to] burn down the temple of Yahweh, the king's palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem. They [also] destroyed all the important buildings [in the city]. **14** Then he supervised the soldiers from Babylonia while they tore down the walls on all sides of Jerusalem. **15** Then Nebuzaradan (forced to go/exiled) [to Babylon] some of the poorest people, those Israelis who had said they would support the king of Babylon, the rest of the craftsmen, and other people who had remained in Jerusalem. **16** But Nebuzaradan allowed some of the very poor people to remain [in Judah] to take care of the vineyards and fields. **17** The soldiers from Babylonia broke [into pieces] the [huge] bronze pillars that were in front of the temple, and the [large] bronze water tank, and the [ten bronze water] carts, and they took all the bronze to Babylon. **18** They also took away the basins [for holding the ashes from the burned sacrifices], the shovels [for cleaning out the ashes], the tools for snuffing out the wicks of the lamps, the basins [for holding the blood of the sacrificed animals], the dishes [for incense], and all the [other] bronze items that were used when sacrifices were made at the temple. **19** Nebuzaradan also [told his soldiers to] take away the small bowls, the dishes for burning incense, the basins, pots, lampstands, bowls [for incense], and the bowls used for pouring out the wine offerings. They took all the other items that were made of pure gold or silver. **20** The bronze from the two pillars, the [large water] tank and the twelve

statues of oxen that were beneath it, and the water carts, was more/heavier than they could weigh. Those things had been made for the temple during the time that Solomon was the king. **21** Each of the pillars was (27 feet/8 meters) tall and (18 feet/5.5 meters) around. They were hollow, and each had sides/walls that were (3 in./8 cm.) thick. **22** The bronze head on the top of each pillar was (7-1/2 feet/over 2 meters) high and was decorated all around with a bronze [network of figures that represented] pomegranates. **23** There was a total of 100 figures of pomegranates on the network at the top, 96 of which could be seen from the ground. **24** When Nebuzaradan [returned to Babylon], he took [with him as prisoners] Seraiah the Supreme Priest, Zephaniah who was Seraiah's deputy, and the three men who guarded the entrances [to the temple]. **25** He found [some other] people who were [hiding] in the city. [So] from them he took a commander of the army [of Judah], seven of the king's advisors, the army commander's chief secretary who was in charge of recruiting [soldiers for the army], and 60 [other] soldiers. **26** Nebuzaradan took them all to the king of Babylon, [who was still] at Riblah. **27** There at Riblah in the Hamath region, the king of Babylon commanded that they [all] be executed. [Many of the people of] Judah were (forced to leave/exiled from) their own land. **28** The number of people who were captured and sent to Babylon at that time, when Nebuchadnezzar had been ruling for almost seven years, was 3,023. **29** Then, when he had been ruling for almost 18 years, his [soldiers] took 832 [more Israeli people to Babylonia]. **30** When he had been ruling almost 23 years, he sent Nebuzaradan [to Jerusalem again], and he brought back 745 [more Israelis to Babylonia]. That was a total of 4,600 Israelis [who were taken to Babylonia]. **31** After King Jehoiachin of Judah had been in prison [in Babylon] for almost thirty-seven years, Evil-Merodach became the king of Babylon. He was kind to Jehoiachin and ordered that he be released from prison. That was on March 31 of the year that Evil-Merodach became king. **32** He [always] spoke kindly to Jehoiachin and gave him a position in which he was honored more than [all] the other kings [who had been exiled/taken to Babylon]. **33** He [supplied new clothes] for Jehoiachin, to replace the clothes that he had been wearing in prison. [He also allowed] Jehoiachin to eat with him every day, all during the rest of his life. **34** Every day, the King [of Babylon] gave him some money [to buy the things that he needed. That continued] until the day that Jehoiachin died.

Lamentations

1 Jerusalem was [once] full of people, but now it is deserted.
[Once] it was honored by people all over the world, but
now it is [grieving/abandoned] like [SIM] a widow. [Once] it
was [honored like] [MET] a princess [is honored] among the
nations, but now [we who live here] have become slaves. **2**
We [PRS] weep bitterly [all] night long, with tears flowing
down our cheeks. Among [the people in] all [the nations]
that loved Jerusalem there are none that comfort us [now].
All [the rulers of those nations that were previously] our
allies have betrayed us, and they are all now enemies [of
the people of Jerusalem]. **3** [The people of] Judah have
been (exiled/forced to go to other countries) and caused to
suffer greatly as slaves. They live in [other] nations where
they do not have peace/safety. Their enemies seized them,
and there was no way for them to escape. **4** The roads to
Zion [Hill] are empty [PRS] because no one comes [here] to
[celebrate] the sacred festivals. The city gates are deserted,
and the priests groan. The young women [of Jerusalem] cry
[because] they are suffering greatly. **5** Our enemies have
conquered the city, and [now] they prosper. Yahweh has
punished [the people of] Jerusalem because of all the sins
that they have committed. The children [of Jerusalem] have
been captured and taken [to other countries]. **6** Jerusalem
was a beautiful city, but it is not beautiful now. The leaders
[of the city] are like [SIM] deer that are starving because
of being unable to find any grass [to eat]. They are very
weak, with the result that they are unable to run from their
enemies. **7** [The people of] Jerusalem are sad and scattered,
and they think about the previous greatness of the city. [But
now] our enemies have captured the city, and there is no
one to help the people. Our enemies destroyed the city and
laughed while they were doing that. **8** [The people of] [PRS]
Jerusalem have sinned very much; [it is as though] [MET] the
city has become [like] a filthy [rag]. All those who [previously]
honored the city [now] despise it, because they see that it
has become very disgraced [MET]. Now [the people of] the
city groan, and they cover their faces [because they are
very ashamed]. **9** The city has become filthy because of
[PRS] the sins that the people have committed; they did not
think about what could happen to the city. [Now] the city
has been destroyed, and there is no one to comfort [the
people]. [The people cry out saying], "Yahweh, look at how
we are suffering because our enemies have defeated us!"
10 Our enemies have taken away all our treasures, all the
valuable things that we owned. We have seen [soldiers from
other] nations, [men who do not worship Yahweh], enter
our sacred temple, [the place] where foreigners/non-Israelis
were (forbidden/not allowed) to enter. **11** The people of the
city groan while they search for food; they have given their
treasures to get food [to eat] to remain alive. [They say],
"Yahweh, look [at us], and see that we are despised!" **12**
You people who pass by, you do not [RHQ] seem to care
at all [about what has happened to us]. Look around and
see that there are no other [RHQ] people who are suffering
like we are. Yahweh has caused us to suffer because he
was extremely angry [with us]. **13** [It is as though] he sent a
fire from heaven [MTY] that burned in our bones; [it is as
though] [MET] he has placed a trap for our feet, and has
prevented us from walking any further. He has abandoned
us; we are weak/miserable [every day], all day long. **14**
He caused the sins that we have committed to be [like] a
heavy load for us to carry; [it is as though] [MET] he tied
them around our necks. Previously we were strong, but
he has caused us to become weak. He has allowed our
enemies to capture us, and we were not able to do anything
to resist them. **15** Yahweh looked at our mighty soldiers
and laughed at them. He has summoned a great army to
[come and] crush our young soldiers. [It is as though] [MET]
Yahweh has trampled on [us] people of Judah like [SIM]
[people trample] on grapes in a pit [to make wine]. **16** I weep
because of [all] those things; my eyes are filled with tears.
There is no one to comfort me; those who could encourage
me are far away. Our enemies have conquered [us], so our
children have nothing good to (hope for/expect to happen).
17 [We people of] [PRS] Jerusalem reach out our hands
[to get help], but there is no one to comfort us. Yahweh
has decided concerning [us descendants of] Jacob that the
people in nearby nations will become our enemies; so they
consider that Jerusalem has become [like] [MET] a filthy
rag. **18** But what Yahweh has done [to us] is fair, because
we have rebelled against obeying the commands that he
gave [us]. You people everywhere, listen [to us]; [look and]
see that we are suffering [greatly]. We had [many] sons and
daughters, but they have been captured and forced to go
to distant countries. **19** We pleaded with our allies [to help
us], but they [all] refused. Our priests and our leaders have
died [from hunger] in the city while they were searching for
food [to eat] to remain alive. **20** Yahweh, see that we are
suffering very much. [It is as though] our inner beings are
tormented. We are sad [SYN] because we have rebelled
[against you]. Our enemies kill people in the streets with
their swords; people are dying [because they have no food
to eat]. **21** People have heard us while we groaned, but
no one [came to] comfort us. [Yahweh,] you caused us to
experience this [disaster], and our enemies are happy to see
what you have done [to us]. But cause it soon to be the time

that you have promised, when our enemies will suffer like we have suffered! **22** [Yahweh,] see all the evil things that they have done and punish them! [Punish them] like you have punished us for all the sins that we committed! [We say this to you] because we suffer and groan very much, and we (faint/are very sad).

2 Yahweh was extremely angry [with us]; as a result, [it was as though] [MET] he covered Jerusalem with a dark cloud. Previously it was a beautiful/glorious city, but he has caused it to become a ruins. At the time he punished [MET] Israel, he [even] abandoned his temple [MET] [in Jerusalem]. **2** Yahweh destroyed the homes of [the people of] [PRS] Judah; he did not act mercifully. Because he was very angry, he broke down the fortresses of Judah. He has caused our kingdom and our rulers to become disgraced, and he has gotten rid of them. **3** Because he was extremely angry, he has caused Israel to not be powerful [MET] any more. He has refused to assist us when our enemies attacked us. He has destroyed Israel like [SIM] a raging fire destroys everything. **4** He bent his bow [to prepare to shoot us, his people], as though we were his enemies. He [prepared to] kill the people whom we love the most [MET], members of our own families. He is extremely angry [MTY] with us people of Jerusalem; his anger is like [SIM] a fire. **5** Yahweh has become like an enemy to [us] Israelis; he has destroyed our palaces and caused our fortresses to become ruins. He has gotten rid of many people in Jerusalem, and caused us to mourn and weep [for those who were killed]. **6** He has caused his temple to be smashed [as easily] as [SIM] if it was a shelter in a garden. He has caused [us, his people], to forget all our sacred festivals and Sabbath days. He has caused [our] kings and priests to be rejected because he was extremely angry with them. **7** Yahweh has rejected his own altar and abandoned his temple. He has allowed [our] enemies to tear down the walls of [our temple and] our palaces. They shout [victoriously] in the temple of Yahweh, like we [previously shouted] during our sacred festivals. **8** Yahweh was determined to cause the walls of our city [MTY] to be torn down. [It was as though] he measured the walls and [then he completely] destroyed [MTY] them. [It was as though] he caused the towers and walls to lament/weep, [because they were now ruins]. **9** The city gates have collapsed; the bars that fastened the gates shut have been smashed. The king and his officials have [been forced to] go to other countries. No longer does anyone teach the people the laws [that God gave to Moses]. The prophets do not receive any visions [because] Yahweh does not give them any. **10** The old men of Jerusalem [MTY] sit on the ground, and they say nothing. They wear rough sackcloth and throw dust on their heads [to show that they are sad]. The young girls of Jerusalem bow down [sorrowfully], their faces touching the ground. **11** My eyes are very tired because of my tears; I am very grieved in my soul. Because [very many of] my people have been killed, I grieve and am exhausted. [Even] children and babies are fainting [and dying] in the streets [because they have no food]. **12** They cry out to their mothers, "We need [RHQ] something to eat and drink!" They faint like wounded men in the streets of the city. They slowly die in the arms of their mothers. **13** You people of Jerusalem [MTY, DOU], (what can I/there is nothing that I can) say [to help you]. No people have [RHQ] suffered like you are suffering; I do not know what I can do to comfort you. The disaster [MET] that you have experienced is as great as the ocean is deep; there is no one [RHQ] who can restore your [city]. **14** The prophets among you claimed that they had seen visions [from Yahweh], but what they said was false and worthless. They did not save you from being (exiled/forced to go to other countries), because they did not proclaim that you had sinned. Instead, the messages that they gave you deceived you [because] they were not true. **15** All those who pass by you make fun of [IDM] you; they shake their heads and they hiss/sneer at you. [They say], "Is this that great city of Jerusalem? Is it the city that was the most beautiful city in the world, the city that caused all [the people on] the earth to be joyful?" **16** [Now] all our enemies scoff [IDM] at you; they hiss/sneer [at you] and gnash their teeth [to show that they hate you]. They say, "We have destroyed them! This is what we longed/waited for, and now it has happened!" **17** Yahweh has done what he planned; long ago he threatened to destroy you, and [now] he has done it. He has destroyed [your city] without acting mercifully [toward you]; he has enabled your enemies to he happy about defeating you; he has enabled your enemies to [continually] become stronger. **18** I wish/desire that the walls of Jerusalem [APO] would cry out to Yahweh! You people of Jerusalem [MET], Cry day and night! Let your tears flow like rivers. Do not stop grieving; do not stop crying. **19** Get up [every] night and cry out; tell Yahweh what you are feeling. Raise your arms to plead to him to act mercifully to prevent our children from dying; they are fainting on the street corners because they have no food to eat. **20** Yahweh, look, and think [about it]! Have you ever [RHQ] caused people to suffer like this before? [It is certainly not right that] [RHQ] women are eating the flesh of their own children, the children whom they have always taken care of! [It is not right that] [RHQ] priests and prophets are being killed in your own temple! **21** [The corpses of] people of all ages lie in the streets; [there are even corpses

of] young men and young women who have been killed by [our enemies'] swords. Because you were very angry, you caused them to be killed; you have slaughtered them without pitying them [at all]. **22** You summoned our enemies to attack us from every direction, as though you were calling/inviting them to come to a feast. At that time when [you showed that] you were very angry, no one escaped. Our enemies murdered [our little children,] ones whom we took care of and reared/brought up.

3 I [, the one who am writing this,] am a man who has been afflicted/punished [MTY] by Yahweh because he was angry. **2** [It was as though] he caused me to walk in a very dark place without any light [at all]. **3** He has punished [IDM] me many times, all day, [every] day. **4** He has caused my skin and my flesh to become old. He has broken my bones. **5** He has surrounded me [DOU] with bitterness and suffering. **6** [It is as though] he has buried me in a dark place like [SIM] [the graves of] those who have been dead for a long time. **7** [It is as though] [MET] he has built a wall around me, and fastened/tied me with heavy chains, and I cannot escape. **8** Although I call out and cry out for him to help me, he does not pay attention to my prayers. **9** [It is as though] he has blocked my path with a [high] stone [wall] and has caused my path to become crooked. **10** He has waited to attack me like [SIM] a bear or a lion hides and waits [to attack other animals]. **11** [It is as though] he has dragged me off the path and (mauled me/torn me into pieces), and left me without help. **12** [It is as though] [MET] he bent his bow and caused me to become the target [at which he shot] his arrows. **13** [It is as though] he shot his arrows deep into my body. **14** All my relatives laugh at me; all day, [every] day they sing songs that make fun of me. **15** He has filled me with (bitterness/great suffering), [like] [MET] someone who drinks a very bitter liquid suffers. **16** [It is as though] he has caused me to chew gravel that broke my teeth, and he has trampled me in the dirt. **17** Things no longer go well for me; I no longer remember being prosperous. **18** I [continued to] say [to myself], "I no longer expect to live much longer; I no longer confidently expect [to receive good things] from Yahweh!" **19** When I think about my suffering and my wandering [away from home], [it is like drinking] a very bitter [DOU] liquid. **20** I will never forget this time when I feel very depressed/discouraged [IDM]. **21** However, I confidently expect [Yahweh to do good things for me again] when I think about this: **22** Yahweh never stops faithfully loving [us], and he never stops being kind to us. **23** [He is the one whom we can] always trust/lean on. Every morning he is merciful [to us again]. **24** [So] I say to myself, "Yahweh is all that I need; so I will confidently wait for him [to do good things for me]." **25** Yahweh is good to [all] those who depend on him, to those who seek his [help]. **26** [So] it is good for us to wait quietly for Yahweh to save/rescue [us]. **27** And it is good for us to [patiently] endure [suffering] while we are young. **28** Those [who seek his help] should sit by themselves, silently, [knowing that] it is Yahweh who has allowed/caused them to suffer. **29** They should lie in the dirt, with their faces on the ground, [because] they can still hope [that Yahweh will help them]. **30** If someone strikes us on one cheek, we should turn the other cheek toward that person [in order that he may strike it, too], and accept/endure it when we are insulted. **31** Yahweh does not abandon [us his people] forever. **32** Sometimes he causes us to suffer, but sometimes he is kind [to us] because he continually and faithfully loves [us]. **33** And he is not happy about causing human beings to suffer or to be sad. **34** If people (mistreat all the prisoners/crush all the prisoners under their feet) **35** or if they rebel against God by refusing to give to people the things that it is right for them [to receive], **36** or if they cause judges to decide matters unjustly, (does Yahweh not see all those things?/Yahweh certainly sees all those things!) [RHQ] **37** No one can [RHQ] command something to happen [and then cause it to happen] if Yahweh has not already decided that it should happen. **38** God in heaven [MTY] is [RHQ] the one who causes disasters to happen, and he [also] causes good things to happen. **39** [So] it is certainly not [RHQ] right for us, who are only humans, to complain when he punishes us for the sins that we have committed. **40** Instead, we should (examine/think carefully about) our behavior; we should turn back to Yahweh. **41** We should pray [IDM] sincerely and lift up our arms toward God in heaven, [and say,] **42** "We have sinned and rebelled [against you], and you have not forgiven [us]. **43** You have surrounded us with your anger and pursued us; you have slaughtered [us] without pitying us. **44** You have hidden yourself in a cloud, with the result that you do not hear [us] when we pray. **45** You have caused [the people of other] nations to consider us to be only garbage [DOU]. **46** All our enemies have insulted us. **47** We are constantly afraid [DOU], [because] we have experienced disasters and ruin [DOU]." **48** I cry a lot because my people have been destroyed. **49** My tears continually flow; they will not stop **50** until Yahweh looks down from heaven and sees [us]. **51** I am very grieved because of [what has happened to] the women of my city. **52** Those who are my enemies hunted for me like [SIM] [people hunt for] a bird [to kill it] [even though] there was no reason [for them to do that]. **53** They threw me into a pit to kill me, and they threw stones on top of me. **54** The water [in the pit] rose above my head, and I said [to myself], "I am about to

die/drown!" 55 But from the bottom of the pit I cried out to you [MTY], "Yahweh, [help me]!" 56 I pleaded with you, "Do not refuse to heed [MTY] me while I cry out to you!" 57 Then you answered me and said, "Do not be afraid!" 58 Yahweh, you defended me; you did not allow me to die. 59 [Now], Yahweh, you have seen the evil things that my enemies have done to me, [so] decide my case [and show that I am right]! 60 You know the evil things that they have planned to do to me. 61 Yahweh, you have heard them insult [me] and what they have planned to do to me. 62 Every day they whisper and mutter things about me, all day long. 63 Look at them! Whether they are standing or sitting they make fun of me with the songs that they sing. 64 Yahweh, cause them to suffer in return for their causing [me] to suffer! 65 Curse them [IDM] [for] their being very stubborn [IDM]. 66 Because you are angry with them, pursue them and get rid of them, [until none of them remain] on the earth.

4 [Previously our people were like] [MET] pure gold, but now they are worthless. [Like] [MET] the sacred stones in the temple have been scattered, [our young men have been scattered]. 2 The young men of Jerusalem were as valuable as [MET] large amounts of gold, but now people consider that they are as worthless as [ordinary] clay pots. 3 Even the [female] jackals/wolves feed their pups, but my people act cruelly [toward their children]; they are like [SIM] ostriches in the desert [that abandon their eggs]. 4 [My people's] infants' tongues cling to the roofs/tops of their mouths because they are [extremely] thirsty; the children plead for some food, but no one gives them [any]. 5 People who [previously] ate fine food are [now] starving in the streets; those who previously lived luxuriously [MTY] [now] paw/dig through rubbish heaps [to find some food]. 6 [The people of] Sodom were struck with a disaster very suddenly, and there was no one to rescue them; but my people have been punished more severely than [the people of] Sodom were punished. 7 Our leaders' [behavior] was [previously] very pure, whiter [and brighter] than snow and milk; their bodies were redder than [red] coral/stones; they were very strong and healthy [MET]. 8 But now their faces are blacker than soot, and no one recognizes them in the streets. Their skin has shriveled on their bones, and it has become as dry as [SIM] a wooden [stick]. 9 It is better to die in a battle [MTY] than to die of hunger. There was no food to harvest in the fields, so the people slowly starved until they died. 10 Women who [usually/previously] were very kind have [killed and] cooked their own children; they ate them [when there was no other food], when Jerusalem was surrounded [by enemy soldiers]. 11 Yahweh has shown that he was extremely angry; [it is as though] he started/ignited a fire in Jerusalem that burned everything to ashes. 12 None of the kings on the earth or anyone else believed that any of our enemies could enter the gates of Jerusalem. 13 [But that is what happened]; it happened because the prophets sinned; and the priests [also] sinned by causing innocent people to be executed [MTY]. 14 The prophets and priests wandered through the streets [as though they were] blind. No one would touch them because their clothes were stained with the blood [of people who had been killed]. 15 The people [who were alive] shouted, "Stay away [from us] [DOU]! You are defiled/untouchable! Do not touch us!" So the prophets and priests fled [from Israel], and they wandered around from one country to another, because people [in each country] kept saying to them, "You cannot stay here!" 16 It is Yahweh himself who has scattered them; he no longer is concerned about them. People do not respect [our] priests or leaders. 17 We [SYN] continued to look for someone to help [us], but it was useless. We continued to watch to see if one of our allies would save us, but none of the nations that we were waiting for could help [us]. 18 [Our] enemies were hunting for us, so we could not [even] walk in our streets [lest they seize us]. We were about to be captured; it was time for us to be killed. 19 Those who pursued us were faster than eagles [flying] in the sky. Even if we fled to the mountains or hid in the desert, they [went there ahead of us and] waited [to attack] us. 20 [Our king,] whom Yahweh appointed, was the one who enabled us to remain alive [MTY]; he was the one whom we trusted to protect us [IDM] from [the armies of] other nations. But he was [captured] [like animals are] [MET] caught in a pit. 21 You people of [IDM] Edom and Uz, [you may] be happy [about what is happening to us now], but [Yahweh] will be punishing [MTY] you [also]. You will become drunk and will be ashamed [because your enemies] will have stripped off your clothes. 22 You [people of] [APO] Jerusalem, the time of your being punished will end; Yahweh will not allow you to continue to live in (exile/foreign countries). But [you people of] [APO] Edom, Yahweh will punish [you]; he will reveal the wicked things that you have done.

5 Yahweh, think about what has happened to us. See that we have been disgraced. 2 Foreigners have seized our property, [and now] they live in our homes. 3 [Our enemies] have killed our fathers; they caused our mothers to become widows. 4 [Now] we are required to pay for water to drink, and we must pay [a lot of money] for firewood. 5 [It is as though] those who pursue us are at our heels; we are exhausted, but they do not allow us to rest. 6 In order to get enough food [to remain alive], we went to Egypt and Assyria and offered to work [for the people there]. 7 Our ancestors

sinned, and now they are dead, but we are being punished for the sins that they committed. **8** [Officials from Babylon] who were [previously] slaves [now] rule over us, and there is no one who can rescue us from their power. **9** When we roam around in the desert searching for food, we are in danger of being killed, because people there kill strangers with their swords. **10** Our skin has become hot like [SIM] an oven, and we have a very high fever because we are extremely hungry. **11** [Our enemies] have raped the women in Jerusalem, [and they have done that to] the young women in [all] the towns of Judea. **12** [Our enemies] have hanged our leaders, and they do not respect our elders. **13** They force our young men to grind [flour] with millstones, and boys stagger while they [are forced to] carry [heavy] loads of firewood. **14** [Our] elders no longer sit at the city gates [to make important decisions]; the young men no longer play their musical [instruments]. **15** We [SYN] are no longer joyful; instead of dancing [joyfully], we now mourn. **16** The wreaths [of flowers] have fallen off our heads. Terrible things have happened to us because of the sins that we committed. **17** We [SYN] are tired and discouraged [IDM], and we cannot see well because our eyes are [full of tears]. **18** Jerusalem is [completely] deserted, and jackals/wolves prowl around it. **19** But Yahweh, you rule forever! You continue to rule [MTY] from one generation to the next generation. **20** [So] why [RHQ] have you forgotten us? Why [RHQ] have you abandoned us for a very long time? **21** [Please] enable us to return to you, and enable us to prosper [MTY] as we did previously. **22** Please do that, because we hope that [RHQ] you have not rejected us forever and that [RHQ] you do not continue to be extremely angry with us!

Ezekiel

1 [I am] Ezekiel, a priest, the son of Buzi. When I was 30 years [old], I [living] among [Israeli] people who had been (exiled from/forced to leave) [and had come to Babylon]. I was living along the Kebar River/ [south of Babylon]. Almost five years after King Jehoiachin had been (exiled/forced to leave Judah), on the fifth day of the fourth [of that year, it was as though] the sky was opened and I saw visions from God. On that day, **3** God gave me [in visions here] in Babylonia, and I felt the power [MTY] of Yahweh on me. **4** [In one of the visions, I saw a] windstorm coming from the north. There was a huge cloud, and lightning was flashing continually, and a brilliant light surrounded the cloud. In the center of where the lightning was flashing there was something that resembled glowing bronze. **5** In the center of the storm I saw what resembled four living creatures. They resembled humans, **6** but each of them had four faces and four wings [DOU]. **7** Their legs were straight. Their feet resembled the hooves of calves, and the creatures shone like polished bronze. **8** On their four sides under their wings there were hands like humans have. **9** As the four [stood there, they formed a circle/square], with their wings touching each other. They did not turn when they were moving; they went straight ahead. **10** [of the creatures had four faces]. The face that was in front [of each one was a face that] resembled a human face. The face on the right side resembled a lion's face. The face on the left side resembled an ox's face. The face in back resembled an eagle's face. **11** Two of each creature's wings were lifted up and touched the wings of the creatures that were on each side. The other two wings were folded against the creature's body. **12** The creatures went straight ahead in whatever direction the [that controlled/guided them] wanted them to go, without changing directions while they were moving. **13** [four] creatures resembled burning coals or torches. A blazing fire moved back and forth among the creatures, and lighting flashed from among them. **14** The creatures moved back and [extremely rapidly], like [SIM] flashes of lightning. **15** While I looked at the four living creatures, I saw a wheel on the ground beside each of them. **16** Each of the wheels was the same, and they all shone like [SIM] (chrysolite/a valuable green stone). Each seemed to have one wheel inside another wheel. **17** Whenever they moved, they would go straight in one of the four directions that they faced; they did not [in another direction] while they moved. **18** The rims of the wheels were covered with eyes. **19** Whenever the living creatures moved, the wheels moved with them. [So] whenever the creatures rose from the ground, the [also] rose up. **20** Wherever the [that controlled the creatures] wanted the creatures to go, they went, and the wheels went with them, because the [that controlled/guided them] was in the wheels [DOU]. **21** Whenever the creatures moved, the wheels moved. Whenever the creatures [still], the wheels stopped. Whenever the creatures rose up from the ground, the wheels rose up with them. **22** Above the heads of the creatures there was something that resembled a dome. It shone like ice (OR, crystal) shines, and it was awesome. **23** Under the dome, the creatures stretched out their wings. Each one had two wings; [each wing] stretched towards the creature [was next to] it, and two wings that were against the creature's body. **24** Whenever the creatures moved, their wings made a sound that resembled the roar made by a rushing stream. It also sounded like the voice of Almighty God, and like [SIM] the noise of a huge army marching. Whenever the creatures stood [on the ground], they lowered their wings. **25** While they [on the ground] with their wings lowered, there was a voice from the dome that was over their heads. **26** Above the dome was something that resembled [huge] [that was made of a huge] (sapphire/valuable blue stone). Sitting on the throne was someone that resembled a human. **27** I saw that above his waist his body resembled metal that was glowing as though it [a very hot] fire inside it. And I saw that below his waist there was a very brilliant light that surrounded him. **28** [shone] like [SIM] a rainbow shines in the clouds on a rainy day. That was the brilliant light that represented the presence of Yahweh. When I saw it, I prostrated myself on the ground, and I heard him speak.

2 He said to me, "You human, stand up while I speak to you." **2** While he spoke to me, [God's] Spirit entered me and enabled me to stand up. Then I heard him speak to me. **3** He said, "You human, I will send you to the Israeli people. They are people who have turned away from me and rebelled against me. Their ancestors rebelled against me, and they themselves are still rebelling against me. **4** The people to whom I will send you are very stubborn [DOU]. But say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says to you.' **5** [when you tell them my messages], perhaps those rebellious people will heed those messages and perhaps they will not heed them, but they will know [you are] a prophet who has been among them. **6** And you human, you must not be afraid of them or afraid of what they say. [Living among them will be like] living in the midst of briers or scorpions, but do not be afraid of them. They are rebellious people [MTY], but do not allow them to cause you to become afraid. **7** Tell them my message, but do not expect them to pay attention to it, because they [very] rebellious. **8** But human, you must pay attention to what I say. Do not be rebellious like they are.

[Now] open your mouth and eat what I give to you." 9 Then, as I watched, I saw his hand that was stretched toward me. In his hand was a scroll. 10 He unrolled the scroll. On both sides of it were written words that expressed sorrow and mourning and words about trouble/disaster.

3 He said to me, "You human, eat this scroll that is in front of you. Then go and speak to the Israeli people [MTY]." 2 So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat it. 3 Then he said to me, "You human, eat the scroll that I have given to you. Fill your stomach with it." So I ate it, and in my mouth it tasted as sweet as honey. 4 Then he said to me, "You human, go to the Israeli people [MTY] and tell them my message. 5 The people to whom I am sending you are not people whose language is very [to learn], a language which you do not understand. I am sending you to your Israeli people [MTY]. 6 I am sending you to people whose language you understand very well. If I were sending you to people whose language was difficult for you to understand, they [be surprised and] pay attention to what [say to them]. 7 But the Israeli people do not want to listen to you because they do not want to listen to me. [They do not want to listen because] they are all very stubborn [DOU]. 8 But I will enable you [SYN] to be as stubborn and tough as they are. 9 I will cause you to be as firm/unbreakable as [SIM] the hardest stone, like flint. So, [even though] they are very rebellious people, do not be afraid of them; do not allow them to cause you to be afraid." 10 He also said to me, "You human, listen very carefully to what I say, and keep thinking about it [IDM]. 11 Go to your fellow Israelis who [here after being] (exiled/forced to leave their country), and speak to them. Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says,' [and then tell them my message], whether they want to hear it or whether they do not want to hear it." 12 [in the vision] the [of God] lifted me up, and I heard behind [someone speaking very loudly], like a loud rumbling sound. [I heard someone say,] "Praise our glorious Yahweh in the place where he [in heaven]!" 13 [I heard] the sound of the wings of the four living creatures brushing against each other, [I also heard] the sound of the wheels that were beside them. It was a loud rumbling sound. 14 The Spirit took me away. Within me I was very bitter and angry [DOU], but I felt Yahweh holding me very powerfully. 15 I came to the exiles who lived at Tel [town] near the Kebar River/ [south of Babylon]. Then, where they were living, I sat for seven days. I was [about everything that I had seen]. 16 After those seven days had ended, Yahweh gave me this message: 17 "You human, I am appointing [to be like] a watchman [MET] for the Israeli people [MTY]. [So] listen to these messages that I will give you, and tell them those messages to warn them. 18 When I say about some wicked people, 'They will surely [because of their sins],' if you do not warn them or tell them that they must turn from their wicked behavior if they want to (save their lives/remain alive), those wicked people will die because of the sins that they have committed, but I will consider that you are responsible for their deaths [MTY]. 19 But if you warn the wicked people and they do not turn from all their wicked behavior [DOU], they will die because of their sins, but you will have saved [from my punishing you]. 20 Similarly, when righteous people turn from their righteous behavior and do evil deeds, I will cause bad things to happen [IDM] to them. [But you must warn them. If you do not warn them], and if they do not stop their sinful behavior, they will die because of their sins; I will not think about the righteous things that they [previously], but I will consider that you are responsible for their deaths [MTY]. 21 But if you warn righteous people not to sin, and they do not sin, they will surely remain alive because they [your] warning, and you will have saved [from my punishing you]." 22 [I felt] Yahweh take control [MTY] of me, and he said to me, "Get up and go [from the city down] to the plain/valley, and there I will speak to you." 23 So I got up and went down to the valley. And I saw the glory of Yahweh there, like the glory that I had seen along the Kebar River/Canal. And I prostrated myself on the ground. 24 Then the [of God] entered me and enabled me to stand up. He said to me, "Go into your house and stay inside it. 25 People will tie you with ropes, with the result that you will be unable to go out among the people. 26 [Even though] they are very rebellious people, I will cause your tongue to stick to the roof of your mouth, with the result that you will be unable to talk and to rebuke them. 27 [then] when I speak to [again], I will enable you to talk [MTY], and you will say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says,' [and you will tell them my message]. Those who are willing to [to what you say] will listen, [many] will refuse to listen, because they are rebellious people [MTY]."

4 [Yahweh also said to me,] "You human, take a large clay tablet/brick and put it in front of you. Then on the [engrave/draw] on it lines that represent Jerusalem. 2 [draw figures around it to represent enemy soldiers who will] surround the city. Make mounds around it and a dirt ramp up against the [around the city]. [figures around it that represent] (battering rams/heavy logs that will break though the walls). 3 Then take an iron pan, and place it [to be] like an iron wall between you [the drawing of] the city. Then turn your face toward the drawing. It will symbolize [enemy troops will] surround the city to attack it. That will be a warning to the Israeli people [MTY]. 4 Then lie on your left side, and stay like that for 390 days. That [symbolize that the Israeli

people will be punished for] their sins; you must lie like that one day for each year during which they will be punished. **6** After that, lie down again. This time, lie on your right side for 40 days. That [symbolize that the Israeli people will be punished more] for their sins, one day for each [during which they will be punished]. **7** Turn your face [the drawing of] Jerusalem and bare your [like a soldier does who prepares to go into a battle] [MTY], and prophesy [what will happen to] the city. **8** [You will not be able to move; it will be as though] I have tied you with ropes in order that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have [symbolizing how many years the city] will be (besieged/surrounded by enemy soldiers). **9** [Before you do that,] take some wheat and barley, beans, lentils, spelt and millet, and put them in a [storage] jar, and use that to bake [for yourself]. That is what you will eat during the 390 days while you lie on your [left] side. **10** You will eat (8 ounces/a small loaf) of bread each day. **11** [Also] measure out (1.5 pints/0.6 liter) of water to drink each day. **12** Eat that bread like you would eat a loaf of barley bread. But use your own dried dung for fuel to bake the bread while people are watching. **13** That will symbolize that the Israeli people will be forced to eat food that is unacceptable to me when they are living in the nations to which I will force them to go." **14** Then I said, "No, Yahweh God![Do not force me to do that]! I have never caused myself to become unacceptable to you [by doing anything like that]. From the time when I was young, I have never eaten meat of any [animal] that was found dead or that had been killed by wild animals. And I have never eaten any meat that is unacceptable to you." **15** Yahweh replied, "Okay, I will allow you to bake your bread using dried cow manure instead of human [for fuel]." **16** Then he said to me, "You human, I will cause the supply of food to Jerusalem to be cut off. [Then] the people will eat the small amounts of food and drink the small amounts of [that the government permits them to have], and they will be [very] distressed and anxious as they do that, **17** because water and food will be very scarce. They will see each other becoming extremely thin, and they will be appalled; [but this will happen] because they are being punished [for the sins that they have committed]."

5 "Also, you human, [when you start doing those things,] take a sharp sword and use it like [SIM] a razor to shave your head and your beard. Then put the hair that you shaved off on scales, and divide the [into three equal parts]. **2** When the time during [you will symbolize that] the city will be [by enemy troops] ends, put a third of the hair inside [drawing of the] city and burn it. Take another third of the hair, [scatter it] all [the drawing of] the city, and then strike it with your sword. That will symbolize that I will strike the people of Jerusalem [their enemies'] swords. Then allow the wind to scatter the other third of the hair. That will symbolize [even if they flee from the city], I will [cause their enemies to] pursue them and attack them with swords. **3** Take a few of your hairs and tuck them into the folds of your robe. **4** Then take a few of those hairs, throw them into the fire, and burn them up. [That will symbolize that] a fire will spread from Jerusalem [and destroy things] throughout Israel. **5** This is what [I,] Yahweh the Lord, say: '[drawing will represent] Jerusalem, [the city which] I have set in the center of the nations, with [other] countries around it. **6** But the wicked people of Jerusalem rebelled against [obeying] my commands, and [they show that] they are more wicked than the people of the surrounding countries. They rejected my laws and refused to obey my commands.' **7** Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: 'You people of Jerusalem have been more rebellious than the people of the nations around you; you have not obeyed any of my laws [DOU]. You have not even obeyed the laws of the nations around you!' **8** Therefore, this is [I,] Yahweh the Lord, say: 'I am opposed to [you people of] Jerusalem. I will punish you, and the [people of other] nations will see it happen. **9** Because of all your detestable [idols], I will punish [people of Jerusalem] like I have never done before and will never do again. **10** As a result, parents among you will eat their children, and children will eat their [because there will be nothing else to eat]. I will punish you [severely], and I will cause those who will still be alive to be scattered in all directions [IDM].' **11** Therefore, I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that as surely as I am alive, because you have polluted my temple with all your disgusting [statues of idols] and by the other detestable things that you do, I will no longer bless you. I will not pity [you] or act mercifully [toward you]. **12** One-third of your people will die inside the city because of the plagues [they will experience] or by (famine/lack of food). One-third of your people will be killed [your enemies'] swords outside the city. And one-third I will cause to be scattered in all directions; [your enemies] will [still] pursue you and kill you with their swords. **13** Then I will no longer be angry with you; I will stop punishing [MTY] you after I have gotten revenge on you. And when I stop punishing you, you will know that I, Yahweh, have spoken to you because I have been very strongly concerned [what you have done]. **14** I will cause your [city] to be a ruins, with the result that [people of other] nations that are around you will pass by and see it and sneer at you. **15** They will make fun of you and taunt you. When I severely punish you because of my being very angry [DOU] with you, they will be horrified and they will be warned. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it. **16** When I cut off your food supply and

cause there to be more famine, [it will be as though] [MET] I am shooting at you with my arrows that will destroy you. 17 I will cause you to experience a famine, and I will send wild beasts to attack you and your children, and [all] your children will be killed. You will experience plagues and wars, and I will cause [your enemies] to attack you with their swords. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it."

6 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, 2 "You human, turn toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy [what will happen to] them, and say, 3 'You mountains and hills of Israel [APO], listen to what Yahweh the Lord says to you: "I am about to [enemy soldiers with] swords to come and destroy [the shrines on] your hilltops. 4 They will smash all the [for worshiping idols] and the altars for burning incense. And they will [many Israeli] people in front of those idols. 5 Their corpses will lie in front of their idols, and their bones will be scattered around their altars. 6 Wherever the Israelis live, their towns will be ruined, and the shrines where they worship idols will be smashed. Their altars will be completely smashed [DOU], their idols will be completely smashed [DOU], and everything that they own will become a pile of ruins. 7 Many of their people will be killed; and then they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do the things that I say that I will do]. 8 But I will allow some of the Israelis to remain alive. They will escape being killed when their enemies scatter them among many other nations. 9 When that happens, in those nations to which they have been forced to go, those who have escaped from being killed will think about me. They will remember that I was very grieved because of their turning away from me [IDM] with their inner beings, and because they very much desired [IDM] to worship their idols. They will (hate/be very displeased with) themselves because of the evil and detestable things that they have done. 10 [they will realize that] I, Yahweh, [have punished them. They will realize that] when I threatened to punish them, I surely intended [LIT] to do that. 11 So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, [to you, Ezekiel]: 'Wring your hands and stamp your feet and cry [to show that you are distressed], and [about what will happen to] your Israeli people [MTY] because of all their wicked and detestable behavior. They will be killed [their enemies'] swords, they will die from hunger, and they will die from plagues. 12 Those who are far [from Jerusalem] will die from plagues, those who are close [to Jerusalem] will be killed by [their enemies'] swords, and those who are still alive will die from hunger. That is how I will punish [MTY] them. 13 [Some of] your people's corpses will lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hilltop and on all the mountaintops, under every big tree [DOU]—at all the places where they burned incense [honor] their idols. Then they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. 14 And I will stretch out my arm and cause your entire country to become an empty wasteland, from the [in the far south] to [town in the far north]. Then they will realize that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do the things that I say that I will do].'"

7 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said] 2 "You human, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say to [the people] [MTY] of Israel: All of Israel will soon be destroyed. 3 [people of Israel], the end has come. I will punish you severely. I will judge you for all the wicked things that you have done, and pay you back for your disgusting behavior. 4 I will not pity you or act mercifully toward you. I will [surely] punish you for your wicked behavior [DOU]. Then you will know that [it has happened because] I, Yahweh, [have done it]." 5 This is [also] what Yahweh the Lord says: "You will soon experience many terrible disasters! 6 This will be the [of Israel]; your country will be finished! And your [lives] will be ended [PRS]! 7 It will be the end of you people who live in the [of Israel]. The time has come; the [when you will be destroyed] is near. At that time [the people who worship idols] on the mountains will not be happy; they will panic. 8 I am very angry with you and am about to pour out my punishment [MTY] on you. I will judge you for all the wicked things that you have done and pay you back for your disgusting behavior. 9 I will not pity you or act mercifully toward you. I will surely punish you for your wicked behavior [DOU]. Then you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have punished you. 10 The [of your punishment] is here! It has arrived! Disasters have come. 11 People are acting violently and doing more wicked things. And nothing that belongs to those people will be left, none of their money, nothing that is valuable. 12 Now is the time; that day has arrived. 13 People who buy things should not [because of buying things very cheaply], and those who sell things should not be [because they had to sell things cheaply], [Yahweh] will be punishing [MTY] everyone. During the rest of their lives, people who sell some of their property will never be able to buy it back, because I, Yahweh, will never change my mind about what I have declared; because of your sins, [I will destroy] all of you people. 14 Even though [soldiers] blow [to prepare for] a battle, no soldier will go into a battle, because I will have killed all of them. 15 [When those things happen, your enemies] will be [the city] with their swords, and there will be plagues and famines [the city]. [who flee from the city] into the countryside will be killed [their enemies'] swords, and those who stay in the city will die from famines and plagues. 16 Those who survive and escape will flee to the mountains, and they all will moan like doves because of

their sins. 17 [Because everyone will be very afraid,] all the people's hands will become limp and their knees will become very weak. 18 They will put on clothes made from rough cloth, and they will be terrified. Their faces will show that they are ashamed, and they will shave their [to show that they are very sad]. 19 They will throw their silver into the streets, and consider that their gold is only like [SIM] garbage, because they will realize that their silver and gold will not be able to rescue them when I, Yahweh, punish them. They will not be able to use their gold and silver to buy things to fill their stomachs, because having a lot of gold and silver has led them to sin. 20 They were proud of their beautiful jewelry, and they used it to make their detestable idols and disgusting [of their gods]. So I will cause them to be disgusted with those things. 21 I will give their silver and gold to foreigners who invade your country and take away your valuable treasures. I will give those things to wicked people, and they will do disgraceful things to those treasures that I give them. 22 I will not (interfere with/stop) [IDM] robbers when they enter my sacred temple and desecrate it. 23 Prepare chains to be fastened on you. People are being murdered [MTY] throughout the country, and people are acting violently throughout the city. 24 So I will bring armies of the nations whose people are extremely wicked to occupy the houses of the Israeli people. I will cause Israeli [who think that they] are [IRO] strong/mighty to no longer be proud. Your enemies will cause your places of worship to no longer be acceptable to be used. 25 When your enemies cause you to be terrified, you will plead for them to make peace, but there will be no peace. 26 You will experience many disasters, and you will continually hear [about disasters that are happening in other places]. People will plead with prophets to tell them what visions they have received, [but the prophets will not have received any visions]. Priests will no longer teach people the [that I gave to Moses]. 27 Your king will mourn, and his son will no [longer] [that good things will happen]. The hands of people throughout the country will tremble. And I will do to them what they deserve for their wicked behavior. I will [and condemn] them the same way they have [and condemned] others. Then they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]."

8 On the fifth day of the sixth month [of that year], almost six years after we Israeli people had been (exiled/forced to go to Babylon), I was sitting in my house. The elders of Judah were sitting in front of me. Suddenly the power [MTY] of Yahweh the Lord came on me. 2 [in a vision] I saw someone who resembled a man. Below his waist, [his body] was like fire, and above his waist [his body] was glowing like very hot metal. 3 He reached out what seemed to be a hand and grabbed me by the hair of my head. The Spirit lifted me up high above the earth, and in visions God took me [from Babylon] to Jerusalem. He took me [to the temple], to the north gate, to the place where there was an idol that caused Yahweh to be very disgusted and furious. 4 And there in front of me was the brilliant light that indicated the presence of the God whom the Israeli [people previously worshiped. It was] like the vision that I had seen alongside the Kebar River/Canal. 5 Yahweh said to me, "You human, look toward the north!" So I looked, and I saw in the entrance of the gate near the altar that idol that caused Yahweh to be disgusted and furious. 6 He said to me, "You human, do you see what those Israeli people [MTY] are doing? They are doing detestable things here, things that will cause me to abandon my temple. But you will see things that are even more detestable." 7 Then he brought me to the entrance of the courtyard. I looked and saw a hole in the wall. 8 He said to me, "You human, dig through the wall here." So I dug through the wall, and I saw a doorway inside. 9 He said to me, "Go in and see the wicked and detestable things that they are doing there!" 10 So I went in through the doorway and looked, and I saw, all over the [of a big room, drawings of] all kinds of creatures that scurry across the ground and [other] detestable animals, and drawings of all the idols that the people of [were worshiping]. 11 In front of them stood 70 elders of Israel. Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan, was standing among them. Each of them was holding a pan in which incense was burning, and fragrant smoke of the burning incense was rising up. 12 Yahweh said to me, "You human, look at [RHQ] what the Israeli elders are doing here in the darkness, each of them standing in front of the shrine of his own idol! They are saying, 'Yahweh does not see us; Yahweh has deserted this country.'" 13 He also said, "But you will see things that are even more detestable!" 14 Then he took me to the entrance at the north gate of the temple. I saw women sitting there, mourning for [the death of the god of the people of Babylonia], Tammuz. 15 He said to me, "You human, you see this [RHQ], but you will see things that are more detestable than this!" 16 Then he took me into the courtyard outside the temple. There at the entrance of the temple, between the porch and the altar, were about 25 men. Their backs were toward the temple and their faces were toward the east, and they were bowing down to [worship] the sun [as it rose] in the east. 17 He said to me, "You human, you see [RHQ] what they are doing. [Do you think that] it is not important that these men of Judah are doing these detestable things here? [But they are doing other terrible things]. They are acting violently throughout their country, and continually causing me to be angry. Look

at them! They are insulting me by their actions [IDM]! 18 So I will show them that I am very angry. I will not pity them or act mercifully toward them. And even if they shout to me [to help them], I will not pay attention to them."

9 Then I heard Yahweh call out loudly, "[You men who are going to punish this city,] bring here the guards of the city, each carrying a weapon." 2 Then I saw six men coming from the north gate of the temple area. Each one was carrying a weapon. With them was a man wearing a white linen robe. [carried] at his side a case containing things to write with. They [all] came into the temple and stood beside the bronze altar. 3 [Then] the (glory/dazzling light) [that symbolized the presence] of the God of Israel rose up from above the four winged creatures and moved to the entrance of the temple. Then Yahweh called to the man wearing the linen robe, 4 and said to him, "Go throughout Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who are very sad [DOU] because of the detestable things that are being done inside the city." 5 While I was listening, he said to the other six men, "Follow the man wearing the white robe, and kill people. Do not pity them or act mercifully toward them. 6 Slaughter old men, young men and women, older women and children, but do not harm any of those who have that mark on their forehead. Start at my temple." So they began by killing the elders who were [worshiping idols] in front of the temple. 7 Then Yahweh said to those men, "Pollute the temple by filling the [with the corpses of those whom] you kill! Start now!" So they went out and starting killing people throughout the city. 8 While they were doing that, I was left alone. I prostrated myself on the ground and cried out, "Yahweh my Lord, are you going to get rid of all the people of Israel and Judah who are still alive, while you are severely punishing [MTY] [the people of] Jerusalem?" 9 He replied, "The sins of the people [MTY] of Israel and Judah are extremely great. People are murdered [MTY] everywhere [in this country], and this city is full of [people who act] unjustly. They say, 'Yahweh has abandoned this country, and he does not [what we are doing].' 10 [So] I will not pity them or act mercifully toward them. I will do to them the evil things that they have done to other people." 11 Then the man wearing the linen robe returned, saying, "I have done what you commanded me to do."

10 Then [in the vision] I saw what resembled a throne made of (sapphire/[a very valuable] blue stone). It was above the thing that resembled a dome that was above the heads of the four winged creatures. 2 Yahweh said to the man wearing the linen robe, "Go between the wheels that are under the winged creatures. Pick up as many hot coals as you can, and scatter them over the city." And while I watched, the man wearing the linen robe left. 3 The four winged creatures were standing on the south side of the temple when the man wearing the linen robe entered. Then a cloud filled the inner courtyard [of the temple area]. 4 And the (glory/dazzling light) of Yahweh rose up from above the winged creatures and went to the entrance of the temple. The cloud filled the temple, and the courtyard was full of the (glory/dazzling light) of Yahweh. 5 The sound made by the wings of the winged creatures could be heard as far away as the courtyard outside the temple. It [very loud], like [SIM] the voice of Almighty God when he speaks. 6 When Yahweh commanded the man wearing the linen robe to take burning coals from among those winged creatures, the man went [the courtyard] and stood beside one of the wheels. 7 Then one of those winged creatures reached out his hand to the fire that was there among them. He picked up some of the coals and put them in the hands of the man wearing the linen robe, and that man took them and left. 8 Under the wings of the winged creatures was something that resembled a human's hands. 9 Then [in the vision] I saw four wheels alongside the winged creatures. There was one wheel beside each of the winged creatures. The wheels shone like [SIM] very valuable stones. 10 The wheels were all alike: Each had one wheel inside another wheel. 11 Whenever they moved, they went straight in whatever direction one of the winged creatures faced. The wheels did not turn in another direction while the winged creatures flew. 12 Their bodies, including their backs and hands and wings, were covered with eyes. The wheels were also covered with eyes. 13 I heard someone call them 'the whirling wheels'. 14 Each of the winged creatures had four faces. One face was like the face of a bull, one face was like the face of a human, one face was like the face of a lion, and one face was like the face of an eagle. 15 Then the winged creatures rose up. They were the same living creatures that I had seen alongside the Kebar River/Canal. 16 When the winged creatures moved, the wheels moved with them. When the winged creatures spread their wings to fly over the ground, the wheels did not leave them. 17 When the winged creatures stopped, the wheels stopped. When the winged creatures started to fly, the wheels flew with them, because the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. 18 Then the (glory/dazzling light) left the entrance of the temple and stopped above the winged creatures. 19 While I watched, the winged creatures spread their wings and started to fly, and the wheels went with them. They stopped at the gate on the east side of the temple area, and the (glory/dazzling light) of God, the one whom the [had worshiped], was above them. 20 Those were the [same] four living creatures that I

had seen alongside the Kebar River/Canal, and I realized that they were the winged creatures. **21** Each of them had four faces and four wings, and under their wings was what resembled a human's hands. **22** Their faces were the same as the faces that I had seen at the Kebar River/Canal. Each of them flew straight ahead.

11 [Then God's] Spirit lifted me up and took me to the gate on the east side of the temple area. There at the gate were 25 men. Among them I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, who were leaders of the people. **2** Yahweh said to me, "You human, these are the [new leaders in Jerusalem] who are planning to do evil things and who are giving wicked advice [to people] in this city. **3** They say, '[Everything will go well for us, so] it will surely soon be [RHQ] time to build houses. [We are like] [MET] fine/choice pieces of meat that are carefully stored in covered pots, and we are protected [from the bad things that will happen to others].' **4** So, you human, prophesy [the terrible things that will happen to] them." **5** Then the Spirit of Yahweh came upon me and told me to [to the people], "This is what Yahweh says: You Israeli people [MTY] are saying those things, but I know what you are thinking. **6** You have killed many people in this city and filled the streets with their corpses. **7** Therefore this is what Yahweh the Lord says: The corpses of the people whom you have killed here are [like] the meat [MET], and this city is [like] the pot [MET], but I will expel you from this city. **8** You are afraid [being killed by enemies'] swords, and that is what I will cause to happen to you. **9** I will expel you from this city and enable foreigners to capture you and punish you. **10** They will kill [EUP] you with their swords; you will be punished [right here] in Israel. Then people will realize that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **11** This city will not be [a place were you will be protected like] [MET] meat in a covered pot. I will punish you wherever you are in Israel. **12** And you will know that I, Yahweh, [have predicted that would happen], because you have not obeyed my commands and decrees; instead, you have imitated [wicked] behavior [of the people] of the nearby nations." **13** While I was prophesying that, Pelatiah the son of Benaiah [suddenly] died. Then I prostrated myself on the ground and cried out loudly, "Yahweh my Lord, are you going [similarly] get rid of all the Israeli people who are still alive?" **14** Then Yahweh gave me this message: **15** "You human, the people who are still in Jerusalem are talking about you and your own relatives and about all the other people who were (exiled/forced to go to other countries), saying, 'They [in Babylonia], far from Yahweh. They have left their [here in Israel, so] their property now belongs to us!'" **16** So tell [them], "This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Although I caused them to be taken far [from Israel] and scattered them among other nations, for a short time I will (be like a refuge for/protect) them in the countries to which they have been taken." **17** So also tell them, "This is what Yahweh the Lord says: [Some day] I will gather you from the [to which you have been taken] and bring you back to Israel, and you will live in your country/land [again]. **18** When you return to your country, you will get rid of all the vile statues of gods and detestable idols. **19** I will put a new way of thinking [IDM] within you. I will cause you to no longer be stubborn [IDM], and I will enable you to obey me completely [IDM]. **20** When I do that, you will carefully obey all my laws [DOU]. You will be my people, and I will be your God. **21** But as for those who are devoted [worshiping] their vile statues and detestable idols, I will punish them as they deserve for the evil things that they have done.'" **22** Then the winged creatures, with their wheels beside them, spread their [and flew up into the air], and the dazzling brightness of Yahweh was above them. **23** That light went up away from the city and stopped above the mountain to the east of the city. **24** In the vision [that I had been seeing, God's] Spirit lifted me up and brought me [back] to the (exiles in/people who had been forced to go to) Babylonia. Then the vision ended, **25** and I told the exiles everything that Yahweh had shown [in the vision].

12 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] **2** "You human, you are living among people who are [very] rebellious. They have eyes, but they do not [what I want them to see]; they have ears, but they do not [what I want them to hear], because they are rebellious/stubborn people. **3** Therefore, you human, pack your belongings as though you were (going into exile/being forced to go to another country). Then, during the daytime, while people are watching, [prepare to] go to another place. Even though the people are rebellious, perhaps they will [what you are symbolizing]. **4** During the daytime, while they are watching, bring out the things that you want to take and pack them. Then in the evening, while they are watching, do what those who are preparing to go into exile do. **5** Dig through [city] wall and take your things through the hole. **6** Then put [in a sack] on your shoulder while they are watching and leave at dusk. Cover your face in order that you cannot see the path. [I want you to do this] because I want you to warn the Israeli people." **7** [So] I did what Yahweh told me to do. During the day I brought things out of my [as though] I was packing to go into exile. Then in the evening I dug through [city] wall. [Then] while people watched, I put my sack of belongings on my shoulder and left. **8** The next morning, Yahweh gave me this message: **9** "You human, the rebellious people [MTY] of

Israel asked you, 'What are you doing?' 10 [So go back and] say to them, 'What I did is about the king in Jerusalem and all the [other] people of Israel who are there.' 11 Tell [them], '[What I did] is a warning to you.' What has happened to you will happen to them. They will be captured and forced to go to another country. 12 Their king will put his belongings on his shoulder at dusk and leave. [His servants] will dig a hole through the city wall, [and he will take his belongings] through it. He will cover his face in order [others will not recognize] him. 13 [it will be as though] I will spread a net for [to be captured]; [enemy soldiers will] capture him and take him to [city]. But he will [be able to] see it; and there he will die. 14 I will scatter in all directions [IDM] all those who have been around him—his advisors and his soldiers—and I will cause his enemies to pursue them, with their swords ready to strike them. 15 Then, when I scatter them among many nations [DOU], they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. 16 But I will spare/save a few of them from being killed by swords and from dying from famines or plagues, with the result that in the nations to which they are forced to go, they will realize/admit that they have been doing disgusting things, and they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." 17 Then Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] 18 "You human, tremble while you eat your food, and shudder fearfully while you drink your water. 19 Tell [this to] the Israeli people: 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says about those who are [still] living in Jerusalem and [other places in] Israel: They also will be very anxious/worried [DOU] while they eat their food and drink their water, because their country will [soon] have everything taken away. That will happen because the people who live there [continually] act [very] violently. 20 The towns where people live will be devastated, and the land will become barren/empty. Then you people will know that it is I, Yahweh, [who have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" 21 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] 22 "You human, the people in Israel have this proverb/saying: 'The days pass, and [the prophets] predict never happens.' 23 So say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: I am going to prove that (what they say/that proverb) is not correct, and then they will never say that again in Israel.' Tell them, 'It will soon be the time when everything that the prophets have predicted will happen. 24 No longer [false prophets tell] to the Israeli people false visions, or prophecies that try to please people. 25 Instead, I, Yahweh, will say what I want to tell the people, and what I predict will quickly happen. You rebellious people, I will cause to happen everything that I say will happen. [That is what I,] Yahweh the Lord, say.'" 26 Yahweh also gave me this message: 27 "You human, the Israeli people are [constantly] saying [about you], 'The things that he sees in [will not happen soon]. They are [things that will happen] many years from now, far in the future.' 28 Therefore say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord [DOU] says: I will no longer [causing to happen] any of the things that I have prophesied. Whatever I have predicted [very soon] happen.'"

13 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] 2 "You human, [a warning] against the prophets in Israel who are prophesying. Some of them are prophesying things that they themselves have imagined/thought. Say to them: 'Listen to what Yahweh says! 3 He says, "Terrible things will happen to those wicked prophets who proclaim their own ideas and have not seen [visions from me]. 4 You Israeli people, your prophets [as useless] as [SIM] jackals/wolves [that only dig] through the [of a city]. 5 Those prophets have not helped you Israeli people [MTY] to repair the places where [city] walls have (been broken/crumbled). That needs to be done in order that the walls will be strong at the time when I, Yahweh, [allow your enemies] to attack you. 6 The visions and prophecies of those prophets are false. They say, 'Yahweh told me this,' but I have not sent [to you to be my prophets]. But they expect that what they prophesy will truly happen! 7 They say that they have seen visions, but those visions are false, and the things that they prophesy are lies [RHQ]. They say, 'Yahweh told me this,' but I have told them nothing!" 8 Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: "Because you prophets have said what is false, and because your visions are lies, I am opposed to you. 9 I will strike/punish all you prophets who falsely say that you have seen visions and prophesy things that are lies. You will not have any place among my people, your names will not be listed in the records of the Israeli people, and you will never return to Israel. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." 10 They deceive my people, saying "Things will go well for us," when things will not go well. [It as though] [MET] the people have built a shaky/weak wall, and the prophets cover it with (whitewash/white paint) [to make people think that it is a very strong wall]. 11 So, tell those prophets who cover the wall with whitewash that the wall will surely fall down. It will rain very hard. I will send big hailstones to fall. Very strong winds will blow against it. 12 When the wall falls down, the people will certainly say to those prophets, "The white paint certainly did not [RHQ] make the wall strong!" 13 So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: "Because I am very angry with you, [I will send enemy armies to destroy Jerusalem. It will be as though] [MET] I will send a very strong wind and hailstones and very heavy rains to destroy you." 14 [The

false prophecies of your prophets are like] [MET] a wall that they have covered with whitewash, but I will break it down, and shatter it down to the ground, with the result that people can see its foundations. When the wall collapses, you also will be killed, and everyone will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **15** In that way I will show that I am very angry [the people who built] the wall and those who covered it with (whitewash/white paint). Then I will say to you, "The wall is destroyed/gone, and those prophets who put (whitewash/white paint) on it have been killed." **16** Those are the prophets who prophesied that things would go well for the people in Jerusalem, when things would not go well for them. **17** So, you human, show that you are angry with [IDM] the women of Jerusalem who prophesy things that they themselves have imagined. **18** Tell them, "This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Terrible things will happen to you women who fasten magic charms on your wrists and make veils of various sizes to put on your heads in order to deceive the people. [You think that] [RHQ] you will deceive [by telling them that you know what will happen in the future], and that you will save your own lives. **19** You dishonored [by telling lies] in order to get from my people a few handfuls of barley and a few pieces of bread. My people listen to lies; and you women who are lying to them have caused to be killed people who did not deserve to die and have (spared/allowed to remain alive) those who should not continue to live." **20** Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, [to those women]: "I detest your magic charms by which you deceive people like [SIM] [people trap] birds. I will tear those charms off your wrists, and I will cause the people whom you have deceived to no longer be deceived by you. **21** I will also tear off your veils and rescue my people from continuing to be deceived by you, and they will no longer be under your control. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **22** You have discouraged righteous people by telling them lies when I did not [do things to] cause them to be sad. And you have encouraged wicked people to not turn away from their wicked behavior; if they had done that, they would have continued to remain alive. **23** Therefore, you will no longer falsely say that you have seen visions or tell people what will happen in the future [in order to please them]. I will rescue my people from being deceived by you. And then you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." ""

14 One day some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me. **2** Then Yahweh gave me this message: **3** "You human, these men want to [IDM] worship idols, and they are allowing idols to induce them to sin [IDM]. So I will certainly [RHQ] answer them if they ask me for advice. **4** So say this to them: 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: When any Israeli person wants to worship idols which will induce him to sin, and he goes to a [to get advice], I, Yahweh, will give him the answer that he deserves to receive because he worship idols. **5** [I will do that] in order that the Israeli people, who have abandoned me in order to worship their idols, will sincerely [IDM] worship me again.' **6** Therefore, say to the Israeli people, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: (Repent/Stop sinning)! Stop worshiping your idols, and stop all your [other] detestable behavior!' **7** When any of [you] Israeli people or any foreigner living among you turns away from me and starts worshiping idols [IDM] that induce him to sin, and then goes to a prophet to find out what I want him to do, I myself will answer him. **8** I will show that I detest him, and [what happens to] him to be a warning [to others], and cause him to be someone whom people despise. I will cause him to no longer be allowed to associate with my people. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **9** And if a prophet is deceived and gives a false prophecy, [even though] I [allowed him to] give that message, I will get rid of him and remove him from among my Israeli people. **10** Both the prophet and the one who asks him for advice will be guilty, [and I will punish both of them]. **11** Then you Israeli people will no longer abandon me, and you will no longer become unacceptable to me because of your sins. You will be my people, and I will be your God. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, say." **12** Yahweh gave me another message. [He said], **13** "You human, [the people of some] country sin against me by abandoning me, and I punish [IDM] them by cutting off their food supply and by sending a famine, with the result that people and animals die, **14** even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were there, they would save only themselves because of their being righteous. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare. **15** Or, if I send wild animals throughout the country, and they attack and [many of] [HYP] the people, with the result that travel in that country becomes very dangerous and no one travels through that country, **16** [as surely] as I am alive, even if those three men were in that country, they could not save [even their own] sons or [from being killed]. Only those [three] would (be saved/remain alive), and the country would become desolate. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare. **17** Or, if I bring enemy soldiers [MTY] to attack that country, and they kill [MTY] people and animals throughout that country with their swords, **18** as surely as I am alive, even if those three men were in that country, they would not be able to save even their own sons or [from being killed]. They would save only themselves. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare. **19** Or, if I send a plague into

that land and cause the people and the animals to [from the plague] because I am very angry with those people, **20** [as surely] as I am alive, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in that country, they would not [be able to] save even their sons and daughters. They would save only themselves because of their being righteous. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare. **21** So [now] this is what [I,], Yahweh the Lord, say: I will cause four things to happen to [the people of] Jerusalem to punish them very severely. [Some] people and animals will be killed by swords, [some will die from] famines, [others will be attacked and killed by] wild animals, and [others will die in] plagues. **22** But some [of your people] will remain alive, [both adults] and children. They will come to you, [Ezekiel, in Babylon]. And when you see [disgusting] behavior and actions, you will realize that I had good reasons for causing [the people of] Jerusalem to experience those many great disasters [DOU] that I have sent to them. **23** When you see those things that they do, you will know that there were very good reasons [LIT] for me to do everything that I caused to happen to them. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare."

15 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said], **2** "You human, the wood of a grapevine is certainly not [RHQ] more useful that the branches of the trees in a forest. **3** No one [RHQ] ever takes a branch of a grapevine and makes anything [useful] from it. No one [RHQ] even makes pegs from them to hang things on. **4** And after a branch of a grapevine is thrown into a fire, and the fire burns both ends and chars/scorches the branch in the middle, will it then be useful for anything? **5** No; if it was not useful for anything before it was burned, it certainly cannot [made into something] useful after the fire has burned and charred it. **6** Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: The wood of grapevines is useful only for fuel in a fire. Similarly, the people who live in [are useless]. **7** I will reject [IDM] them. [It will be as though] they have escaped from a fire, but there will still be a fire that will burn them up. And when I punish [EUP] them, you [people who remain alive] will know that I, Yahweh, [have done it]. **8** I will cause your country to become a wasteland because your people have not been loyal [to me. That is what I], Yahweh, the Lord, say."

16 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **2** "You human, cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their detestable behavior. **3** Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says to you people of Jerusalem: [It is as though you are a woman who] [MET] was born in the country where the Canaan people-group lived. [It is as though] [MET] your father belonged to the Amor people-group and your mother belonged to the Heth people-group. **4** [It is as though] [MET] on the day that you were born, your umbilical cord was not cut, and your body was not washed in water, and it was not rubbed with salt or wrapped in strips of cloth, [like Israeli babies always are]. **5** No one pitied you or acted kindly toward you by doing those things for you. Instead, [it was as though] [MET] you were thrown into a field, because on the day that you were born, you were despised {everyone despised you}. **6** Then [it was as though] [MET] I passed by and saw you lying in your own blood and kicking. And while you lay there kicking in your own blood, I said to you, "I want you to remain alive!" **7** [It was as though] I caused you to grow up, like plants in the field grow; you grew up and became tall and became like [MET] a very beautiful jewel. [It was as though] [MET] your breasts (formed/became large), and your hair became long, although you were still naked [DOU]. **8** When I saw you several years later, [it was as though] [MET] I saw that you were old enough to have sex [EUP]. So [it was as though] [MET] I spread the corner of my robe over [to symbolize that I would marry you], with the result that you were no longer naked. I solemnly promised [that I would marry you] and made a marriage agreement with you, and you became my wife. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say. **9** [And then it was as though] [MET] I bathed you and washed the blood from you and put ointment on your body. **10** [It was as though] [MET] I put a fine linen robe on you and gave you other expensive clothes. I put an embroidered dress on you and put leather sandals on your feet. **11** [It was as though] [MET] I put bracelets on your arms and a necklace around your neck. Those things all had nice jewels fastened to them. **12** I put a gold ring in your nose and fastened earrings to your ears and put a beautiful crown on your head. **13** So [it was as though] you wore gold and silver ornaments. You had clothes made from fine (linen/white cloth) and other expensive embroidered material/cloth. You ate [bread made from] fine flour, honey, and olive oil. You became very beautiful, like [MET] a queen. **14** You were very beautiful, with the result that people in other nations heard about you, because they knew that I, Yahweh the Lord, am the one who had caused you to become very beautiful. **15** But [it was as though] [MET] you realized that because people knew that you were very beautiful, you could [earn a lot of money by] becoming a prostitute. [It was as though] you had sex with [EUP] every man who came along, and they all enjoyed your beauty. **16** [It was as though] you took some of your clothes to make beautifully decorated shrines, and that is where you had sex with those men. Those things should certainly never occur! **17** You took the fine gold and silver jewelry that I gave you, and you made male idols for yourself, in order to have sex with them. **18** You took some of your embroidered clothes to

put on those idols, and you burned oil and incense in front of them [to honor them]. **19** And the [bread that was made from] fine flour and the olive oil and honey that I gave to you to eat, you offered to be a fragrant sacrifice to those idols. I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that is what happened. **20** And you even took your sons and daughters who were [as though they were] [MET] my children, and sacrificed them to be food for the idols. That was much worse [RHQ] than your becoming a prostitute. **21** You slaughtered [those who were like] [MET] my children, and offered them to be sacrifices to the gods! **22** All during the time when you were acting like a prostitute and doing other detestable things, you did not think about the time when [it was as though] you were very young, naked [DOU], lying in your own blood and kicking. **23** So I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that terrible things will happen to you. In addition to all the other wicked things that you did, **24** you built a shrine to worship idols in every [city] square/plaza. **25** At the beginning of every street you built a shrine, and showed people your beautiful body, offering it to have sex with every man who walked by, becoming a better known prostitute every day. **26** [It was as though] [MET] you had sex with men from Egypt who were eager to have sex with you, men who lived near to Israel. You caused me to become very angry because you became more eager to have sex with more and more of them. **27** So I punished [IDM] you and caused your enemies to capture some of your country. I enabled your greedy enemies from Philistia to defeat you; and even they were shocked because of your disgraceful behavior. **28** [It was as though] you had sex with soldiers from Assyria, too, because you always wanted more sex. And after that, you still were not satisfied. **29** So you also had sex [with soldiers from] Babylonia, a country full of merchants/businessmen, but even that did not satisfy you. **30** I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that when you did all those things, acting like [MET] a bold prostitute, you were showing that you were ready to do anything that you wanted to [IDM]. **31** When you built shrines to worship idols on every street corner and in every city square/plaza, you were not like a prostitute: Prostitutes charge money, but you refused to take money for what you did. **32** You are like [MET] a woman who commits adultery: You prefer to [have sex with] strangers rather than with your husband. **33** Prostitutes are paid, but [it is as though] you give gifts to all your lovers; you bribe them to come to you from everywhere to have sex with you. **34** So although you act like [MET] a prostitute, you are not like other prostitutes: No one needs to request you to have sex [EUP] with them. You are the opposite of other prostitutes; instead of them giving any money to you, you give men money to have sex with you. **35** Therefore, [you people of] Jerusalem, who are like a prostitute [MET], listen to what I, Yahweh the Lord, am saying about you! **36** I say that [what you have done is as though] [MET] you took off your clothes and acted like a prostitute and had sex with men who are not your husband. [What I mean is that you have been worshiping] detestable idols, and you have murdered [MTY] your own children to be sacrifices to them. **37** So [what I am going to do is as though] I will gather those who you think have loved you and those whom you hated. I will gather them around you [to attack you], and [what I will do is as though] I will strip your clothes off you, and they will see you when you are completely naked. **38** I will punish you like women who commit adultery and who murder people [MTY] are punished. I will get revenge on you and get rid of you because I am extremely angry with you. **39** I will allow [your enemies who you thought] loved you [IRO] to defeat you, and they will tear down your shrines. [It will be as though] they will strip off your fancy clothes and take away your fine jewelry and cause you to be completely naked [DOU]. **40** They will bring a mob to attack you, and that mob will throw stones at you and cut you to pieces with their swords. **41** They will burn down your houses and punish you while many women are watching. I will cause your acting like a prostitute and paying your lovers to have sex with you to end. **42** Then I will no longer be angry [DOU] with you. I will stop being jealous [because of your worshiping gods other than me only]. **43** You have forgotten [the wonderful things that I did for you] in previous years [MET]. You have caused me to become extremely angry because of all the [evil things] that you have done. In addition to all the other detestable things that you did, you committed many sexual sins. So I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that I will punish you [IDM] for doing those things. **44** People who [like to] quote proverbs will quote this proverb about you: "[behave] like their mothers [behave]." **45** You are like your mother; [it was as though] she detested her husband and her children. You are like your sisters, who also despised their husbands and their children. [It was as though] [MET] your father belonged to the Amor people-group and your mother belonged to the Heth people-group. **46** And [it was as though] [MET] your older sister was Samaria, and she and her daughters lived to the north of you, and [it was as though] your younger sister was Sodom, and she and her daughters lived to the south of you. **47** You not only imitated all [DOU] their detestable behavior, but you quickly became more sinful than they were. **48** I, Yahweh the Lord, solemnly declare that as surely as I am alive, [the people who lived in] [MTY] Sodom and other nearby cities never did the detestable things that you [people in Jerusalem and other places in Judah] have done. **49** These are the

sins [the people who lived in] Sodom, who were like your sister [MET]: The people who lived there and in nearby cities were arrogant. In spite of having more food to eat than they needed, they refused to help the poor and needy [DOU] people among them. **50** The people of Sodom and nearby cities [MET] were proud and did detestable things in my presence, so I got rid of them when I saw what they had been doing. **51** Also, [the people of] Samaria did not commit half as many sins as you have committed. You have done more disgusting things than they have done. You cause the people of Samaria to appear to be good, compared to you. **52** Your sins are worse than their sins, so they seem to be less wicked than you are. So I will punish you more than I punished them. As a result, you will be ashamed and disgraced [DOU]. **53** However, [some day] I will [the people of] Sodom and Samaria and the cities near to them [MET] to prosper again. And I will cause you to prosper again, too. **54** You will be very ashamed [DOU] of the wicked things that you have done, and that will cause the people of those cities to be encouraged. **55** [The people of] Sodom and Samaria will prosper again, and you and the people in nearby cities will prosper also. **56** You (sneered at/despised) [the people of] Sodom when you were proud, **57** before it was revealed that you were very wicked. And now [the people of] Edom and [the people of] Philistia all insult you and despise you. **58** And you are being punished for all your immoral behavior and other detestable things that you do. **59** This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I will continue to punish you like you deserve to be punished, because by rejecting the agreement that I made with you, you have despised that solemn agreement that you promised to obey. **60** But I will not forget the agreement that I made with you long ago [MET], and I will make an agreement with you that will endure forever. **61** Then you will think about what you have done, and you will be ashamed about those things when you welcome [the people of] Sodom and Samaria, cities which are like [MET] older and younger sisters to you people of Jerusalem. I will [put them under your control by] causing them to become like [MET] your daughters, but they will not have the same agreement that I will make with you. **62** I will establish my agreement with you, and you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **63** Then when I have forgiven you for all your sins, you will think about all the sins that you committed and you will be ashamed, and you will never again [boast about them], because you will be humiliated.'"

17 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] **2** "You human, tell this story/parable [DOU] to the people [MTY] of Israel. **3** [Say to them,] 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: A huge eagle that had strong wings and long beautiful feathers of many colors flew to Lebanon. It grasped the top of a cedar [tree] **4** and broke it off. Then the eagle carried it away to [Babylonia], a country that had many merchants/businessmen, and planted it in one of the cities there. **5** Then that eagle took a seedling from [your] country and planted it in a fertile field. He planted it like people plant a willow tree, alongside [a stream that had] plenty of water. **6** It grew and became a low grapevine that spread [along the ground]. Its branches turned up towards the eagle, but its roots grew down into the ground. So it became a [good] vine and produced [lots of] branches and leaves. **7** But there was another huge eagle that had strong wings and beautiful feathers. And [some of] the roots of the vine grew toward that eagle, and its branches [also] turned toward it, hoping that the eagle would bring more water to it. **8** [That happened in spite of the fact that] the vine had [already] been planted in good soil, where there was plenty of water, with the result that it had produced branches and produced grapes and had become a very healthy/productive vine.' **9** Then [after you have told that to the people, say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: That vine] will certainly not [RHQ] remain healthy/productive. It will be [RHQ] pulled up by its roots by the eagle [that planted it], and all its fruit will be stripped off and its leaves will wither. And it will not need someone with strong arms or many people to pull it out by its roots. **10** Even if that vine is transplanted, it certainly will not continue to grow [RHQ]. When the hot wind from the east blows against it, it will completely wither, there where it was planted! [RHQ]'" **11** Then Yahweh gave this message to me: **12** "Ask these rebellious [Israeli] people, 'Do you know what this parable/story means?' Tell them that it signifies that the King of Babylon went to Jerusalem [with his army] and captured the King of Judah and his officials, and took them back to Babylon. **13** Then he took one of the king's close relatives [and appointed him to be the king], and made an agreement with him, forcing him to solemnly promise [to remain loyal]. The King of Babylon also took to Babylon the other important citizens of Judah, **14** in order that the kingdom of Judah would not be able to become powerful again. The King of Babylon intended that the kingdom [of Judah] would not continue to exist if the people did not obey that agreement [that he made with the King of Babylon]. **15** But the King of Judah rebelled against the King of Babylon by sending officials to Egypt to request from them horses and a large army [to fight against the army of Babylonia]. But the King of Judah will certainly not [RHQ] be sucessful. Rulers who [rebel like that and] and refuse to obey solemn agreements will never [RHQ] escape. **16** [I],

Yahweh the Lord, declare that [as surely] as I am alive, the King of Judah will die in Babylon, in the city where the King of Babylon appointed him to be the King [MTY] [of Judah]. He will die because he despised the solemn agreement and refused to do what he promised to do. **17** The King of Egypt with all his very huge army [DOU] will not [be able to] help the King of Judah: [The soldiers from Babylonia] will build ramps up against the walls of Jerusalem and set up devices to batter the walls. They will [enter Jerusalem and] kill many of its people. **18** The King of Judah despised the solemn agreement by disregarding the treaty. Although he had solemnly promised to be under the control of the King of Babylon, [he sent officials to request help from Egypt]. Therefore he will not escape being punished [by the King of Babylon]. **19** Therefore this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: 'Just as surely as I am alive, I will cause the King of Judah to be punished [IDM] for ignoring the solemn agreement that he made [with the King of Babylon] and then refusing to obey it. **20** [It will be as though] I will spread a net to capture him, and he will be caught in it. He will [be captured and] taken to Babylon and punished because he rebelled against me. **21** Most [HYP] of his soldiers who try to escape will be killed by [their enemies'] swords, and those who survive will be scattered in all directions. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" **22** This is [also] what Yahweh the Lord says: "[It will be as though] I will take a shoot from the top of a very tall cedar [tree] and plant it [DOU] in another place. I will plant it on a very high [DOU] mountain. **23** [It will be as though] I will plant it on a mountain in Israel, and it will grow and become a beautiful cedar [tree]. Many [HYP] kinds of birds will make their nests in the tree, and they will have shade in its branches. **24** And [it will be as though] all the trees in the field will know that I, Yahweh, get rid of tall trees and make little ones grow. I cause [big] green trees to wither, and I cause dry trees to become green. I, Yahweh have said this, and I will [certainly] do what I have said that I will do."

18 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] **2** "You people quote [RHQ] this proverb [and say that it is] about Israel: 'Parents/People eat sour grapes, but it is their children who have a very sour taste in their mouths', [which means that you think that it is not fair for you to be punished for your ancestors' sins]. **3** But [I], Yahweh the Lord, declare that [as surely] as I am alive, you Israeli people will no longer quote that proverb. **4** Everyone [who is alive] belongs to me. That includes children and their parents; they all belong to me. And it is those who sin who will [because of their sins]. **5** [So,] suppose there is a righteous person [always] does what is fair and right [DOU]. **6** He does not [meat sacrificed to idols] on the hilltops, he does not request help from idols. He does not have sex with someone else's wife or have sex with a woman during her monthly menstrual period. **7** He does not mistreat/oppress people; if [borrows money from him and gives him his cloak to guarantee that he will pay the money back], he always gives the cloak back to that [before the sun goes down]. He does not rob people. He gives food to hungry people. He gives clothing to people who need clothes. **8** When he lends money to people, he does not [do it just to] charge big interest. He does not do [SYN] things that are evil. He [always] decides things fairly. **9** He faithfully obeys all [DOU] my laws. That man is truly righteous; he will remain alive. [That is what I,] Yahweh the Lord, promise. **10** But suppose that man has a son who acts violently, who murders people and does any of these other things, even though his father has not done any of them: **11** He [meat sacrificed to idols] on the hilltops. He has sex with other people's wives. **12** He mistreats/oppresses poor and needy people. He robs people. If someone gives him his cloak to [that he will pay the money back], he never gives the cloak back to [before the sun goes down]. He seeks help from idols. He does [other] detestable things. **13** When he lends money, he [very big] interest. If you think that such a person [be allowed to] remain alive [RHQ], you are certainly wrong. Because he has done those detestable things, he will surely be executed, and it will be his own fault [IDM]. **14** But suppose that man has a son who sees all the sins that his father commits, but he does not do those things: **15** He does not [meat sacrificed to idols] on the hilltops. He does not request help from idols. He does not have sex with other people's wives. **16** He does not mistreat/oppress people. If he lends money to someone, he does not require that person to give him his cloak to guarantee that he will pay the money back. He does not rob anyone. He gives food to those who need it. He gives clothes to those who need clothes. **17** He does not commit sins, [like his father did], and does not charge big interest [DOU] when he lends money. He faithfully obeys [all] [DOU] my laws. That person will not be executed for his father's sins; he will surely remain alive. **18** But his father will be executed for the sins that he committed, because he cheated people and robbed people and did [other] things that are evil. **19** [If] you ask, 'Why should the [man's] son not (suffer/be punished) for the evil things that his father did?', [I will answer that] the son has done what is fair and right [DOU] and has obeyed all my laws, so he will surely remain alive. **20** It is those who sin who will [because of their sins]. People will not be punished for the sins of their parents, or for the sins of their children. Good/Righteous people will be rewarded for their being good/righteous, and

evil people will be punished for [doing] evil. 21 But if a wicked person (turns away from/quits) doing all the evil things that he did previously, and if he starts to obey faithfully all my laws, and does what is fair and right [DOU], he will surely remain alive; he will not be executed. 22 He will not be punished for the sins he committed [previously]. Because of the good/righteous things that he has done [since that time], he [be allowed to] remain alive. 23 [I], Yahweh the Lord, declare that I certainly am not [RHQ] happy about wicked people dying. Instead, I am happy when they turn away from their wicked behavior, [because of that, they] remain alive. 24 But if a righteous person stops doing righteous things and [starts to] commit sins and does the same detestable things that wicked people do, he will certainly not [RHQ] [be allowed to] remain alive. I will not think about the righteous things that he did previously. Because he did not [do what pleases me], and because of [all] the sins that he has committed, he will be executed. 25 But you say, 'Yahweh does not act fairly!' You Israeli people, listen to what I say: It is certainly not [RHQ] what I do that is unfair, it is what you continually do that is not fair/right! 26 If a righteous person (turns away from/quits) doing what is righteous and commits sins, he will [for committing those sins]. 27 But if a wicked person turns away from doing wicked things and does what is just and right [DOU], he will save [from being executed/punished]. 28 Because he has thought about all the evil things that he did and has turned away from doing them, he will [be allowed to] live. He will not be executed [for having done evil things]. 29 But [you] Israeli people [MTY] say, 'Yahweh does not act fairly.' You people of Israel, my behavior is certainly not [RHQ] unfair! It is your behavior that is not right. 30 Therefore, you Israeli people [MTY], I, Yahweh the Lord, will judge each of you according to what you have done. Repent! Turn [away] from all your wicked behavior! Then you will not be destroyed [PRS] because of your sins. 31 Get rid of all your wicked behavior, and get a new way of thinking [IDM, DOU]. You Israeli people [MTY], (do you really want to be executed for your sins?/you act as though you want to be executed [for your sins]) [RHQ]. 32 [I], Yahweh the Lord, declare that I am not pleased about your dying. So repent, and remain alive!"

19 [Yahweh said to me, "Ezekiel], sing a sad funeral [a which will be a parable] [two of the] kings of Israel. 2 Say [to the Israeli people], '[It is as though] [MET] your mother was a brave female lion who raised her cubs among [other] lions. 3 She taught one of them to [for other animals to kill], and he [even] learned [kill and] eat people. 4 [When people from other] nations heard about him, they trapped him in a pit. Then they used hooks to drag him to Egypt. 5 His mother waited for him [to return], but [soon] she stopped hoping/expecting [that he would return]. So she raised another cub who [also] became very fierce. 6 He hunted along with [other] [for animals to kill], and he even learned [kill and] eat people. 7 He destroyed forts, and he ruined cities. When he roared [loudly], everyone was terrified. 8 So [people of other] nations planned to kill him, and men came from many places to spread out a net for him, and they caught him in a trap. 9 They tied him with chains and took him to Babylonia. And [there] he was locked in a prison, with the result that [no one on] the hills of Israel ever heard him roar again.' [Also, say to the Israeli people,] 10 '[It is as though] [SIM] your mother was a grapevine that was planted along a stream. There was plenty of water, so it had lots of branches and produced [a lot of] grapes. 11 That grapevine grew and became taller than all the nearby trees; [everyone could] see that it was very strong and healthy. And those branches were good for making scepters that symbolize the power/ [of a king]. 12 [Yahweh] became very angry, so he pulled up the vine by its roots and threw it on the ground, where the [very hot] winds from the desert dried up all its fruit. The strong branches wilted and were burned in a fire. 13 Now that vine has been planted in a hot, dry desert. 14 A fire started to burn its stem, and then started to burn the branches and burned all the grapes. [Now] not [even] one strong branch remains; they will never become scepters for a king.' That funeral song must be sung very sadly."

20 Almost seven years [King Jehoiachin and the rest of us had been captured and taken to Babylonia], on the tenth day of the fifth [of that year], some Israeli elders came to me to [if I had a message for them] from Yahweh. 2 Then Yahweh gave me a message. [He said,] 3 "You human, speak to the Israeli elders and say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: [say that] you have come to ask if there is any message from me [RHQ], but [as surely] as I am alive, I will [answer you if] you ask [to tell you] anything.' 4 If you are [RHQ] willing to warn them, remind them of the detestable things that their ancestors did. 5 Then say to them, 'On the day that I chose [you] Israeli [to belong to me], with my hand lifted up, I made a solemn promise to your [while they were still] in Egypt. I said to them, "I am Yahweh, your God. 6 I will bring you out of Egypt and lead you to a land that I have chosen for you. It is a very fertile [IDM] and (very beautiful/more beautiful than any other) land. 7 Each of you must get rid of the disgusting idols that you loved [IDM], and do not defile yourselves [worshiping] those [that you saw] in Egypt. I, Yahweh your God, [am saying this to you]."' 8 But they rebelled against me. They would not pay attention to me. They did not get rid of the disgusting idols

they loved, and they did not reject those [that they saw] in Egypt. So because I was angry with them, I said that I would punish [MTY] them in Egypt. **9** But for the sake of my own reputation, I decided to do something in order that I would not be dishonored by the people of the nations who would see it when I brought my people out of Egypt. **10** Therefore I led them out of Egypt and brought them into the desert. **11** I gave them [all] my laws and decrees [DOU], in order that they would obey them, and as a result they would live [for a long time]. **12** Also, I established the Sabbath/rest days to be a symbol between us to show that I, Yahweh, had caused them to be set [from the other nations]. **13** But the Israeli people rebelled against me in the desert. They did not obey my commands [DOU]; they rejected them, even though they tell people who obey them that they will live [for a long time], and they profaned the Sabbath days. So I said that I would get rid of them in the desert, and that would show that I was very angry with them. **14** But [again], for the sake of my own reputation, I decided to do something else in order that I would not be dishonored/despised by [the people of] the nations who had seen me bring my people out of Egypt. **15** I lifted up my hand and solemnly declared to them in the desert that I would not take them into the land that [had promised to] give them, a land that was very fertile [IDM] and (very beautiful/more beautiful than any other) land. **16** The reason that I promised that was because they rejected and disobeyed all my laws [DOU] and (desecrated/refused to rest on) the Sabbath days. [They did that] because they [SYN] were devoted [worshiping] their idols. **17** But, I still pitied them and did not get rid of [all of] them in the desert. **18** I said to their children, 'Do not do the things that your parents continually did, or defile yourselves [worshiping] their idols. **19** I am Yahweh your God. Carefully obey [DOU] my laws and commands. **20** Respect my Sabbath days, in order that by doing that [PRS], it will remind you that you belong to me, Yahweh your God.' **21** But their children [also] rebelled against me. They did not carefully obey my laws [DOU], [even though] the people who obey them will live [for a long time]; and they profaned the Sabbath days. So again I said that by getting rid of them in the desert, I would show that I was very angry with them. **22** But I did not do that [IDM]. [Again,] for the sake of my own reputation, I [decided to] do something in order that I would not be dishonored/despised by [the people of] the nations who had seen it when I brought my people out [of Egypt]. **23** I lifted up my hand and solemnly declared to them in the desert that I would cause them to be scattered among [many] nations [DOU], **24** because they had rejected and disobeyed all my laws [DOU] and desecrated the Sabbath days, and they had eagerly [to worship] the idols that their [had worshiped]. **25** I also allowed them to obey laws that were not good, and laws that would not enable them to live [a long time if they obeyed them]. **26** I allowed them to become unacceptable to me by their sacrificing their firstborn children in the fire. I did that in order that they would be horrified, and in order that they would know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **27** Therefore, you human, speak to the Israeli people. Say this to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says [to you]: This is one way that your ancestors dishonored me by turning away from me. **28** After I brought them into the land that I had solemnly promised to give to them, every time that they saw a high hill or a [big] green tree, they offered [to idols] there. They made offerings to them, and that caused me to become angry. They presented to those idols their fragrant burning incense, and poured out wine offerings to them. **29** [Then] I asked them, "Who [RHQ] [told you to worship at] a shrine like this, here on this hilltop?" So they are still called "hilltop shrines".' **30** Therefore, say this to the Israeli people [MTY]: 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: "You are going to [RHQ] defile yourselves like your ancestors did by strongly [to worship] their disgusting [statues of idols]. **31** When you sacrifice your children in the fire, you are still continuing to make yourselves unacceptable to me [worshiping] your many idols. You Israeli people, should I allow you to [what I want you to do]? I, Yahweh the Lord, say that [as surely] as I am alive, [I will not answer] if you inquire.' **32** You say, 'We want to be like the [other] nations, like the [other] people-groups in the world. We want to [idols made of] wood and [like they do].' But what you want will never happen. **33** [I], Yahweh your Lord, say that [as surely] as I am alive, I will use my great power [DOU, MTY] to rule over you, and show that I am angry with you. **34** With my great power I will gather you from the places to which you have been scattered, **35** and I will bring you to a [that is surrounded] by [other] nations. There, while I am looking at you, I will judge you. **36** I will punish you, like I punished your ancestors in the desert near Egypt. **37** I will count you [MTY] as you walk by, and I will force you to obey the agreement that I made with you. **38** I will get rid of those people among you who rebel [DOU] against me. Although I will bring them out [Babylonia], where they are now living, they will not enter Israel. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **39** As for you Israeli people [MTY], this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: 'Go and worship your idols now [IRO], each of you. But [afterwards], you will [surely] heed me and no longer dishonor me [MTY] by taking gifts to your idols. **40** [I], Yahweh your Lord, declare that there on my sacred hill,

[Zion], that high hill in Israel, you will bring gifts to me, and I will accept them. I will require you to bring to me gifts and offerings there, and your sacrifices that are dedicated to me. **41** When I bring you out from the [other] nations [DOU] to which you have been scattered, I will accept [as though you were] fragrant incense. By doing that, I will show the people of other nations that I have set you apart to belong to me. **42** Then, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the land that I solemnly promised with my hand lifted up that I would give to your ancestors, you will know that I, Yahweh, [have done it]. **43** And [in Israel] you will remember how you conducted your lives [previously, you will remember] the actions that caused you to become unacceptable to me, and you will hate/despise yourselves for all the evil things that you have done. **44** When I act toward you Israeli people to protect my reputation, and not [just] because of your evil deeds and corrupt behavior, you Israeli people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].' That is what Yahweh the Lord declares." **45** Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **46** "You human, turn toward the south. Preach about what will happen to that dry land, to the forest there. **47** Say to the forest in the [part of Israel]: 'Listen to this message that Yahweh the Lord is saying [about you]: "I am about to start a fire in your midst, and it will burn up all your trees, [both] the green trees and the withered/dry trees. Nothing will extinguish the blazing flames. And the fire will scorch the faces of everyone [who lives] in that area, from the south to the north. **48** Everyone will see that it is I, Yahweh, who have lit this fire, and no one will [be able to] put it out." '" **49** Then I said, "Yahweh, my Lord, [when I tell things like this to people, they do not believe me]. They say about me, 'He is only telling parables.'"

21 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] **2** "You human, turn toward Jerusalem. Preach about what will happen to the temple [there]. Preach about what will happen to the Israeli people. **3** Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh says: I am opposed to you. **4** [what I will do to you will be as though] [MET] I will pull my sword from its sheath [and strike you]. I will kill everyone, including righteous people and wicked people [DOU]. I will get rid of everyone, from the south to the north. **5** Then everyone will know [it is as though] I, Yahweh, have struck people with my sword, and I will not put it back in its sheath again.' **6** Therefore, you human, groan! Groan in front of the Israeli people very sadly and sorrowfully [IDM, DOU]. **7** And when they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' tell them, 'Because of the news that they soon will hear. Everyone will be very fearful [IDM], and their knees will become as weak as [SIM] water. [A great disaster] will soon occur. That is what Yahweh the Lord is promising.'" **8** Yahweh gave me another message. [He said], **9** "You human, prophesy and say [to them], 'This is what Yahweh says: I have sharpened my sword and polished it. **10** It is sharpened in order that I can [many people with it]; it is polished so that it will flash like lightning. The people of Judah will not [their being punished like this], but they did not repent [I only struck them] with a stick. **11** A sword should be polished, and be grasped [in someone's hand]. It should be sharpened and polished, ready for someone to use it to kill people. **12** [So,] you human, cry and wail, because I will use my sword to kill my people, including the leaders of Israel. They and all the other people, my people, will be killed by swords, so beat your [to show that you are sad]. **13** I am about to test my people, and the kings [MTY] of Judah will not escape being punished. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say. **14** So, you human, prophesy; clap your [to show that you are very happy about what is going to happen]. My sword will strike them again and again; it is a sword for slaughtering many people, while I attack them from every side. **15** In order that people will be very much afraid [IDM] and many people will be killed, I have [soldiers holding] my swords at every [city] gate, ready to slaughter people. Those swords will flash like lightning, as the [soldiers] grasp them to slaughter people. **16** Their swords [APO] will slash to the right and [then] to the left, whichever way they turn the blades. **17** Then I will clap my [triumphantly]; and [then] I will no longer be angry. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it.'" **18** Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] **19** "You human, [a map], and on it mark two roads for the King of Babylonia to march [along with his army, carrying] their swords. When they depart from their country, they will come to a sign post where the road divides. **20** [If they continue on the one road,] they will attack [city], the capital of the Ammon people-group. [If they continue on the other road,] they will come to Judah and to Jerusalem, [a city] with walls around it. **21** [When the army of] Babylonia comes to where the road divides, [they will stop], and the king will perform magic rituals [to decide which road to go on]. He will throw arrows; [then] consult his [about which road to go on], and he will (examine/look at) the [of a sheep]. **22** With his right hand he will pick up the arrow marked 'Jerusalem'. He will [command his soldiers to go to Jerusalem. When they arrive there, they] will set up (rams/devices to [down the walls],) and [then] the king will give the command for them to slaughter [the people]. They will shout [a battle-cry], and they will set up the rams against the [city] gates. They will build a dirt ramp [against the walls around the city], and set up things to bash those walls. **23** The [in Jerusalem] who had promised [to be

loyal to the King of Babylonia will think that those rituals must be wrong. They will think that his army should not be attacking them]. But he will remind them of the sins [MTY] that they had committed, [his army] will capture them. **24** Therefore, [tell the Israeli people that] this is what Yahweh the Lord says: 'You people have allowed everyone to see that you are openly [against the King of Babylonia], and by doing that you have shown that everything that you do is sinful. Therefore you will be captured and [to Babylonia].' **25** Also, say, 'You very wicked [DOU] king of Israel, it is your [to die]. It is the time for you to be punished.' **26** And this is what Yahweh the Lord says [to you soldiers from Babylonia]: 'Take off [the king's] turban and his crown, because now things will be different than they were [before]. [in Jerusalem] who had no authority will now be given authority, and those who had authority will have their authority taken from them. **27** [Jerusalem] will be completely ruined. I will cause it to be ruined, and it will not be rebuilt/restored until the king to whom the city truly belongs comes; I will give it to [to rule it].'" **28** "And, you human, prophesy and say [this]: 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says about the Ammon people-group, and about what they have said to insult [Israel]: ["The King of Babylon says,] '[My soldiers have] swords' [APO]; they have pulled out those swords to slaughter many people. They have polished them in order to kill people, and to make those swords flash like lightning. **29** [Your prophets] have given you false visions about [what will happen to] you, and they have given you messages that are not true. So swords will strike the necks of those wicked people; it is time for them to be killed; it is the day when they will be [for their sins]. **30** You must put your swords back in their sheaths [because the days for you to slaughter your enemies are ended]. I will judge those people in the country where they were born. **31** I will pour out my punishment [MTY] on them. Because I am very angry with them, my breath on them will scorch them [like] fire [MET]. I will allow brutal men to capture them, men who are experts in killing people. **32** You will be [like] fuel [MET] [that is burned] in a fire. Your blood will be shed in your own land. No one will remember you any more. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it." "

22 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **2** "You human, are you ready to condemn the people of Jerusalem? It is [RHQ] a city full of murderers [MTY]. Remind them of all the detestable things that they have done. **3** [Then] say, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: By your murdering people and by (defiling yourselves/making yourselves unacceptable to God) by making idols, you people of this city [APO] have brought to yourselves the time when you [will be destroyed]. **4** You have become guilty by doing both of those things [DOU]. You have brought to an end your time [to remain alive] [DOU]. Therefore I will cause you to become a group whom the [people of other] nations will scorn; they will all laugh at you [DOU]. **5** People in countries that are near you and people who live far from you will make fun of you, because your city is full of lawless people and full of confusion. **6** Think about how each of your Israeli kings have used their power to cause people to be murdered [MTY]. **7** Your people do not respect/honor their parents; they have oppressed foreigners; they mistreat orphans and widows. **8** You despise my sacred places and (dishonor/do not respect) the Sabbath days. **9** Among you are men who tell lies in order to cause others to be executed [MTY]. There are those who [food offered to idols] at the hilltop [shrines], and they perform disgusting sexual acts. **10** There are men who have sex with their father's wives [EUP], and men who have sex with women during their monthly menstrual periods. **11** There are men who have sex with someone else's wife. Some men have sex with their daughters-in-law or with their sisters or half-sisters. **12** There are among you men who accept bribes in order to cause someone to be executed [MTY]. You charge high interest when you lend people money. You become rich by forcing people to give you money. [the worst thing is that] you have forgotten me, Yahweh the Lord. **13** So I will shake my fists at you to show that I am angry with you because of your stealing money from people and murdering [MTY] people who live among you. **14** When I [punishing] you, you will no longer [RHQ] be courageous/brave [DOU]. I, Yahweh, have said [what I will do to you], and I will do it. **15** I will cause you to be scattered among many nations [DOU], and I will cause you to stop your sinful behavior. **16** When [the people of other] nations see that you have been humiliated, you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" **17** Yahweh [also] said to me, **18** "You human, your Israeli people [MTY] have [useless] to me. They are [like] [MET] dross/slag to me. They are like [SIM] [worthless] copper, tin, iron, and lead that remains after silver is melted in [very hot] furnace. **19** Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: Because you have all become [like] dross/slag, I will gather you in Jerusalem. **20** People [ore containing] silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin in a [very hot] furnace and melt them in a blazing [to burn up the impurities]. Similarly [SIM], I will gather you [inside Jerusalem], and because I am very angry with you, [what I will do will be as though] I am melting you. **21** [It will be as though] I will blow on you with a hot breath that shows that I am very angry, [it will be as though] you will be melted, **22** as though you will be melted like [SIM] silver is melted

in a furnace, and then you will know that I, Yahweh, have poured out my punishment [MTY] on you." 23 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, 24 "You human, say to the Israeli people, '[Yahweh] is angry with you, there has been no rain or showers in your country.' 25 Your leaders are like [SIM] lions that tear apart the animals that they have killed. Your leaders destroy their people. They steal treasures and [other] valuable things from people, and they cause many women to become [by murdering their husbands]. 26 Their priests disobey my laws and disrespect my sacred things by saying that there is no difference between things that are sacred and those that are not sacred, and by ignoring my laws about honoring the Sabbath days. As a result, they no [longer] honor me. 27 Their officials are like [SIM] wolves that tear apart the animals that they have killed: They murder people [DOU] in order to get their money. 28 Their prophets, by falsely saying they have received [from God], and by giving false messages, try to (cover up [MET]/say that it is all right to commit) those sins. They say, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says,' when I have said nothing to them. 29 The Israeli people force others to give them money, and they rob people. They oppress poor [DOU] people, and they mistreat foreigners among them by not treating them [in the courts]. 30 I looked among them to find a man who would cause the people of the city to repent [MET] so that I would not need to get rid of them. But I did not find anyone. 31 So because I am very angry with them, I will severely punish them [MTY] for [all] the wicked things that they have done. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh the Lord, have said it."

23 Yahweh said to me, 2 "You human, [listen to this parable about Jerusalem and Samaria]. Once there were two women, daughters of the same mother. 3 They lived in Egypt. And from the time that they were young women, they became prostitutes. In that land, [men] fondled their breasts and caressed their bosoms [DOU]. 4 The older [sister] was Oholah, and her [younger] sister was Oholibah. [It was as though] they became my [wives. Later] they gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah represents Samaria, and Oholibah represents Jerusalem. 5 Oholah acted like a prostitute while she was [still] my wife. She desired to have sex with those she loved—soldiers from Assyria. 6 [Some of them] were army officers and commanders. They wore [beautiful] blue [uniforms. They were] all handsome young men. Some of them rode horses. 7 She acted like a prostitute toward all the important Assyrian officials, and became unacceptable to me by worshiping all the idols of the men she wanted to have sex with. 8 When she was a young woman in Egypt, she started being a prostitute, and [young] men caressed her breasts and had sex with her; and when she became older, she did not quit acting like a prostitute. 9 So I allowed the Assyrian soldiers, whom she wanted to have sex with, to capture her. 10 They stripped all her clothes off her. They took away her sons and daughters. And then they killed her with a sword. [Other] women started talking about what had happened to her, about how she had been punished. 11 [younger] sister Oholibah saw those [that happened to Oholah], but she was a prostitute, and she desired to have sex with men more than [older] sister had desired. 12 Oholibah [also] wanted to have sex with the Assyrian soldiers. [Some of them were] army officers and commanders. [They all] wore beautiful blue uniforms. They were all handsome young men. [Some of] them rode horses. 13 I saw what she did that caused her to became unacceptable to me, just like [older] sister. 14 But she did [even] worse things. She saw drawings of men from Babylonia on the walls, painted in red. 15 The [in the drawings] had belts around their waists and long turbans on their heads. They all resembled officers from Babylonia [DOU] [who rode in chariots]. 16 As soon as she saw those drawings, she wanted to have sex with those men, and she sent messages to them in Babylonia. 17 Then the soldiers from Babylonia came to her, they lay in bed with her, and they had sex with her. Then she became disgusted with them and turned away from them. 18 But when she continued to openly/boldly act like a prostitute [DOU], I became disgusted with her, and I rejected her like I had rejected [older] sister. 19 But she became even more immoral, as she remembered when she was a young woman who was a prostitute in Egypt. 20 There she wanted to have sex with those who loved her, whose genitals were [very long], like [SIM] those of donkeys, and whose sexual emissions were huge, [like] those of horses. 21 So she desired to be immoral like she was when she was young, when men in Egypt caressed her bosom and fondled her breasts." 22 "[represents you people of Jerusalem]. Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord say: 'I will cause those [soldiers] who loved you but whom you turned away from because you became disgusted with them, to be angry with you. I will cause them to come and attack you from every side— 23 soldiers from Babylon and all the other places in Babylonia, [their allies] from Pekod and Shoa and [regions], and all the army of Assyria. [Yes], all of them are handsome young men, army officers and commanders, officers who ride in chariots, all riding on horses. 24 Their huge army will attack you with weapons, riding in chariots and pulling wagons [that will carry their army supplies]. They will surround you, carrying large and small shields, and wearing helmets. I will allow them to capture you and punish you in the way that they [always]

[their enemies]. 25 Because I am very angry with you, I will cause them to act [very] furiously toward you. They will cut off your noses and your ears. Then, those who are still alive, they will kill with their swords. They will take away your sons and daughters, and a fire will burn up those who remain alive. 26 They will strip off your clothes and your fine jewelry and take them away. 27 In that way, I will stop all the immoral behavior that began when you became a prostitute in Egypt. You will no longer desire to do those things, or think [what you did in] Egypt.' 28 This is what [I], Yahweh the Lord say: 'I am about to allow those whom you hate, those you became disgusted with and turned away from, to capture you. 29 They will be cruel and take away everything that you have worked hard to acquire. They will leave you completely naked [DOU], and everyone will see that you truly are a prostitute. 30 It is because of what you have done that you will be punished like that; you have been an immoral prostitute; you have had sex with men of other nations, and you have caused yourselves to become unacceptable to me [worshiping] their idols. 31 You have behaved [the people of Samaria, who are like] your [older] sister. So I will cause you to be punished [MET] like they were punished.' 32 This is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: '[You will suffer like people suffer when they drink from a cup a lot of strong alcoholic drink]: [It will be as though] you will drink from the cup that the people of Samaria drank from; a big and tall cup. Because of your drinking what is in that cup, many people will scorn you and make fun of you because there is a lot of liquid in that cup. 33 When you become very drunk, you will become very sad, [drinking what is in] that cup [MTY] will cause you to become ruined and deserted, like what happened [MET] to [the people of] Samaria, [who are like] [MET] your sister. 34 You will drink all the liquid that is in that cup; then you will break that cup into pieces [use those pieces to] gash/cut your [because you will be very sad].' [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it. 35 Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: 'Because you have forgotten me and rejected me [IDM], you must be punished for your immoral behavior and for [like] a prostitute.'" 36 Yahweh said to me, "You human, you must [RHQ] [the people of those two cities represented by] Oholah and Oholibah. You must remind them of their detestable behavior: 37 [It is as though the people of those cities] have committed adultery and have murdered [MTY] people. They have been unfaithful to me by [worshiping] idols. They have even sacrificed their own children, who belonged to me, to be food for their idols. 38 They have done [disgraceful things]: They have caused my temple to be an unacceptable place for worship, and have not respected the Sabbath days. 39 On the same day that they sacrificed their children to their idols, they entered my temple, which caused it to be an unacceptable place for worshiping me. 40 They sent messages to men [in countries] far away. And when those men arrived, [the women of those two cities] bathed themselves for them, painted their eyebrows, and put on jewelry. 41 They sat on a beautiful couch, with a table in front of it on which they had put incense and [olive] oil that belonged to me. 42 Soon there was a noisy crowd around them. Among the crowd there were men from Sheba who had come from the [of Arabia]. They put bracelets on the arms of the [two] sisters and put beautiful crowns on their heads. 43 Then I said about the woman who had become exhausted by her having sex with many men, 'Now allow those men to act toward her as though she is a prostitute, because that is all that she is.' 44 So they had sex [EUP] with those two women, Oholah and Oholibah, like men have sex with prostitutes. 45 But righteous men will condemn them to be punished, like women who commit adultery and who murder others are punished, because those women commit adultery and they murder [MTY] others. 46 So this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: Bring a mob to attack Samaria and Jerusalem, and allow that mob to cause the people of those cities to be terrified, and to rob them. 47 The mob will throw stones at [to kill them]; they will cut them into pieces with their swords, they will kill their sons and daughters, and burn down their houses. 48 In that way I will cause them to stop their immoral behavior. It will warn other women to not imitate/do what you people of Jerusalem are doing. 49 [people of Jerusalem] will be punished for your immoral behavior and for your worshiping idols. Then you will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]."

24 Almost nine [after we had been taken to Babylonia], on the tenth day of the tenth month [of that year], Yahweh gave me this message: 2 "You human, write down what day of the month this is. On this [the army of] King of Babylon has surrounded Jerusalem. 3 Tell those rebellious Israeli people [MTY] [in Babylon] a parable. Say this to them: This is what Yahweh the Lord says: 'Pour water into the [cooking] pot and put the pot [the fire]. 4 Put into the pot some pieces of [from one of your best sheep]: Put in the leg and shoulder, [which are] the best pieces. [Then] fill [the rest of] the pot with the best bones. 5 Pile wood on the fire, and cook the bones and the meat in the boiling water.' 6 [Do that] because this is what Yahweh the Lord says: 'Terrible things will happen [Jerusalem]; it is city that is full of murderers [MTY], [a city that is like] [MET] a scorched pot whose black residue inside cannot be removed. Take the pieces [of meat]

out of the pot, but do not choose which pieces to take out. 7 The blood of the people who were murdered in Jerusalem is still there; they were murdered on the bare rocks, not on the soil, where their blood could be covered. 8 But I am the one who caused the blood of those who were murdered [MTY] to be smeared on the bare rock, where their blood could not be covered; I did that in order [I could see it and] then be angry and get revenge.' 9 Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord say: 'Terrible things will happen to that city that is full of murderers [MTY]! [It will be as though] I also will pile high [the wood in the fire]. 10 [So], heap on the wood and light the fire! Cook the meat well, and mix some spices with it; cook it until the bones are charred. 11 Then set the empty pot on the [of the fire] until the pot becomes [very] hot and the copper glows, with the result that the impurities and the rust will be burned up. 12 [It is as though] I tried to get rid of that rust, but I was not able to do it, [not even] by putting that pot in a fire. 13 The [in the pot represents] your immoral behavior. I tried to cleanse you from your wicked behavior, but you did not allow me to do that. So you will not be [from the guilt of your sin] [I have punished you and] I am no longer angry. 14 I, Yahweh, have said [that I will surely punish you]. [And it is time] for me to do that. I will not change my mind; I will not refrain from punishing you, and I will not pity you. I will judge you [and punish you] as you deserve to be punished for your sinful behavior. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh the Lord, have said it."" 15 [One day] Yahweh gave me this message: 16 "You human, I am going to suddenly take from [your wife], whom you love very much. [when she dies], do [show that you are] sad or lament or cry. 17 Groan quietly; do not cry [openly] for her. [Keep] your turban wrapped around your head, [instead of being barefoot, keep] your sandals on your feet. Do not cover the lower part of your [to show that you are sad]. And do not eat the kind of food that people who are mourning usually eat." 18 [one morning] I talked to the [as usual], and that evening my wife [suddenly] died. The next morning I did what [Yahweh] had told me to do. 19 Then the people asked me, "What do the things that you are doing signify to us?" 20 So I said to them, "[This is what] Yahweh told me: 21 'Tell the Israeli people [MTY] that I am about to destroy the temple, [the building] that you are very proud of, the building that you delight to look at. Your children whom you [in Jerusalem when you were forced to come to Babylon] will be killed [their enemies'] swords. 22 [When that happens], you will do like I have done: You will not cover the lower part of your faces, or eat the kinds of food that people who are mourning usually eat. 23 [You will keep] your turbans wrapped around your heads and [keep] your sandals on your feet. You will not mourn or cry, but your bodies will become very thin and slowly die because of your sins. And you will groan to each other. 24 Ezekiel will be a warning to you, and you must do what he has done. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh the [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" 25 [Then Yahweh said to me], "You human, [soon] I will destroy their sacred temple, which they rejoice about and which they respect and delight to look at, and [I will get rid of] their sons and daughters also. 26 On that day, someone will escape [from Jerusalem] and come and tell you what has happened [there]. 27 When that happens, you will be able to speak again [MTY] [without constraint]. You two will talk together [DOU]. You will be a warning to the people; and they will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]."

25 [Some time later,] Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] 2 "You human, turn toward where the Ammon people- [lives], and prophesy [what will happen to] them. 3 Say about them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: "You shouted joyfully when my [in Jerusalem] was destroyed, and when the country/land of Israel was ruined, and when the people of Judah were (exiled/forced to go) [to Babylonia]. 4 Therefore, I am going to allow you to be conquered by people [who will come] from the east. They will set up their tents in your country and live there. And they will eat the fruit from [fruit trees] and drink the [from your cattle]. 5 I will [your capital city] Rabbah to become a pasture for camels, and the rest of Ammon to [only] a resting place for sheep. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." 6 This is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: "You clapped your [joyfully] and stomped your feet, and laughed because you despised [the people in] the land of Israel. 7 Therefore, I will use my power [MTY] against you, and I will enable [other] nations [conquer you and] take away your valuable possessions. I will destroy you completely [DOU], with the result that you no longer will be a nation. When that happens, people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" 8 This is [also] what Yahweh the Lord says: "[The people of] [south of Ammon] and [the people of] [south of Moab despised Israel and] said, 'The people [MTY] of Israel have [as unimportant] as all the other nations!' 9 Therefore, I will destroy the cities that protect the borders of Moab, starting at Beth-Jeshimoth, Baal-Meon, and Kiriathaim, the finest cities in Moab. 10 I will enable people from the east to conquer Moab and also to conquer Ammon. As a result, [I will cause that] Ammon will no longer be remembered by other nations. 11 I will also punish [the people of] Moab. When that happens, they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." 12 This is [also] what Yahweh the Lord says: "[You

people of] Edom are guilty of getting revenge on the people [MTY] of Judah. 13 Therefore this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: 'I will use my power against [the people of] Edom and will get rid of their men and their animals. I will ruin the land from Teman [region in central Edom] to Dedan [region in the south of Edom], and many of their men will be killed [their enemies] swords.' 14 The Israeli people will use their power [MTY] to get revenge on [the people of] Edom. They will show [the people of] Edom that I have been angry with them, and I will punish [MTY] them. The people of Edom will experience my getting revenge on them. Then they will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." 15 This is [also] what Yahweh the Lord says: "The Philistia people-group wanted very much to get revenge [on the people of Judah]. They very maliciously wanted to destroy [Judah]. 16 Therefore this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I am about to use my power [MTY] against the Philistia people. I will get rid of the Kereth people-group and all [those who live along] the coast of the [Mediterranean] Sea. 17 By the way I punish them, I will get great revenge on them and show that I am angry with them. And when I get revenge on them, they will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]."'

26 Almost twelve [after we had been taken to Babylonia], on the first day of the month, Yahweh gave me another message. He said to me, 2 "You human, [the people of] Tyre [city] shouted joyfully and said about Jerusalem, '[Jerusalem,] the city from which many traders/merchants went to many nations, is now destroyed. And now people from all over the world will come to us to buy and sell things. Because Jerusalem has now been ruined, we will prosper!' 3 Therefore, this is what [I,] Yahweh the Lord, say: 'I am now the enemy of [you people of] Tyre. I will [the armies of] many nations to come and attack your [city], like the waves of the sea beat against the shores. 4 Their soldiers will destroy the walls around Tyre and tear down its towers. Tyre will become a place where people from many nations steal valuable things, [and then the city will be completely destroyed]. Then they will scrape away the rubble and cause the city to become a bare rock. 5 Out in the sea, Tyre will become an island where men spread [their fishing] nets to dry them. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh the Lord, have predicted it. 6 The people in small villages on the coast near Tyre will be killed [their enemies'] swords. Then people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].' 7 This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, [is going to happen]: 'From the north, I am going to bring the most powerful king [in the world], King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, [with his army] to attack Tyre. They will bring horses and chariots, and men who ride the horses [and men who drive the chariots]; it will be a huge army. 8 [In the battles in the small villages] on the coast, their soldiers will kill [many] people with their swords. [Then] they will set up devices to batter the wall around the city of Tyre, and they will build a dirt ramp up to the top of the wall, and they will all hold up shields [to protect themselves from arrows being shot from the ground]. 9 The king will direct the soldiers who operate the (rams/things) to batter the walls, and who will use their iron bars to tear down the towers in the wall. 10 The king will have a huge number of horses, [the stamping of their hooves will result in] the city being covered with dust. [It will be as though] the walls will tremble because of the noise made by the horses, the [supply] wagons, and the chariots when they enter the city where the walls have been broken down. 11 The horses will trample all of the [of the city] with their hooves. The soldiers will kill the people with their swords; and they will cause your strong pillars to (collapse/fall to the ground). 12 They will take away all the people's valuable possessions and steal the things that the merchants sell. They will tear down the walls of the houses and destroy their fine houses. Then they will throw into the sea the stones [from the walls] of those houses and the timber and the rubble. 13 No longer will you sing noisy songs, and people will not play their harps any more. 14 The enemy soldiers will cause the city to become a bare rock and [only] a place where men spread [their fishing] nets. And the city will never be rebuilt. [Those things will surely happen] because [I], Yahweh the Lord, have [that they will happen].' 15 This is [also] what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say about [the people of] Tyre: 'When the wounded [people in Tyre] groan and many people are slaughtered and the city is destroyed, [it will surely be as though] [RHQ] the areas along the coast will tremble. 16 Then all the kings [in the cities] along the coast will step down from their thrones and lay aside their robes and their embroidered clothes. They will be terrified, and they will sit on the ground, trembling. They will be appalled because of what has happened to the city of Tyre. 17 Then they will sing a sad song about the city, and they will sing this: "The famous city [APO], in which many [who sailed on] the seas lived, is now destroyed! The people of that city had great power [because they had many ships that sailed] on the seas; they caused all the people who lived near them to be terrified. 18 Now on the day when that city is destroyed, [it is as though the people in] the areas along the coast tremble and the [the people on the] islands in the sea are terrified because of that city being ruined."' 19 This is also what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: 'When I cause the city [of Tyre] to become desolate/empty, like [other] cities

in which people no [longer] live, and when I cause the huge waves of the sea to cover it, 20 then I will bring the people of that city down to be with those who have gone down to where the dead people are, people who lived long ago. I will cause them to remain in the place below the earth that is like old/ancient ruins, with those who have gone down to that pit [previously], and they will never return to the earth, to where people are alive. 21 I will cause them to die in a horrible way (OR, people will be very afraid because of what happens to that city), and that will be the end of (them/their lives). People will search for that city but it will no longer exist. [That is what I,] Yahweh the Lord, declare [will happen].'"

27 Yahweh said this to me: 2 "You human, sing a funeral song about Tyre. 3 [The city of] is located [on an island] at the edge of the sea, and their merchants (traded/bought and sold goods) with people-groups [who live] along many seacoasts. This is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say [that you should tell them]: 'You [people of] Tyre said that your [city] was very beautiful. 4 You controlled what was bought and sold by people who lived along the sea. Those who built your [city] caused it to become very beautiful. 5 You were like [SIM] a huge ship that was built from the from pine/cypress [trees] on Hermon [Mountain]. Then they took cedar [wood] from Lebanon to make a mast for the ship. 6 They carved your oars from oak trees from the Bashan [region]. They made the deck from cypress/pine wood from Cyprus [island], and they covered [the decks] with ivory. 7 The sails for the ship were made from fine embroidered linen from Egypt, and those sails were like flags that people could see [far away]. For shade they [hung pieces of] blue and purple cloth [brought] from [people living on] Cyprus [island]. 8 Men from Sidon and Arvad [cities] pulled the oars; the men who steered the boat were skilled men from Tyre. 9 Experienced craftsmen from Byblos [city on the coast] (did the caulking/filled the spaces between the planks in the sides) of the ship. Sailors from many countries came in their ships to buy and sell goods there. 10 Men from [as far away as] Persia, Lydia, and Libya were [soldiers] in your army. They hung their shields and helmets on [the walls of] your [city], and that caused people to admire your city. 11 Men from Arvad and Helech [cities were watchmen] on the walls [of your city]; men from Gammad [town] were in your towers. They [also] hung their shields on your walls; they also caused your [city] to be very beautiful. 12 Because of the many things that you had [to trade], men from Tarshish [in Spain] sent merchants who brought silver, iron, tin, and lead to trade for things that you had. 13 [Merchants from] Greece, Tubal, and Meshech brought slaves and things made from bronze to trade for things that you had. 14 [Men from] Beth-Togarmah [in Armenia] brought work horses, war horses, and mules to trade for things that you had. 15 Merchants came to you from Rhodes [island]. [People from] nations along the coast traded with you; they brought (ivory/elephant tusks) and [valuable black] ebony [wood] to trade for things that you had. 16 Because you had very many things [to trade], people from Syria brought to you valuable turquoise stones, purple [cloth], embroidered [cloth], fine linen [cloth], and [jewelry made from] coral and rubies to trade for your things. 17 Men from Judah and Israel brought wheat from Minnith [city in Ammon], and figs, honey, [olive] oil, and ointment to trade for your things. 18 Because you had very many things [to trade], men from Damascus brought wine from Helbon [town] and white wool from the Zahar [area] to trade for many things that you had. 19 Greek men from the Uzal [area] brought things made of iron, and cassia [spice], and [fragrant] calamus [seeds] to trade for things that you had. 20 [Merchants came from] Dedan [in southern Edom] bringing saddle blankets to trade for things that you had. 21 Men from Arabia and all the rulers of the Kedar [region] sent merchants to trade lambs and rams and male goats for things that you had. 22 Merchants from Sheba and Raamah [in Arabia] brought many kinds of very good spices and jewels and gold to exchange for things that you had. 23 [Men came from] Haran, Canneh, Eden, Sheba, Asshur and Kilmad [in Mesopotamia] with their goods. 24 They brought pretty things to trade: Blue cloth, embroidered cloth, and rugs of [many] colors that were [rolled up and] tied with ropes. 25 Cargo ships from Tarshish carried [all] those things that you traded; and the warehouses on your island were full of all those things.'" 26 "'The men who row your boats took [the ships full of] cargo out on the stormy seas. But the strong east wind wrecked those cargo boats. 27 Everything in the boats (was lost/sank to the bottom of the sea)— all the valuable cargo [DOU] and [many of] [HYP] the sailors and ship pilots, the ship workers and merchants and soldiers. On the day that the ships were wrecked, many of those on the ships sank to the bottom of the sea. 28 [The people in cities along] the coast trembled when they heard your ship pilots cry out. 29 All the men who remained who pulled the oars left the ships; the sailors and pilots [go to the shore and] stand on the beach. 30 They cry aloud because of [what has happened to] your [wealth], and they weep bitterly. They throw dirt on their heads and roll around in ashes. 31 They shave their heads to show that they are very sad because of [what has happened to] you, and they put on rough sackcloth. They weep for you very bitterly and mourn for you. 32 While they wail and mourn because of what has happened to you, they sing this sad funeral song: "There

was certainly never [RHQ] a city like Tyre that now is silent, covered by the waves of the sea." **33** The goods that your merchants traded were things that pleased the people of many countries. Kings in very distant places became rich from the wealth that they obtained from trading with you. **34** But now your city is like a ship [MET] that is wrecked in the sea, and everything that was in it is broken, at the bottom of the sea. All of your cargo and your sailors have sunk to the bottom of the sea along with the ships. **35** All the people who live along the seacoast are appalled/horrified because of what has happened to you. Their kings are very horrified, [causing] their faces to be twisted [as they watch]. **36** The merchants of the [other] nations shake their heads [because it is difficult for them to believe what has happened]; your city has disappeared, and it will not exist any more.'"

28 [Then] Yahweh gave me another message. [He said]: **2** "You human, give to the king of Tyre this message from [me], Yahweh the Lord: 'You have very proudly claimed, "I am a god! I sit on a throne of a god [in a city on an island] in the sea!" You boast that you are a god; but you are only a man, not a god. **3** [You think that] you are wiser than Daniel was, [and you think that] you can understand every secret. **4** By being wise and understanding [a lot], you have become [very] rich; you have acquired much gold and silver for your treasuries. **5** [Yes, it is true that] by trading wisely, you have been enabled to become very rich, and because you are rich, you have become very proud. **6** Therefore, this is what Yahweh the Lord says: "Because you think that you are as wise as a god, **7** I will [now] bring a foreign [army] to attack your [country], an army that causes other nations to be terrified. They will pull out their swords to strike you, [you who think that] [IRO] you have marvelous/great wisdom, and they will destroy all your beautiful things. **8** They will bring you down to your grave; you will die violently like [MET] those who died in the sea. **9** Then you will certainly not [RHQ] say to those who are killing you, 'I am a god!' [because they will know that] you are not a god; you are only a man. **10** You will die like other people who are unacceptable to me die, killed by foreigners." [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it.'" **11** Yahweh also gave me this message: **12** "You human, sing a sad/funeral song about the king of Tyre. Say to him, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: ["You thought that] [IRO] you were completely perfect, extremely wise and handsome. **13** You [had a wonderful life, as though] you were in my [beautiful] garden in Eden. Your [clothes] were decorated with many [HYP] kinds of very valuable stones—ruby, topaz, emerald, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, turquoise, and beryl [stones]. Those stones were set/placed in gold [mountings]. They were prepared for you on the day that you were born. **14** I appointed [DOU] you to be like [MET] a strong angel to guard the people. [It was as though I put] you on my holy mountain, and you walked among fiery stones. **15** You were completely good in all that you did, from the day that you were created/born, until you [started to] do wicked things. **16** [Then] you became busy trading things, and you started to act violently, and you sinned. So I caused you to be disgraced; and the angel who was guarding you forced you to leave my holy mountain, forced you to leave your place among those fiery stones. **17** You were extremely proud because you were very handsome. Because you loved beautiful things, you did things that wise people do not do. [So] I threw you to the ground, and allowed [other] kings who saw you to laugh at you. **18** By committing many sins and by trading things dishonestly, you caused your places of worship to become unacceptable to me. So I caused a fire [to burn down your city]. [Your city] was burned completely; the people who were watching it saw that only ashes remained on the ground. **19** All the people who knew what your [city was like previously] were appalled. Now [your city] has disappeared, and it will not exist any more.'"" **20** [Then] Yahweh gave me another message. [He said], **21** "You human, turn toward Sidon [city], and declare the terrible things that will happen to it. **22** Give [the people of Sidon] this message from [me], Yahweh the Lord: 'I am your enemy, [you people of] Sidon, and by what I do to you, I will reveal that I am very great/glorious. When I punish you and reveal that I am holy, everyone who is watching that will know that it is I, Yahweh, [who have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **23** I will send a plague upon you, and I will send [enemies to come and] kill [MTY] you in your streets. They will attack you from every direction, and your people will be slaughtered inside the walls of your city. Then everyone will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].' **24** No longer will those who live near you people of Israel [hurt you] like [MET] painful briers and sharp thorns [hurt people]. And then the Israeli people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." **25** And this is [also] what Yahweh the Lord says: "Some day the people of Israel will live in their own land [again], the land that I gave to Jacob, who [also] served me. I will gather them from [distant] countries where I have scattered them. And I will reveal to the nations that I am holy among my people. **26** My people will live safely in Israel; they will build houses and plant vineyards. And when I punish the nearby nations that despised them, they will know that it is I, Yahweh their God, [who has done it]."

29 Almost ten [after we had been taken to Babylonia], on the twelfth day of the tenth [of that year], Yahweh

gave me another message. [He said to me], 2 "You human, turn toward Egypt and proclaim the terrible things that will happen to the king of Egypt and all his people. 3 Give the king this message from [me], Yahweh the Lord: 'You king of Egypt, I am your enemy; [you are like] [MET] a great monster/crocodile that lies in the [along the Nile River]. You say, "The Nile [River] is mine; I made it [for myself]." 4 But [it will be as though] I will put hooks in your jaws and drag you out [from the river] onto the land, with fish sticking to your scales. 5 I will leave you and all those fish to die in the desert; you will fall onto the ground, and your [corpse] will not be picked up and buried, because I have declared that your flesh will be food for the wild animals and birds. 6 When that happens, all the people of Egypt will know that it is I, Yahweh, [who have the power to do what I say that I will do]. The Israeli people [trusted that you would help them]. But you have been [like] [MET] a reed pole in their hands. 7 And when they leaned on that pole, it splintered and tore open their shoulders. When they leaned on you, [it was as though] you were a pole that broke, and as a result you wrenched their backs. 8 Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: "I will bring [your enemies to attack] you with their swords, and they will kill your people and your animals. 9 Egypt will become an empty desert. Then the people of Egypt will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." You [proudly] said, "The Nile [River] is mine; I made it!" 10 Therefore I am opposed to you and your streams, and I will cause Egypt to be ruined, and cause it to be an empty desert, from Migdol [in the north] to Aswan [in the south], as far [south] as the border of Ethiopia. 11 For 40 years no one will walk through that area, and no one will live there. 12 Egypt will be barren/empty, and it will be surrounded by other desolate nations. The cities in Egypt will be empty and deserted for 40 years, surrounded by ruined cities in nearby nations. I will cause the people of Egypt to be scattered to countries [far away]. 13 But this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, [also] say: "At the end of 40 years, I will enable the people of Egypt to return home [again] from the nations to which they were scattered. 14 I will bring back the people of Egypt who had been captured, and I will enable them to live again in the Pathros area [in the south], where they lived previously. But Egypt will be a very unimportant [DOU] kingdom. 15 It will be the least important of [all] the nations; it will never again be greater than the nearby countries. I will cause Egypt to be very weak, with the result that it will never again rule over other nations. 16 [When that happens, the leaders of] Israel will no longer be tempted to ask Egypt to help them. Egypt will be punished, and that will cause the Israeli people to not forget that they previously sinned by trusting that Egypt could help them. And the people of Israel will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]." " 17 Almost twenty-seven years [after we had been taken to Babylonia], on the first day [of the new year], Yahweh gave me this message: 18 "You human, the army of king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon fought very hard against Tyre, with the result that their heads were rubbed bare and their shoulders became (raw/full of blisters). But Nebuchadnezzar and his army did not get any valuable things from Tyre to reward them for their hard work [to destroy Tyre]. 19 Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: 'I will enable King Nebuchadnezzar's army to conquer Egypt. They will carry away from there all the valuable things, in order that the king can give them to his soldiers. 20 I will enable them to conquer Egypt as a reward for what they did [to Tyre], because [I], Yahweh say that [it was as though] his army was working for me, [doing what I wanted them to do, when they destroyed Tyre]. 21 And some day Israel will become a glorious nation [MET] again. When that happens, I will cause the Israeli people to respect what you say [MTY]. And then they will know that [it has happened because] I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'"

30 Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] 2 "You human, prophesy [about what will happen to Egypt]. Say, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: "Weep and wail [DOU], because terrible things will happen some day. 3 That day is near, the day when I, Yahweh, [will punish people]; it will be a day of [dark] clouds and disaster for [many] nations. 4 [An enemy army] [PRS] will come to attack Egypt with their swords, and there will be great distress [among the people] in Ethiopia. [Many] people will be killed in Egypt; everything valuable will be taken away, and [even] the foundations [of the buildings] will be torn down. 5 [Soldiers of] Ethiopia, Libya, Lydia, and from all of Arabia, and [all the other] groups who are their allies, will be killed in the battles." 6 This is what [I], Yahweh say: "The allies of Egypt will be defeated, and the power that [the people of Egypt] are proud of will end. From Migdol [city in the north] to Aswan [city in the south], the soldiers of Egypt will be killed by their enemies' swords"; [that is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare. 7 Egypt will become the most deserted country in the world, and its cities will be ruined, surrounded by ruined cities [in nearby nations]. 8 Then, when I cause [everything in] Egypt to be burned in fires, and all their allies are defeated, people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. 9 At that time, I will send messengers to go [swiftly up the Nile River] in boats to cause the people of Ethiopia who (are complacent/confident/think that nothing terrible

will happen to them) to become afraid. They will be terrified [PRS] when Egypt is destroyed; and it will soon be that time!" **10** This is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: "By the power of [MTY] of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon I will get rid of very many people in Egypt. **11** Nebuchadnezzar and his army, whose soldiers are extremely ruthless, will come to destroy Egypt. They will pull out their swords and fill Egypt with [the corpses of] those whom they have killed. **12** I will cause the Nile [River] to become dry, and I will sell the nation to evil men. By the power [MTY] of foreigners I will ruin the land and everything that is in it. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have predicted it." **13** This is [also] what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: "I will cause the idols and statues [of idols] [DOU] in Memphis [city] to be destroyed. No longer will there be a king in Egypt, and all over the land, people will be terrified. I will cause [the people of] Egypt to be very afraid. **14** I will cause the Pathros [area in southern Egypt] to be abandoned. I will start fires in Zoan [city in northeast Egypt] and punish [the people in] Thebes, [the capital of southern Egypt]. **15** I will pour out my punishment [MTY] on [the fortress in] Pelusium [at the eastern end of Egypt], and I will get rid of very many people in Thebes. **16** I will burn Egypt by fires; [the people in] Pelusium will suffer severe pain. [Enemies] will conquer Thebes, and [the people in] Memphis will constantly be terrified. **17** [Many] young men in Heliopolis and Bubastis [cities in northern Egypt] will be killed by [their enemies] swords, and the others [from those cities] will be captured and taken [to Babylon]. **18** It will be a dark day [of destruction] at Tahpenes [city in northeast Egypt] when I cause the power [MET] of Egypt to end; that country will no longer be proud of being strong. [It will be as though] a dark cloud will cover Egypt, because the people of its villages will be captured and forced to go [to Babylon]." **19** That is how I will punish Egypt, and people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" **20** Almost eleven years [after we had been taken to Babylon], on the seventh day of the first month [of that year], Yahweh gave me another message. [He said,] **21** "You human, I [have enabled the army of Nebuchadnezzar to defeat the army of] the King of Egypt. [It is as though] I have broken one of the arms of the King of Egypt, and it has not been bandaged in order that it could be healed, and it has not been put in splints in order that [after it heals] the arm will be strong [enough] to hold a sword. **22** Therefore, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: 'I am the enemy of the King of Egypt. [I will completely destroy the power of Egypt; it is as though] now I will break both of the king's arms, the good/strong one and the broken one, and cause the sword to fall from his hand. **23** I will cause the people of Egypt to be scattered among the nations [DOU]. **24** [It is as though] I will strengthen the arms of the King of Babylon and put a sword in his hand, and [as though] I will break the arms of the king of Egypt, and he will groan in front of the King of Babylon like [SIM] a soldier who is wounded and about to die. **25** I will cause the power [MTY] of the King of Babylon to become greater, and the power of the king of Egypt will be useless [MET]. When that happens, when I give power to the army of the King of Babylon, they will use that power to attack Egypt. **26** I will cause the people of Egypt to be scattered among the nations [DOU]. And when that happens, the people [of Egypt] will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do] [DOU].'"

31 Almost eleven years [after we had been taken to Babylonia], on the first day of the third month [of that year], Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **2** "You human, say to the King of Egypt and all of his people, '[You think that] there is [RHQ, IRO] no country whose power is as great as the power of your country. **3** You think that your country is as great as Assyria was: Assyria was previously like [MET] a tall cedar tree in Lebanon; [it was as though] it had big beautiful branches that provided shade for [other trees in] the forest. It was very tall; its top was above the leaves of the other trees. **4** Water came from deep springs, and as a result that cedar tree grew tall and very green. Then water flowed around the base of the tree into channels that took water to other nearby trees. **5** That huge tree grew very tall, higher than all the other trees around it. Its branches grew very thick and long [DOU] because of the abundant water [at the base of the tree]. **6** Birds built their nests in the branches, and wild animals gave birth to their babies under those branches. [And it was as though people of] all the great nations lived in the shade of that tree. **7** It was majestic and beautiful; its branches spread out widely because the roots of the tree grew down into the ground where there was a plentiful supply of water. **8** The cedar trees in my garden [in Eden] were not as great as that tree, and the branches of the pine/cypress trees were not as long and thick as the branches of that cedar tree. And the branches of the plane trees were not as long and thick, either. No tree in my garden was as beautiful as that cedar tree. **9** Because I caused that tree to become very beautiful with its magnificent green branches, [all the leaders of other countries represented by] [MET] those other trees in Eden envied [the country represented by] that tree.' **10** Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: 'That tree, which [represents Assyria], grew very tall, and its top was higher than the other trees, and it became very proud because of being very tall. **11** Therefore, I enabled another

mighty nation to conquer it and to destroy it as it deserved to be destroyed. I have already discarded it. **12** A foreign army, one that has caused people of other nations to be terrified, cut it down and left it. Its branches fell on the mountains and in the valleys. Some of its branches lay broken in all the ravines in the land. All the people of other nations came out from being under its shade and left it. **13** Birds (settled/went to live) on the fallen tree, and wild animals lived among its branches. **14** The result of what I have done is that no other trees, even if they have plenty of water, will ever grow very high and become proud, and lift their tops above the branches of other trees. I do not want any other tree to grow high like that cedar tree did; trees will all certainly die and decay in the ground, like people die and go down to their graves.' **15** This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: 'When that great tree was cut down, [it was as though] the springs that watered it mourned for it, because I caused the plentiful water [from the springs] to dry up. I caused [the mountains in] Lebanon to become black, and all the trees there to wither. **(Sheol h7585)** **16** I caused the people of other nations to tremble when they heard that tree fall to the ground. [They realized] that it would decay, like all people who die and are buried decay. And all the [leaders of other countries represented by] other beautiful trees in my garden in Eden and in Lebanon, were like beautiful trees [that were very proud]. They were ones which had roots that grew down deep into the [ground where there was plenty of] water. They were comforted when [the king represented by] [MET] that cedar tree was there with them in the place where the dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** **17** The [leaders of other countries represented by] [MET] trees that grew in the shade of the huge tree, [the allies of] the great nation [that the cedar tree represents], had also joined those who had been killed by the sword and gone down to where the dead people are. **(Sheol h7585)** **18** [This parable is about you] people of Egypt. [You think that] [RHQ, IRO] there is no other nation that is as great and glorious as yours is. But your nation will also be destroyed, [as Assyria was], along with those other nations. Your people will be there among the other people who are not fit to worship me, people who have been killed by their enemies' swords. That is what will happen to the king of Egypt and all his people. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, [have predicted it].'"

32 Almost twelve years [after we had been taken to Babylonia], on the first day of the twelfth month [of that year], Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **2** "You human, sing a sad/funeral song about the king of Egypt. Sing this to him: 'You [think that you] [IRO] are like [SIM] a lion among the nations; or like [SIM] a monster/crocodile in the river thrashing around in the water, churning/stirring up the water with your feet and causing the water to become muddy. **3** But this is what Yahweh the Lord says: "I will send many people to throw my net over you, and they will haul/drag you up [onto the land] in my net. **4** They will throw you into a field [DOU] [to die]; I will allow the birds to sit on you, and all the wild animals will eat the flesh of your corpse until their stomachs are full. **5** I will cause them to scatter your flesh on the hills and fill the valleys with your bones. **6** I will cause them to fill the land with your blood, all the way to the mountains, and the ravines will be filled with your flesh. **7** When I get rid of you, I will cover the sky and not allow the stars to shine. I will put a dark cloud in front of the sun, and the moon will not shine. **8** I will cause the stars in the sky to be dark, and there will be darkness over your entire land; [that will surely happen because] I, Yahweh the Lord, have said it. **9** And when the people of many nations hear about your being destroyed, many of them will be afraid/worried—people living in countries that you have never known about. **10** I will cause many people to be appalled because of [what has happened to] you, and their kings will be horrified and shudder/shake because of your [being destroyed], when I swing my sword in front of them. At the time that you will be destroyed, all of them will tremble, fearing that they also will be killed." **11** This is what Yahweh the Lord says: "The swords of [the army of] the King of Babylon will strike you. **12** I will cause very many of your people to be killed by the swords of mighty soldiers [from Babylonia], who are more ruthless/cruel than the soldiers of all other nations. They will cause the people of Egypt to quit being proud, because very many [HYP] of their people will be killed. **13** I will destroy all the cattle in Egypt that (graze/eat grass) alongside the streams. As a result, the water in those streams will never again become muddy because of people and cattle walking in them. **14** Then I will allow the streams in Egypt to become calm again and flow [as smoothly] [SIM] as olive oil flows. **15** When I cause Egypt to become empty/desolate and strip off everything that grows on the land, and when I get rid of all the people who live there, people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'" **16** That sad song about Egypt will also be sung by the people. Women of many nations will sing it. They will chant it about Egypt and all its people; [that will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said that it would happen." **17** On the fifteenth day of that same month, Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **18** "You human, wail about the many people of Egypt, because I will send them to the place under the earth, where they and people of other mighty nations will be. I will send them there, along with others, down to the place where

the dead are. 19 Say to them, 'You people of [APO] Egypt, [you think that] [IRO, RHQ] you are more beautiful than the people of other nations. But you also will descend to the place where the godless dead people are. 20 [Your enemies] will pull out their swords and kill many of you. A huge number of the people of Egypt who remain will be dragged away. 21 In the place where the dead people are, mighty leaders [of other countries] will [make fun of the people of Egypt] and say, "They have come here to lie with us godless people who were killed by our enemies' swords!"' (Sheol h7585) 22 [The corpses of the people of] Assyria will be there. They will be surrounded by [corpses of] soldiers who were killed by [their enemies'] swords. 23 The people's graves are there in the deep pit, and [corpses of soldiers of] their army lie around their graves. Corpses of all those who had caused many others in other places to be terrified also will be there, having been killed by swords. 24 A great number of the people of Elam will be there. They also were killed by [their enemies'] swords. They had caused people in many places [HYP] to be terrified. At that time they will lie there in that deep pit below the earth, and they, along with the others who have gone there, will be disgraced. 25 They will lie there among others who were slaughtered, surrounded by the graves of a huge crowd of other people. While they were alive, they caused people of other nations to be terrified; but they were godless, and now, having been killed by [their enemies] swords, they will lie with others in that deep pit, disgraced, all of them avoiding each other. 26 [Corpses of] soldiers of Meshech and Tubal will be there, surrounded by the graves of a huge crowd of their people. They were all godless people who were killed by swords because while they were alive, they also caused people in many places [HYP] to be terrified. 27 They will surely [RHQ] not be buried honorably like the soldiers who have died, whose shields were buried with their corpses, whose swords were placed on their skulls in the graves. While those godless people were alive, they had caused many people in the land to be terrified, so they were punished for their sins. (Sheol h7585) 28 You king of Egypt, you also be killed and will lie there with other godless people who have been killed by [their enemies'] swords. 29 People of the Edom people-group will be there, along with their kings and leaders. They were powerful, but they will [be killed and] lie there in the place where the other dead people are. They will lie there in that deep pit, with the other godless people. 30 All the rulers of countries north [of Israel], including people from Sidon, will be there. Because of their power, they caused people to be terrified, but they will lie there. They were godless, and they will lie there along with others who were killed by [their enemies'] swords. They, along with everyone else who descends into that deep pit, will be disgraced. 31 The king of Egypt and all his army will see them, and they will be comforted to know that there were other huge groups of people who were killed by [their enemies'] swords. 32 While he was living, I allowed him to cause others in many countries to be terrified, but he and his huge army will be there among other godless people who had been killed by [their enemies'] swords. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh the Lord, am the one who has said [that it would happen]."

33 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, 2 "You human, speak to your fellow Israelis and say this to them: 'When I bring an enemy army [MTY] to attack a country, and the people of that country choose one of their men and appoint him to be a watchman, 3 if he sees the enemy army [MTY] coming to attack his country, and he blows a trumpet to warn the people, 4 if anyone hears the trumpet and does not heed the warning, and as a result he is killed by the sword [of one of his enemies], he will be responsible for his own death [MTY]. 5 If he had heeded the warning, he would have (have saved his life/still be alive). But because he heard the sound of the trumpet and did not heed that warning, his death will be his own fault. 6 But if the watchman sees the enemy army [MTY] coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people, and one of his people is killed by an enemy sword, that person will die because of his sin, but I will consider that the watchman is responsible for that man's death.' 7 So, you human, I have appointed you to be a watchman for the Israeli people [MTY]. So always listen to what I say and warn the people for me. 8 When I say to some wicked person, 'You wicked person, you will surely die [because of your sins,' you must tell him that]. If you do not speak to that person to warn him that he should turn away from his sins, that wicked person will die because of his sins, but I will say that you are responsible for his death [MTY]. 9 But if you warn that wicked person that he should turn away from his sins, and he does not do that, he will die because of his sins, but you will have saved your life. 10 You human, say to the Israeli people, 'This is what you all are saying: "[The guilt that we have for] disobeying God's laws and sinning is like a heavy weight on us, and it is hurting us, and we are slowly dying. So what can we do to continue to remain alive?"' 11 Say to them, 'Yahweh the Lord says, "As surely as I am alive, I am not happy when wicked people die; I would prefer that they turn away from their wicked behavior and continue to live. So repent! Turn away from your evil behavior! You Israeli people, do you really want to die [RHQ]?"' 12 Therefore, you human, say to your fellow Israelis, 'If righteous people start

to disobey me, their being righteous previously will not save them [from being punished]. And if wicked people turn away from their wicked behavior, they will not die because of the sins that they committed [previously]. And if righteous people start to sin, they will not be allowed to remain alive because of their formerly being righteous.' **13** If I tell righteous people that they will surely remain alive, but then they trust/think that because they have been righteous previously, they can start to do evil [and not be punished], I will not think about the righteous things that they did previously; they will die because of the evil things that they are doing. **14** And if I say to some wicked person, 'You will surely die [because of your sins],' that person may turn away from his sinful behavior and do what is just and right [DOU]. **15** For example, he may return what he took from another person to guarantee [that that person would pay back what he owes], or he may return things that he has stolen, and he may obey the laws that will enable [those who obey them] to remain alive, and he will not continue to do evil things. If that happens, he will surely remain alive; he will not die [because of the sins that he committed previously]. **16** I will not think about the sins that he has committed; he will surely remain alive. **17** Your fellow Israelis say, 'What Yahweh does is not fair.' But it is your behavior that is not fair. **18** If a righteous person turns away from doing what is righteous and starts to do what is evil, [it is fair that] he die because of his sins. **19** And if a wicked person turns away from his wicked behavior and does what is right and fair [DOU], [it is fair] for him to remain alive because of doing that. **20** But you Israeli people still say, 'What Yahweh does is not fair.' But I will judge each of you for what you do." **21** Almost twelve years [after we had been taken to Babylonia], on the fifth day of the tenth month [of that year], a man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me [in Babylon] and said, "Jerusalem has been captured!" **22** The evening before that man arrived, Yahweh took control [MTY] of me, and when that man arrived, Yahweh enabled me to speak again; I was no longer forced to be silent. **23** Then Yahweh gave a message to me. He said, **24** "You human, the people who are living in the ruins in Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one person, but Yahweh [promised him that he and his descendants] would possess this land. But we are many; so surely this land has been given to us [by Yahweh] to continue to possess.' **25** So send a message to them. Say, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: You eat meat that still has the animal's blood in it. You still worship idols. And you still murder others [MTY]. So, (should this land belong to you?/this land should certainly not belong to you!) [RHQ] **26** You rely on using your swords [to obtain things that you want]. You do many detestable things. Each of you has sex with other men's wives. So (why should you continue to possess the land of Israel?/you should not continue to possess this land!) [RHQ]' **27** Send this message to them: 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: As surely as I am alive, those who are left in the ruins [in Jerusalem] will also be killed by [their enemies'] swords, and those who are living in the countryside will be killed by wild animals, and those who are living in forts and caves will die from a plague. **28** I will cause your country to become a desolate wasteland. You will no longer be proud of being a strong country. The mountains of Israel will become very desolate, with the result that no one will walk across them. **29** Then, when I have caused your country to become a desolate wasteland because of all the detestable things that you have done, you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].' **30** As for you, you human, your fellow Israelis [here in Babylon] are talking about you along the city walls and at the doors of their houses. They are saying to each other, 'Come and listen to the message that has come from Yahweh!' **31** My people come to you as they often have done, and they sit in front of you to listen to what you say. But they do not do what you tell them that they must do. With their mouths they say that they love me, but in their inner beings they are eager to acquire things by doing what is unjust. **32** To them, you are only a man who sings love songs with a beautiful voice, and you play a musical instrument well. They hear what you say, but they do not do what you tell them to do. **33** The terrible things that I have said will happen to them will surely happen. And then they will know that a prophet has been among them, [and that you are that prophet]."

34 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **2** "You human, prophesy about [leaders] of Israel. [They should be taking care of my people like] [MET] shepherds [take care of their sheep]. Say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Terrible things will happen to you leaders [MET] of Israel who only take care of yourselves! You should certainly [RHQ] take care of [your people like] [MET] a shepherd takes care of his flock of sheep! **3** [It is as though] you eat the curds, you slaughter the very good animals and wear clothes made from their wool. But you do not take care of the flock. **4** You have not enabled those who are weak to become strong. You have not healed those who were sick. You have not bandaged those who were wounded/injured. You have not brought back those who went astray. You have not searched for those who became lost. You have ruled your people harshly and cruelly. **5** So they were scattered, because you did not [take care of them like] [MET] a shepherd [takes care of his sheep]. And

when they were scattered, [it was as though] wild animals attacked and [killed them and ate] their flesh. **6** My people wandered like sheep all over the high hills and mountains. They were scattered all over the earth, and no one searched for them [DOU]. **7** Therefore, you [who should be acting like] shepherds, listen to what I, Yahweh the Lord say: **8** As surely as I am alive, my people [are like a flock of sheep that has] no shepherd, and as a result [it is as though] wild animals have attacked my people and eaten them. You did not search for them; instead, you only wanted to provide food for yourselves. **9** Therefore, you [who should be like] [MET] shepherds, listen to what I, Yahweh say: **10** I am opposed to [you leaders who should be like] [MET] shepherds for my people. I will remove you from taking care of my people, with the result that you will no longer feed yourselves [instead of feeding them]. I will rescue my people from you, with the result that you will longer be able to [butcher them and] eat them. **11** This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to you leaders: I myself will search for my sheep and take care of them. **12** Like a shepherd finds his scattered sheep, I will rescue my people from all the places to which they have been scattered, at a time when things were very gloomy and they experienced disasters. **13** I will bring them back from many countries and gather them together again in their own land. [Because my people are like sheep] [MET], [it is as though] I will enable them to find good pastureland on the hills of Israel, and in the ravines, and in the villages of Israel. **14** [It is as though] I will allow them to graze in good pastures on the mountaintops. They will lie down in good (grazing areas/grassy fields) there [DOU]. **15** I myself will take care of my people and enable them to lie down and rest. **16** I will search for those who are lost and bring back the ones who have strayed away. I will bandage those who have been injured and strengthen those who are weak. But I will get rid of those who are fat and powerful. I will act fairly toward [the people who are like] [MET] my sheep. That is what I, Yahweh, promise. **17** And as for you who are like [MET] my sheep, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I will judge between each of you; and I will separate [those that are peaceful like] sheep from [those that are always trying to dominate others like] goats. **18** It is bad that [RHQ] some of you keep the best pastures for yourselves. It is even worse that [RHQ] you trample the good grass with your feet. You yourselves drink the clear water [RHQ]. But with your feet you cause the other water to become muddy [RHQ]. **19** [It is as though] you [RHQ] are forcing my flock to eat the grass that you have trampled and to drink the water that you have caused to become muddy! **20** Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to you: I myself will judge between [those of you who are like] [MET] the fat sheep and [those of you who are like] the thin sheep. **21** [who are like] strong sheep, [it is as though] with your shoulders and buttocks you have shoved away [those who are like] thin sheep, and you have butted them with your horns, until you have chased them all away [from the good pastureland]. **22** But I will rescue my people, and they no longer will be (harassed/treated cruelly). I will judge between one person and another. **23** And I will appoint one leader [MET] for them, [someone who will be like] King David, who served me [very well]. That leader will take care of them and be like their shepherd. **24** I, Yahweh, will be their God, and [the one who is like] [MET] King David will be their king. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it. **25** I will make a peace agreement with the people of Israel. In this agreement I will promise to get rid of all the wild animals in Israel, in order that my people may live safely, even in the desert and in the forests. **26** I will bless them, and I will bless the places close to my sacred hill. I will bless them by sending them rain showers at the right season; they will be showers to bless them. **27** The fruit trees will produce fruit and the ground will produce crops. And my people will live safely in their land. When I rescue them from people who caused them to be slaves [MET, DOU], they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **28** [Soldiers from] other nations will no longer take away their valuable possessions, and wild animals will no longer attack them. They will live safely, and no one will cause them to be afraid. **29** I will cause their land to be famous/well-known for its good crops. There will no longer be famines in the land, and people in other nations will no longer ridicule them. **30** Then they will know that I, Yahweh their God, am helping them, and they will know that they, the Israeli people, are my people. **31** [It will be as though] [MET] my people are my sheep whom I will take care of, and I will be their God. That is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare.'"

35 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, **2** "You human, turn toward Edom and prophesy what will happen to its people. Say that this is what Yahweh says to them: **3** 'You who live near Seir Mountain [in Edom], I am opposed to you, and I will use my power [MTY] to strike you and cause your country to become a wasteland. **4** I will cause your country to be ruined and desolate. When that happens, people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **5** You have always been enemies of the Israeli people. You [rejoiced] when they experienced a great disaster: [their enemies attacked them with] swords, when I punished them [for the sins that they had committed]. **6** Therefore, I, Yahweh the Lord, declare

that as surely as I am alive, I will allow [your enemies] to slaughter [MTY] you and continue to slaughter you. You were happy when [LIT] others were slaughtered; 7 so I will cause Seir Mountain to be abandoned/deserted, and I will get rid of anyone who enters it or leaves it. 8 I will cause your mountains to be filled with [the corpses of] those who have been killed. The corpses of those who have been killed by [your enemies'] swords will lie on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines. 9 I will cause your land to be deserted forever. No one will live in your towns again. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. 10 You people said, "Israel and Judah will become ours. We will take over their territory!" You said that even though I, Yahweh, was still there [and protecting them]. 11 Therefore, I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that as surely as I am alive, I will punish [MTY] you for being angry with my people, envying them, and hating them. 12 Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have heard all the disgusting things that you have said about the mountains in Israel. You said that they have been ruined/devastated, and that they have been given to you to occupy [MET]. 13 When you insulted me, I heard all that you said about me. 14 So this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: You people who live on Seir Mountain and in all the other places in Edom, when I cause your land to become desolate, everyone in the entire world will rejoice. 15 You were happy when the land [MTY] of the Israeli people became desolate, so I will cause your land to become desolate. When that happens, people will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do].'"

36 You human, prophesy about the mountains in Israel. Say to them, "You mountains in Israel, listen to what Yahweh says. 2 This is what Yahweh the Lord says: Your enemies [happily] said about you, 'Aha! The mountains in Israel that have existed for a long time have become ours!'" 3 Therefore prophesy about those mountains and say, "This is what Yahweh the Lord declares: [Armies of other nations] attacked you [DOU] from every direction, with the result that your land became abandoned, and people of other nations occupied you, and they spoke maliciously about you and slandered you. 4 Therefore, you mountains in Israel, listen to this message from me. I, Yahweh the Lord, have something to say to the hills and mountains, to the ravines and valleys, to the deserted ruins and towns whose valuable possessions have been taken and their people ridiculed by the people of other nations around them. This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare: I am very angry [DOU] with the people of Edom and other nations; they have forced you [Israeli people] to endure them insulting you. 7 Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Lifting up my arm, I solemnly declare that the people of the nations that are around you will also endure being insulted. 8 But [I say to] you mountains in Israel that huge crops of fruit will grow on your trees for my Israeli people, because they will soon return home [from Babylonia]. 9 I (am concerned about/will take care of) you, and I will bless you. I will [enable farmers to] plow the ground and plant seed there. 10 I will cause the number of people who live on you mountains and everywhere else in Israel to greatly increase. People will live in the towns and rebuild [houses where there are now only] ruins. 11 I will cause the number of people and domestic animals to increase. People will have many children [IDM, DOU]. I will enable people to live there like they did previously, and I will enable them to prosper like they did before. Then you will know that it is I, Yahweh, [who have the power to do what I say that I will do]. 12 I will enable my Israeli people to walk through your mountains. They will own you; you will be their permanent possession. Never again will their children die. 13 This is also what I, Yahweh the Lord, say to you: People say that [only a small amount of food is produced on your mountains, and as a result the people of Israel] die from hunger. 14 Therefore, I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that no longer will that happen. 15 No longer will the people of other nations ridicule you; no longer will they laugh at you; no longer will [the armies of] other nations conquer you. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have declared that it will happen." 16 Yahweh gave me another message. He said, 17 "You human, when the Israeli people were living in their own land, they (defiled it/caused it to become unacceptable to me) by the things that they did. I considered that their behavior was [disgusting], like [SIM] the rags/cloths that women use during their monthly menstrual periods. 18 So I severely punished [MTY] them, because they had murdered [MTY] many people and because they had defiled the land by [worshiping] idols there. 19 I caused them to be scattered among many nations [DOU]. I punished [MTY] them like they deserved to be punished because of their very evil behavior [DOU]. 20 And wherever they went among those nations, they caused my reputation [MTY] to be disgraced. What has happened is that the people in those countries said about the Israeli people, 'They belong to Yahweh, but they were forced to leave the land that he [gave to them].' 21 But I was concerned about my reputation, which the people of Israel had disgraced among the nations to which they were forced to go. 22 Therefore, say to the Israeli people, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: You Israeli people, it is not for your sake that I am going to do these things. Instead, it is for the sake of my sacred reputation, which you have

disgraced among the nations to which you were forced to go. **23** I will show that my reputation is sacred, a reputation which you have disgraced among the nations to which you were forced to go. And when I show the nations that I am holy, the people of those nations will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **24** What I will do is to bring you back from those nations. I will gather you from all the countries [to which you were forced to go], and bring you back to your own land. **25** [It will be as though] [MET] I will sprinkle clean water on you, and then you will be clean. I will cause you to be cleansed from everything that has defiled you, and I will cause you to stop worshiping idols. **26** I will give you a completely new way of thinking [IDM]. I will enable you to stop being stubborn [IDM], and I will enable you to obey me from your inner beings [IDM]. **27** I will put my Spirit within you and enable you to carefully obey all my laws [DOU]. **28** You will again live in the land that I gave to your ancestors. You will be my people, and I will be your God. **29** I will free you from all your disgraceful behavior. I will cause your grain to be plentiful, and I will not send a famine to you again. **30** I will cause your fruit trees to produce plenty of fruit and your ground to produce plenty of good crops, with the result that you will no longer be ridiculed by the people of other nations because of your not having enough food. **31** When that happens, you will think about your previous evil behavior and wicked deeds, and you will (be very displeased with/hate) yourselves for your sins and the detestable things that you did. **32** But I, Yahweh the Lord, declare that I want you to know that it is not for your sake that I will do those things. You Israeli people ought to be ashamed of your behavior. **33** This is also what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: At the time that I forgive you for all the sins that you have committed, I will enable you to live in your towns again and to build houses where there are now only ruins. **34** People who walk through your country will see that your land is again cultivated instead of (being desolate/having nothing growing in it). **35** They will say, "This land that was ruined has become [very fertile/productive] like [SIM] the garden of Eden! The cities that were piles of ruins, empty and destroyed, now have walls around them, and people live in those cities." **36** When that happens, the people in the nations that are around you that still exist will know that it is I, Yahweh, who have enabled you to rebuild what was destroyed, and to again plant crops in the fields that had nothing growing in them. I, Yahweh, have said [that it will happen], and I will cause it to happen. **37** This is also what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: Again I will heed what you Israeli people are pleading for me to do for you. I will cause your people to be as numerous as your sheep, **38** as numerous as the flocks of sheep that will be needed for offerings in Jerusalem during your regular festivals. The cities that are now ruined will be filled with people, and then you will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]."'

37 One day Yahweh gave me another vision. In the vision I felt the power [MTY] of God on me, and by his Spirit he took me to the middle of a valley. It was full of bones [of people who had been killed]. **2** He led me to walk back and forth among those bones. I saw that there were very many bones there, bones that were very dry. **3** He asked me, "You human, [do you think that] these bones can become living [people again]?" I replied, "Yahweh my Lord, only you know [if that can happen]." **4** Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones. Say to them, 'You dry bones, listen to what Yahweh says. **5** This is what Yahweh the Lord says to you bones: I will put my breath into each of you, and you will become alive again. **6** I will fasten tendons to your bones, and cause your bones to be covered with flesh. I will cover the flesh with skin. Then I will breathe into you, and you will become alive. When that happens, you will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]."' **7** So I spoke to the bones what Yahweh commanded me to speak. As I was speaking, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bones joining to each other. **8** While I was looking, I saw tendons fastening to them and flesh covering them, and then skin covered the flesh, but they did not breathe. **9** Then he said to me, "You human, prophesy to the wind. Say to the wind, 'Wind [APO], Yahweh says to you, blow from all four directions. Breathe into these people who have been killed, in order that they can become alive again!'" **10** So I said what he commanded me to say, and then breath entered them. They became alive and stood up, like a huge army. **11** Then he said to me, "You human, these bones represent all the Israeli people [MTY]. The people say, '[It is as though] our bones are dried up; there are no more good things that we can (hope for/confidently expect to happen to us); our nation is destroyed/finished.' **12** So prophesy and say to them, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: My people, [it will be as though] I will open your graves and cause your corpses to become alive again. I will bring you back to Israel. **13** Then, what that happens, you my people will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **14** I will put my Spirit in you, and [it will be as though] you will become alive again, and I will enable you to live in your own land again. Then you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who said [that it would happen] and who has caused it to happen. That is what I, Yahweh, declare.'" **15** Yahweh gave me [another] message. He said,

16 "You human, take a piece of wood and write on it, 'This
represents Judah and all the tribes of Judah.' Then take
another piece of wood and write on it, 'This represents Israel
and all the tribes of Israel.' 17 Then join them together to
become [as though they were] one piece of wood in your
hand. 18 When your fellow Israelis ask you, 'What does
(this action/what you just did) mean?', 19 tell them, 'This is
what Yahweh the Lord says: One of the pieces of wood in
my hand represents Israel and all the tribes of Israel. I am
joining it to the piece of wood that represents Judah, to form
one piece of wood in his hand.' 20 Then, [you human], hold
up the pieces of wood that you have written on, in order that
the people can see them. 21 Say to the people, 'This is what
Yahweh the Lord says: I will take you Israeli people out of
the countries to which you have been forced to go. I will
gather you from all those nations and bring you back to your
own land. 22 And I will cause you to again be one nation
in that land, on the mountains in Israel. And there will be
one king to rule over all of you. Never again will you be two
nations or divided into two kingdoms. 23 No longer will you
(defile yourselves/make yourselves unacceptable to me)
by [worshiping] idols and disgusting statues [of your gods],
because I will enable you to quit your sinful behavior and to
stop rejecting me. You will be my people, and I will be your
God. 24 [Someone who will be like] [MET] [King] David who
served [me well] will be the king [of your descendants], and
[it will be as though] [MET] he will be their shepherd. They
will carefully obey all my laws [DOU]. 25 They will live in the
land that I gave to Jacob, who also served [me well]; they
will live in the land where your ancestors lived. They and
their children and their grandchildren will live there forever,
and [the one who will be like] [MET] [King] David will be their
king forever. 26 I will make a peace agreement with them; it
will be an agreement that will endure forever. I will again
give them that land and cause their population to increase.
And I will put my temple among them forever. 27 The place
where I will live will be among them; I will be their God and
they will be my people. 28 Then, when my temple is forever
there among them, the people of other nations will know that
I, Yahweh, have caused the Israeli people to be set apart [to
belong to me]."'

38 Yahweh gave me another message. He said to me,
2 "You human, turn and face Magog, the country where
Gog [is the king]. He is [also] the ruler of [the nations of]
Meshech and Tubal. Prophesy about [the terrible things that
will happen to] him, 3 and say, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord
says: Gog, you who rule Meshech and Tubal, I am opposed
to you. 4 [It will be as though] I will turn you around and
put hooks in your jaws and bring you [to Israel]—you and
all of your army, [including your] horses and men carrying
weapons who ride the horses, and many other soldiers
carrying large shields and small shields, all of them carrying
swords. 5 [Armies from] Persia, Ethiopia, and Put/Libya will
also come, all of them with shields and helmets. 6 An army
from Gomer [north of Israel] will come, and an army from
Togarmah far north [of Israel] will come. Armies of many
nations will accompany you.' 7 [Tell Gog,] 'Get ready and
be prepared to be the commander of all those groups of
soldiers. 8 At some future time, I will command you to lead
those armies to attack [Israel], a country whose [buildings]
have been rebuilt after [they were destroyed in] wars. Their
people will have been brought back from many nations [to
live again] on the hills of Israel, which had been deserted
for a long time. They had been brought back from [other]
nations and will be living peacefully. 9 You and all those
armies from many nations will go up to Israel, advancing
like [SIM] a big storm. Your army will be like a huge cloud
that covers the land. 10 But this is what [I], Yahweh the
Lord, say: On that day, you will have an idea about [DOU]
doing an evil thing. 11 You will say [to yourself], "My [army]
will invade a country where the villages do not have walls
around them. We will attack people who are peaceful and do
not suspect/think [that they will be attacked]. Their towns
and villages do not have walls with gates and bars. 12 So [it
will be easy for] us to attack the people who are living again
in those towns that were previously destroyed. They are
people who have been gathered from many countries [where
they had lived for many years], people who now live safely
in their land with all their livestock and other possessions.
They are living in the country that is in the middle of the
most important countries (OR, [that they think is] [IRO] the
most important country) in the world. Our soldiers will take
away [DOU] all their valuable possessions." 13 [Then people
of] Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and
nearby villages will come and say to you, "Are you gathering
all your soldiers in order to [attack Israel and] take away
all their silver and gold? [Do you plan] to take away their
livestock and all their other valuable possessions [DOU]?"'
14 Therefore, you human, prophesy about Gog and say to
him, 'This is what Yahweh the Lord says: At that time, when
my people of Israel are living safely, you will certainly think
about that. 15 So you will come from your place far north [of
Israel], with the armies of many [other] nations, all riding
horses, a huge army. 16 You will march toward my Israeli
people, and [your soldiers] will cover the land like a huge
cloud. Gog, I will bring your army to attack the country that
belongs to me, but [what I do] for you will show the people of
other nations that I am holy. 17 This is what [I], Yahweh the

Lord, say to Gog: In past years, when I gave messages to my servants, the prophets [in Israel], there were messages [RHQ] about you. At that time, they prophesied for [many] years that I would bring your [armies] to attack my people. **18** [So] this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say will happen: When your [army] attacks Israel, I will be very angry with you. **19** I will be very furious, and to show that I am angry, there will be a great earthquake in Israel, [where your armies will be]. **20** The fish in the sea, the birds, the wild animals, and the animals/creatures that crawl on the ground, and all the people on the earth will tremble because of what I [am doing]. Mountains will fall down, cliffs will crumble, and walls everywhere will fall to the ground. **21** Gog, on all the mountains in the country that belongs to me I will cause your soldiers to fight against each other with their swords. **22** I will punish [MTY] you [and your soldiers] with plagues and murders [MTY]. And I will send down [from the sky], on you and your troops that have come from many nations, huge amounts of rain and hail and burning sulfur. **23** By doing that, I will cause [the people of] many nations to know that I am very great and holy, and they will know that I, Yahweh, [have the power to do the things that I say that I will do].'"

39 [Yahweh said to me], "You human, prophesy about [more terrible things that will happen] to Gog, and say this [to him]: 'Gog, I am opposed to you who rule Meshech and Tubal. **2** I will turn you around and drag you [and your armies] from far north [of Israel] and send you to [fight on] the mountains in Israel. **3** When you are there, I will snatch your bows from your left hands and cause your arrows to fall from your right hands. **4** You and all the soldiers that are with you will die on the mountains in Israel. I will give your [corpses] to be food for the birds that eat [dead] flesh, and to the wild animals. **5** You will die in the open fields. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh the Lord, [have said that it will happen]. **6** I will cause [many] fires to burn in Magog and among [all] those who live safely in the areas along their coasts, and they will know that it is I, Yahweh, [who have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **7** I will enable my Israeli people to know that I am holy. I will no longer allow people to damage my reputation, and [people in other] nations will know that I, Yahweh the Lord, am the Holy One in Israel. **8** [I], Yahweh the Lord, declare that it will soon be the day that those things will happen. It will be the day that I have spoken [to you] about. **9** At that time, those Israelis who live in the towns will go out and gather the weapons [from your dead soldiers], and use them to make fires [to cook their food]. They will burn the small and large shields, the bows and arrows, the war clubs, and spears. There will be enough weapons to use as firewood for seven years. **10** They will not need to gather firewood in the fields or cut wood from trees in the forests, because those weapons will be all the firewood [that they will need]. And they will take valuable things from those who took valuable things from them, and steal things from people who stole things from them. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare [will happen]. **11** At that time I will create a graveyard for you, Gog, [and your soldiers], in the valley east of the [Dead] Sea. That graveyard will block the road that travelers [usually walk on], because you, Gog and all [the soldiers] of your huge army will be buried there. [So] it will be named 'the Valley of Gog's Huge Army'. **12** For seven months the people of Israel will be burying those corpses. [It will be necessary to bury all of them], in order that the land will not be (defiled/considered unacceptable to me) [because of any unburied corpses]. **13** All the people of Israel will [do the work of] burying them. The day when I [win that victory] they will honor me. **14** After those seven months are ended, the Israeli people will appoint men to go throughout the land to bury corpses, in order that the land will not remain defiled. **15** When they go through the land, when one of them sees a human bone, he will set up a marker beside it. [When] the gravediggers [see the markers, they will pick up the bones] and bury them in the Valley of Gog's Huge Army. **16** There will be a city there named Hamonah, [which means 'huge army']. And by doing this [work of burying the corpses], they will (cleanse the land/cause the land to be acceptable to me again).'" **17** [Yahweh said to me], "You human, this is what [I], Yahweh the Lord, say: Summon every kind of bird and wild animal. Say to them, 'Gather together from everywhere and come to the feast that Yahweh is preparing for you. [It will be] a great feast on the mountains in Israel. [There] you will eat [men's] flesh and drink their blood. **18** You will eat the flesh of strong soldiers and drink the blood of kings [as if they were] fat animals—rams and lambs, goats and bulls—from the Bashan [region]. **19** At that feast that Yahweh is preparing for you, you will eat fat until your [stomachs] are full, and you will drink blood until [it is as though] you are drunk. **20** [It will be as though] you are eating at a table that I [have set up for you. You will eat all you want of the flesh] of horses and their riders, strong soldiers [DOU] of every kind.' [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare. **21** I will show [people of] many nations that I am glorious, and all those nations will see how I punish them [DOU]. **22** After that time, the Israeli people will know that I, Yahweh their God, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. **23** And the [people of other] nations will know that the Israeli people had been forced to go to other countries because they sinned by not being faithful to me. I (turned away from/abandoned) them,

and allowed their enemies to capture them [IDM], and many [HYP] of them were killed by [their enemies'] swords. **24** I punished them like they deserved to be punished because of their disgusting behavior and sins, and I turned away from them [MTY]. **25** Therefore, this is [now] what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: I will now bring back from exile/Babylonia [the descendants of] Jacob; I will pity all the Israeli people, and I will [also] jealously protect my reputation. **26** When the Israeli people [are back in their own country, they will] live safely in their land, with no one to cause them to be afraid, but they will be ashamed when they think about the disgraceful and unfaithful things that they did [previously]. **27** When I have brought them back from their enemies' countries and gathered them together [in Israel], the people of many nations will know that I am holy. **28** And the Israeli people will know that I, Yahweh their Lord, [have the power to do what I say that I will do]. They will know that because [even though] I forced them to go to [other] countries, I will gather them together in their own country. I will not leave any of them in those countries. **29** I will no longer turn away from them; I will pour out my Spirit on the Israeli people. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it."

40 Almost 25 years after we had been [to Babylonia], on the tenth day of the first month of that year, almost 14years after Jerusalem had been destroyed, in a vision [I felt] the power [MTY] of Yahweh on me, and he took me to Israel. **2** He set me on a very high mountain. On the south side of that mountain there were some buildings that appeared to be [part of] a city. **3** When he took there, I saw a man whose face was like [SIM] bronze. He was standing in the entrance [of a building]. He had a linen cord and a measuring stick in his hand. **4** He said to me, "You human, look carefully at everything that I am going to show you, and pay attention to everything that I say and everything that I will show you, because that is why you have been brought here. [And then later] you must tell the Israeli people everything that you have seen [here]." **5** [In the vision I saw that] there was a wall that completely surrounded the temple area. The measuring stick in the man's hand was (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) long. He measured the wall: It was (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) thick and (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) high. **6** Then he went to the entryway on the east [side of the temple]. He climbed the steps and measured the outer threshold/opening for the entryway: It was (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) deep. **7** Next, there was an entry hallway with [three] (alcoves/very small rooms) along each side [where the guards stood]. Each of the alcoves was (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) on each side. There was a dividing wall between each alcove that was (8-3/4 feet/2.7 meters) wide. At the end of the entry hallway was the inner threshold/opening for the entryway, (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) deep. It led to the entry room [to the inner courtyard] and faced the temple. **8** Then he measured the entry room at the end of the entry hallway. **9** It was about (14 feet/4.2 meters) long, and its supporting columns were (3-1/2 feet/1.1 meters) thick. The entry room of the entryway was at the end of the entry hallway that faced the temple [and extended into the courtyard]. **10** Inside the east entryway there were three alcoves on each side of the entry hallway. They each had the same length and width. And the measurements of the walls that divided the alcoves were all identical. **11** Then he measured the threshold/opening for the entryway: It was (17-1/2 feet/5.3 meters) wide, and the entry hallway [between the alcoves] was (22-3/4 feet/6.9 meters) wide. **12** In front of each alcove was a low wall about (21 inches/53 cm.) high, and the alcoves were (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) on each side. **13** Then he measured the width of the roof of the entrance hallway, the distance between the rear wall of one alcove to the rear wall of the opposite alcove, [including the supporting walls along each side]. It was (43-3/4 feet/13.3 meters). **14** Then he measured all along the dividing walls between the alcoves all along the inside of the entry hallway: It was (105 feet/31.8 meters). He measured as far as the entry room of the entryway. **15** The length from [outer] opening of the entryway to the far end of the entry room was (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters). **16** There were [small] windows in the outside walls of all the alcoves, and also in the inner dividing walls between the alcoves. There were also small windows in the entry room. The dividing walls were decorated with [carvings of] palm trees. **17** Then [in the vision] he brought me to the outer courtyard. There I saw some rooms, and a stone path/pavement along the walls around the courtyard. There were thirty rooms along the path. **18** The stone path was all around the courtyard, and it extended out from the walls into the courtyard for the same distance as the entry room [of the entryway]. That was the lower path. **19** Then the man measured the distance [across the outer courtyard of the temple], between the inner [entrance of] the entryway and [the wall surrounding the] inner courtyard: It was (175 feet/53 meters) [on the east side and on the north side of the courtyard]. **20** Then he measured how long and how wide was the entryway that was on the north side, the entrance into the outer courtyard [of the temple]. **21** There were three alcoves on each side of the entryway hall. The measurements of the alcoves, the dividing walls between the alcoves, and the entry room were the same as as those in the first entryway. The length from [outer] opening of the entryway to the far end of the entry room was (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters). The entryway

was (43-3/4 feet/13.3 meters) wide. **22** Its windows and the entry room and the palm tree [decorations all] measured the same as the ones on the east [side]. There were seven steps up to the outer threshold/opening for the entryway, and an entry room was at the other end of the entryway. **23** There was an entryway to the inner courtyard that faces the north entryway, like there was on the east [side]. The man measured [the distance] from [the north] entryway to the entryway [on the other side]; it was (175 feet/53 meters). **24** Then he brought me through the south entryway [into the outer courtyard], and he measured it. It measured the same as the other entryways. Its alcoves, its dividing walls between the alcoves, and its entry room measured the same as the ones on the other sides. **25** The alcoves and the entry room had [narrow] windows along the walls, like on the other [sides]. The length [of the outer opening of the] entryway [to the far end of the entry room was] was (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters) and the entryway was (43-3/4 feet/13.3 meters) wide. **26** There were seven steps up to the outer threshold/opening for the entryway, and an entry room was (opposite it/at the end of the entryway facing the courtyard). It [also] had [carvings of] palm trees on the dividing walls that were between the alcoves. **27** The inner courtyard also had an entryway on the south [side]. He measured from that entryway to the entrance on the south [side of the outer courtyard; it was also] (175 feet/53 meters). **28** Then [in the vision] he brought me through the south entryway into the inner courtyard, and he measured the south entryway. It measured the same as the other [entryways]. **29** Its alcoves [along the entry hallway], its dividing walls [between the alcoves], and its entry room measured the same as [the ones on] the other [sides]. The alcoves and the entry room had windows. The length [of the outer opening of the] entryway [to the far end of the entry room was] was (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters) and the entryway was (43-3/4 feet/13.3 meters) wide. **30** The entry rooms around [the inner courtyard] were (43-3/4 feet/13.3 meters) wide and (8.7 feet/2.6 meters) long. **31** The entry room faced the outer courtyard. There were [carvings of] palm trees that decorated the columns, and there were eight steps [up] to the entryway. **32** Then he led me to the east side of the inner courtyard, and he measured the entrance. It had the same measurements as the other [entrances] **33** Its alcoves and dividing walls and entry room measured the same as the others. **34** Its entry room faced the outer courtyard. It also had carvings of palm trees that decorated the walls, and it had eight steps up to it. **35** Then he led me to the entrance on the north side and measured it. It measured the same as the other entrances. **36** And its alcoves and walls between them and the entry room all had [small] windows in the walls. It was (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters) long and (43.7 feet/13.3 meters) wide. **37** Its entry room faced the outer courtyard. There were [carvings of] palm trees that decorated its walls, and there were eight steps [up] to the entryway. **38** [In the vision, I saw that] in the inner entry room of the north entryway there was a door to a side room. That side room was where the [carcasses of the] animals that would be burned completely [on the altar] were washed. **39** In the entry room, there were two tables on each side [of the room]. On those tables would be slaughtered the animals that would be completely burned, and the animals for offerings for sins that people had committed, and offerings to cause people to longer be guilty for having sinned. **40** Along the outside wall of the entry room, on each side of the steps at the opening to the entryway on the north side, were two tables. **41** [So] there were four tables outside the entrance and four tables inside the entry room, on which the [animals to be] sacrificed were slaughtered. **42** There were also four tables of cut stone for the offerings to be completely burned, (31-1/2 in./80 cm.) on each side and (21 in./53 cm.) high. On those stone tables would be placed the tools for slaughtering all the animals for the sacrifices. **43** The meat for the offerings would be placed on [stone] tables. There were hooks [on which the meat was hung], each with two prongs, each (3 in./8 cm.) long, fastened to the walls [of the entry room]. **44** Outside the inner entryway, inside the inner courtyard, were two rooms, one on the north side and one on the south side. **45** The man said to me, "The room whose door faces south is for the priests who are in charge of the work in the temple. **46** The room whose door faces north is for the priests who are in charge of [the work at] the altar. They are the descendants of Zadok; they are the only descendants of Levi who are permitted to approach Yahweh while they work for him." **47** Then he measured the courtyard: It was square, (175 feet/53 meters) long and (175 feet/53 meters) wide. The altar was in front of the temple. **48** Then [in the vision] he brought me to the entry room of the temple, and measured the walls on each side of the entrance: They were (8-3/4 feet/2.6 meters) thick. The entrance was (24-1/2 feet/7.4 meters) wide, and the walls on each side of the entrance were (5-1/4 feet/1.6 meters) long. **49** The entry room was (35 feet/10.6 meters) wide on each side. There were ten steps up to it, and there were pillars on each side of the entrance.

41 [in the vision] the man brought me to into the Holy Place in the temple and measured the walls on each side of the doorway of that room: They were about (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) thick. **2** The entrance was (17-1/2 feet/5.3 meters) wide, and the walls of each side of it were (8-3/4

feet/2.6 meters) wide. He also measured the Holy Place, it was (70 feet/21.4 meters) long and (35 feet/10.7 meters) wide. **3** Then he entered the inner room [of the temple] and measured the walls of the entrance; [each was] (3-1/2 feet/1.1 meter) thick. The doorway was (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) wide, and the walls on each side of the entrance were (12-1/4 feet/3.7 meters) long. **4** Then he measured the inner room: It was (35 feet/10.7 meters) long and (35 feet/10.7 meters) wide. He said to me, "This is the Very Holy Place." **5** Then he measured the wall of the temple: It was (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) thick.[There was a row of rooms along the outside wall of the temple]. Each of those rooms was (7 feet/2.1 meters) wide. **6** There were three levels of rooms, one above the other. There were thirty rooms on each level. There were ledges all around the wall of the temple that were supports for those side rooms; so those supports were not built into the wall of the temple. **7** Each of those side rooms was wider than the one below it. The most narrow rooms were built first, at the bottom. Then a wider set of rooms was built over it, and the widest set was at the top. A set of stairs was built from the lowest level through the middle level to the highest level. **8** I saw that there was a terrace (OR, raised platform) around the temple. The terrace was the foundation for those side rooms; it was (10-1/2 feet/3.3 meters) high. **9** The outer wall of those side rooms was (8-3/4 feet/2.6 meters) thick. All around those side rooms there was an open area that was (35 feet/10.6 meters) wide. **10** There was a row of rooms for the priests on each side of the outer wall of the inner courtyard. **11** There were two doors from those side rooms into another open area; one faced north and one faced south. That open area was (8-3/4 feet/2.6 meters) wide. **12** There was a large building on the west side of the temple area. It was (122-1/2 feet/37.1 meters) wide and (157-1/2 feet/47.7 meters) long. And its walls were [also] (8-3/4 feet/2.6 meters) thick. **13** Then the man measured the temple. It was (175 feet/53 meters) long, and the [temple] courtyard, where the large building was, including its walls was [also] (175 feet/53 meters) wide. **14** The courtyard on the east side of the temple, across the front of the temple, was also (175 feet/53 meters) wide. **15** Then he measured the building on the west [side]. Including its walls it was also (175 feet/53 meters) wide. The outer walls of the Holy Place, the Very Holy Place, and the entry room, **16** the inner walls above and below the windows, and the frames of the windows were all covered with [thin] panels of wood. **17** All the walls inside the temple were decorated [carvings of] winged creatures and palm trees: Between each figure of a winged creature was a carving of a palm tree. Each winged creature had two faces: **18** One was a face of a human, and one was the face of a lion. Those figures were carved on the walls all around the inside of the temple. **20** They covered all the walls, from the floor to the top of the walls. **21** At the entrance to the Holy Place of the temple there were square doorposts. In front of the Very Holy Place there was something that resembled **22** a wooden altar. It was (5.2 feet/1.6 meters) high and (3-1/2 feet/1.1 meters) wide on all four sides. Its corners and base and sides were [all made] of wood. The man said to me, "This is the table that is in the presence of Yahweh." **23** The Holy Place and the Very Holy Place had double doors. **24** Each doorway had two doors that [on hinges]. **25** On the doors of the Holy Place there were carvings of winged creatures and palm trees, like those on the walls of the Holy Place. There was also a wooden roof over the front of the entry room [of the temple]. **26** On the side walls of the entry room were narrow windows with [figures of] palm trees [carved] on the sides of the windows. The side rooms around the temple also had roofs.

42 [in the vision] the man led me out of the inner courtyard, through [the entrance on] the north side. We entered the outer courtyard and came to a building that was built against the north [of the inner courtyard]. **2** That building was (175 feet/53 meters) long and (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters) wide. Its doorway faced north. **3** In that building were two rows of rooms, built on three levels, that faced each other. One row of rooms was built against the wall of the inner courtyard, and the other row was built against the wall facing the outer courtyard. The building was 34 feet from the temple. **4** Between the [two] rows of rooms there was a walkway that was (17-1/2 feet/5.3 meters) wide and (175 feet/53 meters) long. All its doors were on the north side. **5** Each of the upper rows of rooms was narrower than the row of rooms below them, [because the upper rows needed to have a walkway in front of them]. **6** The rooms on the upper levels had no pillars to support them like the ones in the courtyard. Instead, each of those row of rooms were supported by the walls of the row of rooms on the level below. **7** The wall of the building extended (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters) past the set of rooms built along the outer courtyard, separating all the rooms from the outer courtyard. **8** The row of rooms that were along the outer courtyard was (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters) long, and the set of rooms that faced the temple was (175 feet/53 meters) long. **9** The lowest row of rooms had an entrance from the outer courtyard, on the east side. **10** On the south [side], along the wall of the outer courtyard, next to the temple courtyard, was a [a building with two] rows of rooms, **11** with a walkway between them. Those rooms were like the rooms on the north [side]: they were the same length

and width, and had the same kind of entrances. 12 The doorways on the south side were similar to the doorways on the north side. There was an entrance in the wall that faced the doors of the set of rooms, and there was an entrance on the east side, at the end of the inside walkway. 13 Then the man said to me, "These rooms that overlook the temple on the north and south sides are holy. Here the priests who offer sacrifices to Yahweh will [their portions of] the sacred offerings. Because these rooms are holy, they will be used to store the sacred offerings: [the grain for] the grain offerings, the offerings for the sins that people have committed, and offerings in order that people will no longer be guilty for having sinned. 14 When the priests leave the temple, they will not be allowed to [immediately] enter the outer courtyard. First, they must remove the clothes that they had been wearing inside the temple, because those clothes are holy. They must put on other clothes before they enter the parts [of the temple area] where the [other] people [gather]." 15 When the man had finished measuring the inside of the temple area, he led me out through the east entrance [of the outer courtyard] and measured all the way around the temple area. 16 He measured the four sides of the area. There was a wall around the area that was (875 feet/265 meters) long on each side. 20 That wall separated the [area which was] sacred/holy from the [areas that were] not sacred.

43 Then [in the vision] the man brought me to the entrance on the east side. 2 Suddenly I saw the glory/brightness of the God of Israel coming from the east. The sound of his coming was like the roar of a rushing river, and all that area shone with his glory. 3 What I saw in this vision was like what I saw in the visions that I had seen [previously, first] by the Kebar River and [later] when God came to destroy Jerusalem. I prostrated myself on the ground. 4 The glory of Yahweh entered the temple through the east entrance. 5 Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner courtyard, and the glory of Yahweh filled the temple. 6 [Then] while the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speak to me from inside the temple. 7 He said, "You human, this is [my temple], the place [I sit on] my throne and where I rest my feet. This is where I will live with the Israeli people forever. The Israeli people and their kings will never again disgrace me [SYN] by worshiping other gods [MET] at the shrines on their hilltops, or by [building] monuments to honor their kings who have died. 8 They placed their altars near mine, and the doorposts of their [temples] were next to the doorposts of my [temple]. There was only a wall between them. And they disgraced me by the detestable things that they did. So, being very angry with them, I got rid of them. 9 Now they must stop this disgusting worship of idols and these rituals to honor their kings who have died. If they stop doing those things, I will live among them forever. 10 You human, describe to the Israeli people what this temple that I have shown you [in a vision] is like, in order that they will be ashamed of the sins that they have committed [which resulted in their temple in Jerusalem being destroyed]. 11 If they are ashamed of all [the evil things] that they have done, tell them [all] about the temple [that I showed you]: its design/shape, the exits and entrances, [and everything else about it]. And tell them all my laws and regulations about worshiping me there. Write all these things down while they watch you, in order that they will be able to faithfully obey those laws. 12 And this is the supreme law about the temple [DOU]: All of the area on top of the hill [where the temple will be built] must be kept sacred and holy." 13 These are the measurements of the altar, using the same kind of measuring stick that was used for the temple area: There is a gutter around the altar that is (21 in./53 cm.) deep and (21 in./53 cm.) wide. There is a rim around it that is (9 in./23 cm.) wide. 14 The lower part of the gutter is (3-1/2 feet/1.1 meters) high to the lower ledge/rim that surrounds the altar. The lower ledge is (21 in./53 cm.) wide. The upper part of the altar is (7 feet/2.1 meters) high, up to the upper ledge. That ledge is also (21 in./53 cm.) wide. 15 The (hearth/place where the sacrifices are burned) at the top of the altar is another (7 feet/2.2 meters) high, and there is a projection that juts/extends up from each of the four corners. 16 That place at the top of the altar is square, (21 feet/6.4 meters) on each side. 17 The upper ledge is also a square, (24-1/2 feet/7.4 meters) on each side. There is a (21 in./53 cm.) gutter [at the bottom of the altar], and a (10.5 in./26.6 cm.) rim all around it. There are steps up to the east side of the altar." 18 Then the man said to me, "You human, this is what Yahweh the Lord says: These are the regulations for sacrificing offerings that will be completely burned and for sprinkling the blood against the sides of the altar when it is built: 19 You must present to the priests a young bull to be an offering to cause the altar to be acceptable to me. The priests are descendants of Levi, from the clan of Zadok, who come near to the altar to serve me. 20 You must take some of the blood [from the bull that is sacrificed], and smear it on the four projections of the altar and on the four corners of the upper ledge, and all around the rim, to cause the altar to be acceptable to me, and to consecrate it. 21 You must burn that bull outside the temple in the part of the temple area [that I have] designated for that. 22 The next day, you must offer a male goat that has no defects, to be an offering to cause the altar to be acceptable to me. Then you must purify the altar again, like you did with the bull that was sacrificed.

23 When you have finished doing all that, you must offer a
young bull and a ram, both of them without any defects. 24
You must offer them to [me], Yahweh, and the priests must
sprinkle salt on them and completely burn them [on the altar]
for a sacrifice to me. 25 [Then], each day for seven days,
you must bring [to the priest] a male goat [to be sacrificed]
for an offering to cause the altar to be acceptable to me. You
must also sacrifice a young bull and a ram, [each] without
any defect. 26 For seven days the priests will consecrate the
altar and cause it to be acceptable to me. By doing that they
will dedicate it to me. 27 At the end of those seven days,
starting on the following day, the priests will continue to put
on the altar offerings to be completely burned and offerings
to maintain fellowship with me. Then I will accept you. [That
it what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare."

44 Then [in the vision] the man brought me back to the
outer entryway to the temple [area], the one on the
east side, but the outer entrance was shut. 2 Yahweh said to
me, "This entrance must remain shut. It must not be opened
[by anyone]; no one will be permitted to enter it. It must
remain shut because [I], Yahweh, the God of Israel, have
[caused it to be sacred by] entering through it. 3 Only the
king [of Israel] will be permitted to sit inside this entryway
to eat food in the presence of Yahweh. But he will must
enter and leave [the temple area] through the entry room
of this entryway." 4 Then the man brought me through the
north entryway to the front of the temple. I looked and saw
that the glory of Yahweh filled his temple, and I prostrated
myself on the ground. 5 Yahweh said to me, "You human,
look carefully, and listen carefully to everything that I tell
you about all the regulations concerning the temple. Note
carefully the temple entrance and all the exits. 6 Say this to
the rebellious Israeli people: 'This is what [I], Yahweh the
Lord, say: You Israeli people, I will no longer endure the
detestable things that you do! 7 In addition to all the other
detestable things that you do, you brought into my temple
foreign men who had not been circumcised and who were
godless [IDM]. By doing that, you caused my temple to be
an unacceptable place to worship me, while you offered
food and fat and blood, and you disobeyed my agreement
with you. 8 Instead of doing what I commanded you to do
in regard to my holy things, you appointed foreigners to
be in charge of my temple. 9 But this is what [I], Yahweh,
have said: No foreigners, no men who are not circumcised,
no godless people are permitted to enter my temple, not
even foreigners who live among you [Israelis permanently].
10 [Most of] the descendants of Levi abandoned me along
with [most of] the Israeli people, and started to worship
idols. They must be punished for their sin. 11 They are [still]
permitted to work in my temple and to be in charge of the
entrances of the temple, and they are permitted to slaughter
the animals that will be completely burned on the altar, and
[to burn other] sacrifices for the people, and they will [be able
to] help the people. 12 But because they helped the people
to worship idols and caused [many of] the Israeli people
[MTY] to sin [by worshiping idols], I have lifted up my arm
and solemnly declared that they must be punished for their
sin. 13 They must not come near me to serve as priests.
They must not come near any sacred things or the holy
offerings. They must be ashamed of the shameful things
that they did. 14 But I will still put them in charge of the
work in the temple and allow them to do all the work that
needs to be done there. 15 But [most of] the priests who are
descendants of Levi and from the clan of Zadok worked
in my temple when the [other] Israelis abandoned me. [So
they] are permitted to come near to me to work for me. They
will stand in my presence to offer [sacrifices of animals'] fat
and blood. 16 They [are the only ones who] are permitted to
enter my temple. They are [the only ones who are] permitted
to come near my altar to serve me and do what I tell them to
do. 17 When they enter [one of] the entrances into the inner
courtyard, they must wear linen clothes. They must not wear
any clothes [made] of wool while they do their work at the
entrances of the inner courtyard or inside [the temple]. 18
They must have linen turbans [wrapped] around their heads
and wrap linen undergarments around their waists. They
must not wear anything that would cause them to perspire.
19 Before they go out into the outer courtyard where [other]
people are, they must take off the clothes that they have
been wearing and leave them in the sacred rooms, and they
must put on other clothes, in order that the other people
are not punished because of [their touching] the sacred
clothes. 20 The priests must not shave their heads or allow
their hair to become long; but they must regularly trim [the
edges of] their hair. 21 Priests must not drink wine before
they enter the inner courtyard. 22 [Also], priests must not
marry widows [of men who were not priests] or women who
have been divorced. [Priests are permitted to marry only]
Israeli [MTY] virgins or widows of [other] priests. 23 Priests
must teach the people the difference between things that are
holy/sacred and things that are not, and they must teach
them the difference between things that are acceptable to
me and things that are not. 24 When there are disputes
[between people], the priests are the ones who must be
the judges and decide according to my laws what must be
done. They must obey all my laws and decrees concerning
the sacred festivals, and they must keep my Sabbath days
(holy/set apart). 25 A priest is permitted to go near the corpse

of his father or his mother or his son or his daughter or his brother or his unmarried sister; but he is still defiled by doing that. But a priest must not defile himself by going near a corpse of anyone else. **26** But [even] if a priest touches the corpse [of a close relative, he must perform the rituals to become acceptable to serve me again]. After he performs those rituals, he must wait seven days. **27** Then, on the day that he enters the inner courtyard [again] to serve me in the temple, he must give an offering to remove his guilt for his sin. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare. **28** The priests are not permitted to own any property. They will have only what I [provide for them]. **29** They will eat the offerings [other people make] from grain, offerings to remove people's guilt for having sinned, and offerings made when people fail to give to Yahweh the things that they are required to give. Everything [else] in Israel that is completely dedicated to [me], Yahweh, will belong to the priests. **30** The best fruits of the first part of each harvest and all the [other] special gifts that are given to me will belong to the priests. You must give them the first part of your finely-ground flour, in order that I will bless [the people who live in] [MTY] your houses. **31** Priests must not eat the flesh of any bird or animal that was found dead or that has been killed by wild animals.'"

45 "'When the land of Israel is divided [among the twelve tribes], you must present to me, Yahweh, one part of the land to be a sacred district. It will be (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (6.7 miles/10.6 km.) wide. That entire area will be (holy/set apart for me). **2** Part of that area, (875 feet/265 meters) on each side, will be for the temple area. An additional strip of ground, (87-1/2 feet/26.5 meters) wide, will be left empty all around the temple area. **3** Inside that sacred district, measure a section (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (3.5 miles/5.3 km.) wide. **4** That section will be the sacred portion of the land for the priests who work in the temple and who come near to me to serve me. It will be a place for their houses as well as being a holy place for the temple. **5** An area (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (3.5 miles/5.3 km.) wide will be for the descendants of Levi who work in the temple. That area will belong to them, and they will be permitted to build cities there to live in. **6** Alongside that sacred area will be a section of land that is (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (1.7 miles/2.65 km.) wide. It will be for a city where anyone in Israel [MTY] will be permitted to live. **7** The king will have two sections of land; one will be on the western side of the sacred district and other will be on the eastern side of the sacred district. The one on the western side will extend west to the Mediterranean Sea. The one on the eastern side will extend east to the eastern end of the country. The eastern and western borders of the king's land will be next to the areas allotted to the tribes. **8** That land will be the land in Israel that belongs to the king. So, [because the kings will have their own land], they will no longer need to oppress my people and steal [land] from them. They will assign the remaining parts of the land to the people, giving a part to each tribe. **9** This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say: You kings of Israel must stop acting violently and oppressing the people! You must do what is fair and right [DOU]. Stop taking land from the people! **10** And you must use accurate scales, and accurate containers for measuring things. **11** The baskets for measuring dry things and containers for measuring liquids must be the same size; each must hold 175 quarts/liters. **12** When you weigh things, you must use weights that everyone accepts as being correct [MTY].'" **13** "'You must present to the king one bushel of wheat or barley for every 60 that you harvest. **14** And you must give him one quart/liter of olive oil for every 100 quarts/liters that you make. **15** Also, I, Yahweh, declare that you must take one sheep from each 200 sheep in your flocks in the pastures of Israel. Those things that you take to the king will be used with the offerings of things made from grain and for the offerings that will be completely burned and the offerings to maintain fellowship with me, offerings in order for me to forgive you for the sins that you have committed. **16** All the Israeli people must join in bringing those offerings to the king of Israel. **17** The king must provide the animals to be completely burned on the altar, grain for the grain offerings, and wine for the wine offerings for the sacred festivals that I have appointed for the people of Israel—including the festivals to celebrate each new moon and the Sabbaths. He must provide [the animals for] the offerings for the people to become acceptable to me, grain for the grain offerings, animals to be completely burned [on the altar], and offerings to maintain fellowship with me, Yahweh, in order that I will forgive the Israeli people for their sins. **18** This is also what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare: On the first day of the first month [of each year] you must take one young bull that has no defects and [sacrifice it to] cause the temple to be acceptable to me. **19** The [Supreme] Priest must take some of the blood of the offering to cause people to become acceptable to me, and smear it on the doorposts of the temple, on the four corners of the upper ledge of the altar, and on the entry posts of the inner courtyard. **20** He must do the same thing on the seventh day of the month for any people who sin without intending to sin or without realizing that what they did is sinful. By doing that you will purify the temple. **21** In the first month of each year, on the 14th day of the month, you must start to celebrate the Passover Festival. The festival will last for seven days. During that time you must not eat

bread made with yeast. 22 On the first day, the king must provide a bull to be an offering for himself and for the all the other people of the country. 23 And every day during those seven days he must provide seven young bulls and seven rams that have no defects, to be an offering for the people's sins. 24 He must also provide a half bushel of grain to be an offering, and also four quarts of olive oil, for each bill and ram. 25 During the seven days of the festival [of Living in Temporary Shelters], which starts on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of each year, the king must provide the same things for offerings for the people's sins, for offerings to be completely burned, for grain offerings, and the same amount of olive oil that he provided each day [during the Passover Festival].'"

46 "'This is [also] what [I], Yahweh the Lord, declare: The east entryway of the inner courtyard must be shut during the six days in which people work each week, but on the Sabbath days and on the days when there is a new moon, that entryway must [remain] open until that evening. 2 The king must enter the courtyard through the entry room of the entryway, and stand alongside the entry post. [Then] the priests must sacrifice the animal that the king brought to be completely [on the altar], and also his offering to maintain fellowship with me. The king must worship me at the entrance of the entryway, and then he must go out. [After he leaves], the entryway will not be shut until that evening. 3 On the Sabbath days and on the [days when there is a] new moon, the people must worship [me] at the entrance of the entryway. 4 The offering that the king brings to be completely burned on the Sabbath day must be six lambs and one ram, all with no defects. 5 The offering [that he gives] with the ram must be a bushel of grain, and the grain [that he offers] with the lambs should be as much as he desires to offer, along with (1 gallon/3.8 liters) of [olive] oil for each bushel [of grain]. 6 [Then] each day that there is a new moon, he must offer a young bull, six lambs and a ram, all with no defects. 7 He must [also] provide one bushel of grain with the bull, one bushel of grain with the ram, and as much grain as he wants with the lambs, along with one quart/liter of [olive] oil with each bushel [of grain]. 8 When the king enters [the temple area], he must enter through the entry room of the entryway, and he must go out through that same entry room [when he leaves]. 9 When the Israeli people come to worship me at the festivals that I have appointed, those who enter the temple area through the north entryway must go out through the south entryway. And those who enter through the south entryway must go out through the north entryway. People must not go out through the entryway through which they entered; they must go out through the opposite entryway. 10 The king must go in when the other people go in, and go out when the people go out. 11 During the festivals and sacred feasts, the king must present a bushel of grain along with each bull or ram, and as much grain as he wants to bring, along with the lambs and (1 gallon/3.8 liters) of olive oil with each bushel of grain. 12 When the king gives an offering that is not required, either one to be completely burned [on the altar] or an offering to maintain fellowship with [me, Yahweh, the entryway on the east side of the courtyard] must be opened for him. Then he must present those offerings like he does on the Sabbath days. Then he must go out, and after he goes out, the entryway must be shut. 13 Every day, during the morning, someone must provide a one-year-old lamb with no defects to be an offering to me that will be completely burned. 14 Someone must also provide each morning an offering of flour. It must be one sixth of a bushel of flour mixed with one quart/liter of [olive] oil. These offerings of flour and olive oil to must be presented [to me], Yahweh, each day. 15 The lamb and the offering of flour and [olive] oil must be presented to me every morning, to be completely burned on the altar. 16 This is what I, Yahweh the Lord, declare: If the king gives some of his land to one of his sons, to belong to him permanently, it will then belong to his son's descendants forever. 17 However, if he gives some of his land to one of his servants, the servant is allowed to keep that land until the Year of Celebration. Then the king will own it again; the king's land must belong to his descendants forever. 18 The king must not take any land that the people own and force them to live somewhere else. The land that he gives to his sons must be from his own property, [not from anyone else's property], in order that none of my people will be forced to leave his own property.'" 19 Then, [in the vision], the man [who was showing the temple area to me] brought me through the entrance alongside the entryway and led me to the sacred rooms on the north side, the rooms that the priests used, and he showed me a place at the western end [of those rooms]. 20 He said to me, "This is the place where the priests must cook the meat of the offerings that people bring in order to no longer be guilty for having sinned, and offerings for their sins, and where they will bake bread made with the flour brought to be offerings. [They will cook those things in their rooms] in order to avoid bringing them into the outer courtyard [to cook them there], lest someone [be punished because of] touching them." 21 Then the man brought me to the outer courtyard and led me to its four corners. In each corner I saw an enclosed area; 22 each of those areas was (70 feet/21.2 meters) long and (52-1/2 feet/15.9 meters) wide. 23 Around the inside of each of those enclosed areas was a stone ledge, with places to make fires

all around under each ledge. 24 The man said to me, "These are the kitchens where [the descendants of Levi] who work in the temple must cook the sacrifices that the people bring."

47 Then, [in the vision], the man brought me back to the entrance of the temple. There I saw water flowing out from under the entrance, flowing toward the east. The water was flowing from under the south side of the entrance, south of the altar. 2 Then the man brought me out of the inner courtyard through the north entryway, and then he led me around to the outer entryway on the east side [of the inner courtyard]. 3 As the man continued walking toward the east, he had a measuring line in his hand. He measured off (1,750 feet/530 meters), and then led me through water that covered my ankles. 4 Then he measured off another (1,750 feet/530 meters) and led me through water that was up to my knees. Then he measured off another (1,750 feet/530 meters) and led me through water that was up to my waist. 5 Then he measured off another (1,750 feet/530 meters) and led me through water that had become a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen [very high, with the result that] it would be necessary to swim across it. It was a river that no one could cross [by walking across it]. 6 Then he said to me, "You human, think carefully about what you have seen." 7 Then he led me to the bank of that river. There I saw many trees growing on each side of the river. 8 He said to me, "This water flows east and down into the [Dead] Sea. And when it flows into the [Dead] Sea, its salty water becomes fresh. 9 Wherever the river flows, there will be lots of animals and fish. And there will be lots of fish in the [Dead] Sea, because the water that flows into it will cause the salt water to become (fresh water/water that people can drink). Wherever the river flows, everything [alongside it] will flourish. 10 Fishermen will stand along the bank [of the Dead Sea to catch fish]. From En-Gedi [on the western side] to En-Eglaim [on the eastern side] there will be places [for fishermen] to spread their fishing nets. There will be many kinds of fish, like there are in the Mediterranean Sea. 11 But the swamps and marshes [along the shore] will not become fresh; they will be left to the people to use make salt. 12 Many kinds of fruit trees will grow on both sides of the river. Their leaves will not wither, and they will always have fruit. They will bear fruit every month, because [they will continually get water from] the water [that comes] from the temple. Their fruit will be good to eat and their leaves will be [good] for healing." 13 [In the vision], Yahweh [also] said this to me: "Here is a list of the twelve tribes of Israel and the territory that each tribe must receive. [The descendants of] Joseph will receive two portions; [the tribe of Levi will not receive any]. 14 I lifted up my arm and solemnly declared to your ancestors that I would give you this land to own permanently. [So divide the land equally among all of the other tribes]. 15 These will be the boundaries of the land: On the north side, [it will extend] from the Mediterranean Sea east along the road to Hethlon, past Lebo-Hamath to Zedad, 16 to [the cities of] Berothah and Sibraim, which are on the border between Damascus and Hamath. [From there the boundary will extend] as far [the city of] Hazer-Hatticon, which is on the border of the Hauran [region]. 17 So the boundary will extend from the [Mediterranean] Sea to [the city of] Hazar-Enan on the border between Hamath to the north and Damascus [to the south]. That will be the northern boundary. 18 On the east side, the boundary [will extend] between Hauran and Damascus, [south] along the Jordan [River] between the Gilead [region] and the land of Israel, along the Dead Sea as far as [the town of] Tamar. That will be the eastern boundary. 19 On the south side, the boundary will extend from Tamar [southwest] to the springs near [the town of] Meribah-Kadesh. Then [the boundary will extend west] along the dry riverbed [at the border] of Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. That will be the southern boundary. 20 On the west side, the boundary will be the Mediterranean Sea, north to near Lebo-Hamath. 21 You must distribute this land among yourselves, among the tribes of Israel. 22 You must allot the land to be a permanent possession for yourselves, and [also] to be a permanent possession of any foreigners who are living among you and raising their children. You must consider those people to be like you who were born Israelis, and they must be allotted land among the tribes of Israel. 23 Wherever foreigners are living, you must give them some land to belong to them permanently. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare."

48 "Here is a list of the tribes of Israel [and the territory that each tribe is to receive]: [The tribe of] Dan will be allotted land at the northern boundary [of Israel]: It will extend east from the Mediterranean Sea east to Hethlon [city], then from there to Hamath Pass, and on to [the town of] Hazar-Enan south of Damascus, between Damascus and Hamath. The tribe of Dan will receive land on the northern border [of Israel] from the eastern end [of the country] west to the [Mediterranean] Sea. 2 South of their land will be the territory [for the tribe] of Asher. 3 South of their land will be the territory [for the tribe] of Naphtali. 4 South of their land will be the territory [for the tribe] of Manasseh. 5 South of their land will be the territory [for the tribe] of Ephraim. 6 South of their land will be the territory [for the tribe] of Reuben. 7 South of their land will be the territory [for the tribe] of Judah. 8 South of their land will be an area set apart for special use. The temple will be in the center of that area.

9 It must be (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (6.7 miles/10.6 km.) wide. **10** For the priests, there must be a strip of land (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (3.3 miles/5.3 km.) wide. The temple will be in the center of that area. **11** That area is for the priests who are descendants of Zadok. They are ones who served me faithfully and did not turn away from me, like most of the descendants of Levi and the other Israeli people did. **12** When the land is distributed, that area must be given to the priests; it is land that is very sacred. It will be next to the land that will be given to the other descendants of Levi. **13** The land that will be allotted to the [other] descendants of Levi will be the same size as the land allotted to the priests. So together, those two portions of land will be (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (6.6 miles/10.6 km.) wide. **14** None of this special land will ever be permitted to be sold or traded or used by other people, because it belongs to me, Yahweh. It is set apart for me. **15** The rest [of that sacred area, a strip of land] (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) long and (1.7 miles/2.65 km.) wide will be allotted for other people to use. It will be land where they will be permitted to build homes and have pasturelands. There will be a city at the center. **16** The city will be square, (1.5 miles/2.4 km.) on each side. **17** Around the city there will be an area for farming, that will be (150 yards/135 meters) in each direction. **18** Outside the city, to the east and to the west, there will be a farming area. It will extend (3 miles/4.8 km.) to the east and (3 miles/4.8 km.) to the west. [Men who work there] will produce food for the people who work in the city. **19** [Some of] those who come from the various Israeli tribes to work in the city may also work on the farmland. **20** That entire special area, including the sacred lands and the city, will be a square that is (8.3 miles/13.3 km.) on each side. **21** The areas to the east and to the west of the sacred area and the city will belong to the king. One area will extend east to the eastern boundary of Israel and the other will extend west to the Mediterranean Sea. The sacred area in which the temple is located will be in the middle. **22** The area that belongs to the king will be between the land [of the tribe] of [to the north] and the land [of the tribe] of Benjamin [to the south]. **23** South of that special area, each of the other tribes must be allotted one portion of land that extends from the eastern [boundary of Israel] west [to the Mediterranean Sea]. [Beginning at the north] will be land for [the tribe of] Benjamin. **24** South of their land will be the territory for [the tribe of] Simeon. **25** South of their land will be the territory for [the tribe of] Issachar. **26** South of their land will be the territory for [the tribe of] Zebulun. **27** South of their land will be the territory for [the tribe of] Gad. **28** The southern boundary of [the tribe of] Gad will extend south from Tamar to the springs at Meribah-Kadesh, and from there [to the west] along the dry riverbed at the border of Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. **29** That is the land that you must allot to the tribes of Israel, to belong to them permanently. [That is what I], Yahweh the Lord, declare." **30** These will be the exits from the city: On the north side, which will be (1.5 miles/2.4 km.) long, **31** there must be three gates; each one will have the name of one of the tribes of Israel. The first one will be named for Reuben, the next for Judah, the next for Levi. **32** On the east side, [also] (1.5 miles/2.4 km.) long, will be gates named for Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan. **33** On the south side, [also] (1.5 miles/2.4 km.) long, will be gates named for Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun. **34** On the west side, [also] (1.5 miles/2.4 km.) long, will be gates named for Gad, Asher, and Naphtali. **35** [So] the distance around the city will thus be (6 miles/9.6 km.). And from that time on, the name of the city will be 'Yahweh Is There'.'

Daniel

1 After King Jehoiakim had been ruling in Judah for almost three years, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem [with his army] and surrounded the city. **2** [After two years,] Yahweh allowed Nebuchadnezzar's [soldiers] to capture Jehoiakim, [who was the] King of Judah. They also took some of the things that were in the temple of God, and took them to Babylonia. There Nebuchadnezzar put them in the temple of his god. **3** Then Nebuchadnezzar commanded Ashpenaz, the chief official in his palace, to bring [to him] some of the Israeli men [whom they had brought to Babylon. He wanted men] who belonged to important families, including the family of the King of Judah. **4** [King Nebuchadnezzar wanted only] men who were very healthy, handsome/good-looking, wise, well-educated, capable of learning many things, and suitable for working in the palace. He also wanted to teach them the Babylonian language and have them read things that had been written in the Babylonian language. **5** The king commanded [his servants], "Give them the same kind of food and wine that is given to me. Train them for three years. Then they will become my servants." **6** Among the young Israeli men [who were chosen] were [me], Daniel, and Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who all came from Judah. **7** But Ashpenaz gave us [Babylonian] names. The name he gave to me was Belteshazzar, the name he gave to Hananiah was Shadrach, the name he gave to Mishael was Meshach, and the name he gave to Azariah was Abednego. **8** But I decided that I would not eat the kind of food that the king ate, or drink the wine that he drank, because that would make me (ritually defiled/unacceptable to God). So I asked Ashpenaz to allow me to eat and drink other things. **9** God had caused Ashpenaz to greatly respect me, **10** but he was worried about what I suggested. He said, "My master, the king, has commanded that you eat the kinds of food and drink that he does. If [you eat other things and as a result] you become more thin and pale than the other young men who are your age, he will [order his soldiers to] cut off my head because of what you have done!" **11** Ashpenaz had ordered a guard to watch me, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. **12** So I said to this guard: "[Please] test us for ten days. [During that time] give us [only] vegetables to eat and water to drink. **13** After ten days, see how we look, and see how the other young men look, the ones who are eating the kind of food that the king eats. Then you can decide about [what food you will let us eat]." **14** The guard agreed to do what I suggested, and he tested us like that for ten days. **15** After ten days, [he saw that] my three friends and I looked healthier [DOU] than the young men who had been eating the food that the king wanted them to eat. **16** So after that, the guard gave us [only] vegetables to eat; he did not give us the king's special food and wine. **17** And God gave to us four young men wisdom and the ability to study many things that Babylonians had written and studied. And [he also gave to] me the ability to understand the meaning of visions and dreams. **18** When those three years that the king had set for training us young men from Judah were ended, Ashpenaz brought all of us to King Nebuchadnezzar. **19** The king talked with [each of] us, and realized that none of the other young men were as capable as Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah and I were. So we four became the king's special advisors/servants. **20** In all important matters, the king found that what we [four men] advised was ten times as good as what all the magicians and sorcerers/fortune-tellers in his kingdom advised. **21** I remained [there serving the king more than 60 years], until the first year that Cyrus became king.

2 [One night] during the second year that Nebuchadnezzar ruled, he had a dream. The dream worried him very much; and [as a result] he could not sleep. **2** [The next morning] he summoned his men who worked magic, fortune-tellers, those who worked sorcery, and those who studied the stars. [Because he had forgotten what he had dreamed,] he insisted that they tell him what he had dreamed. As they stood there in front of the king, **3** he said, "I had a dream [last night] that worries me. [Tell me what I dreamed, because] I want to know what the dream [means]." **4** The men who studied the stars replied to the king, speaking in the Aramaic [language]. They said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we hope that you will live a long time! Tell us what you dreamed, and [then] we will tell you what it means!" **5** But the king replied, "I have firmly decided that you must tell me the dream, and [also tell me] what it means. If you do not do that, I will [order my soldiers to] cut you into pieces, and to cause your houses to become only piles of stones! **6** But if you tell me what I dreamed and what it means, I will reward you. I will give you wonderful gifts and greatly honor you. So tell me what I dreamed and what it means!" **7** But again they said, "Tell us what you dreamed, and [then] we will tell you what it means." **8** The king replied, "I know that you are just trying to get more time, because you know that I will do to you what I said that I would do. **9** If you do not tell me what I dreamed, you will be punished. [I think that] you have all agreed to tell me lies and [other] wicked things, because you hope that I will change ([my mind/what I am thinking]). But tell me the dream, and [then] I will know that you can [also] tell me what it means." **10** The men who studied the stars replied, "There is no one on the earth who can do what you ask! There is no king, [even] a great and mighty king, who

has [ever] asked his men who work magic or his fortune-tellers or men who study the stars to do something like that! **11** What you are asking [us to do] is impossible. Only the gods can tell you what you dreamed, and they do not live among us!" **12** The king was very angry when he heard that, so he commanded [his soldiers] that they execute all such wise men in Babylon. **13** And because of what the king commanded, they sent some men to find me and my [three] friends, to execute us [also]. **14** Arioch, the commander of the king's guards, came to kill us. But I spoke to him very wisely and tactfully/skillfully. **15** I asked Arioch, "Why has the king made such a harsh/terrible decree?" So Arioch told me all that had happened [because of the king's dream]. **16** I [immediately] went to talk to the king and requested that the king give me some time, so that I could find out [what the dream was and] what the dream meant. **17** Then I went home, and I told my friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, what had happened. **18** I urged them to ask God, who lives/rules in heaven, to have mercy on us by telling us the secret [meaning of what the king dreamed], in order that we and the other wise men in Babylon would not be executed. **19** And that night [God] gave to me a vision in which he revealed the secret. Then I praised God, **20** saying, "We should praise God [MTY] forever, because [only] he truly is wise and powerful. **21** He determines what events will happen through the years. He removes [some] kings and gives their authority to [new] kings. He is the one who causes people to become wise and enables those who study to understand [many] things. **22** He reveals things that are very mysterious; he is surrounded by light, but he knows things that are hidden [as though they were] in the darkness. **23** God, whom my ancestors [worshiped], I thank you and I praise you, because you have caused me to be wise and made me strong. You have told me what my friends and I asked you to tell us; and you have revealed to us what the king demanded to know." **24** Then I went to Arioch, the man whom the king had appointed to execute the wise men in Babylon. I said to him, "Do not kill those wise men. Take me to the king, and I will tell him what his dream means." **25** So Arioch quickly took me to the king. He said to the king, "I have found [this man], one of the men whom we brought from Judah who [says he can] can tell you what your dream means!" **26** The king said to me, whose [new] name was Belteshazzar, "[Is this true]? Can you tell me what I dreamed and what it means?" **27** I replied, "There are no wise men or fortune-tellers or men who work magic or men who work sorcery who can tell such things to you. **28** But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets. And he has shown in [your dream] what will happen in the future. Now I will tell you what you dreamed, the vision you saw [as you were lying] on your bed. **29** O King, while you were sleeping, you dreamed about events that will happen in the future. The one who reveals mysteries has shown you what is going to happen. **30** And it is not because I am wiser than anyone else on earth that I know the meaning of this mysterious dream. It is because God wanted you to understand what you were thinking. **31** O King, [in your vision] you saw in front of you a huge and terrifying statue [of a man. It was] shining very brightly, and it was frightening and awesome. **32** The head of the statue was [made] of pure gold. Its chest and arms [were made of] silver. Its belly and thighs [were made of] bronze. **33** Its legs [were made of] iron, and its feet were a mixture of clay and iron. **34** As you watched, something cut a rock [from a mountain, but it was] not a human [who cut it]. The rock [tumbled down and] smashed the feet of the statue, feet [that were made of] iron and clay. It smashed them to bits. **35** Then the rest of the statue collapsed into a big heap of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. The pieces of the statue were as small as bits of chaff on the ground where it is threshed, and the wind blew away all the tiny pieces. There was nothing left. But the rock that smashed the statue became a large mountain that covered the whole earth. **36** That was what you dreamed. Now I will tell you what it means. **37** You are a king [who rules] over [many other] kings. The God who rules in heaven has caused you to rule over them and has given you great power [DOU] and has honored you. **38** He has caused you to be the ruler over all people, and [even] the animals and birds are controlled by you. [So] the head [of the statue] represents you. **39** But after your [kingdom/rule] ends, there will be another [great] kingdom, [but it] will not be as great as yours. [The silver parts of the statue represent that kingdom]. Then there will be a third [great] kingdom [whose king] will rule over the whole earth. The bronze parts [of the statue represent] that kingdom. **40** After that kingdom ends, there will be a fourth [great] kingdom. The iron [parts of the statue represent that kingdom]. [The army of] that kingdom will smash the previous kingdoms, just like iron smashes everything that it strikes. **41** The feet and toes of the statue that you saw, that were a mixture of iron and clay, indicate that the kingdom they represent will [later] be divided. **42** Some parts of that kingdom will be as strong as iron, but some parts will not remain together, just as iron and clay do not stick together. **43** The mixture of iron and clay [in the statue] shows also that the rulers of those kingdoms that separate from each other will try to form alliances with each other as a result of members of the royal families of those kingdoms marrying each other. But that will not succeed, just as iron and clay do

not stick together. 44 But while those kings are ruling, God who rules in heaven will establish a kingdom that will never end. No one will ever defeat its king. He will completely destroy all those kingdoms, but his kingdom will remain forever. 45 That is the meaning of the rock that something cut from the mountain, the rock that will crush to tiny bits the statue that is made of iron, bronze, silver, and gold. O king, the great God has shown you what will truly happen in the future. And you can trust [what I told you about] the meaning of the dream." 46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar prostrated himself in front of me [in great respect]. He commanded [his people] that they burn incense and burn an offering of grain to honor me. 47 The king said to me, "[Your God has enabled] you to tell me the meaning of this dream/mystery, so now I truly know that your God is greater than all the other gods and all other kings. He reveals [to people] things that they cannot know." 48 Then the king gave many gifts to me, and he [also] appointed me to rule over the entire province of Babylon, and [also] to be the boss of all his wise men. 49 I asked the king to appoint Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to [also] have important positions in Babylon province, and the king did what I asked him to do. But [I did my work while] I stayed at the king's palace.

3 King Nebuchadnezzar ordered his men to make a gold statue. It was (90 feet/27 meters) high and (9 feet/2.7 meters) wide. They set it up in the Dura plain in Babylon province. 2 Then he sent messages to all the provincial governors, the district governors, the chief advisors, the counselors, the various judges, and all the other officials in the province. He told them to come to the dedication of the statue that he had set up. 3 When they all arrived, they all stood in front of that statue. 4 Then an announcer shouted, "You people who come from many countries and many people-groups and [who speak many] languages, listen to what the king has commanded! 5 When you hear the sounds made by the trumpets, the flutes, the guitars, the harps, the wind instruments, and all the other musical instruments, bow down to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue. 6 Anyone who refuses to do that will be thrown into a blazing furnace!" 7 So when all those people who had gathered heard the sounds made by the musical instruments, they all bowed down to worship the statue. 8 But some of the men who studied the stars went to the king. 9 They reported to him, "We hope that you, O king, will live a long time! 10 You decreed that all the officials [whom you had gathered] should bow down and worship the gold statue when they heard the sounds made by the musical instruments. 11 You also decreed that those who refused to do that would be thrown into a blazing furnace. 12 Sir, there are some men from Judah whom you have appointed to be officials in Babylon province who have not obeyed your decree. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They have refused to worship your god and the gold statue that you have set up." 13 Nebuchadnezzar became very angry. He commanded [his soldiers] to bring in Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. When they were brought to him, 14 Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true that you three men have refused to worship my gods or the gold statue that I have set up? 15 [If that is true,] I will give you one more chance. If you bow down to worship the statue that I have set up when you hear the sounds of the musical instruments, fine. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. Then (what god will be able to rescue you from my power?/no god will be able to rescue you from my power!)" [RHQ] 16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend our [actions] to you in this matter. 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we worship is able to rescue us. Sir, he will rescue us from your power. 18 But [even] if he does not [rescue us], you need to know that we will never worship your gods or the gold statue that you have set up." 19 Nebuchadnezzar was extremely angry. [His being very angry even] showed on his face. He commanded that the furnace should be made seven times as hot as usual. 20 [After that was done,] he commanded some of the [very] strong men of his army to tie Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and [then] to throw them into the blazing furnace. 21 So [the soldiers] tied them up and threw them into the furnace, while they were wearing their clothes. 22 Because the fire had been made very hot because the king had very strongly ordered them to do that, the flames [leaped out and] killed the soldiers as they were throwing the men into the fire! 23 So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell into the roaring flames. 24 But as Nebuchadnezzar was watching, he was amazed. He suddenly jumped up and shouted to his advisors, "Did we tie up three men and throw them into the flames, or not?" They replied, "Yes, O king, [we did]." 25 Nebuchadnezzar shouted, "[Look]! I see four men in the fire! They have no ropes on them, they are walking around, and [the flames] are not hurting them! And the fourth man looks like a divine being!" 26 Nebuchadnezzar came closer to the opening of the flaming furnace, and he shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you who worship the Supreme God, come out of there! Come here!" So they stepped out of the fire. 27 Then all the king's officials crowded around them. They saw that the flames had not harmed them. The flames had not [even] singed any of the hair on their heads or scorched any of their clothes! There was not [even] any

smell of smoke on them! 28 [Then] Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise the God whom Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego [worship]! He sent one of his angels to rescue these [three] men who worship him and trust in him. They ignored my command; they insisted that they would worship only their God, and were willing to die instead of worshiping any other god. 29 Therefore, I am [now] making this decree: 'If any people, from any country or people-group or any language group, criticize the God whom Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego worship, they will be cut in pieces and their houses [will be torn down and] made into a pile of rubble. There is no other god who can rescue people like this!'" 30 Then the king gave Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego more important positions in Babylon province than they had before.

4 [Several years after] Nebuchadnezzar [started to rule, he sent this message] to [the people of] every nation and people-group and all language groups in his empire. [He wrote,] "I wish/hope that everything is going very well with you! 2 I want you to know about [all] the wonderful miracles [DOU] that the Supreme God has performed for me. 3 He performs great miracles, and does wonderful things. His kingdom will last forever; his rule [over people] will never end. 4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living in my palace. I was living luxuriantly, and everything was going very well for me. 5 But one night I had a dream that caused me to be very afraid. I saw visions that terrified me as I lay on my bed. 6 So I summoned all the wise men in Babylon, in order that they would come and tell me what it meant. 7 All the men who worked magic, the fortune-tellers, the men who worked sorcery, and men who studied the stars came to me. I told them what I had dreamed, but they could not tell me what it meant. 8 Finally, Daniel came to me, and I [decided to] tell him what I had dreamed. One of my officials had given him a new name, Belteshazzar, to honor my own god. I knew that the spirit of the holy gods was in him. 9 So, [using the name that had been given to him], I said, 'Belteshazzar, you are the most important of all my fortune-tellers. I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and that you can reveal all mysteries. There is none that is too difficult for you. So, tell me what my dream means. 10 This is what I dreamed while I was lying on my bed: I saw a large tree [growing] in the middle of the land. 11 The tree was very strong and had grown very tall; [it seemed that] its top reached up to the sky, with the result that everyone in the world [HYP] could see it. 12 It had beautiful leaves, and it had produced a lot of fruit for people to eat. Wild animals rested in the shade of that tree, and birds built nests in its branches. All the living creatures everywhere in the world got food from that tree. 13 While I was still lying on my bed, I saw another vision. In the vision I saw a holy angel coming down from heaven. 14 The angel shouted, "Cut down the tree, and cut off its branches! Strip/Shake off all of its leaves, and scatter its fruit. Chase away the animals that are lying in the shade of the tree, and the birds that are in its branches. 15 But leave the stump of the tree and its roots in the ground. Fasten a band of iron and bronze around the stump, and allow it to stay there with grass around it." 16 [That tree seems to have represented a man, because the angel also said], "Cause that man to live [out in the fields] among the animals and plants. Cause the dew from the sky to make his body damp [each morning]. Do not allow him to [continue to] have a mind like humans; instead, cause him to have a mind like animals have, for seven years. 17 The holy angels have decided what must happen. They want to inform everyone that the Supreme God rules over all the kingdoms in this world. He is the one who chooses who will rule these kingdoms. He [sometimes] allows very unimportant people to become rulers." 18 Belteshazzar, that is what I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw in my dream. Now tell me what the dream means. No one else can tell me. [I asked] all the very wise men in my kingdom [to tell me] what it means, [but they were unable to do that]. But you can [tell me], because the spirit of the holy gods is in you." 19 I, whose [new] name was Belteshazzar, did not say anything for some time, [because] I was very worried/disturbed [about the meaning of the dream. Finally], the king said to me, "Belteshazzar, do not be afraid about the dream and about what it means." I replied, "Sir, I wish that the events that were predicted in your dream would happen to your enemies, [and not to you]. 20 [In your dream/vision] you saw a very strong and very tall tree. It [seemed to] reach to the sky, [with the result that] everyone in the world could see it. 21 It had beautiful leaves and it had produced a lot of fruit for people to eat. Wild animals rested in the shade of that tree, and birds built nests in its branches. 22 (Your majesty/O King), that tree [represents] you! You have become very powerful. [It is as though] your greatness reaches up to the sky, and you rule people all over the world. 23 [Then] you saw a holy angel coming down from heaven. That angel said, 'Cut down the tree, and cut off its branches! Strip/Shake off all of its leaves, and scatter its fruit. But leave the stump of the tree and its roots in the ground. Fasten a band of iron and bronze around the stump and [allow it to stay there] with grass around it. [Each morning] cause the dew from the sky to make this man, [who was represented by the tree], damp. Cause him to live in the fields with the animals for seven years.' 24 (Your Majesty/O King), that is what your dream means. That is what the Supreme God has

declared will happen to you. **25** [Your advisors] will force you to live away from other people. You will live in the fields with the wild animals. You will eat grass like cows do, and dew from the sky will cause your [body] to be damp/wet [every morning]. You will live that way for seven years, until you learn that it is the Supreme God who rules over the kingdoms of the world, and he appoints the ones whom he chooses [to rule them]. **26** But the stump of the tree and its roots were left [in the ground]. That means that you will rule your kingdom again when you learn that it is God [MTY] who is [really] the ruler. **27** (Your Majesty/O King), please do what I am telling you to do. Stop sinning, and do what is right. Turn away from your evil behavior. Act mercifully to poor people. If you do that, perhaps you will continue to be sucessful." **28** But [the king refused to stop sinning. So what was predicted in the dream is] what happened to him. **29** Twelve months later, [one day] he was walking [on the flat roof] of his palace in Babylon. **30** As he [looked out over/across the city], he said [to those around him], "I have built this great [city of] Babylon to be the place where I rule! I have built it to display my own power, in order [to show people] my glory, to show them that I am very great!" **31** While he was still saying this, God [MTY] spoke from heaven and said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, this is what I am saying to you: You are no longer the ruler of this kingdom! **32** [Your advisors] will force you to live away from [other] people. You will live in the fields with wild animals, and you will eat grass like cows do. You will live that way for seven years, until you learn that [it is] I, the Supreme God, who rules over the kingdoms of this world, and I appoint the ones whom I have chosen to rule them." **33** Immediately what [God] predicted happened. Nebuchadnezzar [became insane, so his advisors] forced him to live away from other people. He ate grass like cows [do], and dew from the sky caused his body to be damp/wet [every morning. He lived like that] until his hair was as long as eagles' feathers, and his fingernails became like birds' claws. **34** "After those [seven] years ended, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up toward heaven, [and I acknowledged that what God said was true]. Then I could think correctly again. I praised and worshiped the Supreme God, and I honored him, the one who lives forever. He rules forever; his kingdom will never end. **35** All the people in the world are very insignificant; we are not like him. He has the power to do whatever he wants to do, among the angels in heaven and among us people who live on the earth. [So] no one can stop him [SYN], and no one can [challenge him], saying to him, 'Why [are you doing these things]?' **36** When I was able to think correctly again, I was honored again, and I [was able to] rule my glorious/great kingdom again. My advisors came to me again [to talk about what should be done], and I became greater and more powerful than I was before. **37** Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and honor [DOU] [God], the king who rules in heaven. All of his actions are just and right. And he is able to cause to become humble those who are proud, [like I was]."

5 [Several years later,] Belshazzar [became the] king [of Babylon. One day] he invited 1,000 of his officers to a big feast, and he drank [a lot of] wine with them. **2** While he was drinking, he commanded [his servants] bring to him the gold and silver cups that the previous king, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the temple in Jerusalem. [He did that] because he wanted himself and his officials, his wives, and [even] his (concubines/slave wives) to drink from them, [making fun of the god that we Israelis worshiped]. **3** So his servants brought in [all] those gold cups, that had been taken [many years previously] from the temple of [the true] God in Jerusalem. Then the king and his officials and his wives and his slave wives drank [wine] from those cups. **4** They drank to praise/honor their idols that were made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and [even] wood and stone. **5** Suddenly they saw a man's hand writing on the plaster of the wall opposite the lampstand. The king also saw the hand as it was writing. **6** He became very frightened, and his face became pale/white. His knees started shaking, and his legs became very weak, with the result that he could not stand up. **7** [Then] he shouted to summon the men who worked magic, the men who studied the stars, and the fortune-tellers. He said, "I will [greatly honor] any one of them who can read this writing and tell me what it means. I will give him a purple [robe like I wear because I am the king], and I will put a gold chain around his neck. He will become a very important official in my kingdom; there will be only two others who will be more important than he will be." **8** But when all those wise men came in, none of them could read the writing, or tell him what it meant. **9** So King Belshazzar became more afraid. His face became [even] paler/whiter. And [all] his officials [who were there at the feast] did not know what to do. **10** But when the mother of the king (OR, of the previous king) heard the king and his officials talking [loudly about what had happened], she entered the room where they were having the feast. She said [to Belshazzar], "(Your majesty/O King), I hope you will live for a long time! But do not be pale and afraid about this. **11** There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. When Nebuchadnezzar was ruling, they discovered that this man understood many things and was wise, just like the gods. The man who was king previously, Nebuchadnezzar, appointed him to be in charge of all the

men [in Babylon] who worked magic, the men who worked sorcery, the men who studied the stars, and the fortune-tellers. 12 That man's name is Daniel; the king gave him a [new] name, Belteshazzar. He is very intelligent and is able to know and understand many things. He is [even] able to tell the meaning of dreams, and explain riddles, and explain things that are very difficult to understand. Summon him, and he will tell you what [this writing] means." 13 So they [went and] brought me in. The king asked me, "You [must] be Daniel [RHQ]! [They told me that you are] one of those who was brought [here] from Judah by the previous king. 14 I have [also] heard that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that you are very wise and understand many things. 15 My wise men and men who work magic have tried to read the writing on this wall and tell me what it means, but they are not able to do it. 16 [Someone] told me that you can tell what dreams mean and explain things that are very difficult to understand. If you can read these words and tell me what they mean, [I] give you a purple robe [like I wear because I am the king], and I will put a gold chain around your neck. You will become a very important official in my kingdom; there will be only two others who will be more important than you will be." 17 I replied, "[I do not want] your gifts; keep them, or give them to someone else. But I will read for you the writing [on the wall], and I will tell you what it means. 18 (Your Majesty/O king), the Supreme God caused the man who was king before you, Nebuchadnezzar, to become a great ruler, who was greatly praised and honored. 19 Because God caused him to become [very] great, people of many [HYP] people-groups and nations and who spoke many different languages were very much afraid of him. He [commanded his soldiers to] kill those whom he wanted to be killed, and he (spared/allowed to live) those whom he wanted to spare. He honored those whom he wanted to honor, and he caused to be disgraced those whom he wanted to be disgraced. 20 But when he became very proud and stubborn [IDM], he was removed from being king [MTY]. People did not consider him to be glorious/great any more. 21 [His officials] sent him away in order that he would not be near [other] people. [God] caused him to have a mind like animals have. He lived among the wild donkeys. He ate grass like cows do, and dew from the sky caused his body to be damp/wet [each morning]. [He was like that] until he learned that the Supreme God is [really the one who] rules the kingdoms of this world, and that he appoints whomever he chooses to rule those kingdoms. 22 Now, Belshazzar, you have become the king. You [also] knew all those things, but you have not made yourself humble. 23 You have considered yourself to be greater than [God], the Lord of heaven. [So you have commanded your servants to] bring to you these sacred cups, [which were dedicated to the Supreme God, and which were taken] from his temple [in Jerusalem]. You and your officials and your wives and your (concubines/slave wives) have been drinking wine from these cups, while you have been praising [your own] gods—gods which are made of gold and silver and bronze and iron and wood and stone. [Those are gods] that cannot see, that cannot hear, and that do not know anything! You have not honored the God who gives you breath and who controls everything that happens to you. 24 So God sent that hand to write a message [for you]. 25 This is the message that it wrote: 'Mene, mene, tekel, parsin.' 26 This is what those words mean: Mene [means] 'numbered/counted'. [That means that] God has been counting the days that you will rule, and he has [now] decided that you will not rule any more. 27 Tekel [means 'weighed'. It is as though God] has weighed you on a scale, and you do not weigh what you should, [which means that you have not been doing what you should; you are not fit to be a king] [MET]. 28 Parsin [means 'divided'. That means that God] has divided your kingdom. Some of it will be ruled by people from Media and some will be ruled by people from Persia." 29 Then Belshazzar [did what he had promised]. He put on me a purple robe [like the one he himself wore. He] put a gold chain around my neck. And he proclaimed that there would be only two others who would be more important than me in his kingdom. 30 But that same night [soldiers from Media entered the city and] killed Belshazzar, the King of Babylonia. 31 Darius, the King of Media, became the King [of Babylonia] when he was 62 years old.

6 King Darius decided to divide his kingdom into 120 provinces. He appointed a governor to rule each province. 2 He also appointed me and two other men to be administrators, to supervise the governors and to be sure that they did the king's work [properly], in order that the king would not have to worry about anything. 3 I soon showed that I was (more capable/able to do the work better) than all the other administrators and the governors. Because of that, the king planned to appoint me to be in charge of the entire empire. 4 Then, the [other] administrators and the governors [became jealous. So they began to] try to find something that they could criticize about the way I was working for the king. But I always did my work faithfully and honestly, and was never lazy. So they could not find anything to criticize. 5 They concluded, "The only way we can find something for which we can criticize Daniel will be something concerning the laws that his god [his given him]." 6 So the administrators and governors went as one group to the king and said, "(Your Majesty/O king), we wish

that you will live a long time! 7 [We] administrators and governors and district governors and advisors and other officials have all agreed that you should make a law that everyone must obey. We want you to command that for the next thirty days people may pray only to you. If anyone prays to anyone else, either to a human or to a god, he must be thrown into [a pit of] lions. 8 And because laws made by [our governments of] Media and Persia cannot be changed, [we want] you, [the head of our government], to sign it." 9 So King Darius [wrote] the law and signed it. 10 But when I found out that [the king] had [written and] signed that law, I went home. I knelt down in my upstairs room and prayed. I looked toward Jerusalem, and the windows were open [with the result that everyone could see me while I was praying]. I prayed three times each day, just as I always did, thanking God. 11 The officials went together [to my house] and they saw me praying and requesting God to help me. 12 So they returned to the king and said to him, "[Do you remember] that you wrote a law stating that for the next thirty days people may pray only to you, and if anyone prays to anyone else, either to a human or to a god, he will be thrown into [a pit of] lions?" The king replied, "[Yes, that is the law that I wrote]. It is a law of [our governments of] Media and Persia, which cannot be canceled." 13 Then they said to the king, "Well, that [man] Daniel, one of the men who were brought from Judah, is not paying any attention to you or the law that you [signed]. He prays [to his god] three times each day!" 14 When the king heard that, he was very distressed. He tried to find a way to save me. All the rest of that day he tried to think of a way to rescue me. 15 [In the evening, many of] [HYP] the officials went together to the king and said, "(Your Majesty/O king), you know that [our governments of] Media and Persia have declared that no law that the king signs can be canceled/changed. [So Daniel must be thrown to the lions!]" 16 So the king gave the order, and his servants brought me and threw me into a pit where the lions [were]. [Before they threw me in], the king said to me, "I hope/wish that your God, whom you worship regularly, will rescue you!" 17 They rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the pit. Then the king [fastened a string across the entrance and put wax at each end, and stamped the wax with] the seal from his [ring] and the seals [of the rings] of his officials, in order that no one could [secretly] rescue me. 18 Then the king returned to his palace. That night he refused to eat any food. He would not allow anyone to entertain him [because he did not want to be happy, with the result that he would forget about me. And that night] he was unable to sleep [because he was worried about me]. 19 At dawn the next morning, the king got up and went quickly to the pit where the lions were. 20 When he came near it, he was very worried. He called out, "Daniel, you who serve the all-powerful God! Was your God, whom you worship regularly, able to save you from the lions?" 21 I answered, "(Your Majesty/O king), I hope that you will live a long time! 22 [Yes], my God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths, in order that they would not harm me! [He did that] because [he knows that] I have done nothing that he thinks is wrong. And, (Your Majesty/O king), I never did anything wrong to you!" 23 The king was extremely happy, and he commanded [his servants] to lift me out of the pit. [When they did that, they] saw that the lions had not wounded me at all. [God had protected me] because I trusted in him. 24 Then the king commanded that the men who had accused me should be seized and be thrown, along with their wives and children, into the pit where the lions were. [When they were thrown into the pit], the lions leaped on them and crushed their bones before they fell onto the bottom of the pit! 25 Then King Darius wrote [this message and sent it throughout his kingdom] to the people of every people-group and nation and from all language groups: "I wish/hope that everything is going very well with you! 26 I command that everyone in my kingdom should fear and revere the God that Daniel [worships]. He is the all-powerful God, and he will live forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed; he will rule forever. 27 He rescues and saves [his people]. He performs all kinds of miracles in heaven and on the earth. He rescued Daniel from the power of the lions!" 28 So I was successful [all] during the time that Darius ruled and during the time that Cyrus, [the King] of Persia, ruled.

7 [Previously,] during the first year that Belshazzar was the king of Babylonia, I had a dream and a vision one night as I lay on my bed. [The next morning] I wrote down what I had dreamed. This is what I wrote: 2 I, Daniel, had a vision last night. In the vision I saw that strong winds were blowing from all four directions, stirring up [the water in] the ocean. 3 Then [I saw] four beasts coming out of the ocean. All four of them were different. 4 The first one resembled a lion, but it had wings like an eagle has. But as I watched, something tore off its wings {its wings were pulled off}. The beast was left there, standing on its two hind/rear legs, like a human being stands. And it was given a mind like humans have. 5 The second beast resembled a bear. It was crouching, and it held between its teeth three ribs [from another animal that it had killed and eaten]. Someone said to it {It was told}, "Stand up and eat as much meat [as you want]!" 6 Then I saw in front of me the third of those beasts. It resembled a leopard, but it had four wings protruding from its back. The wings were like a bird's wings. It had four heads. It was given the power/authority to rule [people]. 7 In the vision I saw a

fourth beast. It was stronger than the other beasts, and it was more terrifying. It crushed other creatures with its huge iron teeth and ate their flesh. The parts of animals that it did not grind with its teeth, it trampled [on the ground]. It was different from the other three beasts: It had ten horns [on its head]. **8** While I was looking at those horns, I saw a little horn appear [on the head of that beast]. It tore out three of the other horns. This little horn had eyes like humans have, and it had a mouth [with which it spoke] very boastfully. **9** [Then] while I watched, thrones were put in the places [where they belonged], and [God], the one who had been living forever, sat on one of the thrones. His clothes were as white as snow, and his hair was as white as pure/clean wool. His throne had wheels that were blazing with fire, and his throne was [also] blazing. **10** A fire was rushing out of in front of him like a stream. Many thousands [of people] (OR, [angels]) [were there] serving him, and millions [of other people] (OR, [angels]) were standing in front of him. They started (the court session/judging people), and they opened the books [in which they had written the record of all the good and bad things that people had done]. **11** While I was watching, I could hear the little horn speaking very boastfully. As I [continued to] watch, the [fourth] beast was killed. Its corpse was thrown into a fire and completely burned. **12** The power/authority of the other [three] beasts was taken away from them, but they were allowed to continue to live for a while. **13** While I [continued to] see the vision that night, I saw someone who resembled a human being. He was coming [closer to me], surrounded by clouds. Then he was taken to [God], the one who had been living forever. **14** He was honored and given great authority to rule over all the nations in the world, in order that people from every people-group and every nation, people from all language groups, would worship/serve him. He will rule forever; he will never stop ruling. The kingdom that he rules will never be destroyed. **15** As for me, Daniel, I was very terrified by what I had seen in that vision, and I did not know what to think about it. **16** I went to one of those who were standing in front of the throne of God, and I asked him to tell me what it meant. So he told me the meaning of it. **17** [He said], "The four huge beasts represent four kingdoms/empires that will exist on the earth. **18** But the Supreme God will give power/authority to his people [to rule], and they shall rule forever." **19** Then I wanted to know what the fourth beast signified—[the beast] that was different from the other three, the beast that crushed [those that it attacked] with its bronze claws, and [then] ate [their flesh] with its iron teeth, and trampled on the parts of their bodies [that it did not eat]. **20** [I also wanted to know about] the ten horns on its head, and about the horn that appeared later, which got rid of three of the other horns. [I wanted to know what it meant that] it had eyes and a mouth with which it spoke very boastfully. [The beast that was represented by] that horn was more terrifying than the other beasts. **21** While I was having the vision, I saw that this horn attacked God's people and was defeating them. **22** But then the Supreme God, the one who had been living forever, came and judged in favor of the people who belonged to him. And [I knew that] it was time for God's people to receive authority [to rule]. **23** [Then] the man who was standing there said [to me], "The fourth beast represents an empire that will exist on the earth; that [empire] will be different from all [other] empires. [The army of] that empire will crush/kill [people all over] the world and trample [on their bodies]. **24** As for its ten horns, they represent ten kings who will rule that empire, [one after the other]. Then another [king] will appear. He will be different from the previous kings. He will defeat the three kings [that were represented by the three horns that were pulled out]. **25** He will revile the Supreme God, and he will oppress God's people. He will try to change the [sacred] festivals and their [religious] laws/regulations. He will control them for three and a half years. **26** But there will be a session/meeting of the court/judges in heaven, and that king's authority/power will be taken away, and he will be completely destroyed. **27** Then all the power and the greatness of all the kingdoms on the earth will be given to the people who belong to the Supreme God. The kingdom that he rules (OR, they rule) will endure forever. And the rulers of all the nations on the earth will serve and obey him (OR, them)." **28** That is [what I saw in] my vision/dream. I, Daniel, was terrified, with the result that my face became pale. But I did not tell anyone about the vision [that I had seen].

8 During the third year that Belshazzar was the King [of Babylonia], I had another vision. **2** In that vision I was in Susa, the capital city of Elam Province. I was [standing] alongside the Ulai Canal. **3** I looked up and saw a ram that was standing alongside the canal. It had two [long] horns, but the newest one was longer than the other one. **4** The ram butted/knocked away [with its horns] everything that was west and everything that was north and everything that was south of it. There were no [other] animals that were able to oppose it, and none that could rescue/save [other animals] from its power. The ram did whatever it wanted to do and became very powerful. **5** While I was thinking [about what I had seen, in the vision] I saw a goat come from the west. It ran across the land so quickly, that [it seemed like] its feet did not touch the ground. This goat had one very large horn between its eyes. **6** It was very angry, and it ran

[straight] toward the ram that I had seen [previously, the ram] that was standing alongside the canal. **7** The goat struck the ram furiously and broke off its two horns, with the result that the ram was unable [to defend itself]. [So] the goat knocked the ram down and trampled on it. No one could rescue the ram from the goat's power. **8** The goat became very powerful. But when its power was very great, its horn was broken off. But four [other] large horns took its place. They each pointed in a different direction. **9** [Then] from one of those [large horns] appeared a little horn, which became very big, [and pointed] toward the south and [then] toward the east and [then] toward the beautiful land [of Israel]. **10** [The man who was represented by] that horn became very strong, with the result that he attacked some of the [soldiers of the] army of heaven, and (OR, meaning) the stars in the sky [which represented God's people]. He threw some of them to the ground and trampled on them. **11** He (defied/considered himself to be greater than) the leader of the army [of heaven], and prevented [priests from] offering sacrifices to him. He also (defiled the temple/caused the temple to become unholy). **12** Then God's people allowed the [man who was represented by] that horn to control/rule them, with the result that they sinned by offering sacrifices to him. And he threw to the ground the [laws that contained the] true religion. Everything that he did was successful. **13** Then I heard two angels who were talking to each other. One of them asked, "How long will the things/events that were in this vision continue? How long will the man who rebels against God and causes [the temple] to be defiled be able to prevent [priests from] offering sacrifices? How long will he trample on the temple and on the armies of heaven?" **14** The other angel replied, "[It will continue] for 1,150 days. During all of that time, [people will not be permitted to offer sacrifices] in the morning or in the evening. After that, the temple will be purified." **15** While I, Daniel, was trying to understand what the vision meant, suddenly [an angel] who resembled a man stood/appeared in front of me. **16** And I heard a man call out from [the other side of] the Ulai Canal, saying, "Gabriel, explain to him the meaning of the vision [that he saw]!" **17** So Gabriel came and stood beside me. I was very terrified, with the result that I fell onto the ground. But he said to me, "You human, it is necessary for you to understand that [the events that you saw in] the vision will occur [near] the time that [the world] will end." **18** While he was speaking, I fainted. I lay there, unconscious, with my face still on the ground. But Gabriel put his hand on me and lifted me up in order that I could stand again. **19** Then he said, "I [have come here to] tell you what will happen because of [God] being angry. These things will happen near the time when [the world] will end. **20** As for the ram with two horns that you saw, those horns [represent] the kingdoms of Media and Persia. **21** The goat [that you saw represents] the kingdom of Greece, and the horn that appeared between its eyes [represents] its first king. **22** As for the four horns that grew after the first horn was broken off, they [represent] four kingdoms into which that first kingdom will be divided [after the first king dies]. Those four kingdoms will not be as strong/powerful as the first kingdom was. **23** The people [in those kingdoms] will become very wicked, with the result that it will be necessary for them to be punished. But near the time when those kingdoms will end, one of those kingdoms will have a king who will be very proud/defiant [IDM]. He will [also] be very fierce and very deceitful. **24** He will become very powerful, but it will not be because of what he himself does. He will terribly destroy things in many places, and he will succeed in doing everything that he wants to. He will get rid of [many] powerful men, and [also] some of God's people. **25** Because he is very cunning/clever, he will succeed by doing things that deceive many people. He will be proud of himself. He will destroy many people when they think that they are safe. He will also rebel against [God] [EUP], who is the greatest king. But [God] will destroy him, without the help [MTY] of any human being. **26** What you saw in the vision about [priests being prevented from making] sacrifices in the morning and in the evening, which [I] explained [to you], will surely happen. But [for the present time], do not reveal the vision [to others], because it will be many years before those things happen." **27** Then I, Daniel, became weak, and I was sick for several days. Then I arose and [returned to] doing the work that the king [had given to me], but I was perplexed/confused about the vision, and I could not understand it.

9 [Now I am going to tell you about what happened] when Darius, who was from the Mede people-group and who was the son of Xerxes, ruled as the King of Babylonia. **2** During the first year that he was the king, I, Daniel, was studying/reading the [holy] books/Scriptures the message that Yahweh had given to the prophet Jeremiah. In that message Jeremiah had written that Jerusalem would [be destroyed and] remain ruined for seventy years. **3** [After I read that], I pleaded to Yahweh my God [to help us], praying and (fasting/abstaining from eating food). [While doing that, I was wearing] rough cloth and [sitting in] ashes [to show that I was very sad about what was going to happen to us]. **4** I confessed [the sins that we had committed], and [this is what I] prayed: Lord, you are great and awesome! You have faithfully done what you said that you would do for us. You faithfully love those who love you and who do

what you have commanded [that they should do]. **5** But we [Israelis] have sinned. We have done things that are wrong. We have done wicked things, and we have rebelled [against you]. We have turned away from [obeying] your commands [DOU]. **6** Your prophets spoke for you [MTY], [giving your messages to] kings, to our other rulers, to our [other] ancestors, and to all the Israeli people, but we have refused to (pay attention to/heed) those prophets. **7** Lord, you always do what is righteous/just/fair, but we have caused ourselves to be ashamed [IDM]. This is [still] true about all of the Israelis who live in Jerusalem and who live in other places in Judea. It is [also] true about all us Israelis whom you scattered, who [were taken to] other countries, some near [Israel] and some far away, because we were very unfaithful/disloyal to you. **8** Lord, we and our kings and our other rulers and our [other] ancestors have done very shameful things and have sinned against you. **9** Although we have rebelled against you, you act mercifully [toward us] and you [are willing/ready] to forgive us. **10** Yahweh our God, when you gave your laws to your prophets who served you, and they told us to conduct our lives according to those laws, we did not (listen to/heed) you. **11** All [of us] Israeli people have disobeyed your laws, and we have turned away from [obeying] what you said. We have sinned against you. As a result, [you] have caused us to experience the terrible things that your servant Moses said/wrote [would happen to us] if we sinned against you. **12** You warned us and our rulers that you would punish Jerusalem severely by causing a great disaster there, a disaster that would be worse than any disaster that any other city had ever experienced, and you have done what you said that you would do. **13** [You] punished us just like Moses wrote [that you would do]. But, Yahweh our God, we still have not tried, by turning away from our sinning and by heeding your truth, to persuade you to act mercifully toward us. **14** So, because we did not obey you, you prepared to punish us, and [then] you did punish us, because you always do what is righteous/just/fair. **15** O Lord our God, you brought your people out of Egypt by your great power [MTY], and by doing that you have caused people from that time until the present time to know that you are great [IDM] [even though] we have sinned and done wicked things. **16** Lord, Jerusalem is your city, and [your temple was built there] on your sacred hill. Now all the people who live in nearby [countries/nations] despise Jerusalem and [us] your people because of our sins and because of the evil things that our ancestors did. But [now], because you do what is righteous/just, [we ask you to] not be angry with Jerusalem any longer. **17** O Lord our God, listen to what I am praying and pleading [for you to do]. (For your own sake/In order that people will know that you are very great), act kindly [IDM] concerning your temple, which was destroyed [by the armies of Babylonia]. **18** My God, listen [to my prayer]. Look [at us] and see our troubles, and see that this city that belongs to you [MTY] has been ruined/destroyed. We are praying to you because you are merciful, not because we have done what is right/good. **19** Lord, listen [to us]! Lord, forgive us! Lord, this city and these people belong to you, so [we plead with you to] heed what we are saying and act [to help us] right now, (for your own sake/in order that people will know that you are very great)! **20** I continued praying and confessing the sins that my people and I had committed, and pleading with Yahweh my God that he would restore [the temple on] the sacred hill [in Jerusalem]. **21** While I was praying, Gabriel, the angel/one whom I had seen in the vision previously, came flying rapidly to me, at the time in the evening when [the priests] offered sacrifices. **22** He said to me, "Daniel, I have come to you to enable you to understand [DOU] clearly [the message that God gave to Jeremiah]. **23** When you began to plead [with God], he gave me a message [to pass on to you]. He loves you very much, so [he has sent me] to tell you what he said to me. So [now] (pay attention/listen carefully) in order that you may understand the meaning of what he revealed [to Jeremiah]. **24** [God] has determined/declared that there will be 490 years until he frees/saves your people from [the guilt of] their sins and to atone for the evil things that they have done. Then [God] will rule everyone justly, and he will do that forever. And [what you saw in] the vision and what [Jeremiah] prophesied will (come true/be fulfilled), and the sacred temple will be dedicated [to God again]. **25** You need to know and understand this: There will be 49 years from the time that [the king] commands that Jerusalem should be rebuilt until the leader/king that God has chosen will come. Then 434 years later, Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and it will have streets and will have a (moat/deep ditch filled with water) around it [to protect the city]. But that will be a time when [God's people] will have [a lot of] troubles/difficulties/suffering. **26** After those 434 years, the leader/king whom God has appointed will be killed [when it seems that] he will have accomplished nothing (unjustly/without having done anything wrong). After that, the temple will be destroyed by [the army of] a powerful ruler. The city and the temple will be destroyed like a flood [MET] [destroys everything]. That will be the beginning of the war and destruction that [God] has decreed [will happen]. **27** That ruler will make a strong agreement with many people. He will promise to do for seven years what he has said in that agreement. But when that time is half finished, he will prevent [priests from] giving any more offerings and sacrifices [to

God]. A disgusting idol will be put on the highest part of the temple, and it will stay there until [God] gets rid of the one who put it there, which is what he said that he would do."

10 During the third year that Cyrus was the king of Persia, I Daniel, [who had been given the] name Belteshazzar, received [another] message [from God]. The message was true, but it was very difficult for me to understand it. But [later] I understood the message because of the vision that I had seen. **2** At that time I had been sad for three weeks [about what had happened to Jerusalem]. **3** I did not eat any tasty food or any meat or drink any wine. I did not even put any perfumed oil on my [face or hair] for those three weeks. **4** [When those three weeks ended,] on April 23, [my companions and] I were standing on the bank of the great Tigris River. **5** I looked up and saw someone there who was wearing fine white/linen clothes and a belt [made of] pure gold. **6** His body [shone] like a precious beryl stone. His face was as [bright as] a flash of lightning. His eyes [were/shone] like flaming torches. His arms and legs [shone] like polished bronze. And his voice was [very loud], like the roar of a huge crowd. **7** I, Daniel, was the only one who saw this vision. The men who were with me did not see anything, but [they sensed that someone was there, and they] became terrified. They ran away and hid themselves. **8** So I was left there by myself, looking at this very unusual vision. I had no strength left. My face became very pale, with the result that no one would have recognized me. **9** I saw a man there, and when I heard him speak, I fell to the ground. I (fainted/became unconscious), [and I lay there] with my face on the ground. **10** Suddenly someone's hand took hold of me and lifted me, with the result that I was on my hands and knees, [but I was still] trembling. **11** The man said to me, "Daniel, [God] loves you very much. Stand up and listen to what I am going to say to you, because [God] sent me to you." When he said that, I stood up, [but I was still] trembling. **12** Then he said to me, "Daniel, do not be afraid. God has heard what you have prayed ever since the first day that you determined to humble yourself in order to understand [the vision]. I have come to you because of what you prayed. **13** The [evil spirit who] rules the kingdom of Persia resisted/hindered me for 21 days, but Michael, who is one of God's chief angels, came to help me. I left him there in Persia [to resist] that evil spirit who rules there. **14** I have come here to enable you to understand what will happen to the Israeli people in the future. [Do not forget that] the vision [that you saw] is about [things that will happen in] the distant future, [not about things that will happen very soon]." **15** While he was saying that, I stared at the ground and was unable to say anything [because I was very afraid]. **16** Suddenly [the angel], who resembled a human, touched my lips. Then [I was able to speak, and] I said to him, "Sir, because [I have seen] this vision, I have become very weak, with the result that I cannot stop trembling. **17** I am not able [RHQ] to talk to you, my master. I have no strength left, and it is very difficult for me to breathe." **18** But he took hold of me again, and enabled me to become stronger again. **19** He said to me, "You human, God loves you very much. [So] do not be afraid. I desire/want things to go well for you and that you will be encouraged." When he had said that, I felt even stronger, and I said, "Sir, tell me [what you want to tell me]. You have enabled me to feel stronger." **20** Then he said, "(Do you know why I came to you?/I will tell you why I came to you.) [RHQ] It is to reveal to you what is written in the book which reveals/contains God's truth. But now I must return to fight against [the evil spirit] who rules the kingdom of Persia. After I have defeated him, [the evil angel] who guards Greece will appear [and I must defeat him]. Michael, who guards you [Israeli people], will help me, but there is no one else to help me."

11 "As for me, during the first year that Darius was king, I helped and encouraged Michael." **2** [The angel also said], "And what I am going to reveal to you now will truly [happen]. There will be three more kings to rule Persia, [one after the other]. Then there will be a fourth king, who will be much richer than the others. As a result of [his giving] a lot of money [to people, they will enable him to] become very powerful. Then he will incite/persuade many nations [HYP] [to fight] against the kingdom of Greece. **3** Then a very powerful king will appear [in Greece]. He will rule over a very large empire, and he will do whatever he wants to do. **4** But when he has become very powerful, [he will die]. Then his kingdom will be divided into four parts. Kings who are not his descendants will rule, but they will not be as powerful as he was. **5** Then the King of Egypt [MTY] will become very powerful. But one of his army generals will become more powerful than he is, and he will rule a bigger area. **6** Several years later, the King of Egypt and the King of Syria will make an (alliance/agreement to help each other) [MTY]. The King of Syria will give his daughter to the King of Egypt to become his wife. But she will not be able to influence him [MTY] very long, and that woman, her husband, her child, and her servants will all be killed/assassinated. **7** Soon after that, one of her relatives [MET] will become King [of Egypt]. His army will attack the army of Syria. They will enter the fortress of the soldiers of Syria and defeat them. **8** They will return to Egypt, taking the statues of the gods [of the people of Syria] and many items made of silver and gold that had been dedicated to those gods. Then for several years his army will

not attack [the army of] the King of Syria. **9** Then the army of the King of Syria will invade Egypt, but they will soon return to Syria. **10** However, the sons of the King of Syria will prepare to start a war, and they will gather a large army. That army will march [south] and spread all over [Israel] like a huge flood. They will attack a strong fortress [in the south of Israel]. **11** Then the King of Egypt, having become very angry, will march [with his army north] from Egypt and fight against the army of Syria. The King [of Syria] will gather together a very large army, but [the army of the King of Egypt] will defeat them. **12** The King of Egypt will become very proud because of [his army] having killed a very large number of soldiers [from Syria], but his army will not continue to win battles. **13** The King of Syria will again gather together an army that will be bigger than the one that he had before. After a few years, he will again march [south on their way to Egypt] with a large army and a lot of equipment [for fighting battles]. **14** At that time, many people in Egypt will rebel against their king. In order to fulfill a vision that [one of their leaders had seen], some violent/lawless people from your country [of Israel] will also rebel [in order to not be controlled by Egypt any more], but they will be defeated. **15** Then the King of Syria will come [south with his army] and pile up dirt against the walls of a city that is well protected, and they will [break through those walls and] they will capture the city. The soldiers from Egypt [who have come to defend that city], even the best troops, will not be strong enough to continue to fight. **16** So the King of Syria will do whatever he wants to, and no one will be able to oppose him. [His army] will occupy the glorious land [of Israel] and completely control/subdue it. **17** Then he will decide to march [south] with all the soldiers from his kingdom. He will make an alliance with the King [of Egypt] and in order that his own daughter will [help him to] destroy the kingdom of Egypt, he will give her to the King of Egypt to become his wife. But that plan will fail. **18** After that, the [army of] the King of Syria will attack the regions that are close to the [Mediterranean] Sea, and his [army] will conquer many of them. But [the army of] a leader from another country will defeat the army of Syria and will stop their king from continuing to be proud. He will do to the King of Syria what he deserved for being very insolent. **19** Then the King of Syria will return to the fortresses in his own land. But he will be defeated, and he will (die/be assassinated) [EUP] there. **20** Then another man will (succeed him/become king). That king will send one of his officers to oppress the people [in Jerusalem] by forcing them to pay big taxes, in order to get more money for his kingdom. But after a few years [HYP] that king will die, but he will not die as a result of people being angry with him or in a battle. **21** The next King of Syria will be an evil man who, [because he will not be the son of the previous king,] will not have the right to become king. But he will come when people do not expect it, and he will become king by tricking the people. **22** When his army advances, they will attack any armies that oppose him and destroy those armies. They will also kill God's Supreme Priest. **23** By making treaties/alliances with [the rulers of] other nations, he will deceive them, and he will become very powerful, even though he rules a nation that does not have a lot of people. **24** Suddenly his [army] will invade a province that is very wealthy, and they will do things that none of his ancestors did: they will capture in battles all kinds of possessions from the people whom they defeat. Then the king will divide those possessions among his friends. He will also plan [for his army] to attack fortresses [in Egypt], but only for a short time. **25** He will courageously/boldly conscript/gather a large and powerful army to attack [the army of] the king of Egypt. But the King of Egypt will prepare to fight against them with a huge and powerful army. However, someone will deceive him, with the result that his plan will not be successful. **26** Even his most trusted advisors will plan to get rid of him. His army will be defeated and many of his soldiers will be killed. **27** Then the two [kings who both want to rule that area] will sit down at the same table and eat together, but they will both lie to each other. Neither of them will get what he wants, because it will not be the time [that God] has determined/set [for them to rule Egypt]. **28** [The army of] the King [of Syria] will return to Syria, taking with them all the valuable things [that they had captured]. The king will be determined to get rid of the Supreme Priest of the Jewish people. He will do what he wants to [in Israel], and then return to his own country. **29** When it is the time that God has decided, the King of Syria [and his army] will invade Egypt again. But this time he will not be successful like he was before. **30** The army of Rome will come in ships and oppose his army and cause him to be afraid. So he will be very angry, and [with his army] he will return [to Israel] and try to get rid of the Supreme Priest. The King of Syria will do what those who have abandoned the Jewish religion advise/want him to do for them. **31** Some of his soldiers will do things to (defile the temple/cause the temple to become unholy for them). They will prevent the priests from offering sacrifices each day, and they will put [in the temple] something that is disgusting/abominable. **32** By deceiving those who have abandoned the Jewish religion, he will persuade them to (become his supporters/help him to do what he wants to do). But those who are devoted to their God will firmly oppose them. **33** And wise [Israeli] leaders will teach others also. But for a while, some of those wise

leaders will be killed in battles, and some will be burned to death, and some will be robbed, and some will be put in prison. **34** While God's people are being persecuted, some people will help them a little bit, although some of those who help them will not do it sincerely. **35** Some of those wise leaders will be killed [EUP], but as a result the others will be purified [DOU]. This suffering will continue until it is the time [that God] has appointed [for it to] end. **36** The King [of Syria] will do what he wants to. He will boast and say that he is greater than any god. He will even revile the Supreme God. He will be able to do what he wants until the time that [God] punishes [MTY] him. [God] will accomplish what he has planned. **37** The [King of Syria] will ignore the god that his ancestors worshiped and the god that many women love. He will ignore every god, because he will think that he is greater than all of them. **38** But he will honor the god who [people think] protects fortresses. That is a god whom his ancestors did not honor. And he will give gold, silver, (jewels/very valuable stones) and other expensive gifts to that god. **39** He will ask that god (OR, people who worship a god) from another country to help him to defend his fortresses. He will greatly honor those who allow him [to be their ruler]. He will appoint [some of] them to important positions in the government; and to reward them, he will give them some land. **40** But when his time [to rule] is almost ended, [the army of] the King of Egypt will attack his [army]. The [army of the] King of Syria will fight against them furiously [SIM]. [His soldiers will be driving] chariots and [riding on] horses and [traveling in] many ships. His army will invade many countries and [spread all over those countries] like a flood [MET]. **41** They will invade the glorious land [of Israel] and kill [EUP] tens of thousands of people. But the people of the Edom people-group and the people of the Moab people-group and the people of the Ammon people-group who are still alive will escape. **42** When the army of Syria invades other countries, even the people of Egypt will be defeated. **43** The army of Syria will take away from Egypt gold, silver, and other valuable items. The people of Libya and Ethiopia will allow [the King of Syria] to rule over them. **44** But he will become very frightened/alarmed when he hears reports about what is happening in the east and in the north. So he will become very angry, and send his army to fight furiously and kill many [of their enemies]. **45** The [King of Syria] will set up his royal tents in the area between the [Mediterranean] Sea and the hill [in Jerusalem] on which the temple (exists/was built). But he will be killed there, because there will be no one to help him."

12 [The angel also said to me,] "After those things happen, the great angel Michael, who protects the [Israeli] people, will appear. Then there will be a time when there will be great troubles/suffering. The troubles will be greater than any troubles/suffering since the nations began. At that time, all of your people whose names have been written in the book [containing the names of those who have eternal life] will be saved. **2** Many of those who have died [EUP] will become alive again. Some of them will live eternally [with God], and some will be eternally shamed/disgraced [in hell]. **(questioned)** **3** Those who were wise will shine as brightly as the sky [is bright when the sun is shining]. And those who have shown to others the way to live righteously will shine forever, like the stars [SIM]. **4** But as for you, Daniel, close up the scroll [on which you are writing], and seal it [in order that no one can open it] until the end [of the world] is near. [Before that happens,] many people will travel rapidly here and there, learning more and more [about many things]." **5** When [that angel finished speaking], I, Daniel, looked up, and suddenly I saw two other [angels]. One was standing on the side of the river [where I was], and one was standing on the other side. **6** One of them [called to] the other one, who was wearing linen/white clothes, who was now standing further up (OR, above) the river, "How long will it be until these amazing/frightening events end?" **7** The angel who was on the other side of (OR, above) the river raised his hands toward the sky, and solemnly promised, with the authority [MTY] of God, who lives forever, "It will be three and a half years. All these things will end after God's people stop fighting against those who (persecute/cause trouble for/cause suffering for) them." **8** I heard [what he said], but I did not understand it. So I asked, "Sir, what will be the result when these things end?" **9** He replied, "Daniel, you must leave now. [I cannot answer your question] because what it means must (be kept secret/not be revealed) [DOU] until the time when everything ends. **10** Many people will thoroughly purify their inner beings [DOU]. But wicked people will not understand these things. They will continue to be wicked. Only those who are wise will understand [these things]. **11** [But I can tell you that before everything ends,] there will be 1,290 days, from the time that people are prevented from offering sacrifices each day, that is, from the time that the abominable/disgusting thing is put in the temple. **12** God will be pleased with those who remain faithful until 1,335 days are ended. **13** So [now I say] to you, continue to faithfully [trust God] until [your life on earth] ends. You will die [EUP], but when everything ends, you will receive your reward [from God]."

Hosea

1 [I am] Hosea, the son of Beeri. Yahweh gave me these messages [at various times] during the years that Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were the kings of Judah, and Jeroboam the son of Jehoash was the King of Israel. **2** When Yahweh first [began to] give messages to me [to tell to the people of Israel], he said to me, "Go and marry a prostitute. But [some of] her children will be born as a result of her having sex with men to whom she is not married. That will illustrate how the people of Israel have turned away from me and worship (idols/other gods)." **3** So I married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim. She became pregnant and gave birth to my son. **4** Yahweh said to me, "Give him the name Jezreel, [which means 'God scatters'], because I will soon punish the descendants [MTY] of [King] Jehu [by scattering them], because he killed many of my people at Jezreel [town]. [Some day] I will end the kingdom of Israel, **5** by destroying the power [MTY] of [the army of] Israel in Jezreel Valley." **6** [Later] Gomer became pregnant [again], and she gave birth to a daughter. Yahweh said to me "Give her the name Lo-ruhamah, [which means 'not loved],' because I will no longer [show that I] love the people [MET] of Israel, and I will not forgive them [for the sins that they have committed]. **7** But I will [show that I] love the people [MTY] of Judah [by saving them from their enemies]. However, it will not be by weapons and armies or horses and chariots that I will save them. Instead, it will be by [the power that I], Yahweh their God, [have]." **8** After Gomer had (weaned/stopped breast-feeding) Lo-ruhamah, she became pregnant again, and she gave birth to another son. **9** Yahweh said "Give him the name Lo-ammi, [which means 'not my people',] because the people of Israel are no [longer my people], and I am not their God. **10** But [some day] the people of Israel will be [as numerous] as [SIM] the [grains of] sand on the seashore; no one will be able to count them. Now [I] am saying to them, 'You are not my people,' but then people will say to them, '[You are the] children of God who is all-powerful.' **11** [At that time], the people of Judah and the people of Israel will unite. They will appoint one leader for all of them, and they will return from the countries [to which they have been (exiled/forced to go)]. That will be a great time; Jezreel [also means 'God plants', and it will be as though God will plant them in this country again]."

2 [At that time,] you will say to your fellow-Israeli men, "[You are] God's people," and [you will say] to your fellow-Israeli women, "You are ones whom God loves." **2** [Yahweh also said to me], "I want you to accuse the Israeli people. [It is as though] [MET] this nation is your mother, but this nation is [no longer as though it is] [MET] my wife, and it is [no longer as though] [MET] I am its husband. Tell the Israeli people that they must stop [acting like] a prostitute [by worshiping other gods]; they must stop showing by their behavior that they (are unfaithful to/have abandoned) [me] [MET]. **3** If they do not do that, I will not give them [food and] clothes [as a husband should give to his wife]; I will take away those things, and I will cause their nation to become [as deserted] as it was on the day that I [brought their ancestors out of Egypt and caused them to become a nation] [MET]. I will cause their country to be like [SIM] a desert; there will be no rain to water the ground [MET]. **4** I will not pity the people, because they have [abandoned me] as [MET] prostitutes abandon their husbands. **5** Their parents are like prostitutes [MET]: they have been unfaithful [to me], and they have done [very] disgraceful things. They said, 'We will run to [our idols/gods] who love us; [they are the ones] who give us food and water and wool and linen and [olive] oil, and [wine to] drink.' **6** So [it will be as though] [MET] I am blocking their road with thornbushes, and putting put a wall around them so that they do not know which way to go. **7** They will run to their idols/gods that [they think] love them, but they will not find them. They will search for their false gods, but they will not find them. Then they will say, '[Perhaps] we should return to [Yahweh], whom we worshiped previously [MET], because things were better for us then than they are now.' **8** But they do not realize that I, [Yahweh], am the one who gave them grain and wine and [olive] oil; I am the one who gave them silver and gold which they used to worship Baal. **9** Therefore I will return and take my grain and grapes from them when they are ripe. I will take from them the wool and linen that I gave to them [to make their clothes] [MTY]. **10** I will show those false gods/idols that what my people are doing is disgusting [MET], and no one will be able to hinder me from [punishing them]. **11** I will cause their religious celebrations to cease, the festivals that they celebrate every year and at every new moon and on their (Sabbath days/weekly days of rest). I will cause all their religious celebrations to cease. **12** I will destroy [all] their grapevines and fig trees, which they said were what their [idols/gods] who loved them paid them for worshiping those idols. I will cause those places to become a desert, and wild animals will eat the fruit [that remains]. **13** I will punish my people for [all] the times that they burned incense to [honor] the idols of Baal. They decorated themselves with rings and jewelry, and they went to worship those [false gods/idols] that [they thought] [IRO] loved them, but they abandoned/forgot me! [That is what I], Yahweh, say. **14** But listen! [Some day] I will persuade my people [to worship

me again]; I will lead them [out] into the desert and speak kindly to them [there]. **15** I will give their vineyards [back] to them, and I will cause Achor Valley, [which means 'valley of trouble'], to become a valley where they will confidently expect [me to do good things for them]. They will (respond to/want to please) me there like they did long ago, when I freed them from [being slaves in] Egypt. **16** At that time, they will say to me, '[It is as though] [MET] you are our husband.' They will not say that I am their [master, like they considered that] Baal [was]. **17** I will not allow them to speak [MTY] the names of Baal; they will never use those names again. **18** At that time [it will be as though] I will make an agreement with [all] the wild animals and birds, and [even with] the little animals that scurry across the ground, so that they will never harm my people [again]. And I will remove from their nation all the weapons [for fighting] battles, [like] swords and bows [and arrows]. The result will be that my people will live peacefully and safely, and will not be afraid. **19** I will cause them to be [as though they are] [MET] my bride forever. I will be righteous and fair/just; I will faithfully love them and be kind to them. **20** I will not abandon them, and they will realize [that I] Yahweh, [have the power to do what I say that I will do.] **21** At that time, [when they request me to do things for them], [I will do those things]. When they request clouds and rain to fall on their land, I will speak to the clouds, and rain will fall on the earth, **22** and grain will grow, and the vineyards and the olive trees will grow in Jezreel [Valley]. **23** [At that time], I will take care of the Israeli people [like a farmer plants and takes care of his crops] [MET]. I will love those people that I previously said were ones I did not love, and I previously said, 'You are not my people,' and [then] they will say to me, 'You are our God.'"

3 Then Yahweh said to me, "Go and show to your wife that you still love her, even though she has been committing adultery with another man who loves her. [That will show that] I still love the people of Israel, even though they worship other gods/idols and eat raisin cakes [in feasts that honor those gods]." **2** [My wife had become a slave,] but I bought her for (6 ounces/179 grams) of silver and ten bushels of barley. **3** Then I said to her, "You must wait for many days [before we sleep together] [EUP]. During that time, you must not be a prostitute, and you must not have sex with any other man; but I will live with you." **4** [Our doing that will show that] in the same way, the people of Israel will not have a king and [other] leaders for many years. They will not offer sacrifices or [have sacred stone] pillars, no sacred vest [for the Supreme Priest], and no idols! **5** But later, the people of Israel will return to Yahweh their God and [be guided by him and] by a king who is a descendant of [King] David. In the last/future days they will come to Yahweh, revering him and trembling [in his presence], and he will bless them.

4 You Israeli people, listen to this message from Yahweh! He is accusing you people who live in this country, [saying] "The people are not faithfully [doing what pleases me], they are not kind [to others], and they do not [even] know me! **2** Everywhere in this land they curse [others], they murder [others], they steal, and they commit adultery. They act violently toward others and commit one murder after another. **3** It is because of their doing those things that there is no rain [MTY], the land has become dry, the people are mourning, and the people are dying [from hunger]. Even the wild animals and the birds and the fish in the sea are dying. **4** But no one should accuse someone else and say it is his fault. It is you priests whom I am accusing. **5** So I will punish [MTY] you priests, night and day, and I will punish the prophets with you. I am going to destroy [Israel, the nation that is like] [MET] a mother to you. **6** It is because my people do not know [about me] that they will be destroyed. And their not knowing about me is because you priests have refused [to teach them about me]; so I will no longer allow you to be my priests. You have forgotten the things that I taught you, so I will forget [to bless] your children. **7** As there are more and more priests, they have sinned against me more and more. So I will no longer allow them to be honored; instead, I will cause them to be disgraced. **8** The priests get food from [the offerings that the] people [bring in order to be forgiven for having sinned], [so] the priests want the people to sin more and more [in order that the people will bring them more and more offerings]. **9** The priests [are as sinful] as the [other] people, and I will punish [all of] them for what they have done; I will pay them back for the [evil] things that they have done. **10** [The priests] will eat, but they will still be hungry; they will have sex with prostitutes, but they will not have any children, because they have abandoned [me], Yahweh, **11** and they are devoting themselves to sleeping with prostitutes, and to [drinking] old wine and new wine, which results in their not being able to think clearly." **12** "[You] my people request wooden idols [to tell you what you should do]! Like prostitutes who have left/abandoned their husbands, **13** you have abandoned [me] your God, and you are chasing after [other gods] on the tops of hills and mountains; you burn incense under oak [trees], poplar [trees], and other trees where there is nice/pleasing shade. So your daughters have become prostitutes, and your daughters-in-law have committed adultery. **14** But it is not [only] your daughters [whom I will punish] for having become prostitutes, and it is not [only] your daughters-in-law whom I will punish for committing adultery, because the men also are

having sex with prostitutes, and they offer sacrifices with the prostitutes [who search for men at the] shrines [of the idols]. [They are all] foolish people, and they will [all] be ruined. **15** You Israeli [people] have abandoned me like [MET] those who commit adultery have abandoned their spouses. But do not cause [the people of] Judah to sin [also]. Do not go to Gilgal or go up to Beth-Aven [towns] [to worship idols there]. Do not make solemn promises [there, saying 'Just as surely] as Yahweh lives, [I will do what I am promising].' **16** You [people of Israel] are as stubborn as [SIM] a young cow. So there is no way [RHQ] that [I], Yahweh, will [provide food for them] [like a shepherd provides food for his] lambs [by leading them] to a nice meadow. **17** The people of Israel have chosen to worship idols [MET], [so] allow them [to do what they want to do]. **18** When their rulers finish drinking [their wine], they go to find prostitutes; they love their disgraceful behavior. **19** But they will disappear [as though] [MET] they were blown away by a whirlwind. They will become [very] ashamed because of their offering sacrifices [to idols]."

5 "Listen, you priests! And you [other] Israeli people, you also pay attention! And you who are members of the king's family, [you also need to] listen, because [I am going to] judge you! Your [worshiping idols] has been [like] [MET] a trap for [the people at] Mizpah [town]; it has been [like][MET] a net spread out [to catch people] at Tabor [Mountain]. **2** You have done many evil things, so I will punish all of you. **3** I know [everything about the people of] Israel; nothing that they have done is hidden from me. Because [the people of] Israel have given themselves [to worshiping idols] like [MET] prostitutes [give themselves to the men they sleep with], they have become unacceptable to me. **4** Because they [like to do evil] things, they will not return to [me], their God. Like prostitutes [who have abandoned their husbands] [MET], they have [IDM] abandoned [MET] me; they do not [even] know me, Yahweh. **5** [It is as though] their being proud testifies [PRS] against them. The sins that [the people of] Israel have committed [are like a heavy load that] causes them to stumble, and [the people of] Judah stumble with them. **6** They will come to worship [me], Yahweh, bringing their herds of sheep and cattle, but they will not [be able to] find me, because I have abandoned them. **7** They have abandoned me; and their children do not belong to me [MET]. So [they will not be able to celebrate their festivals at] the new moons [because I] will destroy them and [the crops in] their fields. **8** Blow the [rams'] horns in Gibeah [town] [and blow] the trumpets in Ramah [town]! Warn [the people at] Beth-Aven [town]; you warriors of the tribe of Benjamin, lead the troops [into the battle]. **9** Israel will be ruined on the day that [I] destroy them. What I am telling to the tribes of Israel will certainly [happen]. **10** [Because] the leaders of Judah [seized some land that belonged to Israel], they are like [SIM] those who move boundary markers [to get more land for themselves]; [so] I will punish them severely [MET]. **11** And [the people of] Israel will suffer greatly when I punish them, because they are [very] determined to worship idols. **12** I will destroy [the people of] Israel like [SIM] ([larvae of] moths/cockroaches) destroy wool, and I will cause [the people of] Judah to be like [SIM] rotten wood. **13** When [the leaders of] Israel and Judah saw that the people were suffering because of what [their enemies were doing to them] [MET], they sent [messages] to the great King of Assyria requesting [his help]. But he cannot help you; he cannot cause you to stop suffering, [because I am the one who is punishing Israel and Judah]. **14** I will become like [SIM] a lion [DOU] to both nations; I will [attack them and] tear them to pieces. I will drag them away, and no one will [be able to] rescue them. **15** [After that], I will return to my place [in heaven] until they admit that they have sinned [MTY] and return to me; when they will experience [many] troubles, they will request me [to help them]."

6 [The Israeli people say,] "Come, let's return to Yahweh! He has caused [us] to be injured, but he will heal us. He has caused [us] to be wounded, but [it is as though] he will put bandages on our wounds [MET]. **2** After a very short time he will revive us; in less than three days he will restore us in order that we may live in his presence. **3** We must try to know Yahweh; [if we do that,] he will come [and help] us, as surely as the sun rises [every morning], as surely as rain falls every winter/cold season, and as surely as the rain falls again (in the springtime/at the end of the cold season)." **4** [But Yahweh knows they are insincere;] [so he says to them,] "You [people of] Israel, and you [people of] Judah, [I do not know] [RHQ] what I should do to you. Your being faithful [to me will disappear as quickly] as [SIM] the morning mist [disappears], like [SIM] the dew [on the ground] that disappears quickly [when the sun shines]. **5** I warned [HYP] you by [the messages that I gave to] the prophets, [but you did not pay attention to my messages]. Therefore I will completely destroy you; the punishment that I give you will strike you like lightning. **6** I want [my people] to faithfully love [me] more than [I want them to offer] sacrifices [to me]; [I want them] to know me more than [I want them to] completely burn sacrifices [on the altar]. **7** But they have refused to obey my agreement, [just] like Adam did; they have not been faithful to me. **8** Gilead is a city [full] of people who do wicked things; [in the streets] are the bloody footprints [of those who have murdered others]. **9** The priests are like [SIM] bandits who wait (in ambushes/along

the road) to attack people; they murder [people who are walking] on the road to Shechem, and they commit other disgraceful crimes. **10** I have seen horrible things [being done] in Israel [MTY]. The people have abandoned me [like prostitutes who have abandoned their husbands] [MET]; [so the people of] Israel have become unacceptable to me. **11** And you [people of] Judah, I have appointed a time when I will punish [MET] you, too. Whenever I wanted to enable my people to prosper again,"

7 "and when I wanted to heal them [again], [I did not do it,] [because] I saw the wicked things that [the people of] Samaria [city] and [other places in] Israel [DOU] have done. They constantly deceive others; bandits rob people in the streets. **2** But they do not realize that I do not forget all the evil things that they do. [It is as though] they are surrounded by [all] the sins that they commit; and [it is though] those sins are [always right] in front of me [MTY]. **3** Their king is delighted with the wicked things that the people do; his officials are happy about the people's lies. **4** [The king and his officials] are all treacherous. [They are always eager to do wicked things;] they are like [SIM] an oven that is [very] hot: a baker mixes the dough and waits for it to expand, and he does not [need to] cause the oven to become hotter. **5** The king and his officials get very drunk during their festivals, carousing with others who also do foolish things. **6** The officials angrily plan to murder the king; it is like [SIM] they have an oven in their inner beings. All during the night their [eagerness/wanting to murder the king] is like a fire that is smouldering, but in the morning it becomes like [MET] a roaring fire. **7** All those officials are like [MET] hot flames that completely burn up their rulers, so all their kings are murdered, and no one pleads with me [to help them]." **8** "[The leaders of] Israel join with leaders of [godless] nations; so [the leaders of] Israel are [as worthless as] a pancake that is cooked on only one side. **9** Joining with the rulers of foreign nations has caused Israel to be a weak [nation], but the Israelis do not realize that. Israel has become [like] [MET] a gray-haired old man, but the people of Israel do not realize it. **10** Their being proud [PRS] testifies against them, but in spite of that, they do not return to [me], Yahweh, their God, or [even] try to know me. **11** [The people of] Israel have become foolish and stupid like [SIM] doves. [First] they called out to Egypt [to help them], [and then] they sought help from Assyria. **12** But wherever they go [to get help], [I will not allow them to succeed]; [it will be as though] [MET] I will throw a net over them like [SIM] [a hunter uses a net to capture] birds; I will punish them for the evil things that they do. **13** Terrible things will happen to them because they abandoned/deserted me! They will be destroyed because they rebelled against me. I wanted to rescue them, but they tell lies about me. **14** They do not cry out to me sincerely [IDM]; they [only] lie on their beds and wail. They gather together and ask [me to give them] grain and wine, but they turn away from me. **15** I trained/taught them and enabled them to become strong, but now they plan [to do] evil things to me. **16** They have rejected me, their Great God, and turned to their god Baal; they are [as useless] as [SIM] a crooked bow. Their leaders boast [that they are very strong], but they will be killed by [their enemies'] swords. As a result, [the people of] Egypt will laugh at them."

8 [Yahweh said to me], "Blow [MTY] your trumpet [to warn the people]! My people have rejected the agreement that I made with them, and they have rebelled against [obeying] my laws. Therefore, [their enemies] are swooping down on my people's country like [SIM] an eagle. **2** My Israeli people cry out to me, 'Our God, we know that you are our God!' **3** But because the Israeli people have rejected what is good, their enemies will pursue them. **4** The Israel people appointed [their last three] kings, but they did not ask me if I agreed to [what they were doing]. They chose their own leaders without asking if I would approve of them. They used their own silver and gold to make for themselves idols, and doing that led them to be destroyed. **5** You people of Samaria, throw away your [idol that resembles a] calf! I am extremely angry with you people! How long [RHQ] will you [do things that cause] you to be unacceptable to me? **6** [Someone in] Israel made that idol for you; [but I am] God and it is not. So that idol of a calf in Samaria must be smashed to pieces. **7** [The foolish thing that the people of Israel have done is like] [MET] trying to plant wind; but what they harvest will be like [MET] a whirlwind. So the grain that they planted will have no heads [on the stalks], and as a result [there will be no grain] from which to make flour. And if it did produce good grain, foreigners would [come and] steal it. **8** [The people of] Israel will be defeated [MET] [by their enemies]; they will be [scattered] among other nations and become worthless. **9** Like [MET] donkeys that are looking for mates, they have requested [help] from Assyria; they paid money to [the leaders of Assyria] in order to [persuade those leaders to] protect them. **10** But although they have agreed to pay money each year to [the leaders of] those countries, I will soon gather them together [to punish them]. The great King [of Assyria] will cause them to suffer greatly. **11** Although [the people of] Israel built many altars to present offerings [to their idols] to take away [their guilt for] sinning, those altars have become places where they commit [more] sins. **12** I wrote many laws for them, but they disregarded them, saying that [they did not have to obey them because]

they were different from laws that they had known previously. **13** They offer sacrifices to me, and they eat [some of] the meat of those sacrifices, [which is what I permitted them to do]. But I, Yahweh, am not pleased with those sacrifices. I remember the evil things that they have done, and I will punish them for the sins that they have committed: I will force them to [go to other countries] [and become slaves like they were] [MET] in Egypt. **14** [The people of] Israel have abandoned/forgotten me, the one who created their [nation]; they have built palaces, and [the people of] Judah have built walls around many towns. But I will send a fire that will destroy all their cities and their fortresses."

9 [You people of] Israel, do not shout joyfully [during your festivals] like [people of other] nations do! [I say that] because you have (not been faithful to/abandoned) me, your God. At every place where the people thresh grain you have [presented gifts to your idols like men] pay money to prostitutes. **2** [But soon] there will not be enough grain [MTY, PRS] and wine [MTY, PRS] for you. **3** And you people will not remain in the land that I, Yahweh, [gave to your ancestors]. You will be [captured and] taken to [Assyria], [where you will become slaves like your ancestors were] in Egypt; and in Assyria you will be forced to eat food that Yahweh has forbidden you to eat. **4** You Israelis will not [be able to] give wine offerings to him, or bring sacrifices to him. None of your other sacrifices will please him; they will be unacceptable to him, like [SIM] food that is touched by people at funerals, and everyone who eats that food will become unacceptable to him. They will be permitted to eat that food themselves, but they will not [be permitted to] bring it into the temple. **5** At that time you will not [RHQ] be able to celebrate the feasts and sacred festivals. **6** And even if you escape and are not killed [by the Assyrians], you will be captured by [the army of] Egypt, and you will [die and] be buried in Memphis, [the capital of Egypt]. Briers will [grow up and] cover your treasures of silver, and thorns will grow in your [ruined] tents/houses. **7** It is now the time for Yahweh to punish you, to pay you back for all the sins that you have committed. You people will [soon] know that. You have [committed] very many sins, and you very much hate Yahweh. You consider that the prophets are foolish, and you think that those who proclaim messages from him are crazy. **8** My God appointed [me and the other] prophets to be [like] [MET] watchmen [to warn] you people of Israel, but everywhere that we go, [it is as though] people set traps for us and people are hostile [to us, even] in the temple of our God. **9** The sins that the Israeli people have committed are as awful as [what the men of] Gibeah did long ago; [so] God will not forget the wicked things that they have done; he will punish the Israelis for [all] those sins. **10** [Yahweh says], "When I first started [to do things to help] Israel, it seemed to me as though [SIM] I had found grapes in the desert. Your ancestors were [delightful], like [SIM] the first figs that grow on fig trees [each year]. But when they came to Peor [Mountain], they worshiped that disgusting idol Baal, and they became as disgusting as the idol that they loved. **11** The things that cause Israel to be great will disappear like [SIM] a bird that flies away; [most of their women will] not become pregnant [DOU] or give birth to children. **12** Even if their children are born and start to grow up, I will cause all of them to die [while they are still young]. Terrible things will happen to them when I abandon them! **13** I have seen Israel become beautiful and prosperous like Tyre [city] was [before it was destroyed], but now the people of Israel will [be forced to] take their children to be slaughtered [by their enemies]." **14** Yahweh, [I do not know] [RHQ] what I should ask for my people. So I ask that you do this one thing: Cause the women who are pregnant to have miscarriages and unable [to nurse their babies]. **15** [Yahweh says], "Because of all the wicked things that my people did at Gilgal, that is where I started to hate them. [And now], because of [all] the sinful things that they have done, I will expel them from my country. I will not love them any longer; all their leaders rebel [against me]. **16** Israel is like [MET] a grapevine that is dried up; [like a vine] [MET] whose roots are withered and that produces no fruit. Even if the [women of Israel] give birth to [more] children, I will cause those children, whom they love, to die. **17** The people of Israel have not obeyed me, their God, so I will reject them. [As a result], they will wander among the [other] nations, [searching for a place to live]."

10 "Israel was [like a large] healthy/luxuriant vine [MET] that produced [a lot of] grapes. But as the people became richer, they made more altars [at which to worship idols]. As the people prospered, they [built and] decorated sacred pillars [that they worshiped]. **2** They are deceitful; [so] now they are guilty and must be punished. [I], Yahweh, will tear down their altars and smash those pillars. **3** Then they will say, 'It is because we did not revere Yahweh that we no [longer] have a king. But [even if we had] a king, he certainly could not [RHQ] do anything to help us.' **4** They falsely promise [that they will do many things]; they solemnly promise and make agreements, but they do not do what they promise. So people accuse and sue [each other in the courts]; they are like [SIM] poisonous weeds [that grow] in a plowed field. **5** The people who live in Samaria [city] are worried about [what may happen to the idol that resembles] a calf [that they set up] at Beth-Aven [town]. The people in Samaria will mourn, and the priests there will cry about it [if it

is damaged or destroyed]. [Previously] they shouted joyfully about its being very great; but now it will not be great any more. **6** It will be taken to Assyria to be a gift for the great King [of Assyria]. [So the people of] Israel will be disgraced, and they will be ashamed because [they trusted in] that idol. **7** The King of Samaria [and the other people in Samaria] will be gone; they will be like [SIM] a twig [that floats away] on the surface of the water [and disappears]. **8** The altars on the tops of hills [where the people worshiped idols] will be destroyed; those have been the places where the people of Israel sinned greatly. Thorns and weeds will grow and cover those altars. Then the people will plead to the mountains and hills, 'Fall [down and] cover us [to protect us from God punishing us]!' **9** [You people of] Israel, [ever since your ancestors did evil things] at Gibeah, you have continued to sin. [When the people at] [PRS] Gibeah [did evil things], the result was a war [in which thousands of people died]. **10** [So now], when I want to, I will punish the Israeli people. Because of the many sins that they have committed, [the armies of other] nations will gather to attack them, and they will cause the Israeli people to become their slaves. **11** Israel is [like] [MET] a well-trained (heifer/young cow) that likes to thresh [grain]. [So now you will become slaves]. [It will be as though] I will put a yoke on your neck, and you will be forced to work hard for your enemies in their fields. [You people of] Israel and Judah [will be forced to go to Assyria]; there you [DOU] will pull plows to break up the ground [for planting seeds]. **12** [You plow your fields and plant your seeds] and harvest [your crops] [MET], [but what you need to do is] to act righteously and to faithfully love [me]; you need to repent [MET], because it is time to try to know [me], Yahweh; and if you do that, I will pour out [MET] many blessings on you. **13** You [plant seeds and harvest the crops and eat them]; [but what I consider that you have really done is] that you have planted wicked things and harvested evil things and eaten [MET] the results [IDM] of the lies [that you have told]. [Instead of trusting in me,] you have (depended on/trusted in) your own power and in your many soldiers. **14** As a result, you will [soon] hear the roar of battle, and all your cities that have walls around them will be destroyed, like [SIM] Shalman's [army] destroyed Beth-Arbel [city] in a battle, and the women [in that city] and their children were bashed to death. **15** [You people of] [APO] Bethel [city], that is what will happen to you, because you are very wicked. And when the sun rises [on that day], the King of Israel will be killed [in the battle]."

11 "Before the Israeli [people] became a nation [MET], I loved them [like a man loves] his son, and I called them out of Egypt. **2** But while I continued to call them, they [continued to] turn away from me more and more. They offered sacrifices to their statues of Baal, and they burned incense to [honor] them. **3** [The people of] Israel were [like a little boy] [MET], and [it was as though] it was I who taught them to walk, holding them by their hands. But they did not realize that it was I who was taking care of them. **4** [It was as though I fastened] ropes [around them] to lead them, while I loved them and was kind to them. [It was as though they were young oxen] [MET], and I lifted the yoke from their necks and bent down to feed them. **5** But the people of Israel will become [slaves] again, like they were in Egypt, and [the people of] Assyria will [RHQ] rule over them, because the people of Israel refused to repent. **6** [Their enemies] will use their swords [to attack] the cities in Israel and will destroy the bars in the gates [of the city walls]. [As a result], the people of Israeli will not be able to accomplish the things that they planned to do. **7** My people are determined to (turn away from/abandon) me. They say that I am the great all-powerful God, but they do not honor me at all. **8** [You people of] Israel, I certainly do not want to [RHQ] abandon you and allow [your enemies] to capture you. I do not [RHQ] want to act toward you like I acted toward Admah and Zeboiim, [cities that I completely destroyed when I destroyed Sodom]. I [SYN] have changed my mind [about punishing you]; my desire to pity you has increased. **9** Although I am extremely angry, I do not want to punish you severely; I do not want to (devastate/completely ruin) Israel. [Humans would easily decide to do that], but I am God, not a human. I, the Holy One, am with you; although I am very angry [with you], I will not [destroy you]. **10** You will follow me when I roar like [SIM] a lion; when I roar, [some of you] my children will tremble as you return [to Israel] from [the islands and seacoasts toward] the west. **11** [Some of] you will come swiftly from Egypt like [a flock of] birds; [others] will return from Assyria, like doves. I will enable you to live in your homes [in Israel] again. [That will surely happen, because I], Yahweh, have said it." **12** [Yahweh says, "The people of] Israel have (surrounded me with lies/constantly told lies to me). And the people of Judah have [also] turned/rebelled against me, their God, the Holy One who always does what I promise to do, and the people of Judah worship other gods."

12 [The leaders of] Israel are constantly wavering [about seeking help from other countries]. [Seeking their help is as useless as] [MET] chasing the wind. They pile up their lies and violent acts. [First,] they make a treaty with Assyria, and [then they] send olive oil to [the rulers of] Egypt [to seek their help]. **2** Yahweh [says that he] will bring accusations against [the leaders of] Judah, and that he will punish [the descendants of] Jacob for what they have done. **3** [When

Jacob was] in his mother's womb, he grabbed his brother [Esau's] heel [because he wanted to be born first]. When Jacob grew up, he wrestled with God. **4** He struggled with [the one who had appeared to him in the form of] an angel, and Jacob defeated him, but [then] he cried and asked the angel to bless him. [Later], God came to Jacob at Bethel and talked with him there. **5** [That was] the Commander of the armies of angels whose name is Yahweh [who talked with him]! **6** But you [people of Israel] must return to your God! You must faithfully love [him], and you must do what is fair/just and always depend on him. **7** The merchants [among you] use scales that do not weigh correctly; they love/like to cheat people. **8** [The people of] Israel boast, saying "We are [very] rich [DOU]; and we got all that money by our own efforts, and without committing any sin." **9** "I am Yahweh your God, [the one who brought your ancestors] out of Egypt. [And some day] I will force you to live in tents again [like your ancestors did] when [they celebrated] the Festival [of Living in Temporary Shelters]. **10** [Many times] I spoke to the prophets, and I gave them many visions, and I gave them parables to tell [to the people]." **11** [The people of] Gilead [city] are [RHQ] extremely wicked; they are worthless. The people sacrifice bulls in Gilgal [city], but their altars will [soon] become like [SIM] piles of stone [at the edge of] a plowed field. **12** [Your ancestor] Jacob fled [from his brother Esau] and went to northwest Mesopotamia. He worked [for his uncle Laban for many years] to get a wife; he took care of [his uncle's] sheep [to pay] for her. **13** [Many years later,] Yahweh enabled a prophet to bring the [ancestors of you] people of Israel here from Egypt; that prophet, [Moses], took care of them. **14** [But now the people of] Israel have caused [Yahweh] to become very angry; Yahweh says that they deserve to die because they caused [many others] to die [MTY]; he will pay them back for the sins that they have committed against him and for insulting him.

13 [Previously], when [the leaders of] Israel spoke, the people trembled; those leaders were highly respected by the Israeli people. But the people sinned greatly by [worshiping] Baal, so now they will be killed [by their enemies]. **2** Now they sin more and more; they make idols for themselves [and coat the idols] with their silver. Those idols are statues that are very cleverly made, but those statues are made by [mere] humans. But [the people are told], "Kiss those idols [that resemble a] calf, and offer sacrifices to them!" **3** Therefore, those people will [disappear quickly] like [SIM] the morning mist or the dew that lies [on the ground] early [in the morning]; [they will disappear] like [SIM] chaff that is blown away from where [the wheat] is threshed, like [SIM] smoke that goes out of a chimney. **4** But [Yahweh says to his people], "I am Yahweh, your God, [the one who brought your ancestors] out of Egypt. You must believe that only I am God and that there is no other God, and that there is no one else who can save you! **5** I took care of your [ancestors when they were] in the desert, where it was extremely [hot and] dry. **6** When I provided food for them, their [stomachs] were full, and they were satisfied. But then they became proud and they forgot [about] me, [and you are like your ancestors]! **7** So I will attack you like [SIM] a lion [attacks other animals]; I will be like [SIM] a leopard that waits beside the road [to attack another animal]. **8** Like [SIM] a female bear attacks anyone that steals her cubs, I will attack you Israelis and rip you open. I will completely destroy you like [SIM] lions or [other] wild animals tear apart the animals that they catch and devour them. **9** [You people of] Israel, you will be destroyed because you oppose me, the only one who (can help/helps) you. **10** You have a king; (why is he [unable to save you]?/but he is [unable to save you].) [RHQ] You have [RHQ] rulers in all your towns, but they are not helping you, [either]. Your [ancestors] said, 'Appoint for us a king and [other] leaders [to rule over us] [like the other nations have]!' **11** I was angry with them [for requesting that], but I appointed a king [to rule over] them. But [later] I became very angry with them [again], so I took their king away. **12** [I have written on a scroll] a record of the sins that have been committed by you people of Israel, and I have stored away that record. **13** You people are not wise; and now [you are helpless]. You are like [MET] a woman who is having birth pains but who is unable to give birth to the baby. **14** I certainly will not [RHQ] save you from being killed and from going to the place where the dead people are. I will [RHQ] cause you to be afflicted by plagues and to die and be buried in graves. I will not be merciful [to you]. **(Sheol h7585)** **15** Even if you people of Israel prosper more than the nearby nations do, [the army of Assyria] will come [like] [MET] an east wind that blows from the desert; the springs and wells in Israel will become dry; and [your enemies] will take away all your valuable possessions. **16** [You people of] Samaria must be punished because you have rebelled against [me], your God. You will be killed by [your enemies'] swords; your little children will be [killed by being] dashed/thrown to the ground; the [bellies of] women [among you] will be ripped open."

14 [You people of] Israel, return to Yahweh our God. You are being punished because of the sins which you have committed. **2** So now return to Yahweh and say [MTY] this to him: "Forgive us for all the sins that we have committed, and kindly accept (us/our sacrifices) in order that we may thank/praise you [IDM]. **3** [We admit that] Assyria will not save us, and our war horses will not save us, either.

We will never again say, 'You are our gods' to [the idols that] we [SYN] have made. You are the one who acts mercifully to orphans." **4** [Yahweh says, "If they say that to me,] I will forgive them for having (turned away from/abandoned) me, and I will love them with all my inner being, because I [PRS] will have stopped being angry with them. **5** I will be to the people of Israel like dew [that refreshes the soil]. When I do that, they will [become as delightful as] [MET] lilies are when they are blooming. [No one will be able to conquer them;] they will be [as unmovable as] [SIM] the roots [of cedar trees]. **6** [Their good influence will spread] like [MET] the branches of a tree. They will be like [SIM] beautiful olive trees, and [they will be as delightful as] [SIM] the aroma of the cedar [trees in] Lebanon. **7** People will [come to them to be protected] [like people are protected from the hot sun by being] [MET] in the shade [of a tree]. They [will (flourish/be strong) like] [SIM] grain that grows well. They will [be successful like] a vineyard [in which grapes grow abundantly]. They will become as famous/well-known as [SIM] the wines from Lebanon. **8** [You people of] Israel, do not [RHQ] have anything more to do with idols; if you [get rid of your idols], I will answer your [prayers] and take care of you. I am like [MET] a strong/green pine tree, and your blessings come from me." **9** Those who are wise will understand the things [about which I have written]. Those who think well will pay careful attention to them. The things that Yahweh wants us to do [MET] are right; righteous people will conduct their lives adhering to them. But those who rebel against Yahweh will be ruined.

Joel

1 [I am] Joel, the son of Pethuel. [This is] a message that Yahweh gave to me. **2** You leaders [of Israel], and everyone else who lives in this country, listen [to this message]! Nothing [RHQ] like this has ever happened during the time that we have lived or the time when our ancestors lived. **3** Tell your children about it, and tell your children to tell it to their children, and tell your grandchildren to tell it to their children. **4** [I am talking about] the locusts that have eaten our crops. The first swarm of locusts came and cut [many of the leaves of the crops]; then another swarm came and ate [the rest of the leaves], then another swarm came hopping along, and finally another swarm came and they destroyed [everything else]. **5** You people who are drunk, wake up! Wake up and wail loudly, because all the grapes are ruined, and so there will be no new wine [MTY]! **6** [Huge swarms of] locusts have entered our country. [They are like] [MET] a powerful army [that has very many soldiers], [with the result that] no one can count them. The locusts have teeth that are [as sharp as] the teeth of lions [DOU]! **7** They have destroyed our grapevines and our fig trees [by] stripping off [and eating all] the bark, with the result that the branches are white [and (bare/have no leaves on them)]. **8** Cry like [SIM] a young woman cries when the young man to whom she was (engaged/promised to marry) has died. **9** There is no grain or wine for us to offer [as sacrifices] at the temple, [so] the priests who serve Yahweh are mourning/weeping. **10** [The crops in] the fields have been ruined; [it is as though] [PRS] the ground is mourning. The grain has been destroyed, there are no [grapes to make] wine, and there is no [more olive] oil. **11** You farmers, grieve! You who take care of grapevines, wail, because the grain has been destroyed; there is no wheat or barley growing. **12** The grapevines and the fig trees have withered, and the pomegranate [trees] and palm [trees] and apricot [trees] have also dried up. The people are no longer joyful. **13** You priests, put on [rough] sack clothes and wail. You who serve God [by offering sacrifices] on the altar, wear those rough sack clothes all night [to show that you are mourning], because there is no grain or wine to be offered at the temple of your God. **14** Tell the people that they should (fast/abstain from eating food). Tell the leaders and the other people to gather at the temple and to cry [out] to Yahweh [there]. **15** Terrible things are happening to us! It will soon be the time when Yahweh, [who is] the Almighty God, [will really punish us], [when he] will cause us to experience more disasters. **16** Our crops are already gone, and no [one is] rejoicing at all [DOU] at the temple of our God. **17** [When we plant] seeds, [they do not grow]; they dry up in the ground, so there are no crops to harvest. Our barns/storehouses are empty; there is no grain [to store in them]. **18** Our cattle groan, searching for a pasture with some grass to eat, and the sheep bleat because they are suffering. **19** Yahweh, I cry [out] to you, because our pastures and our forests have dried up in the hot sunshine [MET]. **20** [It is as though] even the wild animals cry [out] to you because all the streams have dried up. The rivers and streams are all dry, and the grass in the pastures is all parched.

2 Blow trumpets on Zion [Hill], God's sacred hill [in Jerusalem]! Tell the people of Judah that they should tremble, because it will soon be the time for Yahweh [to punish us further]. **2** [That will be a very] dark and gloomy day; there will be [black] clouds and it will be very dark. A huge [swarm of locusts] has covered the mountains like [SIM] a black [cloud]. Nothing like this has ever happened before, and nothing like this will ever [happen] again. **3** [It is as though the locusts bring] flames of fire from which no one can escape. In front of them, the land was [beautiful] like [SIM] the garden of Eden, but behind them [the land is like] a desert and nothing survives. **4** [The locusts] resemble horses, and they run like [SIM] war horses. **5** Leaping over the mountaintops, they make a noise like rumbling chariots, like [SIM] a mighty army that is preparing for a battle, or like [SIM] the roar of a fire that burns up stubble [in a field]. **6** When people see them coming, they become very pale and frightened. **7** [The locusts] climb over walls like soldiers do; they march along in columns and never turn aside [from their columns]. **8** They rush straight ahead without pushing each other. [Even though people throw] spears and javelins at them, that will not cause them to stop. **9** They swarm over the city walls and enter our houses; they enter through our windows like [SIM] thieves do. **10** [It is as though] they cause the earth to shake and the sky to tremble. The sun and the moon become dark and the stars do not shine [because there are so many locusts in the sky]. **11** Yahweh leads this army [of countless locusts], and they obey his commands. This time when he is judging and punishing us is very terrible, [with the result that it seems that] no one [RHQ] can survive it. **12** But Yahweh says, "In spite of [these disasters that you have experienced], you can return to me with all your inner beings. Weep, and mourn, and (fast/abstain from eating food) [to show that you are sorry for having abandoned me]. **13** Do not tear your clothes [to show that you are sorry]; instead, show [MET] that you are sorry." Yahweh is merciful and kind; he does not quickly become angry; he faithfully loves [people]. He does not quickly become angry; instead, he greatly and faithfully loves [you], and he does not like to punish you. **14** No one knows

[RHQ] if he will change his mind [about punishing you] and if instead he will act mercifully [toward you]. If he does that, he will bless you [by giving you plenty of grain and wine] in order that you can offer [some of] those things as sacrifices to him. **15** Blow the trumpets on Zion [Hill]! Gather the people together! Show by fasting that you are sorry [for the sins that you have committed]. **16** Perform the rituals to cause yourselves to be acceptable to Yahweh. Gather everyone together— the old people and the children, even the babies, and summon brides and bridegrooms from their rooms. **17** Tell the priests who serve Yahweh to cry between the altar and the entrance to the temple and to pray [this]: "Yahweh, rescue/save [us] your people; do not allow people from other nations to despise us; do not allow them to ridicule us and say, 'Why has [RHQ] their God [abandoned them]?'" **18** But Yahweh [showed that he] was concerned about his people and that he would act mercifully toward them. **19** When the people prayed, Yahweh answered and said, "I will give you [plenty of] grain and wine and [olive] oil, and you will be satisfied. And I will no longer allow other nations to insult you. **20** Another army [of locusts will come] from the north [to attack you], but I will force them to continue [past Jerusalem] into the desert. Some will go into the Dead Sea in the east and some will go into the [Mediterranean] Sea in the west. [There] they will [all die, and their bodies] will stink." Yahweh does great things! **21** He does wonderful things! So even the ground should rejoice! **22** And the wild animals should not be afraid, because the meadows will soon become green again; the fig trees and [other] trees will be full of fruit, and the grapevines will be covered with grapes. **23** You people of Jerusalem, rejoice about what Yahweh, your God, [will be doing for you]. He will send abundant rain at the (right time/time when it is needed)— (in the spring/early in the year) and (in the autumn/late in the year) like he did previously. **24** The ground where you thresh the grain will be covered with grain, and your vats where you store grape juice and [olive] oil will be full. **25** [Yahweh said,] "I will repay you for everything that was destroyed by those great swarms of locusts that I sent to attack you. **26** You, my people, will eat until your stomachs are full. Then you will praise me [MTY], Yahweh, your God, for the wonderful things that I have done for you. And never again will you be disgraced. **27** When that happens, you will know that I am [always] among you, and that I am Yahweh, your God, and that there is no other [God]. Never again will you be disgraced." **28** "Some time later, I will give my Spirit to many [HYP] people. Your sons and daughters will proclaim messages that come directly from me. Your old men will have dreams [that come from me], and your young men will have visions [that come from me]. **29** At that time, I will give my Spirit even to servants, both men and women. **30** I will do unusual/amazing things on the earth and in the sky. [On the earth] [CHI], there will be much blood [shed] and [there will be very large] fires and smoke that resembles huge clouds. **31** [In the sky,] the sun will become dark and the moon will become [as red as] [MET] blood. [Those things will happen] before that great and terrible day when [I], Yahweh, appear. **32** But at that time [I] will save everyone who worships me. I promise that some people in Jerusalem [DOU] will escape [those disasters]; those whom I have chosen will survive."

3 [Yahweh says this]: "At that time [DOU], I will enable [the people of] Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah to prosper again. **2** [Then] in the Valley of Judgment I will gather together [the people of] all the [other] nations; I will judge [and punish] them because they scattered my Israeli people and forced them to go to other countries. They divided up my land **3** and they (threw marked stones/cast lots) to determine who would get [each of] my people. Then they sold [some of] the Israeli boys and girls [to get money to pay] for prostitutes and wine to drink. **4** You [people of] [APO] Tyre and Sidon [cities] and [you people of] the Philistia [region], I certainly have not [RHQ] done anything to harm you! [So] if you are trying to get revenge on me, I will very quickly get revenge on you. **5** You have taken the silver and gold and [other] things from my temple and put them in your temples. **6** [You dragged away] the people of Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah, and you took them far away and sold them to people in Greece. **7** But I will cause my people to want to return from the places to which you sold them, and I will do to you what you did to them. **8** Then I will cause [some of] your sons and your daughters to be sold to the people of Judah! And [some of] them will be sold to the Sabea people-group, who live far away. [That will certainly happen because I], Yahweh, have said it." **9** Proclaim to the [people of all] nations, "Prepare for a war! Summon your soldiers, and tell them to stand in their battle positions. **10** [Take] your plows and make swords from them, and [take] your pruning knives and make spears from them. [Even] the weak people must [also] be like [MET] [strong] soldiers. **11** All you [people from the] nations that are near [Judah] must come quickly and gather [in the Valley of Judgment]." But Yahweh, [when that happens], send your army [of angels to attack them]! **12** The [people in] the nations near [Judah] must get ready and come to the Valley of Judgment. There Yahweh will sit and judge [and punish] them. **13** [They are like] [MET] crops that are ready to be harvested; so [strike them like] [MET] [a farmer] swings his sickle to cut the grain. They are like [MET] grapes that are piled high in the pits where

they will be pressed; because they are very wicked, [punish them severely] [MET] now, like [MET] [a farmer] tramples on the grapes until the pits are full of juice. **14** [There will be] huge crowds of people in that Valley of Judgment. It will soon be the time that Yahweh [will punish them]. **15** [At that time] there will be no light from the sun or moon, and the stars will not shine. **16** From Zion [Hill] in Jerusalem Yahweh will shout, and his voice will be like thunder, and his voice will cause the sky and the earth to shake. But Yahweh will protect [MET] his people; he will be like [MET] a strong wall behind which the people of Israel will be protected. **17** [Yahweh says], "At that time, you Israeli people will know that I am Yahweh, your God. I live on Zion, my sacred hill. Jerusalem will be a sacred [city], and [soldiers from] other countries will never conquer it again. **18** At that time, there will be vineyards covering [MTY] the hills, and [your cattle and goats on] those hills will produce plenty of milk. The streams in Judah will never dry up. And a stream will flow from my temple into the Acacia Valley [northeast of the Dead Sea]. **19** [The armies of] Egypt and Edom attacked the people of Judah and killed [MTY] many people who had not done anything that was wrong. So [now] those countries will become deserts, **20** but there will always be people living in Jerusalem and [in other places] in Judea. **21** [I], Yahweh, live on Zion [Hill in Jerusalem], and I will get revenge on the people [of Egypt and Edom] who killed [MTY] [many of my people]."

Amos

1 This is the message that [Yahweh] gave to [me], Amos. I am a (shepherd/man who takes care of sheep). I am from [near] Tekoa [town south of Jerusalem]. I received this message about Israel in a vision two years before the [big] earthquake. It was when Uzziah was the king of Judah, and Jeroboam, the son of [King] Jehoash, was the king of Israel.
2 This is what Yahweh said: "I will roar [like a lion] [MET]; when I speak from Zion [Hill in] Jerusalem [DOU], my voice will [resemble the sound of] thunder. [When that happens], the pastures where you shepherds [take care of] your sheep will dry up, and [the grass] on top of Carmel [Mountain] will (wither/become brown) [because I will cause that no rain will fall]." **3** This is [also] what Yahweh said [to me]: "[I will punish the people of] Damascus, [the capital of Syria,] because of the many sins that they have committed; I will not [change my mind about punishing them] [MTY], because [the cruel things that they did to the people of the] Gilead [region] [were like] [MET] people threshing grain using sledges [that have (iron teeth/sharp iron nails) in them]. **4** I will cause a fire to burn the palace [that King] Hazael [built and lived in], the fortress where [his son King] Ben-Hadad [also] lived. **5** I will cause the gates of Damascus to be broken [down]; I will get rid of the king who rules in Aven Valley and the one who rules in Beth Eden. And the people of Syria will be captured and taken to the Kir [region where they originally lived]." **6** Yahweh [also] said this [to me]: "[I will punish the people of the cities in Philistia]: [I will punish the people of] Gaza [city] because of the many sins that they have committed; I will not change my mind about punishing them, because they captured large groups of people and took them to Edom and sold them to become the slaves of [the people of] Edom. **7** I will cause a fire to completely burn the walls of Gaza and [also] destroy its fortresses. **8** I will get rid of the king of Ashdod [city] and the king who rules [MTY] in Ashkelon [city]. I will [also] strike/punish [the people of] Ekron [city], and [all] the people of Philistia who are still alive will be killed." **9** Yahweh [also] said this [to me]: "[I will punish the people of] Tyre [city] because of the many sins that they have committed; I will not change my mind about punishing them, because they [also] captured large groups of our people and took them to Edom, disregarding the treaty of friendship that they had made [with your rulers]. **10** So I will cause a fire to completely burn the walls of Tyre and [also] destroy its fortresses." **11** Yahweh [also] said this [to me]: "I will punish [the people of] Edom because of the many sins that they have committed; I will not change my mind about punishing them, because they pursued the people [of Israel], who descended from Esau's [brother Jacob, and killed them] with swords; they did not act mercifully toward them at all. They were extremely angry [with the people of Israel], and they continued to be angry [with them]. **12** I will cause a fire to burn Teman [district in Edom] and completely burn the fortresses of Bozrah, [the biggest city in Edom]." **13** Yahweh [also] said this [to me]: "I will punish [the people of] Ammon because of the many sins that [they] have committed; I will not change my mind about punishing them, because [their soldiers even] ripped open [the bellies of] pregnant women [when their army attacked] the Gilead [region] to gain more territory. **14** I will cause a fire to [completely] burn the walls around Rabbah [city] and completely burn its fortresses. During that battle, [their enemies] will shout loudly and the fighting will be [like] [MET] a fierce/raging wind/storm. **15** [After the battle], the king [of Ammon] and his officials will be (exiled/forced to go to another country)."

2 Yahweh [also] said this: "[I will punish the people of] Moab because of the many sins [that they have committed]; I will not change my mind about punishing them, because they [dug up] the bones of the king of Edom and burned them completely, with the result that [the ashes became as white] as lime. **2** So I will cause a fire to completely burn the fortresses of Kerioth [city in Moab]. [People will hear soldiers] shouting and blowing trumpets [loudly] while I am causing Moab to be destroyed **3** [and while] I am getting rid of its king and all its leaders. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it!" **4** Yahweh [also] said this: "[I will also punish the people of] Judah because of the many sins [that they have committed]; I will not change my mind about punishing them, because they have rejected what I taught them and they have not obeyed my commands. They have been deceived [and persuaded to worship false gods], the same [gods] that their ancestors [worshiped]. **5** So I will cause a fire to completely burn [everything in] Judah, including the fortresses in Jerusalem." **6** Yahweh [also] said this: "[I will punish the people of] Israel because of the many sins [that they have committed]; I will not change my mind about punishing them, because they sell righteous [people] to get [a small amount of] silver; they sell poor [people, causing them to become slaves], getting for [each of] them [only the amount of money with which they could buy] a pair of sandals. **7** [It is as though] they trample the poor people into the dirt and do not allow those who are helpless to be treated fairly. Men and their fathers dishonor me [MTY] by both having sex [EUP] with the same [slave] girl. **8** [When poor people borrow money], [the lenders force those people to give to them a piece of clothing] for them to keep until he can pay back the money. [But at the end of each day, instead

of returning that garment as Yahweh had commanded them to], they lie down on that garment at the places where they worship [their gods]! They fine people, and with that money [they buy] wine and drink it in the temples of their gods! **9** [Long ago,] to assist your ancestors, I got rid of the Amor people-group. They [seemed to be] as tall as cedar [trees] and as strong as oak [trees], but I got rid of them completely, [as easily as someone cuts off] [MET] the branches of a tree and then digs out all its roots. **10** I brought your [ancestors] out of Egypt, and [then] I led them through the desert for 40 years. And then I enabled them to conquer/possess the Amor area. **11** I chose some of you Israelis to be prophets, and I chose others to be Nazir-men [who were completely dedicated to me]. You people of Israel certainly [RHQ] know that what I have said is true! **12** But you commanded the prophets to not speak the messages that [I gave to] them, and you persuaded the Nazir-men to drink wine, [which I told them never to do]. **13** So I will crush you like [SIM] [the wheels of] a wagon that is loaded with grain crushes [whatever it rolls over]. **14** [Even] if you run fast, you will not escape; [even] if you are strong, [it will be as though] you are weak, and warriors will be unable to save themselves. **15** [Even] if you are able to shoot arrows [well], you will be forced to retreat [LIT]; [even] if you run fast or if you ride [away] on a horse, you will not [be able to] save yourself. **16** [Even] warriors who are very brave will drop their weapons when they try to flee on the day [that I get rid of them]. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it."

3 "You people of Israel, I brought all your ancestors out of Egypt; so listen to what I am saying about you. **2** From all the people-groups on the earth, I [chose and] took care of only you. That is the reason that I will punish you for the sins that you have committed." **3** Two [people] certainly cannot [RHQ] walk together if they have not [already] agreed [about what place they will start walking from]. **4** A lion certainly does not [RHQ] roar in the bushes/forest if it has not killed another animal. It does not [RHQ] growl in its den if it is not eating [the flesh of an animal that it has caught]. **5** No one can [RHQ] catch a bird if [he does] not [set] a trap for it. A trap does not spring shut unless some [animal] has not sprung the trap. **6** [Similarly, all] the people in a city certainly [RHQ] become afraid when [they hear someone] blowing a trumpet [to signal that enemies are attacking]. And when a city experiences disaster, Yahweh is the one who has caused it [RHQ]. **7** And whatever Yahweh plans to do, he tells his prophets about it. **8** Everyone certainly becomes terrified [RHQ] when they hear a lion roar, and if Yahweh the Lord has given messages [to prophets like me], we certainly must [RHQ] proclaim those messages, [even if they cause people to become terrified]. **9** [I said this to the leaders of Samaria] (OR, [Yahweh said this to me]): Send this message to the leaders [MET] in Ashdod [city] and to Egypt: "Come to the hills of Samaria and see [the way that their (leaders/wealthy people)] are causing people in that city to be terrified, and [the way that they] are causing the people to suffer!" **10** Yahweh says that the people there do not know how to do things that are right. Their homes are filled with [valuable things] that they have stolen or [taken] violently [from others]. **11** So Yahweh [our] God says that [soon] their enemies will come and tear down their (defenses/high city walls) and take away those valuable things. **12** Yahweh has declared this: "When a lion attacks a sheep, [sometimes] a shepherd will be able to snatch from the lion's mouth only two legs or an ear of the sheep. Similarly, [only] a few people from Samaria will escape, and [they will be able to rescue only] a part of a couch and a part of a bed." **13** The Commander of the armies of angels said this: "Proclaim [this message] about the descendants [MTY] of Jacob: **14** When I, Yahweh, punish [the people of] Israel because of the sins that they have committed, I will cause the altars at Bethel [town] to be destroyed; even the projections at the corners of the altars will be cut off and fall to the ground. **15** I will cause the houses [that they live in during] the (winter/rainy season) and those [in which they live during] the (summer/dry season) to be torn down. [Beautiful] big houses and houses [that are decorated] with ivory will be destroyed. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it!"

4 You [wealthy women] of Samaria [have grown fat like] [MET] the fat cows of the Bashan [region]. You oppress poor people and you cause needy people to suffer. And you say to your husbands, "Bring us [more wine] to drink!" **2** But Yahweh [our] God has said this: "Because I am holy, I solemnly promise this: It will [soon] be the time when you all will be taken [to another country]; [your enemies will take you away as though they are] using sharp hooks [DOU] [to grab you]. **3** [Your enemies] will drag you out through breaks/holes [in your city walls], and they will throw you outside the city. [That will surely happen because I], Yahweh, have said it! **4** Go to Bethel and Gilgal [towns where many people worship me] and sin more and more [SAR]! [I say that not because I want you to do it], [but because it is what you have always been doing]! Offer sacrifices on the morning [after you arrive], [and bring me] (a tithe/one tenth) of your crops the next day. **5** Bring offerings of bread to thank me, and [other] offerings that are not required/commanded, and boast about [these offerings that you bring], because that is what you like to do, [but you do it to impress others, not to please

me]. [That is certainly true, because I], Yahweh, have said it. **6** I [am the one who] caused there to be no food in any of your cities and towns [DOU], but you rejected me in spite of that. **7** When it was still three months before [the time of] harvesting [crops], [at the time when your crops needed rain the most], I prevented rain from falling. [Sometimes] I allowed rain to fall on some towns and prevented it from falling on other towns. Rain fell on some fields, but it did not fall on other fields, with the result that [the soil in] those fields [where it did not rain] dried up. **8** People would stagger from one town to another town to find water, but they could not even get enough water to drink, but in spite of that, you have not returned to me. [That is certainly true because I], Yahweh, have said it! **9** I caused your grain fields to dry up; I caused your gardens and vineyards to be struck/destroyed by (blight/hot winds) and mildew. [I sent] locusts to eat [the leaves on] your fig trees and olive trees, but in spite of that, you rejected me. [That is certainly true because I], Yahweh, have said it! **10** I caused you to experience (plagues/severe sicknesses) like the plagues [that I sent to the people] of Egypt. I caused [many of] your young men to die in battles. I allowed [your enemies] to capture your horses. [Many of your soldiers were killed,] and I caused your camps to be filled with the smell/stink of their [decaying] corpses. But in spite of that, you rejected me. [That is certainly true, because] I, Yahweh, have said it! **11** I got rid of many of you, like I got rid of [the people in] Sodom and Gomorrah. [Those of] you who [did not die] were like [SIM] a burning stick that was snatched from a fire [so that it would not burn completely]. But in spite of that, you rejected me. [That is certainly true, because I], Yahweh, have said it! **12** So [now], you [people of] Israel, I am going to punish you. Prepare to stand in front of me, your God, [when I judge you]! **13** I created the mountains, and [I] created winds. I reveal to humans what I am thinking. I [sometimes] cause the daylight to become dark [like the night]. I [rule over everything]; I [even] walk on the highest mountains on the earth! I am the Commander of the armies of angels!"

5 You people [MTY] of Israel, listen to this funeral song that I will sing about you: **2** "You are like [MET] a young woman, but in spite of that, you will certainly be struck down and you will never get up again! You will lie on the ground, abandoned, and there will be no one to help you stand up." **3** This is what Yahweh the Lord says to the people [MTY] of Israel: ["When your enemies attack you,] and when 1,000 [of your soldiers] will go [to a battle], there will be only 100 who will survive. When 100 soldiers march out [from a city to fight], there will be only ten who will remain alive." **4** Yahweh continues to say to the people [MTY] of Israel: "You Israeli people, return to me! If you do that, you will continue to remain alive. **5** Do not go to Bethel to seek [my help]; do not go to Gilgal [to worship]; do not [even] go to Beersheba, because [your enemies] will drag away [the people of] Gilgal to other countries, and Bethel will be completely destroyed." **6** So, come to Yahweh; if you do that, you will remain alive. If you do not do that, Yahweh will descend on you descendants [MTY] of Joseph like [SIM] a fire; that fire will burn everything in Bethel, and (nothing/no one) will be able to save that town. **7** You people distort what is fair/right and cause [people to think that] it is something that is very bitter; you treat good things as though they are evil. **8** [Do you know who] created all the groups of stars and put them in their places? [Each morning] he causes the darkness to become the dawn, and [each evening] he causes the daylight to become darkness. He scoops up water from the oceans [to become clouds], and then he dumps the water [from the clouds] onto the earth. The one who does those things is named Yahweh. **9** He causes strong [soldiers] to be killed, and causes the (high walls around/fortresses of) cities to be torn down. **10** [He is the one who will punish you] because you hate those who challenge anyone who tries to make unjust decisions, and you hate those who tell the truth in your courts. **11** You oppress poor people and force them to pay big taxes. You have built big stone mansions [for yourselves], but you will not be able to live in them. You have planted vineyards, but there will not be any [grapes for you to harvest to make] wine. **12** I know all of your sins and the terrible crimes that you have committed. You oppress righteous/honest people, and you accept bribes. You do not allow judges to treat poor people justly. **13** This is a time when [many people do] evil things, so people who have good sense say nothing [when they hear about such things being done]. **14** In order to remain alive, you must stop doing what is wrong, and start doing what is right. If you do that, the Commander of the armies of angels will be with you like you claim [that he always is]. **15** Love what is good, and hate what is evil! Try to cause [judges] in your courts to make decisions that are right/fair! If you do those things, perhaps the Commander of the armies of angels will act mercifully toward [you descendants of] Joseph who are still alive. **16** "Because I, Yahweh, [will punish you for your sins], this is what I have solemnly declared: People will be wailing loudly in every street, and people will be very sorrowful in every plaza. Farmers will be summoned to [come and] weep, along with the other official mourners who will wail [for those who have died]. **17** People will be wailing in your vineyards, because I will punish you [IDM] severely. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it!"

18 Terrible things will happen to you who desire that it will soon be the day when Yahweh [will punish your enemies], because that will be a day of darkness, not of light. 19 [At that time,] when you try to run from a lion, you will face a bear. When you run into your house [to be safe], and you put your hand on a wall, it will be bitten by a snake. 20 That day, [when he punishes people], will certainly be [RHQ] a very dark day [MET], without even a little bit of light. 21 [Yahweh says], "I hate your religious celebrations and the times when you gather to worship me; I detest them [DOU]. 22 Even if you bring me offerings that will be completely burned [on the altar] and offerings of grain, I will no longer accept them. Even if you bring me offerings to renew/maintain fellowship with me, I will not pay any attention to them. 23 So, stop singing noisy/loud songs! I will not listen when you play harps. 24 Instead, your continually acting justly/fairly and righteously should be [never stop,] like [SIM] [the water in] a river that never stops flowing. 25 You Israeli people [MTY], your [ancestors] wandered through the desert for 40 years; and during that time, they never brought any sacrifices and offerings to me! 26 But they carried the two idols that they had made— the idols of Succoth, the god [that they considered to be] their king, and Kaiwan, [the image of the] star [that they worshiped]. 27 Therefore, now I will force you to go to [a country that is] far beyond Damascus! [That will surely happen because] I, the Commander of the armies of angels, have said it!"

6 Terrible things will happen to you people in Jerusalem who are not worried about anything, and also to you leaders who live on Samaria Hill who think that you are safe. [You think that] [IRO] you are the most important people [in the world], people to whom Israeli people [MTY] go [to get help]. 2 But go to Calneh [city] and see [what happened there]. Then go to [see] the great [city] Hamath [and see what happened there]. Then go down to Gath [city] in Philistia [and see what happened to their city walls]. Your land/country is certainly not [RHQ] larger or more powerful than their countries were, [but they were all destroyed]. 3 You are trying to not think about a day when you will experience disasters, when [your enemies will come and] violently attack you. 4 You lie on beds [decorated with expensive] ivory, and on [soft] couches. You eat [the tender meat of] lambs and fat calves. 5 You create/compose new songs and play them on your harps like [King] David did. 6 You drink entire bowlfuls of wine and you put expensive oils/perfumes on your bodies, but you do not grieve about [your country of] Israel [MTY], which is about to be destroyed. 7 Your feasting and lounging [on soft couches] will soon end, and you will be among the first ones to be forced [by your enemies] to go (into exile/to another country). 8 Yahweh the Lord has solemnly declared this: "I hate the people of Israel because they are very proud; I detest their fortresses. I will enable [their enemies] to capture their [capital] city and everything in it." 9 [When that happens,] if there are ten people in one house, they will all die. 10 If a relative who (has the task of/is responsible for) burning their corpses comes to the house and inquires of anyone who is still hiding there, "Is there anyone here with you?", and that person replies "No," [the one who inquired] will say, "Be quiet! We must not mention the name of Yahweh, [lest he cause us also to be killed]!" 11 [Terrible things like that will happen] because Yahweh has commanded that large houses [in Israel] must be smashed into pieces, and small houses must be smashed into tiny bits. 12 Horses certainly do not [RHQ] run on big rocks, and certainly people do not [RHQ] plow the sea with oxen. But you have [done things that no one should do]: You have distorted what is fair/right and caused it to be considered like poison [MET]; you have changed what is right and consider it to be like things that are bitter. 13 You are proud because you have captured Lo-Debar [town], and you have said, "We captured Karnaim by our own power!" 14 But the Commander of the armies of angels declares, "I will cause another nation to attack you people [MTY] of Israel; they will (oppress you/cause you to suffer) all the way from Hamath Pass [in the northwest] to the Dead Sea [in the southeast]."

7 Yahweh our God showed me [in a vision] that he was going to send locusts [to destroy our crops]. It was going to happen right after the king's share of the hay had been harvested/cut and before the rest of the hay was ready to be harvested. 2 [And in the vision I saw] those locusts come, and they ate everything that was green. Then I cried out, "Yahweh our Lord, please forgive us! We Israeli people are very helpless; (how will we be able to survive [RHQ]?/we will not be able to survive!)" 3 So Yahweh changed his mind and said, "That will not happen." 4 Then this is what Yahweh our Lord showed me [in another vision]: He was calling to a fire to [come and] punish [his people]. [In the vision I saw that] the fire dried up the ocean and also burned [everything on] the land. 5 Then I cried out again, "Yahweh our Lord, I plead with you, please stop this! We Israeli people are very helpless; how will we be able to survive [RHQ]?" 6 So Yahweh changed his mind again, and said, "That also will not happen." 7 Then Yahweh showed me [another vision]. I saw him standing beside a wall. [It was very straight because] it had been built using a (plumb line/cord with a weight on one end to determine if walls are vertically straight). Yahweh had the plumb line in his hand. 8 Yahweh asked me, "Amos, what do you see?" I replied, "A plumb line." Then Yahweh

said, "Look, I am going to use a plumb line among my Israeli people, [to show that they are like a wall that is not straight]. I will not change my mind again about punishing them. 9 The places on hills where [the descendants of] [MTY] Isaac worship [idols] will be destroyed. And the other important shrines in Israel will also be destroyed. And I will enable [your enemies] to attack your people with swords and they will get rid of [King] Jeroboam and all his descendants." 10 Then Amaziah, the priest at Bethel, sent [a message] to Jeroboam, the King of Israel. In the message he said, "Amos is plotting against you among the Israeli people [MTY]. [I am worried that] the people of this country will not be able to refute his words. 11 This is what he is saying: 'Jeroboam will soon be killed by [someone using] a sword, and the people of Israel will be (exiled/forced to leave their land and go to another country).'" 12 Then Amaziah [came to me and] said, "You prophet, get out of here! Go back to the country of Judah! Earn money to [buy food to be able] to live there, and do your prophesying there! 13 Do not prophesy any more here at Bethel, because this is where the national temple, the king's temple, is!" 14 I replied to Amaziah, "I was [previously] not a prophet, and my father was not a prophet; I was a shepherd. I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. 15 But Yahweh took me away from taking care of my sheep, and he said to me, 'Go to Israel and prophesy to my people there!' 16 You said to me, 'Do not prophecy saying terrible things will happen to [the people of] Israel; stop saying those things!' 17 Therefore listen to what Yahweh says about you: 'Your wife will become a prostitute in this city, and your sons and daughters will be killed by [your enemies'] swords. Others will measure your land and divide it up [among themselves]; and you yourself will die in a foreign country. And the people of Israel will certainly be forced to leave their country and go (into exile/to live in another country).'"

8 Yahweh showed me [in a vision] a basket full of ripe fruit. 2 He asked me, "Amos, what do you see?" I replied, "A basket of [very] ripe fruit." He said, "That indicates that it almost the end for my Israeli people. I will not change my mind again about punishing them. 3 [Soon,] instead of singing in the temple, they will be wailing. There will be corpses everywhere [HYP]. So, remain silent (OR, Everyone will be silent). [These things will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it!" 4 [It is as though] you people trample on needy people, and you destroy the poor people. 5 You habitually say, "We wish that [RHQ] the new moon [festival] would end soon, in order that [restrictions on doing business during the festival will be ended] and we can sell grain. We wish that the Sabbath would end soon, in order that we will again be permitted to sell our wheat"— and [when you sell it], you charge a big price for it, and you cheat people by using scales that do not weigh correctly. 6 You sell wheat that you have swept up from the floor, and as a result it is mixed with dirt. Those who are needy and poor [DOU] and who do not have money [to buy things], you cause them to become your slaves by buying them with the [small amount of] silver [with which you could buy] a pair of sandals! 7 Yahweh has declared, "Although you are very proud of [being descendants] [MTY] of Jacob, I solemnly declare that I will not forget the [evil things] that you have done. 8 [Because of those evil things], your country will certainly [RHQ] soon be shaken, and all of you will mourn. [It will be as though] it will repeatedly rise and fall like [SIM] the Nile [River] that gets full of water [and overflows it banks] and then settles back into its riverbed. 9 On the day [when I punish my people], I will cause the sun to set at noontime, and the [entire] earth will be dark in the daytime. 10 I will cause your [religious] celebrations to become times when you mourn; instead of singing, everyone will be weeping. Because of what I [will do], all of you will wear rough sackcloth and shave your heads [to show that you are sorrowing]. I will cause that time to be like when people mourn after an only son [has died]. All of you will be extremely sad all of that day." 11 And Yahweh our God says this: "It will [soon] be the time when I will cause something to be very scarce [MET] throughout the country. But it will not be a time when there is no food or water; it will instead be a time when there will be no messages from me for anyone to hear. 12 People will stagger from the [Dead] Sea to the [Mediterranean] Sea, and wander from the north to the east, searching for a message from me, but there will not be any. 13 At that time, even beautiful young women and strong young men will faint because of being very thirsty. 14 Those who (make oaths/solemnly promise to do something) using the names of their shameful gods of Samaria, and those who solemnly promise to do something [using the name of] the god of Dan, and those who solemnly promise to do something [using the name of] the god of Beersheba, will all die; and they will never live again."

9 Yahweh [showed me another vision. In the vision,] I saw him standing next to the altar. He said, "Shake the tops of the pillars [of the temple], until they become loose and fall down, so that even the foundation will shake. Then cause the [pieces of the temple] to fall down on the people [who are inside]. I will kill with a sword anyone who [tries to] flee; no one will escape. 2 If they dig deep pits in the ground, or if they try to climb up to the sky [in order to escape], I will reach out and grab them. **(Sheol h7585)** 3 If they go to the top of Carmel [Mountain] to escape, I will search for them and seize them. If they [try to] hide from me at the

bottom of the sea, I will command the [huge] sea monster to bite them. **4** If their enemies [capture them and] force them to go to other countries, I will command that they be killed there with swords. I am determined [IDM] to get rid of them, not to help them." **5** When the Commander of the armies of angels touches the earth, it melts, and all over the earth [many people die, and the others] mourn for them. [It is as though] Yahweh causes the earth repeatedly to rise and fall like [SIM] the Nile [River] rises and falls. **6** He builds his [beautiful] palace in heaven, and sets/causes the sky to be like a dome over the earth. He scoops up the water from the ocean and [puts it into clouds], and then empties [the clouds] onto the earth. His name is Yahweh. **7** And Yahweh says, "You people of Israel, you are certainly [RHQ] [now no more important to me] than the people of Ethiopia. I brought your [ancestors] here from Egypt, but I also brought the people of Philistia from Crete [Island], and I brought the people of Syria from the Kir [region]. **8** I [SYN], Yahweh the Lord, have seen that you people in the kingdom [of Israel] are very sinful, so I will (destroy you/wipe you off the earth). But I will not get rid of all you descendants [MTY] of Jacob. [That is what will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it. **9** When I command it, [it will be as though] I will shake you Israeli people [who are living] in various nations, like [MET] [a farmer] shakes a sieve [to separate] the stone pebbles [from the grain], in order that they do not fall on the ground [with the grain]. **10** From among my people, all you sinful people who say, 'We will not experience disasters; nothing evil will happen to us,' will be killed by [your enemies'] swords." **11** "The kingdom [over which King] David [ruled has been destroyed, like] [MET] a house that collapsed and then became ruins. But some day I will cause it to be a kingdom again. I will cause it to prosper again just like it did previously. **12** When that happens, your [armies] will seize/capture the remaining part of Edom [region] again, and they will also seize the land in other nations that previously belonged to me [MTY]. I, Yahweh, have said [that I will do these things], and I will certainly cause them to happen. **13** There will be a time [when your crops will grow very well]. Very soon after the crops are harvested, farmers will plow the ground [to plant more crops in it again], and soon after the vineyards are planted, [farmers will harvest] grapes and tread on them [to make wine]. [And because there will be a lot of] wine, [it will seem as though] wine is flowing down from the hills [DOU]. **14** I will cause you, my Israeli people, to prosper again. You will rebuild your towns and live in them. You will plant vineyards and then drink the wine [made from the grapes that grows in them]. **15** I will enable you to live [MET] in your land again, the land that I gave to [your ancestors], and never again will you be forced to leave it. [That is what will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it."

Obadiah

1 This is a message that Yahweh our God gave to me, Obadiah, about the Edom [people-group]. Yahweh our God has told me this about [the people of] Edom: "I, Yahweh, have sent a messenger to other nations, telling them to prepare to go and attack Edom." **2** And Yahweh says this to the people of Edom: "I will soon cause you to become the weakest and most despised nation [on the earth]. **3** Your [capital city] is high in the rocky cliffs, and you are very proud; you think that you are safe from being attacked by your enemies [RHQ], but you [IDM] have deceived yourselves. **4** And I tell you that even if [you had wings and] could fly higher than eagles fly, and if you could make your homes among the stars, I would bring you [crashing] down from there. **5** When thieves break into someone's house during the night, they certainly [RHQ] steal only the things that they want. And people who pick grapes always [RHQ] leave a few grapes on the vines. But your country will be completely destroyed! **6** Everything that is valuable will be taken away. [Your enemies] will find and take away even the valuable things that you have hidden. **7** All (your allies/nations who promised to help you) will turn against you, and they will force you to leave your country/land. Those with whom you have peace now will trick/deceive you and defeat you. Those who eat meals with you now are planning to trap you, and [then they will say to you], 'You are not [RHQ] as clever [as you thought you were]!' **8** I, Yahweh, declare that at the time that I destroy Edom, I will punish the men who live in those cliffs who [thought that they] were wise. **9** The soldiers from Teman [town] will become terrified; all you people who are descendants of Esau will be (wiped out/killed). **10** You acted cruel in a cruel way toward your relatives who are descendants of Jacob, [the twin brother of your ancestor Esau]. So now you will be disgraced forever; you will be completely destroyed. **11** Foreigners entered the gates of Jerusalem and (cast lots/threw small stones that were marked) to decide what valuable things they would take away; but you were as bad as those foreigners, because you just stood there [and did not help the Israelis]. **12** You should not have (gloated/been happy) about the disaster that the Israelis were experiencing. You should not have been happy when their towns were ruined. You should not have made fun [of them] when they were suffering. **13** They are my people, so you should not have entered their [city] gates when they were experiencing those disasters and you should not have laughed at them. And you should not have taken away their [valuable] possessions. **14** You should not have stood at crossroads to catch those who were [trying to] escape. You should not have [captured them and] put them into the hands of [their enemies] when they were experiencing those disasters." **15** "There will soon be the time when I, Yahweh, will judge [and punish] all the nations. And you [people of Edom] will experience the same [disasters] that you caused [others to experience]. The same evil things that you have done to others will happen to you. **16** [My people in Jerusalem have been punished] because I was very angry with them. [It is as though] [MET] they drank [a cup of very bitter liquid] on Zion, my sacred hill. But [I] will punish [MET] all the other nations even more severely, and cause them to disappear completely. **17** But some [people in Jerusalem will escape], and Jerusalem will become a very holy/sacred place. Then the descendants of Jacob will [conquer and] possess again the land that truly belongs to them. **18** The descendants [MTY] of Jacob and his son Joseph will be like [MET] a fire, and the people [MTY] of Edom will be like [MET] stubble that will be completely burned in that fire. Not one person will remain alive. [That will surely happen because] I, Yahweh, have said it." **19** The Israeli people [who live] in the southern desert are the ones who will capture Edom. And those [who live in] the western foothills will capture the Phoenicia [region] and the areas of Ephraim and Samaria. And people of the tribe of Benjamin will conquer the Gilead [region]. **20** Those who were (exiled in/forced to go to) [Babylon] will [return to their land] [and] capture the Phoenicia [region] as far north as Zarephath [on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea]. People of Jerusalem who were captured and taken to Sardis, [the capital city of the Lydia region], will capture the towns in the southern desert. **21** The army of Jerusalem will attack Edom and conquer it, and Yahweh will be their king.

Jonah

1 [One day] Yahweh said to [the prophet] Jonah, the son of Amittai, **2** "I have [seen] how wicked [the people of] [MTY] the great city of Nineveh are. Therefore go there and warn the people that [I am planning to] destroy their city [because of their sins]." **3** But [instead of going to Nineveh], Jonah [went in the direction] opposite to where Yahweh [told him to go]. He went down to Joppa [city]. There he bought a ticket to travel on a ship that was going to Tarshish [city], in order to avoid [doing what] Yahweh [told him to do]. [He got on the ship,] and [then went down] to a lower deck, [lay down, and went to sleep]. **4** Then Yahweh caused a very strong wind to blow, and there was such a violent storm that [the sailors thought] the ship would break apart. **5** The sailors were very frightened. Because of that, they each [started to] pray to their own gods [to save them]. Then they threw the cargo into the sea to make the ship lighter [in order that it would not sink easily]. **6** Then the captain went [down] to where Jonah was sleeping soundly. [He awoke him] and said [to him], "(How can you sleep [during a storm like this]?/You should not be sleeping [during a storm like this]) [RHQ]! Get up and pray to your god! Perhaps he will pity us and save us, in order that we will not drown!" [But Jonah refused to do that]. **7** Then the sailors said to each other, "We need to (cast lots/shake from a container small objects that we have all marked), to determine who has caused [all] this trouble!" So they did that, and [the object with] Jonah's mark fell out [of the container]. **8** So [various ones of] them asked him, "Are you the one who has caused us all this trouble?" "What work do you do?" "Where are you [coming] from?" "What country and what people-group do you belong to?" **9** Jonah replied, "I am a Hebrew. I worship Yahweh God, who [lives in] heaven. He is the one who made the sea and the land. I am trying to escape from [doing what] Yahweh [told me to do]." **10** After the sailors heard that, they were terrified. So they asked him, "Do you realize what [trouble] you have caused?" **11** The [storm kept getting worse and] the waves kept getting bigger. So [one of] the sailors asked Jonah, "What should we do in order to make the sea become calm?" **12** He replied, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea. [If you do that], it will become calm. I know that this terrible storm is the result of my [not doing what Yahweh told me to do]." **13** But the sailors did [not want to do that]. [Instead], they tried hard to row the ship back to the land. But they could not [do that], because the storm continued to get worse. **14** Therefore they prayed to Yahweh, and [one of them] prayed, "O Yahweh, please do not let us drown because of our causing this man to die. O Yahweh, you have done what you wanted to do. [We do not know if this man has sinned. If] he has not sinned, do not consider that we are guilty of sinning when we cause him to die!" **15** Then they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea. Then the sea became calm. **16** [When that happened], the sailors became greatly awed at Yahweh's [power]. So they offered a sacrifice to Yahweh, and they strongly promised [him that they would do things that would please him]. **17** [While they were doing that,] Yahweh sent a huge fish that swallowed Jonah. Then Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

2 [While he was] inside the huge fish, Jonah prayed to Yahweh God, [whom] he [worshiped. After Yahweh told him that he would answer his prayer,] **2** Jonah said, "Yahweh, when I was greatly distressed [here], I prayed to you, and you heard what I [prayed]. When I was [about to descend way down into] the place where dead people go, you heard me when I called out [for you to help/save me]. **(Sheol h7585)** **3** You threw me [down] into the deep [water], into the bottom [DOU] of the sea. The currents of the sea swirled around me, and the huge waves crashed above me. **4** Then I thought, 'You have banished me, and I will never be able to enter your presence again. I will never see your holy temple [in Jerusalem] again!' **5** The water surrounded me, and threatened to drown me. Seaweed was wrapped around my head. **6** I sank down to where the mountains start rising [MET] [from the bottom of the sea]. I thought that forever [it would be as though] my body would be in a prison [MTY] [inside the earth] below me. But you, Yahweh God, whom I [worship], rescued me from going down to the place of the dead. **7** When I was almost dead [EUP], Yahweh, I (thought about/prayed to) you. You [heard] my prayer, up [there where] you [are, in] your holy temple. **8** All those who worship worthless idols are rejecting [you], the one who [could] act kindly toward them. **9** But I will sing to thank [you], and I will offer a sacrifice to you. I will [surely] do what I have solemnly promised [to do]. Yahweh, you are the one who is [able to] save [us]." **10** Then Yahweh commanded the huge fish to vomit out Jonah, [and the fish did that], and [Jonah was able to get] to the land.

3 Then Yahweh said to Jonah again, **2** "Go to that great city of Nineveh, and tell them the message that I gave you [previously]." **3** So [this time] Jonah obeyed Yahweh, and he went to Nineveh. That city was so big that a person [had to walk] for three days to completely [go through] it. **4** On the first day [after] Jonah [arrived], he [began walking] through the city. He was proclaiming (OR, At the end of that day he started proclaiming) to the people, "Forty days from now, Nineveh will be destroyed {[God] will destroy Nineveh}!"

5 The people of Nineveh believed God's [message]. They [all] decided that everyone should begin (fasting/abstaining from food). So [everyone], including important people and unimportant people, [did that]. They [also] put on coarse cloth, [to show that they were sorry for having sinned]. 6 The King of Nineveh heard [what the people were doing]. [So] he took off his royal robes, and [he also] put on coarse cloth. He left his palace, and sat down where there were [cold] ashes, [to show that he also was sorry for having sinned]. 7 Then he sent messengers to proclaim to [the people in] Nineveh: "My advisors and I have decreed that no one may eat or drink anything. Do not even allow your animals to eat or drink. 8 Instead, every person must put on coarse cloth. [Put coarse cloth on] your animals, [too]. Then everyone must pray fervently to God. And everyone must stop doing evil actions/things, and stop acting violently [toward others]. 9 Perhaps, [if everyone does that], God may change his mind and be merciful [to us], and stop being very angry with us, with the result that we will not die." 10 When they [all did that], God saw what they were doing, and he saw that they had stopped doing evil things. So [he pitied them, and] he did not get rid of them as he had threatened to do.

4 But Jonah was very distressed [that God had not destroyed Nineveh]. He became very angry. [The people of Nineveh were non-Jews, and Jonah did not think that God should act mercifully toward anyone who was not a Jew]. 2 He prayed to Yahweh, "O Yahweh, what you have done is what I thought that you would do, before I left home [RHQ]. That is why I [decided] immediately to run away, and go to Tarshish [city], because I knew that you, O God, act very kindly and compassionately [toward all people]. You do not quickly become angry with people who do evil things. You love people very much, and you change your mind about punishing [people who sin]. 3 [So] now, O Yahweh, [since you will not destroy Nineveh city as you said you would], allow me to die, because it would be better for me to die than to [continue to] live." 4 Yahweh replied, "(Why is it right for you to be angry [about my not destroying the city]?/It is not right for you to be angry [about my not destroying the city]!) [RHQ]" 5 Jonah [did not reply]. He went out of the city to the east [side of it]. He made a small shelter in order that he could sit under it and be protected from the sun. He sat under the shelter and waited to see what would happen to the city. 6 Then Yahweh God caused a vine to grow up [immediately] to shade Jonah's head from the sun and make him [feel] more comfortable. Jonah was very happy about [having] the vine [over his head]. 7 But before dawn the next day, God sent a worm that chewed the vine, with the result that the vine withered. 8 Then, when the sun rose [high in the sky], God sent a very hot wind from the east, and the sun shone very strongly on Jonah's head, with the result that he felt faint. He wanted to die, and he said, "It would be better for me to die than to [continue to] live!" 9 But God asked Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about [what happened to] the vine?" Jonah replied, "[Yes], it is right! [Now] I am very angry and I want to die!" 10 But Yahweh said [to him], "You have been concerned about my [causing] that vine [to wither], even though you did not take care of it, and you did not make it grow. It just grew up during one night, and it completely withered [at the end of] the next night. 11 But there are more than 120,000 people in Nineveh who [are very young, and because of that], they cannot tell which is their right hand and which is their left hand, and there are also many cattle, [and none of these have done anything to displease me]. So (is it not right for me to be concerned about the people of that huge city, [and not want to destroy them]?/it is certainly right for me to be concerned about the people of that huge city [and not want to destroy them]!) [RHQ]"

Micah

1 [I am] Micah. I am from [the town of] Moresheth [in Judah]. Yahweh gave me these [messages in] visions about Samaria and Jerusalem during the time when Jotham, [and then] Ahaz, and [then] Hezekiah, were the kings of Judah. **2** You people everywhere on the earth, pay attention to this [DOU]! Yahweh our God is accusing you from his holy temple [in heaven]. **3** He will come down [from heaven] and walk on the tops of the highest mountains. **4** [It will be as though] the mountains will melt under his [feet] like [SIM] wax [melts] in front of a fire, and like [SIM] water [disappears] when it rushes/flows down into a valley. **5** Those things will happen because of the terrible sins [DOU] that the people [MTY] of Israel, [the descendants of] Jacob, have committed. But it was [RHQ] [the people of] Samaria [city who persuaded all the people of] Israel to sin, and it was [RHQ] because the people of Jerusalem [set up altars to worship their gods] that [the other people of] Judah [were persuaded to worship idols on] their hilltops. **6** So Yahweh will cause Samaria to become a heap [of rubble/ruins]; [it will be only] a field for planting vineyards. He will cause the stones of its [buildings] to roll down into the valley, and the foundations [of the buildings] will be uncovered. **7** All the idols in Samaria will be smashed, and the gifts [given to prostitutes at the temples of their idols] will be destroyed in a fire. And because people paid prostitutes there, [their enemies will take away those idols and sell them] to get money to pay to prostitutes [in other countries]. **8** Because [Samaria will be destroyed], I will weep and wail. I will walk around (barefoot/without any sandals on my feet) and naked. I will howl like a jackal/wolf and screech like an owl, **9** because Samaria will be completely destroyed [MET]; nothing can save that city. But the same thing will happen to Judah! [It is as though the enemy army] has [already] reached the city gates of Jerusalem, [the main city where] my people [live]. **10** Do not tell that to [our enemies] in Gath [city in Philistia]! Do not cry, [lest the people there find out what is happening]! [Instead, just] roll in the dirt in Beth-Leaphrah [because the name of that town means 'house of dust].' **11** You people who live in Shaphir [town, whose name means 'beautiful,' naked and ashamed, you will be taken [to another country]. [You people in] Beth-Ezel [town] should mourn, [because] no one from Zaanan [town, whose name means 'one who goes out],' will go out to help you. **12** [The name of] Maroth [town sounds like 'bitterness];' everyone there is anxiously waiting for good things to happen to them, but good things will not happen to them; instead, terrible things are about to happen to them, and it will soon happen at the gates of Jerusalem. **13** You people of Lachish [city, whose name sounds like 'team],' hitch your horses to pull the chariots [in which you can ride to flee from your enemies]. The Israeli people rebelled against Yahweh, and you (imitated them/did the same evil things that they did), and that caused the people of Jerusalem [IDM] to start sinning, too. **14** [You people of Judah], send a farewell gift to [the people] of Moresheth [town], [because their enemies will soon destroy it]. [The name of the town Aczib means 'deception],' and the kings of Israel [will soon find out that the people of that town] will deceive them. **15** [The name of your town of] Mareshah [means 'conqueror],' and Yahweh will [soon] send someone to conquer your town. [It will be necessary for] the great/glorious leaders of Israel to go [and hide in the cave at] Adullam [city]. **16** [You people of Judah], shave your heads [while you will be mourning], because your children whom you love will [soon] be (exiled/forced to leave you and go to another country).

2 Terrible things will happen to you who lie awake at night, planning to do wicked things. You get up at dawn, and you do those things, [as soon as] you are able to do them. **2** You want fields [that belong to other people], so you seize them; you also take their houses. You cheat people to get their homes, taking away the property that belongs to their families. **3** Therefore, this is what Yahweh says: "I will cause you people to experience disasters, and you will not be able to escape [MTY] from them. You will no [longer] walk around proudly, because when those things happen, it will be a time of much trouble for you. **4** At that time, [your enemies] will make fun of you; they will ridicule you by singing this sad song about you: 'We are completely ruined; Yahweh is taking our land/fields from us, and he will give it to those who will capture us.'" **5** So [when it is the time for the land to be given back to you] people who belong to Yahweh, there will be no one [MTY] who will be able to (cast lots/throw marked stones) to determine which land belongs to whom. **6** The people [who heard me say that] replied to me, "Do not prophesy such things! Do not say that [Yahweh] is going to humiliate us [by causing us to experience disasters]!" **7** But you people [MTY] of Israel should not [RHQ] talk like that! The Spirit of Yahweh will certainly not [RHQ] be patient [with people who say such things]! People who continually do things that are righteous will certainly [RHQ] like/appreciate what I say. **8** [But Yahweh says], "[Recently] my people have been acting toward me like an enemy. When soldiers return from fighting [against their enemies], you [rich people refuse to return the coats of those poor soldiers who have borrowed money from you] [and given you their coats to guarantee that they will pay back the money that they borrowed from you]. [It is as though] you are waiting to forcefully take their

coats off their backs! 9 You have forced women to leave their nice homes, and you have stolen from their children forever the (blessings/good things) that I wanted to give them. 10 [So] get up and leave [here]! This is not a place where you can rest [and be safe/protected], because you have (defiled it/caused it to be a place that I hate); it will be completely destroyed. 11 [You people want] a prophet who will lie to you, saying 'I will preach [that you should drink] plenty of wine and [other] alcoholic drinks!' That is the [kind of] prophet who [would please] you." 12 "[But some day], you descendants of Jacob, you Israeli people who have survived, I will bring you back [from (exile/other countries)], I will gather you together like [SIM] [a shepherd gathers his] sheep from the pasture into a pen [DOU]; there will be many of you in your land/country. 13 Your leader will enable them to leave the countries where they have been exiled; he will lead them out of the gates [of their enemies' cities], [back to your own country]. Your king will lead them; [it is I], Yahweh, who will be their king!"

3 Then I said, "You Israeli [MTY] leaders, listen [to what I say]! You should certainly [RHQ] know what things are right [to do] [and what things are wrong], 2 but you hate what is good and you love what is evil. [You act like butchers]: [it is as though] you strip the skin off my people and [tear] the flesh from their bones. 3 [It is as though] you chop them into pieces like [SIM] meat [to be cooked] in a pot. 4 Then, [when you have troubles], you plead to Yahweh [to help you], but he will not answer you. At that time, he will turn away from you because of the evil things that you have done." 5 This is what Yahweh says about your [false] prophets who are deceiving the people: "If someone gives them food, those prophets say that things will go well for him. But they declare war against anyone who does not give them food. 6 So [now it is as though] [MET] night will descend on you prophets; you will not receive any [more] visions. [It is as though] [MET] the sun will set for you; the time [when you are greatly honored] will end. 7 [Then] you (seers/people who predict what will happen in the future) [DOU] will be disgraced; you will cover your faces [because you will be ashamed], because when you ask me [what will happen], there will be no answer from me." 8 But as for me, I am full of [God's] power, [power] from the Spirit of Yahweh. I am courageous and strong to declare to the Israeli people [MTY, DOU] that they have sinned and rebelled [against Yahweh]. 9 You leaders of the people [MTY] of Israel, listen to this! You hate [it when people do] what is just; and [when people say] what is true, you distort it, [saying it is false]. 10 [It is as though] you are building [houses in] Jerusalem on foundations that consist of murdering people and doing what is corrupt. 11 Your leaders make [favorable] decisions [only if they receive] bribes. Your priests teach people only if [those people] pay them [well]. Your [false] prophets require people to pay them to tell people what will happen [to them] in the future. Those prophets say, "Yahweh is telling us [what we should say], and [we say that] we will not experience any disasters." 12 Because of what you [leaders do], Zion [Hill] will be plowed like a field; it will become a heap of ruins/rubble; the top of the hill, where the temple is [now], will be covered with bushes.

4 Yahweh [says that] some day his temple will be on top of a mountain, and that mountain will be the most important [MET] one on the earth; it will be [as though it is] higher than all the hills, and huge groups of people from all over the world will come there [to worship]. 2 [People from] many nations will say [to each other], "Let's go to the mountain where Yahweh is, to the temple where we can worship the God whom Jacob [worshiped]. There God will teach us how he wants us to conduct our lives, and we will do what he wants us to do." Zion [Hill] is the place where he will teach [people]; and [people will go] out from Jerusalem [to tell others] his messages. 3 Yahweh will settle disputes between many people, and he will [also] settle disputes between powerful nations that are far away. Then people will hammer their swords to cause them to become plow blades, and [hammer] their spears to cause them to become pruning knives. [Armies of] nations will no [longer] fight against [armies of other] nations, and they will no longer train [men how to fight] in wars. 4 Everyone will sit [peacefully] under his own grapevines, and under his own fig trees; no one will cause them to be afraid. [That is what will surely happen] because the Commander of the armies of angels has said it. 5 Many [HYP] [of the people of other] nations will worship [IDM] their own gods, but we will worship Yahweh our God always, forever. 6 Yahweh says, "There will soon be a time when I will gather the people whom I have punished, who have been (exiled/forced to go to other countries), all those whom [I have caused to] suffer much. 7 My people who did not die while they were exiled will become a strong nation [again]. Then [I], Yahweh, will be their king, and I will rule from Jerusalem forever. 8 As for you people of Jerusalem [MET], you who [guard all of my people] like [MET] [a shepherd guards his sheep] from a tower, you [who live on] Zion [Hill], will have great power again. You people who live in Jerusalem will again rule like you did previously. 9 [So] why [RHQ] are you wailing now? Is it because you have no king? Have all your wise people died? You are groaning loudly like [SIM] a woman who is giving birth to a baby. 10 [Well], you people of Jerusalem should writhe and

groan like [SIM] a woman who is having birth pains, because now you must leave this city, and [while you are traveling], you will set up tents in open fields [at night]; you will go to [live in] Babylon. [But while you are] there, [I], Yahweh, will rescue you; I will free you from the power/control [MTY] of your enemies. **11** Now [the armies of] many nations have gathered to attack you. They are saying, 'Jerusalem must be destroyed! We want to see this city [when it becomes ruins]!' **12** But they do not know what [I], Yahweh, think, and they do not understand what I plan: I will gather them [and punish them] like [SIM] [farmers] thresh grain on the ground. **13** So, you people of Jerusalem, rise up and punish [MET] [the nations who oppose you]. I will cause you [to be very strong], [as if] [MET] you had horns made of iron, [as if] [MET] you had hoofs made of bronze; and you will crush many nations. And [then you will take] from your enemies the valuable things that they have taken [from other countries], and you will dedicate those things to [me, the one who is] the Lord of all [the people on] the earth."

5 "But now, [you people of Jerusalem, gather your troops together,] [because even though] you have a wall [around your city to protect it], [enemy soldiers] are surrounding the city. And [soon] they will strike your leader on his face, with a rod." **2** But you [people of] [APO] Bethlehem in Ephrathah [district need to know that] even though your [town] is a very small one among all the towns in Judah, someone who will rule Israel will be born in your town. [He will be] someone whose family has existed a very long time ago [DOU]. **3** [But now] you people of Israel will be conquered by your enemies; [but it will be for only a short time], like [MET] [the short time that] women have great pain while their babies are being born. After that, your fellow-countrymen who were (exiled/forced to go to other countries) will return to their own country. **4** And that man who will be ruling [there in Jerusalem] will stand and lead his people well, because Yahweh, his God, will cause him to be strong and greatly honored. Then the people whom he rules will live [in Jerusalem] safely; he will be greatly honored by people all over the earth, [so no one will dare to attack Jerusalem]. **5** And he will cause things to go well [for his people]. When [the army of] Assyria attacks our country and breaks though our fortresses, we will appoint (seven or eight/several) leaders [to lead our army] to fight against them. **6** With their swords [our army] will defeat the [army of] Assyria, [whose capital was founded by] Nimrod [long ago]. So our army will rescue us from the Assyrian [army] when they invade our country [DOU]. **7** The (descendants of Jacob/Israelis) who survive will be [a blessing] to the people of other nations, like [SIM] dew and rain sent by Yahweh do good to the grass. The Israelis will not trust in humans [to help them]; instead, they will rely on Yahweh. **8** In the midst of [their enemies in] many people-groups [DOU], the descendants of Jacob who remain alive will be like [SIM] a lion among the [other] wild beasts of the forest, like [SIM] a young lion who goes among a flock of sheep and pounces [on one] and (mauls it/tears it to pieces), and no one will be able to rescue [that sheep]. **9** You Israelis will defeat [MTY] all your enemies and completely destroy them. **10** Yahweh says, "At that time, I will destroy [you Israeli people's] horses [that your soldiers use in war] and your chariots. **11** I will tear down your city [walls] and destroy all your fortified cities. **12** I will get rid of all those among you who practice magic and the (fortune-tellers/those who say that they can predict what will happen in the future). **13** I will destroy [all] your idols and [sacred stone] pillars, and then you will no longer bow down [and worship] things that you yourselves [SYN] have made. **14** I will get rid of your poles [that represent the goddess] Asherah, and [I will also] destroy all your idols. **15** And because I will be very angry, I will [also] punish [the people of] all the nations who have not obeyed [me]."

6 Pay attention to what Yahweh says [to you Israeli people]: "Stand up [in court] and state what you are accusing [me] about. And allow the hills and mountains to hear what you will say. **2** [But then] you mountains must [also] listen [carefully] [DOU] to what I, Yahweh, am complaining [about my people]. I have something to say about what [DOU] my Israeli people are doing that displeases me. **3** My people, what have I done to [cause trouble for] you [RHQ]? What have I done to cause you to experience difficulties? Answer me! **4** I [did great things for your ancestors]; I brought them out of Egypt; I rescued them from that land where they were slaves. I sent Moses to [lead] them, and [his older brother] Aaron and [his older sister] Miriam. **5** My people, think about when Balak, the king of Moab, requested Beor's son Balaam [to curse your ancestors], and think about what Balaam replied. Think about [how your ancestors crossed the Jordan River miraculously while] they were traveling from Acacia to Gilgal. [Think about those things in order] that you may know that [I], Yahweh, do what is right." **6** [The Israeli people ask,] "What shall we bring to Yahweh [who lives in] heaven when we come to him and bow down before him? Should we bring calves that are a year-old that will be offerings that will be [killed and] completely burned [on the altar]? **7** Will Yahweh be pleased [if we offer to him] 1,000 rams and 10,000 streams of [olive] oil? Should we offer our firstborn children [to be sacrifices] to pay for the sins that we have committed [DOU]?" **8** [No, because] he has shown each of us what is good [to do]; he has shown [RHQ] us what he

requires each of us [to do]: He wants us to do what is just/fair and to love and to be merciful [to others], and [he wants us] to live humbly [while we fellowship] with him, our God. **9** "I am Yahweh, so if you are wise, you should revere me. I am calling out to [you people of] Jerusalem, 'The armies [MET] that will destroy your city are coming, so pay careful attention to me, the one who is causing them to punish you with my rod. **10** Do you think that [RHQ] I should forget that you wicked people filled your homes with valuable things that you acquired by cheating [others]? Do you think that [RHQ] I should forget that you used false measures [when you bought and sold things]? Those are things that I hate. **11** [Do you think] that [RHQ] I should say nothing about people who use scales that do not weigh correctly, and who use weights that are not accurate? **12** The rich people among you always act violently [to get money from poor people]. All of the people [in Jerusalem] are liars, and they [SYN] always deceive people. **13** Therefore, I have [already] begun to get rid of you, to ruin you because of the sins that you have committed. **14** [Soon] you will eat food, but you will not have enough to satisfy you; your stomachs will [still feel as though they are] empty. You will try to save up [money], but you will not be able to save anything, because I will send your enemies to take it from you in wars [MTY]. **15** You will plant [seeds], but you will not harvest [anything]. You will press olives, but [others], not you, will use the [olive] oil. You will trample on grapes [and make wine from the juice], but [others], not you, will drink the wine. **16** [Those things will happen to you because] you obey [only] the wicked laws of [King] Omri, and [you do the terrible things that wicked King] Ahab and his descendants commanded. So, I will destroy your [country], and I will cause your people to be despised; people [of other nations] will insult you.'"

7 I am very miserable/frustrated! I am like [SIM] someone who is hungry, [who searches for fruit to pick] after all the fruit had been picked and who finds no grapes or figs to eat. **2** [All] the godly people have disappeared from this land; there is not one of them left. [The people who are left] are all murderers [MTY]; [it is as though] everyone is eager to kill his fellow countryman. **3** They [all] use both hands to do what is evil. [Government] officials and judges [all] ask for bribes. Important people tell others what they want, and they plot/scheme together [about how to get it done]. **4** [Even] the best people are [as worthless] [SIM] as briers; the people [who are considered by others to be] [IRO] the most honest are worse than clumps of thornbushes. But, [Yahweh] will soon judge them; now is the time that he will punish people, a time when they will be [very] confused [because of being defeated]. **5** [So], do not trust anyone! Do not trust [even] a friend; [even] be careful what you say to your wife whom you love! **6** Boys will despise their fathers, and girls will defy their mothers. Women will defy their mothers-in-law. Your enemies will be those who live in your own houses. **7** As for me, I wait for Yahweh [to help me]. I confidently expect that God, my Savior, will answer me [when I pray]. **8** You who are our enemies, do not gloat/rejoice about [what has happened to] us, [because even] if we have experienced disasters, [those disasters will end and] we will be restored. [Even] if [it is as though] we are sitting in the darkness, Yahweh will be our light. **9** We must be patient while Yahweh punishes us because we have sinned against him. But later, [it will be as though] he will go to court and defend us, and he will make sure that the judge makes a right decision about us. [It will be as though] he will bring us out into the light, and we will see it when he rescues us. **10** Our enemies will [also] see that, and they will be disgraced because they [ridiculed us], saying "Why is [RHQ] Yahweh, that God of yours, [not helping you]?" But with our own eyes we will see them when they are defeated; we will see them trampled like [SIM] mud in the streets. **11** [You people of Israel,] at that time your cities will be rebuilt, and your territory will become larger. **12** [People from many countries will come to honor you]: people from Assyria and from [near] the [Euphrates] River [in the east] and from Egypt [in the south], from distant seas, and from many mountains. **13** But [the other countries on] the earth will become desolate because of the [evil] things that their people have done. **14** Yahweh, protect your people like [MET] [a shepherd protects his sheep] by using his walking stick; lead your people [MET] whom you have chosen to belong to you. [Even though some of them] live by themselves in a forest, give them the fertile pastureland in the Bashan and Gilead [regions] that they possessed long ago. **15** [Yahweh says/replies], "[Yes], I will perform miracles for you like the miracles that I performed when I rescued your [ancestors] from [being slaves in] Egypt." **16** [People from many] nations will see [what Yahweh does for you], and they will be ashamed because they do not have any power. They will put their hands over their mouths and their ears [because they will be very amazed because of what Yahweh does], [and they will not be able to say anything or hear anything]. **17** [Being very humiliated,] they will crawl on the ground [MTY] like [SIM] snakes. They will come out of their homes trembling, and stand revering Yahweh our God. They will be very afraid of him, and will tremble in front of him. **18** [Yahweh], there is no [RHQ] God like you; you forgive the sins [DOU] that were committed by the people who have survived, the people who belong to you. You do not remain angry forever; you are very happy

[to show us] that you faithfully love [us]. **19** You will again act kindly/compassionately toward us. You will get rid of [the scroll on which you have written] the sins that we have committed [as though you were] trampling it under your feet or throwing it into the deep ocean. **20** You will show that you faithfully [do what you promised for us] and faithfully love us, just like you solemnly promised long ago to our ancestors Abraham and Jacob that you would do.

Nahum

1 [I am] Nahum, from Elkosh [village]. [This is] a message about Nineveh [city, the capital of Assyria that was given] to me in a vision [by Yahweh]. **2** Yahweh our God (is jealous/does not want people to worship any other god). He is very angry [with those who worship other gods], and he gets revenge [DOU] [on all] those who oppose him [DOU]. **3** Yahweh does not quickly become angry; but he is very powerful, and he will certainly punish [LIT] those who have done evil things [MTY]. He shows his power by sending whirlwinds and storms, and clouds are [like] [MET] the dust [stirred up by] his feet. **4** When he commands oceans and rivers to become dry, they dry up. [He causes the grass in the fields in] the Bashan [region] and [on the slopes of] Carmel [Mountain] to wither, [and causes] the flowers in Lebanon to fade. **5** When he appears, [it is as though] the mountains shake and the hills melt; the earth quakes and [the people on] the earth tremble. **6** There is no one [RHQ] who can resist him when he becomes extremely angry; there is no one [RHQ] who can survive when his anger is very hot. When he is very angry, [it is as though] his anger is like [SIM] a blazing fire, and [it is as though] mountains are shattered into pieces. **7** But he is good; he protects [us his people] when we experience troubles. He takes care of those who trust in him. **8** But he will get rid of his enemies; he will be to them [like] [MET] a flood that destroys everything. He will chase his enemies into the darkness [of the place where the dead are]. **9** [So], it is useless [RHQ] for you [people of Nineveh] to plot against Yahweh. He will not [need to] strike you two times to destroy you; he will destroy you [by striking you only once]. **10** [It will be as though his enemies] are tangled in thorns, and they will stagger like people who have drunk a lot of wine. They will be burned up like [SIM] a fire completely burns up stubble/straw. **11** In Nineveh [city] there was a man who advised people to do very wicked things to Yahweh. **12** But this is what Yahweh says [about you Israeli people]: "Although the people of Assyria have very many people and their army is very powerful, they will be destroyed and will disappear. [I say to my people in Judah,] 'have [already] punished you, but I will not punish you again. **13** Now I will cause the [people of Assyria] to no longer control/oppress you [MET]; [it will be as though] I will tear off the shackles/chains on your [hands and feet]." **14** [And this is what] Yahweh also declares about you people of Nineveh: "You will not have any descendants who will continue to have your family names. And I will destroy all the statues of your gods that were carved or formed in molds. I will cause you [to be killed and] sent to your graves, because you are vile/despicable!" **15** [You people of Judah,] look! A messenger will be coming across the mountains, and he [SYN] will be bringing good news [to you]. He will be declaring [that you will now have] peace [because Assyria will have been conquered]. [So,] celebrate your festivals, and do what you solemnly promised to do [when your enemies were threatening to attack you], because your wicked [enemies] will not invade your country again, [because] they will be completely destroyed.

2 [You people of] [APO] Nineveh, your enemies are coming to attack you. [So] place guards on the tops of the walls around the city! Guard the roads [into the city]! Get ready to fight! Gather your troops/soldiers [MTY] together! **2** Even though enemy soldiers have destroyed the descendants of [MTY] Jacob, Yahweh will cause them to be honored again. Israel is like a grapevine that has been ruined, but Israel will prosper again. **3** The shields of the enemy soldiers [who are coming to attack you] will shine red [as the sun shines on them], and they will wear bright red uniforms. The metal of their chariot [wheels] will flash when they line up [before the battle], and their soldiers will lift up their cypress/pine spears and wave them. **4** Their chariots will dash through the streets [of Nineveh] and rush furiously through the plazas. Going as quick as lightning, they will resemble flaming torches. **5** [Meanwhile], your king will summon his officers who will stumble as they [try to] come [quickly]. They will dash to the [city] wall, holding their shields to protect themselves. **6** But, the gates [of the dams] on the rivers will be thrown open [by enemy soldiers], and [the flood will cause] the palace to collapse. **7** The queen will have her clothes stripped off her [by enemy soldiers], and her slave girls will moan like doves and beat their breasts [to show that they are very sad]. **8** [The people will rush from] Nineveh like [SIM] water rushes from a broken dam. [The officials] will shout, "Stop! Stop!" but the people will not even look back [as they run away]. **9** [The enemy attackers say to each other,] "Seize the silver! Grab the gold! There is a huge amount of very valuable things in this city, more valuable things than anyone can count!" **10** [Soon everything valuable in the city] will be seized or ruined. People will be trembling, with the result that they will not be able to fight. Their faces will all become pale. **11** [After that happens, people will say,] "What happened to [RHQ] that [great city of Nineveh]? [It was like] [MET] a den [full] of young lions, where the male and female lions lived and fed the young ones. **12** [The soldiers in Nineveh were like] [MET] lions that killed or strangled [other animals] [and brought the meat] to their dens." **13** The Commander of the armies of angels says [to the people of Nineveh], "I am opposed to you; I will cause your chariots to [be burned in fires and] go

up in smoke. Your young men will be killed with swords. [Your soldiers] will never again conquer [other nations] and seize their valuable possessions. Your messengers will never again take messages [to other nations, demanding that their armies surrender to them]."

3 Terrible things will happen to [Nineveh], that city [that is full of people who] murder [MTY] and lie. [The city is] full of things that were seized [from other countries by their soldiers]; [their armies] continually [LIT] have acted brutally towards people whom they conquered. **2** But [now listen to the enemy soldiers coming to attack Nineveh]; [listen to them] cracking their whips, and [listen to the] rattle of [their chariot] wheels! [Listen to] their galloping horses and their chariots as they bounce along! **3** [Look at their] flashing swords and glittering spears as the horsemen race forward! Many [people of Nineveh will be] killed; [there will be] piles of corpses, [with the result that] people will stumble over them. **4** All [that will happen] because [Nineveh is like] [MET] a beautiful prostitute [who lures men to where they will be ruined]; [Nineveh is a beautiful city] which has attracted/enticed [people of] other nations [to come there]. [The people of Nineveh] taught those people [of other nations rituals of] magic, and caused them to become their slaves. **5** [So] the Commander of the armies of angels says to [the people of Nineveh]: "I am your enemy, and I will [cause the people in other] nations to see you [completely] humiliated like [MET] [women who have committed adultery are humiliated by] having their skirts lifted high, [with the result that] people can see their naked [bodies]. **6** I will cause rubbish/garbage to be thrown at you; I will show [others] that I despise you very much, and I will cause you to be publicly ridiculed. **7** All those who see you will turn their backs to you and say, 'Nineveh is ruined, but absolutely no one [RHQ] will mourn for it.' No one will regret Nineveh being destroyed!" **8** Your city is certainly [RHQ] no safer than Thebes [city] was. [Thebes was an important city] beside the Nile [River]; the river was [like] [SIM] a wall that protected the city [DOU]. **9** [The rulers of] Ethiopia and Egypt helped Thebes; there was no limit to their power. [The governments of the nearby countries of] Put and Libya were also allies of Thebes. **10** But Thebes was captured, and [its people were] (exiled/forced to go to other countries). Their babies were dashed to pieces in the streets [of the city]. [Enemy soldiers] (cast lots/threw small marked stones) to decide who would get each official in Thebes [to become his slave]. All the leaders of Thebes were fastened/tied by chains. **11** You [people of Nineveh] will similarly become dazed and drunk, and you will search for places to hide [to escape] from your enemies. **12** [Your enemies will cause] the walls around your city to fall down like [SIM] the first figs that fall from fig trees [each year]. [Your city will be captured easily, like] [MET] [figs that fall] into the mouths [HYP] of those who shake the fig trees. **13** Look at your soldiers! They will be [as weak/helpless as] [MET] women! The gates of your city will be opened wide [to allow] your enemies [to enter them], [and then] the bars of those gates will be burned. **14** Store up water [now to use when] your enemies surround the city! Repair the forts! Dig up clay and trample it [to make it soft], and put it into molds to make bricks [to repair the walls]! **15** [Nevertheless, your enemies] will burn your [city]; they will kill you with their swords; they will kill you like [SIM] locusts [destroy crops]. **16** In your [city] there are now very many merchants; [it seems that] there are more of them than there are stars. But [when your city is being destroyed, those merchants will take the valuable things and disappear] [like] [SIM] locusts that strip the leaves from plants and [then] fly away. **17** Your leaders are [also] like a swarm of [SIM] locusts [DOU] that crowd together on the stone fences/walls on a cold day, and [then] fly away when the sun comes up, and no one knows where they have gone. **18** O King of Assyria, your officials will [all] be dead [EUP]; your important people will lie down and rest [forever]. Your people will be scattered over the mountains, and there will no one to gather them [together]. **19** You [are like someone who] has a wound that cannot be healed; [it will be] a wound that causes him to die. And all those who hear about what has happened to you will clap their hands [joyfully]. [They will say,] "Everyone has [RHQ] suffered because he continually was [very] cruel to us."

Habakkuk

1 [I am] Habakkuk, a prophet. This is the [message that Yahweh] gave to me in a vision. **2** [I said,] "Yahweh, how long must I continue to call [to you] for help before you respond? I cry out to you [for help], saying that [people are acting] violently [everywhere], but you do not rescue us! **3** (Must I/I do not want to) continue seeing people doing what is unjust [RHQ]. Why do you not punish people who are doing what is wrong [RHQ]? I see people destroying things and [acting] violently. There is fighting and quarreling [everywhere]. **4** No one obeys laws [PRS], and judges [PRS] never do what is fair/just. Wicked people always defeat righteous people [in the courts], with the result that matters are never decided fairly/justly." **5** [Yahweh replied to me,] "[I know that what you say is true, but] look around at [what is happening in] the other nations; [if you look,] you will be amazed, because I am doing something during this time that you would not believe [would happen], even if someone told you about it. **6** The soldiers of Babylonia are fierce/cruel and swift. And now I am causing them [to become very powerful]; they will march across the world and conquer [many] other countries. **7** They are people whom [others] fear very much [DOU], and they do whatever they want to, paying no attention to the laws of other countries. **8** The horses [that pull their chariots] go faster than leopards, and they are fiercer than wolves are in the evening. The horses on which the soldiers ride gallop swiftly; the soldiers riding them come from distant places. They are like [SIM] eagles that swoop down to [snatch and] kill small animals. **9** As they ride along, [they are] determined to act violently. They advance like [SIM] a wind from the desert, gathering prisoners that are as [numerous as grains of] sand. **10** They make fun of kings and princes [of other countries], and they ridicule all the cities that have high walls around them. They pile dirt [outside those walls] [in order to climb up] and capture those cities. **11** They rush past like the wind, and then they go [to attack other cities]. But they are very guilty, because [they think that] their own power is their god." **12** [Then I said,] "Yahweh, you have certainly [RHQ] always/forever been God. You are my Holy One; you will not die. So [why] have you appointed those men [from Babylonia] to judge and get rid of [us]? You are like [MET] a huge rock [under which we are protected/safe], so why have you sent them to punish us? **13** You [SYN] are pure, and you cannot endure looking at what is evil, [so why] are you ignoring men who are treacherous? Why do you do nothing [to punish] those wicked men [from Babylonia] who destroy people who are more righteous than they [are]? **14** [Do you consider that] we are like fish in the sea, or like other creatures in the sea, that have no ruler? **15** [The soldiers of Babylonia think that we are fish] [RHQ] for them to pull out of the sea with hooks or to catch in their nets, while they rejoice and celebrate. **16** If they catch us, they will [worship] their weapons [MET] with which they captured us, and offer sacrifices to them and burn incense in front of them! [They will say] 'Those weapons have enabled us to become rich and be able to eat expensive food.' **17** [Will you allow] them to continue [to conquer people] [MET] forever? [Will you allow] them to destroy people of other nations without their being merciful [to anyone]?"

2 [After I said that, I said to myself,] "I will climb up into my watchtower, and stand there at my guard post. I will wait there to find out what Yahweh will say, what he will reply to what I have complained about." **2** Then Yahweh replied to me, "Write plainly on tablets [what I am revealing to you in] this vision, [and then read it to a messenger] in order that he can run with it [to tell it to] other people. **3** In this vision [I will be talking about things that will happen] in the future. Now is not the time when those things will happen, but they certainly will happen, and when they occur, they will occur quickly, and they will not be delayed. Now you [want those things to happen immediately, but] they are not happening. But wait patiently for them [to happen]! **4** Think about the proud [people of Babylonia]! They are certainly not doing what is righteous. But people who are righteous will live because they faithfully [do what I want them to do]. **5** If people [trust in their wealth], they will deceive themselves, and proud people are never able to rest. [It is as though] the greedy people [of Babylonia open their mouths] as wide as the place where dead people are, and they never have enough, like [the place where] dead people go never has enough dead people [PRS]. The [armies of Babylonia] conquer many nations for themselves, and capture all their people. **(Sheol h7585)** **6** But [soon] all those [whom they have captured] will ridicule [the soldiers from Babylonia]! They will make fun of them, saying, 'Terrible things will happen to you who have stolen things [from other countries]! You got many things by forcing people to give them to you. [But you certainly will not keep those things] for a long time [RHQ]!' **7** Suddenly those whom you (oppressed/treated cruelly) will cause you to tremble, and they will take away all the things that you have stolen from them. **8** You stole things from the people of many nations. You murdered [MTY] people of many people-groups, and you destroyed their land and their cities. So those who are still alive will steal valuable things from you. **9** Terrible things will happen to you [people of Babylonia] who build big houses with money that you got by forcing others

to give it to you. You are proud and you think that your houses will be safe because you have built them in places where you can easily defend them. **10** But because you have destroyed others, you have caused your family [MTY] to be shamed/disgraced, and you yourselves will be killed. **11** [It is as though] the stones in the walls [of your houses] cry out to accuse you, and [it is as though] the beams [in your ceilings] also say the same things. **12** Terrible things will happen to you [people of Babylonia] who kill people [MTY] in order to build cities, cities that you build by using money that you have gotten by committing crimes. **13** But the Commander of the armies of angels has [RHQ] declared that everything that is built by people who do things like that [will be destroyed by] fire; they will have worked hard uselessly. **14** But [in contrast], like [SIM] the oceans are filled with water, the earth will be filled with [people who] know that Yahweh is very great. **15** Terrible things will happen to you [people of Babylonia] who cause people who live in nearby countries to become drunk. You force them to drink a lot of wine from wineskins [until they are drunk and then they walk around] naked, in order that you can see that. **16** But you are the ones who [soon] will be disgraced instead of being honored. [It will be as though you are forced to] drink [a lot of wine] in order that you will also stagger [around, drunk]. You will drink the wine [that symbolizes that Yahweh will punish you], and he will cause you to be disgraced instead of being greatly respected [any more]. **17** You did violent [PRS] things to [the people in] Lebanon, and you killed the wild animals [there], but you will be punished severely for doing that. You have killed [MTY] many people and you have destroyed their lands and their cities. **18** [You people of Babylonia need to know that your] idols are completely [RHQ] useless, because it is people who made them. Statues that have been carved or made in a mold deceive you. Those who trust in idols are trusting in things that they themselves created, things that cannot speak! **19** Terrible things will happen to you who say to lifeless idols that are made of wood, 'Wake up!' Idols certainly cannot [RHQ] tell you what you should do; they [look nice/beautiful because] they are covered with silver and gold, but they are not alive. **20** But Yahweh is in his holy temple; everyone on the earth should be silent in his presence."

3 Yahweh, I have heard about you; I revere you because of [all the amazing] things that you have done. In our time, do again [some of] those things that you did long ago! Even when you are angry [with us], be merciful [to us]! **3** [In the vision, I saw] God, the Holy One, coming from the Teman [district in Edom]; [and I also saw] him coming from the Paran Hills [in the Sinai area]. His glory filled the sky, and the earth was full of [people who were] praising him. **4** His glory was like [SIM] a sunrise; rays flashed from his hands where he hides his power. **5** He sent plagues in front of him, and [other] plagues came behind him. **6** When he stopped, the earth shook. When he looked at the nations, [all the people] trembled. The hills and mountains that have existed for a very long time [HYP] collapsed and crumbled. Yahweh is the one who exists eternally/forever! **7** [In the vision] I saw the [people who live in] tents in the Cushan [region] being afflicted, and the people in the Midian [region] trembling. **8** Yahweh, was it because you were angry with the rivers and streams that you were angry with them? Did the seas cause you to be furious, with the result that you rode through them with horses that were pulling chariots that enabled you to defeat them? **9** [It was as though] you uncovered your bow, took arrows from your quiver, [and prepared to shoot them]. [Then with lightning] you split open the earth, and streams burst forth. **10** [It is as though] the mountains saw you [doing that], and they trembled. Floods rushed by; [it was as though] the deep ocean roared and caused its waves to rise up high. **11** The sun and moon stopped moving in the sky while your [lightning] flashed [past like] a swift arrow, and your glittering spear flashed. **12** Being very angry [DOU], you walked across the earth and trampled the [armies of many] nations. **13** But you [also] went to rescue us, your people, and to save the [king] (Or, [people]) whom you had chosen [MTY]. You struck down the leader [MTY] of those wicked people and stripped off his clothes, from his head to his feet. **14** With his own spear you destroyed the leader of those soldiers who rushed like [SIM] a whirlwind to [attack and] scatter us, thinking that they could conquer us [Israelis] easily. **15** You walked through the sea with your horses [to destroy our enemies], and caused the waves to surge. **16** When I saw that vision, my heart pounded and my lips quivered [because I became afraid]. My legs became weak and I shook, [because I was terrified]. But I will wait quietly for the people [of Babylonia], those who invaded our country, to experience disasters! **17** [Therefore,] even if there are no blossoms on the fig trees, and there are no grapes on the grapevines, and even if there are no olives growing on the olive trees, and there are no crops in the fields, and even if the flocks [of sheep and goats] die in the fields, and there are no cattle in the stalls/barns, **18** I will rejoice because [I know] Yahweh. I will be joyful because Yahweh my God is the one who saves me! **19** Yahweh the Lord is the one who causes me to be strong; he enables me to climb [(safely/without falling)] in the [rocky] mountains, like [SIM] a deer does. (This message is for the choir director:

[When this prayer is sung, it is to be accompanied by people playing] stringed instruments.)

Zephaniah

1 [I am] Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, the grandson of Gedaliah, and the great-grandson of Amariah, whose father was [King] Hezekiah. Yahweh gave this message to me during the time when [King] Amon's son Josiah was the King of Judah. **2** Yahweh says, "I will (sweep away/destroy) everything [HYP] that is on the earth. **3** I will sweep away people and animals. I will sweep away birds and fish. I will get rid of wicked people; there will be no more [wicked] [HYP] people on the earth." **4** "[These are some of the things that I will do]: I will punish the people who live in Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah. I will destroy everything that has been used in the worship of Baal. I will cause [people] to no longer remember the names of the pagan priests or the [other] priests [who have turned away from me]. **5** [I will get rid of] those who go up on the roofs [of their houses] and worship the sun and moon and stars, those who claim that they worship me but [also] worship [their god] Molech. **6** I will get rid of all those who previously worshiped me but no longer do, those who no [longer] seek my [help or ask me to tell them what they should do."] **7** Be silent in front of Yahweh the Lord, because it will soon be the time/day when Yahweh [will judge and punish people]. Yahweh has prepared to get rid of [the people of Judah]; they will be like [MET] animals that are slaughtered for sacrifices, and he has chosen [their enemies] to be the ones who will get rid of them. **8** Yahweh says, "On that day when I will get rid of [the people of Judah], [I will punish] their officials and the king's sons, and [I will punish] all those who worship foreign gods [MTY]. **9** I will punish those who [show that they revere their god Dagan] by avoiding stepping on the threshold [of his temple], and those who do violent things and tell lies in the temples of their gods." **10** Yahweh [also] says, "On that day, people will cry [out] at the Fish Gate [of Jerusalem]. People will wail in the newer part of the city, and [people will hear] a loud crash [of buildings collapsing] in the hills. **11** [So, all you] people who live in the market area [of Jerusalem] should wail, because all those who sell goods and weigh out silver will be slaughtered. **12** [It will be as though] I will light lanterns to search in [dark places in] Jerusalem for those who have become very satisfied with their behavior and complacent [about their sins]. They think that [I], Yahweh, will do nothing to them, neither good things nor bad things. **13** [But I say that] their valuable possessions will be plundered/stolen [by their enemies], and their houses will be destroyed. They will build [new] homes, but they will not live in them; they will plant vineyards, but they will never drink [any] wine [made from grapes that grow there]." **14** It will soon be the day/time when Yahweh [will punish people]. It will be here quickly. It will be a time [when people cry] bitterly, a time when [even] brave soldiers will cry loudly. **15** It will be a time when [God shows that he is] very angry, a time when [people experience much] distress/suffering and trouble. [It will be] a time [when many things are] ruined and destroyed [DOU]. It will be a time when it is very gloomy and dark [DOU], when the clouds are very black. **16** It will be a time when [soldiers] will blow trumpets [to call other soldiers] to battle. [Your enemies] will tear down the walls around your cities and the high towers [at the corners of those walls]. **17** Because you sinned against Yahweh, he will cause you to experience great distress; you will walk [around groping] like [SIM] blind people do. Your blood will flow [from your bodies] like [SIM] water, and your corpses will lie on the ground and rot [SIM]. **18** At the time that [Yahweh shows that he] is very angry [with you], you will not be able to save yourselves by [giving] silver or gold [to your enemies]. Because Yahweh (is very jealous/does not want people to worship any other god), he will send a fire to burn up the entire world, and he will suddenly get rid of all the [wicked] people who live on the earth.

2 You people [of Judah] who ought to be ashamed, gather together [DOU]. **2** Yahweh is extremely angry with you, [so gather together now], before it is time for him to punish [MTY] you and blow you away like [SIM] [the wind blows away] chaff. **3** All you people in Judah who are humble, worship Yahweh, and obey what he has commanded. Try to do what is right and to be humble. [If you do that], perhaps Yahweh will protect/spare you on the day when he punishes [MTY] people. **4** [When Yahweh punishes Philistia], Gaza and Ashkelon [cities] will be deserted/abandoned. Ashdod [city] will be attacked and the people expelled at noon [when people are resting]; the [people of Ekron city] will [also] be driven out. **5** And terrible things will happen to you people of Philistia who live near the sea, because Yahweh has decided [MTY] that he will punish [MTY] you, [also]. He will get rid of all of you; not one person will (survive/remain alive). **6** The land [of Philistia] near the sea will become a pasture, a place for shepherds and their sheep pens. **7** The people of Judah who (survive/are still alive) will possess that land. At night they will sleep in the [deserted] houses in Ashkelon. Yahweh will take care of them; he will enable them to prosper again. **8** The Commander of the armies of angels, the God to whom [we] Israeli people [belong], says [this]: "I have heard the people of Moab and Ammon when they insulted [DOU] my people, and when they said that they would conquer my people's country. **9** So now, [as surely] as I live, [I will destroy] Moab and Ammon like [SIM]

[I destroyed] Gomorrah [city]. Their land will be a place were there are nettles and salt pits; it will be ruined forever. My Israeli people who survive will take away all their valuable possessions and [also] occupy their land." **10** The people of Moab and Ammon will get what they deserve for being proud, because they made fun of the people who belong to the Commander of the armies of angels. **11** Yahweh will cause them to be terrified [when] he destroys all the gods of their countries. Then [even the people who live on] islands throughout the world will worship Yahweh, each in their own countries. **12** [Yahweh says that] he will also slaughter the people of Ethiopia. **13** Yahweh will punish [IDM] and destroy Assyria, [that land] northeast of us. He will cause [its capital] Nineveh to become ruined and deserted, a place that will be as dry as the desert. **14** [Flocks of sheep and] herds [of cattle] and many kinds of wild animals will lie down there. Owls and crows will sit on the columns/pillars [of the destroyed buildings], and they will (hoot/cry out) through the windows. There will be rubble in the doorways, and the [valuable] cedar boards will be taken [from the ruined houses]. **15** [The people of] Nineveh were [previously] happy and proud, thinking that they were very safe. They were [always] saying, "Our city is the greatest city; there is no city as great as ours!" But now it will become a ruins, a place where wild animals make their dens. And everyone who passes by there will hiss [and scorn/ridicule that city], and shake their fists [to show that they detest that city very much].

3 Terrible things will [also] happen [to Jerusalem], that city whose people have rebelled [against Yahweh] and who have become unacceptable to him [because of the sins that they have committed]. [They act violently toward others] and they (oppress/treat cruelly) [other people]. **2** [The people there] do not pay attention to people who tell them [the wrong things that they are doing] and [try to] (correct them/cause them to quit doing those things). [The people in Jerusalem] do not trust in Yahweh or draw near to ask help from their God. **3** Their leaders are [like] [MET] roaring lions; they are [like] [MET] wolves that [attack other animals] during the evening, [and eat everything that they kill], with the result that the next morning there is nothing left [of those animals to eat]. **4** The prophets in Jerusalem are proud, [and they give messages that are] not to be trusted. Their priests cause the temple to be unholy by doing things that are opposed to the laws [of Moses]. **5** But Yahweh is [also] in the city; and he never does what is wrong. He treats people justly/fairly; he does that every day, but wicked people are never ashamed [about their doing what is wrong]. **6** [Yahweh says this]: "I have destroyed [many] nations; I have destroyed their strong/high city walls and towers. [Now] I have caused the streets in those cities to be completely deserted [DOU]; the cities are ruined. There are no people [still alive] in the cities; they are all dead [LIT]. **7** [So] I thought [to myself], '[Because of what I have done to those other nations], surely the people [of Jerusalem] will revere me [now], and they will accept (my correcting them/my telling them to quit doing what is wrong). [If they do that, I] will not destroy their houses; I will not punish them like I said that I would do.' But [in spite of knowing how I punished those other nations], they were still eager to get up early each morning and continue to do evil things. **8** Therefore I, Yahweh, say, 'Wait for the day in which I will testify [in court about your evil things].' I have decided to gather the people of the kingdoms [of the earth] [DOU] and cause them to know that I am very angry with them. All [over] the earth I will punish and destroy people; my being angry with them because I (am jealous/want people to worship no other god) is [like] [MET] a (raging/very hot) fire. **9** When that happens, I will cause [all] people [MTY] to be changed and enable them to speak [only] what is (pure/pleasing to me), in order that everyone can worship me [MTY] and unitedly/together serve me [MTY]. **10** [Then] my people who [were forced to go to other countries], those who live along the upper part of the [Nile] River in Ethiopia will come to me and bring offerings to me. **11** At that time, you [people in Jerusalem] will no [longer] be ashamed [about what has happened to you], because you no longer will be rebelling against me. I will get rid of all the people among you who are very proud [DOU]. No one on [Zion], my holy hill, will [strut around] proudly. **12** Those who are still alive in Israel will be poor and humble; they will be people who trust in me [MTY]. **13** Those people who are still alive [there] in Israel will not do [things that are] wrong; they will not tell lies or deceive [MTY] people. They will eat and sleep [safely], [because] no one will cause them to be afraid." **14** You people who live in Jerusalem [DOU] and [other places in] Israel, sing and shout loudly! Be glad, and rejoice [DOU] greatly, **15** [because] Yahweh will stop punishing [MTY] you, and he will send away from you [the armies of] your enemies! And Yahweh [himself], the king of [us] Israeli people, will live among us, and never again will we be afraid that [others will] harm us. **16** At that time, [other people] will say to us people of Jerusalem, "[You people of] [APO] Jerusalem, do not be afraid; do not become afraid or discouraged, **17** [because] Yahweh your God is [living] among you. He is mighty, and he will rescue/save you. He will be very happy with you; because he loves you, he will cause you to not be afraid; he will sing loudly to rejoice over you." **18** [Yahweh says,]

“You people were sad and ashamed because [you were unable to attend] your religious festivals; but I will cause you to no longer be disgraced. **19** Truly, I will [severely] punish all those who (oppressed you/caused you to suffer). I will rescue those who are helpless and those who were forced to go to other countries. I will enable them to be praised and honored in every country to which they were (exiled/forced to go), places where they were disgraced. **20** At that time, I will gather you together and bring you [back] home [to Israel]. I will cause you to (have a good reputation/be honored) and be [greatly] praised among all the nations of the earth. You [MTY] will see me causing you to prosper again. [That will surely happen because I,] Yahweh, have said it.”

Haggai

1 [I am], Haggai, a prophet. I received a message from Yahweh on August 29th, during the second year that Darius was the king [of Persia]. I told this message to Shealtiel's son Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, and to Jehozadak's son Jeshua, the Supreme Priest. **2** Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of heaven, told [me] that the people were saying that it was not yet time for them to rebuild Yahweh's temple. **3** Then Yahweh gave me this message [to tell to the people of Jerusalem]: **4** "It is not right [RHQ] for you to be living in luxurious houses while my temple is only ruins! **5** [I,] Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of heaven, say this: Think about what is happening to you. **6** You have planted a lot [of seeds], but you are not getting many [crops] to harvest. You eat [food], but you never get enough. You drink [wine], but you are still thirsty. You wear clothes, but you do not stay warm. You earn money, [but things are very expensive], with the result that [it is as though] [MET] [your money disappears because] you are putting it in purses/pockets that have [big] holes in them." **7** [So] this is what Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of heaven, says: "Think about what is happening to you. **8** [Then] go up into the hills, [cut down trees,] and bring timber [down here], and rebuild my temple. When you do that, I will be pleased, and I will be honored. **9** You expected [to harvest] plenty [of crops], but there were few [crops to harvest]. And when you brought the crops home, I caused them to spoil [IDM] quickly. The reason [that happened is that] my temple is a ruins, while each of you are busy building your own [beautiful] houses. **10** It is because of what you [are doing] that rain does not fall from the sky, and [as a result] there are no crops. **11** I have caused a (drought/severe lack of rain) on the hills and on your fields. The result has been that your grain [has withered], and your grapevines [MTY] and olive trees [MTY] and all your [other] crops have dried up. [Because of that,] you and your cattle [do not have enough food], and the hard work that you have done will be for nothing." **12** Then Zerubbabel and Jeshua and all the others of God's people who were still alive obeyed the message that Yahweh our God had said, and they heeded the message that I had given them, because [they knew that] Yahweh our God had sent/appointed me. And the people revered Yahweh. **13** Then [I], Haggai, who was Yahweh's messenger, gave this message from Yahweh to the people: "I, Yahweh, declare that I am with you." **14** [So] Yahweh motivated Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the other people to want to rebuild the temple of our God, the Commander of the armies of angels. They gathered together and started to work to rebuild it. **15** [They started work] on September 21st, during the second year that Darius was the king.

2 On October 17 [of that year], Yahweh gave [me], the prophet Haggai, [another] message. **2** [The message was that I should] say this to Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and to the other people who were still alive [in Jerusalem]: **3** "Do any of you remember how glorious our former temple was? [If you do,] what does it look like to you now? It must seem like nothing at all. **4** But now the Commander of the armies of angels says to [all of you], to Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of you people who live in this nation, '[Do not be discouraged;] be strong [DOU], and work [to build this new temple], because I will (be with/help) you. **5** My Spirit remains among you, like I promised your [ancestors] when they left Egypt. [So] do not be afraid!'" **6** This is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: "Soon I will shake the sky and the earth, the oceans and the land again. **7** I will shake [again the people of] all the nations, and as a result they will bring their treasures [to this temple]. I will fill this temple with [my] glory. **8** The silver and the gold [that they own] are [really] mine, [so they will bring them to me]. **9** [Then] this temple will be more glorious than the former/previous [temple was]. And I will cause things to go well for you all. [That will surely happen because I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, have said it." **10** On December 18 of that year, Yahweh gave [another] message to [me], the prophet Haggai. **11** This is what the Commander of the armies of angels said to me: "Ask the priests [this question] about what is written in the laws [of Moses about sacrifices]: **12** 'If one [of you priests takes from the altar some] meat that was sacrificed and is carrying it in his robes, if his robe touches [some] bread or stew or wine or [olive] oil or some other food, does that food also become (holy/acceptable for a sacrifice)?'" [When he said that to] the priests, they replied, "No." **13** Then Haggai asked them, "If someone becomes unacceptable to God by touching a corpse, and [then he] touches any of those foods, will the food [also] become unacceptable to God?" The priests replied, "Yes." **14** Then Haggai replied, "Yahweh says [this]: 'It is the same with you people and with this nation. Everything that you do and [all the sacrifices] that you all offer are unacceptable to me [because of the sins that you have committed]. **15** Think about what has been happening to you before you began to lay the foundation of my temple. **16** When you expected [to harvest] 20 bushels [of grain, you harvested] only ten bushels. When someone went to a [big] wine vat to get 50 gallons [of wine], there were only 20 [gallons in the vat]. **17** I sent (blight/hot winds) and mildew and hail to

destroy all your crops. But still you did not return to me. **18** Starting from this day, December 18, the day when [you] have laid the foundation of my [new] temple, continue to think carefully [about your situation]. **19** Is there now [RHQ] [any grain] seed left in your barns? [No, because you have eaten the small amount that you harvested]. And there is no fruit on your grapevines and fig trees and pomegranate [trees] and olive trees. But, from now on, I will bless you!'" **20** On that same day, Yahweh gave another message to me. **21** [He said,] "Tell Zerubbabel the governor of Judah that I am going to shake the sky and the earth. **22** I will end the power of the kings of [many] nations [DOU]. I will cause their chariots and their drivers, their horses and [the soldiers] who are riding on them to be destroyed. [What will happen is that I will cause the soldiers] to kill each other with their swords. **23** Zerubbabel, you serve [me well]. So [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, declare that [like kings wear] signet rings [to show that they have authority to rule people], I will appoint you and cause you [to have authority to rule]. I will do that because I have chosen you. [That will surely happen because I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, have said it."

Zechariah

1 [I am] Zechariah, a prophet, the son of Berekiah and grandson of Iddo. When Darius [had been the emperor of Persia] for almost two years, during November [of that year], Yahweh gave me this message: **2** "I was very angry with your ancestors. **3** So tell this to the people: [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, say, 'Return to me, and [if you do that], I will [help] you again. **4** Do not be like your ancestors. [Other] prophets, who have now died, [continually] proclaimed to your ancestors that they should stop doing the evil things that they were continually doing. But they refused to pay attention to what I said. **5** Your ancestors [have died and are now in their graves] [RHQ]. And the prophets did not [RHQ] live forever, [either]. **6** But I punished [IDM] [the people for disobeying] the commands and the decrees which I commanded my servants the prophets [to tell to the people]. Then they (repented/turned away from their evil behavior) and said, 'The Commander of the armies of angels has done to us what we deserved for our evil behavior, just like he said that he would do.'" **7** [Three months later], on February 15, Yahweh gave [another] message to me. **8** During the night [I had a vision. In the vision] I saw an [angel] who was on a red horse. He was in a narrow valley among some myrtle trees. Behind him were [angels on] red, brown, and white horses. **9** I asked the angel who had been talking to me, "Sir, who are those [angels on the horses]?" He replied, "I will show you who they are." **10** Then the [angel] who had been under the myrtle trees explained. [He said,] "They are the [angels] whom Yahweh sent [to (patrol/see what is happening in)] the [entire] world." **11** Then those angels reported to the angel who was [there] among the myrtle trees, "We have traveled throughout the world, and we have found out that [the army of the emperor of Persia has conquered nations] throughout the world, [and that] those nations are now (helpless/unable to resist his army)." **12** Then the angel asked, "Commander of the armies of angels, how long will you continue to not be merciful to Jerusalem and the [other] towns in Judah? You have been angry with them for 70 years!" **13** [So] Yahweh spoke kindly to the angel who had talked to me, saying things that comforted/encouraged him. **14** Then the angel who had been talking with me said to me, "Proclaim this [to the people of Jerusalem]: The Commander of the armies of angels says that he is very concerned about [the people who live on] Zion [Hill] and [in the other parts of] Jerusalem. **15** But he is very angry with the nations that are [proud and feel] safe. He was only a little bit angry [with the people of Judah], but [he is very angry with the surrounding nations because] they caused [the people of Judah to experience] complete disaster. **16** Therefore, this is what he says: 'I will again be merciful to [the people of] Jerusalem, and they will rebuild my temple. Men will measure [all the land in] the city [before they start rebuilding the houses].' **17** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] said this: 'Tell the people that [the people in] my towns [in Judah] will soon be very prosperous again, and I will encourage [the people of] Jerusalem, and their city will again be my chosen [city].'" **18** Then I looked up, and I saw in front of me four [animal] horns. **19** I asked the angel who had been speaking to me, "What are those [horns]?" He replied, "Those horns [represent the armies that] forced [the people of] Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah and Israel to go [to other countries]." **20** Then Yahweh showed me four (craftsmen/men who make things from metal). **21** I asked, "What are those men coming to do?" He replied, "[The armies represented by] those horns caused [the people of] Judah to be scattered, with the result that they suffered greatly. But the craftsmen have come to cause those who attacked [IDM] Judah to be terrified and crushed."

2 Then I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line/tape. **2** I asked him, "Where are you going?" He replied, "[I am going] to measure Jerusalem, to determine how wide it is and how long it is." **3** Then the angel who had been talking to me started to leave, and another angel walked toward him. **4** That other angel said to him, "Run and tell that young man that [some day] there will be very many people and livestock in Jerusalem, with the result that there will be too many to live inside the city walls; many will [live outside] the walls. **5** And Yahweh says that he [himself] will be [like] [MET] a wall of fire around [the city], and he will be there with his glory." **6** Yahweh declares [to the people who were exiled to Babylonia], "Run! Flee from Babylonia [MTY], the country east [of Israel], and flee in all directions from the places where I caused you to be scattered! **7** You people [who previously lived in] Jerusalem and who [now] live in Babylon, flee from there! **8** The [armies of the] nations that [attacked you and] took away your valuable possessions have attacked those who are very precious to the Commander of the armies of angels [IDM]. So he says this about me: 'After I have honored him and sent him to [rebuke] the nations, **9** [it is as though] I will strike them with my fist, with the result that those who were their slaves will [now] take back their possessions from those who caused them to become slaves.' And when that happens, you will know that the Commander of the armies of angels is the one who sent me." **10** Yahweh says, "[You people of] Jerusalem [APO], shout and be happy, [because] I will be coming [to you] and I will live among you!" **11** At that time, [people of] many nations will be united to Yahweh and will become his

people. He will live among [all of] you; and you will know that the Commander of the armies of angels [is the one who] sent me to you. 12 [The people of] Judah will be a very special part of his sacred country, and Jerusalem will again be the city that he has chosen. 13 Everyone, [everywhere,] should be silent in the presence of Yahweh, because he [again] will come [down] from the sacred place where he lives in heaven [to do great things for us].

3 Then [Yahweh] showed me Joshua, the Supreme Priest, [who was] standing in front of the angel that Yahweh had sent. And Satan was standing at Joshua's right side, [ready] to accuse him. 2 But Yahweh said to Satan, "Satan, I am rebuking you! I [am the one] who has chosen Jerusalem [to be my special city, and I] am rebuking you! This [man, Joshua], [has been brought back from Babylonia]; he is surely [like] [MET, RHQ] a burning stick that has been snatched from a fire." 3 Joshua was wearing filthy clothes while he was standing in front of the angel. 4 The angel said to those [other angels] who were standing in front of him, "Take off his filthy clothes!" [After they did that,] the angel said to Joshua, "Look! I have taken away [the guilt of] your sins, and I will put beautiful clothes on you." 5 Then I said to them, "Put a clean turban on his head!" So they put a clean turban on his head and put [new] on him, while the angel sent by Yahweh was standing there. 6 Then the angel said [this] to Joshua: 7 "The Commander of the armies of angels says that if you do what I want you to do [IDM], and obey my instructions, you will (be in charge of/have authority over) [what is done in] my temple and its courtyard. And I will allow you to speak at any time to the angels who are standing near to me. 8 Joshua, [you are] the Supreme Priest, and your (associates/fellow priests) are sitting in front of you. They symbolize/represent things that will happen in the future. [Some day] I am going to bring someone who will work for me, someone who will be called the Branch. 9 Look at the stone that I have put in front of Joshua. There are seven sides on the stone. I will engrave a message on that stone, and in one day I will remove the guilt of [all the people of] this country. 10 At that time, each of you will invite his friends [to come and sit] under his grapevine and under his fig tree. [That is what] the Commander of the armies of angels declares."

4 Then the angel who had been talking with me returned, and he called to me as though I had been asleep. 2 He asked me, "What do you see?" I replied, "I see a lampstand [made] completely of gold. There is a small bowl [for olive oil] at the top, and there are seven [small] lamps around the bowl, and a place for a wick on each lamp. 3 Furthermore, I see two olive trees, one at the right side of the lampstand and one at the left side." 4 I asked the angel who was talking with me, "Sir, what are these?" 5 He replied, "Surely you know [RHQ] what they are?" I replied, "No, I do not know." 6 Then he said to me, "This is the message that Yahweh [says that you should give] to Zerubbabel [the governor of Judah: 'You will do what I want you to do, but it will] not be by your own strength or power. It will be [done] by [the power of] my Spirit, says the Commander of the armies of angels. 7 Zerubbabel, you [have many difficult matters to handle. They are like] high mountains [MET]. But they will [become easy to handle, as though] they will become flat land. And you will bring [to the temple] the final stone [to complete the rebuilding of the temple]. When you do that, [all the people] will shout repeatedly, "It is beautiful! May God bless it!"'" 8 Then Yahweh gave me [another] message. 9 He said [to me], "Zerubbabel [SYN] laid the first stone in the foundation of the temple, and he will put the last stone in its place. When that happens, the people will know that [it is I, the Commander of the armies of angels, who] have sent you to them." And he said, "The seven bowls represent the eyes of Yahweh, who looks back and forth at everything [that happens] on the earth." 10 No one [RHQ] should think that little things that are done at the beginning of a big project are unimportant. [When the temple is almost finished being rebuilt,] Zerubbabel will use a (plumb line/string with a stone fastened to it) [to see if the walls they are building are straight]; so when the people see that, they will rejoice." 11 Then I asked the angel, "What is [the meaning of] the two olive trees, one on each side of the lampstand? 12 And what [the meaning of] the two olive branches, one alongside each of the gold pipes from which [olive] oil flows to the lamps?" 13 He replied, "Surely [RHQ] you know what they are?" I replied, "No, sir, [I do not know.]" 14 So he said, "They represent the two [men who have been] appointed [MTY] to serve the Lord who [rules] the entire earth."

5 I looked up again, and I saw a scroll that was flying [through the air]. 2 The angel asked me, "What do you see?" I replied, "I see a flying scroll that is [huge], (10 yards/9 meters) long and (5 yards/4.5 meters) wide." 3 Then he said to me, "On this scroll is written the [words that Yahweh is speaking to] curse the entire country. On [one side of] the scroll it is written that every thief will be banished. On [the other side] it is written that everyone who tells a lie when he is solemnly promising to tell the truth will also be banished from the country. 4 The Commander of the armies of angels says, 'I will send [copies of] this scroll to the places where thieves live and to the houses of those who use my name when they solemnly promise to tell the truth. [The copies

of] this scroll will stay in their houses, until those houses and all their wood and stones are destroyed.'" **5** Then the angel who had been talking to me came closer to me and said, "Look up and see what is appearing!" **6** I asked him, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a big basket [for measuring grain]. But it represents the sins that everyone in this nation has committed." **7** Then [the angel] lifted the basket's cover, [which was made] of lead. There was a woman sitting inside the basket! **8** The angel said, "She represents the wicked things [that people do]." Then the angel pushed her back into the basket and closed the very heavy lid [again]. **9** Then I looked up and saw two women in front of me. They [were flying toward us], with their wings spread out in the wind. Their wings were [large], like [SIM] storks' wings. They lifted the big basket up into the sky. **10** I asked the angel who had been talking to me, "Where are they taking that basket?" **11** He replied, "[They are taking it] to Babylonia to build a temple for it. When the temple is finished, they will set the basket there on a pedestal [for people to worship it]."

6 I looked up again, and [in the vision] I saw four chariots coming toward me. [They were coming] between two mountains [that were made] of bronze. **2** The first chariot [was pulled by] red horses, the second chariot [was pulled by] black horses, **3** the third chariot [was pulled by] white horses, and the fourth chariot [was pulled by] spotted gray horses. They were all very strong horses. **4** I asked the angel who had been speaking to me, "Sir, what do those chariots mean?" **5** The angel replied, "They have come from standing in the presence of the Lord who controls/rules the entire earth. They will go across the sky in four directions. **6** The chariot [pulled by] black horses will go north, the [one pulled by] white horses will go west, the one [pulled by] spotted gray horses will go south." **7** When those powerful horses left, their [chariot-drivers] were eager to go throughout the world. [As they were leaving,] the angel said to them, "Go throughout the world [and see what is happening]!" So that is what they did. **8** Then the angel called to me [and said], "Look/Listen, the [drivers of the] chariots that have gone north will do what the Spirit [of Yahweh wants them to do] there." **9** Then Yahweh gave me [another] message. **10** He said, "Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah will be bringing some silver and gold from the people who were (exiled in/forced to go to) Babylon. As soon as they arrive, go to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. **11** Take [some of that] silver and gold from them and make a crown. Then put it on the head of Jehozadak's son Joshua, the Supreme Priest. **12** Tell him that [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say that the man who is called the Branch will come. He will leave the place where he is now, and he will [supervise those who] build my temple. **13** He is the one who [will tell those who] will build my temple [what to do]. He will wear royal clothing and he will sit on his throne and rule. There will also be a priest [sitting] next to his throne, and the two of them will work together harmoniously. **14** The crown must be [kept] in my temple to remind people of what Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Josiah [did for them]. **15** People who are [living] far away will come and [help to] build my temple. When that happens, the people will know that [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, have sent you to them. [That will happen] if they faithfully obey me, Yahweh, your/their God."

7 When Darius had been the emperor for almost four years, on December 7, Yahweh gave me [another] message. **2** The people of Bethel [city] sent two men, Sharezer and Regem-Melech, along with some other men, [to the temple of Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels,] to request that Yahweh bless them. **3** They also asked the priests at Yahweh's temple and the prophets [this question]: "For many years, during the fifth month [and during the seventh month of each year], we have mourned and (fasted/abstained from eating food). Should we [continue to do that]?" **4** Then the Commander of the armies of angels gave me a message. **5** [He said], "Tell [RHQ] the priests and all the [other] people of Judah that during the past 70 years, when they mourned and fasted during the fifth and seventh months [of each year], it was not really [RHQ] me, [Yahweh], whom they were [honoring]. **6** And when they ate and drank, it was really [RHQ] to [benefit] themselves. **7** That is certainly [RHQ] what I continually told the former prophets to proclaim [to the people], when Jerusalem and the nearby towns were prosperous and filled with people, and people [also] lived in the desert area to the south and in the foothills [to the west]." **8** Yahweh gave another message to me, saying **9** "[Tell the people that] this is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: 'Do what is just/right, and act kindly and mercifully toward each other. **10** Do not (oppress/treat cruelly) widows or orphans or foreigners or poor people. Do not even think about doing evil to anyone else.'" **11** But the people refused to pay attention [to what Yahweh said]. They turned their backs [to him], and put their hands over their ears in order to not hear [what he said]. **12** They were very stubborn [IDM], and they would not listen to the laws [that God gave to Moses] or the messages that the Commander of the armies of angels told his Spirit to give to the prophets who were now dead. So the Commander of the armies of angels was very angry. **13** The Commander of the armies of angels says, "When I called/spoke [to the people], they would not listen. So when they called/prayed [to me], I did not listen. **14** And I caused them to be scattered among

many nations, where they were strangers. [It was as though] [MET] a whirlwind [picked them up and carried them away from their country]. The country/land that they [were forced to] leave was ruined, with the result that no one could [live there or even] travel through it. [It was previously] a delightful land, but they caused it to become (desolate/like a desert)."

8 Yahweh gave me [another] message. He said, **2** "This is what [I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say: 'I love [the people of] Jerusalem; I love them very much, and I am very angry with their enemies.' **3** So this is what I say: '[Some day] I will return to Zion [Hill] and I will live there. [At that time,] Jerusalem will be called the city [where people] (are faithful to/faithfully obey) me, and [people will say that Zion] Hill [is] holy because it is where the Commander of the armies of angels dwells.'" **4** The Commander of the armies of angels also says this: "[Some day] old men and old women will again sit along the streets of Jerusalem, each of them holding a cane because of their being very old. **5** And the city streets with be full of boys and girls playing." **6** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] says this: "[When those things happen,] it will seem marvelous to the people who are still alive, but it certainly will not [RHQ] seem marvelous to me!" **7** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] says this: "I will rescue my people from countries to the northeast and to the southwest [to which they were forced to go]. **8** I will bring them back [to Judah], and they will [again] live in Jerusalem. They will be my people, and I will be their God. I will be faithful [to them] and act righteously [toward them]." **9** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] says this: "When the foundation for my temple was laid, there were prophets there who proclaimed messages [from me]. Some of you heard what those prophets said. [So] be brave/courageous [MTY] [while you are building] the temple, in order that you may [finish] building it. **10** Before [you started to rebuild the temple], [no one could hire] men or animals [to work for them, because] there was no money to pay for them. And people were afraid to go anywhere because I had caused people to oppose each other, and [they thought that] there were enemies [everywhere]. **11** But now I will act differently toward [you] people who are still alive, [differently] than I did previously. [That is what I], the Commander of the armies of angels, say. **12** [From now on,] it will be peaceful when you plant [your seeds], and your grapevines will produce grapes, and good crops will grow in your fields. There will be rain. I will give all those things to [you] people who are still alive. **13** You [people of] Judah and Israel, [the people of other] nations have cursed you. But I will rescue you, and you will be a blessing [to the people of many nations. So] do not be afraid; work hard [MTY] [to finish building the temple]." **14** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] says this: "When your ancestors caused me to become very angry, I decided to punish them. And I did not change my mind. **15** But now [I will do something different]. I am planning to do good things to [the people of] Jerusalem and [other towns in] Judah. [So] do not be afraid. **16** These are the things that you should do: [You should always] tell the truth to each other. In the courts, [your judges must] make decisions according to what is correct and fair. **17** Do not plan to do evil things to others, and do not falsely promise [to do things that you know that you will not do]. I hate all those things." **18** The Commander of the armies of angels spoke to me [again]. **19** This is what he said: "The times when you people of Judah (fast/abstain from food) during the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months [of each year] will become good and very happy/joyful [DOU] festivals. But you must want [to speak] truthfully and [be] peaceful." **20** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] says this: "[Some day] people from many [people-groups and foreign] cities will come [here to Jerusalem]. **21** People from one city will go to [the people in] another [city] and say, 'Let's [go together to Jerusalem] to worship Yahweh and ask him to bless us; we [ourselves] are going.' **22** And [people from] many people-groups and [from] powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh and ask him to bless them." **23** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] says this: "At that time, [this is what will happen everywhere]: A group of people from one nation or a group of people who speak another language will grab the fringe/edge of the robe of a Jew and say [to him], 'We have heard [people say] that God is with you. So allow us to go with you [to Jerusalem to worship him].'"

9 [This is another] message [that I received] from Yahweh. [Yahweh said,] "I watch [MTY] everyone, especially the tribes of Israel; [so] I will [punish the people in] the Hadrach [region] and in Damascus [city] [because of what they did to the people of Israel]. **2** [I will also punish the people in] nearby Hamath [city]. I will also [punish the people in] Tyre and Sidon [cities], even though they are [considered to be] [IRO] very wise. **3** [The people in] Tyre built a high wall [around their city]. They piled up [huge amounts of] silver and gold as though they were [piles of] dirt in the streets. **4** But [I], Yahweh, will cause their precious possessions to be taken away and all their ships to be destroyed, and their city will be destroyed by a fire. **5** [The people in Ashkelon city] will see that [happen], and they will become very afraid. [The people in] Gaza [city] will shake because of being terrified, and [the people in Ekron city] will shake too, because they will no longer expect [to prosper]. The king of [the city of] Gaza

will be killed, and [the city of] Ashkelon will be deserted. **6** Foreigners will occupy Ashdod [city]. I will cause the [people in all those cities of] Philistia to no longer be proud. **7** I will no longer allow them to eat [MTY] meat that still has blood in it, and I will forbid them to eat [MTY] food that I [MTY] have not allowed them to eat [because it was offered to idols]. [At that time,] the people [in Philistia] who survive will worship me, and they will become [my people, like] the people of Judah are. The Philistine people of Ekron will also become my people like [SIM] the people of Jebus did [when they were conquered]. **8** I will protect my temple, and I will not allow any [enemy soldiers] to enter it. No [enemies] will harm my people again, because I will be watching [over my people] carefully. **9** Rejoice very much, [you people of] Jerusalem [APO, DOU] and shout joyfully, because your king will be coming to you. He is righteous and victorious; [but he will be] gentle, and [he will be] riding on a donkey, on a young female donkey. **10** I will get rid of the chariots in the Ephraim [region that are used in battles] and [all] the war horses in Jerusalem. [All] the bows used in wars will be broken. [Your king] will proclaim that he will cause things to go well and peacefully in the nations. He will rule [the area] from the [Mediterranean] Sea to the [Dead] Sea, and from the [Euphrates] River to the most distant places on the earth. **11** As for you [my people of Jerusalem], because of the blood [of the animals that were sacrificed to make] my agreement with you, I will free your people who were forced to go to other countries where [it was as though they were kept] in a waterless pit. **12** [You people who were] prisoners [in those countries] who [still] confidently expect [God to help you], return to [Judah], where you will be safe. This day I declare that I will give you two blessings for [each of the troubles that you have experienced]. **13** I will cause Judah to be like [MET] my bow, and I will cause Israel to be [like] [MET] my arrow. I will enable you young men of Jerusalem to fight against the soldiers of Greece; you will be like [SIM] a warrior's sword." **14** [Some day] Yahweh will appear [in the sky] above his people, and the arrows that he shoots will be like [SIM] lightning. Yahweh [our] Lord will blow his trumpet, and he will march [fiercely] like [MET] the storms from the south. **15** The Commander of the armies of angels will protect [his people]; [the soldiers of Judah] will attack and defeat [their enemies who attack them] using slingshots. [Those soldiers of Judah] will drink and celebrate and shout like [SIM] people who are drunk; they will be as full [of wine] as the bowl that holds [the blood of the animals that are sacrificed] and [which is then] sprinkled on the corners of the altar. **16** On that day, Yahweh our God will save his people [like a shepherd saves] his flock [of sheep from danger]. In their land, they will be like [SIM] jewels that sparkle on a crown. **17** They will be delightful and beautiful. The young men will become strong from [eating] grain, and the young women will [become strong] from [drinking] new wine.

10 Ask Yahweh to cause rain to fall (in the springtime/before the hot season starts), [because] he is the one who makes the clouds [from which the rain falls]. He causes showers to fall on us, and he causes crops to grow well in the fields. **2** [What people think that] the idols in their houses suggest [is only] nonsense, and people who [say that they can] interpret dreams tell [only] lies. When they [tell people things to] comfort [them, what they say] is useless, so the people [who (consult/trust in) them] are like lost sheep; they are attacked because they have no [one to protect them] [like] [MET] a shepherd [protects his sheep]. **3** [Yahweh says,] "I am angry with the leaders [MET] of my people, and I will punish them. [I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, take care of my people, the people of Judah, [like a shepherd takes care of his] [MET] flock, and I will cause them to be like [SIM] proud/powerful war horses. **4** From Judah will come rulers [who will be very important], [like] [MET] a cornerstone is [the most important stone for a house], [like] [MET] a tent peg [is very important for a tent], [like] [MET] a bow [is very important for (an archer/a man who shoots arrows]). **5** They will all be like [SIM] mighty warriors trampling [their enemies] in the mud during a battle. [I,] Yahweh, will be with them, so they will fight and defeat their enemies who ride on horses. **6** I will cause the people [MTY] of Judah to become strong, and I will rescue the people [MTY] of Israel. I will bring them back [from the countries to which they were (exiled/forced to go)]; [I will do that] because I pity them. Then they will be as though I had not abandoned them, because I am Yahweh, their God, and I will answer them [when they pray for help]. **7** The people of Israel will be like [SIM] strong soldiers; they will be as happy as [people who have drunk a lot of] wine. Their children will see [their fathers being very happy], and they [also] will be happy because of what Yahweh [has done for them]. **8** I will signal for my people [to return from (being exiled/other countries)], and I will gather them together [in their own country]. I will rescue them, and they will become very numerous like [they were] previously. **9** I have caused them to be scattered among many people-groups, but in those distant countries they will think about me again. They and their children will remain alive and return [to Judah]. **10** I will bring them [back] from Egypt and from Assyria; I will bring them [back] from the Gilead and Lebanon [regions], and there will hardly be enough [HYP] space for them all [to live in Judah]. **11** They will endure/experience many difficulties [as though they were walking] [MET] through a

sea, but [I] will calm the waves of the sea; the Nile [River which is usually] deep will dry up. [I] will defeat the proud [soldiers of] Assyria, and [I will cause] Egypt to no longer be powerful [MTY]. 12 I will enable my people to be strong, and they will honor me and obey [IDM] me. [That will surely happen because I,] Yahweh, have said it."

11 [You people of] [APO] Lebanon [should] open your gates, [because you will not be able to stop] fire from burning your cedar [trees]! 2 Your cypress/pine [trees] [APO] should [also] wail because the cedar [trees] have been cut down. Those glorious/great trees have been destroyed. The oak trees in the Bashan [region] should also wail, because the other trees in the forest have been cut down. 3 And listen to the shepherds crying because the fertile pastures have been ruined. Listen to the lions roar; they roar because the delightful forest [where they live] near the Jordan [River] has been ruined. 4 This is what Yahweh my God said [to me]: "[I want you to] become a shepherd for a flock [of sheep that are about] to be slaughtered. 5 The people who are going to buy the sheep will kill the sheep, and they will not be punished. Those who are selling the sheep say, '[I] praise Yahweh, [because] I will become rich!' Even the shepherds do not feel sorry for the sheep. 6 And similarly, I no longer feel sorry for the people of this country. I am going to allow many of them [HYP] to be captured by other people or by their king. Those who capture them will ruin this country, and I will not rescue any [of the people]." 7 So I became the shepherd of a flock [of sheep that were about] to be slaughtered [for their meat to be sold] to the dealers. [I took good care of the sheep, even the ones that were the weakest sheep. Then] I took two [shepherds'] /walking sticks). I named the one [staff] 'Kindness' and the other [staff] 'Union'. And I took good care of the sheep. 8 But the three shepherds [who had been working with me] detested me, and I became impatient with them. Within one month I (dismissed/got rid of) those shepherds. 9 So I said [to the dealers], "I will no [longer] be the shepherd. I will allow the ones that are dying to die. I will allow the ones that are getting lost to get lost. And I will not prevent those that remain from destroying each other." 10 Then I took the staff that I had named 'Kindness' and I broke it. [That showed that Yahweh] was annulling/canceling the agreement that he had made with all the people-groups. 11 So that agreement was ended immediately. And the men who bought and sold sheep who were watching me knew [by seeing what I was doing] that I was giving them a message from Yahweh. 12 I told them, "If you think it is what you should do, pay me [for taking care of the sheep]. If you do not think that is what you should do, do not pay me." So they paid me [only] 30 pieces of silver. 13 Then Yahweh said to me, "[That is a ridiculously small amount of money that they have paid you]! [So] throw it to the man who makes clay pots!" So I took the silver to the temple of Yahweh, and I threw it in the chest where the offerings/money is kept. 14 Then I broke my second staff, [the one that I named] 'Union'. That [indicated that] Judah and Israel would no longer be united. 15 Then Yahweh said to me, "Take again the things that a foolish shepherd uses, 16 because I am going to appoint a new king for the people, [one who will not take care of my people. He will be like a foolish shepherd]: [MET] He will not take care of those who are dying, those who are very young, those who have been injured, or those who do not have enough food. Instead, he will [treat them very cruelly, like a shepherd who would] [MET] kill and eat the best sheep and tear off their hoofs. 17 But terrible things will happen to that foolish/useless king who abandons the people [MET] over whom he rules. [His enemies] will strike his arm and his right eye with their swords. [The result will be that] he will have no strength in his arm, and his right eye will become completely blind."

12 [This is] a message from Yahweh concerning Israel. Yahweh is the one who stretched out the sky, who created the earth, and who (gave life to humans/caused humans to be alive). This is what he says: 2 "I will soon cause Jerusalem to be [like] [MET] a cup full [of very strong alcoholic drink], and the people of other nations who drink it will stagger around. And they will come and attack Jerusalem and [the other towns in] Judah. 3 At that time, [the armies of] all the nations will gather to attack Jerusalem, but I will cause [the leaders of] Judah to be [like] [SIM] a very heavy rock, and all who [try to] lift it will be badly injured. 4 At that time I will cause every [one of their enemies'] horses to panic, and their riders to become crazy. I [IDM] will protect the people of Judah, but I will cause all their enemies' horses to become blind. 5 Then the leaders of Judah will say to themselves, 'The people in Jerusalem are strong because the Commander of the armies of angels is their God.' 6 At that time I will enable the leaders of Judah to be like [SIM] a pan containing hot coals [that is put] in a woodpile [to set it on fire], or like [SIM] a burning torch [that is put] in a [field of] ripe grain [to set it on fire]. The leaders of Judah [and their army] will destroy the people of the surrounding nations in all directions. But [the people of] Jerusalem will remain safe. 7 And [I], Yahweh, will protect the tents of [the soldiers in other places in] Judah before [I rescue the people of Jerusalem], in order that the leaders of Jerusalem [DOU] will not be honored more than [the people in other places in] Judah [are honored]. 8 At that time, I will protect [MET] the people of Jerusalem. When that happens, even the weakest

people in Jerusalem will be [strong] like [King] David [was]. And the descendants [MTY] of David will [rule the people] like I [would], as though an angel sent from [me], Yahweh, was their leader. 9 At that time, I will prepare to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem." 10 "I, [Yahweh,] will cause the descendants [MTY] of [King] David to act very kindly and mercifully. They will look at me, [the one] who has been stabbed, and they will cry bitterly, like people cry for a firstborn son [who has died] [DOU]. 11 At that time, many people in Jerusalem will be crying bitterly, like people cried [when King Josiah was killed in the battle] at Hadad-Rimmon on the Megiddo Plain. 12 Many people in Judah will cry, each family by themselves: the male descendants of David by themselves, and their wives by themselves, the male descendants of [David's son] Nathan by themselves, and their wives by themselves, 13 the male descendants [MTY] of Levi by themselves, and their wives by themselves, the male descendants of [Levi's grandson] Shimei by themselves, and their wives by themselves, 14 and all the other members [of the kings' clans and the priests' clans] by themselves, and their wives by themselves."

13 At that time [it will be as though] [MET] there will be a fountain from which water flows continually to cleanse the descendants [MTY] of [King] David and [all] the [other] people in Jerusalem from the guilt of the sins that they have committed, [especially] from becoming unacceptable to me [by worshiping idols]. 2 The Commander of the armies of angels says, "At that time, I will prevent [people from even mentioning] the names of the idols in their country, and no one will remember them any more. I will also expel from the land all the people who falsely claim that they are prophets [DOU]. 3 If someone continues to prophesy [falsely], his parents must say to him, 'You have told lies saying that Yahweh [MTY] gave those messages to you, so you must be executed.' [So] if someone prophesies [like that], his own father and mother must stab him [and kill him]. 4 At that time, the false prophets will be ashamed [that they claimed to have received messages from me in] their visions and prophesies [that they told to people]. They will no [longer] deceive people by wearing the clothes [that prophets usually wear], clothes made of [animals'] hair. 5 [So] each of them will say, 'I am not [really] a prophet; I am a farmer, and I have been a farmer on my land ever since I was a boy!' 6 But someone, [seeing the wounds on one of those prophet's bodies, will suspect that he injured himself during rituals to worship idols, and he] will ask 'Why are those wounds on your body?' And he [will lie, saying] 'I was injured [when I was] at my friend's house.'" 7 The Commander of the armies of angels says, "[My] sword [APO] must strike [the one who is like] [MET] my shepherd, the man who is (my companion/very (close/dear) to me). When the shepherd is killed, [those who are like] [MET] his sheep will scatter. [And those who are like] [MET] my little sheep will [also] be attacked [IDM]." 8 Yahweh [also] says, "Two-thirds [of the people in Judah] will die [DOU]. [Only] one-third [of the people in Judah] will remain alive. 9 And I will test the ones that remain alive [by causing them to experience great difficulties, to find out if they will continue to worship me]. I will purify them like [MET] a man purifies gold or silver by putting it into a [very hot] fire. [Then] my people will call to me [MTY] [for help], and I will answer them. I will say [to them], 'You are my people,' and they will say, 'Yahweh is our God.'"

14 Listen! It will soon be the time when Yahweh [will judge everyone]. At that time, the possessions that were taken from you [people of Jerusalem by your enemies will be returned to you, and] will be divided among you. 2 [Before that happens,] Yahweh will cause [the armies of] many [HYP] nations to attack Jerusalem. They will capture the city and steal all the valuable things from your houses and rape the women. They will take half of the people to other countries, but the other half of the people will be allowed to remain in the city. 3 Then Yahweh will go out to fight against those nations; he will fight like [SIM] [soldiers] fight in a battle. 4 On that day, he will stand on Olive [Tree] Hill, east of Jerusalem. Olive [Tree] Hill will be split into two [parts], with a large valley between the parts. Half of the hill will move toward the north and half [will move] toward the south. 5 People will flee through that valley which extends to the other side (OR, to Azel), like [SIM] people fled when there was an earthquake during the time that King Uzziah ruled Judah. Then Yahweh my God will come with his holy [angels]. 6 At that time, there will be no light [from the sun]; it will not become cold and there will be no frost. 7 There has been no other time like that time, and only Yahweh knows when it will happen. There will be no daytime or nighttime; there will be [light continually], [even] in the evening. 8 At that time, running/fresh water will flow from Jerusalem. One stream will flow toward the east to the [Dead] Sea. The other stream will flow toward the west to the [Mediterranean] Sea. The water will flow [all the time], during (summer/the hot season) as well as in (winter/the cold season). 9 After that time, Yahweh will be the king [who rules] the entire world. [Everyone will know that] Yahweh, and only Yahweh [MTY], is the true God. 10 [At that time,] all the land [in Judah] from Geba [town at the north] to Rimmon [town far to] the south of Jerusalem, will become a plain. Jerusalem will remain raised up like it has always been. [It will extend] from the Benjamin Gate and the First Gate [northeast] to the Tower of

Hananel, and to the king's winepresses [to the southwest].
11 Many people will live there, and the city will never be
destroyed again. It will be a safe city. **12** But Yahweh will
cause the people in all the nations that attacked Jerusalem
to be afflicted by a (plague/severe illness). Their flesh will rot
while they are still standing up. Their eyes will rot in their
sockets and their tongues will rot in their mouths. **13** At that
time, Yahweh will cause many people to panic. People will
grab and attack each other. **14** [The people who live in other
places in] Judah will fight to defend Jerusalem. They will
collect the valuable things from the surrounding nations—a
lot of gold and silver and clothes. **15** The same plague [that
will afflict the people of other nations] will afflict their horses,
mules, camels, donkeys, and all the other work animals in
their (camps/places where they have set up their tents). **16**
The people of other nations who [previously] came [to fight]
against Jerusalem, all those who are still alive, will return to
Jerusalem every year to worship the King, the Commander
of the armies of angels, and to celebrate the Festival of
Living in Temporary Shelters. **17** If there are people in those
nations who do not go [to Jerusalem to worship there], rain
will not fall on their land. **18** If the people of Egypt [or any
other nation] do not go to Jerusalem, [they will not have any
rain]. And Yahweh will cause them to experience the same
plague that afflicted the [people of other] nations that did
not celebrate the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters.
19 That is how [Yahweh] will punish [the people of] Egypt
and [the people of] any [other] nation who do not go [to
Jerusalem] to celebrate the Festival of Living in Temporary
Shelters. **20** At that time, [the words] 'Dedicated to Yahweh'
will be written on the bells that are fastened to the horses.
The [cooking] pots in [the courtyard of the] temple will be
[sacred], like the bowls that are near the altar. **21** Every pot
in Jerusalem and [in other places in] Judah will be dedicated
to the Commander of the armies of angels. So everyone
who offers sacrifices [there in Jerusalem] will be able to take
some of the meat that has been brought for sacrifices, and
cook it in their own pots. And at that time, people will no
longer buy or sell things in [the courtyard of] the temple of
the Commander of the armies of angels.

Malachi

1 [This is] the message that Yahweh gave to [the prophet] Malachi to [give to the people of] Israel. **2** Yahweh says, "I have [always] loved you [Israeli people]." **3** But you reply, "In what way have you loved us?" Yahweh replies, "[This is how I loved you]: [It is true that your ancestor] Jacob was [RHQ] Esau's [younger] brother, and I loved Jacob, but I rejected Esau. I caused his hilly region to become (desolate/a place where crops did not grow). I caused the land which he possessed to become a desert where jackals/wolves live." **4** [The descendants of Esau who live in] Edom may say, "[Yes,] we have been crushed/ruined, but we will rebuild [houses] in the ruins." But the Commander of the armies of angels replies, "They may build [houses again], but I will demolish [them again]. Their [country] will be called 'The land where wicked people [live]' and [their people will be called] 'The people with whom Yahweh is angry forever'." **5** When you [Israeli] people yourselves see [what I will do to them], you will say, "[It is evident far] beyond the borders of Israel that Yahweh is [very] great!" **6** But the Commander of the armies of angels says to the priests, "Boys honor their fathers, and servants [respect] their masters. So, if I am [like your] father and your master, why [RHQ] do you not honor and respect me? You have despised me [MTY]!" But you ask, "(How/In what way) have we despised you?" **7** [Yahweh replies,] "[Instead of honoring me, you have despised me] by offering sacrifices on my altar that are unacceptable to me." Then you ask, "What sacrifices have we given that have been unacceptable to you?" [Yahweh replies,] "You think that (it does not matter/it is okay) if you do not respect my altar. **8** You offer for sacrifices animals that are blind. (Is that not wrong?/That is disgusting!) [RHQ] And you offer for sacrifices animals that are crippled or that have diseases. (Is that also not wrong?/That [also] is disgusting!) [RHQ] If you tried to give presents like that to your governor, (do you think [RHQ] that he would be pleased?/he would certainly not be pleased!) (Would he [RHQ] accept such gifts? He would certainly not accept such gifts!) [That is what] the Commander of the armies of angels says!" **9** [And he also says,] "You plead with me to be merciful to you. But you bring to me sacrifices that are not acceptable to me, so why should I be kind to you [RHQ]?" **10** The Commander of the armies of angels [also] says, "I wish/desire that one of you would shut the gates [of the temple courtyard], in order that no one could offer those worthless sacrifices. I am not pleased with you, and I will not accept the offerings that you bring to me. **11** [People of other] nations honor me [MTY] [every day], from sunrise/morning until sunset/evening. All over the world people offer incense and [other] pure/acceptable offerings to me [MTY]. [They do that] because [people among all] the nations know that I [MTY] am [very] great. **12** But you [priests show that you] despise me [by what you do]. You say, '[It is all right if] people pollute the altar by bringing sacrifices that are unacceptable.' **13** You say 'We are tired of [burning all these sacrifices on the altar].' You (turn up your noses at/act very disrespectfully toward) [me]. When you bring [to me] animals that have been stolen or ones that are crippled or that have diseases, to offer them for sacrifices, [do you think that] [RHQ] I should accept them? **14** [I will] curse anyone who [tries to] cheat [me] by solemnly promising [to bring to me a perfect] ram from his flock [of sheep] and then brings to me one that has defects. [If anyone does that, I will punish him], because I am a great king; [I am] the Commander of the armies of angels and [people of the other] nations revere me [MTY], [but you do not]!"

2 You priests, I will say something to warn you. **2** The Commander of the armies of angels says [this]: "Pay attention [to what I am saying], and [then] decide [IDM] to honor me [MTY]. If you do not do that, I will curse you, and I will curse [the things that I have given to you to] bless you. And I have already cursed them, because you have not honored [IDM] me. **3** I will punish your descendants [MET], and [it will be as though] I will splatter on your faces [some of] the material inside the stomachs of the animals that are brought to be sacrificed, and you will be thrown away with the rest of that material. **4** When that happens, you will know that I warned you like this, in order that my agreement with [you priests who are descendants of] Levi will continue [to be obeyed]. [That is what I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, am saying [to you]. **5** My agreement with [your ancestor] Levi was because I wanted the priests to live prosperously and peacefully. And that is what I have done for them. I required that they greatly respect me and revere [DOU] me. **6** They told the people that what I instructed them to do was right. And they did not tell [MTY] lies. They worked for me peacefully and loyally, and they helped many people to stop sinning. **7** What priests say [MTY] should enable more people to know [about me], and people should go to them [MTY] to be taught [what I want them to know], because priests [should] be messengers from me, the Commander of the armies of angels. **8** But, you priests have stopped doing what I wanted you to do. What you have taught people has caused many [of them] to sin. You have rejected the agreement [that I made] with [the descendants of] Levi [long ago]. **9** Therefore I have caused all the people to despise you, and I have caused you to be

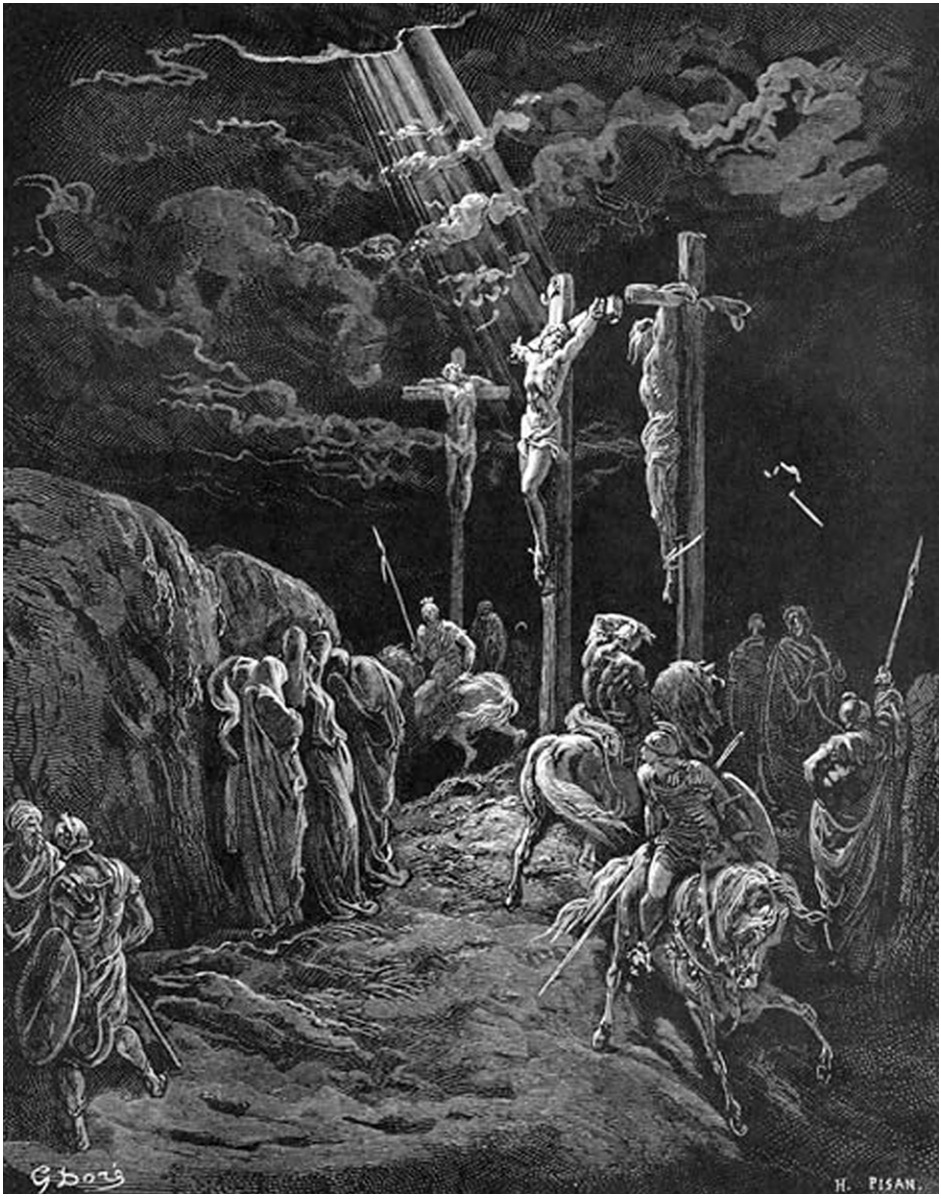
humiliated, because you have not obeyed me. When you teach [people] my commands, you do not treat all [people] equally." **10** [Now I will warn you about something else]. We all certainly [RHQ] have the same [heavenly] Father. We are certainly [RHQ] [all] created by the same God. So why are [RHQ] [some of] you disobeying/despising the agreement [that Yahweh made] with our ancestors, by not doing for each other what you said that you would do? **11** [You people of] Judah have been unfaithful [to Yahweh]. You have done detestable things in Jerusalem and in [other places] in Israel. You Israeli men have defiled the temple that Yahweh loves. [You have done that by] marrying women who worship idols. **12** I wish that Yahweh would expel from Israel every man who has done that, [even though] they [say that they are obeying] the Commander of the armies of angels by bringing offerings to him. **13** This is another thing that you do: You cover Yahweh's altar with your tears. You wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings; but he is not pleased with them. **14** You [cry out], saying, "Why does Yahweh not like our offerings?" The answer is that Yahweh heard what each of you men solemnly promised to your wives when you were young. But you men have not done what you promised your wives; you sent them away, the ones to whom you made that agreement. **15** It is certainly [RHQ] Yahweh who joined you together. Your spirits and your bodies belong to him. [So] what he wants [RHQ] from you are godly children. So make sure that each of you men remain (with/loyal to) the woman that you married when you were young. **16** Yahweh, the God to whom [we] Israelis belong, says, "I hate divorce!" [So] if you men divorce your wives, you are overwhelming them by being cruel to them. So be sure that you are (not disloyal/remain united) to your wives. [That is what] the Commander of the armies of angels says. **17** Yahweh [also says], "What you have said has caused me to become disgusted." You reply, "What have we said that caused him to become disgusted?" [The answer is that you have caused him to become disgusted] by saying that Yahweh is pleased with all those who do evil things. [You have caused him to become disgusted] by [constantly] asking, "Why does God not act fairly?"

3 The Commander of the armies of angels says [this]: "Listen! I [am about to] send my messenger who will prepare [the people to receive me] when I come. [You claim that] [IRO] you are wanting to see me, and I will suddenly come to my temple. The messenger [who will tell you about a new] agreement, the one whom you are eagerly [SAR] awaiting, is certainly going to come [to you]." **2** But will anyone [RHQ] be able to survive when he comes? Will anyone [RHQ] be able to [remain] standing in front of him? [Certainly not,] because he will be like [SIM] a blazing fire that refines/purifies [metal/gold]. He will be like [SIM] a very strong soap [that bleaches clothes]. **3** [He will be like a worker who] sits [in front of his work] to cause silver to become pure by burning all the impurities. Like [a worker refines] silver and gold, he will cause the (descendants of Levi/priests) to become pure, [in order that they will again become acceptable to] offer sacrifices that will be acceptable to him. **4** When that happens, Yahweh will [again] accept the offerings brought to him by [the people of] Jerusalem and [other places in] Judah, as [he did] previously. **5** [This is what] the Commander of the armies of angels says: "At that time, I will come to you to judge you. I will quickly testify against [all] those who practice sorcery/witchcraft, [all] who have committed adultery, and [all] liars. [I will testify] against those who have not given their workers the pay/wages that they promised, those who (oppress/treat cruelly) widows and orphans, and those who do not allow foreigners who live among you to be treated fairly. [I will testify that all] the people who do those things do not revere me." **6** "I am Yahweh, and I never change. And although you [deceive people like] your ancestor Jacob did, I have not [yet] gotten rid of you. **7** You and your ancestors have ignored my commands and you have not obeyed them. [Now] return to me; and when that happens, I will (return/do good) to you. [That is what I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, say." But you ask, "[We have never gone away from you, so] how can we return [to you]?" **8** [I reply,] "People should certainly not [RHQ] cheat God; but you people have cheated me!" You ask, "In what way did we cheat you?" [I reply,] "[You have cheated me by not bringing to me each year] (the tithes/one tenth of [all] your crops and animals) and [other] offerings [that you are required to give to me]. **9** All that you do is cursed, because all you people in this country have been cheating me. **10** [Now] bring all the tithes to the storage rooms [in the temple], in order that there will be [enough] food [for the people who serve me] there. If you do that, I, the Commander of the armies of angels, promise that I will open the windows of heaven, and pour out [from them] blessings on you. [If you bring your tithes to the temple, the blessings will be] very great, with the result that you will not have enough space to store all of them. So test me [to see if I am telling the truth]. **11** You will have abundant crops [to harvest], because I will protect them in order that they will not be harmed by locusts/insects. Your grapes will not fall from the vines [before they are ripe]. **12** When that happens, [the people of] all nations will say that [I] have blessed you, because your country will be delightful. [That is what I,] the Commander of the armies of angels, say. **13** [I,]

Yahweh, [have something else] to say [to you]. You have said terrible things about me." But you reply, "What terrible things have we said about you?" **14** [I reply], "You have said, 'It is useless [for us] to serve God. We have gained nothing [RHQ] by obeying the commands that he gave [to us] and by trying to show the Commander of the armies of angels that we are sorry [for the sins that we have committed]. **15** From now on, we will say/consider that those who are proud are [the ones whom God has] blessed. [We will say that because it seems that it is] those who do evil who become rich, and [that it is] those who try to find out how many evil things they can do without God punishing them who are not punished.'" **16** After [the people heard my message], those who revered Yahweh discussed [those things] with each other, and Yahweh listened to what they said. While Yahweh was watching, they wrote on a scroll the things that would remind them [about what they promised], and they wrote on that scroll the names of those who revered Yahweh and who [said that they] always wanted to honor him [MTY]. **17** The Commander of the armies of angels says this [about those people]: "They will be my people. At the time that I judge people, [they will be like] [MET] a special treasure to me. I will be kind to them, like [SIM] fathers are kind to their sons who obey them. **18** When that happens, you will again see that [the manner in which I treat] righteous people is different from [the manner in which I treat] wicked people. [You will see that the manner in which I act toward] those who serve me is different from [the manner in which I act toward] those who do not."

4 [This is also what] the Commander of the armies of angels says: "There will be a time that I will judge [and punish] people. [When that happens, it will be] like [SIM] a very hot furnace. At that time, all the proud and wicked people will be burned up like [MET] stubble burns. They will be burned up completely, [like] roots and branches [and everything else on a tree burns completely in a very hot fire]. **2** But [as for] you who revere me [MTY], [the one who will save you will come to you] like [MET] [the sun shines in the morning, and enable you to] become righteous (OR, [do what is] righteous); he will restore you [and protect you like a bird protects its chicks] [MET] under its wings. [When he comes,] you will [be very joyful], like [SIM] calves that go out from a barn into the pasture leaping [joyfully]. **3** At the time when I judge people, you will tread on wicked people as though [SIM] they were the dirt under your feet. [That is what I], the Commander of the armies of angels, promise. **4** Be sure to obey the laws that I gave to Moses, who served me [well]. [Obey all] the commandments and regulations that I gave him on Sinai [Mountain], for all [you people of] Israel [to obey.] **5** Listen [to this: Some day] I will send to you the prophet Elijah. [He will arrive] before the great and dreadful/terrible day when [I], Yahweh, [will judge and punish people]. **6** Because of what he [preaches], parents and their children will [love] each other [again] [IDM]. If that does not happen, I will come and curse your country [and destroy it]."

NEW TESTAMENT



The Crucifixion

"Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.'
Dividing his garments among them, they cast lots."
Luke 23:34

Matthew

1 [This is] the record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah,
the descendant of [King] David and of Abraham, [from
whom all we Jews have descended]. **2** Abraham was the
father of Isaac. Isaac was the father of Jacob. Jacob was the
father of Judah and Judah's [older and younger] brothers. **3**
Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah, [and their mother]
was Tamar. Perez was the father of Hezron. Hezron was
the father of Ram. **4** Ram was the father of Amminadab.
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was the
father of Salmon. **5** Salmon and his wife Rahab, [a non-
Jewish woman], were the parents of Boaz. Boaz was the
father of Obed. [Obed's mother was] Ruth, [another non-
Jewish woman]. Obed was the father of Jesse. **6** Jesse was
the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon.
[Solomon's mother was previously married to] Uriah. **7**
Solomon was the father of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the
father of Abijah. Abijah was the father of Asaph. **8** Asaph
was the father of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat was the father
of Jehoram. Jehoram was an ancestor of Uzziah. **9** Uzziah
was the father of Jotham. Jotham was the father of Ahaz.
Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah. **10** Hezekiah was the father
of Manasseh. Manasseh was the father of Amon. Amon
was the father of Josiah. **11** Josiah was the grandfather of
Jeconiah and Jeconiah's brothers. [They lived] at the time
when the [Babylonian army] took the Israelites as captives
to the [country of] Babylon. **12** After the Babylonians took
the Israelites to Babylon, Jeconiah became the father of
Shealtiel. Shealtiel was the grandfather of Zerubbabel. **13**
Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud. Abiud was the father of
Eliakim. **14** Eliakim was the father of Azor. Azor was the
father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Akim. **15** Akim
was the father of Eliud. Eliud was the father of Eleazar.
Eleazar was the father of Matthan. Matthan was the father
of Jacob. **16** Jacob was the father of Joseph. Joseph was
Mary's husband, and Mary was Jesus' mother. Jesus is
the one who is called {whom we call} the Messiah. **17** [As
you can calculate, I have grouped Jesus'] ancestors [as
follows:] There was [a succession of] 14 of them from [the
time when] Abraham [lived] to [the time when King] David
[lived]. There was [a succession of] 14 of them from [the
time when] David [lived] to [the time when] the [Israelites
were taken] {[the Babylonian army took the Israelites]} away
to Babylon. There was [a succession of] 14 of them from
[the time when the Israelites were taken] {[the Babylonian
army took the Israelites]} away to Babylon until [the time
when] the Messiah [was born]. **18** This is [the account of
what happened just before] Jesus Christ was born. Mary,
his mother, {had publicly promised Joseph that she would
marry him} had been publicly promised to marry Joseph.
Before they began to sleep together, [Mary] realized that she
was pregnant. [It was the power of] the Holy Spirit that had
caused her to become pregnant. **19** Joseph, her [future]
husband, was a man who obeyed God's commands. [One
of those commands was that men must divorce women
who had acted immorally. So when Joseph learned that
Mary was pregnant, he assumed that she was pregnant as
a result of her acting immorally]. So he decided to break
the engagement. But because he did not want to shame
her publicly, he decided to do it privately. **20** While he was
seriously considering this, much to his surprise, in a dream
he saw an angel whom the Lord [had sent]. The angel
said, "Joseph, descendant of [King] David, do not be afraid
that [you(sg) would be doing wrong if you(sg) would marry]
Mary. Instead, [begin to treat her] as your wife, because the
Holy Spirit, [not a man], has caused her to be pregnant. **21**
She will give birth to a son. Since it is he who will cause
that his people will be saved from [the guilt of] their having
sinned, name [the baby] Jesus, [which means 'the Lord
saves people']." **22** All this happened as a result of what the
Lord told the prophet [Isaiah to write long ago about what
was going to happen]. This is what Isaiah wrote: **23** "Listen,
a virgin will become pregnant and will give birth to a son.
They will call him Emmanuel." Emmanuel means 'God is
with us'. **24** When Joseph got up from sleep, he did what the
angel whom the Lord [had sent] commanded him to do. He
took [Mary] home to be his wife. **25** But he did not have
sexual relations with her until she had given birth to a son.
And [Joseph] named him Jesus.

2 Jesus was born in Bethlehem [town] in Judea [province]
during the time [MTY] that King Herod [the Great ruled
there. Some time] after Jesus was born, some men who
studied the stars and who lived in a [country] east [of Judea]
came to Jerusalem. **2** They asked [people], "Where is the
one who has been born [in order that he might be] the king of
[you] Jews? [We believe that your new king] has been born,
because we have seen the star [that we believe indicated
that] he has been [born]. [We saw it while we were in our
country] east [of here]. So we have come to worship him." **3**
When King Herod heard [what those men were asking], he
became worried [that someone else might be proclaimed]
{[people might proclaim someone else]} [king of the Jews
to replace him]. Many [of the people] of Jerusalem [MTY,
HYP] [also] became worried [because they were afraid of
what King Herod might do]. **4** Then Herod gathered together
all the ruling priests and men who taught the people the
[Jewish] laws and he asked them where [the prophets had

predicted that] the Messiah was to be born. **5** They said to him, "[He will be born] in Bethlehem, [here] in Judea [province], because it was written by the prophet [Micah] {the prophet [Micah] wrote} [long ago what God said]: **6** 'You [who live in] Bethlehem [APO], in Judea [province], your town is certainly very important [LIT], because a man from your [town] will become a ruler. He will guide my people [who live in] Israel.'" **7** Then [King] Herod secretly summoned those men who studied the stars. He asked them exactly when the star [first] appeared. [By what they told him, he was able to know the approximate age of the baby]. **8** Then he [concealed what he really planned to do and] said to them, "Go to Bethlehem and inquire thoroughly [where] the infant is. When you have found him, [come back and] report to me so that I, myself, can go [there and] worship him, too." **9** After the men heard what the king [told them], they went [toward Bethlehem]. To their surprise, the star that they had seen while they were in the eastern [country] went ahead of them [again] until it stood above [the house] where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they rejoiced greatly [and followed it]. **11** They [found] the house and entered it and saw the child and his mother, Mary. They bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasure [boxes] [MTY] and they gave gold, [costly] frankincense, and myrrh to him. **12** [Because] God [knew that King Herod planned to kill Jesus], in a dream the men who studied the stars were warned {he warned the men who studied the stars} that they should not return to [King] Herod. So they returned to their country, [but instead of traveling back on the same road, they] went on a different road. **13** After the men who studied the stars left [Bethlehem], an angel [from] the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. He said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you [(sg) that you should leave], because [King] Herod is about [to send soldiers] to look for the child so that they can kill him." **14** So Joseph got up, he took the child and his mother [that] night, and they fled to Egypt. **15** They stayed there until [King] Herod died, [and then they left Egypt]. By doing that, it was {they} fulfilled what the prophet [Hosea] wrote, which had been said by the Lord {which the Lord had said}, I have told my son to come out of Egypt. **16** [While King] Herod [was still living], because he realized that he had been tricked by the men who studied the stars {the men who studied the stars had tricked him}, he became furious. Then, [assuming that Jesus was still in Bethlehem or the surrounding regions], Herod sent [soldiers there] to kill all the boy babies two years old and younger. [Herod calculated how old the baby was], according to what the men who studied the stars told him [about when the star first appeared]. **17** [Because Bethlehem and Ramah towns were in the area where the descendants of Jacob's wife Rachel lived, when soldiers killed the infant boys], they fulfilled what Jeremiah the prophet wrote, **18** [Women] in Ramah were weeping and wailing loudly. [Women who were the descendants] of Rachel, [the ancestor of the women there] [SYN], were grieving for [what happened to] their children. [Even though people tried to comfort them], they would not be comforted {stop mourning}, because their children were dead. **19** After Herod died [and while Joseph and his family were still in Egypt], an angel that the Lord [had sent] appeared to Joseph in Egypt in a dream. **20** He said to Joseph, "Take the child and his mother and go back to Israel [to live], because the people who were looking for the child [in order to kill him] have died." **21** So Joseph took the child and his mother, and they went back to Israel. **22** When Joseph heard that Archaelaus now ruled in Judea [district] instead of his father, [King] Herod [the Great], he was afraid to go there. Because he was warned {[God] warned Joseph} in a dream [that it was still dangerous for them to live in Judea], he [and Mary and Jesus] went to Galilee [District] **23** to Nazareth [to live there]. The result was that what had been said by the ancient prophets {what the ancient prophets had said} [about the Messiah], that he would be called {people would call him} a Nazareth-man, was fulfilled {came true}.

3 While [Jesus was still in Nazareth town], John, [whom the people called] the Baptizer, went to a desolate place in Judea [district]. **2** He was preaching [to the people who came there]. He kept saying, "[You need to] turn away from your sinful behavior, because God [MET] will soon begin to rule [over people, and he will reject you if you do not turn away from your sinful life]." **3** John was the person who [fulfilled] what was said by Isaiah the prophet {what Isaiah the prophet [predicted] when he said}, long ago: In a desolate area ([people will hear someone/someone will be heard]) shouting [to the people who pass by], Prepare [yourselves to receive] the Lord when he comes! [Make yourselves ready so that you will be prepared when he comes] [MET, DOU], just like people [improve and] straighten out the road [for an important official!] **4** John wore [coarse] clothing made from camel's hair. And [as the prophet Elijah did long ago], he wore a leather belt around his waist. His food was [only] grasshoppers and honey [that he found] in that desolate area. **5** [People who lived in] Jerusalem [city] [MTY], many [HYP] [people who lived in other places in] Judea [district] [MTY], and many [HYP] [people who lived in] the area around the Jordan [River] [MTY] came to John [to hear him preach]. **6** After [they heard him tell them to turn away from their sinful behavior], they [openly] confessed their sins, and

as a result they were baptized by John {John baptized them} in the Jordan River. 7 After John noted that many men of the Pharisee [religious group] and of the Sadducee [religious group] were coming [to him] to be baptized {in order that he would baptize them}, he said to them, "You people are [evil like poisonous] snakes [MET]! I warn you that God will some day punish [MTY] everyone who sins. (And do not think that you can escape from his punishing you [MTY] [if you do not turn from your sinful behavior]!/Did someone tell you that you can escape from his punishing you [MTY] [if you do not turn from your sinful behavior]?) [RHQ] 8 Do what is appropriate [IDM] for people who have truly turned away from their sinful behavior [before you come to me in order to be baptized] {[that I baptize you]}. 9 [God promised to give Abraham many descendants. In order to fulfill that promise], God [does not need you! I] tell you that he can change these stones to make them descendants of Abraham. So do not start to say to yourselves, 'Since we are descendants of [our ancestor] Abraham, [God will not punish us even though we have sinned].' 10 [God is] ready [to punish you if you do not turn away from your sinful behavior, just like] a man who lays his axe at the roots of a [fruit] tree [in order to] chop it down and throw it into the fire if it does not produce good fruit [MET]." 11 "As for me, I [am not very important, because] I baptize you [only] with water. I [baptize you] because of your feeling sorry that you have sinned. But someone else will come soon who is very great; [he will do powerful deeds] (OR, [act powerfully]). [Because he is] superior to me, I am not worthy [even to do a menial task for him, such as] to carry his sandals. He will put [his] Holy Spirit [within] you [to truly change] the way you live [MET], and [he will judge others of you and punish you in] the fire [in hell]. **(questioned)** 12 [He is like a farmer who wants to clear away the grain that is on the ground where it has been threshed] {[they have threshed it]}. [That farmer uses a] huge fork to throw the grain into the air [to separate the wheat from the chaff] [MET], and then he cleans up the threshing area. [Similarly], God will [separate righteous people from the evil people like a farmer who] gathers the wheat into his storage area, and then [God] will burn the [people who are like] chaff with a fire that will never be put out [MET]." 13 During that time, Jesus went from Galilee [District] to the Jordan [River], where John was. [He did that] in order to be baptized by John {in order to ask that John would baptize him}. 14 [When Jesus asked John to baptize him], John objected, saying, "I need to be baptized by you {you to baptize me} [because you are superior to me. Since you are not a sinner], ([you(sg)] should not come to me [to be baptized by me] {[to ask that I baptize you(sg)]}!/why do you come to me [to be baptized by me] {[ask that I baptize you(sg)]} [RHQ]?)" 15 But Jesus said to him, "Baptize me at this time, because in this way we [two] will do [everything that God] requires." Then John consented to baptize him. 16 After he was baptized {John baptized Jesus}, Jesus immediately came up out of the water. Just then, [it was as though] the sky was opened {split apart}. Then [Jesus] saw God's Spirit coming down upon him. He came in the form of a dove. 17 Then [God] [SYN] spoke from heaven, saying, "This is my Son. I love him. I am very pleased with him."

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit {[God's] Spirit led Jesus} into a desolate area to be tempted by the devil {in order that the devil would tempt him}. 2 After he did not eat food for 40 days, and 40 nights. he was hungry. 3 [Satan], the tempter, came to him and said, "Because you [claim that you have a relationship with] God [as] a son [has with his father] [MET], [prove it] by commanding these stones to become bread [so that you can eat them]!" 4 But Jesus said [to him], "[No! I will not change stones into bread, because] it is written [in the Scriptures] {in the Scriptures [Moses] wrote}, ['Eating] food [SYN] [sustains] people [physically, but] it does not sustain them [spiritually] [SYN]. Instead, [paying attention to] everything that God has spoken [to them is what sustains people spiritually]." 5 Then the devil took Jesus to [Jerusalem], the city that is dedicated to God. He set him on the highest part of the Temple, 6 and said to him, "Because you [claim that you have a relationship with] God [as] a son [has with his father, prove it by] jumping down [to the ground. You will not be hurt], because it is written [in the Scriptures], ['God] will command his angels to protect you. They will lift you up in their hands [when you are falling], in order that [you will not get hurt]. You will not [even] strike your foot on a stone.'" 7 But Jesus said, "[No! I] will not [jump down, because] in another place [in the Scriptures] it is written {there are these words that [Moses] wrote}: 'Do not [try to] test the Lord your God [to see if he will prevent something bad from happening to you when you do something foolish!]'" 8 Then the devil took him on [top of] a very high mountain. There he showed him all the nations in the world and the magnificent things in those nations. 9 And then he said to him, "I will [let you rule all these nations and] give you the magnificent things in them if you bow down and worship me." 10 But Jesus said to him, "[No, I will not worship you], Satan, [so] go away! It is written in the Scriptures, 'It is the Lord your God whom you [(pl)] must worship, and you [(pl)] must serve only him!'" 11 Then the devil went away, and right away, angels came to Jesus and took care of him. 12 [While] Jesus [was in Judea, John the Baptizer's disciples] told him that John had been put in

prison and kept there {that [Herod Antipas] had put John [the Baptizer] in prison [and kept him there]}. [So] Jesus returned to Galilee [District]. While he was in Galilee, he first went to Nazareth [town]. **13** Then he left Nazareth and went to Capernaum [city in order to live there. Capernaum is located beside Galilee Lake in the region which was formerly] the regions of [the tribes of] Zebulun and Naphtali. **14** [One reason that he went there] was so that [these words] that were written by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled {so that he might fulfill these words that the prophet Isaiah wrote}: **15** "Zebulun region and Naphtali region [are on] the road [which is] near Galilee [Lake and] on the eastern side of the Jordan [River. They are] the regions in Galilee [District where many] non-Jews [are living]. **16** [Although the people there will be like] people who sit in a dark place [MET], [they will suddenly perceive clearly a new teaching, as] people who have seen a big light shining on them [MET] perceive everything clearly. [The] people who are located in a dangerous [MET] region [will suddenly perceive clearly what God teaches], as people on whom a light shines perceive things clearly [MET, DOU]. **17** From that time, [while] Jesus was [in Capernaum city, he began to preach this to people: "God [MTY/EUP] will very soon begin to rule, and he will judge you when he rules]. So you [(pl)] need to turn from your sinful ways [so that God will not punish you]." **18** [One day] while Jesus was walking by Galilee Lake, he saw two men, Simon, who was [later] called Peter, and Andrew, his [younger] brother. They were casting their [fishing] net into the lake because they [earned money by] catching [and selling] fish. **19** He said to them, "[Just like you have been] gathering fish, come with me and I will teach you how to gather people [to become my disciples]." [MET] **20** They immediately left [the work that they were doing with] their [fishing] nets, and they went with him. **21** As [the three of them] walked on from there, Jesus saw two other men, James, and John, the [younger] brother of James. [They were] in their boat with Zebedee, their father, mending their [fishing] nets. Jesus told them that [they should leave their work and] go with him. **22** They immediately left their fishing boat and their father, and they went with Jesus. **23** Jesus went [with those four men] throughout all of Galilee [District]. He was teaching [the people] in the buildings where we Jews worship God. He was preaching the good message that tells how to become members of the group of people whose lives God rules over. He was also healing all [the Galileans] who had diseases or who were sick. **24** When people who lived in other parts of Syria [District] heard [PRS] what he was doing, they brought to him people who suffered from illnesses, people who suffered from many kinds of diseases, people who [suffered from] severe pains, people who were controlled by demons {whom demons controlled}, people who were epileptics, and people who were paralyzed. And Jesus healed them all. **25** Then crowds started to go with him. [They were people from] Galilee [District], (from the Decapolis/from the Ten Towns [area]), from Jerusalem [city], from other [parts of] Judea [district], and from areas east of the Jordan [River].

5 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a hillside. He sat down [in order to teach] his disciples. They came near to him [to listen to him]. **2** Then he began to teach them by saying, **3** [God] is pleased with people who recognize that they have a spiritual [need]; he will allow them to be the people whose lives he rules over. **4** [God] is pleased with people who mourn [because they have sinned;] they will be encouraged {he will encourage them.} **5** [God] is pleased with people who are meek; they will inherit the earth [that God will recreate]. **6** [God] is pleased with people who sincerely [desire to live] righteously [just like they] desire to eat and drink [MET]; they will be enabled {he will enable them} to do all that he desires [MET]. **7** [God] is pleased with people who act mercifully; he will act mercifully to them. **8** [God] is pleased with people who think only about that which pleases him; [some day] they will [be where] God is and will see him. **9** [God] is pleased with people who help other people to live peacefully; they will be considered to be {he will consider that they are} his children [MET]. **10** [God is pleased with] people to whom evil things are done {to whom [other people] do evil things} because they [conducted themselves] righteously; he will allow them to be where he rules over people. **11** [God is pleased with] you when [other] people insult you, when [other people] do evil things to you and when [other people] say falsely [that] you are evil because [you believe in] me. **12** [When that happens], rejoice and be glad [DOU], because [God will give] you a great reward in heaven. [God will think highly of you], just like [he thought highly of] the prophets whom your [ancestors persecuted] long ago. **13** "You are [able to influence] evil [people] [MTY] [and improve the way they live in order that they do not become more evil, just like] salt [is able to improve the flavor of food and to preserve it] [MET] [from spoiling]. Salt that no longer tastes salty cannot become salty again [RHQ]. As a result, that salt becomes useless. It is rejected by people, thrown on the ground, and walked on {People reject it, throw it on the ground and walk on it} [MET]. [Similarly, if the way you live no longer influences people to live in a godly manner, God will reject you]. **14** You [enable] evil [people] [MTY] [to perceive God's truth as] a light [enables people to perceive what is around them. Just like] everyone can see [LIT] [the lights of] a city on a hill [MET], [other people can

see what you do]. 15 After people light a lamp, they never put it under a basket. Instead, [they put it] on a lampstand in their houses in order that it can shine on everyone there. 16 [Similarly], you need to do [what is right] [MET] in such a manner that other people can see the good deeds that you do, and as a result they will praise your Father [who is] in heaven." 17 "I came to earth, not to annul the laws [that God gave Moses] or [what] the prophets [MTY] [wrote]. Instead, I [came] to cause to happen [what the authors of those books predicted would happen]. So do not think any longer that I have come [to earth] in order that I might annul [what they wrote]. 18 Keep this in mind: [Every] point of those laws, [including those points that seem] least important, and even the smallest details of the laws [MTY] will surely be in effect [HYP, LIT] until the heavens and the earth disappear and until all [that God told their authors to write] happens. 19 Since [all God's laws are important], if anyone disobeys any of those commandments, [even if it would be] one of the least [important ones], and if that person teaches people [to disobey any of those commandments], it will be said {[God] will say} that that person is the least [important] of those in the place where [EUP] God rules. But those who obey [those commandments] and teach [other people to obey them, it will be said] {[God] will say} that they are very important among those that God rules. 20 Keep this in mind: [You assume that] the Pharisees and the men who teach our laws [faithfully obey] what God commands. But if you do not obey those laws better than they obey them, you will by no means enter the place where God rules." 21 "You have heard [your religious teachers say] that it was said {that [Moses] said} to your ancestors, 'Do not murder [anyone.' This implied that] if someone murders [another person], the judge will condemn that person [and] sentence him to be [executed] {[say that someone must execute him]}. 22 But what I say to you is this: [If you are] angry with someone, [God] will judge you. If you say to someone, '[You are worthless],' the Jewish Council will judge you. If you [hate someone], and say to them 'You fool!' you. yourself, will be in danger of being thrown into the fires in hell. **(Geenna g1067)** 23 So, when you take your gift [for God] to the altar, if you remember that you have offended someone, 24 leave your gift by the altar, and first go [to the person you have offended]. Tell that person that you are sorry for what you have done, and ask that person to forgive you. Then go back and offer your gift [to God]. 25 [Also], when a fellow citizen [takes you to court in order to] accuse you, settle accounts with that person quickly while you are walking with that person [to court]. Do that [while there still is time to do so] in order that he will not take you to the judge, [because if] the judge [favors the person who is accusing you, he will declare that you are guilty and send you] to the prison guard, and the prison guard will put you in prison. 26 Keep this in mind: [If you go to prison], you will never get out [because you will never be able to] pay all that the judge says that you owe [MET]. [And remember also that] you [ought to settle accounts with God before you die, too]." 27 "You have heard [God's] commandment, 'Do not commit adultery.' 28 But what I say to you is this: If a man only looks at a woman desiring to have sex with her, [God considers that] his doing that [MET] is sin. 29 If because of what you see [MTY] you [are tempted to] sin, [stop looking at those things! Even if you have to] gouge out one of your eyes and throw it away [HYP] [to avoid sinning, do it!] It is good [that you not sin and] as a result [go to heaven, even though while you are still here on earth] you lack one [or both of] your eyes. But it is not good [that you continue to have two eyes and sin and, as a result, God] sends your whole body to hell. **(Geenna g1067)** 30 If you are [tempted to] use one of your hands to sin [MTY], [stop using your hand. Even if you have to] cut your hand off and throw it away [to avoid sinning, do it] [HYP]! It is good [that you do not sin and as a result you go to heaven, even though while you are still here on earth] you lack one [or both] of your [hands]. But it is not good [that you sin and, as a result, God] sends your whole body to hell." **(Geenna g1067)** 31 "It is written {[Moses] wrote}, 'If a man is divorcing his wife, he should write a document [on which he states that he is] divorcing her.' 32 But [now listen to what] I say to you: [A man] may [divorce his wife] only if she has committed adultery, [and not for any other reason]. If a man divorces his wife [for any other reason, and he has sex with another woman], he makes his wife become one against whom he has committed adultery, [because in God's estimation she still is his wife]. Also, if a man marries a woman who is divorced {whose husband has divorced her}, [God considers] him [guilty of] committing adultery." 33 "You have also heard [your religious teachers say] that it was written {that [Moses] wrote} to your ancestors, 'Make sure that you do what you promised the Lord that you would do!' [DOU] 34 But [now listen to what] I say to you: Never promise to do anything and then ask a superior being to affirm [that what you are saying will happen. For example, do] not [promise that you will give something and then ask spiritual beings in] heaven [MTY] [to affirm that you will do it], because heaven is where God [sits] on his throne [MTY] [to rule over people]. 35 [Also, do] not [promise that you will give something and then ask spiritual beings] on earth [MTY] [to affirm that you will do it], because the earth is where God rests his feet [MET]. [Also, do] not [promise that you will do something and ask religious authorities] in Jerusalem

[to affirm that you will do it], because Jerusalem is the city where [God], the great King [rules]. **36** [Also, do not promise that you will do something and then say that] your head [should be cut off] {[someone should cut off] your head} [if you do not do it]. You are not [even] able to [change the color of the hair of your head by] making one [black] hair white or one [white] hair black. **37** [If you talk about doing something], just say 'Yes, I [will do it],' or 'No, I [will not do it].' [If you say] anything more than that, it is from [Satan], the Evil One." **38** "You have heard [your religious teachers say] that [it is written] {[Moses wrote]}, '[Retaliate like this]: [If someone damages] one of your eyes, [someone should damage] one of that person's eyes. [If someone damages] one of your teeth, [someone should damage] one of that person's teeth.' **39** But [now listen to what] I say to you: Do not take revenge for evil [deeds done] {[that other people do]} [to you]. Instead, if someone [insults you by] striking you on one cheek, turn your other cheek toward that person [in order that he can strike it also]. **40** If someone wants to sue you and take your (inner garment/shirt), give him your (outer garment/coat) also. **41** If a [military authority] compels you to go with him one mile [and carry his gear], go with him two miles [and carry his gear]. **42** Also, if someone asks you for [something], give [him what he is asking for]. If someone requests you to lend him [something], do not refuse [to lend it to him]." **43** "You have heard [your religious teachers say that it is written that Moses wrote], 'Love the citizens of your country and hate your enemies.' **44** But [now listen to what] I say to you: Love your enemies [as well as your friends], and pray for those who cause you to suffer. **45** Do that in order to imitate what [God], your Father [who is] in heaven, does. He desires that you [MET] do [like he does]. [He acts kindly to all people. For example, he causes] the sun to shine [equally] on wicked [people] and on good [people], and [he sends] rain [both] on righteous [people] and on unrighteous [people]. **46** If you love [only] the people who love you, ([do not expect God to] reward you [in heaven]!/will [God] reward you [in heaven]?) [RHQ] [This is based on the fact that everyone], even the tax collectors, [who you think are very great sinners], love [RHQ] those who love them. [If you act like them], ([you are not any different from tax collectors!/in what way are you different from tax collectors]?) [RHQ] **47** If you want [God] to bless only your friends, (you are not acting any better than other people!/are you acting any better than other people?) [RHQ] Even the non-Jews, [who you think sin very much] (OR, [you think are unacceptable to God]), want God to bless their friends [RHQ], [but God does not reward them for that]. **48** [You need to love those who do not love you], and in that way become perfect as [God] your Father, [who is] in heaven, is perfect."

6 "When you do your good deeds, make certain that you do not do them when other people are watching so that they may see you [and think highly of you]. If [you do good deeds merely in order that other people may think highly of you, God], your Father who is in heaven, will not give you any reward. **2** So, whenever you give something to the poor, do not [announce it as people announce something that they want other people to know about] by playing a [fanfare] on a trumpet [MET]. That is what the hypocrites do (in the synagogues/in the Jewish meeting places) and on the main roads in order that people might [see what they do and] praise them. Keep this in mind: [People praise those hypocrites], [but] that is the [only] reward they will receive! **3** Instead [of doing as they do], when you give something to the poor, do not let other people know that you are doing that [MET]. **4** In that way, you will be giving to the poor secretly. [As a result God], your Father who observes [you] while no one else sees [you], will reward you. **5** Also when you pray, do not do what the hypocrites do. They like to stand in the Jewish meeting places and on the corners of the main streets to pray, in order that other people will see them [and think highly of them]. Keep this in mind: [People praise them, but] that is the [only] reward they will get. **6** But as for you, when you pray, go into your private room and close the door in order to pray to [God], your Father, whom no one can see. He observes you where no one else observes you, and he will reward you. **7** When you pray, do not repeat words many times as the people who do not know God do [when they pray. They repeat meaningless words] because they think that if they use many words, their gods will listen to them and give them [what they ask for]. **8** Do not [repeat words] as they do, because [God] your Father knows what you need before you ask him. **9** So pray [things] like this: Father, [you who are] in heaven, we [(exc)] desire that you be honored/revered {that people honor/revere you}. **10** We [(exc)] desire that people let you rule [over their lives]. We(exc) want [people who live] on the earth to do what you desire, as those who live in heaven [do what you want them to do]. **11** Give us [(exc)] each day the food [SYN] that we [(exc) need for] that day. **12** Forgive our sins just like we [(exc)] have forgiven the people who sin against us [(exc)]. **13** Do not let us(exc) do wrong things when we(exc) are tempted {someone or something tempts us}, and rescue us [(exc)] when Satan the evil one tempts us to do evil things." **14** "[Forgive the people who sin against you], because, if you forgive other people, [God], your Father who is in heaven, will forgive your [sins]. **15** But if you do not

forgive other people, neither will God forgive your sins." **16** "When you abstain from eating food [in order to please God], do not look sad as the hypocrites look. They make their faces appear sad in order that people will see that they are abstaining from food [and will think highly of them]. Keep this in mind: [People will think highly of those people for that], but [that is the only] reward those people will get! **17** Instead, [each of] you, when you abstain from food, should comb your hair and wash your face [as usual], **18** in order that other people will not notice that you are fasting [because you will look as you always do]. But [God], your Father, whom no one can see, [will observe that you are abstaining from food. God] your Father sees [you] even though no one else sees [you], and he will reward you." **19** "Do not [selfishly] accumulate large quantities of money and material goods for yourselves on [this] earth, because [the earth is where everything is destroyed. For example], on earth termites ruin things, and things rust, and thieves enter [buildings] and steal things. **20** Instead, do [deeds that will please God. Your doing such deeds will be like] storing treasures in heaven [MET]. [Nothing perishes in heaven]. In heaven no termites ruin [things], nothing rusts, and thieves do not enter buildings and steal. **21** [Remember that] the things [that you think are the most] valuable are [the things that] you will be constantly concerned about [MET]. [So if you want to be storing treasures in heaven], you [need to be] constantly thinking [about God and heaven], [instead of your earthly possessions]." **22** "Your eyes are [like] a lamp [MET] for your body, because they enable you to see things. So if your eyes are healthy, you are able to see everything well [MET]. [Similarly, if you are generous with your money and other possessions, you will be able to know much of what God wants you to know] [MET]. **23** But if your eyes are bad, you are not able to see things well. And if that continues, the time will come when you will not be able to see at all. You will be in complete darkness [MET]. [Similarly, if you continue to be greedy, you will be in spiritual darkness. If all that your eyes can see and your mind can think about involves your greedily desiring material possessions, all that you do will be evil] [MET]." **24** "No one is able to serve two [different] bosses [at the same time]. If [he tried to do that], he would dislike one of them and love the other one, or he would be loyal to one of them and despise the other one [DOU]. [Similarly], you cannot [devote your life to] worshipping God and [worshipping] money and material goods [at the same time]." **25** "Because [you should be concerned about what God thinks is important and not about material goods, I] tell you that you should not worry about [things that you need in order to] live. [Do not worry] about whether you will have [enough food] to eat, and [something] to drink, or [enough] clothes to wear. It is important to have [sufficient] food [and drink] and clothing, but the way you conduct your lives is much more important [RHQ]. **26** Look at the birds. They do not plant [seeds, and they do not] harvest [crops] and gather them into barns. [But they always have food to eat because God], your Father who is in heaven, provides food for them. And you are certainly worth a lot more than birds [RHQ]! [So you can be assured that God will supply what you need!] **27** (None of you can, just by worrying, [add time to your life]./Can any of you, just by worrying, [add time to your life]?) [RHQ] [You cannot] add [even] one minute to your life! [So you should not worry about things such as food and clothing!] **28** You should also not worry about [whether you will have enough] clothes [to wear] [RHQ]. Think about the way flowers [grow] in the fields. They do not work [to earn money], and they do not make their own clothes. **29** But I tell you that even though [King] Solomon, who [lived long ago], [wore very beautiful clothes], his clothes were not as beautiful as one of those [flowers]. **30** God makes the wild plants very beautiful, [but they grow] in the field [for only a short time]. One day they grow, and the next day they are thrown into an oven {someone [cuts them and] throws them into an oven} [to be burned to make heat for baking bread. But you are more important to God than wild plants are, and you live much longer]. So (God will certainly provide clothes for you who [live a long time but] trust him so little!/will not God surely very adequately clothe you, [who live a long time but] trust him so little?) [RHQ] **31** Because of God's caring for you, do not worry and say, 'Will we have anything to eat?' or 'Will we have anything to drink?' or 'Will we have clothes to wear?' [RHQ] **32** Those who do not know God are always worrying about things like that. But God, your Father who is in heaven, knows that you need all those things, [so you should not worry about them]. **33** Instead, the most important thing you should be concerned about is to let [God] completely direct your life, and to strive [to live] righteously. [If you do that], all the things that you [need] will be given to you {God will give you all the things [that you need]}. **34** So [each day] do not be worried about what will happen to you the next day, because [when] that day [PRS] comes, [you] will be concerned about [what happens during] that day. You will have enough to be concerned about each day. [So do not worry ahead of time]."

7 "Do not talk about how sinfully others have acted, in order that God will not say how sinfully you have acted. **2** If you condemn [other people], [God] will condemn you. To the same extent that you condemn others, you will be condemned {[God] will condemn you}. **3** (None of you

should be concerned [about someone else's small faults] [MET]!/Why should any of you be concerned [about someone else's small faults]?) [MET, RHQ] [That would be like noticing] a speck in that person's eye. But you should [be concerned about your own big faults. They are like] [MET] planks in your own eye, which you do not notice. **4** (You should not say to other people [about their minor faults], 'Let me remove the specks from your eyes!'/Why do you say to other people [about their minor faults], 'Let me remove the specks from your eyes?') [RHQ] [You should not say that] if a plank is still in your own eye [MET]. **5** You hypocrite, [stop committing your own sins! That will be like] removing the plank from your own eye [MET]. Then, as a result, you will be able to perceive things spiritually so that you can help other people get rid of the [faults] [MET] [that are like] specks in their eyes." **6** "You do not give holy things to dogs [that would ignore those things] and attack you [CHI]. You do not throw pearls in front of hogs, [because they would just ignore them] and trample them. [Similarly], do not give [precious spiritual truth to people you know will not value it but instead will do evil things to you]." **7** "Keep asking [God for what you need]. If you do that, [he] will give it to you. Confidently keep [expecting God to give you the things that you need, and he will give them to you. It will be like] [MET] looking for what you need and finding it. Keep on [praying persistently to God. Then God will answer you. It will be like] [MET] knocking [on a door in order to enter a room]. And the way will be opened {[God] will open the way} for you [to get what you pray for]. **8** Remember that [God] will give things to everyone who continues to ask [him for them]. [He] will give things to whoever confidently keeps asking. [He] will open [the way] for people [to get the things that they keep persistently praying for]. **9** (No man among you would give a stone to his son if his son were to ask for bread./Would anyone among you give a stone to his son if his son were to ask for bread?) [RHQ] **10** Likewise, (no man would give a [poisonous] snake to his son if his son would ask for a fish./would anyone give a [poisonous] snake to his son if his son would ask for a fish?) [RHQ] **11** You, who are evil, know how to give good things to your children. So [God], your Father who is in heaven, will certainly give good things to the people who ask him." **12** "So in whatever way you want others to act toward you [(pl)], that is the way you [(pl)] should act toward them, because that [sums up what Moses wrote in] the laws [that God gave him] and [also what] the prophets [wrote long ago]." **13** "[Going to] where people live eternally [with God in heaven] is difficult. [It is like] going along a narrow road [PRS, MET] that leads to a narrow gate. Not many people find that way. [The way] that most [people take] is easy, [but it results in their being punished] {[God punishing them]} [in hell. That way is like a] wide road that people walk on [PRS, MET] until they reach the wide gate, but that road and that gate lead to where [they] will be destroyed {[God] will destroy them}. Many people enter that gate. So I [am telling you to leave the wide road and] enter the narrow gate [to heaven]." **(questioned)** **15** "Beware of people who come to you and say falsely that they are telling you [what God has said]. [They seem to be harmless, but they are extremely harmful. They are like] wolves that have covered themselves with sheepskins [to make people believe that they are sheep] [MET], but they actually are wolves that attack people [MET]. **16** [So how will you know that they are false?] Well, by seeing what plants produce, you know [what kind of plants] they are [MET]. [For example, thornbushes cannot produce grapes], so (no one can pick grapes from thornbushes./can anyone pick grapes from thornbushes?) [RHQ] And [thistles cannot produce figs], so (no one can pick figs from thistles./can anyone pick figs from thistles?) [RHQ] **17** [Here is another example]: All good fruit trees produce good fruit, but all unhealthy trees produce worthless fruit. **18** No good fruit tree is able to produce worthless fruit, and no unhealthy tree is able to produce good fruit. **19** [And] all the trees that do not produce good fruit are chopped down and burned in a fire {people chop them down and burn them in a fire} [to get rid of them]. [Similarly], those who falsely claim to be prophets [will be thrown] {[God will throw false prophets]} [into the fires of hell]. **(questioned)** **20** By seeing [what plants] produce, you know [what kind of plants] they are. [Similarly, when you see what the people who come to you do], [you will know if they are false prophets]." **21** "[Even though many] people [habitually] call me 'Lord', [pretending that they have my authority], some of them will not go to heaven where God rules, [because they do not do what he desires]. [Only] those people who do what my Father, who is in heaven, desires [will go there]. **22** On the day [MTY] [that God judges everyone], many [people, trying to tell me that they deserve to go to heaven], will say to me, 'Lord, we(exc) spoke God's message as your representatives [MTY, RHQ]! As your representatives we(exc) expelled demons from [people] [RHQ]! And as your representatives, many times we(exc) performed miracles [RHQ]!' **23** Then I will declare to them, 'I have never said that you belonged to me. Go away from me, you who do what is evil!'" **24** "So then, anyone who hears what I say and does what I command, will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. **25** [Even though] the rain came down and the river flooded, and the winds blew and beat against that house, it did not fall down because it had been built {he built it} on a solid foundation. **26** On the

other hand, anyone who hears what I say but does not obey what I say will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** When the rain fell and the rivers flooded, and the winds blew and beat against that house, it crashed down and broke completely apart, [because it was built on the sand. So it is important for you to obey what I teach you]." **28** When Jesus finished saying all those things, the [who had been listening to him were] amazed at the [new] teaching that he had taught them. **29** The reason they were amazed was that he was teaching as a person does who has authority. He was not teaching like the men who taught the [Jewish] laws, [who just repeated what other people had taught them].

8 When Jesus went down from the hillside, large crowds followed him. **2** [After he left the crowds], a man who had [the skin disease called] leprosy unexpectedly came and knelt before him. He said [to Jesus], "Lord/Sir, [please heal me, because I know] you are able to heal me if you are willing to." **3** Then Jesus, [disregarding the religious law that forbade people to come close to lepers], stretched out his hand and touched the man. He said [to him], "I am willing to [heal you], and I heal you [now]!" Immediately the man was healed from his leprosy {he was no longer a leper}. **4** Then Jesus said to him, "Go and show yourself to a [nearby] priest [so that he can examine you and verify that you no longer have leprosy]. [Then], after he tells [the local people], they will know [that you no longer have leprosy], [and you will be able to associate with them again]. Make sure that [now] you do not report [about my healing you] to anyone [other than the priest]. Then go [to the Temple in Jerusalem and give the priest] the offering that Moses commanded [that people who have been healed from leprosy should offer] as a sacrifice to God." **5** When Jesus went to Capernaum [city], a [Roman] officer who commanded 100 soldiers came to him. He begged Jesus [to help him]. **6** He said [to him], "Sir, my servant is lying [in bed] at home and is paralyzed, and he has severe pain." **7** Jesus said [to him], "I will go [to your house] and heal him." **8** But the officer said [to him], "Lord/Sir, [do not bother to go. I am a non-Jew], so I am not worthy for you, [a Jew], to come into my house [MTY] [and associate with me]. Instead, [just] command [that] my servant [be healed], and he will be healed. **9** I [believe this] because, as for me, I am a man under the authority of others, and I also have soldiers under my authority. When I say to one of them 'Go!' he goes. When I say to another 'Come!' he comes. When I say to my slave, 'Do this!' he does it. [And I believe that you speak with a similar kind of authority]." **10** When Jesus heard this, he marveled. He said to the crowd that was walking with him, "Listen to this: I have never before found anyone who has as firm a faith [in me as this non-Jewish man has]. Not even in Israel, [where I would expect people to believe in me], have I found anyone who has the kind of faith in me that he has! **11** I tell you truly that many [other non-Jewish people] who [will believe in me like this Roman officer] will come from [distant countries, including] those [far] to the east and far to the west [SYN], and they will sit down to eat with [MTY] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in heaven, where God rules. **12** But [the Jews] [IDM] [who should have allowed] God to rule over them will be sent to [hell, where there is] total darkness. And as a result, they will weep [because of their suffering] and will grind their teeth [because they will have severe pain] [MTY]." **(questioned)** **13** Then Jesus said to the officer, "Go [home]. What you believed [would happen], [that I would heal your servant from a distance], will happen." [Then the officer went home and found out that] his servant became well at the exact time [that Jesus told him that he would heal him]. **14** When Jesus [and some of his disciples] went to the home of Peter, Jesus saw Peter's mother-in-law. She was lying on a bed because she had a fever. **15** He touched her hand, and as a result, [immediately] she no longer had a fever [PRS]. Then she got up and served them [some food]. **16** That evening [when] ([the Sabbath/the Jewish rest day]) [ended and restrictions about traveling ended], many people who were controlled by demons {whom demons controlled} [and people who were sick] [MTY] [were] brought to Jesus. He caused the demons to leave just by speaking to them, and he healed all the people who were sick. **17** By doing this he fulfilled the words that had been said by the prophet Isaiah {that the prophet Isaiah had said} [about the Messiah]: "He healed people who had sicknesses and he cured them of their diseases." [DOU] **18** Jesus saw the crowd around him, but [he needed to rest]. So he told [his disciples to take him by boat] to the other side [of the lake]. **19** [As they were walking toward the boat], a man who taught the [Jewish] laws came to him and said, "Teacher, I will go with you wherever you go." **20** [In order that the man might know what he could expect if he went with him], Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes [in the ground in which to live], and birds have nests, but [even though I] am the one who came from heaven, I do not have a home where I can sleep [MTY]." **21** Another man who was one of Jesus' disciples said to him, "Sir/Lord, permit me first to go [home. After] my father [dies I will] bury him, [and then I will come with you]." **22** But Jesus said to him, "Come with me [now]. [God considers that people who do not have eternal life are] dead [MET]. Let those people [do the work of] burying people who die." **23** Then Jesus got into the boat. The disciples also got [in, and] they [started sailing close

to the shoreline around Lake Galilee]. **24** Suddenly strong winds blew on the lake, and very high waves were splashing into the boat and filling it. But Jesus was sleeping. **25** They went and woke him up, and said [to him], "Sir/Lord, rescue [us!] We are about to drown!" **26** He said [to them], "(You should not be terrified!/Why are you terrified?) [RHQ] I [am disappointed that in spite of all you have seen me do], (you do not believe very much [that I can rescue you./] you not believe [that I can rescue you]?) [RHQ]" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and told the waves to calm down. And [the wind stopped blowing and the lake] became calm. **27** [As a result], they were amazed, and they said [to one another], "This man is certainly an [extraordinary] person [RHQ]! [All things are under his control!] Even the winds and the waves obey him [PRS]!" **28** When they came to the [east] side [of the lake], they arrived in the region where the Gadarenes [lived]. [Jesus got out of the boat and began walking on the road. Then] two men who were controlled by demons {whom demons controlled} came out of the burial caves [where they were living]. Because they were extremely violent [and attacked people], no one dared to travel on the road [near where they were living]. **29** Suddenly they shouted [to Jesus], "You are the Son of God! [Because] you have nothing in common with us [IDM, RHQ], [leave us alone] Have you come here [RHQ] to torture us before the time [MTY] [God has appointed to punish us]?" **30** There was a large herd of pigs not far away, digging for food with their noses. **31** So the demons begged Jesus, saying, "You are going to cast us out of the men, so send us into the herd of pigs!" **32** Jesus said [to them], "[If that is what you want], go!" So the demons left [the men] and entered the pigs. Suddenly the whole herd [of pigs] rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. **33** The men who were tending the pigs [became afraid and] ran into the town and reported everything [that had happened], including what had happened to the two men who had been controlled by demons {whom demons had controlled}. **34** Then [it seemed as if] all [the people] [HYP] [who lived in] that town [MTY] went to meet Jesus. When they saw him [and the two men who had been controlled by the demons], they begged Jesus to leave their region [because they thought that he would destroy more things than just the pigs] (OR, [because they realized he must be very powerful]).

9 Jesus and his disciples got into the boat. They skirted around [the lake] and went to [Capernaum, the city where he was living]. **2** [Some men] brought to him a man who was paralyzed and who was lying on a sleeping pad. When Jesus perceived that they believed [that he could heal the paralyzed man], he said to him, "Young man, be encouraged! I forgive your sins." **3** Some of the men who taught the [Jewish] laws said among themselves, "[He claims that he can forgive sins! That means that he claims to be equal with God] He is insulting God!" **4** Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said, "(You should not think evil [thoughts], [accusing me because I claim that I am God]!/Why do you think evil [thoughts], [saying that it is wrong for me to claim that I am God]?) [RHQ] **5** It would [not] be risky [for someone] to say [to this man], '[I] forgive your sins', [because no one could see whether or not it really happened]. But [no one, without having the power to heal], would say [to him], '[Get] up and walk!', [because people could easily see whether it happened or not!] [RHQ] **6** [So I am going to do something] in order that you may know that [God] has authorized [me], the one who came from heaven, to forgive the sins [of people while I am] on the earth, [as well as to heal people]." Then he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, pick up your sleeping pad, and go home!" **7** And [immediately] the man got up, [picked up his sleeping pad], and went home! **8** When the crowds saw this, they were awestruck. They praised God for giving authority to a human being [to do] such [things]. **9** As Jesus was going away from there, he saw me, a man named Matthew. I was sitting at a table where I collected taxes [for the Roman government]. He said to me, "Come with me [and become my disciple]!" So I got up and went with him. **10** [Then I invited] Jesus and his disciples to my home for a meal. While [they] were sitting and eating in my home, many tax collectors and [other people who were] {whom [the Pharisees]} [considered to be habitual] sinners came unexpectedly to eat with us. **11** When the Pharisees saw [that, they came] to us disciples and said, "([It is disgusting that] your teacher, [who claims to be righteous], eats [and associates] with tax collectors and [other] sinners!/Why is it that your teacher, [who claims to be righteous], eats [and associates] with tax collectors and [other] sinners?)" [RHQ] **12** Jesus heard what [they said], so he told them [this parable]: "[It is] people who are sick who need a [doctor] [MET], not people who are well." [What he meant by that was that it was people who knew that they were sinners who were coming to him in order to be helped spiritually]. **13** He continued by saying, "You need to learn what these words that [God said] mean: 'I want you to [act] mercifully to people and not [just to offer] sacrifices.' Keep in mind that I came [from heaven, not] to invite [people who think] [IRO] [that they are] righteous [to turn away from their sinful lives and come to me, but to invite people who know they are] sinners [to turn from their sins and come to me]." **14** Later, the disciples of John [the Baptizer] came to Jesus and asked him, "We [(exc)] and the Pharisees [often] abstain from food

[to show that we want to please God], but your disciples do not do that. Why [do they not]?" **15** [Jesus wanted to show them and the Pharisees that it was not appropriate for his disciples to abstain from food and mourn while he was still with them]. So he [gave them this illustration]: "When a bridegroom is with [his friends at the time of the wedding], (his friends certainly do not mourn, do they?/do his friends mourn?) [RHQ] [No, they do not mourn, because they are not sad at that time. But when] the bridegroom is taken {[someone] takes the [/his enemies] take the bridegroom} from them, they will abstain from food, [because then they will be sad]." **16** [Jesus wanted to show them that people who desire to live in accordance with his new message should not try to continue to obey the old religious traditions like] ([abstaining from food/fasting]) [MET]. [So he said to them], "People do not sew a patch of unshrunken cloth on an old garment [to mend a hole]. If they did that, [when they washed the garment], the patch would [shrink] and tear the garment, and the hole would become bigger. **17** Neither does anyone pour freshly-[squeezed] grape juice into old skin bags [to store it]. If anyone did that, those skin bags would tear [because they would not stretch when the grape juice ferments and expands. They] would be ruined, and the wine would be spilled {spill} [on the ground]. Instead, [people] put new wine into new skin bags, [and the bags will stretch when the wine ferments]. As a result, both [the wine and the bags] are preserved." **18** While Jesus was saying that, a leader of the Jewish meeting place came and bowed down before him [to show respect]. Then he said, "My daughter just died! But if you come and lay your hand on her, she will live [again]!" **19** So Jesus got up, and he and [we] disciples went with the man. **20** Then a woman who [had been suffering constant vaginal] bleeding for twelve years came near Jesus. She was saying to herself, "[I want Jesus to heal me without anyone finding out that I have this problem of bleeding]. So if I [touch him] or even if I just touch his garment, I will be healed [without anyone finding out about it]." So she came behind him and touched the tassel of his garment. **22** Then Jesus turned around [to see who had touched him]. And when he saw the woman, he said to her, "Be encouraged, dear woman. Because you believed [PRS] [that I could heal you, I] have healed you." The woman was healed at that very moment. **23** Then Jesus [and some of us disciples] came to the Jewish leader's house. Jesus heard the flute players [playing funeral music] and the crowd [that had gathered] wailing loudly [because the girl had died]. **24** [Knowing that he would cause her to live again], he said [to them], "Go away [and stop the funeral music and wailing], because the girl is not dead! She is [just] sleeping!" [The people laughed at him, because they knew that she was dead]. **25** But Jesus told them to get out of the house. Then he went into [the room where the girl was lying]. He took hold of her hand and she [became alive again and] got up. **26** And the [people of that] whole region heard [PRS] about it. **27** As Jesus went away from there, two blind men followed him and shouted, "Have mercy on us [and heal our eyes, you who are the Messiah], the Descendant of [King] David!" **28** Jesus went into the house, where he [was staying], and then the blind men went in, too. Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able [to heal your eyes]?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord!" **29** Then he touched their eyes and he said [to them], "Because you believe [that I can heal your eyes], I am healing them [right now]!" **30** And they were able to see [IDM]! Then Jesus told them sternly, "Be sure [IDM] that you do not tell anybody [what I did for you]!" **31** But they went out and reported it throughout that whole region. **32** When [Jesus and we disciples] left [the house], some people brought to Jesus a man who was unable to speak because he was controlled by a demon {a demon controlled him}. **33** After Jesus had expelled the demon, the man who had been unable to speak began to speak! The crowd [who saw this] marveled. They said, "Never before have [we seen] anything as [marvelous] as this happen in Israel!" **34** But the Pharisees said, "It is [Satan], who rules the demons, who [enables this man to] expel demons [from people]." **35** Then [we] went [with] Jesus through many of [HYP] the cities and towns [in Galilee district. He was teaching (in the synagogues/in the Jewish meeting places)], and preaching the good message about how God rules [over people's lives]. He also was healing the [people who had] various diseases and illnesses. **36** When he saw the crowd of people, he pitied them because they were harassed and dejected. [They were] like sheep that do not have a shepherd [SIM]. **37** Then he gave [this illustration] to us disciples: "[The people who are ready to receive my message are like a] field that is ready to be harvested {for people to harvest}. But there are only a few [of you who are teaching people my message]. **38** So pray and ask the Lord [God] to send [more] workers [who will gather people together and teach them my message, just like a landowner sends workers] into his [field to gather] the [MET] harvest."

10 He told [us] twelve disciples to come to him. Then he gave us the power/authority to expel evil spirits [that controlled people]. He also enabled [us] to heal all people who had diseases or who were sick. **2** [Here is a list of us] twelve [disciples whom he called] apostles ([which means 'messengers']): Simon, [to whom he gave the new name] Peter; Andrew, Peter's [younger] brother;

James, the son of Zebedee; John, the [younger] brother of James; 3 Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; me, Matthew, the tax collector; James, the [son] of Alpheus; Thaddeus; 4 Simon, a member of the party [that wanted to overthrow the Roman government;] and Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]), who [later] enabled [the Jewish leaders] to seize Jesus. 5 When Jesus was [about to] send [us] twelve [apostles to tell his message to people in various places], he gave [us] these instructions: "Do not go where the non-Jews live [MTY] or into the towns [where the] Samaritans live, [because they hate you]. 6 Instead, go to the people of Israel [SYN] who have [gone away from God like] sheep that have gotten lost [MET]. 7 When you go [to them], proclaim to them that God [EUP/MTY] will soon begin to rule over people. 8 Heal sick people, cause dead people to become alive, heal people who have leprosy, and cause demons to leave people [who are controlled by them] {[whom demons control]}. Do not charge money [for helping people, because God] did not charge you anything [for helping you]. 9 Do not take any money with you [MTY], nor a knapsack. Do not take an extra shirt, nor sandals [in addition to what you are wearing], nor a walking stick. Every worker deserves to get pay [from the people for whom he works], [so you deserve to receive food and a place to stay from the people to whom you go]. 11 In whatever town or village you enter, find out which person is worthy [that you should stay in his home]. And as you go into that house, [ask God to] bless the people [who live there] [MTY]. Stay in that home until you leave [that town or village]. 13 If the people who live in [MTY] that house are worthy [of being blessed] {[God blessing them]}, [God] will bless them. If the people who live in that house are not worthy [of being blessed] {[of God blessing them]}, [God] will bless you [instead of blessing them]. 14 If the people [who live in any house or town] do not welcome you [to their home or town], nor listen to your message, leave that house or town. And as you leave, shake off the dust from your feet. [By doing that, you will warn them that God will punish them for rejecting your message]. 15 Note this carefully: [At the time when God] judges [all people, he] will punish [the people who lived in] Sodom and Gomorrah [MTY], [the ancient cities which God destroyed because their people were extremely wicked]. But in any town where the people [MTY] refuse to hear your message, God will punish them even more severely." 16 "Take note: After I send you out, [you will be as defenseless] as sheep [MET] in the midst of [people who are as dangerous as] wolves. So you should wisely [stay away from such people, like you stay away from poisonous] snakes [SIM]. You should be as harmless as doves are [SIM]. 17 Also, be on guard against [our religious leaders]. They will arrest you and take you to the members of the religious councils [to put you on trial and punish you because you are my disciples]. You will be whipped {The local leaders will whip you} [in] their meeting places. 18 [And] because [you teach] about me, you will be taken {[the religious leaders] will take you} to governors and kings [in order that they may put you on trial and punish you]. As a result, you will testify to those rulers and to [other] non-Jews [about what I have done]. 19 When [the religious leaders] arrest you, do not be worried about what you will say [to them], because at that very time [the] Holy Spirit will tell you the words that you should say. 20 It is not that you [will decide what to] say. Instead, you will say what the Spirit of your [heavenly] Father tells [you to say]. 21 [You will be taken] {[People who do not believe in me will] take you} to the authorities to be killed [because you believe in me. For example], people will betray their brothers, and fathers will betray their children. Children will rebel against their parents and cause [them] to be killed. 22 Many people will hate you [because you believe in me]. Nevertheless, [many people] will keep on believing in me until they die. They are the people whom [God] will take to live with him. 23 When people in one town cause you to suffer, escape to another town [and tell the people there about me]. Note this: [I], the one who came down from heaven, will certainly return [to earth] before you have finished going from one town to another town throughout Israel [and telling people about me]. 24 A disciple should not [expect to be] greater than his teacher, and servants [are not] superior to their master. 25 You do not [expect that] people will [treat] a disciple better than [they treat] his teacher, or that [they will treat] a servant [better than they treat] his master. [Similarly, because I am your teacher and master, you can expect that people will mistreat you, because they have mistreated me]. The most you can expect is that people [will treat you like they treat me. I am like] the ruler of a household [MET]. But people [have insulted me by] calling [me] Beelzebub, [the ruler of the demons]. So they [will] certainly [insult you more, you who are only like] members of my household [MET]!" 26 "Do not be afraid of [people who insult you and do evil things to you. God wants] everything that is unknown now to be revealed {[God wants you to] reveal everything [that is unknown now]}. [He does] not [want his truth] to remain hidden [MET] and kept secret [DOU]. 27 [So, instead of being afraid], what I say to you [secretly as people do] at night [MTY], tell [publicly as people do] during the daytime [MTY]. What I [say to you privately as people do when they] whisper to you [MTY], proclaim publicly [MTY, DOU]. 28 Do not be afraid of people who [are able to] kill your body [SYN] but are not

able to destroy your soul. Instead, fear [God because] he is able to destroy both a [person's] body and a [person's] soul in hell. **(Geenna g1067)** **29** [Think about the] sparrows. [They have so little value] that [you] can buy cares two of them for [only] one small coin [RHQ]. But when [any] sparrow falls to the ground [and dies] [LIT], [God], your [heavenly] Father, knows it, [because he cares about everything]. **30** [He cares about you, too]. He even knows how many hairs you have on your head! **31** [God] values you much more than he values sparrows [LIT]. So, do not be afraid [of people who threaten to kill you] **32** If people, [without being afraid, are willing to] tell others [that they are my disciples], I will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven [that they are my disciples]. **33** But if they are afraid to say in front of others that they are my [disciples], I will tell my Father, who is in heaven, [that] they are not [my disciples]." **34** "Do not think that I came to earth to cause [people] to live together harmoniously. The result of my coming is that [some of those who follow me] [MTY] will be killed. **35** Because I came [to earth, people who do not believe in me] will oppose [those who do believe in me. For example], some sons will oppose their fathers, some daughters will oppose their mothers, and some daughters-in-law will oppose their mothers-in-law. **36** [This shows that sometimes] a person's enemies will be members of his own household. **37** People who love their fathers or mothers more than [they love] me are not worthy to [have a relationship with me]. And people who love their sons or daughters more than [they love] me are not worthy [to belong to] me. **38** [People who are ready to execute a prisoner force him to] carry a cross [to the place where they will nail him to it] [MET]. Those who are not [willing to allow other people to hurt and disgrace them like that because of being my disciples] are not worthy to belong to me. **39** People who [deny that they believe in me in order to escape being killed] will not live [with God eternally] [MET], but people who [confess that they believe in] me and, [as a result are] killed, will live [with God eternally] [MET]." **40** "[God considers that] everyone who welcomes you, welcomes me [SIM], and [he considers that] everyone who welcomes me welcomes [him], the one who sent me [SIM]. **41** Those who welcome [someone because] [MTY] [they know] that person is a prophet they will receive the [same] reward that prophets [receive from God. Likewise], those who welcome a person [because] [MTY] [they know] that person is righteous will receive the reward righteous people [receive from God]. **42** [Note this:] people [see that you are thirsty] [MTY] [and] give you a drink of cold water because they know that [MTY] you are one of my disciples. [God] will certainly reward people who do that. [They might consider that what they did] is insignificant, [but God will consider it very significant]" [LIT].

11 When Jesus had finished instructing [us] twelve disciples [about what we should do, he sent us to various Israelite towns]. Then he went to teach and preach in [other Israelite] towns [in that area]. **2** While John [the Baptizer] was in prison, he heard what [Jesus, the man whom he thought was] the Messiah, was doing. So he sent [some of] his disciples [to him] in order **3** to ask him, "Are you the [Messiah] who [the prophets prophesied] would come, or is it someone else that we should expect [to come]?" **4** [After they asked] Jesus [that question], he answered them, "Go back and report to John what you hear [me telling people] and what you see [me doing]. **5** I [am enabling] blind people to see and lame people to walk. I [am] healing [people] who have leprosy. I [am enabling] deaf people to hear and dead people to become alive again. I [am] telling poor people [God's] good message. **6** [Also tell John that God] is pleased with people who do not stop believing in me [because what I do is not what they expected the Messiah to do]." **7** When John's disciples had gone away, Jesus began to talk to the crowd of people about John. He said to them, "[Think about] what sort of person you went to see in the desolate area [when you went there to see John]. ([You did not go there to listen to a man who constantly changed his message, like] a reed that is blown {blows} back and forth in the wind [MET]!/Did you go there [to listen to a man whose message changes continually like] long grass that is blown {blows} back and forth in the wind [changes its direction]?) [MET, RHQ] **8** Then what [kind of person] did you go [there] to see [RHQ]? ([You did not go there to see] a man who was wearing expensive clothes.[/Did you go there to see] a man who was wearing expensive clothes?) [RHQ] [No! You know very well that] people who wear beautiful clothes reside in kings' palaces [and not in desolate areas]. **9** Then what [kind of person] did you go to see [RHQ]? [Did you go there] [RHQ] [to see John because he was] (a prophet/a person who speaks what God tells him to say)? Yes! But I will tell you that [John] is more [important] than an [ordinary] prophet. **10** He is the one [to whom God was referring when he said to the Messiah these words] that are written {about whom [the prophet Malachi] wrote} [in the Scriptures:] Listen! I am going to send my messenger [to go] before you [SYN] to prepare [the people] [MET] for your coming. **11** Note this: Of all the people who have ever lived, [God does not consider] that any of them are greater than John the Baptizer. However, [God considers that all] those people who have let God rule their lives are greater than [John, even if they are insignificant people]. **12** From the time

that John the Baptizer [preached] until now, [other people] have violently attacked the people who have [allowed] God [MTY/EUP] to rule their lives, and they have suffered (OR, people have very eagerly been asking God to take control of their lives, OR, Israelite people [who have thought that I would become their king] have been extremely eager to be included in my kingdom) (OR, have been violently attacked and made to suffer). **13** [All this that I am saying about John is confirmed by the fact that] all the men who wrote the Scriptures [MTY, SYN] foretold [about God ruling people's lives], until John [the Baptizer came]. **14** [Even though most of you are unwilling to believe what I am saying, I will tell this truth to] anyone who is willing to believe [it]: John is [the man who is like] Elijah [MET]. He is the one who [one of the prophets said] would come [in order to prepare the people to welcome the Messiah]. **15** If you want to understand this, you must think [carefully] [MTY] [about what I have just said] [MTY]." **16** "(I will illustrate what [you] people who have heard what John [the Baptizer] and I have taught are like./Do you know what [you] people who have heard what John and I have taught are like?) [RHQ] You are like children who are [playing games] in an open area. [Some of the children] are calling to the others, saying, **17** 'We played [happy music] on the flute for you, but you did not dance! Then we sang sad funeral songs for you, but you did not cry [MET]!' **18** [Similarly, you are dissatisfied with both John and me]! When John came [and preached to you], he did not eat [good food] and did not drink [wine, like most people do]. But you [rejected him] saying, 'A demon is controlling him!' **19** [In contrast], [I], the one who came from heaven, eat [the same] food and drink [wine as other people do]. But you [reject me], saying, 'Look! [This man] eats too much food and drinks too much wine, and he associates with tax collectors and [other] sinners!' But people [who really think about] what [John] and I have done will realize that what we do is truly wise [MET, PRS]." **20** [The people who lived in] the towns [MTY] [in the area where Jesus was saw him] perform many miracles. But they did not turn away from their sinful behavior. So Jesus began to reproach them [by saying to them], **21** "You [people who live in] Chorazin [city] [MTY] and you [people who live in] Bethsaida [city] [MTY] will suffer terribly in hell! [I] did great miracles in your [cities, but you did not turn from your sinful behavior]. If the miracles that I performed in your [cities] had been done in [the ancient cities of] Tyre and Sidon, the [wicked people who lived there] long ago would have sat in ashes, wearing coarse cloth [to show that they were sorry for their sins]. **(questioned)** **22** So note this: [God will punish the wicked people who lived in the cities of] Tyre and Sidon [MTY], but he will punish you even more severely on the final day when he judges [all people]. **23** [also have something to say to] you [people who live in] Capernaum [city] [MTY]. (Do not [think that] you will be honored {that [God] will honor you} in heaven!/Do you think that you will be honored {that [God] will honor you} in heaven?) [RHQ] [That will not happen! On the contrary, after you die, you will be sent] {[God] will send you} down into the place where [sinful people] will be punished {he will punish sinful people} [forever. God destroyed the ancient city of] Sodom [because the people who lived in that city were extremely wicked]. If I had performed in [Sodom the miracles that I performed in your city, the people there would have turned away from their wicked behavior and] their [city] [MET] would still exist now [MTY]. But you, [although I did miracles in your city, you did not turn from your wicked behavior]. **(Hadēs g86)** **24** So note this: [God] will punish [the people who lived in] Sodom [city] [MTY], but he will punish you [even] more severely on the final day when [he] judges [all people]." **25** At that time Jesus prayed, "Father, you rule over [everything in] heaven and [on] the earth. I thank you that you have prevented [people who think that they] are wise [IRO] because they are well-educated, from [knowing] these things. [Instead], you have revealed them to [people who accept your truth as readily as] little children [MET] [do]. **26** Yes, Father, [you have done that] because it seemed good to you [to do] so." **27** [Then Jesus said to the people there who wanted him to teach them], "[God], my Father, has revealed to me all the things [that I need to know in order to do my work]. Only my Father knows [who] I [really am]. Furthermore, only I and those [people] to whom I wish to reveal him know [what God] my Father [is like]. **28** Come to me, all you people who are very weary [of trying to obey all the many laws that your religious teachers tell you to obey] [MET]. I will enable you to quit [trying to obey all those laws]. **29** Let me [help] you [carry those loads, just like two oxen who have] a yoke [on their necks] [MET, DOU] [help each other pull a heavy load]. It will not be difficult for you to do the things that I ask you to do for me [DOU]. Because I am gentle and humble [DOU], accept what I teach [about what God wants you to do]. [And as a result, you will quit worrying about obeying all the religious laws, and] your spirits will be at peace."

12 During that period of time, on a (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest), Jesus [and we] disciples were walking through some grain fields. And because we were hungry, we began to pick some of the heads of grain and eat them. [The laws of Moses permitted people to do that if they were hungry]. **2** Some Pharisees saw us [do what they considered to be work]. So they said to Jesus, [accusing him], "Look! Your disciples are doing [work] that is not permitted [in our] laws

[PRS] [for us] to do on our day of rest!" **3** [Jesus wanted to show them that the record in the Scriptures indicated that God permitted people to disobey certain religious laws when they needed food]. [So] he said to them, "[It is written] {[Someone wrote]} [in the Scriptures] [RHQ] what [our revered ancestor King] David did when he and the men with him were hungry. You have read about that, ([but you do not think about what it implies!/so why do you not think about what it implies]?) [RHQ] **4** David entered the big tent [where they worshipped] God [and asked for some food. The high priest gave him] the bread that had been {they had} presented [to God]. According to the laws [of Moses], only priests were permitted to eat that bread, but David and the men who were with him ate it. And [God did not consider that what they did was wrong] **5** Also, think about the laws that [Moses wrote] [RHQ]. He said that [even though] the priests, [by working] in the Temple on our Jewish day of rest, are not obeying the Jewish day of rest [laws], they are not guilty. You have surely read that, [but you do not understand what it means]. **6** Note this: [God allows men to work in] the Temple [on our rest day because that work must be done. But in addition, I] tell you that [I have] more [authority than the authority of] the Temple. So, it is more important for you to obey my teachings than to obey your traditions about our rest day. **7** [You should think about] these words [of God in the Scriptures]: 'I want you to [act] mercifully toward people, and not [just] offer sacrifices.' If you understood what that means, you would not condemn [my disciples], who have done no wrong. **8** [And I want you to know that] I, the one who came from heaven, have [the] authority [to determine what is right for my disciples to do on] the days of rest." **9** After Jesus left there [that day], he went into a building where we Jews worship God. **10** [He saw] a man with a shriveled hand there. [The Pharisees thought that Jesus would be disobeying the tradition about not working on the day of rest if he healed the man, so one of] them asked him, "Does [God] permit [us] to heal [people] on our day of rest?" [They asked that question] so that they might accuse him [if he healed someone] (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day). **11** He replied to them, "Would anyone among you who has [only] one sheep that falls into a hole (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day) [just leave it there] [RHQ]? [Certainly not]! You would take hold of it and lift it out right away, [and that would be acceptable work on our day of rest, too] **12** [Because] sheep are valuable, [their owners may work on our day of rest in order to rescue them. So, because] people are more valuable than sheep, it is certainly right for us to do something good [by healing another person any day, including] our day of rest!" **13** Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your [withered] hand!" The man stretched it out, and it became normal like the other hand! **14** Then the Pharisees left [the meeting house. They were worried that the people would reject their traditions and would accept Jesus' teaching instead. So] they met together to plan how they could kill him. **15** Because Jesus knew [that the Pharisees were plotting to kill him], he [took us disciples and] went away from there. Crowds, [including many sick people], followed him, [wanting him to heal them], and he healed them all. **16** But he told them firmly that they should not tell [other people yet] who he was. **17** [By acting humbly like that] he fulfilled what was written by Isaiah the prophet {what Isaiah the prophet wrote} [long ago about the Messiah]. [Isaiah wrote] that God said: **18** Take note of my servant whom I have chosen, the one whom I love and with whom I am pleased. I will put my Spirit in him, and he will proclaim that [God] will judge the non-Jews justly. **19** He will not quarrel [with people], neither will he shout. He will not [teach with] a loud voice in the [main] streets. **20** Until he has justly judged [the people who trust in him and] has declared them not guilty, he will not destroy [anyone who is weak like] a smashed stalk [MET], nor will he silence [anyone who is as helpless as] a smoldering [linen] wick [MET, DOU]. **21** As a result, the non-Jews will confidently expect [that he will do great things for them]. **22** One day when Jesus was at home, [some men] brought to [Jesus] a man [who, because of being] controlled by a demon {a demon controlled him}, was blind and unable to speak. [Jesus] healed him [by expelling the demon]. As a result, the man [began to] talk and [was able to] see. **23** All the crowd [who saw it] marveled. They began asking [each other], "Could this man be the [Messiah, the] descendant of [King] David, [whom we have been expecting]?" **24** Because the Pharisees [and the men who taught the Jewish laws] heard [that the people thought that Jesus might be the Messiah because he had expelled the demon], they said, "[It is not God, but] Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons, who enables [this man] to expel demons [from people!]" **25** But Jesus knew what [the Pharisees] were thinking [and saying]. So, [in order to show them that what they said did not make sense], he said to them, "If [the people in] [MTY] one nation fight against each other, [they] will destroy their nation {their nation will be destroyed}. If [people who live in] the same city or house fight each other, they will certainly not remain [as one group or family]. **26** [Similarly], if Satan were expelling his own [demons] [MTY], [it would be as though] he was fighting against himself. (His kingdom would not continue!/How could his kingdom continue?) [RHQ] His rule over them would [certainly] not last! **27** Furthermore,

if [it is true that] Satan enables me to expel demons, is it also true that your disciples [who] expel demons [do so] by [Satan's] power [RHQ]? [No] So they will show you that you [are not thinking logically]. **28** But because it is God's Spirit who [enables] me to expel demons, [that proves that the power of] God to rule [people's lives] has come to you. **29** [I will illustrate why I am able to expel demons]. (A person cannot go into the house of a strong man) [RHQ] [But if he ties up the strong man], then he will be able to steal [the things in that man's] house. **30** [No one can be neutral]. Those who do not acknowledge [that the Holy Spirit enables] me [to expel demons] are opposing me, and those who do not gather [people to become] my [disciples] are causing [those people] to [DOU] go away [from me]. **31** You [are saying that it is not the Holy Spirit who is enabling me to expel demons]. So I will say this to you: [If] those who offend and slander other people in any way are [then sorry and ask God to forgive them, God] will forgive them. But people who discredit what the Holy Spirit does will not be forgiven {[God] will not forgive [people] who discredit what the Holy Spirit does}. **32** [God is willing to] forgive people who criticize [me], the One who came from heaven. But I [warn you that] those who say evil things about what the Holy Spirit [does] will not be forgiven {[God] will not forgive people who speak evil words about what the Holy Spirit [does]}. They will not be forgiven {[He] will not forgive them} now, and they will never be forgiven {[he] will never forgive them}." **(aiōn g165)** **33** "Think about this: You can know whether [a person is good and what that person says is good, in the same way that you] can know whether a tree [MET] and the fruit it produces [MET] are good. [You can also know whether a person and what that person says is evil in the same way that you can know] whether a tree [MET] and its fruit [MET] are blighted. You can know whether a tree is good by [seeing] its fruit, and similarly [people can know the evil character of you Pharisees by listening to your accusations against me]. **34** [What] you [teach harms people spiritually like poisonous] snakes [harm them physically] [MET]! You are not able to speak good things because you are evil [RHQ]. Evil people [SYN] [like you] speak what comes from all that is in their (inner beings/hearts). **35** Good people [speak good things. That is like] taking good things out of buildings where they are stored. But evil people [speak evil things. That is like] taking evil things out of buildings where they are stored. **36** I tell you that on the day when God judges [MTY], he will make people recall every useless word they have spoken, [and he will judge them accordingly]. **37** Based on the words that you have spoken, [God] will [either] declare that you are righteous based on the words that you have spoken, or [else] he will condemn you." **38** Then some of the Pharisees and men who taught the [Jewish] laws responded [to what Jesus was teaching] by saying to him, "Teacher, we want to see you [perform] a miracle [that would prove to us that God sent you]." **39** Then Jesus said to them, "[You] people [have already seen me perform miracles], but you are evil, and you do not faithfully worship God [MET]! You want [me to perform] a miracle [that would prove to you that God sent me], but [God will enable] you to see only one miracle. It will be [like] what happened to Jonah the prophet [MET]. **40** Jonah was in the stomach of a huge fish for three days and nights [before God caused him to live again]. Similarly, for three days and nights I, the one who came from heaven, will be in a place [where dead people are, and then God will cause me to live again]. **41** When [God] judges [all people], the people who lived in Nineveh will stand [in front of him] with [you] people who [have seen me perform miracles]. The [people of Nineveh turned from their sinful ways as a result of hearing what] Jonah preached. [Jonah was important, but I], who am more important than Jonah, [have come and preached to you, but you have not turned from your sinful ways. So] when [God] judges [all people, he] will condemn you. **42** The queen from [Sheba, South of Israel, who lived long ago, came from a distant region in order to listen to King Solomon teach] many wise things. But now [I], [a man] who [is much] greater [and wiser] than Solomon, am here, [but you have not listened to what I have told you]. So at the time when [God] judges [all people], the queen from [Sheba will stand in front of him, along] with you people, and will condemn you." **43** "[Sometimes] when an evil spirit leaves a person, it wanders around in desolate areas, seeking [someone in whom it can] rest. If it does not find anyone, **44** it says [to itself], 'I will return to the person [MET] in whom I used to live.' So it goes back [and finds that the Spirit of God is not in control of that] person's [life. The person's life is like] a house that has been swept clean and everything put in order [MET], [but it is] empty. **45** Then [this evil spirit] goes and gets seven other spirits that are [even] more evil, and they [all] enter [that person] and [begin] living there. [So, although] that person's condition [was bad] before, it becomes much worse. That is what [you] wicked people who [have heard me teach] will experience." **46** While Jesus was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his [younger] brothers [arrived]. They stood outside [the house], wanting to speak with him. **47** Someone said to him, "Your mother and your [younger] brothers are standing outside [the house], wanting to talk to you." **48** Then Jesus said to the person who told him [that], "([I will tell you something about] my mother and brothers [MET].[/Do you know] who I [consider

to be like] my mother and my brothers?)" [MET, RHQ] **49** He then pointed toward [us] disciples and said, "These are ones [whom I love as much as I love] my mother and my brothers [MET]. **50** Those who do what [God] my Father [who is] in heaven wants, are [as dear to me] [MET] [as] my brother, my sister, or my mother."

13 That same day Jesus, [along with us] disciples, left the house [where he was teaching and went] to [Galilee lake]. He sat down there, **2** and a very large crowd gathered around him to [listen to his teaching]. So, [in order that they would not jostle him] (OR, [to speak to the people better]), he got into a boat and sat down [to teach them]. The crowd stood on the shore [and was listening]. **3** He was telling them many parables. [One of the parables] that he told them was this: "Listen! A man went out [to his field] to sow [some seeds]. **4** As he was scattering [them over the soil], some [of the] seeds fell on the path. Then some birds came and ate those seeds. **5** Other [seeds] fell on ground where there was not much soil [on top of the] rock. Those seeds sprouted very soon, [because the sun quickly warmed] the shallow soil. **6** But when [the young plants came up], they were scorched by the sun, and they withered because they did not have [deep] roots. **7** Other seeds fell on [ground that contained roots of] thorny [weeds]. The thorny weeds grew [together with the young plants], and [they] crowded out [the plants]. **8** [But] other seeds fell on good soil, and [the plants grew and] produced [a lot of] grain. Some [plants produced] 100 times [as many seeds as were planted]. Some [plants produced] 60 times [as much]. Some [plants produced] 30 times [as much]. **9** If you want to understand this [MTY], you should consider [carefully what I have just said]." **10** [We] disciples approached Jesus and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you speak to the crowd?" **11** He answered [us] saying, "God [EUP/MTY] is revealing to you what he did not reveal before, about [how he wants to] rule [over people's lives]. But he has not revealed it to others. **12** Those who [think about what I say and] understand [it], God will enable them to understand more. But those who do not [think carefully about what I say] will forget even what they already know. **13** That is why I use parables when I speak to people, because although they see [what I do], they do not perceive [what it means], and although they hear [what I say], they do not really understand [what it means]. **14** What these people do completely fulfills what [God told] the prophet Isaiah [to say long ago to the people who did not] try to understand what he said, You will hear [what I say], but you will not understand it. You will keep seeing [what I do], but you will not understand [what it means] [DOU]. **15** [God also said to Isaiah], These people have become unresponsive [MTY] [to what they see me do and to what they hear me say]. They listen unwillingly [MTY] [to what I say], and they do not pay attention to [MTY] [what I do]. If it were not so, they would perceive [MTY] [what I am doing], they would understand [MTY] [what I say to them], and they would turn [away from their sinful lives] and turn [to me], and I would save them [from being punished for their sins] [MET]. **16** But as for you, God is pleased with you because you [SYN] have seen [what I have done] and because you [SYN] understand [what I say] [DOU]. **17** Note this: Many prophets and righteous people [who lived long ago] longed to see what you are seeing [me do], but they did not see it. They longed to hear the things that you have been hearing [me say], but they did not hear [what you hear me say]." [DOU] **18** "[Since God wants] you [to understand what I am teaching you], listen as I [explain] the parable about the man who sowed [seeds in various kinds of soil]. **19** The people who hear about how God rules over people's lives and do not understand [what they have heard] are [like] the path where [some of] the seeds fell. [Satan], the Evil One, comes and causes these people to forget [MET] what they have heard [MET]. **20** [Some people are like the] shallow soil on top of rock. When they hear God's message, they immediately accept it joyfully. **21** [But because it does not penetrate deeply into their inner beings, they believe it for only] a [short] time. [They are like the plants that] did not have [deep] roots. When they are treated badly and caused to suffer because they believe [God's message], they soon stop believing [it]. **22** [Some people are like the soil that had the roots of] thorny [weeds] in it. They hear God's message, but they desire to be rich, [so they] worry [only] about [MTY, PRS] material things. As a result, they [PRS] forget [God's] message, and they do not do [IDM] the things that God wants them to do. **(aiōn g165)** **23** But [some people are like the] good soil where [some of the seeds] fell. [Just like the plants that grew in this soil] produced a lot of grain, [these people] hear my message and understand it. [Some of them] do many things [IDM] [that please God, some do] even more [things that please God, and some do] very many [things that please God]." **24** Jesus also told the crowd another parable, [by which he tried to explain that although] God [MTY/EUP] is a king, [he will not immediately judge and punish all the wicked people]. Jesus said, "[God] is like a landowner [who sent his servants] to sow good [wheat] seed in his field. **25** While those servants were sleeping [and not watching the field], an enemy of the landowner came and scattered weed [seeds] in the midst of the wheat. Then he left. **26** After [the seeds] sprouted and the green plants [grew], the heads of grain began to form. But the weeds also grew. **27** So the

servants of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, you [RHQ] [gave us good seeds and those are the ones we] [RHQ] [planted] in your field. So where did the weeds come from?' **28** The landowner said to them, '[My] enemy did this.' His servants said to him, 'So, do you want us to pull up [the weeds and] put them in a pile?' **29** He said [to them], 'No, [do not do that, because] you might pull up [some of] the wheat at the same time. **30** Let the wheat and the weeds grow together until harvest [time].' At that time I will say to the reapers, 'First gather the weeds, tie them into bundles to be burned. Then gather the wheat [and put it] into my barns.'" **31** Jesus also told this parable: "The [number of] (OR, [God's influence in the lives of]) [people whose] lives God rules over [will continue to grow. It is very much] like mustard seeds grow after a man plants them in his field. **32** Although mustard seeds are among the smallest of all the seeds [that people plant, here in Israel they become large plants. When the plants have fully grown, they are larger than the other garden plants. They become shrubs that are large enough for birds to build nests in their branches."] **33** Jesus also told this parable: "[The way people who let] God [MTY/EUP] rule their lives [MET] [can influence the world] is like yeast that a woman mixed with about 50 pounds of flour. [That small amount of yeast made] the whole batch of dough swell up." **34** Jesus told the crowd parables [to teach them] all these things. When he spoke [HYP] to them, he habitually used such illustrations. **35** By doing that, [he] fulfilled what [God told one of] the prophets to write [long ago]: I will speak [MTY] in parables; I will tell [parables to teach] what I have kept secret since I created the world. **36** After Jesus dismissed the crowds, he went inside. Then [we] disciples approached him and said, "Explain to us the parable about the weeds [that grew] in the [wheat] field." **37** He answered, "The one who sows the good seed represents [me], the one who came from heaven. **38** The field represents this world [MTY], [where people live]. The seeds [that grew] well represent the people who let God rule their lives [MET]. The weeds represent the people who do what [the devil], the Evil One, [tells them to do]. **39** The enemy who sowed the weed seeds represents the devil. The [time when the reapers will] harvest [the grain] represents the time when the world will end. The reapers represent the angels. **(aiōn g165)** **40** The weeds are gathered and burned. {The reapers gather the weeds. Then they burn them.} That represents [the judging of people, which God will do] when the world will end. [It will be like this]: **(aiōn g165)** **41** I, the one who came from heaven, will send my angels, and they will gather [from everywhere the people] who cause others to quit believing in me [MET] and all those who disobey [God's] commands. **42** They will throw those people into the fires of [hell]. There those people will weep and grind their teeth [because of the great pain that they are suffering]. **(questioned)** **43** [God's] brightness will shine [on] the people who have lived as he wants them to. It will shine [on them as brightly] as the sun [shines]. It will shine on them in the place where [God], their Father, rules over them. If you want to understand this [MTY], you should think [carefully] about what I have just said." **44** "[What people do who begin to allow] God [MTY/EUP] to rule their lives is like [what a certain man did to acquire a treasure]. A treasure was hidden in a field by someone {Someone hid a treasure in a field [and never dug it up again]}. When [another] man found it, he hid it [by burying it again in order that no one else would find it]. Being very happy [that he had found something very valuable, he went and] sold all his possessions [to obtain money to buy the field the treasure was in]. He then went and bought the field, [and so he was able to acquire that treasure]. **45** Also, what [people do who begin to allow] God [MTY/EUP] to rule their lives is like [what] a merchant [did who was] looking for good quality pearls [to buy]. **46** When he found one very costly pearl [that was for sale], he sold all his possessions [to acquire enough money to buy that pearl]. Then he [went and] bought it. **47** What God [MTY/EUP] [will do to people who falsely say that they are letting him] rule their lives is like what certain [fishermen] did [with the fish they caught] in a lake, using a large net. They caught all classes [of fish, both useful and worthless fish]. **48** When the net was full, the [fishermen] pulled it up onto the shore. Then they sat there and put the useful [fish] into buckets, and threw the worthless ones away. **49** [What they did in separating the good fish from the bad ones] is like [what will happen to people] when the world ends. The angels will come [to where God is judging people], and will separate the wicked [people] from the righteous [ones]. **(aiōn g165)** **50** They will throw the wicked people into the fire [in hell]. And those wicked people will weep and gnash their teeth [because of the intense pain they are suffering]." **(questioned)** **51** [Then Jesus asked us], "Do you understand all these [parables I have told you]?" We said to him, **52** "Yes, [we understand them]." Then he said to us, "Because [you understand all these parables], [you will understand the following parable: You, along with] all others, will teach people what [you heard me say] about God ruling people's lives. [You will add that to what you formerly learned. You will be] like a manager of a household who takes both new things and old things out of his storage room." **53** When Jesus had finished [telling] these parables, he took [us] and left that [area]. **54** We went to [Nazareth, his hometown. (On the Sabbath/On the

Jewish rest day]) he began to teach the people in the Jewish worship house. The result was that the people there were astonished. But [some] said, "[This man is just an ordinary person like us. So] how is it that he knows so much and understands so much [RHQ]? And how is it that he is able to do [such] miracles [RHQ]? **55** (He is [just] the son of the carpenter!/Isn't he [just] the son of the carpenter [that lived here]?) [RHQ] His mother is Mary, and his younger brothers are James, Joseph, Simon and Judas [RHQ]! **56** (And his sisters [also live] here in our [town]./Do not his sisters [live] in our [town]?) [RHQ] So how is he able to do all these [miracles]?" **57** The people were unable to accept [that] he [was the Messiah. So] Jesus said to them, "[People] honor [me and other] prophets [everywhere else we go], but in [our] hometowns [we are] not [honored], and [even] our own families do not [honor us!]" **58** Jesus did not perform many miracles there because the people did not believe [that he was the Messiah].

14 During that time Herod [Antipas], the ruler, heard reports about Jesus [performing miracles]. **2** He said to his servants: "That must be John the Baptizer. He must have risen from the dead, and that is why he has power to perform miracles." **3** The reason [Herod thought that was this: Herod had married] Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, [while Philip was still living. So] John had been saying to him, "[What] you [did by] marrying [your brother's wife while your brother is still alive is against God's] law!" Then, to [please] Herodias, Herod [told his soldiers] to arrest John. They bound him with chains and put him in prison. **5** Herod wanted to have John executed, but he was afraid that the people [who had accepted what John taught would riot if he did that], because they believed that John was a prophet. **6** But when Herod [gave a party to celebrate] his birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced for [his guests]. This pleased Herod. **7** So he promised to give her whatever she asked, and he asked God to punish him if he did not do what he had promised. **8** [So Herodias' daughter went and asked her mother what to ask for]. Her mother told her to ask for John the Baptizer's head. [So] her daughter [went back and] said [to Herod]: "[Cut off] the head of John the Baptizer and [please] bring it here on a platter [so that my mother can know for sure that he is dead!]" **9** The king was distressed because he now knew he should not have made that promise to her. [But] because he had made an oath [in front of] his guests [when he made that promise], and [he did not want] them [to think that he would not do what he had promised], he commanded that [the girl] be given [what she requested]. **10** He sent [the executioner to go to] the prison and to cut off John's head. **11** [The executioner did that, and] put John's head on a platter and gave it to the girl. Then the girl took it to her mother. **12** John's disciples then went [to the prison], took John's body and buried it, and they reported to Jesus [what had happened]. **13** After Jesus heard that, he took [just us disciples] with him and we went by boat [on Galilee Lake to an uninhabited place]. Matthew 14:13-21 After the crowds heard [that we had gone to an uninhabited place], they [left their towns and] followed Jesus, walking along the shore. **14** When Jesus came [to the shore], he saw a large crowd of people [who had gathered there, waiting for him]. He felt sorry for them, and he healed those [among them who were] sick. **15** When it was [nearly] evening, we disciples came to him and said, "This is a place where nobody lives, and it is very late. Dismiss the crowds so that they can go into the [nearby] towns. [Have them do that so that they can] buy food for themselves." **16** But Jesus said to us, "They do not need to leave [to get food. Instead], you [yourselves] give them something to eat!" **17** We said to him, "But we have only five loaves of bread and two [cooked] fish here!" **18** He said [to us], "Bring them to me!" **19** He told the people [who had gathered there] to sit on the grass. Then he took the five flat loaves and the two fish. He looked up toward heaven, thanked [God for them], and broke [them into pieces]. Then he gave them to us disciples, and we distributed them to the crowd. **20** All [the people in the crowd] ate until they had enough to eat. Then we [disciples] gathered the pieces that were left over, [and we] filled twelve baskets with them. **21** Those who ate were about 5,000 men. [We did] not [count the] women and children! **22** Right after that happened, Jesus told us disciples to get in the boat and to go ahead of him further around [the lake] while he dismissed the crowds. **23** After he dismissed them, he went up into the hills to pray by himself. When it was evening, he was [still] there alone. **24** [By this time] we were already many hundred meters from the shore. The boat was being severely tossed around by the waves {The waves were severely tossing the boat} because the wind was [blowing] against [it]. **25** [Then Jesus came down from the hills to the lake]. Some time between three and six o'clock in the morning he walked on the water toward our [boat]. **26** When we disciples saw someone walking on the water, we thought that [we must be seeing] a ghost. We were terrified, and we screamed out because we were afraid. **27** Immediately Jesus said to us, "Cheer up! It is I. Do not be afraid!" **28** Peter said to him, "Lord, if it is you, tell me to walk on the water to you!" **29** Then Jesus said, "Come!" So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. **30** But when Peter looked at the [tossing waves which] the strong wind [caused], he became afraid. He began to sink, and cried out,

"Lord, save me!" **31** Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and grabbed him. He said to Peter, "You only trust a little bit [in my power] (Why did you doubt [that I could keep you from sinking]?/You should not have doubted [that I could keep you from sinking]!) [RHQ]" **32** Then Jesus and Peter got in the boat, and the wind [immediately] stopped blowing. **33** All [of us disciples] who were in the boat worshipped Jesus and said, "Truly you are the (Son of/man two is also) God!" **34** When we had gone further around [the lake in the boat], we came ashore at Gennesaret [town]. **35** The men of that area recognized Jesus. So they sent [people to inform those who lived] in that whole surrounding region [MTY] [that Jesus was in their area]. [So the people] brought to Jesus all the sick people [who lived in that region]. **36** [The sick people] kept begging him to allow them to touch [him or] just to touch the edge of his robe [so that they would be healed]. And all who touched [him or his robe] were healed {he healed all who touched [him or his clothing]}.

15 Then [some] Pharisees and men who taught the [Jewish] laws came from Jerusalem [to talk to] Jesus. They said, **2** "(We think it is disgusting that your disciples disobey the traditions of our ancestors!/Why do your disciples disobey [what our ancestors wrote down and] our [elders taught us]?) [RHQ] They do not perform the proper ritual of washing their hands before they eat!" **3** Jesus answered them, "(What is really disgusting is that you refuse to obey God's commands [just] so that you can follow what your ancestors taught you!/Why do you refuse to obey what God commanded [people to do, just] so that you can follow your own traditions?) [RHQ] **4** God gave these [two] commands: 'Honor your father and your mother,' and 'People who speak evil about their father or mother must be executed.' **5** But you tell people, 'You can say to your father or mother, "What I was going to give to you [to help provide for you], [I have now promised] to give [to God]."' **6** And if you do that, you think that you do not need to give anything to help your parents. In [that way], [by teaching people] your traditions, you disregard what God commanded. **7** You only pretend to be good! Isaiah prophesied accurately about you [also when he quoted what God said about your ancestors. God said], **8** 'These people talk [as if they] honor me [MTY], but they do not think about honoring me at all [MET]. **9** It is useless for them to worship me, because they teach what people thought up [as if I myself had commanded it].'" **10** Then Jesus [again] summoned the crowd to come [nearer] to him. Then he said to them, "Listen to [what I am about to tell you], and [try to] understand it. **11** Nothing that a person puts into his mouth [to eat] causes [God to consider] that person to be unacceptable. Instead, it is [the words] that come out of people's mouths [SYN] that cause [God to reject them]." **12** Later we disciples went to Jesus and said, "Do you know that the Pharisees heard what you said, and as a result they felt offended [RHQ]?" **13** Then, [to teach us what God would do to the Pharisees], Jesus told [us this parable]: "My Father in heaven [will] get rid of all [those who teach things that are contrary to his truth, just like a farmer] gets rid of plants that he did not plant, by pulling them up along with their roots [MET]. **14** Do not pay any attention to [the Pharisees]. They [do not help people who do not know God's truth] to [understand it, just like] blind guides [do not help] blind [people to perceive where they should go] [MET]. If a blind person [tries to] lead [another] blind person, they will both fall into a big hole [MET]. [Similarly, both the Pharisees and their disciples will end up in hell]." **(questioned)** **15** Peter said to Jesus, "Explain to us the parable [about what a person eats]." **16** He replied [to them], "(I am disappointed that even you, [who should understand what I teach], still do not understand!/Why is it that even you [who should understand what I teach], still do not understand?) [RHQ] **17** (You ought to understand that all [food that people] eat enters their stomachs, and later the refuse passes out of their [bodies]./Cannot you understand that all [food that people] eat enters their stomachs and later the refuse passes out [of their bodies]?) [RHQ] [Because food does not alter what we think and desire, what we eat does not cause God to consider that we are unacceptable to him]. **18** [You should know that] what comes out of [people's] mouths, [meaning everything that they say] [SYN], comes from their inner beings/hearts. Many of the [things that they say] cause [God to consider] them to be unacceptable [to him]. **19** It is people's innermost beings that [cause them] to think things that are evil, to murder people, to [commit] adultery, to commit other sexual sins, to steal things, to testify falsely, and to speak evil about [others]. **20** It is these actions that cause [God to consider] people to be unacceptable [to him]. To eat with unwashed hands does not cause [God to consider] people unacceptable to him." **21** After Jesus [took us and] left [Galilee district], we went into the region [where the cities of] Tyre and Sidon [are located]. **22** A woman [from the group of people called] Canaanites who live in that region came [to the place where Jesus was staying]. She kept shouting [to him], "Lord, you are the descendant of [King] David, [you are the Messiah!] Have pity on me [and my daughter!] She is suffering very much because a demon controls her." **23** But Jesus did not answer her at all. [We] disciples came to him, and [knowing that the woman was not a Jew], we said to him, "Tell her to leave, because she keeps [bothering us] by yelling behind us!" **24** But Jesus said

[to her], "I have been sent {[God] has sent me} to [help] only the Israelite people [at this time] [SYN]. [They are like] sheep that have gotten lost [MET] [because they do not know the way to heaven]." **25** But she came [closer] to Jesus and knelt down in front of him [to worship him]. She pled, "Lord/Sir, help me!" **26** Then, [to suggest to her that he needed to help the Jews first and not the non-Jews, whom the Jews called dogs], he told her, "It is not good [for someone] to take food [that has been prepared for] the children and throw it to the [little] dogs." **27** [But to show that she believed that non-Jews could also receive help from God], the woman said [to Jesus], "Lord/Sir, what you [say is] correct, but even the [little] dogs eat the crumbs that fall to the floor [when] their masters [sit at] their tables [and eat]!" **28** Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, [because] you believe firmly [in me, I] will [heal your daughter] as you desire!" At that moment [the demon left] her daughter, [and she] became well. **29** After Jesus, [along with us disciples], departed from that area, we went [back] to Galilee Lake [and walked] along it. Then Jesus climbed the hill [near there] and sat down [to teach the people]. **30** Crowds kept coming to him for the next two days and brought lame, crippled, and blind people, those who were unable to talk, and many others [who had various sicknesses]. They laid them in front of Jesus [so that he would heal them] [SYN]. And he healed them. **31** The crowd saw [him heal] people who could not talk, crippled people, lame people, and blind people, and they were amazed. They said, "Praise God [who rules over us who live in] Israel!" **32** Then Jesus called us disciples to him and said [to us], "This crowd [of people] has been with me for three days and have nothing [left] to eat. I feel sorry for them. I do not want to send them away [while they are still] hungry, [because if I did that], they might faint on the way [home]." **33** We disciples said to him, "In this place where nobody lives, (we cannot possibly obtain enough food to feed such a large crowd!/how can we obtain a large enough amount of food to feed such a large crowd?) [RHQ]" **34** Jesus asked us, "How many small loaves do you have?" We said to him, "[We have] seven small loaves and a few [cooked] fish." **35** He told the people to sit on the ground. **36** Then he took the seven small loaves and the fish. After he thanked [God for them], he broke them [into pieces], and he kept giving [them] to us. Then we [kept distributing] them to the crowd. **37** [Because Jesus made the food multiply miraculously], all [those people] ate and had [plenty to] satisfy [them]. There were 4,000 men [who ate], but no [one counted] the women and the children [who also ate]. Then we [disciples] collected the pieces of food that were left over, and we filled seven large baskets [with them]. **39** After Jesus dismissed the crowd, he, [along with us], got in the boat, and we sailed [around the lake] to the region called Magadan.

16 [Some] Pharisees and Sadducees came to [Jesus] and asked him [to perform] a miracle that would prove [that] [had sent him]. **2** He answered them, "[In this country], in the evening you say, '[It will be] good weather [tomorrow], because the sky is red.' **3** [Early] in the morning [you say], 'It will be stormy weather today, because the sky is red, and dark clouds have formed.' You understand how to predict [the weather by looking at the sky], but you cannot [seem to look at what is happening] now, [and by that] understand [what God is doing]. **4** [You] evil people have seen me [perform miracles] but you do not faithfully worship God [MET]. You want to see [me perform] a miracle [that would prove that God has sent me]. But [God] will [enable you to see] only one miracle. It will be [like] what happened [MET] to Jonah, [the prophet, who was inside a huge fish for three days and then came out of it to live again]." Then Jesus left them and sailed away, [along with us disciples]. **5** [We] forgot to take bread when [we] sailed to another edge of [the lake]. **6** [Then] Jesus said to us, "Beware [that you do not accept] the yeast [MET] that the Pharisees and Sadducees [distribute]." **7** Then, [not realizing that he was speaking figuratively], [we] said to one another, "[He must have said that] because we forgot to bring any bread!" **8** Because Jesus knew what [we were saying], he said [to us], "(I am disappointed that you are discussing among yourselves, [thinking] that [it was because] you did not bring any bread [that I talked about the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees]./Why are you discussing among yourselves thinking that it was because you did not bring any bread [that I talked about the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees]?) [RHQ] You believe only a little [what I am able to do for you]. **9** (You should understand [that I can continue to do miracles to provide for what you need./] you not yet understand [that I can provide miraculously for you if you need food]?) [RHQ] Do you not remember that 5,000 [people ate when I multiplied the] five small loaves [and the two fish? And after everyone had enough to eat], you collected [twelve] baskets [of left-over pieces] [RHQ]! **10** [Do you not remember] [RHQ] [that] 4,000 [people ate when I multiplied the] seven small loaves [and a few fish]? And [after everyone had enough to eat], you collected [seven] large baskets [of left-over pieces] **11** (You should have understood that I was not speaking about [real] bread [that contains yeast]./Why have you not understood that I was not speaking about [real] bread [that contains yeast?]) [RHQ] What I [was saying] was that you should [not accept what] the Pharisees and Sadducees [say, because it would affect you like] yeast [affects] [MET] [dough]." **12**

Then we understood that he was not talking about the yeast that is [in] bread. Instead, [he was talking] about the [wrong] teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. **13** When Jesus came with [us] disciples to the region near Caesarea Philippi [town], he asked us, "Who do people say that I, the one who came from heaven, [really] am?" **14** We answered, "Some [people say that you are] John the Baptizer, [who has come back to life again]. Others say [that you are the prophet] Elijah, [who has returned from heaven as God promised]. [Still] others [say that you are the prophet] Jeremiah or one of the [other] prophets [who lived long ago, who has come back to life again]." **15** Jesus said to us, "[What about] you? Who do you say that I am?" **16** Simon Peter said to him, "You are the Messiah! You are the Son of the all-powerful God." **17** Then Jesus said to him, "Simon, son of Jonah, [God] is pleased with you. What you just said was not [SYN] revealed to you by any human. Instead, [it was] my Father [who lives] in heaven [who revealed this to you]. **18** I will also tell you this: You are Peter, [which means rock]. [You are like] a rock. What you [and your fellow apostles teach] (OR, [what] you [do]) [will be like a foundation on which I] will create congregations of people who [believe in] me. And the demons [PRS], [who live] where the dead people who lived evil lives are, will not be able to [come and] prevent [MET] [me from doing] that." **(Hadēs g86)** **19** [Then, speaking to all of us, he said], "I will enable you [(pl)] to have authority [MTY] over the groups of people over whose lives [God] rules. Whatever you forbid regarding those people [MTY], it will have been forbidden by God. Whatever you permit [MET] regarding them, it will have been permitted by God." **20** Then Jesus warned [us] disciples strongly not to tell anyone [at that time] that he is the Messiah. **21** From that time Jesus began to teach [us] disciples that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem [city]. There the ruling elders, the chief priests, and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws would cause him to suffer and (be killed/die). Then on the third day [after that], he would become alive again. **22** [Because Peter assumed that the Messiah would not suffer and die], he took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him [for talking about suffering and dying]. He said, "Lord, may [God] never permit that to happen to you! That must certainly not happen!" **23** Then Jesus turned [to look at] Peter, and he said to him, "Stop talking to me [like that] [MTY]! [Stop saying what] Satan [MET] [would say, and stop] trying to prevent [from happening what God has planned]! You are a hindrance to me, because you are not thinking like God thinks. Instead, [you are thinking] like people [think]!" **24** Then Jesus said to [us] disciples, "If any one [of you] wants to be my disciple, you must not do [only] what you yourself want [to do]. [You] must be willing to [let people hurt you and disgrace you. That is like what they do to criminals whom they force to] carry a cross [MET] [to the place where the criminals will be executed. That is what anyone who wants to] be my disciple [must do]. **25** [You must do that], because those who try to save their lives [by denying that they belong to me when people want to kill them for believing in me] will not live [eternally], but those who are killed [because of being my disciples] will live [with God eternally]. **26** People [might] get everything [they want] in this world, but ([if they do not become my disciples], they would really be gaining nothing [because] they would not get eternal life!/what would they gain [if they do not become my disciples and thus] do not get eternal life?) [RHQ] (There is absolutely nothing that people can give [to God] that would enable them to gain eternal life./What can people give [to God] that could enable them to gain eternal life?) [MTY, RHQ] **27** [Listen carefully: I], the one who came from heaven, [will leave this earth, but] I will return, and the angels of heaven will accompany me. At that time I will have the glorious [radiance] that my Father has, and I will reward everyone according to what they did [when they were living on earth]. **28** Listen carefully! Some of you who are here now will see [me], the one who came from heaven, when I return to rule. You will see this before you die!"

17 A week after Jesus [said that], he took Peter, James, and John, the [younger] brother of James, and led them up a high mountain where they were away from other people. **2** [While they were there, the three disciples] saw that Jesus' appearance was changed. His face shone like the sun, and his clothing [shone and] became as brilliant as light. **3** Suddenly Moses and Elijah, [who were important prophets many years ago], appeared and started talking with him. **4** Peter [saw them and] said to Jesus, "Lord, it is wonderful for us to be here! If you want [me to], I will make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." **5** While Peter was speaking, a bright cloud [appeared and] covered them. [They heard God] speaking [about Jesus from] inside the cloud. He said [to them], "This is my Son. I love him. He pleases me very much. [So] you must listen to him!" **6** When the three disciples heard [God speaking], they were terrified. [As a result], they fell prostrate on the ground. **7** But Jesus went to them and touched them [and] said [to them], "Stand up! Do not be afraid any more!" **8** And when they looked up [MTY], they saw that Jesus was the only one [who was still there]. **9** When they were walking down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Do not tell anyone what you saw [on the mountain top] until [God has caused me], the one who has come from heaven, to become alive again

after I die." 10 [Those three disciples had just seen Elijah and he did not do anything to prepare people for the coming of the Messiah], so they asked Jesus, "If [what you say is true], why do the men who teach the [Jewish] laws say that it is necessary for Elijah to come [back to earth] before [the Messiah comes]?" 11 Jesus answered [them], "It is true that [God promised that] Elijah would come to prepare many [HYP] [people for the Messiah's coming]. 12 But note this: Elijah's [representative] has already come, [and our leaders have seen him], but they did not recognize him [as the one who would come before the Messiah]. Instead, they treated him [badly], just like they desired. And those same rulers will soon treat [me], the one who came from heaven, in the same manner." 13 Then the three disciples understood that [when he was talking about Elijah], he was referring to John the Baptizer. 14 When [Jesus and the three disciples] returned to the [rest of us disciples] and to the crowd [that had gathered], a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. 15 He said [to him], "Sir/Lord, have mercy on my son and [heal him]! He has epilepsy and suffers very much. [Because of this illness], he has fallen in the fire and in the water many times. 16 I brought him to your disciples [in order that they might heal him], but they were not able to heal him." 17 Jesus responded [by saying to everyone who had gathered there], "[You who have seen how I help people] do not believe [that you can do anything! Your minds] are distorted! How long do I have to be with you [before you] are [able to do what I do] [RHQ]? How long [do] I have to endure your [not believing] [RHQ]? Bring the boy here to me!" 18 When [they brought the boy to Jesus], Jesus rebuked the demon [that was causing the epilepsy]. [As a result], the demon came out of the boy, and right then the boy was healed. 19 [Later, some of us] disciples approached Jesus. We asked him privately, "Why were we [(exc)] not able to expel the demon?" 20 He answered us, "It is because you did not believe very much [in God's power]. Think about this: Mustard seeds [are very small, but in this area they grow and produce large] [MET] [plants]. [Similarly], if your faith grows until you truly believe [that God will do what you ask him to], you will be able to do anything [LIT]! You [could even] say to this hill, 'Move from here to there!' and it would go [where you told it to go]." 22 When [we disciples] had gathered together in Galilee [district], Jesus said to us, "[I], the one who came from heaven, will soon be handed over {[Someone] will soon hand me, the one who came from heaven, over} to the authorities [SYN]. 23 They will kill me. But [God] will cause me to become alive again on the third day [after I am killed]." [When we heard that], we became very sad. 24 When we came to Capernaum [city], the men who collect taxes [for the Temple approached Peter and said to him], "Your teacher pays the [Temple tax], does he not?" 25 He answered [them], "Yes, [he does pay it]." When we came into the house [where Jesus was saying], [before Peter began to talk about paying taxes], Jesus said [to him], "Simon, from whom do you think rulers collect revenue or taxes? [Do they collect taxes] from the citizens of their own [country], or from citizens of countries [they have conquered]?" 26 Peter answered [him], "From [citizens of] other [countries]." Then Jesus said to him, "So citizens of their own [country] do not need to [pay taxes]. 27 But [even though the Temple is mine, pay the tax for us so that the Temple tax collectors will not become angry with us. In order to get the money to pay it], go to the lake. Cast your [fish line and] hook, and take the first fish that you catch. When you open its mouth, you will find a silver coin [that is worth enough to pay the tax] for you and me. Take that coin and give [it] to the Temple tax collectors."

18 About that time we disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who [among us will be] the most important when God [MTY/EUP] [makes you] king?" 2 Jesus called a child to come, and he placed that child in our midst. 3 He said, "Think about this: If you [(pl)] do not change [the way you(pl) think] and become [as humble] as little children, you [(pl)] will surely not go to the place where God [MTY/EUP] rules. 4 The people who become as humble as this child [or any child] is, will be the most important people among those over whom God rules. 5 Also, when those who, [because they love] me, welcome [a] child like this one, [God considers] that they are welcoming me." 6 "If you cause someone who believes in me to sin, [even if it is someone who is socially unimportant like] this little child, [God will severely punish you]. If a heavy stone were fastened around your neck and you were thrown into the deep waters of the sea, [people would consider that you had been severely punished. But God will punish] you more severely [than that if you cause someone to sin] 7 It will be terrible for those [MTY] who cause others to stop believing in me. [God will punish them eternally]. It is inevitable that there will be [those who] cause others to stop believing in me. But it will be horrible for everyone who does that. 8 So, if you [are wanting to use] one of your hands or feet to sin, [stop using that hand or foot! Even if you have to] cut it off [to avoid sinning, do it] [MET]! It is good [that you not sin and] go where you will live [with God eternally, even though while you are still here on earth] you are maimed or lame and do not have a hand or a foot. But it is not good that you continue to have your two hands and two feet [and do] [MTY] [the sinful things you want to, and as a result], you are thrown into [hell], where

there is eternal fire burning. **(aiōnios g166, questioned)** **9** If what you see you [makes you want] to sin, [stop looking at those things! Even if you have to] gouge out one of your eyes and throw it away [to avoid sinning, do it] [HYP]! It is good [that you not sin and] go where you will live [with God eternally, even though while you are still here on earth] you have only one eye. But it is not good that you continue to have your two eyes [and do the sinful things you want to, and as a result], you are thrown {God throws you} into hell where there is eternal fire burning." **(Geenna g1067)** **10** "Make an effort that you [(pl)] do not despise [even] one of these children. I tell you [(pl)] truly that [since] the angels [live] in heaven [in the presence of] my Father, [they will report to him if you mistreat the children]. **12** What do you [(pl)] think [you would do in the following situation]? If you had 100 sheep and one of them got lost, you would surely leave the 99 sheep [that are] on the hill and go and search for the lost one [RHQ], would you not? **13** If you found it, I affirm to you [(pl)] that you would rejoice very much. You would be happy that 99 sheep did not stray away, but you would rejoice even more [because you had found] the sheep that had strayed away. **14** In the same way [that shepherds do not want one of] their [sheep to stray away], so [God], your Father in heaven, does not want [even] one of these children to go to hell." **(questioned)** **15** "If a fellow believer sins [against you], go [to him], and when you two are alone, reprove him [for sinning against you]. If that person listens to you [and feels sorry that he has sinned against you], you will have restored [your friendship with] that person. **16** If that person will not listen to you [nor feel sorry that he has sinned against you], go get one or two other people [who will listen to what you both have to say]. Have them go with you so that [what is written] {[Moses wrote]} [in the Scriptures might happen:] '[When one person accuses another in some matter], it should be confirmed by [at least] two or three people {[at least] two or three people should confirm it} [before that person can be declared] guilty {[before they declare that person guilty]}.' **17** If the one who has sinned against you will not listen to them [or does not feel sorry that he has sinned against you], tell that to the congregation [so that they can rebuke him]. If that person will not listen to the congregation [or feel sorry that he has sinned against you, exclude him from being a member of your congregation, just like] you [would exclude] pagans, tax collectors, [and others who do not believe in God and sin greatly]. **18** Keep this in mind: Whatever you decide on earth [about punishing] or [not punishing a member of your congregation] is what has also been decided by [God] in heaven {what [God] in heaven has also decided}. **19** Also note this: If [at least] two of you [who live] here on earth agree together about something you ask [God] for [DOU], [God], my Father [who is] in heaven, will give you what you ask for. **20** [This is true], because wherever [at least] two or three of you assemble because you believe in me [MTY], I am [spiritually] present with you. I [will hear what you ask for and I will ask God to do it for you]." **21** Then Peter approached [Jesus] and said to him, "How many times must I forgive a fellow believer who [keeps on] sinning against me? [If he keeps asking me to forgive him, must I forgive him] as many as seven times?" **22** Jesus said to him, "I tell you [that the number of] times [you must forgive someone is] not just up to seven, but [you must] ([forgive him] 77 times/never stop forgiving him). **23** [In order to illustrate] why [you should do this], I [will tell you a story in which] God [MTY/EUP], [who cares for] the people whose lives he rules over, is compared {I compare God, [who cares for] the people whose lives he rules over} to a king [and his officials]. That king told [some of his servants that he wanted] his officials to pay what they owed him. **24** [So those officials were brought to the king to] settle [their accounts with him]. [One of the officials who were brought] owed the king several million dollars. **25** But because he did not have [enough money] to pay [what he owed], the king demanded that he, his wife, his children and all he possessed be sold [to someone else, and that the king] be repaid [with] {receive} [the money that was paid for them]. **26** Then that official, [knowing that he did not have the money to pay that huge debt], fell on his knees [in front of the king] and begged him saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you all of it, [eventually].' **27** The king, [knowing that the official could never pay all that huge debt], felt sorry for him. So he canceled his debt and released him. **28** Then this official went to another one of the king's officials who owed him a bit less than a year's wages. He grabbed him [by the throat], started choking him, and said to him, 'Pay back what you owe [me]!' **29** That official fell on his knees and begged him saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you all of it, [eventually].' **30** But this official kept refusing [to cancel that small debt that the man owed him]. Instead, he [caused that official to be] put in prison [and to stay there] until he could pay back all the money that he owed him. **31** When the other officials [of the king] learned that this had happened, they felt very distressed. So they went to the king and reported in detail what had happened. **32** Then the king summoned the official [who had owed him several million dollars]. He said to him, 'You wicked servant! I canceled that huge debt [that you owed me] because you begged me [to do so] **33** You should have been merciful [and canceled your fellow official's debt], just like I was merciful to you [and

canceled your debt] [RHQ]!' **34** The king was very angry. He handed this official over to some jailers who would torture him severely until he paid all of the debt that he owed." **35** [Then Jesus continued by saying], "That is what my Father in heaven will do to you if you do not [feel merciful and] sincerely forgive a fellow believer [who sins against you]."

19 After Jesus had said that, he [took us] and left Galilee [district] and went to the part of Judea [district that is located] on the [east] side of the Jordan [River]. **2** Large crowds followed him there, and he healed [the sick among] them. **3** [Some] Pharisees approached Jesus and said to him, "Does [our Jewish] law permit [a man] to divorce his wife for any reason whatever?" [They asked that] in order to be able to criticize Jesus, [whether he answered "Yes" or "No]." **4** Jesus said [to them], "[Because] you have read [RHQ] [the Scriptures], [you should know] that at the time [God first] created [people], 'he made [one] man, and he made [one] woman [to be that man's wife].' **5** That explains why [God said], '[When] a man [and woman marry], they should no longer live with their fathers and mothers. [Instead], the two of them shall live together, and they shall become [so closely united that they are like] one person [MET].' **6** Consequently, [although they functioned as] two [separate people before], they now [become as if they were] one person [MET]. Since that is true, a man must not separate [from his wife] whom God has joined to him, [because it is God's plan for them to remain together]." **7** The Pharisees then said to him, "If that is true, why did Moses command that [a man who wanted to divorce] his wife should give her a paper [stating his reason for] divorcing her, and then send her away?" **8** He said to them, "It was because [your ancestors] stubbornly [wanted their own way] that Moses allowed them to divorce their wives, [and you are no different from them]. But when God first [MTY] created a man and a woman, [he did not intend for them to separate]. **9** I am telling you emphatically that [because God considers that a marriage lasts until either the husband or the wife dies, he considers that] any man who divorces his wife and marries another woman is committing adultery, unless [his first wife] has committed adultery." **10** We disciples said to him, "If that is true, it is better for men never to marry!" **11** Then he said to us, "Not every man is able to accept this teaching. Only the men whom [God] enables [to accept it are able to do so]. **12** There are men who [do not marry because they are not able to have sexual relations because they] have been sexually defective ever since they were born. There are other men [who do not marry because they are unable to have sexual relations] because they have been castrated {other men have made them that way}. There are other [men who decide not to marry] [MET] in order that they can serve God better [and spend more time telling people about how] God [MTY/EUP] wants to rule people's lives. You who are able to understand [what I have said about marriage] should accept it [and obey it]." **13** Then [some] children were brought {[some people] brought their children} to Jesus in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray [for them]. But we disciples scolded the people [for bringing their children to Jesus because we thought that Jesus did not want to take the time to be with children]. **14** But [when Jesus saw us scolding them], he said to us, "Let the children come to me! Do not stop them! It is people who are [humble and trusting] like they are, who can experience God's rule [in their lives]." **15** Jesus then laid his hands on the children [and asked God to bless them]. Then he left there. **16** [As Jesus was walking along, a young] man approached him and said [to him], "Teacher, what good [deeds] must I do in order to live [with God] eternally?" **(aiōnios g166)** **17** Jesus said to him, "(Consider [what you are implying about who I am when] you ask me about what is good./Do you realize [what you are implying about who I am when] you ask me about that which is good?) [RHQ] Only one being is good and [really knows what is good. That being is God. But in order to answer your question] about [desiring to] live [with God eternally], I [will say to you], 'Keep the commandments [that God gave Moses']." **18** The man asked Jesus, "Which [commandments must I keep]?" Jesus answered [him], "Do not murder [anyone], do not commit adultery, do not steal things, do not testify falsely, **19** honor your father and your mother, and love people you come in contact with as [much as you love] yourself." **20** [Thinking that he might not be able to live with God eternally even though he had kept those commandments], the young man said to Jesus, "I have always obeyed all those commandments. What else must I do [in order to live with God eternally]?" **21** Jesus said to him, "If you desire to be all that God intends you to be, go [home], sell everything that you have and give [the money] to poor people. [The result will be that] you will have [spiritual] riches in heaven. Then come and be my disciple!" **22** When the young man heard those words, he went away feeling sad, because he was very rich [and did not want to give away everything he owned]. **23** Then Jesus said to [us] disciples, "Keep this in mind: It is very difficult for rich people [to decide] to let God [MTY/EUP] rule their [lives]. **24** Note this also: It is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. It is [almost] as difficult [HYP] for rich people [to decide] to let God rule their [lives]." **25** When [we] disciples heard this, we were astounded. [We thought that rich people were the ones whom God blesses the most. So we said to

him], "(If that is so, it does not seem likely that anyone will be saved!/Who then will God will save?)" [RHQ] **26** [When Jesus heard us say that], he looked intently at us, and [then] he said to us, "[Yes], it is impossible for people [to save themselves]. But [God can save them, because] God is able to do [anything]!" **27** Then Peter said to him, "You know that we [(exc)] have left everything behind and we have become your disciples. So what benefit will we get [for doing that]?" **28** Jesus said to us, "Keep this in mind: [You will get many benefits]. When [God] makes [the] new [earth] and when [I], the one who came from heaven, sit on my magnificent throne, those of you who have accompanied me will each sit on a throne, and you will judge [the people of] the twelve tribes of Israel. **29** [God will reward] those who, because of being my [disciples], have left [behind] a house or plot of ground, [their] brothers, [their] sisters, their father, their mother, their children, [or any other family] [MTY] [members]. [God] will give them 100 times [as many benefits as they have given up]. And they will live [with God] eternally. **(aiōnios g166)** **30** But many [people who consider themselves to] be important [now] will be unimportant [at that future time], and many [people who consider themselves to be] unimportant [now will be] important [at that future time]."

20 "[In order to illustrate how God rewards people], I will compare [the way] God [MTY/EUP] rules his people with what the owner of an estate [did]. Early in the morning the owner of the estate went to [the market] where [people who wanted work gathered]. He went there to hire laborers to work in his vineyard. **2** He promised the men whom he hired that he would pay them the standard wage [for working] one day. Then he sent them to his vineyards. **3** At nine o'clock [that same morning] he went back [to the market]. There he saw more men who did not have work. **4** He said to them, 'Go to my vineyard as other men have done, [and work there]. I will pay you whatever is a just [wage].' [So they also went to his vineyard and began to work]. **5** At noon and at three o'clock he again went [to the market] and found [other laborers whom he promised to pay a fair wage]. **6** At five o'clock he went [to the market again] and saw other [men] standing [there who were not working]. He said to them, 'Why are you standing here all day and not working?' **7** They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, '[I will hire you]. Go to my vineyard as other men have done, [and work there.' So they went]. **8** When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Tell the men to come so that you can give them their wages. First, pay the men who started working last, and pay the men last who started working first.' **9** The [manager] paid the standard daily wage to each of the men who did not start working until five o'clock [in the afternoon]. **10** When the men who had begun working early [in the morning] went [to get their wages], they thought that they would receive more than the standard wage. But they also received only the standard wage. **11** So they complained to the owner of the vineyard [because they thought their payment was unfair]. **12** They said [to him], '[You are not being fair!] The men who started working after [all of the rest of us started] worked for [only] one hour! You have [paid] them the same [wage] as [you paid] us! But we worked hard [all] day [IDM], [including working in the] hottest part of the day!' **13** The owner of the vineyard said to one of those [who complained], 'Friend, I did not treat you unfairly. You agreed with me [to work the whole day] for the standard wage [RHQ]. **14** [Stop complaining to me]! Take your wage and go! I desire to give the same wage that I gave you to the men who began working after all of you [had begun working]. **15** I certainly have a right to [spend my money] as I desire [RHQ], [including paying those laborers what I desire to pay them]. (You should not be envious about my being generous!/Are you angry [MET] because I am generous?) [RHQ]'" **16** [Then Jesus said to us], "Similarly, [God will reward] well [some] people who [seem to be] less important now, and he will not reward [some] people who [seem to be] more important [now]." **17** When Jesus was walking [on the road] up to Jerusalem, [along with us] twelve [disciples], he took us to a place by ourselves [in order that he could talk to us privately]. Then he said to us, **18** "Listen carefully! We are [now] going up to Jerusalem. [While we are there, someone] will enable the chief priests and the men who teach the [Jewish] laws to seize [me], the one who came from heaven, [and they will put me on trial]. They will condemn me [and say] that I should be killed {the authorities should kill me}. **19** [Then they] will put me in the hands of non-Jews so that they can make fun of me, whip me, [and kill me by] nailing me to a cross. But on the third day [after that], [God] will cause me to live again." **20** Then the mother of James and John brought her two sons to Jesus. She bowed down before Jesus and asked him to do her a favor. **21** Jesus said to her, "What do you want [me to do for you]?" She said to him, "Permit these two sons of mine to sit next to you (OR, Permit these two sons of mine to sit next to you at your right side and at your left side) [and rule with you] [MTY] when you become king." **22** Jesus said to [her and her sons], "You do not understand what you are asking for. Can you suffer like I am about to suffer [IDM]?" [James and John] answered him, "Yes, we are able [to do that]." **23** Then Jesus said to them, "Yes, you will suffer as I will suffer [IDM]. But I am not the one who chooses the ones who [will] sit next to me [and rule with me]. [God], my Father,

will give those places [MTY] to the ones whom he appoints." **24** When we ten [other disciples] heard [what James and John had requested], we became angry with them [because we also wanted to rule with Jesus in the highest positions]. **25** [So] Jesus called all of us together and said [to us], "You know that those who rule the non-Jews [enjoy] showing them that they are powerful. Their chief rulers [enjoy] commanding the people under them. **26** You [should] not be like them. On the contrary, everyone among you who wants [God to consider] him great must become [like] a servant for [the rest of] you. **27** And everyone among you who wants [God to consider him] to be the most important must become [like] a slave for [the rest of] you. **28** [You should imitate me]. [Even though I am] the one who came from heaven, I did not come to be served {in order that people would serve me}. On the contrary, I [came in order] to serve [others] and to [IDM] allow myself to be killed {other people to kill me}, so that [my dying would be like] a payment to rescue many [people from being punished for their sins]." [MTY] **29** As we were leaving Jericho [city], a large crowd of people followed [us]. **30** [As we walked along, we saw] two blind men sitting alongside the road. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they yelled [to him], "Lord, Descendant of [King] David, [you are the Messiah] Take pity on us!" **31** [People in] the crowd scolded them [and] told them to be quiet. But the blind men yelled even louder, "Lord, Descendant of [King] David, [you are the Messiah] Have pity on us!" **32** Jesus stopped and called them [to come to him]. [Then] he said [to them], "What do you want me to do for you?" **33** They said to him, "Lord, heal our eyes [IDM] [so that we can see]!" **34** Jesus [felt] sorry [for them and] touched their eyes. Immediately they were able to see, and they went with Jesus.

21 As [we] approached Jerusalem, we came near Bethphage [village], near Olive [Tree] Hill. Jesus said to two [of his] disciples, "Go to the village just ahead of us. As soon as you enter [it], you will see a donkey and her foal that are {someone has} tied [up]. Untie them and bring them [here] to me. **3** If anyone says anything to you [about your doing that], tell [him], 'The Lord needs them.' He will [then allow you to] lead them away." **4** When all this happened, what was written by a prophet {what a prophet wrote about} was fulfilled {happened}. The prophet wrote, **5** "Tell the people who live in Jerusalem [SYN], 'Look! Your king is coming to you! He will come humbly. He [will show that he is humble, because he will be] riding on a colt, the offspring of a donkey.'" **6** So the [two] disciples went and did what Jesus told them to do. **7** They brought the donkey and its colt [to Jesus]. They placed their cloaks on them [to make something for him to sit on]. Then Jesus [mounted the colt] and sat on the cloaks. **8** Then a large crowd spread [some of] their clothing on the road, and other [people] cut off branches from [palm] trees and spread them on the road. [They did those things to decorate the road in order to honor Jesus]. **9** The crowds that walked in front of him and those who walked behind him were shouting things like, "Praise the [Messiah], the descendant of [King] David!" "May the Lord [God] bless [this one] who comes as [God's] representative and with [God's] authority [MTY]." "Praise God, who is in the highest [heaven]!" **10** As Jesus entered Jerusalem, a crowd of people [MTY] from all [over the city] became excited and were saying, "Why [are they honoring] this man [like that]?" **11** The crowd [that was already following him] said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee!" **12** Then Jesus went into the Temple [courtyard] and chased out all of those who were buying and selling things there. He also overturned the tables of those who were giving [Temple tax money in exchange for Roman] coins, and he overturned the seats of those who were selling pigeons [for sacrifices]. **13** Then he said to them, "It is {([Jeremiah/A prophet]) has} written [in the Scriptures that God said], '[I want] my house to be called a place where [people] pray', but you bandits have made it [MET] your hideout!" **14** After that, [many] blind [people] and lame [people] came to Jesus in the temple [in order that he would heal them], and he healed them. **15** The high priests and the men who taught the people the [Jewish] laws saw the wonderful deeds that Jesus did. [They also saw and] heard the children shouting in the Temple, "We praise the [Messiah], the descendant of [King] David!" The religious leaders were indignant [because they did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah]. **16** [They thought that Jesus should not be allowing the children to say that], so they asked him, "[How can you tolerate] this [RHQ]? Do you hear what these [children] are shouting?" Then Jesus said to them, "Yes, I [hear them, but] if you [remembered what] you have read [in the Scriptures about children praising me, you would know that God is pleased] [RHQ] [with them]. [The psalmist] wrote, [saying to God], 'You have taught infants and other children to praise you perfectly.'" **17** Then Jesus left the city. We [disciples] went [with him] to Bethany [town], and we slept there [that night]. **18** Early [the next morning], when we were returning to the city, [Jesus] was hungry. **19** He saw a fig tree near the road. [So he went over to it to pick some figs to eat]. But when he got close, he saw that there were no [figs on the tree]. There were only leaves on it. So [to illustrate how God would punish the nation of Israel], he said to the fig tree, "May you never again produce figs!" As a result, the fig tree withered that night. **(aiōn g165)** **20** [The next day] when we disciples saw [what had happened to the

tree], we marveled, and we said [to Jesus], "(It is astonishing that the fig tree withered so quickly!/How is it that the fig tree dried up so quickly?)" [RHQ] **21** Jesus said to us, "Think about this: If you believe [that God has power to do what you ask him to] and you do not doubt [that], you will be able to do [things like what I have] done to this fig tree. You will even be able to do [marvelous deeds like] saying to a nearby hill, 'Uproot yourself and throw yourself into the sea', and it will happen! **22** In addition [to that], whenever you ask [God for something] when you pray [to him, if you] believe [that he will give it to you], you will receive [it from him]." **23** After that, Jesus went into the Temple [courtyard]. While he was teaching [the people], the chief priests and the elders of the Jewish Council approached him. They asked, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who authorized you to do what you did [here yesterday] [DOU]?" **24** Jesus said to them, "I also will ask you a question, and if you answer me, I will tell you who authorized me to do these things. **25** Where did John [the Baptizer] get [his authority to] baptize [those who came to him]? [Did he get it] from God or from people? [MTY/EUP]" The chief priests and elders debated among themselves [about what they should answer]. [They said to each other], "If we say, '[It was] [MTY/EUP] from God', he will say to us, 'Then (you should have believed his [message]!/why did you not believe [John's message]?) [RHQ]' **26** If we say, 'It was from people', we are afraid that the crowd [will react violently], because all [the people] believe that John was a prophet [sent by God]." **27** So they answered Jesus, "We do not know [where John got his authority]." Then he said to them, "[Because you did not answer my question], I will not tell you who authorized me to do the things I did [here yesterday]." **28** [Then Jesus said to the chief priests and elders], "Tell me [RHQ] what you think [about what I am about to tell you]. There was a man who had two sons. He went to his older son and said, 'My son, go and work in my vineyard today!' **29** But the son said [to his father], 'I do not want to [go and work in your vineyard today]!' But later he changed his mind, and he went to the vineyard [and worked]. **30** Then the father approached his younger son and said what he had said to his older son. That son said, 'Sir, I will [go and work in the vineyard today.'] But he did not go there. **31** So which of the man's two sons did what their father desired?" They answered, "The older son." Jesus [explained to them what that parable meant] by saying, "Think about this: [It is more likely that other people, including] tax collectors and prostitutes, [whom you think are very sinful], will enter where God rules, than it is that you [Jewish leaders] will enter. **32** I [say this to you] because, even though John [the Baptizer] explained to you how to live righteously, you did not believe his message. But tax collectors and prostitutes believed his [message, and they turned away from their sinful behavior]. In contrast, you, even though you saw what they did, refused to turn away from your sinful behavior, and you did not believe [John's message]." **33** "Listen to another parable [that I will tell you]. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He built a fence around it. He dug a hole in the ground [inside the fence]. He placed [in the hole] a stone tank to [collect the juice that would be] pressed out of the grapes. He also built a tower [inside that fence that someone would sit in to guard that vineyard]. He arranged for some men [to care for] the vineyard [and to give him some of the grapes in return]. Then he went away to another country. **34** When it was time to harvest the grapes, the landowner sent some of his servants to the men who were taking care of the vineyard to get his share of the grapes [that the vineyard had produced]. **35** But the renters seized the servants. They beat one of them, they killed another one, and [killed] another one of them [by throwing] stones at him. **36** [So the landowner] sent more servants than [he had sent] the first [time]. The renters treated those servants the same way that [they had treated the other servants]. **37** Later, [knowing this], [the landowner] sent his son to [the renters to get his share of the grapes]. When he sent him, he said [to himself], 'They will certainly respect my son [and give him some of the grapes].' **38** But when the renters saw his son [arriving], they said to each other, 'This is the man who will inherit [this vineyard]! Let's kill him and divide the property [among ourselves].' **39** So they grabbed him, dragged him outside the vineyard, and killed him. **40** [Now I ask you], when the landowner returns to his vineyard, what [do you think] he will do to those renters?" **41** [The chief priests and elders] replied, "He will thoroughly destroy those wicked [renters]! Then he will rent the vineyard to others. They will give him [his share of] the grapes when they are ripe." **42** Jesus said to them, "[That is right, so you need to think carefully about these words which] you have read [RHQ] in the Scriptures: The builders rejected a certain stone. [But others put] that same stone [in its proper place, and it] has become the most important stone [of the] building [MET]. The Lord has done this, and we marvel as we look at it. **43** So, [because you reject me], I am going to tell you this: God will no longer let you [Jews] be the people over whom he rules. Instead, he will let [non-Jews] be the people over whom he rules, and they will do [IDM] what he asks them to do. **44** [The important stone in the building represents me, the Messiah, and those who reject me are like people who fall on this stone]. Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken into pieces {This cornerstone will break

into pieces anyone who falls on it}, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." **45** When the chief priests and the [elders who were] Pharisees heard this parable, they realized that he was accusing them [because they did not believe that he was the Messiah]. **46** They wanted to seize him, but [they did not do so] because they were afraid of what the crowds [would do if they did that], because [the crowds] considered that Jesus was a prophet.

22 Then Jesus told [the Jewish leaders] other parables [in order to illustrate what will happen to the people who do not accept him as the King God promised to send]. [This is one of those parables:] **2** "[God] [MTY/EUP] [is like] a king [SIM] who [told his servants that they should] make a wedding feast for his son. **3** [When] the feast [was ready], the king sent his servants to tell the people who had been {whom he had} invited that it was time for them to come to the wedding feast. [The servants did that]. But the people who had been invited did not want to come. **4** So he sent other servants [to] again [tell the people whom he had invited that they should come to the feast]. He said [to those servants], 'Say to the people whom I invited [to come to the feast], "The king says that he has prepared the food. The oxen and the fattened calves have been butchered [and cooked]. Everything is ready. It is time [now for you to] come to the wedding feast!"'" **5** [But when the servants told them that, they] disregarded [what the servants said]. Some of them went to their own fields. Others went to their places of business. **6** The rest of them seized the king's servants, mistreated them, and killed them. **7** [When the king heard what had happened], he became furious. He commanded his soldiers to go and kill those murderers and burn their cities. **8** [After his soldiers had done that], the king said to his other servants, 'I have prepared the [wedding] feast, but the people who were {whom I} invited do not deserve to [come to it because they did not consider it an honor to have been invited]. **9** So, go to the intersections of the main streets. Tell whomever you find that they should come to the [wedding] feast.' **10** So the servants went there, and they gathered everyone they saw [who wanted to come to the feast]. They gathered [both people that were considered] to be evil and [those that were considered to be] good. They brought them into the hall where the wedding [feast took place]. The hall was filled with people. **11** But when the king went [into the hall] to see the guests who were there, he saw someone who was not wearing clothes [that had been provided for the guests to wear] at a wedding [feast]. **12** The king said to him, 'Friend, (you should never have entered this hall, because you are not wearing the clothes [that guests wear] at wedding [feasts]!/how did you enter this hall, because you are not wearing the clothes [that are appropriate for guests to wear] at a wedding [feast]?) [RHQ]' The man did not say anything, [because he did not know what to say]. **13** Then the king said to his attendants, 'Tie this person's feet and hands and throw him outside where there is total darkness. People who are there cry out [because they are suffering] and they gnash their teeth [because of their severe pain].'" **14** [Then Jesus said, "The point of this story is that God] has invited many [to come to him], but only a few people are the ones whom he has chosen [to be there]." **15** After Jesus said that, the Pharisees met together in order to plan how they could cause him to say something that would enable them to accuse him. **16** They sent to him some of their disciples, [who thought that the Israelites should pay only the tax that the Jewish authorities required them to pay]. They also sent some members of the party that supported Herod. [The members of that party thought that the Israelites should pay only the tax that the Roman government required them to pay]. [Those who were sent came and] said to Jesus, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful and that you teach the truth about what God wants [us to do]. We also know that you do not change what you teach because of what someone says about you, even if it is an important person who does not like what you [IDM] teach. **17** So tell us what you think [RHQ] [about this matter]: Is it right that we pay taxes to the Roman government [MTY], or not?" **18** But Jesus knew that what they really wanted to do was evil. [They were wanting him to say something that would get him in trouble with either the Jewish authorities or the Roman authorities. So he said to them], "You are (hypocrites/pretending to ask a legitimate question), but you are just wanting [RHQ] me to say something for which you can accuse me. **19** Show me [one of] the coins with [which people pay] the [Roman] tax." So they showed him [a coin called] a denarius. **20** He said to them, "Whose picture is [on] this [coin]? And [whose] name [is on it]?" **21** They answered, "[It has the picture and name of] Caesar, [the head of the Roman government]." Then he said to them, "Okay, give to the government what they [require], and give to God what he [requires]." **22** When those men heard Jesus say that, they marveled [that his answer did not enable anyone to accuse him]. Then they left Jesus. **23** During that same day, some Sadducees came to Jesus. [They are a Jewish sect who do not] believe that people will become alive again after they die. They [wanted to] ask [Jesus] a question. **24** [In order to discredit the idea that dead people will live again], they said [to him], "Teacher, Moses wrote [in the Scriptures], 'If a man dies who did not have any children, his brother must marry the [dead man's] widow in order that she can have a child by him. The child

[will be considered] the descendant of the man [who died], [and in that way the dead man will have descendants].' **25** Well, there were seven boys in a family [living] near us. The oldest one married someone. He [and his wife] did not have any children, and he died. So the second brother married the widow. [But he also died without having a child]. **26** The same thing [happened to] the third [brother], and also to the other four [brothers, who one by one married this same woman]. **27** Last of all, the widow also died. **28** So, at the time when people are raised from the dead, which of the seven [brothers do you think] will be her husband? Keep in mind that they had all been married to her." **29** Jesus replied to them, "You are certainly wrong [in what you are thinking]. You do not know [what is written in] the Scriptures. [You] also do not know [that] God has [the] power [to make people alive again]. **30** The fact is that [the woman will not be the wife of any of them, because] after [God causes all dead] people [to] live again, no one will be married. Instead, [people] will be like the angels in heaven. [They do not marry]. **31** But as for dead people becoming alive again, God said something about that. (I'm sure you have read it./Have you not read it?) [RHQ] [Long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died, God said to Moses], **32** 'I am the God whom Abraham [worships] and the God whom Isaac [worships] and the God whom Jacob worships.' It is not dead people who worship God. It is living people who worship him. [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died long before Moses lived, but God said that they were still worshipping him, so we know their spirits were still alive]!" **33** When the crowds of people heard [Jesus teach] that, they were amazed. **34** But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had answered the Sadducees in such a way that the Sadducees could not [think of anything that they might say to] respond to him, the Pharisees gathered together to [plan what they would say to him]. [Then they approached him]. **35** One of them was a man who had studied well the laws [that God gave Moses]. He wanted to see if Jesus [could answer] his question well [or if he would say something wrong]. He asked him, **36** "Teacher, which commandment in the laws [that God gave Moses] is the most important?" **37** Jesus [quoted the Scriptures as he replied], "'You must love the Lord your God with all [IDM] your (inner being/heart). [Show that you love him] in all that you desire, in all that you feel, and in all that you think.' **38** That is the most important commandment [in the laws that God gave Moses]. **39** The next most important commandment [that everyone must surely obey] is: 'You must love the people you come in contact with as much as [you love] yourself.' **40** These two commandments are the basis of every law [that Moses wrote in the Scriptures] and also of all that the prophets [wrote]." **41** While the Pharisees were still gathered together [near] Jesus, he asked them, **42** "What do you think about the Messiah? Whose descendant is he?" They said to him, "[He is] the descendant of [King] David." **43** Jesus said to them, "[If the Messiah is King David's descendant], then (David should not have called him 'Lord' when David was saying [what] the [Holy] Spirit [prompted him to] say./Why did David call the Messiah 'Lord' when David was speaking [what] the [Holy] Spirit [prompted him to] say?) [RHQ] **44** [David wrote this in the Scriptures about the Messiah]: 'God said to my Lord, "Sit [here beside me] on my right, [the place of greatest honor you] [MTY]. [Sit here] while I completely defeat your enemies [MTY]."' **45** So, since [King] David called [the Messiah] 'my Lord', ([the Messiah] cannot be [just someone] descended from David!/how can he be [only] the descendant of [King] David?) [RHQ] [He must be much greater than David]!" **46** No one [who heard what Jesus said] was able to think of even one word to say to him [in response]. And after that, no one else ever dared to ask him another question [to try to trap him].

23 Then Jesus said to the crowd and to us his disciples, **2** "Moses was the [renowned] teacher who taught [the people the laws that God gave him] [MTY]. Now, the Pharisees and the men who teach our [Jewish] laws have made themselves the ones who interpret those laws [IDM]. **3** Consequently, you should do whatever they tell you that you must do. But do not do what they do, because they themselves do not do what they tell [you that you must do]. **4** They [require you to obey many rules that are difficult to obey]. But they themselves [do not help anyone obey those rules. It is] as if they are tying up loads that are hard to carry and putting them on your shoulders [MET] [for you to carry. But they] themselves [do not desire to help anyone obey those laws. They are like] people who do not want to lift [even the slightest load] that they [could lift] [MET] **5** [with] one finger. Whatever they do, they do it to be seen by other people {so that other people will see them doing that}. [For example], they make extra wide the tiny boxes containing portions of Scripture that they wear on their arms. They enlarge the tassels on their robes, [to make others think that they are pious]. **6** [They want people to honor them. For example], at dinner parties they sit in the seats where the most important people sit. In the places of worship [they want to sit] in the seats where the most honored people sit. **7** Also, [they want people to] greet them [respectfully] in the marketplaces and to honor them by calling them 'Teacher'. **8** But you [who are my disciples] should not allow people to address you [honorably] as 'Rabbi', [which means 'teacher]'. I [am the] only one who is [really] your teacher,

which means that you are all [equal, like] brothers and sisters, [and none of you should act superior to another, as the Pharisees do]. **9** Do not [honor anyone] on earth [by] addressing him as 'Father', because God, your Father in heaven, is the only [spiritual] father of all of you. **10** Do not [allow people to] call you 'Instructors', because I, the Messiah, am the one instructor who [teaches all of] you. **11** In contrast, everyone among you who wants [God to consider them] to be important must serve others as servants do. **12** [God] will humble those who exalt themselves. And [he] will exalt those who humble themselves." **13** [Then Jesus said to the religious leaders], "You men who teach the [Jewish] laws and you Pharisees are hypocrites! There will be terrible punishment for [you, because by teaching what is false], you [prevent people] [MTY/HYP] [who are thinking about letting] God rule their lives [from doing that] [MET]. [What you are doing is like] closing a gate [MET] [so that people who] are wanting to enter [a city cannot go in]. As for you, [you do not let] God [rule your lives. Neither do you allow] other people [to let God rule their lives. What you do is like] not going into a [house] yourselves, and not allowing others to enter it [either] [MET]." **15** "You are hypocrites, you men who teach the [Jewish] laws and you Pharisees! Your punishment will be terrible, because you exert yourselves very much to get [even] one person to believe what you teach. For instance, you travel across seas and lands [to distant places] in order to do that. And [as a result], when one person [believes what you teach], you make that person much more deserving to go to hell than you yourselves [deserve to]." **(Geenna g1067)** **16** "You [Jewish leaders], your punishment will be terrible! You are [like people who are] blind [MET] who are trying to lead others. You say, '[In the case of] those who promise to [do] something and then ask the Temple [to affirm what they have promised], it means nothing [if they do not do what] they have promised. But if they ask the gold that is in the Temple [to affirm what they have promised], they must do what they promised.' **17** You are fools, and you are [like people who are] blind [MET]! The gold [that is in the Temple] is important, but [the Temple] is even more important [RHQ], because it is the Temple that the gold is in that sets the gold apart for a special use for God. **18** Also [you say], 'In the case of those who promise to [do] something and then ask [the altar to affirm what they have promised], it means nothing [if they do not do what they have promised]. But if they ask the gift [that] they have put on the altar [to support what they have promised], they must do [what they promised].' **19** [You are like people who are] blind [MET]. The gift [that is offered] on the altar is important, but the altar is even more important [RHQ] because it is the altar on which the offering is offered that sets it apart for a special use for God. **20** So, those who promise to do something, and then ask the altar [to affirm what they have promised] are asking everything on the altar [to support what they promised]. **21** Those who promise to do something, and then ask the Temple [to affirm what they promised], are asking that [God], to whom the Temple belongs, [will affirm what they have promised]. **22** Those who promise to do something and then ask heaven [to affirm what they promised] are asking the throne of God and [God], who sits on that throne, [to affirm what they promised]." **23** "You men who teach the [Jewish] laws and you Pharisees, your punishment will be terrible! You are hypocrites because, [even though] you give [to God] a tenth of [the herbs you produce, such as] mint, dill, and cummin, you do not [obey God's] laws that are more important. [For example, you do not act] justly toward others, you do not act mercifully toward people, and you are not trustworthy. It is good to [give a tenth of your herbs] to God, but you should also [obey] these other [more important laws]. **24** You [leaders are like] blind people [who are trying to lead others. According to your laws you say that touching gnats and camels makes you unacceptable to God. What you are doing is like] straining a gnat [out of a jar of water so that you do not swallow it and thereby become unacceptable to God], and [at the same time] swallowing a camel [with the water] [MET]!" **25** "You men who teach people the [Jewish] laws and you Pharisees, your punishment will be terrible! You are hypocrites! You are greedy and selfish, but you [make yourselves appear holy. You are like] cups and plates that have been cleaned on the outside, but on the inside [they are very filthy]. **26** You blind Pharisees! First you must [stop being greedy and selfish]. [Then you will be able to do what] is [righteous. That will be like] cleaning the inside of a cup first. Then when you clean [MET] the outside [of the cup], [the cup will truly be clean]." **27** "You men who teach the [Jewish] laws and you Pharisees, your punishment will be terrible! You are hypocrites! You are like tombs [SIM] that are painted white [so that people can see them and avoid touching them]. The outside surfaces are beautiful, but inside they are full of dead people's bones and filth. **28** You are [like those tombs]. When people look at you, they think that you are righteous, but in your (inner beings/hearts) you are hypocrites and you disobey [God's] commands." **29** "You men who teach the [Jewish] laws and you Pharisees are hypocrites! Your punishment will be terrible! You rebuild the tombs of the [prophets whom others killed long ago]. You decorate the monuments [that honor] righteous [people]. **30** You say, 'If we had [lived] when our ancestors [MET] [lived], we would not have helped [MET] those who killed [MTY] the prophets.'

31 Thus [you recognize that you should honor the prophets, but you disregard the word of God that other men whom God has sent teach you. In that way] you testify against yourselves that you are descendants and disciples [MET] of those who killed the prophets. 32 You are as ready to murder people as [MET] your ancestors were! 33 [You people are so wicked] You are [as dangerous as poisonous] snakes [DOU, MET]! (You [foolishly] think that you will escape being punished in hell!/Do you [foolishly] think that you will escape when [God] punishes [wicked people] in hell?) [RHQ] **(Geenna g1067)** 34 Take note that this is why I will send prophets, wise men, and other men who will teach you [my message]. You will kill some of them by nailing them to crosses, and you will kill some in other ways. You will whip some of them in the places where you worship, and [you will] chase them from city to city. 35 As a result, God will consider that you are guilty for killing [SYN] all the righteous [people], including killing [MTY] [Adam's son] Abel, who was a righteous man [SYN], and Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, whom you [are guilty of] killing [in the holy place] between the Temple and the altar, and for killing [all the prophets] who lived between [the times that those two men lived]. 36 Think about this: You people who have observed my ministry, it is you whom [God] will punish [for killing all] those [prophets]!" 37 "O [people of] Jerusalem [MTY, APO], you killed the prophets [who lived long ago], and you killed others whom [God] sent to you. You killed them by throwing stones at them [DOU]! Many times I wanted to gather you together [to protect you], like a hen gathers her young chicks under her wings [MET]. But you did not want [me to do that]. 38 So listen to this: Your city [SYN] will [soon] become an uninhabited place. 39 Keep this in mind: You will see me again only when I [return], and you say [about me], '[God] is truly pleased with this man who comes with God's authority [MTY].'"

24 Jesus left the Temple [courtyard]. As he was walking along, [we] disciples came to him to ask him to note [how beautiful] the Temple buildings [were]. 2 He said to us, "These buildings that you are looking at [RHQ] [are wonderful, but] I want to tell you [something about them. They will soon be completely destroyed] {[Foreign invaders will completely destroy them]}. Every stone [in these buildings] will be thrown down {they will throw down every stone in these buildings}. Not one stone will be left {They will not leave one stone} on top of another stone." 3 [Later], as Jesus was sitting alone on [the slope of] Olive [Tree] Hill, [we] disciples went to him and asked him, "When will this happen [to the buildings of the Temple? Also, tell us what will happen to indicate that you are about to] come again, and [to indicate] that this world is ending?" **(aiōn g165)** 4 Jesus replied, "[All that I will say is], be sure that no one deceives you [about what will happen] 5 Many [people] will come and say (that I sent them/that they have my authority) [MTY]. They will say, 'I am the Messiah', and they will deceive many [people]. 6 You will hear about wars [that are close] and wars that are far away, but do not let that trouble you. Keep in mind that [God has said that] those things must happen. But [when they happen], it will not mean that the end [of the world] has come! 7 [Groups in various] countries will fight each other, and [various] governments [will also fight] against each other. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8 These things will happen first. Then there will be other things that [will happen before I return. What will happen will be like the first pains] of childbirth MET]. 9 At that time [people who oppose you] will take you to [the authorities, who] will mistreat you and kill you. You will be hated by [people who live in] all nations [PRS] {[People who live in] all nations [PRS] will hate you} because [you believe in me][MTY]. 10 Also, many [people] will stop believing [in me because of the way they will suffer]. They will betray each other and will hate each other. 11 Many will come saying that they are prophets, but they will be lying, and they will deceive many people. 12 Because there will be more and more [people] who will disobey [God's] laws [PRS], many [people] will no longer [MET] love [their fellow believers] [PRS]. 13 But [all] those who keep on [believing in me] to the end [of their lives] will be saved. 14 Furthermore, the good message about my ruling over people's lives will be preached in every part of the world, in order that people of all ethnic groups may hear it. Then the end [of the world] will come." 15 "[But before the world ends], the disgusting person who will defile [the] holy [Temple and cause people to abandon it will stand in the Temple. Daniel the prophet spoke and wrote] about that [long ago]. May everyone who reads [this] pay attention [to the following warning from me:] 16 When you see that happen [in the Temple, those of you] who are in Judea [district] must flee to the [higher] hills! 17 Those who are outside their houses must not go back into their houses to get things [before they flee]. 18 Those who are [working] in a field should not turn back to get their outer clothing [before they flee]. 19 I [feel] very sorry for women who will be pregnant and women who will be nursing [their babies] in those days, [because it will be very difficult for them to run away] 20 Pray that you will not have to flee (in the winter/in the rainy season) [when it will be hard to travel]. [People who think that God never allows anyone to do any work on] our day of rest [will not help you as you flee, so] pray also that you will not have to flee on such a day, 21 because people will suffer very severely [when those

things happen]. People have never suffered that severely since [God] created the world until now, and no one will ever [suffer like that again]. **22** If [God had not decided to] shorten that time [MTY] [when people will suffer so much], everyone [LIT] would die. But [he has decided to] shorten it because [he is concerned] about [the people] whom [he] has chosen." **23** "[At that time] people will appear [who will] falsely [say that they are] the Messiah or [that they are] prophets. They will perform many kinds (of miracles/of things that ordinary people cannot do), in order to deceive people. They will even try [to see] if [it is] possible to deceive [you people whom God has] chosen. So, at that time, if someone says to you, 'Look, here [is] the Messiah!' or [if someone says], 'Over there is the Messiah!' do not believe it! **25** Do not forget [that] I have warned you about all this before [it happens]. **26** So if someone says to you, 'Look, [the Messiah] is in the desolate area!' do not go there. [Likewise, if someone says to you], 'Look, he is in a secret room!' do not believe [that person], **27** because just like lightning flashes from the east to the west [and people everywhere can] see it [SIM], when [I], the one who came from heaven, return again, [everyone will see me]. **28** [When I return, it will be as obvious to everyone as the fact that] wherever you see vultures gathering, you know that there will be an animal carcass [MET] there. (OR, Just like the vultures gather together wherever there is an animal carcass, God will punish sinful people wherever they are.)" **29** "Immediately after many people have suffered during those days, [the universe will become dark]. The sun will become dark. The moon will not shine. The stars will fall from the sky. And the powerful [objects] in the sky will be shaken. (OR, And the spiritual beings in space will be deposed.) **30** After that, something [will be seen] {[people will observe something]} in the sky that indicates that [I], the one who came from heaven, [am returning to the earth]. Then [unbelieving people from] all ethnic groups of the earth will [mourn because they will be afraid] of [God punishing them]. They will see [me], the one who came from heaven, coming on the clouds with power and great glory [as I return to the earth]. **31** I will send my angels [to the earth] from everywhere in the heavens. [They will be] blowing trumpets loudly. [Then] from throughout the whole earth [DOU] they will gather the people whom I have chosen." **32** "[Now] I [want you to] learn something [from] this parable about [how] fig trees [grow]. [In this area], when the buds [of a fig tree] become tender and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. **33** Similarly, when you see all these things that I [have just described happening], you will know that [the time for me to return] is very close [MET]. **34** Keep this in mind: All of these events will happen before all the people who have observed the things that I have done have died. **35** [You can be certain that these] things that I have told [you] about will happen. You can be more certain of that than you can be certain that the earth and sky [LIT] will continue to exist." **36** "But neither I, nor any other person, nor any angel in heaven, knows either the day or the hour [when the things that I have told you about will happen]. Only [God, my] Father, [knows]. **37** It will be like what happened when Noah lived. Until the flood came, [the people] did not know that [anything bad would happen] to them. Before the flood waters covered the earth, [the people] were eating and drinking [as usual]. Some men were marrying women and [some parents] were giving their daughters to men to marry them. They were doing all this until the day that Noah [and his family] entered the big boat. And then the flood came and drowned all [those who were not in the boat]. Similarly, [the unbelieving people will not know] when [I, the one who came from heaven], will return, [and they will not] be [expecting me]. **40** When I [return], I [will not take all people up to heaven. I will take only those who trust in me. For example], two [people] will be in the fields. One of them will be taken {[I] will take one of them} up [to heaven] and the other [person] will be left {and I will leave the other [person]} [here to be punished]. **41** [Similarly], two [women] will be at the mill grinding grain. One of them will be taken up [to heaven] and the other will be left. **42** So, because you do not know what day [I], your Lord, will return [to the earth], you need to be ready [for me to return at any time]. **43** You know that if the owners of a house knew at what time in the night thieves would come, they would be awake and prevent the thieves from breaking into their houses. Similarly, I [will come just like unexpectedly as a thief]. **44** So you need to be ready [for my return], because [I], the one who came from heaven, will return [to the earth] at a time when you do not expect [me to come]." **45** "Think about what every faithful and wise servant is like [RHQ]. The house owner appoints one servant to supervise the other servants. He tells him to give them food at the proper times. [Then he leaves on a long trip]. **46** If that servant is doing that [work] when the house owner returns, [the house owner] will be very pleased with him. **47** Think about this: The house owner will appoint [that one servant] to be the supervisor of all his possessions. **48** But a wicked servant might say to himself, 'The owner [has been away] for a long time, [so he probably] will not return soon [and find out what I am doing.'] **49** [So he] will begin to beat the other servants and eat and get drunk. **50** [Then] the house owner will come back at a time when the servant does not expect him [DOU]. **51** He will punish that servant severely [HYP], (OR, cut that servant into two pieces) and

he will put him where (the hypocrites/the ones who only pretended to be good) are put. In that place the people cry and grind their teeth [because they suffer very much]."

25 [Jesus continued by saying, "I will tell you something else about the time when I return from] heaven as king [MET]. [What will happen to many people who say that they know me will be] like [what happened to] ten virgins who took their lanterns and went to the place where they would meet a bridegroom [and go to his wedding celebration]. **2** Five of the virgins were foolish and five of them were wise. **3** The [virgins] who were foolish took their lanterns, but they did not take any [extra olive] oil [for] the lantern. **4** But the [virgins] who were wise took oil in their flasks as well as in their lanterns. **5** The bridegroom was delayed, [and it became late at night]. So all the virgins became sleepy and fell asleep. **6** In the middle of the night someone [woke them up by] shouting, 'Hey! The bridegroom [is arriving]! Go outside and meet him!' **7** So all the virgins got up and trimmed their lantern wicks [so that they would burn properly]. **8** The foolish virgins said to the wise ones, 'Give us some of your [olive] oil, because our lanterns are about to go out!' **9** The wise virgins replied, '[No, because] there might not be enough oil for our lanterns and for yours. Go to a store and buy some for yourselves!' **10** But while [the foolish virgins] were going to buy [some oil], the bridegroom arrived. So the [wise virgins], who were ready, went with the bridegroom to the wedding hall [where the bride was waiting]. Then the door was closed {someone closed the door [of that hall]}. **11** Later, the rest of the virgins came [to the hall] and they called [to the bridegroom], 'Sir, open [the door] for us!' **12** But he said [to them], 'The truth is that I do not know you, so I [will not open the door for you]!'" **13** [Then Jesus continued by saying], "So, in order that [this will not happen to you], keep expecting [that I will return], because you do not know when [MTY] [it will be]." **14** "[When I return from heaven as king, I will deal with those who say that they have been serving me like] a man who was about to go on a long journey dealt with his servants. He called them together and gave them each some of his wealth [to invest and gain more money for him]. **15** He gave them money according to their ability [to take care of it]. [For example], he gave one servant 5,000 dollars, he gave another servant 2,000 dollars, and he gave another servant 1,000 dollars. Then he left on his journey. **16** The servant who had received 5,000 dollars went immediately and used that money to gain 5,000 dollars more. **17** Similarly, the servant who had [received] 2,000 dollars gained two [thousand dollars] more. **18** But the servant who had received one [thousand dollars] went and dug a hole in the ground and hid the money there [to keep it safe]. **19** After a long time the servants' boss returned. He [called them together to] find out what they had done with his money. **20** The servant who had received 5,000 dollars brought two [bags, each containing] 5,000 dollars. He said, 'Boss, you gave me 5,000 dollars to take care of. Look, I have gained 5,000 more!' **21** His boss replied, '[You are a very] good and faithful servant! [You have] done [very] well! You have faithfully handled a small [amount of money], so I will put you in charge of a lot of things. Come and be happy with me!' **22** The servant who had [received] 2,000 dollars also came and said, 'Boss, you gave me 2,000 dollars to take care of. Look, I have gained 2,000 more!' **23** His boss replied, 'You are a [very] good and faithful servant! You have done very well! You have faithfully handled a small [amount of money], so I will put you in charge of a lot of things. Come and be happy with me!' **24** Then the servant who had received 1,000 dollars came. He said, 'Boss, I [was afraid of you]. I knew that you are a man who does not do foolish things with his money. [You even] take [from others money] that does not really belong to you, [like a farmer who] harvests [grain from another man's field] where he did not even plant [the seeds]. **25** So because I was afraid [of what you would do to me if I did not make a profit from my business], I went out and hid your 1,000 dollars in the ground [to keep it safe]. Here, this is [the money] that belongs to you!' **26** His boss replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! (You knew that I take [from others money] that does not really belong to me, [like a farmer who] harvests [grain from another man's field] where I did not even plant [the seeds]!/Did you not know that I [take from others money that does not really belong to me, like a farmer] who harvests [grain from another man's field] where I did not even plant [the seeds]?) [RHQ] **27** So then, you should have put my money [on deposit] in a bank, so that when I returned I would get it back with the interest [it earned]!' **28** [Then the boss said to his other servants], 'Take the 1,000 dollars from him, and give it to [the servant] who has the 10,000 dollars! **29** To those who [use well what] they have [received, God] will give more, and they will have plenty. But from those who [do] not [use well what they have received], even what they [already] have will be taken away. **30** Furthermore, throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where he will be [with those who are] wailing and gnashing their teeth [because they are in much pain].'" **31** "When I, the one who came from heaven, come again, I will be very radiant and [bring] all my angels with me. Then I will sit as a king on my wonderful throne [to judge people]. **32** People from all nations [MTY] will be gathered in front of me {[The angels] will gather in front of me people from all nations}. Then I will

separate them, one from another, as a shepherd separates his sheep from his goats. **33** I will put [the righteous people] on my right and [the unrighteous ones on my left, as a] shepherd puts sheep [on one side] and goats [on the other side]. **34** Then I will say to those on my right, 'You people who have been blessed by my Father {whom my Father has blessed}, come! From the time he created the world, he has been preparing to allow you to [receive the blessings that he will give to all those] who let him rule their lives. [Now is the time for] you to receive [those blessings] **35** [They belong to you], because you gave me something to eat when I was hungry. (OR, [They belong to you]. It is as though you gave me something to eat when I was hungry.) You gave me something to drink when I was thirsty. When I was a stranger [in your town], you invited me [to stay] in [your houses]. **36** When I needed clothes [MTY], you gave me some. When I was sick, you took care of me. When I was in prison, you came to visit me.' **37** Then the righteous people will reply, 'Lord, when were you hungry and we saw you and gave you something to eat? When were you thirsty and we gave you something to drink? **38** When were you a stranger [in our town] and we invited you [to stay] in [our houses]? When did you need clothes and we gave you some? **39** When were you sick or in prison and we went to visit you?' [We do not remember doing any of these things for you]. **40** I will reply, 'The truth is that whatever you did for any one of your fellow believers, even an unimportant one, [it was as though] you did it for me.' **41** Then I will say to those on my left, 'You people who have been cursed [by God] {whom God has cursed}, leave me! Go into the eternal fire that God has prepared for (the devil/Satan) and his angels! **(aiōnios g166)** **42** [It is right for you to go there], because you did not give me anything to eat when I was hungry. You did not give me anything to drink when I was thirsty. **43** You did not invite me into [your homes] when I was a stranger [in your town]. You did not give me any clothes when I needed them [MTY]. You did not take care of me when I was sick or in prison.' **44** They will answer, 'Lord, when were you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and we did not help you?' **45** I will reply, 'The truth is that whenever you did not do anything to help any one of [my people], [even if they were] unimportant people, [it was as though] you did not do anything [to help] me.' **46** Then those people [on my left] will go away to the place where [they] will be punished {[God] will punish them} eternally, but the righteous people will go to where they will live forever [with God]." **(aiōnios g166)**

26 When Jesus had finished [saying] all those things, he said to [us] disciples, **2** "You know that two days from now [we will celebrate] the Passover [festival]. [At that time] I, the one who came from heaven, will be handed over to {they will put me, the one who came from heaven, into the hands of} those who will nail me to a cross." **3** At the same time the chief priests and the Jewish elders gathered in the home of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas. **4** [There] they plotted how they could seize Jesus in some deceitful way so that they could have him executed. **5** But they said, "[We must] not [do it] during the [Passover] festival, because [if we do it then], the people might riot." **6** While Jesus [and we] were in Bethany [village] in the home of Simon, whom [Jesus had healed of] leprosy, **7** a woman came to him. She [was carrying] a stone jar [containing] very expensive perfume. [To show how much she appreciated] Jesus, she poured the perfume on his head as he was eating. **8** When [we] disciples saw that, [some of us] were angry. [One of us] said, "(It is terrible that this perfume was wasted!/Why was this perfume wasted?) [RHQ] **9** [We] could have sold it and gotten a lot of money for it! Then the money could have been given {[we] could have given the money} to poor people." **10** Jesus knew [what we were saying. So he] said to us, "(You should not be bothering this woman!/Why are you bothering this woman?) [RHQ] She has done a beautiful thing to me. **11** [Keep in mind that] you will always have poor people among you, [so you can help them whenever you want to]. But I will not always be with you, [so it is good for her to show now that she appreciates me!] **12** When she poured this perfume on my body, [it was as if she knew that I am going to die soon. And it is as if she] has anointed my body for being buried. **13** I will tell you this: Wherever this good message [about me] is preached {people preach this good message about me} throughout the world, those who preach it will tell what this woman has done, [and as a result] people will [always] remember her." **14** Then Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]), [even though he was] one of [us] twelve [disciples], went to the chief priests. **15** He asked them, "If I enable you to seize [Jesus], how much [money] are you willing to give me?" They [agreed to give him] 30 silver coins. So they counted out the coins and [gave them] to him. **16** From that time Judas watched for an opportunity to enable them to seize [Jesus]. **17** On the first day [of the week-long festival] (when [we Jews ate] bread which had no yeast in it/of Unleavened Bread), [we] disciples went to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to prepare [the meal for] the Passover [celebration] so that [we can] eat [it with] you?" **18** [In reply], he [gave instructions to two disciples about where they should go. He] said [to them], "Go into [the city] to a man [with whom I have previously arranged this]. Tell him that the teacher says, 'The time [MTY] [that I told you about] is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover

[meal] with my disciples at your house, [and I have sent these two to prepare the meal].'" **19** So the [two] disciples did as Jesus told them. They [went and] prepared the Passover [meal in that man's house]. **20** When it was evening, Jesus was eating the meal with [us] twelve disciples. **21** While we were eating, he said [to us], "Listen carefully to this: One of you is going to enable [my enemies] to seize me." **22** [We] were very sad. We began to say to him, one after the other, "Lord, (it is surely not I!/I'm not the one, am I?) [RHQ]" **23** He replied, "The one who will enable my enemies to seize me is one of you who is dipping bread [MTY] into [the sauce in] the dish along with me. **24** [It is certain that] I, the one who came from heaven, will [die], because that is what has been written {[the prophets] have written} about me. But there will be terrible punishment for the man who enables [my enemies] to seize me! It would be better for that man if he had never been born!" **25** Then Judas, the one who was going to betray him, said, "Teacher, (surely it is not I!/I'm not the one, am I?) [RHQ]" Jesus replied, "Yes, you are the one." **26** While we were eating, Jesus took [a small loaf of] bread and thanked God for it. He broke it [into pieces] and gave it to [us] disciples, and said, "Take this [bread and] eat [it]. [It represents] my body." **27** Later he took a cup [of wine] and thanked [God for it]. Then he gave it to us, saying, "Drink some [of the wine in this cup], all of you. **28** [The wine in] this cup [represents] my blood, which will soon flow [from my body. With] my blood I [will sign] the new agreement [that God is making] to forgive the sins of many [people]. **29** Note this carefully: I will not drink wine in this way any more until the time when I drink it with you with a new [meaning. That will happen] when my Father [enables me to begin] to rule as king." **30** After we sang a hymn, we started out towards Olive [Tree] Hill. **31** [On the way], Jesus told us, "This night all of you will desert me because of [what will happen to] me! [This is certain to happen] because [these words that God said] are written [in the Scriptures:] 'I will [cause] the shepherd to be killed, and [all] the sheep will be scattered {scatter}.' **32** But after I have [died and] become alive again, I will go ahead of you to Galilee [district and meet you there]." **33** Peter replied, "Perhaps all [the other disciples] will desert you [when they see what happens to you], but I [certainly] will never [leave you]!" **34** Jesus replied to him, "The truth is that this very night, before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me!" **35** Peter said to him, "Even if they kill me [while I am defending you], I will never say that I do not know you!" All [the rest of us] disciples also said the same [thing]. **36** Then Jesus went with us to a place that is called {that people call} Gethsemane. There he said to [most of] us, "Stay here while I go over there and pray." **37** He took Peter, James, and John with him. He became extremely distressed. **38** Then he said to them, "I [SYN] am very sorrowful, so much so that I [feel as if I were] about to die! Remain here and stay awake with me!" **39** After going a little further, he threw himself face down [on the ground]. He prayed, "My Father, if it is possible [MTY], do not make me have to endure the suffering [that is coming] now. But do not do as I want. Instead, do as you want!" **40** Then he returned to the [three] disciples and saw that they were sleeping. He [woke] Peter and said to him, "(I am disappointed that you [men fell asleep and] were not able to stay awake with me for just a short time!/Why were you men not able to stay awake with me for just one hour?) [RHQ] **41** You must keep alert and pray so that you can resist when you are tempted {something tempts you}. You want [to do what I tell you], but you [SYN] are not strong enough [to actually do it]." **42** He went away a second time. He prayed, "My Father, if it is necessary for me to suffer [LIT], may what you want happen!" **43** When he returned to the [three disciples], he saw that they were asleep [again]. They could not keep their eyes open [IDM]. **44** So he left them and went away again. He prayed the third time, saying the same thing [that he had prayed before]. **45** Then he returned to us disciples. He [woke] us [up and] said to us, "(I am disappointed that you are still sleeping and resting!/Why are you still sleeping and resting?) [RHQ] [Look] Someone is about to enable sinful [men] to seize [me], the one who came from heaven! **46** Get up! Let's go [to meet them] Here comes the one who is enabling them to seize me!" **47** While [Jesus] was still speaking, Judas [arrived. Even though he was] one of [us] twelve [disciples], he came [to enable Jesus' enemies to seize him]. A large crowd carrying swords and clubs was with him. They had been sent by the chief priests and elders {the chief priests and [Jewish] elders had sent them}. **48** Judas had [previously] arranged to give them a signal, saying, "The man whom I will kiss is the one [you want]. Seize him!" **49** He immediately went to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Teacher!" Then he kissed Jesus [on the neck/cheek]. **50** Jesus replied, "Friend, is it [to kiss me] that you are here?" (OR, "Do what you have come for!") Then [the men who came with Judas] stepped forward and seized Jesus. **51** Suddenly, one of the men who was with Jesus pulled his sword out [of its sheath]. He struck the servant of the high priest [to kill him], [but only] cut off his ear. **52** Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its sheath! All those who try to kill others with a sword will themselves be killed with a sword! **53** Do you think that [RHQ] if I asked my Father, he would not immediately send more than (twelve armies of/72,000) angels to help me? **54** [But if I did that,

what the prophets] have written in the Scriptures [about what will happen to the Messiah] would not be fulfilled {happen} [RHQ]." **55** At that time Jesus said to the crowd [that was seizing him], "(It is ridiculous that you have come [here] to seize me with swords and clubs, as [if I were] a bandit!/Have you come here to seize me with swords and clubs, as if I were a bandit?) [RHQ] Day after day I sat in the Temple [courtyard], teaching [the people]. Why did you not arrest me [then]? **56** But all this is happening to fulfill what the prophets [have written in] the Scriptures [about me]." Then all of us disciples deserted Jesus and ran away. **57** The men who had seized Jesus took him [to the house where] Caiaphas, the high priest, [lived]. The men who taught the [Jewish] laws and the [Jewish] elders had already gathered [there]. **58** Peter followed [Jesus] at a distance. He came to the high priest's courtyard. He entered [the courtyard] and sat down with the guards to see what would happen. **59** The chief priests and the rest of the [Jewish] Council were trying to find people who would tell lies about Jesus so that they could [convince the Roman authorities to] execute him. **60** But even though many people spoke lies about him, they did not find anyone [who said anything that was useful]. Finally two men came forward **61** and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy God's Temple and to rebuild it within three days.'" **62** Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to reply? What [do you say about] these things that they are saying [to accuse] you?" **63** But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I command you to tell us [the truth], knowing that the all-powerful God [is listening to you]: Are you the Messiah, (the Son of God/the man who is also God)?" **64** Jesus replied, "Yes, [it is as] you say. But I will also say this to all of you: Some day you will see [me], the one who came from heaven, sitting beside [MTY] Almighty [God], and ruling. You will also see me coming on the clouds [from] heaven!" **65** Then the high priest tore his outer garment. [That was the custom to show that he was shocked to hear Jesus say that he was equal to God]. Then he said, "This man has insulted God! He claims to be equal with God! (We certainly do not need anyone else to testify [against this man]!/Why should we seek any more people who will testify [against this man]?) [RHQ] You heard what he said! **66** What have you decided?" [The Jewish leaders] replied, "[According to our laws], he [is guilty and] deserves to be executed!" **67** Then [some of them] spat in his face. [Others] struck him with their fists. Others, [after they blindfolded him], slapped him **68** and said, "[Since you claim that] [IRO] [you are] the Messiah, tell us who hit you!" **69** Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came up to him [and looked at him]. She said, "You also were with Jesus, [that man] from Galilee [district]!" **70** But while everyone there was listening, he denied it. He said, "I do not know what you are talking about!" **71** Then he went out to the gateway of the courtyard. Another servant girl saw him and said to the people who were standing nearby, "This man was with Jesus, [the man] from Nazareth." **72** But [Peter] again denied it. He said, "May God punish me [if I am lying]! I [tell you], I do not even know that man!" **73** After a little while, one of the people who were standing there approached Peter and said to him, "It is certain that you are one of those [who were with that man]. We can tell from your accent that you [are from Galilee."] **74** Then Peter began to proclaim loudly that God should curse him [if he was lying]. He asked God in heaven to witness [that he was telling the truth] and said, "I do not know that man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. **75** Then Peter remembered the words that Jesus had spoken [to him], "Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me." And Peter went [out of the courtyard], crying because he was very sad [about what he had done].

27 Very early the next morning all the chief priests and Jewish elders decided how [to arrange for the Romans] to execute Jesus. **2** They tied his hands and took him to Pilate, the [Roman] governor. **3** When Judas, the one who had (betrayed/enabled Jesus' enemies to seize) him, realized that they had decided to have Jesus executed, he was very sorry [about what he had done]. He took the 30 coins back to the chief priests and elders. **4** He said, "I have sinned. I have (betrayed/enabled you to seize) a man who (is innocent/has not done anything wrong)." They replied, "(That means nothing to us!/What does that mean to us?) [RHQ] That is your problem!" **5** So Judas [took] the money [and] threw it inside the Temple. Then he went away and hanged himself. **6** [Later] the high priests [found] the coins. They picked them up and said, "This is money that we paid [to have a man killed] [MTY], and our law does not allow [such money] to be put {us to put [such money]} into the [Temple treasury]." **7** So they decided to use that money to buy the field where clay was dug for making pots {men dug ground for making pots}. [They made that field] a place where they buried strangers [who died in Jerusalem]. **8** That is why that place is still called {why they still call that place} 'The field of blood'. **9** [By buying that field], they fulfilled these words that the prophet Jeremiah wrote [long ago]: They took the 30 silver coins; That was what the leaders of Israel decided [that he was worth]; **10** and with that money they bought the field where clay was dug for potters. They did that as the Lord had commanded me. **11** Jesus stood in front of [Pilate], the governor. The governor asked Jesus,

"Do you [claim to be] the king of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "[It is] as you have [just] said." **12** When he was accused by the chief priests and elders {When the chief priests and elders accused him} about various things, he did not answer. **13** So Pilate said to him, "You hear how many things they are saying to accuse you; [are you not going to reply]?" **14** But [even though he was not guilty], Jesus did not say anything. He did not reply to any of the things about which they were accusing him. As a result, the governor was very surprised. **15** It was the governor's custom [each year] during the [Passover] celebration to release [one person who was in prison]. [He released] whichever prisoner the people wanted. **16** At that time there was [in Jerusalem] a well-known prisoner whose name was Barabbas. **17** So when the crowd gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which [prisoner] would you like me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus, whom [some of you] claim to be the Messiah?" **18** [He asked that question] because he realized that the chief priests [wanted to have Jesus executed]. They had brought Jesus to him [only] because they were jealous of Jesus. [And Pilate thought that the crowd would prefer that he release Jesus]. **19** While Pilate was sitting on the platform [where he made] judicial [decisions], his wife sent him [this message]: "Early this morning I had a bad dream because of that man. So do not condemn that righteous man!" **20** But the chief priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask [Pilate to] release Barabbas, and to [order] that Jesus be executed {that [his soldiers] execute Jesus}. **21** So when the governor asked them, "Which of the two men do you want me to release for you?" They replied, "Barabbas!" **22** Pilate, [very astonished], asked, "So what shall I do with Jesus who [some of you] say is the Messiah?" They all answered, "[Command that] he be crucified! {[Command your soldiers] (to crucify him/to nail him to a cross)}!" **23** Pilate replied, "Why? What crime has he committed?" But they shouted even louder, "[Have] him crucified {[Command that your soldiers] crucify him}!" **24** Pilate realized that he was accomplishing nothing. He saw that instead, the people were starting to riot. So he took [a basin of] water and washed his hands as the crowd was watching. He said, "[By washing my hands I am showing you that] if this man dies [MTY], it is [your] fault, [not mine]!" **25** And all the people answered, "The guilt for causing him to die [MTY] will be on us, and it will be on our children, too!" **26** Then he [ordered the soldiers to] release Barabbas for them. But he [ordered that his soldiers] flog Jesus. And then he turned Jesus over to the soldiers for them (to nail Jesus to a cross/to crucify him). **27** Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the government headquarters. The whole (cohort/group of soldiers) gathered around him. **28** They pulled off [his clothes], and [pretending he was a king, they] put a purple robe on him. **29** They [took some branches with] thorns and wove them to make a crown and put it on his head. They put in his right hand a reed [like a staff that a king would hold]. Then they knelt in front of him and made fun of him, saying, "Hooray for the king of the Jews [IRO]!" **30** They kept spitting on him. They took the staff and kept striking him on the head with it. **31** When they had finished ridiculing him, they pulled off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to [the place where they] would nail him to a cross. **32** [After Jesus carried his cross] a short distance, [the soldiers] saw a man named Simon, [who was] from Cyrene [city]. They forced him to carry the cross for Jesus. **33** They came to a place called Golgotha. That name means 'the place [like] a skull'. **34** When [they got there], they mixed with wine something that tasted very bitter. They gave it to [Jesus] to drink [so that he would not feel so much pain when they nailed him on the cross]. But when he tasted it, he refused to drink it. [Some soldiers took his clothes]. **35** Then they nailed him to the cross. Afterwards, they divided his clothes among themselves by gambling with something like dice [to decide which piece of clothing each one would get]. **36** Then the soldiers sat down there to guard him, [to prevent anyone from trying to rescue him]. **37** They fastened [to the cross] above Jesus' head a [sign on which had been] {[they had]} written why [they] were nailing him to the cross. [But all] it said was, 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews'. **38** Two bandits were also nailed {They also nailed two bandits} on crosses. One was nailed to a cross on the right side [of Jesus] and one to a cross on the left side. **39** The people who were passing by insulted him by shaking their heads [as if he were an evil man]. **40** They said, "You [said you] would destroy the Temple, and then you would build it again within three days! [So if you could do that], you [should be able to] save yourself! If you are the man who is also God (OR, If you are the Son of God), come down from the cross!" **41** Similarly, the chief priests, the men who taught the [Jewish] laws and the elders made fun of him. [Various ones of them] said things like, **42** "He [claims that he] saved others [IRO] [from their sicknesses], but he cannot help himself!" "He [says that he] is [IRO] the King of Israel. So he should come down from the cross. Then we would believe him!" **43** "He [says that he] trusts in God, and that he is the man who is also God. So if God is pleased with him, God should rescue him now!" **44** And the [two] bandits who had been crucified with him also insulted him, saying similar things. **45** At noon it became dark over the whole land. [It stayed dark] until three o'clock [in the afternoon]. **46** At about three o'clock Jesus shouted loudly, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" That

means, ‘My God, my God, why have you deserted me?’ **47** When some of the people standing there heard [the word ‘Eli’, misunderstanding it], they said, “He is calling for [the prophet] Elijah!” **48** Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with sour wine. Then he put the sponge on [the tip of] a reed and [held it up in order that Jesus] could suck out [the wine that was in it]. **49** But the other [people there] said, “Wait! Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him!” **50** Then after Jesus shouted out loudly again, he died, giving his spirit over [to God]. **51** At that moment the [heavy thick] curtain [that closed off the most holy place] in the Temple split into two pieces from top to bottom. [That signified that ordinary people could now go into the presence of God]. The earth shook, and [some large] rocks split open. **52** [Some] tombs opened up, and the bodies of many godly people who had died became alive again. **53** They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus became alive again, they went into Jerusalem and appeared to many people [there]. **54** The officer who supervised the soldiers [who nailed Jesus to the cross was standing nearby]. His soldiers who had been on guard [so that no one would rescue] Jesus [were also there]. When they [felt] the earthquake and saw all the [other] things that happened, they were terrified. They exclaimed, “Truly he was both man and God! (OR, a Son of God).” **55** Many women were there, watching from a distance. They were women who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee [district] in order to provide the things he needed. **56** Among these women were Mary from Magdala [town], [another] Mary who was the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of James and John. **57** When it was [almost] evening, a rich man named Joseph came [there]. He was from Arimathea [town]. He also was a disciple of Jesus. **58** He then went to Pilate and asked Pilate to [allow him to take] the body of Jesus [and bury it]. Pilate ordered that [he] be allowed to {[his soldiers] let [Joseph]} take [the body]. **59** So Joseph [and others] took the body and wrapped it in a clean white cloth. **60** Then they placed it in Joseph’s own new tomb that had been dug out of the rock [cliff]. They rolled a huge [circular flat] stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. Then they left. **61** Mary from Magdala and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb, [watching]. **62** The next day was Saturday, the Jewish day of rest. The chief priests and [some of] the Pharisees went to Pilate. **63** They said, “Sir, we remember that while that deceiver was still alive, he said, ‘Three days after I [die I] will become alive again.’ **64** So we ask you to order that the tomb be guarded {that [soldiers] guard the tomb} for three days. If you do not do that, his disciples may come and steal the body. Then they will tell people that he has risen from the dead. If they deceive [people by saying that], it will be worse than the way he deceived people before [by saying that he was the Messiah].” **65** Pilate replied, “You [can] take some soldiers. Go to the tomb and make it as secure as you know how.” **66** So they went and made the tomb secure by [fastening a cord from] the stone [that was in front of the entrance to the rock cliff on each side] and sealing it. They also [left some soldiers there to] guard [the tomb].

28 After (the Sabbath/the Jewish day of rest) [ended], on Sunday morning at dawn, Mary from Magdala and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. **2** Suddenly there was a strong earthquake. [At the same time] an angel from God came down from heaven. He [went to the tomb and] rolled the stone away [from the entrance so that everyone could see that the tomb was empty]. Then he sat on the stone. **3** His appearance was [as bright] [SIM] as lightning, and his clothes were as white as snow. **4** The guards shook because they were very afraid. Then they became [completely motionless], as though they were dead. **5** The angel said to the two women, “You should not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was {whom they} (nailed to a cross/crucified). **6** He is not here! [God] has (caused him to be alive again/raised him [from the dead]), just like [Jesus] told you [would happen!] Come and see the place where his body lay! **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has risen from the dead! He will go ahead of you to Galilee [district]. You will see him there.’ [Pay attention to what] I have told you!” **8** So the women left the tomb quickly. They were afraid, but they were [also] very joyful. They ran to tell us disciples [what had happened]. **9** Suddenly, [as they were running], Jesus appeared to them. He said, “Greetings!” The women came close to him. They knelt down and clasped his feet and worshipped him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid! Go and tell (all my disciples/all those who have been accompanying me) that they should go to Galilee. They will see me there.” **11** While the women were going, some of the soldiers who had been guarding [the tomb] went into the city. They reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. **12** So the chief priests and Jewish elders met together. They made a plan [to explain why the tomb was empty]. They gave the soldiers a lot of money [as a bribe]. **13** They said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole his [body] while we were sleeping.’ **14** If the governor hears [MTY] about this, we ourselves will make sure that he does not get angry [and punish you]. [So you will not have to worry].” **15** So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told {as [the chief priests and elders] told them}. And this story has been told {People have told this story} among

the Jews to the very day [that I am writing] this. **16** [Later we] eleven [disciples] went to Galilee [district]. We went to the mountain where Jesus had told [us] to go. **17** We saw him [there] and worshipped him. But some of [us] doubted [that it was really Jesus, and that he had become alive again]. **18** Then Jesus came [close] to [us] and said, "[My Father] has given me all authority over everything and everyone in heaven and on earth. **19** So go, and [using my authority, teach my message to] people of all ethnic groups so that they may become my disciples. Baptize them [to be under the authority of] [MTY] my Father, and of me, his Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **20** Teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember that [by the Spirit] I will be with you always, until the end of [this] age." **(aiōn g165)**

Mark

1 ([This is/I want to tell you]) the good message about Jesus Christ, the Son of God (OR, the man who was also God). [What I want to tell you] begins just like the prophet Isaiah [said it would begin, when] he wrote [these words that God said to Jesus:] Listen! I am sending my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare [people for] your [coming]. **3** He will call out to people [who pass by where he is] in the desolate area, "As people improve and straighten out pathways [before an important official arrives] [MET], make [yourselves] ready [DOU] [in order that you will be prepared when] the Lord [comes]." **4** [The messenger that Isaiah predicted was] John. [People called him] 'The Baptizer'. In the desolate area near the Jordan River he kept telling people, "If you want God to forgive you for having sinned, you must turn away from your sinful behavior [before you ask me to] baptize [you]." **5** A great number [HYP] of people who lived in Jerusalem [city] and [elsewhere] in the Judea [district] were going out to where John was. There, [after hearing John's message], they [responded by] confessing the sinful things [that they had done]. Then they were being baptized by John {John was baptizing them} in the Jordan River. **6** John wore [rough] clothes made of camel's hair. And [as the prophet Elijah had done], he wore a leather belt around his waist; and what he ate was [only] grasshoppers and honey [that he found] in that desolate area. **7** He was preaching, "Very shortly a man will come who is very great. I [am nothing compared to him. Because he is so superior to me], I am not even worthy to [serve him like a slave] by stooping down and untying his sandals. **8** I used [only] water when I baptized you [because you said that you wanted to change your lives], but he will put his Holy Spirit [within] you [to truly change your lives]." **9** During that time [when John was preaching], Jesus came from Nazareth [town], which is in Galilee [district]. He went to [where John was preaching] and he was baptized by John {John baptized him} in the Jordan [River]. **10** Immediately after [Jesus] came up out of the water, he saw heaven opened up [and he saw] the Spirit [of God] descending on himself. He came in the form of a dove. **11** And [God] [MTY] spoke to him from heaven saying, "You are my Son, whom I love dearly. I am very pleased with you." **12** (Then/Right away) the Spirit [of God] sent Jesus into the desolate area. **13** He was there for 40 days. During that time, he was tempted by Satan {Satan tempted him}. There were wild animals [there] also. But angels took care of him. **14** Later, after John was put in prison {after [soldiers] put John in prison} [because he had rebuked the governor Herod Antipas for his sins], Jesus went to Galilee [district]. There he was preaching the good message [that came] from God. **15** He was repeatedly saying, "Now is the time when God will begin to rule people's lives [in a new way]. [So] turn away from your sinful behavior! Believe the good message [in order] ([to belong to him/to become those whose lives he will rule])!" **16** [One day], while Jesus was walking along by Galilee Lake, he saw [two men], Simon and Simon's [younger] brother, Andrew. They were casting their [fishing] net into the lake. They [earned money by] catching [and selling] fish. **17** Then Jesus said to them, "[Just like you have been] gathering fish, come with me and I will [teach] you how to [gather people to become my disciples]" [MET]. **18** Immediately they abandoned [the work that they were doing with] their nets, and they went with him. **19** After they had gone on a little further, Jesus saw [two other men], James and James' [younger] brother, John. They were the sons of [a man named] Zebedee. They were both in a boat mending [fishing] nets. **20** As soon as Jesus saw them, he told them that [they should leave their work and to come with him]. So they left their father, [who remained] in the boat with the hired servants, and they went away with Jesus. **21** [Later] Jesus [and those disciples] arrived at Capernaum [town]. On the next (Sabbath/Jewish rest day), after Jesus had entered (the synagogue/the Jewish meeting place), he began teaching [the people who had gathered there]. **22** They were continually amazed at the way he taught. [He did] not [just teach what others had taught], like the men who teach the [Jewish] laws did. [They habitually just repeated what other people had taught]. Instead, he taught with [his own] authority. **23** Suddenly, [while he was teaching], a man [appeared] in their worship place who had an evil spirit in him, and he shouted, **24** "Jesus, from Nazareth [town, since] we [evil spirits] have nothing in common with you, ([do not interfere with us]!/what do you want with us [evil spirits]?) [RHQ] (Do not destroy us [now]!/Have you come to destroy us [now]?) [RHQ] I know who you are. I know that you are the holy one [who has come] from God!" **25** Jesus rebuked [the evil spirit], saying, "Be quiet! And come out [of the man]!" **26** The evil spirit shook the man hard. He screamed loudly, and then he came out of the man [and left]. **27** All [the people who were there] were amazed. As a result, they discussed this among themselves, [exclaiming], "(This is [amazing]!/What is this?) [RHQ] Not only does he teach in a new and authoritative way, but also the evil spirits obey him [when] he commands [them]!" **28** The people very soon told [many others] throughout the whole Galilee district what Jesus [had done]. **29** After they left (the synagogue/the Jewish meeting place), [Jesus, Simon and Andrew], along with James and John went directly to Simon and Andrew's

house. 30 Simon's mother-in-law was lying in bed because she had a [high] fever. Right away someone told Jesus about her [being sick]. 31 He went to her, and helped her up by taking hold of her hand. She recovered [at once] from the fever, and then she [got up and] served them [some food]. 32 That evening, after the sun had gone down [and restrictions about travel on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day]) [were ended], some people brought to Jesus many people who were sick and others whose lives evil spirits were controlling. 33 [It seemed as though] everyone [HYP, MTY] [who lived in] the town was gathered at the doorway [of Simon's house]. 34 Jesus healed many people who were ill with various diseases. He also expelled many demons [from people]. He did not allow the demons to tell people [about him], because they knew that he [had come from God, and for various reasons he did not want everyone to know that yet]. 35 Jesus got up very early [the next morning] while it was still dark. He left [the house] and went away [from the town] to a place where there were no people. Then he prayed there. 36 Simon and his companions searched for him. When they found him, [wanting him to go back to town to help other people], they said to him, 37 "[Come back to the town with us, because] many [HYP] people [in Capernaum] are looking for you!" 38 He said to them, "[No], let's go on to the neighboring towns in order that I can preach there also, because the reason that I came [into the world] was to [preach to people] in many places!" 39 So they went throughout Galilee [district. As they did so, each (Sabbath/Jewish rest day]) he preached in (synagogues/Jewish meeting places). He was also expelling evil spirits [from people]. 40 [One day] a man who had [a bad skin disease called] leprosy came to Jesus. He knelt down in front of Jesus and then he pleaded with him saying, "[Please heal me, because I know] you are able to heal me if you want to!" 41 Jesus felt very sorry for him. [So he ignored the religious laws about coming close to people who had that disease]. He reached out his hand and touched the man. Then he said to him, "Since I am willing [to heal you], be healed {I heal you} [now]!" 42 Immediately the man was healed! He was no longer a leper! 43 Jesus spoke sternly to him before he sent him away. 44 What Jesus said was, "Go to a local priest and show yourself to him [in order that he may examine you and verify that you are healed]. Then, [after the priest tells the local people], they will know [that you have been healed, and you will be able to associate with them again]. Make sure that you do not tell others [about what happened] Then go to [Jerusalem and take to the priest what Moses commanded that people who have been healed from leprosy should offer, in order that he] may offer it [as a sacrifice to God]." 45 The man went [and presented himself to the priest. But then] he began to tell many people about [how Jesus had healed him] [DOU]. As a result, Jesus was no longer able to enter any town publicly [because the crowds would surround him]. Instead, he remained outside [the towns] in places [where no people lived]. But people kept coming to him from all over that region.

2 [Jesus and his disciples] returned to Capernaum [town]. A few days later, because it was {people} heard that Jesus was in [his] house, 2 many people gathered there. As a result, [after the people filled the house], there was no longer space to stand [in the house or outside] around the doorway. Jesus preached [God's] message to them. 3 Some people came to the house bringing to Jesus a man who was paralyzed. He was carried by four men {Four men carried [him]} [on a sleeping pad]. 4 They were not able to bring the man to Jesus because there was a crowd there. So they [went up the steps to the flat roof and] removed [some of] the tiles [above] where Jesus was. Then, after they made a [big] hole in the roof, they lowered [by ropes] the sleeping pad on which the paralyzed man lay. They lowered [it through the hole, down in front of Jesus]. 5 After Jesus perceived that the men believed [that he could heal this man], he said to the paralyzed man, "My friend, [I] forgive your sins!" 6 There were some men who taught [the Jewish] laws sitting there. They started thinking like this: 7 "(Who does this man think he is, talking like that/This man shouldn't talk like that!) [RHQ]? (He is insulting God!/Does he think he is God?) [RHQ] (No person can forgive sins!/Who can forgive sins?) [RHQ] Only God can forgive sins!" 8 Jesus sensed that they were deliberating like that within themselves. So he said to them, "(You should not question within yourselves [whether I have the right to forgive this man's sins]!/Why do you question [whether I have the right to forgive this man's sins]?) [RHQ] 9 It is [not risky] [RHQ] for someone to tell the man who is paralyzed, 'Your sins are forgiven {[I] forgive your sins},' [because no one can prove that it has happened]. But no one would say to him, 'Get up, pick up your stretcher, and then walk away', [unless he really had the power to heal him, because people can easily see whether it happens or not]. 10 So I [will do something] in order that you may know that [God] has authorized me, the one who came from heaven, to forgive sins on earth [as well as to heal people]." Then he said to the paralyzed man, 11 "To you I say, 'Get up! Pick up your sleeping pad! And then go home!'" 12 The man stood up immediately! He picked up the sleeping pad, and then he went away, while all the people [there] were watching. They were all amazed, and they praised God and said, "We have never before seen anything like [what happened] just now!" 13 Jesus left [Capernaum town again

and walked with his disciples] alongside [Galilee] lake. A large crowd came to him. Then he taught them. **14** As he walked on further, he saw a man named Levi, whose other name was Matthew, and whose father's name was Alpheus. He was sitting in his office where he collected taxes [for the Roman government]. Jesus said to him, "Come with me [and become my disciple]!" So he got up and went with Jesus. **15** [Later], Jesus was eating a meal in Levi's house. Many men who collected taxes and [other] people who were [considered to be] sinning regularly were eating with Jesus and his disciples. [This was not surprising], for there were many people like this who were going [everywhere] with Jesus. **16** The [men who taught the Jewish] laws [who were there] and who were members of the Pharisee [sect] saw that Jesus was eating with men who collected taxes and [others who were considered] {[whom they considered]} [to be] sinners. So they said to his disciples, "(It is disgusting that he eats with [such disgusting] men as those who collect taxes, and with [other] sinners!/Why is it that he eats with [such disgusting] men as those who collect taxes, and with [other] sinners?)" [RHQ] **17** After Jesus heard [what they were saying], he said to the men who taught the [Jewish] laws, "People who [consider that they] are well do not seek a doctor. On the contrary, it is those who are sick [who seek a doctor] [MET]!" [This he said to indicate that it was those who knew that they had sinned who were coming to him in order that he might help them spiritually]. And he said, "I did not come to invite people [who think that] [IRO] they are righteous [to come to me and turn from their sinful behavior]. On the contrary, I came [from heaven to invite] people who [know that they] are sinners, [in order that they might turn from their sins and come to me]." **18** The disciples of John [the Baptizer] and some men who belonged to the Pharisee [sect] used to abstain from food [to show that they wanted to please God]. One day, some people came [to Jesus] and asked him [critically], "The disciples of John and the Pharisees (fast/abstain from food) [from time to time], but your disciples do not. [We think they should abstain from food also. What do you say about that] [RHQ]?" **19** [Jesus wanted them to understand that it was not appropriate for his disciples to show sorrow by abstaining from food while he was still with them]. So he said to them, "When a man is marrying a woman, his friends will certainly not abstain from food while he is still with them, will they [RHQ]? No. During the time that he is with them, they will not abstain from food [because they are happy together]. **20** But some day, he will be taken away {his [enemies] will take him away} from them. Then, in those days, they will abstain from food, [because they will be sad]." **21** [Jesus wanted to show that those who desire to live in accordance with his new message should not try to continue to obey the old religious traditions like fasting. So he also said to them], "People do not sew a patch of unshrunken cloth on an old garment [in order to mend a hole]. If they did that, [when they washed the garment, the patch would shrink] and the new [piece of cloth] would tear off more of the old cloth. As a result, the hole would become bigger! **22** [Similarly], people do not put newly [squeezed] grape juice into old skin bags [to store it]. If they did that, that juice will burst the skin bags [because they would not stretch when the wine ferments and expands]. As a result both the wine and the skin bags would be ruined! On the contrary, people must put new wine into new skin bags!" [MET] **23** On one (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest) Jesus was walking through some grain fields with his disciples. As they were walking along [through the grain fields], the disciples were plucking some of the heads of grain. [They rubbed them in their hands to remove the chaff, and were eating the grain. The laws of Moses permitted people to do that if they were hungry]. **24** [Some of] the Pharisees [saw them doing what they considered to be work. So they] said to him, "Look! (They should not be doing on our (Sabbath day/day of rest) [work] that our laws forbid!/Why are they doing on our (Sabbath day/day of rest) [work] that our laws forbid?) [RHQ]" **25** [Jesus wanted to show them that the record in the Scriptures indicated that God permitted people to disobey certain religious laws when they needed food]. So he said to them, "[It is written in the Scriptures] what [our revered ancestor, King] David, did when he needed food, and both he and the men with him were hungry. You have read about that, but ([you do not think about what it implies./why do you not think about what it implies]?) [RHQ] **26** During the time Abiathar was high priest, David entered the big tent [where people worshipped] God [and asked for some bread. The high priest gave him some] of the loaves of bread. That bread was the bread he had presented to God. It was permitted in one of Moses' laws that only the priests could eat that bread! But David ate some of it. Then he also gave some of it to the men who were with him. [But God did not consider that was wrong!]" **27** Jesus said to them further, "[God] established (the day of rest/the Sabbath day) [to help] people! He did not create people to [obey rules about] (the Sabbath/the day of rest)! **28** And [think about this]: I am the one who came from heaven. So I have the authority [to determine what is right for my disciples to do] (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day)!"

3 [On another] ([Sabbath/Jewish day of rest]), Jesus entered (the synagogue/the Jewish meeting place) again. There was a man there whose hand was shriveled. **2** [Some

men of the Pharisee sect] watched him carefully in order to see whether he would heal the man (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day). They did this in order that [if he healed the man], they would accuse him of disobeying [their Jewish laws, because he worked] ([on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day]). **3** Jesus said to the man whose hand was shriveled, "Stand up here in front of everyone!" [So the man stood up]. **4** Then Jesus said [to the Pharisees], "Do the laws [that God gave Moses] permit people to do good ([on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day]), or do they permit people to do evil? Specifically, do his laws permit us to save a person's life (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day), or [do they permit us] to let him die [by refusing to help him]?" But they did not reply. **5** He looked around at them angrily. He was very distressed that they were stubbornly [not wanting to help the man]. So he said to the man, "Reach out your hand!" When the man reached out his withered hand, his hand became all right again! **6** Then the Pharisees [decided to get rid of Jesus. So] after they left [the meeting house], they [immediately met with some of] the Jews who supported Herod [Antipas, who ruled Galilee district]. Together they planned how they could kill Jesus. **7** Jesus and his disciples left [that] town and went to an area further along [Galilee Lake in order to get away from the people]. But a great crowd of people followed him. They were people who came from Galilee [district], **8** from Jerusalem [city], from [other towns of] Judea [district], from Idumea [district], from [the region on] the [east] side of the Jordan [River], and from [the region] around Tyre and Sidon [cities]. This great crowd of people came to him because they heard about what he was doing. **9** Because he had healed many people, many [other] people who had various illnesses pushed forward in order that by touching him [they would come well]. So he told his disciples that they should get a small boat ready for him [to get in and teach from it]. He wanted to do this in order that the crowd would not crush him [when they pushed forward to touch him]. **11** Whenever the evil spirits saw Jesus, [they caused the people whom they controlled] to fall down in front of Jesus [in recognition of Jesus' power]. Then they exclaimed, "You are (the Son of God/the man who is also God)!" **12** He commanded the [evil spirits] strongly that they should not tell anyone who he was. **13** Jesus went [with many other people] up into the hills. After he picked out [from among them] the men whom he wanted [to accompany him], they came [close] to him. **14** He appointed twelve men in order that they might be with him and in order that he might send them out to preach. He called them apostles. **15** He also gave them power in order that they might expel evil spirits [from people]. **16** These were the twelve men he appointed: Simon, to whom he gave the [new] name Peter; his [younger] brother Andrew; **17** James, [the son] of Zebedee, and John, the [younger] brother of James, to [both of] whom he added the [new] name, 'Men who are like Thunder'. [because of their fiery zeal]; **18** Philip; Bartholomew; Levi, whose other name was Matthew; Thomas; [another] James, the son of Alphaeus; Thaddeus; [another] Simon, who was a [member of the party that wanted] to overthrow [the Roman government]; **19** and Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]). He was the one who [later] (betrayed Jesus/helped Jesus' enemies seize him). **20** Jesus [along with his disciples] went to the house where he was staying [in Capernaum. Again a crowd gathered where he was]. There were many people crowding around him, so that he and his disciples had no time when they could eat or [when they could do anything else]. **21** After his relatives heard about this, they went to take him home [with them] because (some people/they) were saying that he was insane. **22** [Around that time] some men who taught the [Jewish] laws came down from Jerusalem [city. They heard that Jesus was expelling demons]. So they were telling [people], "Beelzebub, who rules the evil spirits, controls him. He is the one who enables this man to expel evil spirits [from people]!" **23** Jesus summoned those men. [Then he spoke to them] in parables [to enable them to realize that Satan would not oppose his own evil spirits. He also wanted them to realize that by expelling evil spirits, he was demonstrating that he was much more powerful than Satan]. So he said, "([It is ridiculous] to suggest that Satan would expel his own [evil spirits]!/Why would Satan expel his own [evil spirits]?) [RHQ] **24** If [people who live in the same] country are fighting one another, they will cease to be a single group under one ruler. **25** And if [people who live in the same] house fight each other, they will certainly not remain [as one family]. **26** Similarly, if Satan and his [evil spirits] were fighting one another, instead of remaining strong, he would become powerless. **27** Contrary to [what you say about me], someone can enter the house of a strong man [like Satan] and carry off his possessions only if he first ties up the strong man. Then [and only then] will he [be able to] steal the things in that man's house." **28** [Jesus also said], "Consider this carefully! People may sin in many ways and they may speak evilly about God, but [if] they [then are sorry and ask God to] forgive [them], [God] will forgive them for doing that. **29** But if anyone speaks evil words about what the Holy Spirit [does], [God] will never forgive that. That person's guilt will remain with him forever." **(aiōn g165, aiōnios g166)** **30** [Jesus told them that] because [they refused to admit that the Holy Spirit was helping him to

expel demons. Instead], they were saying, "An evil spirit is controlling him!" **31** Jesus' mother and [younger] siblings arrived. While they stood outside, they sent [someone inside] in order to call him [outside]. **32** A crowd was sitting around Jesus. One of them said to him, "Listen/Hey, your mother and your [younger] brothers and sisters are outside, and they are wanting (to see/to talk with) you!" **33** Jesus replied to them, "([I will tell you something about] my mother and my brothers.[/Do you know whom I consider to be like] my mother and my brothers?)" [RHQ] **34** After he looked around at [the disciples] who were sitting around him [in a circle], he said, "Look here! I [love these men as much as] I [love] my mother and my brothers. **35** Those who habitually do what God wants are [as dear to me] [MET] as my brother, my sister, or my mother!"

4 Another time Jesus began to teach [people] alongside Lake [Galilee. As he was doing that, a very large crowd gathered around him. Because people were jostling him], he got into a boat in the lake [so that he could speak to the crowd better. Then he sat in it and began to teach the crowd from the boat]. At the same time, the crowd was on the shore close to the lake. **2** Then he taught them many parables. While he was teaching them, he told them [this]: **3** "Consider [well the meaning of this illustration]: A man/farmer went out [to his field] to sow [some seeds]. **4** As he was scattering them [over the soil], some [of the] seeds fell on the path. Then some birds came and ate those seeds. **5** Other [seeds] fell on ground where there was not much soil [on top of] rock. Very soon the [seeds] sprouted because [the sun warmed] the moist soil quickly where it was not deep. **6** But after the sun shone [on those young plants], they became scorched. Then they withered because they did not have [deep] roots. **7** As the farmer sowed, other [seeds] fell on [ground that contained roots of] thorny plants. [The] seeds [grew, but] the thorny plants also grew up and crowded out [the] good [plants. So the plants] produced no grain. **8** But as the farmer sowed, other [seeds] fell on good soil. As a result, they sprouted, they grew well, and then they produced [plenty of] grain. [Some] plants bore 30 [grains]. [Some] bore 60 [grains]. [Some] bore 100 [grains]." **9** Then Jesus said, "If you want to understand this [MTY], you should consider [carefully what I have just said]." **10** [Later], when only the twelve [disciples] and a few [other] people were with him, they asked him about the parables. **11** He said to them, "People have not understood before [the new message] about how God wants to rule people's lives. It is to you that this is being made known {that I am making this known}. But I tell about this [only] (in parables/figuratively) to those who have not [yet invited God to rule their lives]. **12** As a result [it is true what a prophet has written], Although they see [what I do], they do not perceive [what it means] [DOU]. Although they hear [what I say], they do not understand [what it means] [DOU]. So they do not (repent/turn away from their sinful behavior) in order that they would be forgiven {[God] would forgive them}." **13** He also said to them, "([I am disappointed that] you do not understand this illustration!/Can you not understand this illustration?) [RHQ] [If you do not understand] this, (you will certainly not understand any of the [other] illustrations!/how will you understand any of the [other] illustrations?) [RHQ] [Nevertheless, I will explain it to you]. **14** [In the illustration that I told you], the man who sows [seeds represents someone who] declares God's message [DOU]. **15** [Some people are like] the path on which [some of] the seeds fell. When they hear [the message], Satan comes at once and causes them to forget what they have heard. **16** [Some people are like the ground where the soil was not very deep over] rock. When they hear [God's] message, they immediately accept it with joy. **17** But, because [the message does not penetrate deeply] [MET] [into their hearts/inner beings, they] believe it for [only a short time. They are like the plants that] did not have deep roots. When others treat such people badly or cause them to suffer because [they believe], those people [who are suffering] soon stop believing God's message. **18** [Some people are like] the [soil that had roots of] thorny weeds in it. [Although] those people hear [God's] message, **19** they desire to be rich, and they desire to own many other things. So they worry [only] about material things. The result is that they forget [God's] message and they do not do [the things that God wants them to do]. **(aiōn g165)** **20** [But some people] are like the good soil. They hear [God's] message and they accept it [and they believe] it. [Then they do the things that God wants them to do. They are like the good plants that produced] 30, 60 or 100 [grains]." **21** He also told them [another parable], saying, "(People certainly do not [light] an oil lamp and then bring it [in the house] in order that it may be put {someone may put it} under a container or under a bed./Would anyone [light] an oil lamp and then bring it [in the house] in order that it may be put {someone may put it} under a container or under a bed?) [RHQ] (No, [they light it] in order that it may be put {someone may put it} in a place [where it lights the house].[/Wouldn't they light it] in order that it may be put {someone may put it} in a place [where it lights the house]?) [RHQ] **22** [Similarly], there are some [parts of God's message] that people do not know. [But he intends that] people will understand all the things that they do not know [now]. **23** If you want to understand this, you should consider [carefully] what you [have just heard]." **24** Then he said to

them, "Consider carefully what you hear [me say to you], for [God] will let you [understand] to the same degree that you [consider what I say]. [He] will let you [understand] even more than that. **25** Those who [consider what I say] and understand it, [God] will enable them to understand more. But those who do not [consider carefully what I say], they will forget even what they already know." **26** Jesus also said, "God [has the power to change] people who let him rule their lives. I [will illustrate how that can happen] [MET]. A man planted seeds in the ground. **27** Afterwards he slept each night and rose each day [without worrying about the seeds]. [During that time] the seeds sprouted and grew in a way that he did not understand, because by itself the soil [caused the plants to grow and produce grain]. **28** First the stalks [appeared]. Then the heads [appeared]. Then the full kernels in the heads [appeared]. **29** As soon as the grain was ripe he sent [people] [MTY] to harvest it because it was time to harvest [the grain]." **30** [Jesus told them] another [parable. He] said, "I will tell you [RHQ] how the [number of people] whose lives God rules in a new way [will continue to grow] (OR, each continue to have more and more influence in this world). I hope [RHQ] that this illustration will show this [to you]. **31** [You know what happens to] mustard seeds when we plant them. Though mustard seeds are among the smallest of seeds, [here in Israel] they become large plants. **32** After they are planted, they grow up and become larger than the other garden plants. They put out big branches so that birds are able to make nests in their shade." **33** Jesus used many such illustrations when he talked to the people about God. If they were able to understand [some, he kept telling them more]. **34** He always used parables when he spoke to them. But he explained all [the illustrations] to his own disciples when he was alone with them. **35** On that same day, when the sun was setting, Jesus said to [his disciples], "Let's cross over to the opposite side of [Lake Galilee in the boat]." **36** So they left the crowd, [got in] the boat where Jesus [already] was, and left. [Other people] went with them in other boats. **37** A strong wind came up and the waves started coming into the boat! The boat was soon nearly full [of water]! **38** Jesus was in the back part of the boat. He was sleeping, [with his head] on a cushion. So they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher! (You ought to be concerned that we are about to die!/Are you not concerned that we are about to die?) [RHQ]" **39** So Jesus got up and rebuked the wind. Then he said to the lake, "Be quiet! Be still! [DOU]" The wind [immediately] blowing and then [the lake] became very calm. **40** He said to the disciples, "([I am disappointed that] you are afraid [like that]!/Why are you afraid [like that]?) [RHQ] Do you not yet believe [that I can protect you]?" **41** They were very awestruck. They said to one another, "[Not only do the demons obey this man, but] even the wind and the waves obey him! "(What kind of man is he?/This man is [not like ordinary] people!) [RHQ]"

5 Jesus and his disciples arrived on the [east] side of Lake [Galilee. They landed near] where the Gerasene [people lived]. **2** There was a man in that region whom evil spirits controlled. **3** [Because that man was violent and people were afraid of him], they had tied him up many times. [As he grew more violent], no one was able to tie him up any longer, not even with chains, **4** because the chains would be broken by him {he would break the chains} whenever he was bound {they bound him} with them. The iron shackles would also be smashed by him {He would also smash the iron shackles} whenever they were fastened {they fastened them} [on his feet]. **5** He lived in one of the caves [where they bury dead people]. During both night and day he would scream among the caves and in the hills. He would also cut himself with [sharp] stones. [That day] he came out of the caves. **6** As Jesus [and his disciples got] out of the boat, that man saw Jesus from a distance. He immediately ran to Jesus, and then he knelt before him. **7** Jesus said to the evil spirit, "You evil spirit, come out of this man!" [But the demon did not leave quickly]. It shouted very loudly, "Jesus, I [know that you are the] (Son of/man who is also) God, so (we have nothing in common./what do we have in common?) [IDM, RHQ] [So leave me alone] I ask you to promise, knowing God is listening, that you will not torture me [now]!" **9** [So, in order to expel the demon more easily], Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Crowd/Mob because there are many of us [evil spirits in this man]." **10** Then the evil spirits fervently kept begging Jesus that he not send them out of the region. **11** [At the same time], a large herd of pigs was (grazing/rooting for food) nearby on the hillside. **12** So the evil spirits pleaded with Jesus, "Allow us to go to the pigs in order that we might enter them!" **13** He permitted them [to do that]. So the evil spirits left the man and entered the pigs. The herd, [which numbered] about 2,000, rushed down the cliff into the lake, and drowned in the lake. **14** The men who had been tending the pigs ran and reported in the town and the countryside [what had happened. Many people] went to see what had happened. **15** They came to [the place where] Jesus [was]. Then they saw the man whom evil spirits had [previously] controlled. He was sitting there with clothes on and mentally sound. [As a result], they became afraid [because they thought that Jesus might destroy more of their property]. (OR, [they realized that Jesus must be very powerful].) **16** The people who had seen what had happened described what had happened to

the man whom the evil spirits [previously] controlled. They also described [what had happened to] the pigs. **17** Then the people pleaded with Jesus to leave their region. **18** As Jesus got in the boat [in order to leave], the man whom the evil spirits [previously] controlled begged Jesus, "[Please let me] go with you!" **19** But Jesus did not let him [go with him]. On the contrary, he said to him, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord [God] has done for you, and tell them how [God] was kind to you." **20** So the man left [and traveled around] the Ten Towns [district]. He told people how much Jesus had done for him. All the people [who heard what the man said] were amazed. **21** Jesus [and his disciples] went in a boat back around Lake [Galilee] to where they were before. When they arrived at the shore of the lake, a large crowd gathered around Jesus. **22** One of the men who presided over a (synagogue/Jewish meeting place), whose name was Jairus, came there. When he saw Jesus, he prostrated himself at his feet. **23** Then he pleaded with Jesus earnestly, "My twelve-year old daughter is [sick and] nearly dead! [Please] come [to my house] and place your hands on her in order that she will be healed {to heal her}, so that she will not die!" **24** So Jesus [and the disciples] went with him. A large crowd followed [Jesus] and [many] pushed close to him. **25** There was a woman [in the crowd] who had vaginal bleeding [EUP] [every day] for twelve years. **26** She had suffered much while many doctors [treated her]. But although she had spent all [her money] to pay the doctors, she had not been helped {they had not helped her}. Instead, she had become worse [EUP]. **27** After she heard that Jesus [healed people], she came [to where he was and pushed] in the crowd [close] behind Jesus. **28** She did that because she was thinking, "If I [touch him or] even if I touch his clothes, I will be healed {his power will heal me}." So she touched Jesus' clothes. **29** At once her bleeding stopped. At the same time, she sensed that she had been cured of {that [he] had cured} her illness. **30** Jesus [also] immediately sensed that his power had healed someone. So he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" **31** [One of] his disciples replied, "You can see that many people are crowding close to you! [Probably many people touched you]! So (why do you ask 'Who touched me?'[/We are surprised] that you ask 'Who touched me?' [RHQ])" **32** But Jesus kept looking around in order to see the one who had done it. **33** The woman was very afraid and trembling. [She thought that Jesus might be angry because she had violated the law that women who had such a] sickness [should not touch other people. But] she knew [that Jesus had healed her]. So she prostrated herself before him. Then she told him truthfully [about what she had done]. **34** He said to her, "(Ma'am/Young lady), because you have believed [that I could heal you], I have healed you. You may go home with peace [in your heart/inner being], [because I promise that] you will not be sick [this way any more]." **35** While Jesus was still speaking [to that woman], some people arrived who had come from Jairus' house. They said [to Jairus], "Your daughter has [now] died. So (it is useless that you bother the teacher any longer [by urging him to go to your house]!/why do you bother the teacher any longer [by urging him to go to your house]?) [RHQ]" **36** But when Jesus heard what these men said, he said to Jairus, "Do not think that the situation is hopeless! Just keep believing [that she will live]!" **37** Then he allowed only [his three closest disciples], Peter, James, and John, to go with him [to Jairus' house]. He did not allow any other people to go with him. After they arrived near the house, Jesus saw that the people there were in turmoil. They were weeping and wailing [DOU] loudly. **39** He entered the house and then he said to them, knowing that [he was going to cause her to live again], "(Do not make such a disturbance!/Why are you making such a disturbance?) [RHQ] Stop crying, for the child is not dead! On the contrary, she is [only] sleeping [HYP, EUP]!" **40** The people laughed at him, [because they knew that she was dead]. But he sent all the other people outside the house. Then he took the child's father and mother and the [three disciples] who were with him. He went into [the room] where the child was [lying]. **41** He took hold of the child's hand and said to her [in her own language], "Talitha, Koum!" That means, "Little girl, get up!" **42** At once the girl got up and walked around. ([It was not surprising that she could walk], because she was twelve years old.) [When this happened, all who were present] were very astonished. **43** Jesus ordered them strictly, "Do not tell anyone about [what I have done]!" Afterwards he told them that something to eat should be brought to the girl {that they should bring the girl something to eat}.

6 Jesus left [Capernaum city and went to his hometown, Nazareth]. His disciples went with him. **2** (On the Sabbath/On the Jewish rest day), [he entered] the Jewish worship house and taught [the people]. Many who were listening to him were astonished. [But some] were saying, "[This man is just an ordinary person like we are! So (we cannot believe that] this man [is able to teach us] about these things and that he has been made very wise {that [God] has made him very wise} and that he is performing such miracles![/how is it that] [RHQ] this man [is able to teach us] about these things and that he has been made very wise {that [God] has made him very wise} and that he is performing such miracles?) [RHQ] **3** ([We know that]

he is [just an ordinary] carpenter!/Isn't he [just an ordinary] carpenter [RHQ]?) [We know him and his family! We know] Mary his mother! ([We know] his [younger] brothers James, Joses, Judas and Simon!/Are not his [younger] brothers James, Joses, Judas and Simon?) [RHQ] And (his [younger] sisters also live here in this town!/do not his [younger] sisters also live here in this town?) [RHQ]" So they despised him. **4** Jesus [knew that they refused to believe in him]. So he said to them, "[It is certainly true that] people honor [me and other] prophets [in other places, but] not in our hometowns! Even our relatives and the people who live in our own houses do not honor us!" **5** [So], although he healed a few sick people there by touching them, he [decided] not to perform many [other] miracles [in Nazareth] because the people there did not believe that he was the Messiah. **6** He was amazed that they did not believe [in him]. Mark 6:6b-13 Jesus [and his disciples] went from town to town [in that region] teaching [the people]. **7** [One day] he summoned the twelve [disciples], and then he [told them that] he was going to send them out two-by-two [to teach people in various towns]. He gave them power [to expel] evil spirits [from people]. **8** He also instructed them to wear sandals and to take along a walking stick when they were traveling. He told them not to take food, nor a bag [in which travelers carry supplies], nor any money for their journey. He also did not allow them to take extra clothing. [He wanted the people who heard their message to give them what they needed]. **10** He also instructed them, "After you enter a town, [if someone invites you to stay in his house], go into his house. Eat and sleep in that same home until you leave that town. **11** Wherever the people do not welcome you and wherever the people do not listen to you, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave [that place]. By doing that, you will warn them [that God will punish them for rejecting your message]." **12** [So] after the disciples went out [to various towns], they were preaching that people should stop their sinful behavior. **13** They were also expelling many evil spirits [from people], and they were anointing many sick people with [olive] oil and healing them. **14** [King] Herod [Antipas] heard about [what] Jesus [was doing], because many people were talking [about it. Some] people were saying [about Jesus], "[He must be] John the Baptizer! He has come back to life! That is why he [has God's] power to perform these miracles!" **15** Others were saying [about Jesus], "He is [the former prophet] Elijah, [whom God promised to send back again]." Others were saying [about Jesus], "[No], he is a [different] prophet, like one of the [other] prophets [who lived long ago]." **16** Having heard [what the people were saying, King] Herod [Antipas] himself repeatedly said, "The man [performing those miracles] must be John! I [commanded my soldiers to] cut off his head, but he has come back to life again [to get revenge for my killing him]!" **17** The reason [King Herod concluded that John wanted revenge is as follows: Some time before this], Herod married Herodias, while she was [still] the wife of his [younger] brother, Philip. **18** John kept telling Herod, "[God's] law does not permit you to marry the wife of your brother [while he is still alive]." Then, because Herodias [urged him to put John in prison], Herod himself sent [soldiers to John]. They seized John and put him in prison. **19** But because Herodias wanted to get [further] revenge on John, she wanted [someone] to execute him. But she could not do that because [while John was in prison], Herod kept John safe [from her]. **20** Herod did this because he respected/feared John, because he knew that he was a righteous and holy man. The king did not know what he should do, but he liked to listen to him. **21** But [Herodias was able to have someone execute John when they honored/celebrated] the day when Herod was born. On that day, he invited the [most important] government officials, the [most important] army leaders, and the most important men in Galilee [district] in order that they might eat [and celebrate with him]. **22** [While they were eating], Herodias' daughter came into the room and danced, and that pleased [King] Herod and his guests. So the king said to her, "Ask me for whatever you desire and I will give it to you!" **23** He said to her, "Whatever you ask, I will give it to you! I will give you up to half of what I own and rule, if you ask for it. May God punish me [if I do not do what I have promised]!" **24** The girl immediately left the room and went to her mother. She [told her what the king had said, and] asked her, "What shall I ask for?" Her mother replied, "[Ask the king to give you] the head of John the Baptizer!" **25** The girl quickly entered the room again. She went to the king and she requested, "I want you to command someone to [cut off] the head of John the Baptizer [and] give it to me at once on a platter, [so that my mother can know he is dead]!" **26** The king became very distressed [when he heard what she asked for], because he knew John was a very righteous man (OR, because he now knew that he should not have made that promise to her). But he could not refuse [what she requested because] he had promised [that he would give her anything she asked for], and because his guests [had heard him promise that]. **27** So the king at once ordered the man who executes prisoners to go and [cut off] John's head and bring it [to the girl]. That man went to the prison and cut off John's head. **28** He [put it on] a platter, brought it back, and gave it to the girl. The girl took it to her mother. **29** After John's disciples heard [what happened], they went [to the prison] and took

John's body and then they buried [it in a burial cave]. **30** The [twelve] apostles returned to Jesus [from the places to which they had gone]. They reported to him what they had done and what they had taught [to people]. **31** He said to them, "Come [with me] to a place where no people are living, in order that we can be alone and rest a little while!" [He said this] because many people were continually coming to them and going [away again], with the result that [Jesus and] his disciples did not have time to eat [or do anything else]. **32** So they went away by themselves in a boat to a place where no people were living. **33** [But many] people saw them leaving. They also recognized [that they were Jesus and the disciples, and they saw where they were going]. So they ran [ahead on land] from all the [nearby] towns to the place [where Jesus and his disciples were going]. They [actually] arrived there before [Jesus and the disciples]. **34** As Jesus [and his disciples] got out of the boat, Jesus saw this large crowd. He felt sorry for them because they were [confused], like sheep that do not have a shepherd. So he taught them many things. **35** Late [in the afternoon], the disciples came to him and said, "This is a place where no people live and it is very late. **36** [So] send the people away in order that they may go to the surrounding farms and villages in order that they can buy for themselves something to eat!" **37** But he replied, "[No], you [yourselves] give them something to eat!" They replied, "(We could not buy enough bread to feed [this crowd], even if we had as much money as a man earns by working 200 days!/How could we buy enough bread to feed [this mob], even if we had as much money as a man earns by working 200 days?)" [RHQ] **38** But he replied to them, "How many loaves of bread do you have? Go and find out!" They [went and] found out and then they told him, "We have [only] five flat loaves and two [cooked] fish!" **39** He instructed [the disciples to tell] all the people to sit down on the green grass. **40** So the people sat in groups. There were 50 people in some groups and 100 people in other groups. **41** Jesus took the five flat loaves and the two fish. He looked up towards heaven and thanked [God] for them. Then he broke the loaves and fish into pieces and kept giving them to the disciples in order that they would distribute them to the people. **42** Everyone ate [this food] until they all had enough to eat! **43** The disciples then collected twelve baskets full of pieces [of bread] and of the fish [that were left over]. **44** There were approximately 5,000 men who ate the bread [and fish. They did not even count the women and children]. **45** Right away Jesus told his disciples to get into the boat and then go ahead of him to Bethsaida [town, which was] further around [Lake Galilee. He stayed and] dismissed the many people who were there. **46** After he said goodbye to the people, he went up into the hills in order to pray. **47** When it was evening, the [disciples'] boat was in the middle of the lake and Jesus was by himself on the land. **48** He saw that the wind was [blowing] against them as they rowed. As a result, they were having great difficulty. He approached them early in the morning, when it was still dark, by walking on the water. He intended to walk by them. **49** They saw him walking on the water, but they thought that he was a ghost. They screamed **50** because they all were terrified when they saw him. But he talked to them. He said to them, "Be calm! Do not be afraid, [because] it is I!" **51** He got into the boat [and sat down] with them and the wind [immediately] blowing. They were completely amazed [about what he had done]. **52** [Although they had seen Jesus multiply] the [bread and the fish], they did not understand [from that how powerful he was, as they should have]. They did not think clearly about it. **53** After they went further around [Lake Galilee in a boat, they came to the shore at Gennesaret town]. Then they tied up the boat there. **54** As soon as they got out of the boat, [the people there] recognized Jesus. **55** So they ran throughout the whole district [in order to tell others that Jesus was there]. Then the people [placed] those who were sick on stretchers and carried them to any place where they heard [people say] that Jesus was. **56** In whatever village, town or other place where he entered, they would bring to the marketplaces those who were sick. Then the [sick people] would beg Jesus to let them touch [him or] even the edge of his clothes [in order that Jesus might heal them]. All those who touched [him or his robe] were healed.

7 [One day some] Pharisees and some men who teach the [Jewish] laws gathered around Jesus. They had come from Jerusalem [to investigate him]. **2** The Pharisees and all of the [other] Jews [strictly] observe the traditions that their ancestors [taught. For example, they refuse to] eat until they first wash their hands [with a special ritual], especially after they [return] from [buying things in] the marketplace. [They think that God will be angry with them if they do not do that, because some person or thing unacceptable to God might have touched] ([them/the things they bought]). There are many other such [traditions] that they accept and try to obey. Specifically, they wash [in a special way] their cups, pots, kettles, containers, and beds [in order that using these things will not make God reject them]. **5** That day, those Pharisees and men who taught the [Jewish] laws saw that some of his disciples were eating food with hands that they had not washed [using the special ritual]. So they questioned Jesus, saying, "[Your] disciples disobey the traditions of our ancestors! (You should not [let them] eat food if they have not washed their hands [using our special ritual]!/Why do you

[let them] eat food if they have not washed their hands [using our special ritual]?) [RHQ]" 6 Jesus said to them, "Isaiah [rebuked your ancestors], and his words describe very well you people who only pretend to be good! He wrote these words [that God said]: These people speak [as if they] honor me, but they [SYN] really do not think about honoring me at all. 7 It is useless for them to worship me, because they teach only what people have commanded [as if I myself had commanded them]. 8 You, [like your ancestors], refuse [to do] what God has commanded. Instead, you follow only the traditions that (others/your ancestors) have [taught]." 9 Jesus also said to them, "[You think] [IRO] that you are clever in refusing to do what God commanded just so that you can obey your own traditions! 10 [For example, our ancestor] Moses [wrote God's] command, 'Honor your fathers and your mothers'. He also wrote, '[The authorities must] execute a person who speaks evil about his father or mother.' 11 But you [teach people that it is all right that people no longer must help their parents. You teach people that it is all right if people] give their things to God [instead of giving them to their parents]. You allow them to say to their parents, 'What I was going to give to you [to provide for you, I have now promised to] give to God. So I [cannot any longer help you]!' As a result, you are [actually telling people] that they no longer have to help their parents! 13 And, by doing that, you disregard what God commanded! You teach your own traditions to others [and tell them strongly that they should obey them] And you do many other things like that." 14 Then Jesus again summoned the crowd [to come closer. Then] he said to them [figuratively], "All of you people listen to me! [Try to] understand [DOU] [what I am about to tell you]. 15 Nothing that people eat causes [God to] consider them to be unacceptable. On the contrary, it is that which comes from people's (inner beings/hearts) that causes God to reject them." 17 After Jesus had left the crowd and then entered a house with the disciples, they asked him about the parable [that he had just spoken]. 18 He replied, "([I am disappointed that] you also do not understand [what it means]!/Why can you not understand [what it means]?) [RHQ] (You ought to understand that nothing that [enters us from] outside can cause [God to] consider us unacceptable to him./Can you not understand that nothing that [enters us from] outside of us can cause [God to] consider us unacceptable to him?) [RHQ] 19 Instead of entering [and ruining] our minds/souls, it goes into our stomachs, and afterwards the refuse passes out [of our bodies]." By saying this, Jesus was declaring that people [can eat] any food without causing [God] to reject them. 20 He also said, "It is the [thoughts and actions] that come from within people that cause [God] to consider them unacceptable to him. 21 Specifically, it is people's innermost being [that causes them to] think things that are evil; they act immorally, they steal [things], they commit murder. 22 They [commit] adultery, they are greedy, they [act] maliciously, they deceive [people]. They [act] indecently, they envy [people], they speak evil about others, they are proud, and they [act] foolishly. 23 People think [these thoughts] and then they do these evil actions, and that is what causes [God to] consider them unacceptable to him." 24 After Jesus [and his disciples] left [Galilee district], they went to the region around Tyre. While he stayed at a certain house, he desired that no one know [it], but people soon found out [that he was there]. 25 A certain woman, whose daughter had an evil spirit [within her], heard about Jesus. At once she came to him and prostrated herself at his feet. 26 This woman [was not a Jew. Her ancestors came] from Greece [country], but she was born in [the region around] Phoenicia [town] in Syria district. She pleaded with Jesus that he expel the evil spirit from her daughter. 27 But he [wanted to see how strongly she believed in him. So, suggesting that he should help the Jews first and not the non-Jews whom some Jews called dogs] [MET], [he] spoke to her saying, "First let the children eat all they want, because it is not good for someone to take the food [the mother has prepared] for the children and then throw it to the [little] dogs." 28 But [to show that she believed that non-Jews could also receive help from God] [MET], she replied to him, "Sir, [what you say is] correct, but even the [little] dogs, which lie under the table, eat the crumbs that the children [drop]." 29 [Jesus] said to her, "Because of what you have said, [you have shown me that you believe in what I can do for you]. So I will help you. Now you may go [home, because I have caused] the evil spirit to leave your daughter." 30 The woman returned to her house and saw that her child was lying [quietly] on the bed and that the evil spirit had left. 31 Jesus [and his disciples] left the region around Tyre [city] and went [north] through Sidon [city], then [toward the east] through the district of the Ten Towns, and then [south] to [the towns near] Lake Galilee. 32 [There], people brought to him a man who was deaf and who could hardly talk. They begged [Jesus] to lay his hands on him [in order to heal him]. 33 [So Jesus] took him away from the crowd [in order that the two of them could be] alone. Then he put [one of] his fingers into [each of] the man's ears. After he spat [on his fingers], he touched the man's tongue [with his fingers]. 34 Then he looked up toward heaven, he sighed [because he was concerned for the man], and then [in his own language] he said to the man's [ears], "Ephphatha", which means, "Be opened {Open up}!". 35 At once the man could hear plainly [MTY]. He also began to speak clearly

because [what was causing him to be unable to speak] was healed {Jesus healed [what was causing him to be unable to speak]}. **36** Jesus told ([the people/his friends]) not to tell anyone [what he had done]. But, although he ordered them [and others] repeatedly [not to tell anyone about it], they kept talking about it very much. **37** [People who heard about it] were utterly amazed and were saying [enthusiastically], "Everything he has done is wonderful! [Besides doing other amazing things], he enables deaf people to hear! And he enables those who cannot speak to speak!"

8 During those days, a large crowd of people gathered again. [After they had been there a couple days], they had no food to eat. So Jesus summoned the disciples [to come closer] and then he said to them, **2** "This is the third day that these people have been with me, and they have nothing [left] to eat, so now I feel very sorry for them. **3** Furthermore, if I send them home [while they are still] hungry, [some of] them will faint on the way home, because some of them have come from far away." **4** [Knowing that he was suggesting that they give the people something to eat, one of] his disciples replied, "(We cannot possibly find food to satisfy this crowd, here in this place where no people live!/How can we find food to satisfy this crowd, here in this place where no people live?)" [RHQ] **5** Jesus asked them, "How many loaves of bread do you have?" They replied, "[We have] seven [flat loaves]." **6** Jesus commanded the crowd, "Sit down on the ground!" [After they sat down], he took the seven loaves, he thanked [God for them], he broke them [into pieces] and started giving them to his disciples in order that they might distribute them [to the people]. **7** [They found that] they [also] had a few small [dried] fish. So after he thanked God for these, he told the disciples, "Distribute these also." [After they distributed the bread and fish to the crowd], **8** the people ate this food and they had plenty [to] satisfy [them]. [The disciples] collected the pieces of food that were left over. [They filled] seven large baskets full of those pieces. **9** [They estimated that] there were about 4,000 people [who ate on that day]. **10** Then Jesus dismissed the crowd. Immediately after that, he got into the boat along with his disciples, and they went [around Lake Galilee] to Dalmanutha district. **11** [In those days some] Pharisees came to Jesus. They asked him [to perform] a miracle [that would show that] God [had sent him]. They wanted to [find a way by which they could] convince the people to reject him. [So] they started to argue with him. **12** Jesus sighed quietly to himself, and then he said, "I am disgusted that [RHQ], [even though] you people have seen how I [have healed people], you keep asking me to perform miracles! Note this: Such a miracle will certainly not be shown {I will certainly not show such a miracle} [just] for you people!" **13** Then he left them. He got into the boat again, along [with his disciples], and they went further around [Lake Galilee]. **14** The disciples had forgotten to bring along [enough] food. Specifically, they had only one flat loaf of bread with them in the boat. **15** [As they were going], Jesus warned them against [the attitudes the Pharisees and Herod Antipas had, attitudes that were having a bad effect on other people. He did this by telling them a parable]. He said, "Be careful! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod!" **16** [The disciples misunderstood him]. So they said to one another, "[He must have said that] because we have no bread." **17** Jesus knew [what they were discussing among themselves]. So he said to them, "([I am disappointed that you are] discussing about your not having enough bread!/Why are you discussing about your not having enough bread?) [RHQ] (You should understand by now [that I can provide miraculously for you if you need food!/Why do you not yet perceive or understand that I can provide miraculously for you if you need food]?) [RHQ] (You are not thinking!/Why are you not thinking?) [RHQ] **18** (I am also disappointed that, although you have eyes, you do not [understand what you] see!/Why is it that, although you have eyes, you do not [understand what you] see?) [RHQ] You have ears, but you do not understand [what I say] [RHQ]!" [Then he asked], "Do you not remember [what happened] **19** when I broke [only] five loaves [and fed] the 5.000 people [RHQ]? [Not only was everyone satisfied, but there was food left over] How many baskets full of pieces of bread [that were left over] did you collect?" They replied, "We collected twelve baskets full." **20** Then he asked, "When I broke the seven loaves in order to [feed] the 4,000 people, [again when everyone had plenty to eat], how many large baskets [of pieces of bread that were left over] did you collect?" They replied, "[We collected] seven [large baskets full]." **21** Then he kept saying to them, "([I am disappointed that] you do not understand yet [that you should never worry that you do not have enough food]!/Why do you not understand yet [that you should never worry that you do not have enough food]?)" [RHQ] **22** They arrived [in the boat] at Bethsaida [town]. People brought to Jesus a blind man and earnestly requested that Jesus touch him [in order to heal him]. **23** Jesus took the hand of the blind man, led him outside the town, he put his saliva on the man's eyes, he put his hands on the man, and then he asked him, "Do you see anything?" **24** The man looked up and then he said, "[Yes], I see people! They are walking around, but I cannot see them [clearly]. They look like trees!" **25** Then Jesus again touched the eyes of the blind man. The man looked intently and at that moment he was completely healed! He could

see everything clearly. 26 Jesus said to him, "Do not go into the town! [First go straight home and tell the people there about what I did]!" Then he sent the man to his home. 27 Jesus and the disciples [left Bethsaida town and went to the villages near Caesarea Philippi town]. On the way he questioned them, "Who do people say that I [really] am?" 28 They replied, "[Some people say] that you are John the Baptizer, [who has come back to life again]. Others say [that you are the prophet] Elijah [who has returned from heaven as God promised]. And others say that you are one of the [other former] prophets [who has come back to life again]." 29 He asked them, "What about you? Who do you say that I am?" Peter replied to him, "[We believe that] you are the Messiah!" 30 Then Jesus warned them strongly that they should not tell anyone [yet that he was the Messiah]. 31 Then Jesus began to teach them, "[Even though] I am the one who came from heaven, it is necessary that I suffer very much. It is also necessary that I be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the men who teach the [Jewish] laws {that the elders, the chief priests, and the men who teach the [Jewish] laws reject me}, and that I be killed {they kill me}. But on the third day [after I am killed I] will become alive again." 32 He said this to them clearly. But Peter took Jesus aside and then, [because he assumed that the Messiah would never die], he started to rebuke Jesus [for talking about dying]. 33 Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples. Then he rebuked Peter, saying, "Stop thinking like that! Satan [is causing you to talk like that! Instead] of wanting what God wants [me to do, you are wanting] me to do [only] what [most] people [would want me to do]." 34 Then he summoned the crowd along with his disciples [so that they might listen to him]. He told them, "If any one [of you] wants to be my disciple, you must not do [only] what you yourself want to do. Specifically, you must [be willing to allow people to hurt you and to disgrace you. That is what they do to criminals] who are forced to carry crosses [MET] [to the places where they will be crucified]. That is what anyone who wants to be my disciple must do. 35 [You must do that], because those who try to save their lives [by denying that they belong to me when people want to kill them for believing in me] will not live [eternally], but those who are killed because of being my [disciples] and [because of telling others my] good message will live [forever with me]. 36 People might get everything [they want] in this world, but (they are really gaining nothing if they do not get eternal life [because they do not become my disciples!]/what will they gain if they do not get eternal life [because they do not become my disciples]?) [RHQ] 37 ([Think carefully about the fact that] there is absolutely nothing that people can give [to God] that would enable them to gain eternal life!/Is there anything that a person can give [to God] in order to gain eternal life?) [RHQ] 38 And think about this: Those who refuse [to say that they belong to] me and who reject what I say in these days when many people have turned away [from God] and are very sinful, I, the one who came from heaven, will also refuse [to say that they belong to me] when I come back with the holy angels and have the glorious brightness that my Father has!"

9 He also said to [his disciples], "Listen carefully! Some of you who are here now will see God ruling powerfully in [many ways]. You will see it before you die!" 2 A week later Jesus took Peter, James and [James' younger brother] John and led them up a high mountain. [While they were] alone up there, he appeared very different to them. 3 His clothes became dazzling white. They were whiter than anyone on earth could make them by bleaching them. 4 [Two prophets who had lived long ago], Moses and Elijah, appeared to them. Then the two of them began talking with Jesus. 5 [After a short time], Peter [interrupted by] exclaiming, "Teacher, it is wonderful to be here! So allow us to make three shelters. One [will be] for you, one [will be] for Moses, and one [will be] for Elijah!" 6 [He said this] because [he wanted to say something, but] he did not know what to say, because he and the other [two disciples] were very awestruck. 7 Then a [shining] cloud appeared that covered them. [God] [EUP] spoke to them from the cloud saying, "This is my Son. I love him. [Therefore], listen to him!" 8 When [the three disciples] looked around, they saw that suddenly Jesus was alone with them, and that there was no longer anyone [else] there. 9 While they were coming down the mountain, Jesus told them that they should not tell anyone [yet] what had just happened to him. He said, "You may tell them after I, the one who came from heaven, (rise from the dead/become alive again) after I die." 10 So they did not tell others about it [for a long time]. But they discussed among themselves what it meant when he said that he would (rise from the dead/become alive again) after he died. 11 [The three disciples had just seen Elijah, but Elijah had not done anything to prepare people to accept Jesus. So] they asked Jesus, "The men who teach the [Jewish] laws say that Elijah must come back to the earth before [the Messiah comes to earth. But you have been here a long time and Elijah came just today. So is what they are teaching wrong?]" 12 [Jesus wanted them to know that John the Baptizer was the one who represented Elijah. So] he answered them, "It is true that [God promised to send Elijah to come] first [so that people would be ready when I came]. Elijah's representative has already come, and our leaders treated him very badly, just like they wanted to do,

just like it was prophesied {[the prophets] prophesied} long ago. But, (I also want you to consider what is written {what [the prophets] wrote} in the Scriptures about me, the one who came from heaven./why have you not thought about what is written {what [the prophets] wrote} about me, the one who came from heaven?) [RHQ] It is written {They wrote} that I would suffer much and that I would be rejected {that [many people] would reject me}." **14** [Jesus and those three disciples] returned to where the [other] disciples were. They saw a large crowd around the other disciples and [some] men who taught the [Jewish] laws arguing with them. **15** As soon as the crowd saw Jesus, they were very surprised [to see him come]. So they ran to him and greeted him. **16** He asked them, "What are you arguing about?" **17** A man in the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son [here in order that] you [would heal him]. There is an evil spirit in him [that makes him] unable to talk. **18** Whenever the spirit attacks him, it throws him down. He foams at the mouth, he grinds his teeth together, and he becomes stiff. I asked your disciples to expel the spirit, but they were not able to do it." **19** Jesus replied by saying to those people, "(I am very disappointed that [although you] have observed how I help people, you do not believe [that you are able to do anything]!/Why is it that [although you] have observed how I help people, you do not believe [that you are able to do anything]?) [RHQ] (I have been with you a long time, [and you still cannot do what I do]!/How long do I have to be with you [before you can do what I do]?) [RHQ] Bring the boy to me!" **20** So they brought the boy to Jesus. As soon as the evil spirit saw Jesus, it shook the boy severely, and [the boy] fell on the ground. He rolled around, and he foamed at the mouth. **21** Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" He replied, "[This started to happen] when he was a child. **22** [The spirit does not only do this], but he also often throws him into the fire or into the water in order to kill him. But, pity us and help us, if you can!" **23** Jesus exclaimed to him, "[Do not say] [RHQ] 'If you can', for [God/I] can do anything for people who believe [in him/me]!" **24** Immediately the child's father shouted, "I believe [that you can help me, but I do not believe strongly]. Help me to believe more strongly!" **25** Because [Jesus wanted to heal the boy before] the crowd got bigger, he rebuked the evil spirit, saying, "You evil spirit, you who are [causing this boy to be] deaf and unable to talk! I command you to come out of him and never enter him again!" **26** The evil spirit shouted, it shook the boy violently, and then it left the boy. The boy did not move. He seemed like a dead body. So many of the people there said, "He is dead!" **27** However, Jesus took him by the hand and helped him get up. Then the boy stood up. [He was healed]! **28** Later, when Jesus and his disciples were alone in a house, one of them asked him, "Why were we not able to expel [the evil spirit]?" **29** He said to them, "You can expel this kind [of evil spirit] only by your praying [that God will give you the power to do it]. There is no other way that you can expel them." **30** After [Jesus and his disciples] left that [district], they traveled through Galilee [district]. Jesus did not want anyone [else] to know [that he was in their area]; he did not want **31** [anyone to interrupt him] as he taught his disciples. He was telling them, "[Some day my enemies] [SYN] will seize [MTY] me, the one who came from heaven, and I will be handed over [to other] men. Those men will kill me. But on the third day after I am killed {after they kill me}, I will become alive again!" **32** But they did not understand what he was telling them. Also, they were afraid to ask him about what he had said. **33** Jesus and his disciples returned to Capernaum [town]. When they were in the house, he asked them, "What were you discussing [while we were traveling] on the road?" **34** But they did not reply. [They were ashamed to reply] because, [while they were traveling], they had been arguing with each other about which one of them [would be] the most important [when Jesus became king]. **35** He sat down, he summoned the twelve disciples [to come close to him], and then he said to them, "If anyone wants [God to consider him] to be the most important person of all, he must [consider himself] to be the least important person of all, and he must serve everyone [else]." **36** Then he took a child and placed him among them. He took the child in his arms and then he said to them, **37** "Those who, [because they love] me, welcome a child like this one, [God considers that] they are welcoming me. So [it is as though] they are also welcoming [God], who sent me." **38** John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone who was expelling demons, ([claiming he had] authority from you [to do that/while telling people] that you [have told him to do it]). So we told him to stop doing it because he was not one of us [disciples]." **39** Jesus said, "Do not tell him [not to do that]! For no one will speak evilly about me just after he performs a miracle while saying that I [have told him to do it]. **40** Furthermore, those who are not opposing us are trying to [achieve the same goals that] we are. **41** Also think about this: Those [who belong to me who help you in any way, even] if they [just] give you a cup of water to drink because you follow [me], the Messiah, will certainly be rewarded [by God]!" **42** [Jesus also said], "But if you cause someone who believes in me to sin, [God will severely punish you], even if that person is [socially unimportant like] this little child. If someone tied a heavy stone around your neck and you were thrown {and threw you} into the sea, [you would

consider that was a severe punishment. But God will punish you more severely] than that [if you cause a person who believes in me to sin]. **43** [So], if you are [wanting to use one of] [MTY, PRS] [your hands to sin, stop using your hand! Even if you have to] cut your hand off and throw it away [to avoid sinning, do it] [HYP]! It is good that you not sin and that you live eternally, [even though you lack one of] your hands [while you are here on earth]. But it is not good that you sin and as a result God throws your whole body into hell. There the fires never go out! **(Geenna g1067)** **45** If you are [wanting to use] one of [PRS] your feet to sin, [stop using your foot! Even if you have to] cut off your foot [to avoid sinning, do it] [HYP]! It is good that you not sin and live eternally, [even though] you lack one of your feet [while you are here on earth]. But it is not good that you sin and go to hell. **(Geenna g1067)** **47** If because of what you see [MTY, PRS] you are tempted to sin, [stop looking at those things]! Even if you have to gouge out your eye and throw it away [HYP] [to avoid sinning, do it! It is good that you not sin and live eternally, even though you lack one of] your eyes [while you are here on earth]. But it is not good that you sin and, as a result, God puts your whole body in hell. **(Geenna g1067)** **48** In that place people suffer forever and the fires are never put out {never go out}." **49** "[You must endure difficulties in order that God will be pleased with you. Your difficulties are like] a fire [that makes things pure] [MET]. [Your enduring is also like] [MET] salt being put [on] {people putting salt on their} [sacrifices to make them pure]. **50** Salt is useful [to put on food], but you cannot [RHQ] make salt to taste salty again if it becomes flavorless [MET]. Similarly, you must remain useful to God, [because no one can make you useful to God again if you become useless]. You must also live peacefully with each other."

10 Jesus left (that place/Capernaum) [with his disciples], and they went through Judea district and on across [to the east side of] the Jordan [River]. When crowds gathered around him again, he taught them again, as he customarily did. **2** [While he was teaching them, some] Pharisees approached him and asked him, "Does [our Jewish] law permit a man to divorce his wife?" They asked that in order to be able to criticize him [whether he answered "yes" or "no"]. **3** He answered them, "What did Moses command your [ancestors about a man divorcing his wife]?" **4** [One of] them replied, "Moses permitted that a man may write on paper [his reason] for divorcing [his wife], [give this paper to her], and then send her away." **5** Jesus said to them, "It was because your [ancestors] stubbornly wanted just what they desired that Moses wrote that law for [your ancestors], and you [are just like them]! **6** [Remember] that he [also wrote that, when God] first created [people], he made [one] man, and [one] woman [to become that man's wife]. **7** That explains why [God said], 'When a man [and] woman marry, they should no longer live with their fathers and mothers [after they marry]. **8** Instead, the two of them shall [live together, and they shall] become so [closely united] [MET] [that they are like] one person.' Therefore, although the people [who marry] were two [separate persons] before, [God regards them] as one person now, [so he wants them to remain married]. **9** Because that is true, a man must not separate from his [wife] whom God has joined [to him, because God's plan is for them to remain together]!" **10** When Jesus and his disciples were alone in a house, they asked him again about this. **11** He said to them, "[God considers that a marriage lasts until either the husband or the wife dies, so he considers] that any man who divorces his wife and marries another woman is committing adultery, [even] if he divorces his first wife. **12** [God also considers] a woman who divorces her first husband to be committing adultery if she marries another man." **13** [One day], some people were bringing children to Jesus in order that he would touch [and bless] them. But the disciples scolded those people [because they thought that Jesus] ([did not want to be bothered spending time with/was not concerned about]) [children]. **14** When Jesus saw that, he became angry. He said to the [disciples], "Allow the children to come to me! Do not forbid them [DOU]! It is people who [are humble and trust as they do] who can experience (God's rule [in their lives]/God taking care of them) [MET]. **15** Note this: Those who do not [trustingly] allow God to direct [their lives], as children [do], will not enter the place where God rules." **16** Then he embraced the children. He also put his hands on them [and asked God to] bless them. **17** As Jesus was starting to travel [again with his disciples], a [young] man ran up to him. He knelt before Jesus and then he asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to have eternal life/in order to live [with God] eternally?" **(aiōnios g166)** **18** Jesus said to him, "(You should consider carefully [what you are implying] (OR, [that you are implying that I am God]) [by] calling me good, because only God is good!/Do you realize [what you are implying] (OR, [that you are implying that I am God]) [by] calling me good, because only God is good?) [RHQ] No other person is good **19** [But to answer your question], you know the commandments [of Moses, which will cause you to live eternally if you obey them perfectly]. He commanded [things such as] 'do not murder anyone, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not (testify falsely/lie), do not cheat anyone, and honor your father and mother'." **20** The man said to him, "Teacher, I have obeyed all those commandments ever since I was young. [So is] ([that

enough/there something else that I have not done])?" **21** Jesus looked at him and loved him. He said to him, "There is one thing that you have not [yet done]. You must go [home], sell all that you possess, and then give [the money] to poor people. [As a result], you will be spiritually rich in heaven. After [you have done what I have told you], come with me [and be my disciple]!" **22** The man became disappointed when he heard that. He went away sad, because he was very rich [and he did not want to give away everything]. **23** Jesus looked around [at the people]. Then he exclaimed to his disciples, "It is very difficult for people who are wealthy to [decide to] let God rule their lives!" **24** The disciples were surprised at what he said. [They thought that God favored the rich people, so if God did not save them, he would not save anyone]. So Jesus replied again to them, "My dear friends, it is very difficult for anyone [to decide] to let God rule his life. **25** It is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. It is almost as difficult [HYP] for rich people [to decide] to let God rule their [lives]." **26** The disciples were very astonished. So they said to each other, "If that is so, (it will be unlikely that anyone will be saved {that God will save anyone}!/will [God] save anyone?) [RHQ]" **27** Jesus looked at them and then he said, "[Yes], it is impossible for people [to save themselves]! But God certainly can [save them], because God can do anything!" **28** Peter exclaimed, "[You know that] we have left behind everything and we have become your disciples. [So], ([what about us/will God (accept us/reward us)])?" **29** Jesus replied, "I want you to know this: Those who have left [their] houses, [their] brothers, [their] sisters, [their] father, [their] mother, [their] children, or [their] plots of ground, to [be] my [disciples] and to [proclaim] the good news, **30** will receive in this life 100 times as much [as they left behind. That will include houses and people as dear as] brothers and sisters and mothers and children, and plots of ground. Furthermore, although people will persecute them [here on earth because they believe in me], in the future age [they] will ([have] eternal life/live [with God] eternally). **(aiōn g165, aiōnios g166)** **31** But I [warn you all]: Many of you who [now consider yourselves] to be very important will be unimportant [at that future time], and many of you who [now consider yourselves] to be unimportant will be very important [at that future time]!" **32** [Some days later as they continued to travel], Jesus and his disciples were walking on the road that leads up to Jerusalem [city]. Jesus was walking ahead of them. [The disciples/apostles] were astonished [that he was going to where there were many people who opposed him], and the other people who were with them were afraid [about what would happen to him in Jerusalem. Along the way he took the twelve disciples to a place by themselves]. Then he began to tell them again about what was going to happen to him, saying, **33** "Listen carefully! We are going up to Jerusalem. There the chief priests and the men who teach the Jewish laws will be enabled {someone will help the chief priests and those who teach our [Jewish] laws} to seize me. Then they will declare that I must die, [even though] I am the one who came from heaven. Then they will take me to the Roman [authorities]. **34** Those men will ridicule me. They will spit on me. They will (scourge me/whip me with a leaded whip.) Then they will kill me. But on the third day after that, I will become alive again!" **35** [Along the way], James and John, [who were] the two sons of Zebedee, approached Jesus and they said to him, "Teacher, please do for us what we will ask you to do!" **36** He said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" **37** They said to him, "When you [rule] gloriously, [let us rule with you]. Let one of us [sit] at your right side and one sit at your left side." **38** But Jesus said to them, "You do not understand what you are asking for." Then he asked them, "Can you endure suffering [MTY] like I am about to suffer? Can you endure being killed [MTY] as I will be killed {people killing you as they will kill me}?" **39** They said to him, "[Yes], we are able [to do that]!" Then Jesus said to them, "[It is true that] you will endure suffering [MTY] like I will suffer, and you will endure being killed as I will be killed {people killing you as they will kill me}. **40** But I am not the one who chooses the ones who will sit next to me [and rule with me. God will give] those places to the ones he appoints." **41** The [other] ten [disciples later] heard about what James and John [had requested]. As a result, they were angry with them [because they also wanted to rule with Jesus in the highest positions]. **42** Then, after Jesus called them all together, he said to them, "You know that those who rule the non-Jews [enjoy] showing that they are powerful. You also know that officials enjoy commanding others. **43** But do not be like them! On the contrary, all those among you who want [God to consider them] great must become [like] servants to [the rest of] you. **44** Furthermore, if anyone among you wants [God to consider him] to be the most important, he must [act like] a servant for the rest of you. **45** [You should imitate me]. Even though I am the one who has come from heaven, I did not come to be served {for others to serve me}. On the contrary, I came in order to serve others and to allow others to kill me, in order that my dying for people would be like a payment to rescue [many people from being punished] {[God punishing them]} [for their sins]." **46** [On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus and the disciples came to Jericho town]. Afterwards, while they were leaving Jericho along with a great crowd, a blind man who habitually begged [for money] was sitting beside

the road. His name was Bartimaeus and his father's name was Timaeus. 47 When he heard people say that Jesus from Nazareth [was passing by], he shouted, "Jesus! [You who are the Messiah] descended from [King] David, (be merciful to/help) me!" 48 Many people rebuked him and told him that he should be quiet. But he shouted even more, "[You who are the Messiah] descended from [King David], (be merciful to/help) me!" 49 Jesus stopped and said, "Call him [to come over here]!" They summoned the blind man, saying, "Jesus is calling you! So cheer up and get up [and come]!" 50 He threw aside his cloak as he jumped up, and he came to Jesus. 51 Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "Sir, I [want to be able] to see again!" 52 Jesus said to him, "[I am] healing you [because] you believed [in me]. So you may go [home]!" He could see immediately. And he went with Jesus along the road.

11 When they came near to Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage and Bethany [villages] near Olive [Tree] Hill. Then Jesus [summoned] two of his disciples. 2 He said to them, "Go to that village just ahead of you. As soon as you enter it, you will see a donkey that no one has ever ridden, that has been tied {people have tied} up. Untie it, and then bring it [to me]. 3 If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing that?', say, ['Jesus], our Lord, needs [to use] it. He will send it back here [with someone] as soon as [he no longer needs it].'" 4 So [the two disciples] went and they found the young donkey. It was tied close to the door [of a house], which was beside the street. Then they untied it. 5 Some of the [people who were there] said to them, "Why are you untying the donkey?" 6 They told them what Jesus had said. So the people permitted them [to take the donkey]. 7 They brought the donkey to Jesus. [The disciples] put some of their clothes on it [in order to make something for him to sit on]. 8 Many people spread their cloaks on the road [to honor him as a king]. Others, [in order to honor him], spread along the road branches that they cut from [palm trees] in the fields [beside the road]. 9 The people who were going in front of him and behind him were all shouting [things like], "Praise God!" "May God bless this one who comes (with his authority/as his representative) [MTY]." 10 "May you be blessed {May [God] bless you} when you rule [like] our ancestor [King] David ruled!" "Praise God who is in the highest heaven!" 11 He entered Jerusalem [with them], and then he went into the Temple [courtyard]. After he looked around at everything [there], he left [the city] because it was already late [in the afternoon]. He returned to Bethany with the twelve [disciples and slept there]. 12 The next day, as Jesus and his disciples were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. 13 He saw from a distance a fig tree with all its leaves, so he went [to it] to see if he could find any [figs] on it. But when he came to it, he found only leaves on it. This was because it was not yet time when [normal fig trees have ripe] figs. 14 [But to illustrate how God would punish the nation of Israel,] he said to the tree, "No one shall ever eat from you again [because you will no longer bear figs]." The disciples heard what he said. (aiōn g165) 15 Jesus and his disciples went [back] to Jerusalem. He entered the Temple [courtyard. He saw people] who were selling and buying [animals for sacrifices. They were spoiling the place of worship]. He chased those people [from the Temple courtyard.] He also overturned the tables of those who were giving Temple tax money in exchange for Roman coins. He overturned the seats of the men who were selling doves [for sacrifices], 16 and he would not allow anyone who was carrying anything [to sell] to go through the Temple [area]. 17 Then as he taught those people, he said to them, "It is written {[One of the prophets] wrote} [in the Scriptures that God said], '[I want] my house to be called {[people] to call my house} a house where [people from] all nations may pray', but you bandits have made it [like] a cave where you can hide! ([You know that!/Do you not know that]?) [RHQ]" 18 The chief priests and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws [later] heard [about what he had done]. So they planned how they might kill him, [but they knew that it would be difficult], because they realized that the crowd was amazed at what he was teaching and they feared [that the people would soon decide that Jesus had more authority over the Temple than they did] (OR, [feared what the people would do if they tried to arrest Jesus]). 19 That evening, [Jesus and his disciples] left the city [and again slept in Bethany]. 20 [The next] morning, while they were going along [the road toward Jerusalem, they saw that the fig tree that Jesus had cursed] had withered completely. 21 Peter remembered [what Jesus had said to the fig tree] and he exclaimed to Jesus, "Teacher, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered!" 22 Jesus replied, "[You should not be surprised that God did what I asked]! You must trust that God [will do whatever you ask him to do]! 23 [Also] note this: If anyone says to this hill, 'Be raised up {Rise up} and then be thrown {throw yourself} into the lake!' and if he does not doubt [that what he asks for will happen], that is, if he believes that what he asks for will happen, [God] will do it for him. 24 So I tell you, whenever you ask [God] for something when you pray, believe that you will receive it, and, [if you do, God] will do it [for you]. 25 Now, I [tell you this also]: Whenever you are praying, if you have a grudge against people [because they have harmed you], forgive them, in order that your Father in heaven will [likewise] forgive your sins." 27 Jesus and

his disciples arrived in the Temple [courtyard] in Jerusalem again. While Jesus was walking [there, a group consisting of] chief priests, [some] men who taught the [Jewish] laws, and elders came to him and they said to him, 28 "By what authority are you doing these things? Who authorized you to do things [like those you did here yesterday]?" 29 Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you who authorized me to do those things. 30 Did God [MTY] or people [authorize] John to baptize [those who came to him]?" 31 They debated among themselves [as to what they should answer]. They [said to each other], "If we say that it was God [who authorized] him, he will say to us, 'Therefore, (you should have believed what John said!/why did you not believe what John said?) [RHQ]' 32 On the other hand, if we say that it was people [who authorized John, then what will happen to us]?" They were afraid [to say that about where John got his authority, because they knew that] the people [would be very angry with them. They knew that] all the people truly believed that John was a prophet [whom God had sent]. 33 So they answered Jesus, "We do not know [where John got his authority]." Then Jesus said to them, "[Because you did not answer my question, I] will not tell you who authorized me to do those things [here yesterday]."

12 Then Jesus told [those Jewish leaders] a parable. [He wanted to show what God would do to those who rejected the former prophets and himself. He said], "A certain man planted a vineyard. He built a fence around it [in order to protect it]. He made a stone tank [to collect the juice that] they would press [out of the grapes]. He also built a tower [for someone to sit in to guard his vineyard]. Then he leased the vineyard to some men to care for it and [to] give him some of the [grapes] in return. Then he went away to another country. 2 When the time came to harvest the [grapes], he sent a servant to the men [who were taking care of the vineyard] in order to receive from them his share of the grapes that the vineyard had produced. 3 But [after the servant arrived], they grabbed him and beat him, and they did not give him any fruit. Then they sent him away. 4 Later the one who owned the vineyard sent another servant to them. But they beat that one on his head, and they insulted him. 5 Later he sent another servant. That man they killed. They mistreated many other servants [whom he sent]. Some they beat and some they killed. 6 The man still had one other [person with him]. It was his son. He loved him very much. So, finally he sent his son to them because he thought that they would respect him [and give him some of the grapes]. 7 But [when they saw his son coming], those men who were looking after the vineyard said to each other, 'Look! Here comes the man who will some day inherit the vineyard! So let's kill him in order that this vineyard will be ours!' 8 They seized him and killed him. Then they threw his body outside the vineyard. 9 So (do you know what the man who owns the vineyard will do?/I will tell you what the man who owns the vineyard will do [RHQ]). He will come, and he will kill those evil men who were taking care of his vineyard. Then he will arrange for other people to take care of it. 10 [Now think carefully about these words], which you have read [in] the Scriptures: The men who were building the building rejected one stone. But others [put that same stone in its proper place, and] it has become the most important stone in the building [MET]! 11 The Lord has done this, and we marvel as we look at it." 12 Then [the Jewish leaders] realized that he was accusing them when he told this story [about what those wicked people did]. So they wanted to seize him. But they were afraid of what the crowds [would do if they did that]. So they left him and went away. 13 The [Jewish leaders] sent to [Jesus] some Pharisees [who thought that the Jews should pay only the tax that their own Jewish authorities required people to pay]. They also sent some members of the party that supported Herod [Antipas and the Roman government]. They wanted to make Jesus say something wrong [that would make one of those groups very angry with him]. 14 After they arrived, they said to him [deceivingly], "Teacher, we know that you [teach] the truth. We also know that you are not concerned about [what] people [say about you, even if an important person does not like what you say]. Instead, you teach truthfully what God wants [us to do]. So [tell us what you think about this matter:] Is it right that we pay taxes to the Roman government, or not [MTY]? Should we pay the taxes, or should we not pay them?" 15 Jesus knew that they did not really want to know [what God wanted them to do]. So he said to them, "(I [know that] you are [just] trying to make me say something wrong for which you can arrest me./Why are you [just] trying to make me say something wrong for which you can arrest me?) [RHQ] [But I will answer your question anyway]. Bring me a coin so that I might [ask you something after] I look at it." 16 After they brought him a coin, he asked them, "Whose picture is [on] this [coin]? And [whose] name [is on it]?" They replied, "It is a picture and the name of Caesar, [the man who rules the Roman government]." 17 Then Jesus said to them, "[That is correct, so] give to the government [MTY] what they [require], and give to God what he [requires]." They were [frustrated at his answer but] amazed at what he said, [because they were not able to accuse him of anything because of what he said]. 18 [Men who belong to the] Sadducee [sect] deny that people become alive again after they die. [In order to discredit] Jesus [by ridiculing the idea that people will live again, some

of] them came to him and asked him, **19** "Teacher, Moses wrote for us [Jews] that if a man who has no children dies, his brother should marry the dead man's widow. [Then if those two bear children, everyone will consider that those children are the] children of the man who died, [and in that way the dead man will continue to have descendants]. **20** [So here is an example]. There were seven boys [in one family]. The oldest one married [a woman], but [he and his wife] did not bear any children. Then he [later] died. **21** The second [brother followed this law and] married that woman and he, too, did not bear any children. Then he [later] died. The third [brother did] like [his other brothers did. But he also did not bear any children, and later died]. **22** Eventually all seven [brothers married that woman, one by one], but they had no children, and one by one they died. Afterwards the woman died, too. **23** Therefore, [if it were true what some people say, that people will become alive again after they die], whose wife do you think that woman will be when people become alive again? ([Keep in mind that] she was married to all seven [brothers]!/She was married to all seven [brothers, so how can anyone decide] [RHQ]?)" **24** Jesus replied to them, "You are certainly wrong [RHQ]. You do not know [what they have written in] the Scriptures [about this]. You also do not understand God's power [to make people alive again]. **25** [That woman will not be the wife of any of them], because when people have become alive again, instead of men having wives and women having husbands, they will be like the angels in heaven, [who do not marry]. **26** But as to people becoming alive again after they die, in the book that Moses [wrote, he said something about people who have died] that I am sure that you have read [RHQ]. When Moses [was looking at] the bush [that was burning], God said to him, 'I am the God whom Abraham [worships] and the God whom Isaac [worships] and the God whom Jacob [worships].' **27** It is not dead people who worship God. It is living people who worship him. [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died long before Moses lived, but God said that they were still worshipping him, so we know their spirits were still alive]! So your [claim that dead people do not become alive again] is very wrong." **28** A man who taught the [Jewish] laws heard their discussion. He knew that Jesus answered the question well. So he stepped forward and asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the most important?" **29** Jesus answered, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, [you people of] Israel! [You must worship] the Lord, our God, our only Lord. **30** [You must show that you love him in all the ways that you live] Show it in all that you want and feel, in all that you think, and in all that you do!' **31** The next [most important commandment] is: 'You must love people you come in contact with as much as you love yourself.' No other commandment is more important than these two!" **32** The man said to Jesus, "Teacher, [you have answered] well. You correctly said that he is the only [God] and that there is no other God [we must worship/obey]. **33** You have also said correctly that we ([should/must show that we]) love God by all that we are, by all that we think, and by the way that we live. And you have said correctly that we must love (people with whom we come in contact/others) as much as we love ourselves. And you have also implied that doing these things [pleases God] more than offering/giving animals to him or burning [other] sacrifices." **34** Jesus realized that this man had answered wisely. So he said to him, "[I perceive that] you will soon [decide to let] God rule your life." After that, [the Jewish leaders] were afraid to ask him any more questions [like that to try to trap him]. **35** [Later], while he was teaching in the Temple [courtyard], Jesus said [to the people], "These men who teach the [Jewish] laws, (they must be wrong when they say that the Messiah is [merely] a descendant of [King] David!/why do they say that the Messiah is [merely] a descendant of [King] David?) [RHQ] **36** The Holy Spirit caused David himself to say [about the Messiah], God said to my Lord, 'Sit here beside me at the place where I will highly honor you! Sit here while I completely defeat your enemies! [MTY]' **37** Therefore, [because] David himself calls [the Messiah] 'my Lord,' (the Messiah cannot be [just] a man who descended [from King David!]/how can the Messiah be [just] a man who descended [from King David]?) [RHQ] [He must be much greater than David]"! Many people listened to him gladly [as he taught those things]. **38** While Jesus was teaching [the people], he said to them, "Beware that you [do not act like] the men who teach our [Jewish] laws. They [like people to honor them, so] they put on long robes and walk around [in order to show people how important they are]. They also like people to greet them [respectfully] in the marketplaces. **39** [They like to sit] in the most important seats in our (synagogue/Jewish meeting place). At festivals, [they like to sit in] the seats where the most honored people sit. **40** They (swindle/take for themselves) the houses [and property] of widows by cheating them. [Then] they pretend [that they are good] by praying long prayers [publicly. God] will certainly punish them severely!" **41** [Later], Jesus sat down [in the Temple courtyard opposite the boxes in which people put offerings. As he was sitting there], he watched as all the people put money in the box. Many rich people put in large amounts [of money]. **42** Then a poor widow came along and put in two small copper coins, which had a very small value. **43** He gathered his disciples around him and said to them, "The truth is that these other people have a lot

of money, [but] they gave [only a small part of it]. But this woman, who is very poor, has put in all the money that she had to pay for the things she needs. [So God considers that] this poor widow has put more money into the box than all the other people!"

13 While Jesus was leaving the Temple [area], one of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, look at how marvelous [these] huge stones [in the walls are] and how wonderful [these] buildings [are]!" **2** Jesus said to him, "[Yes], these buildings that you are looking [at] [RHQ] [are wonderful], but I [want to tell you something about] them. They will [soon] be destroyed {[Foreign invaders] will destroy [them]} [completely, with the result that] no stone here [in this Temple area] will be left on top of another stone." **3** After they arrived on Olive [Tree] Hill across [the valley] from the Temple, Jesus sat down. When Peter, James, John, and Andrew were alone with him, they asked him, **4** "Tell us, when will [that] happen [to the buildings of the Temple? Tell us what will happen that will show us that all these things that God has planned] are about to be finished {that [God] is about to finish all these things [that he has planned]}." **5** Jesus replied to them, "[I cannot give you a simple answer to your questions. All I will say is], beware that no one deceives you [concerning what will happen]! **6** Many people will come and say (that I sent them/that they have my authority) [MTY]. They will say, 'I am [the Messiah]!' They will deceive many people. **7** Whenever people tell you about wars [that are close] or wars that are far away, do not be troubled. [God has said] that those things must happen. [But when they do happen, do not think] that [God] will finish all [that he has planned] at that time! **8** [Groups who live in various] countries will fight each other, and various governments will fight each other. There will also be [big] earthquakes in various places; and there will be famines. Yet, [when these things happen, people will have only just begun to suffer. The first things that they suffer will be like] the first pains a woman [suffers] who is about to bear a child. [They will suffer much more after that]. **9** Be ready for [what people will do to you at that time]. Because [you believe in] me, they will arrest you and put you on trial before the religious councils. (In the synagogues/In the Jewish meeting places), you will be beaten {others will beat you}. You will be put {[People will put] you} [on trial] in the presence of high government authorities. As a result, you will be able to tell them [about me]. **10** My good message must be proclaimed {[You] must proclaim my good message} to [people in] all people-groups before [God finishes all that he has planned]. **11** And when people arrest you in order to prosecute you [because you believe in me], do not worry before that happens about what you will say. Instead, say what [God] puts into your mind at that time. Then it will not be [just] you who will be speaking. It will be the Holy Spirit [who will be speaking through you]. **12** [Other evil things will happen]: People [who do not believe in me] will (betray/help others seize) their brothers [and sisters] in order that [the government] can execute them. Parents [will betray] their children, and children will betray their parents so that [the government] will kill their parents. **13** [In general], you will be hated by most [HYP] people {most [HYP] people will hate you} because [you believe in] me. But all you who continue [to trust in me strongly] until your life is finished will be saved {[God] will save all you who continue [to trust in me strongly] until your life ends}. **14** [During that time] the disgusting [thing/person that the prophet Daniel described] will enter the Temple. It/He will defile [the Temple when he enters it and will cause people to abandon it. When you see it/him standing there] where it/he should not be, [you should run away quickly] (May everyone who is reading this pay attention to [this warning from Jesus]!) [At that time] those people who are in Judea [district] must flee to [higher] hills. **15** Those people who are outside their houses must not enter their houses in order to get anything [before they run away]. **16** Those who are [working] in a field must not return [to their houses] in order to get [additional] clothes [before they flee]. **17** But I feel very sorry for women who will be pregnant and women who will be nursing their babies in those days, [because it will be very difficult for them to run away] **18** In those days people will suffer very severely. People have never suffered like that since the time when God first created the world until now; and people will not [suffer that way] again. [So] pray that [this painful time] will not happen in (winter/the rainy season), [when it will be hard to travel]. **20** If the Lord [God] had not [decided that he would] shorten that time [when people suffer so much], everyone would die. But he has [decided to] shorten that time because [he is concerned about you] people whom he has chosen [DOU]. **21** [At that time people who will] falsely [say that they are] Messiahs and prophets will appear. Then they will perform many kinds (of miracles/of things that ordinary people cannot do) [DOU]. They will even try to deceive [you] people whom God has chosen, [but they will not] be able to do that. So at that time if someone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or [if someone says], 'Look, he is over there!' do not believe it! **23** Be alert! Remember that [I] have warned you about all this before [it happens.] **24** After the time when people suffer like that, the sun will become dark, the moon will not shine, **25** the stars will fall from the sky, and all things in the sky will be shaken {[God will cause] all things in the sky to shake}. **26** Then people will see [me], the

one who came from heaven, coming through the clouds powerfully and gloriously. 27 Then I will send out my angels in order that they gather together the people whom [God] has chosen from [everywhere, and that includes] all the most remote places on earth [IDM, DOU]. 28 Now I [want you to] learn something from this parable about [the way] fig trees [grow]. [In this area], when their buds become tender and their leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. 29 Similarly, when you see [what I have just described] happening, you yourselves will know that it is very near [the time for me to return] [MTY]. [It will be as though I am] already at the door [HEN]. 30 Keep this in mind: You have observed the things that I have done and said, but all of those events [that I have just told you about] will happen before all of you will die. 31 You can [be certain that] these things [that I have prophesied] will happen. [You can be more certain of that than] you can [be certain that] the earth and what is in the sky will stay in place. 32 But no one knows the exact time [when I will return]. The angels in heaven also do not know. Even [I do not know.] Only my Father knows. 33 So be ready, [like people who are waiting for an important man to come], because you do not know when that time will come [when all these events will happen]! 34 When a man who wants to travel [to a distant place] is [about to] leave his house, he tells his servants that they should manage the house. [He tells] each one what he should do. Then he tells the doorkeeper to be ready [for his return]. 35 [That man must always be] ready, [because he does not know whether] his master will return in the evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or at dawn. [Similarly], you also must [always] be ready, because you do not know [when I will return]. 36 [May it not happen that] when I come suddenly, I will find that you are not ready! 37 These words that I am saying to you [disciples] I am saying to everyone [who believes in me: Always] be ready!" [That is what Jesus warned his disciples].

14 It was only two days before the [people] ([celebrated/started to celebrate]) [for one week the] festival [which they called] Passover. During those days they also celebrated the festival of (Unleavened Bread/[eating] bread that had no yeast in it). The chief priests and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws were planning how they could seize Jesus secretly. [They wanted to accuse him in front of the Roman authorities] so that they would execute him. 2 But they were saying to one another, "We must not [do it] during the celebration, because, [if we do it then], the people will [be very angry with us and] riot!" 3 Jesus was at Bethany [town] in the house of Simon, whom [Jesus had healed from] leprosy. While they were eating, a woman came [to him]. [She was carrying] a stone jar that contained expensive [fragrant] perfume called nard. She opened the jar and then she poured the perfume on Jesus' head. 4 One of the people [who were present] became angry and said to the others, "([It is terrible that she] wasted that perfume!/[Why did she] waste that perfume?) [RHQ] 5 It could have been sold {[We] could have sold it} for (a huge amount of money/an amount of money for which a person works for a year), and then [the money] could have been given {[we] could have given [the money]} to poor people!" So he rebuked her. 6 But Jesus said, "Stop [scolding] her! She has done to me what I [consider to be] very appropriate/delightful. So (you should not bother her!/why do you bother her?) [RHQ] 7 You will always have poor people among you. So you can help them whenever you want to. But I will not [be here among] you much longer. [So it is good for her to show now that she appreciates me]. 8 [It is appropriate that] she has done what she was able to do. [It is as if she knew that I was going to die soon] and has anointed my body for their burying it. 9 I will tell you this: Wherever the good message [about me] is preached {people preach the good message} throughout the world, what she has done will be told {people will tell others what she has done [to me]}, and as a result people will remember her." 10 Then Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]) went to the chief priests in order to [talk to them about] helping them to seize Jesus. He did that [even though] he was one of the twelve [disciples] 11 When they heard [what he was willing to do for them], they were very happy. They promised that they would give him [a large amount of] money [for doing that. Judas agreed, so they gave him the money]. As a result, he [began] watching for an opportunity (to betray Jesus/to enable Jesus' enemies to seize him). 12 [Two days later], when they killed the lambs [for the] festival at the beginning of the week when [people ate] bread that had no yeast in it, Jesus' disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and prepare the meal for the Passover [celebration] in order that you can eat it [with us]?" 13 So he [chose] two of his disciples [to prepare everything]. He said to them, "Go into [Jerusalem] city. A man will meet you, who will be carrying a large jar full of water. Follow him. 14 When he enters [a house], say to the man who owns the house, '[Our] teacher wants us to prepare [the meal of] the Passover celebration so that he can eat it with us his disciples. (Please show us the room that he [arranged with you about]./Where is the room that he [arranged with you about]?) [RHQ]' 15 He will show you a large room that is on the upper floor [of the house]. It will be furnished and ready [for us to eat a meal in it]. Then prepare the meal there for us." 16 So the [two] disciples

left. They went into the city and found [everything] to be just like he had told them. They prepared the [meal for] the Passover [celebration, and then returned to Jesus and the other disciples]. **17** When it was evening, Jesus arrived [at that house] with the twelve [disciples]. **18** As they were all sitting there [and eating], Jesus said, "Listen carefully to this: One of you will enable my enemies to seize me. Specifically, it is one of you who [will do this in spite of the fact that he] is eating with me [right now]!" **19** The disciples became very sad and they said to him one by one, "Surely (it is not I!/I am not the one, am I?) [RHQ]" **20** Then he said to them, "It is one of [you] twelve [disciples], the one who is dipping [bread] into the [sauce in the] dish along with me. **21** It is certain that [I], the one who came from heaven, will [die], because that is what has been {what [the prophets] have} written about me. But there will be terrible [punishment] for the man by whom I will be betrayed {who will (betray me/help my enemies to seize me)}! In fact, it would be better for that man if he had never been born!" **22** While they were eating, he took [a flat loaf of] bread and thanked God for it. Then he broke it [into pieces] and gave it to them and said to them, "This [bread represents] [MET] my body. Take it [and eat it]." **23** Afterwards, he took a cup [that contained wine] and thanked [God for it]. Then he gave it to them, and then, as they all drank from it, **24** he said to them, "This [wine represents] [MET] my blood, which is about to be shed {which is about to flow from my body} [when my enemies kill me]. With this blood I [will sign] the agreement [that God has made to forgive the sins of] many people. **25** I want you to know this: I will not drink any more wine in this way until the time when I drink it with a new [meaning] when I begin to rule as a king." **26** After they sang a hymn, they went out toward Olive [Tree] Hill. **27** [While they were on their way], Jesus said to them, "It has been {[The prophets] have} written [in the Scriptures that God said about me], 'I will kill the shepherd and his sheep will scatter.' [Those words will come true. When they are about to capture me], all of you will leave me and run away. **28** But after I have been made {[God] has made me} alive again, I will go ahead of you to Galilee [district and meet you there]." **29** Then Peter said to him, "Perhaps all the [other disciples] will leave you, but not I! I will not [leave you]!" **30** Then Jesus said to him, "The truth is that this very night, before the rooster crows a second time, you yourself will deny three times [that you know] me!" **31** But Peter replied strongly, "Even if they kill me [as I defend] you, I will never deny [that I know] you!" And all [the other disciples] said the same thing. **32** [On the way], Jesus and the disciples came to the place that [people] call Gethsemane. Then he said to [some/eight of] his disciples, "Stay here while I pray!" **33** Then he took Peter, James, and John with him. He became extremely distressed, and he said to them, **34** "I [SYN] am very sorrowful. [It is as if] I were about to die. [You men] remain here and stay awake!" **35** He went a bit further and threw himself on the ground. Then he prayed that if it were possible, he would not [have to suffer] [MTY]. **36** He said, "O my Father, [because] you are able to do everything, rescue me so that I do not have to suffer [now] [MTY]! But do not [do] what I want. Instead, [do] what you want!" **37** Then he returned and found his [disciples] sleeping. He [woke them up and] said, "Simon! ([I am disappointed that] you fell asleep and that you were not able to stay awake for just a short time!/[Why is it that] you fell asleep and that you were not able to stay awake for just one hour?) [RHQ]" **38** [And he said to them], "You want [to do what I say], but you are not strong enough [MTY] [to actually do it]. So keep awake and pray in order that you can resist when [something like this] tempts you!" **39** Then he went away again and prayed again what he prayed before. **40** When he returned, he found that they were sleeping again because they were [so] sleepy that they could not keep their eyes open. [Because they were ashamed], they did not know what to say to him [when he awakened them]. **41** [Then he went and prayed again]. He returned a third time; [and he found them sleeping again]. He [woke] all of [them and] said to them, "([I am disappointed that you are] sleeping again!/[Why are you] sleeping again?) [RHQ] [You have slept] enough. The time [for me to suffer] is about to begin. Look! Someone is about to enable sinful men to seize me, the one who came from heaven. **42** [So] get up! Let's go [toward him] Look! Here comes the one who is enabling them to seize me!" **43** While he was still speaking, Judas [arrived]. [Even though he was] one of [Jesus'] twelve [disciples], he came [to enable Jesus' enemies to seize him]. A crowd who carried swords and clubs was with him. The [leaders of] the Jewish Council had sent them. **44** [Judas], who was (betraying Jesus/helping Jesus' enemies to seize him), had [previously] told this crowd, "The man whom I kiss is the one [whom you want. When I kiss him], seize him and lead him away [while you guard him] carefully." **45** So, when Judas arrived, he immediately went to Jesus and said, "My teacher!" Then he kissed Jesus [on his neck/cheek]. **46** Then [the crowd] seized Jesus. **47** But one of the [disciples] who was standing nearby drew his short sword. He struck the servant of the high priest with it [to kill him, but he only] cut off his ear. **48** Jesus said to them, "([It is ridiculous that] you come [here to seize] me with swords and clubs, as if I were a bandit!/Have you come [here to seize] me with swords and clubs, as if I were a bandit [RHQ]?) Day after day I was with you in the Temple [courtyard] teaching [the people] Why did

you not seize me then? [But this is happening] in order that [what the prophets have written in] the Scriptures [about me] may be fulfilled {may happen}." **50** All [the disciples at once] left him and ran away. **51** At that time, (a young man/I) was following Jesus. He/[I was] wearing only a linen cloth around his/my body. The crowd seized him/me. **52** But, [as he/I pulled away from them], he/I left behind the linen cloth [in their hands], and then he/I ran away naked. **53** The men [who had seized] Jesus led him away to [the house where] the supreme priest [lived]. All of the Jewish Council were gathering [there]. **54** Peter followed Jesus at a distance. He went into the courtyard [of the house] where the supreme priest [lived], and sat there with the men who guarded [the house of the supreme priest]. He was warming himself beside a fire. **55** The chief priests and all the rest of the Jewish council [had already] tried to find people who would tell lies about Jesus [in order that they could convince the Roman authorities] to execute him. But they did not succeed, **56** because, although many people spoke lies about him, they contradicted each other. **57** [Finally], some stood up and accused him falsely by saying, **58** "We heard him when he said, 'I will destroy this Temple that was built by men, and then within three days I will build another temple (without help from anyone else/that human hands will not build).'" **59** But, what [some of] these men said also did not agree with [what others of them said]. **60** Then the supreme priest [himself] stood up in front of them and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to reply? What [do you say about] all the things that they are saying in order to accuse you?" **61** But Jesus was silent and did not reply [DOU]. Then the supreme priest [tried again]. He asked him, "Are you the Messiah? [Do you say that you are] (the Son of God/the man who is also God)?" **62** Jesus said, "I am. Furthermore, you will see me, the one who came from heaven, [ruling] beside God, who is completely powerful. [You will also see me] coming down through the clouds in the sky!" **63** [In response to Jesus' words], the supreme priest tore his outer garment. [That was their custom to show that he was shocked that Jesus had said that he was equal to God]. Then he said, "We certainly do not [RHQ] need any [more] people who will testify [against this man], **64** [because] you have heard what he said against God! [He claimed to be equal with God] Therefore, what have you decided?" They all said that Jesus was guilty and deserved (to be executed/that they should kill him). **65** Then some of them began spitting on Jesus. They put a blindfold on him, and then they began striking him and saying to him, "[If you are] a prophet, tell us [who hit you]!" And those who were guarding Jesus struck him with their hands. **66** While Peter was outside in the courtyard [of the supreme priest's house], one of the girls who worked for the supreme priest came [near him]. **67** When she saw Peter warming himself [beside the fire], she looked at him [closely]. Then she said, "You also were with Jesus, that man from Nazareth [town]!" **68** But he denied it by saying, "I do not know or understand [DOU] what you are talking about!" Then he went away [from there] to the gate [of the courtyard]. **69** [The] servant girl saw him there and said to the people who were standing nearby, "This man is one of [those who have been with that man they arrested]." **70** But he denied it again. After a little while, one of those who were standing there said to Peter again, "[The way you speak shows that] you also are from Galilee [district]. So it is certain that you are one of those [who accompanied Jesus!]" **71** But he began to exclaim, "I do not know the man that you are talking about! Because God knows that I am speaking truthfully, may he punish me [if I am lying]!" **72** Immediately the rooster crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him [before], "Before the rooster crows a second time, you will deny three times [that you know me." When he realized that he had denied it three times], he started crying.

15 Very early in the morning the chief priests met together with [the rest of] the Jewish council, [in order to decide how to accuse Jesus before the Roman governor. Their guards] tied Jesus' hands [again]. They took him to [the house of] Pilate, [the governor, and they started to accuse him, saying] "[Jesus is claiming that he is a king!]!" **2** Pilate asked Jesus, "Do you [claim to be] the king of the Jews?" Jesus answered him, "You yourself have said so." **3** Then the chief priests claimed that Jesus had done many bad things. **4** So Pilate asked him again, "Don't you have anything to say? Listen to how many bad things they are saying that you [have done]!" **5** But [even though Jesus was not guilty], he did not say anything more. The result was that Pilate was very much surprised. **6** It was the governor's custom [each year] during the [Passover] celebration to release [one person who was in prison. He customarily released] whichever prisoner the people requested. **7** [At that time] there was a man called Barabbas who had been {whom [the soldiers had]} [put in prison with some other men]. Those men had murdered [some soldiers] when they rebelled [against the Roman government]. **8** A crowd approached [Pilate] and asked him [to release someone], just like he customarily did for them [during the Passover celebration]. **9** Pilate answered them, "Would you like me to release for you the [man whom you] Jewish [people say is your] king?" **10** [He asked this] because he realized what the chief priests were wanting to do. They were accusing Jesus because they were jealous of him [because many people were becoming

his disciples]. 11 But the chief priests urged the crowd [to request] that Pilate release Barabbas for them instead [of Jesus]. 12 Pilate said to them again, "[If I release Barabbas], what do you want me to do with the man whom [some of] you Jews say is [your] king?" 13 Then they shouted again, "[Command that your soldiers] crucify him!" 14 Then Pilate said to them, "Why? What crime has he committed?" But they shouted even louder, "[Command your soldiers to] crucify him!" 15 So, because Pilate wanted to please the crowd, he released Barabbas for them. Then, after [his soldiers] had whipped Jesus with leather straps into which they had fastened metal pieces, [Pilate told the soldiers to take him away] in order that he would be crucified {they would crucify him}. 16 The soldiers took Jesus into the [courtyard of the] palace [where Pilate lived]. That place was the government headquarters. Then they summoned the whole (cohort/group of soldiers) [who were on duty there]. 17 [After the soldiers gathered together], they put a purple robe on Jesus. Then they placed on his head a crown that they made from [branches of] thornbushes. [They did those things in order to ridicule him by pretending that he was a king]. 18 Then they greeted him [like they would greet a king, in order to ridicule him], saying, "Hooray for the King [who rules] the Jews!" 19 They repeatedly struck his head with a reed and spat on him. By kneeling down, they [pretended to honor] him. 20 When they had finished ridiculing him, they pulled off the purple robe. They put his own clothes on him, and then they led him outside [of the city] in order to nail him to a cross. 21 [After Jesus carried his cross a short distance], a man named Simon from Cyrene [city came along]. He was the father of Alexander and Rufus. He was passing by while he was returning [home] from outside [the city. The soldiers] compelled Simon to carry the cross [for Jesus]. 22 They brought them both to a place that they [call] Golgotha. That name means, 'a place [like] a skull'. 23 Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was {that they} mixed with [medicine called] myrrh. [They wanted him to drink it so that he would not feel so much pain when they crucified him]. But he did not drink it. 24 [Some] of the [soldiers took his clothes]. Then they nailed him to a cross. Afterwards, they divided his clothes among themselves by gambling with [something like] dice. They did this [in order to determine] which [piece of clothing] each one would get. 25 It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. 26 They [attached to the cross above Jesus' head] a sign on which it had been written {someone had written} the reason why [they were nailing him to the cross]. [But all] that it said was, "The King of the Jews." 27 They also nailed to crosses two men who were bandits. They nailed one to a cross at the right side [of Jesus] and one to a cross at the left side [of Jesus]. 29 The people who were passing by insulted him by shaking their heads as [if here were an evil man]. They said, "Aha! You said that you would destroy the Temple and then you would build it again within three days. 30 [If you could do that, then] rescue yourself by coming down from the cross!" 31 The chief priests, along with the men who taught the [Jewish] laws, also [wanted to] make fun of Jesus. So they said to each other, "He [claims to have] saved others [from their sicknesses] [IRO] but he cannot save himself! 32 He said, 'I am the Messiah, I am the King who [rules the people of] Israel.' [If his words are true], he should come down now from the cross! Then we will believe [him]!" The [two] men who were crucified beside him also insulted him. 33 At noon the whole land became dark, [and it stayed dark] until three o'clock in the afternoon. 34 At three o'clock Jesus shouted loudly, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" That means, "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" 35 When some of the people who were standing there heard [the word 'Eloi', misunderstanding it], they said, "Listen! He is calling for [the prophet] Elijah!" 36 One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine. He placed it on [the tip of] a reed, and then he [held it] up for [Jesus] to suck out [the wine that was in] it. [While he was doing that, someone] said, "Wait! Let's see whether Elijah will come to take him down [from the cross]!" 37 And then, after Jesus shouted loudly, he stopped breathing [and died]. 38 [At that moment] the [heavy thick] curtain that closed off [the most holy place in] the Temple split into two pieces from top to bottom. [That showed that ordinary people could now go into the presence of God]. 39 The officer who supervised the soldiers [who nailed Jesus to the cross] was standing in front of Jesus. When he saw how Jesus died, he exclaimed, "Truly, this man was the man who was also God!" 40 There were also some women there, watching these events from a distance. They had accompanied Jesus when he was in Galilee [district], and they had provided what he needed. They had come with him to Jerusalem. Among those women was Mary from Magdala [town]. There was [another] Mary, who was the mother of the younger James and of Joses. There was also Salome. 42 When evening was near, [a man named] Joseph from Arimathea [town came there]. He was a member of the [Jewish] council, one whom everyone respected. He was also one of those who had been waiting expectantly for the [time when] God [would send] his king to begin to rule. [He knew that, according to Jewish law, people's bodies had to be buried] {[someone had to bury people's bodies]} [on the day they died. He also realized that] it was the day when [people] prepared [things for] ([the Jewish

day of rest/the Sabbath]), [and that the Sabbath would start when the sun set]. So he became courageous and went to Pilate and asked Pilate [to permit him to take] the body of Jesus [down from the cross and bury it immediately]. **44** Pilate was surprised [when he heard that] Jesus was already dead. So he summoned the officer who was in charge of the soldiers [who crucified Jesus], and he asked him if [Jesus] had already died. **45** When the officer told [Pilate that Jesus was dead], Pilate allowed Joseph [to take away] the body. **46** After Joseph bought a linen cloth, he [and others] took [Jesus' body down from the cross]. They wrapped it in the linen cloth and laid it in a tomb that [previously] had been dug out of the rock [cliff]. Then they rolled a [huge flat] stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. **47** Mary [from] Magdala and Mary the mother of Joses were watching where Jesus' [body] was placed {where they placed Jesus' [body]}.

16 [On Saturday evening] when (the Sabbath/the Jewish day of rest) had ended, Mary [from] Magdala, Mary the mother of the [younger] James, and Salome bought fragrant ointment. [The Jews had a custom of] anointing bodies [before they buried them, and the women wanted to follow this custom]. **2** So very early on Sunday, [just after] the sun rose, they [took the fragrant ointment] and started toward the tomb. **3** [While they were going there], they were saying to each other, "Who will roll away for us the stone [that blocks] the entrance of the tomb?" **4** [After they arrived], they looked up and saw that the stone had [already] been rolled away {that someone had [already] rolled away the stone}. [They were surprised because it] would have been difficult to move such a huge stone. **5** They entered the tomb and saw [an angel who looked like] a young man. He was sitting at the right side [of the cave]. He was wearing a [shining] white robe. As a result, they were astonished. **6** The young man said to them, "Do not be astonished! I [know that] you are looking for Jesus, the man from Nazareth, who was nailed to a cross {whom they nailed to a cross}. But he has become alive again! He is not here! Look! [Here is] the place where they placed his [body]. **7** But, instead [of remaining here], go and tell his disciples. Particularly [be sure] that you tell Peter. Tell them, '[Jesus] is going ahead of you to Galilee [district], and you will see him there, just like he told you [previously']!" **8** The women went outside and ran from the tomb. They were trembling [because they were afraid], and they were astonished. But they did not say anything to anyone [about this] while they were going, because they were afraid. **9 (note: The most reliable and earliest manuscripts do not include Mark 16:9-20.)** [When Jesus became alive [again] early on Sunday morning, he appeared first to Mary [from] Magdala [town]. She was the woman from whom he had [previously] expelled seven evil spirits. **10** She went to those who had been with [Jesus], while they were mourning and crying. She told them [what she had seen]. **11** But when she told them that Jesus was alive again and that she had seen him, they refused to believe it. **12** Later [that day], Jesus appeared to two of [his disciples] while they were walking [from Jerusalem to their homes in] the [surrounding] area. [But they did not recognize him quickly because] he looked very different. **13** [After they recognized him], those two went back [to Jerusalem. They told his other followers what had happened], but they did not believe it. **14** Later he appeared to the eleven [apostles] while they were eating. He rebuked them because they had stubbornly refused to believe [the reports of] those who saw him after he had become alive again. **15** [Later] he said to them, "Go into the whole world and preach the good message to everyone! **16** Everyone who believes [your message] and who is baptized will be saved {[God] will save}. But everyone who does not believe it will be condemned {[God] will condemn}. **17** Those who believe [my good message] will perform miracles. Specifically, by my power they will expel evil spirits. They will speak in languages that they have not learned. **18** If they pick up snakes [accidentally] or if they drink any poisonous [liquid accidentally], they will not be hurt. [Whenever] they put their hands on sick [people in order that God will heal them], those sick people will become well." **19** After the Lord Jesus had said this to [the disciples, he was taken] {[God] took him} up into heaven. Then he sat down on his throne beside God [to rule with him]. **20** [As for the disciples], they went out [from Jerusalem, and then they preached everywhere. Wherever they went], the Lord enabled them to perform miracles. [By doing that], he showed people that God's message is true.

Luke

1 My noble [friend] Theophilus, many people saw the things that [Jesus] did while he was with us, from the time when he started [MTY] [his ministry]. They served God [by teaching people] the message [about the Lord Jesus]. Many of those who heard what they taught wrote down for us accounts of the things that [Jesus did from the time when] he began [his ministry]. **3** I myself have studied these accounts carefully. So I decided that it would be good for me also to write for you [(sg)] an accurate account of these matters. **4** I want you to know the truth about what you have been taught {what others have taught you}. **5** When King Herod [the Great ruled] Judea [district], there was a [Jewish] priest named Zechariah. He belonged to the [group of priests called] the Abijah group. He and his wife Elizabeth were both descended from the [first priest of Israel], Aaron. **6** [God considered that] both of them were righteous, because they constantly completely obeyed everything that God had commanded. **7** But they had no children, because Elizabeth had been unable to bear children. Furthermore, she and her husband were very old. **8** One day [Zechariah's] group was doing their work [in the Temple in Jerusalem], and he was serving as a priest in God's presence. **9** Following their custom, [the other priests] chose him by lot to enter the Lord's temple and burn incense. **10** While he was burning the incense, many people were outside [in the courtyard], praying. **11** Then an angel whom God had [sent] appeared to him. The angel was standing at the right side of the place [where the priests burned] incense. **12** When Zechariah saw the angel, he was startled and became very afraid. **13** But the angel said to him, "Zechariah, do not be afraid! When you [(sg)] prayed [asking God for a son] (OR, [that God would send the Messiah]), God heard what you prayed. [So] your wife Elizabeth shall bear a son. You must name him John. **14** He will cause you to be very happy, and many other people will also be happy because he is born. **15** God will consider him to be very important. He must never drink wine or any other alcoholic drink, [in order that he will be completely dedicated to God]. He will be controlled by the Holy Spirit {The Holy Spirit will control him} from before he is born. **16** He will [persuade] many people in Israel to turn away [from their sins and please] the Lord their God. **17** As [God's] Spirit enables him [to preach] powerfully as [the prophet] Elijah did, he will precede [the Messiah]. He will cause parents [SYN] to act [peacefully] toward their children [again]. He will cause [many] people who do not obey [God to hear and obey] the wise things that righteous people [tell them]. He will do this in order to help [many] people to be ready when the Lord [comes]." **18** Then Zechariah said to the angel, "I am very old, and my wife is also so old [that she cannot bear a child. So] (I cannot [believe] that what you [(sg)] said [will happen]!/how can I [believe] that what you [(sg)] said [will happen]?) [RHQ]" **19** Then the angel said to him, "I am [God's chief angel], Gabriel! [I do what God tells me, because] I constantly am in God's presence! I was sent {[He] sent me} to tell you [(sg)] something good [that is going to happen to you]. **20** What I have told you will certainly happen at the time [God decides], but you did not believe what I told you. So now [God will make] you will be unable to talk until the day [your son is born]"! **21** While [Zechariah and the angel] were talking, the people [in the courtyard] were waiting for Zechariah [to come out]. They wondered, "Why is he staying in the Temple for such a long time?" **22** When Zechariah came out, he was not able to speak to the people. Because he could not talk, he made motions with his hands [to try to convey what had happened]. Then they realized that he had seen (a vision [from God]/something that [God] showed him) while he was in the Temple. **23** When Zechariah's time to work [as a priest in the Temple] was finished, he [left Jerusalem and] returned to his home. **24** Some time later his wife Elizabeth became pregnant [EUP]. She did not leave their house for five months, [because she knew that people would laugh at her if she told them that she was pregnant]. **25** But she thought, "God has enabled me to become pregnant. He has pitied me and I will no longer be ashamed [because I have no children]!" **26** When Elizabeth had been [pregnant] [EUP] [for almost] six months, the angel Gabriel was sent by God {God sent the angel Gabriel} [again]. **27** [This time] he went to Nazareth [town] in Galilee [district], to a virgin whose name was Mary. It had been {[Her parents] had} promised that she would marry a man named Joseph, who was descended from [King] David. **28** The angel greeted her and said, "(The Lord/God) is with you [(sg)] and you will be greatly blessed {[has decided to] greatly bless you}!" **29** But Mary was very confused [when she heard] that. She wondered what [the angel meant] by these words. **30** Then the angel said to her, "Mary, God is very pleased with you [(sg)], so do not be afraid. **31** You will become pregnant and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. **32** He will become great. He will be called {[People will] call him} (the Son of God/the man who is also God). God, the Lord, will make him a king [MTY] as his ancestor [King] David was. **33** He will be the King of [the] Jews, the descendants [MTY] of [your ancestor] Jacob, forever. He will rule as king forever!" **(aiōn g165)** **34** Then Mary said to the angel, "I am a virgin, so how can I [have a baby]?" **35** The angel replied, "The

Holy Spirit will come to you; the power of God [MTY/EUP] will overshadow you [and enable you to become pregnant]. So the child [you will] bear will be completely set apart {give himself completely} to obey God, and he will be called {[people] will say that he is} (the Son of God/the man who is also God). **36** [I also need to tell you something else]. Your cousin Elizabeth is very old, and it was thought {[people] said} that she could not bear any children. But she has been [pregnant] [EUP] [for almost] six months, and will bear a son! **37** [You should not be surprised at that], because God can do everything!" **38** Then Mary said, "All right, I want to serve (the Lord/God), so may what you [(sg)] have said about me come true!" Then the angel left her. **39** Very soon after that, Mary got ready and went quickly to a town in the highlands of Judea [district] where Zechariah lived. **40** She entered his house and greeted [his wife] Elizabeth. **41** As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary greet her, the baby moved inside [Elizabeth's] womb. The Holy Spirit took complete control of Elizabeth, **42** and she said loudly [to Mary], "[God] has blessed you [more than] he has blessed [any other] woman, and [he has] blessed the child you will bear! **43** (I am not worthy that [God would allow you] to visit me!/Why is [God allowing you] to visit me?) [RHQ] You will be the mother of my Lord! **44** [I realize this because] as soon as I heard you greet me, the baby inside my womb moved because he was so happy [that you had come]. **45** [God] is pleased with you [because] you believed that what (the Lord/God) told you would come true." **46** Then Mary [praised God by] saying/singing: ", how I [SYN] praise (the Lord/God)! **47** I am happy because God is the one who saves me. **48** I was only his lowly servant girl, but he did not forget me. So from now on, everyone will say that God was pleased with me, **49** because they will hear about the things that God [MTY], the mighty one, has done for me. He [MTY] is awesome! **50** He acts mercifully toward all those who respect him. **51** He shows people that he [MTY] is very powerful. He scatters those who think proudly. **52** He does not let mighty kings rule [MTY] any more, but he honors people who are oppressed (OR, humble). **53** He gives good things to eat to those who are hungry, but he sends away the rich people without giving them anything. **54** And now he has remembered what he promised. So he has helped me and all the other people of [MTY] Israel who serve him. **55** He promised to Abraham and all our other ancestors who descended from him that he would act mercifully toward them forever." **(aiōn g165)** **56** Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months. Then she returned to her home. **57** When it was time for Elizabeth to give birth to her child, she bore a son. **58** Her neighbors and relatives heard how (the Lord/God) had greatly blessed her [by enabling her to bear a child], so they were happy along with [Elizabeth]. **59** Seven days later they gathered together for the [ceremony for] circumcising the baby [to show that he belonged to God]. They wanted to give the baby the same name as his father, Zechariah. **60** But his mother said, "No, [his name will not be Zechariah]. His name will be John!" **61** [So] they said to her, "[John] is not the name of any of your [(dl)] relatives, [so you(dl) should not give him that name]!" **62** Then they made motions with their hands to Zechariah, [for him] to indicate what name [he] wanted to be given {to give} to his son. **63** [So] he signaled that they [should give him] a tablet [to write on. When they gave him one], he wrote [on it], "His name is John." All those [who were there] were surprised! **64** Immediately Zechariah was able to speak again [MTY], and he praised God. **65** All their neighbors were amazed/awestruck! They told other people who lived all over the highlands of Judea about what had happened. **66** Everyone who heard about it kept thinking about it. They were saying, "We wonder what will this child do [for God when] he [grows up] [RHQ]!" They wondered that because [from what had happened they were sure that] God would be helping that child [SYN] [in a powerful way]. **67** [After] Zechariah's [son was born], Zechariah was completely directed by the Holy Spirit {the Holy Spirit completely directed Zechariah} as he spoke these words that came from God: **68** "Praise the Lord, the God whom we(inc) people of Israel worship, because he has come to set us, his people, free from our enemies. **69** He is sending us someone who will powerfully [MTY] save us, someone who is descended from [MTY] King David, who served God well. **70** Long ago God caused his prophets to say that he would do that. **(aiōn g165)** **71** He will rescue us from our enemies, and he will save us from the power of all those who hate us. **72** He will do this because he has not forgotten what he promised our ancestors; he made an agreement that he would act mercifully to us, their descendants. **73** That is what he strongly promised our ancestor Abraham that he would do. **74** God told him that we would be rescued {he would rescue us} from the power of our enemies, that he would enable us to serve him without being afraid, **75** that he would cause us to be completely dedicated to him, and enable us to live righteously all of our lives." **76** [Then Zechariah said this to] his little son: "My child, you will be called {people will say that you are} a prophet whom God [MTY/EUP] has sent; you will begin your work before (the Lord/Messiah) comes; you will prepare people so that they will be ready for him. (OR, you will begin your work before the Messiah comes). **77** You will tell God's people how he will forgive them and save them from being punished

for their sins. 78 Our God will do that because he is very kind to us. Just like a new day begins when the sun rises [MET], God will do that new thing for us when the Messiah comes to us from heaven. 79 People who do not know God [MET] are like those who sit in the darkness. They are afraid [MTY] that they will soon die. But when the Messiah tells us God's message, it will be like causing such people to see a bright light. He will guide us [SYN] so that we will be living peacefully." 80 [Later], Zechariah's son grew up and became spiritually strong. Then he lived in a desolate region until he began to preach to the Israeli people.

2 About that time the Emperor Augustus commanded that ([his officials must] write down the names/[a census be taken]) of all the people who lived in countries [controlled] by the Roman [government] {that the Roman [government controlled]}, [so that the government could collect taxes from them]. 2 That was the first time that they (wrote down the names/took a census) in Syria [province, which included Judea district]. They did this while Quirinius was the governor of the province. 3 Every person had to go to the town where his [most famous ancestor] had lived, so that [the officials] could write down their names. 4 So, because Joseph was a descendant of [King] David, he went up from Nazareth, the town in Galilee [district where he lived], to the town of Bethlehem in Judea [district]. That was the town where [King] David [grew up]. 5 Joseph went with Mary, who [was considered] {whom [people considered]} [to be] his wife, who was now pregnant. They went so that they could put his name and Mary's name [in the record book]. 6 When they arrived [in Bethlehem], there was no place for them to stay in the house where travelers stay. [So they stayed in a cattle shed]. When the time for Mary to give birth arrived, she gave birth to her first son there. She wrapped him in strips of cloth and placed him in a trough where [people] put food for the animals. 8 That night, there were [some] shepherds who were taking care of their sheep [as usual] in the fields near [Bethlehem]. 9 An angel from God appeared to them. A great light (from the Lord/from God) shone on them and around them. [So] they became very afraid. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid! I have come to tell you good news, which will [make you] very happy! This message is for everyone [to hear]. 11 [The message is that] today a baby has been born in [Bethlehem, the town where King] David grew up. That baby will [eventually] save you [from the guilt of your sins]! He is the Messiah, [your] Lord! 12 I will tell you how [you will recognize him] (OR, how you will know [that what I say is true]): [In Bethlehem] you will find a baby who has been wrapped {[whose mother] has wrapped him} in strips of cloth and placed in a trough where [people] put food for the animals." 13 Suddenly a large group of angels from heaven appeared and joined the other angel. They all praised God, singing/saying, 14 "May [all the angels] in the highest heaven praise God! And on the earth may the people to whom God has shown his favor have peace [with him]!" 15 After the angels left them [and returned] to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem to see this [wonderful] thing that has happened, which (the Lord/God) has told us about!" 16 So they went quickly. They found the [place where] Mary and Joseph [were staying], and [they saw] the baby lying in the trough where [people] put food for the animals. 17 Then they told [Mary and Joseph and others] what had been told them {what [the angel] had told them} about this child. 18 Everyone who heard what was said by the shepherds {what the shepherds said} to them was amazed. 19 But Mary [did not talk to others about what the angels said]; she just kept thinking very much about it. 20 The shepherds returned [to their sheep]. They kept praising God very much for all the things that they had heard and seen, [because] everything [happened] exactly like [the angels] told them. 21 Seven days later, when [the priests] circumcised the baby, [his parents] named him Jesus. That was the name that [they were told by] the angel {the angel [told them]} [to] give him before Mary became pregnant. 22 It had been written by Moses {Moses had written} [long ago] in a law that God gave him, that when a woman gave birth to her first son, the parents had to take him [to the Temple] in Jerusalem in order that they might dedicate him (to the Lord/to God). So when the time came for them to do those rituals so that [God would consider] them pure again, Mary and Joseph took Jesus there. 24 God had commanded in his laws that if the first child [of a couple] was a boy, his parents should offer as a sacrifice to God two turtledoves or two young pigeons. [So Joseph and Mary gave the priest two birds so he could offer them]. 25 At that time there was an [old] man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. He habitually did what was pleasing to God and he obeyed God's laws. The Holy Spirit was [directing] him as he was waiting for [God] [MTY] [to] encourage the Israeli [people by sending the Messiah]. 26 It was [previously] revealed by the Holy Spirit {The Holy Spirit [previously] revealed} to him that he would see God's [promised] Messiah before he died. 27 When Joseph and Mary brought their baby Jesus [to the Temple] in order to perform the rituals that [God had commanded] in his laws, the Spirit led Simeon to enter the Temple [courtyard, and revealed to him that Jesus was the Messiah]. 28 So he took Jesus up in his arms and praised God, saying, 29 Lord, you promised me that I would see the one [MTY] who would enable you to save people of all

people-groups from the guilt of their sins. He will be [MET] like a light that will reveal your truth to non-Jews, and he will cause people to think highly of your people, the Israeli people. Since I [SYN] have now seen this one that you promised to send, now let me die peacefully. **33** His parents marveled about what [Simeon] said about [Jesus]. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary, **34** "Note what I say: [God] has determined that because of this child, many Israeli people will [turn away from God], and many others will turn to God [MET]. Although he will be like a sign [MET] [to warn people], [many] people will oppose him. **35** As a result, the [evil] thoughts of many people will be made evident {he will reveal the [evil] thoughts of many people}. [Furthermore, the cruel things that they will do to him] [MET] [will be like] a sword that will pierce your (soul/inner being)." **36** There was also [in the Temple courtyard] a very old woman named Anna. She was a prophetess. Her father Phanuel was a member of the tribe of Asher. After she had been married seven years, her husband died. **37** After that, she lived until she was 84 years old, and she was still a widow. She stayed in the Temple [area] all the time, night and day, worshipping God. She often (abstained from food/fasted) as she prayed. **38** [While Joseph and Mary and the baby were] still [in the Temple, Anna came to them. She thanked God for the baby]. Then she spoke about Jesus to many people who were expecting [God to send the Messiah] [MTY] to set [the people of] [MTY] Jerusalem free [from their enemies]. **39** After Joseph and Mary had finished performing the rituals that (the Lord/God) required [the parents of a first son] to perform, they returned to their own town, Nazareth, in Galilee [district]. **40** As Jesus grew up, he became strong and very wise, and God was very pleased with him. **41** Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem to [celebrate] the Passover festival. **42** So when Jesus was twelve years old, they went up [to Jerusalem] as they always did. **43** When the celebration ended, his parents started to return home, but Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. [His parents] did not realize that [Jesus stayed there]. **44** They thought that he was with the other people who were traveling with them. They walked all day. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. **45** They did not find him, so they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. **46** Two days later, they found him. He was in the Temple [courtyard], sitting with the [Jewish] religious teachers. He was listening to what they said, and he was asking them questions. **47** Everyone who heard what he [said] was amazed at how much he understood and [how well] he answered [the questions that the teachers asked]. **48** When his parents saw him, they were very surprised. His mother said to him, "My son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been very worried as we [(exc)] have been searching for you!" **49** He said to them, [speaking about the Temple being God his Father's house], "(I am surprised that you [(dl)] did [not know] where to find me!/Why did you [not know] where to find me?) [RHQ] (You [(dl)] should have known that it was necessary for me to be in my Father's house!/Did you not know that it was necessary for me to be in my Father's house?) [RHQ]" **50** But they did not understand [the meaning of] what he said to them. **51** Then he returned with them down to Nazareth. He always obeyed them. But his mother kept thinking about all those things. **52** [As the years passed], Jesus continued to become wiser and he grew taller. God and people continued to approve of him more and more.

3 When the Emperor Tiberius had been ruling [the Roman Empire] for 15 years, and while Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea [district], and Herod [Antipas] was ruling Galilee [district], and his brother Philip was ruling Iturea and Trachonitis [districts], and Lysanius was ruling Abilene [district], **2** and while Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests [in Jerusalem], God gave messages to Zechariah's son John while he was living in the desolate region. **3** [So] John went all over the area close to the Jordan [River]. He kept telling people, "If you want [God] to forgive you for your sins, you must (repent/turn away from your sinful behavior) [before you ask me] to baptize [you]!" **4** John was the one who [fulfilled] these words that had [been written] by the prophet Isaiah {that the prophet Isaiah had written} on a scroll [long ago]: In a desolate area, someone [SYN] will be heard shouting [to the people who pass by], "Prepare yourselves [to receive] the Lord when he comes! [Make yourselves ready so that you will be prepared when he comes], [just like people] straighten out the road [MET] [for an important official] [MET, DOU]! **5** [Just like people] level off all the places where the land rises and [just like they] fill all the ravines, and [just like people] make the road straight wherever it is crooked, and [just like people] make smooth the bumps in the road, [similarly you need to remove all the obstacles which prevent God from blessing you]! **6** Then people [SYN] everywhere will understand how God can save [MTY] [people]." **7** Although large groups of people came to John to be baptized {in order that he would baptize them}, [he knew that many of them were not sincere]. So he kept saying to them, "You [people are evil] [MET] [like] poisonous snakes! [I] warn you that [God] will some day punish [MTY] [everyone] who sins. And (do not think that you can escape [from his punishing] [MTY] [you if you do not turn from your sinful behavior!/did someone tell you] that you can escape [from his punishing] [MTY] [you if you do not turn from your

sinful behavior]?) [RHQ] (OR, Who told you that you could escape [God's punishment?]) **8** Do what is appropriate for people who have truly turned from their sinful behavior! [God promised to give Abraham many] descendants. In order to fulfill that promise, God does not need you! I tell you that he can change these stones to make them descendants of Abraham! So do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We [(exc)] are descendants of Abraham, [so God will not punish us, even though we have] sinned!' **9** [God is ready to punish you if you do not turn away from your sinful behavior, just like a man] [MET] lays his axe at the roots [of a fruit] tree [to chop it down and throw it into the fire if it does not produce good fruit] [MET]." **10** [Then] various ones in the crowd asked John, "What shall we [(exc)] do [to escape God punishing us] (OR), [to show that we have repented]?" **11** He answered them, "If any of you has two shirts, you should give one of them to someone who has no shirt. If any of you has [plenty of] food, you should give some to those who have no food." **12** [Some] tax collectors came [and asked] to be baptized ([asked him] to baptize them}. They asked him, "Teacher, what shall we [(exc)] do [to please God]?" **13** He said to them, "Do not take from the people any more money than [the Roman government] tells you to take!" **14** Some soldiers asked him, "What about us? What should we [(exc)] do [to please God]?" He said to them, "Do not [say to anyone], '[If you(sg) do not give me] some money, I will hurt you,' and do not take [people to court and] falsely accuse them of doing something wrong! And be content with your wages." **15** People were expecting [that the Messiah would come soon]. Because of that, many of them wondered about John. [Some of them asked him] if he was the Messiah. **16** John replied to them all, "No, [I am not]. I used [only] water when I baptized you. But [the Messiah] will soon come! He is far greater than I am. [He is so great that] I am not worthy to [be like his slave and] untie his sandals [MET] [like] a slave would do! He will put [his] Holy Spirit within [MTY] you [to truly change your lives], and [he will judge others of you and punish you in] the fire [MET] [in hell]. **(questioned)** **17** He [is like a man] [MET] [who wants to] clear away the grain on the ground where it has been threshed {they have threshed it}. That man [uses] a huge fork [to throw the grain into the air] to separate the wheat from the chaff [MET], and then he cleans up the threshing area. [Similarly, God] will [separate righteous people from the evil people, like a man who] gathers the wheat into his storage area, and then he will burn [those who are like] chaff with a fire (that will never be put out/that will burn forever)." **18** John kept telling people many things to urge them [to turn to God], as he told them the good message [from God]. **19** He also rebuked [the ruler of the district], Herod [Antipas. He rebuked him] for [marrying] Herodias, his brother's wife, [while his brother was still alive], and for doing many other evil things. **20** But Herod [had his soldiers] put John in prison. That was another evil thing he did. **21** [But before John was put in prison], when many people were being baptized {when he was baptizing many people}, after Jesus was baptized {he baptized Jesus} and Jesus was praying, the sky opened. **22** Then the Holy Spirit, resembling a dove, descended upon [Jesus]. And [God] [SYN/EUP] spoke to Jesus from heaven, saying, "You [(sg)] are my Son, whom I love dearly. I am very pleased with you!" **23** When Jesus began [his work for God], he was about 30 years old. It was {[People]} thought that he was [the son of] Joseph. [Joseph was the son] of Heli. **24** [Heli was the son] of Matthat. [Matthat was the son] of Levi. [Levi was the son] of Melchi. [Melchi was the son] of Jannai. [Jannai was the son] of Joseph. **25** [Joseph was the son] of Mattathias. [Mattathias was the son] of Amos. [Amos was the son] of Nahum. [Nahum was the son] of Esli. [Esli was the son] of Naggai. **26** [Naggai was the son] of Maath. [Maath was the son] of Mattathias. [Mattathias was the son] of Semein. [Semein was the son] of Josech. [Josech was the son] of Joda. **27** [Joda was the son] of Joanan. [Joanan was the son] of Rhesa. [Rhesa was the son] of Zerubbabel. [Zerubbabel was the son] of Shealtiel. [Shealtiel was the son] of Neri. **28** [Neri was the son] of Melchi. [Melchi was the son] of Addi. [Addi was the son] of Cosam. [Cosam was the son] of Elmadam. [Elmadam was the son] of Er. **29** [Er was the son] of Joshua. [Joshua was the son] of Eliezer. [Eliezer was the son] of Jorim. [Jorim was the son] of Matthat. [Matthat was the son] of Levi. **30** [Levi was the son] of Simeon. [Simeon was the son] of Judah. [Judah was the son] of Joseph. [Joseph was the son] of Jonam. [Jonam was the son] of Eliakim. **31** [Eliakim was the son] of Melea. [Melea was the son] of Menna. [Menna was the son] of Mattatha. [Mattatha was the son] of Nathan. [Nathan was the son] of David. **32** [David was the son] of Jesse. [Jesse was the son] of Obed. [Obed was the son] of Boaz. [Boaz was the son] of Sala. [Sala was the son] of Nahshon. **33** [Nahshon was the son] of Amminadab. [Amminadab was the son] of Admin. [Admin was the son] of Arni. [Arni was the son] of Hezron. [Hezron was the son] of Perez. [Perez was the son] of Judah. **34** [Judah was the son] of Jacob. [Jacob was the son] of Isaac. [Isaac was the son] of Abraham. [Abraham was the son] of Terah. [Terah was the son] of Nahor. **35** [Nahor was the son] of Serug. [Serug was the son] of Reu. [Reu was the son] of Peleg. [Peleg was the son] of Eber. [Eber was the son] of Shelah. **36** [Shelah was the son] of Cainan. [Cainan was the son] of

Arphaxad. [Arphaxad was the son] of Shem. [Shem was the son] of Noah. [Noah was the son] of Lamech. **37** [Lamech was the son] of Methuselah. [Methuselah was the son] of Enoch. [Enoch was the son] of Jared. [Jared was the son] of Mahalalel. [Mahalalel was the son] of Cainan. **38** [Cainan was the son] of Enos. [Enos was the son] of Seth. [Seth was the son] of Adam. [Adam was the man] God created.

4 As Jesus left the Jordan [River valley], the Holy Spirit was completely controlling him. **2** For 40 days the Spirit led him around in the desolate area. During that time Jesus was being tempted by the devil {the devil was tempting him}, and Jesus did not eat anything. When that time ended, he was [very] hungry. **3** Then the devil said to Jesus, "Because you [claim that you] ([have a relationship with] God as a son [has with his father] [MET]/are the man who is both God and man), [prove it by] telling these stones to become bread [so that you can eat them]!" **4** Jesus replied, "[No, I will not change stones into bread, because it is written] {[Moses] wrote} [in the Scriptures] that [eating] food sustains people physically, but it does not [sustain them spiritually. They also need food for their spirits]." **5** Then the devil took him on top of [a high mountain] and showed him in an instant all the nations in the world. **6** Then he said to [Jesus], "I will give you the authority [to rule] all these areas and will make you famous. [I can do this] because [God] has permitted me [to control these areas], and I can allow anyone I desire to rule them! **7** So if you worship me, I will [let] you [rule] them all!" **8** But Jesus replied, "[No, I] will not [worship you, because] it is written {[the Psalmist] wrote} [in the Scriptures], 'It is the Lord, your God, whom you must worship, and you must serve only him!'" **9** Then the devil took [Jesus] to Jerusalem. He set him on the highest part of the Temple and said to him, "Because you [claim that you] ([have a relationship with God as a son has with his father] [MET]/are the man who is both God and man), [prove it by] jumping down from here. **10** [You will not be hurt], because it is written {the [Psalmist] wrote} [in the Scriptures], 'God will command his angels to protect you [(sg)]. **11** They will lift you up with their hands [when you are falling], so that [you will not get hurt]. You will not [even] strike your foot on a stone.'" **12** But Jesus replied, "[No, I] will not [do that, because] it is written {[Moses] wrote} [in the Scriptures]: 'Do not try to test the Lord your God [to see if he will prevent something bad from happening to you when you do something foolish]'." **13** Then, after the devil had finished trying to tempt [Jesus] in many ways, he left him. He wanted to try to tempt him later at an appropriate time. **14** As the Spirit empowered him, Jesus returned to Galilee [district. People] throughout all that region heard about what he [was doing]. **15** He taught [people] in their (synagogues/meeting places). [As a result], he was praised by everyone {everyone praised him}. **16** Then [Jesus] went to Nazareth, [the town] where he grew up. (On the Sabbath/On the Jewish rest day) he went (to the synagogue/to the Jewish meeting place), as he usually did. He stood up [to indicate that he wanted] to read [Scriptures] to them. **17** A scroll containing [the words] that the prophet Isaiah [had written] was given to him {[Someone] gave to him a scroll containing [the words] that the prophet Isaiah [had written]}. He opened the scroll and found the place from which he [wanted to] read. [He read these words]: **18** The Spirit (of the Lord/of God) is upon me. He has appointed [MTY] me to declare God's good news to the poor. He has sent me [here] to proclaim that God will deliver those whom [Satan] has captured, and he will [enable me to] enable those who are blind to see. He will enable me to free people who have been oppressed {whom [others] have oppressed}. **19** And he sent me to declare that now is the time when (the Lord/God) will [act] favorably [toward people]. **20** Then he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down [to teach the people]. Everyone in the synagogue was looking intently [MTY] at him. **21** He said to them, "Today as you have been hearing [MTY] [me speak], [I am beginning] to fulfill this Scripture passage." **22** [At first] everyone there spoke well about him, and they were amazed at the charming words that he spoke. [But then some of] them said, "(He is [only] Joseph's son!/Isn't he [only] Joseph's son?) [RHQ] [So] ([it is useless for us(exc) to listen to what he says!/why should we(exc) listen to what he says]?) [RHQ]" **23** He said to them, "Surely [some of] you will quote to me the proverb that says, 'Doctor, heal yourself!' [What you will mean is], 'People told us that you did miracles in Capernaum [town, but we(exc) do not know if those reports are true. So] do miracles here in your own hometown, too!'" **24** Then he said, "It is certainly true that [people] do not accept [the message of] a prophet when he speaks in his hometown, [just like you(pl) are not accepting my message now]. **25** But think about this: There were many widows in Israel during the time when [the prophet] Elijah [lived. During that time], because of there being no rain [MTY] for three years and six months, there was a great famine throughout the country. **26** But [God] did not send Elijah to [help] any of those [Jewish] widows. [God sent him] to Zarepath [town] near Sidon [city], to [help] a [non-Jewish] widow. **27** There were also many [Jewish] lepers in Israel during the time when the prophet Elisha [lived]. But [Elisha] did not heal any of them. He healed only Naaman, a [non-Jewish] man from Syria." **28** When all the people in the synagogue heard him say that, they were very angry, [because they realized that he was inferring that he similarly

would help non-Jewish people instead of helping Jews] (OR, [that they also were not worthy of receiving God's help]). **29** So they all got up and shoved him out of the town. They took him to the top of the hill outside their town in order to throw him off the cliff [and kill him]. **30** But he [simply] walked through their midst and went away. **31** [One day] Jesus went [with his disciples] down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee [district]. On the next (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest) (OR, Each (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest)), he taught the people ([in the synagogue/in the Jewish meeting place]). **32** They were continually amazed at what he was teaching, because [he spoke] ([with authority/as people speak who have] the right to command others what to do). **33** [That day], (OR, On one of those Jewish days of rest,) there was a man in the synagogue who was controlled by an evil spirit. That man shouted very loudly, **34** "Hey! Jesus, from Nazareth! [We(exc) evil spirits] have nothing in common with you, so ([do not interfere with us now!/why should you interfere with us now]?) [RHQ] (Do not destroy us [now!]/Have you come to destroy us [now]?) [RHQ] I know who you are. You are the Holy One [who has come] from God!" **35** Jesus rebuked [the evil spirit], saying, "Be quiet! And come out [of the man]!" The demon threw the man down on the ground in the midst of the people. But without harming the man, the demon left him. **36** The people were all amazed. They said to each other, "(What he says to the demons [has great power!/] [kind of] teaching is this?) [RHQ] He speaks to them like he knows that they must obey him, and as a result they leave people!" **37** The people were telling everyone in [every village] in the surrounding region what Jesus [had done]. **38** Jesus [and his disciples] left (the synagogue/the Jewish meeting place) and entered Simon's house. Simon's mother-in-law was sick and had a high fever. So [others in Simon's family] (OR, [the disciples]) asked Jesus to [heal] her. **39** So he bent over her and commanded the fever to leave her. At once she became well! She got up and served them [some food]. **40** When the sun was setting [that day, and the restriction about not traveling] (on [the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day]) [was ended], many people [HYP] whose [friends or relatives] were sick or who had various diseases brought them to Jesus. He put his hands on them and healed [all of] them. **41** He also was [expelling demons] from many people. As the demons left those people, they shouted to Jesus, "You are (the Son of God/the one who is God and man)!" But he rebuked those demons and would not allow them to tell [people about him], because they knew that he was the Messiah, and [for various reasons he did not want everyone to know that yet]. **42** [Early] the next morning [Jesus] left that house and went to an uninhabited place [to pray]. Many people searched for him, and when they found him they kept urging him not to leave them. **43** But he said to them, "I must tell [people] in other towns also the good message about how God wants to rule [MET] their lives, because that is what I was sent {[God] sent me} to do." **44** So he kept preaching in (the synagogues/Jewish worship places) [in various towns] in Judea [province].

5 One day while many people were crowding around him to hear the message from God, Jesus was standing on the shore of Gennesaret Lake, [which is also called Lake Galilee]. **2** He saw two [fishing] boats at the edge of the lake. The fishermen had gone out of the boats and were washing their [fishing] nets [on the shore]. One of the boats belonged to Simon. **3** Jesus got in that boat and asked Simon to push the boat a little bit away from the shore [so that he could speak to the crowd more easily. Jesus] sat in the boat and taught the people [who were on the shore]. **4** After he finished speaking [to them], he said to Simon, "Push the boat out to where the water is deep. Then let your nets down [into the water] to catch [some fish]!" **5** Simon replied, "Master, we [(exc)] worked hard all night but we did not catch any [fish]. But because you [(sg)] tell me to do it, I will let down the nets." **6** When Peter [and the men with him] had done that, they caught so many fish that their nets were breaking. **7** They motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. So they came and filled both the boats [with fish from the net]. The result was that the boats were so full that they began to sink. **8** Simon and all the men who were with him were amazed at how many fish they had taken. James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners, were among those who were amazed. When Simon, [whose other name was] Peter, saw [the fish, feeling ashamed to be in the presence of someone who obviously had God's power], he prostrated himself before Jesus and said, "Lord, you should go away from me, because I am a sinful man!" **10** But Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid! [Up until now you(sg) have been gathering fish] [MET], but from now on you will gather people [to become my disciples]." **11** So after they brought the boats to the shore, they left their business [HYP] [in the hands of others] and went with Jesus. **12** While [Jesus] was in one of the cities [there in the district of Galilee], there was a man there who was very severely affected by leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he prostrated himself before him and, [wanting Jesus to heal him], pleaded with him, "Lord/Sir, [please heal me, because] you are able to heal me if you are willing to!" **13** [Then Jesus, disregarding the religious law that forbade people to come close to lepers], reached out his hand and touched the man. He said, "I am willing [to

heal you]; and I heal you now!" Immediately the man [was healed]. He was no longer a leper [PRS]! **14** Then Jesus told him, "Make sure that you do not report [your healing immediately. First, go to a priest in Jerusalem] and show yourself to him [so that he can examine you and verify that you no longer have leprosy]. After the priest tells [the local people], they will know that [you have been healed, and you will be able to associate with them again]. Also take to the priest [the offering] that Moses commanded [that people who have been healed from leprosy should offer]." **15** But many people heard the man's report of what [Jesus had done]. The result was that large crowds came to Jesus to hear his [message] and to be healed of their sicknesses {so that he would heal their sicknesses}. **16** But he often would go away from them to the desolate area and pray. **17** One day when [Jesus] was teaching, some men from the Pharisee [sect] were sitting there. Some of them were men who taught the [Jewish] laws. They had come from many [HYP] villages in Galilee [district] and also from Jerusalem and from [other] villages in Judea [district]. [At that time while] God was giving Jesus power to heal people, **18** several men brought on a sleeping pad a man who was paralyzed. They wanted to bring him into [the house] and lay him in front of Jesus. **19** But there was no way to do that because of the large crowd of people, so they went up [the steps] onto the roof. They tied ropes onto the sleeping pad and, after [removing some of] the tiles on the roof, they lowered the man [on] the sleeping pad. They lowered him through the opening into the midst of the crowd in front of Jesus. **20** When Jesus perceived that they believed that [he could heal the man], he said to him, "My friend, [I] forgive your sins!" **21** The men who taught the [Jewish] laws and the rest of the Pharisees began to think within themselves, "Who does this man [think he is, saying] that? He is insulting God! (Nobody can forgive sins!/What person can forgive sins?) [RHQ] Only God can do that!" **22** Jesus perceived what they were thinking. So he said to them, "(You should not think that way [about what I said]!/Why do you question within yourselves [about what I said]?) [RHQ] [Consider this]: **23** It would [not] be risky [for someone] to say [to this man], '[I] forgive your sins,' [because no one could see whether or not his sins were really forgiven. But no one] [RHQ], [without having the power to heal], would say to [him], 'Get up and walk!' [because people could easily see whether he was healed or not]. **24** But [as a result of my healing this man] you [(pl)] will know that [God] has authorized [me], the one who came from heaven, to forgive the sins [of people while I am on] the earth, [as well as to heal people]." Then he said to the man who was paralyzed, "To you I say, 'Get up, pick up your sleeping pad, and go home!'" **25** Immediately the man [was healed]. He stood up in front of them. He picked up the [sleeping pad] on which he had been lying, and went home, praising God. **26** All the people [there] were amazed! They praised God and were completely awestruck. They kept saying, "We [(inc)] have seen wonderful things today!" **27** Then [Jesus] left [the town] and saw a man who collected taxes [for the Roman government]. His name was Levi. He was sitting in the booth where he collected the taxes. Jesus said to him, "Come with me [and become my disciple]!" **28** So Levi left his work [HYP] and went with Jesus. **29** Afterwards, Levi prepared a big feast in his own house [for Jesus and his disciples]. There was a large group of tax collectors and others eating together with them. **30** The men who were there who taught the [Jewish] laws, ones who belonged to the Pharisee [sect], complained to Jesus' disciples, saying, "([It is disgusting that] you are eating with tax collectors and [others who we(exc) consider to be] sinners!/Why are you eating with tax collectors [and others who we(exc) consider to be] sinners?)" [RHQ] **31** Then, [to indicate that it was those who knew that they had sinned who were coming to him for help], Jesus said to them, "[It is] people who are sick who need a doctor, not those who are well [MET]. **32** [Similarly], I did not come [from heaven] to invite [those who think they are] righteous [to come to me]. On the contrary, [I came to invite those who know that they are] sinners to turn from their sinful behavior [and come to me]." **33** [Those Jewish leaders] said to Jesus, "The disciples of John [the Baptizer] often abstain from food [to show that they want to please God], and the disciples of the Pharisees do that, too. But your disciples keep on eating and drinking! [Why do not they fast like the others]?" **34** [To show them that it was not appropriate for his disciples to be sad and abstain from food while he was still with them] [MET], Jesus said to them, "When (the bridegroom/man who is getting married) is with [his friends at the time of the wedding], you certainly do not make his friends abstain from food, do you [RHQ]? [No, you do not do that]. **35** [But] some day he will be taken away {[his enemies] will take him away} from them. Then, at that time, his friends will abstain from food, [because they will be sad]." **36** Then Jesus told them two parables [to show them that those who desire to live according to God's new message should not be forced to obey the old religious traditions like] ([fasting/abstaining from food]), [and that those who know only the old traditions are not eager to accept new ones] [MET]. He said, "People never tear a piece of cloth from a new garment and attach it to an old garment [to mend it]. If they did that, not only would they be ruining the new garment by tearing it, but the new piece of cloth would not match the

old garment. 37 Neither does anyone put freshly-[squeezed] grape juice into old skin bags [to store it]. If anyone did that, the grape juice would burst the skin bags [because they would not stretch when the] new [wine ferments and expands. Then] the skin bags would be ruined, and [the wine] would [also] be spilled. 38 On the contrary, new wine must be put into new wineskins. 39 Furthermore, those who have drunk [only] old wine [are content with that]. They do not want to drink the new wine, because they say, 'The old wine is [MET] fine!'"

6 One (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest), while Jesus was walking through some grain fields with his disciples, the disciples picked some of the heads of grain. They rubbed them in their hands [to separate the grains from the husks], and ate the grain. [The law of Moses permitted people to do that if they were hungry]. 2 Some Pharisees [who were watching] said to Jesus, "(You should not be doing on our rest day [work] that [our] laws forbid!/Why are you doing on our rest day [work] that our laws forbid?)" [RHQ] 3 [Jesus wanted to show them that the record in Scriptures indicated that God permitted people to disobey certain religious laws when they needed food]. [So] he replied, "[It is written in the Scriptures] what [our revered ancestor, King] David did when he and the men with him were hungry. You have read about that, ([but you do not think about what it implies/so why do you not think about what it implies]?) [RHQ] 4 David entered God's big worship tent [and asked for some food]. [The high priest gave him] the bread that the priests had presented to God. It was permitted [in] one of [Moses' laws] that only the priests could eat that bread. But [even though David was not a priest], he ate some, and gave some to the men who were with him. [And God did not consider that what David did was wrong]!" 5 Jesus also said to them, "[I am] the one who came from heaven, so [I] have the authority [to determine what is right for my disciples to do on] the day of rest!" 6 Another (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest) Jesus entered a (synagogue/Jewish meeting place) and taught the people. There was a man there whose right hand was shriveled. 7 The men who taught the [Jewish] laws and the Pharisees [who were there] watched Jesus, to see if he would heal the man (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day). They did this so that, [if he healed the man], they would accuse him [of disobeying their laws by working on the day of rest]. 8 But Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Come and stand here [in front of everyone]!" So the man got up and stood there. 9 Then Jesus said to the others, "I ask you this: Do the laws that [God gave Moses] permit [people] to do what is good (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day), or [do they permit people] to harm [others]? [Do they permit us] to save [a person's] life [on our day of rest] or to let [him] die [HYP] [by refusing to help him]?" 10 [They refused to answer him. So] after he looked around at them all, he said to the man, "Stretch out your [shriveled] hand!" The man did that, and his hand became all right again! 11 But the men who taught the Jewish laws and the Pharisees were very angry, and they discussed with one another what they could do to [get rid of] Jesus. 12 About that time [Jesus] went up into the hills to pray. He prayed to God all night. 13 The next day he summoned all his disciples to come near him. From them he chose twelve men, whom he called apostles. 14 They were Simon, to whom he gave the [new] name, Peter; Andrew, Peter's [younger] brother; James and [his younger brother], John; Philip; Bartholomew; 15 Matthew, whose other name was Levi; Thomas; [another] James, the [son] of Alpheus; Simon, who belonged to the party [that encouraged people to] rebel [against the Roman government]; 16 Judas, the [son] of [another] James; and Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]), the one who later (betrayed Jesus./enabled the Jewish leaders to seize Jesus.) 17 [Jesus] came down from the hills with his disciples and stood on a level area. There was a very big crowd of his disciples there. There was also a large group of people who had come from Jerusalem and from many [other] places [in] Judea [district], and from the coastal areas near Tyre and Sidon [cities]. 18 They came to hear Jesus talk to them and to be healed {and for him to heal them} from their diseases. He also healed those whom evil spirits had troubled. 19 Everyone [in the crowd] tried to touch him, because he was healing everyone by [his/God's] power. 20 He looked [MTY] at his disciples and said, "[God] is pleased with you [who know] that you lack what [he wants you to have;] he will allow you to be the people whose lives he rules over. 21 [God] is pleased with you who sincerely desire to receive what [MTY] [he wants you to have]; he will give you what you need, until you are satisfied. [God] is pleased with you that grieve now [because of sin]. Later you will be joyful. 22 [God] is pleased with you when [other] people hate you, when they will not let you join them, when they insult you, when they say that you are evil because [you believe in] me, the one who came from heaven. 23 When that happens, rejoice! Jump up and down because you are so happy! [God will give] you a great reward in heaven! [When they do these things to you, it will prove that you are God's servants]. (OR, [People have always treated God's servants like that].) Do not forget that these people's ancestors did the same things to the prophets [who served God faithfully]! 24 But there will be terrible punishment for you that are rich; the happiness

you have received [from your riches] is the only happiness that you will get. **25** There will be terrible punishment for you who [think that you] have all that you need now; you will [realize] that these things will not make you feel satisfied. There will be terrible punishment for you who are joyful now; you will [later] be very sad. **26** When most [HYP] people speak well about you, trouble is ahead for you; [it will not prove that you are God's servants, because] your ancestors used to speak well about those who falsely [claimed that they were] prophets." **27** "But I say this to each of you [disciples] who are listening [to what I say]: Love your enemies [as well as your friends]. Do good things for those who hate you! **28** [Ask God to] bless those who curse you! Pray for those who mistreat you! **29** If someone [insults one of you by] striking you on one of your cheeks, turn your face [so that he can strike] the other cheek [also]. If [a bandit] wants to take away your [(sg)] coat, let him also have your shirt. **30** Give something to everyone who asks you [(sg) for something]. If someone takes away things that belong to you [(sg)], do not ask him to return them. **31** In whatever way you [(pl)] want others to act toward you, that is the way that you should act toward them. **32** If you love [only] those who love you, do not [expect God] to praise you for [doing that] [RHQ], [because] even sinners love those who love them. **33** If you do good things [only] for those who do good things for you, do not [expect God] to reward you [for doing that] [RHQ], [because] even sinners do that. **34** If you lend [things or money only] to those who you expect will give something back to you, do not [expect that God] will reward you [RHQ] [for doing that]. Even sinners lend to other sinners, because they expect them to pay everything back. **35** Instead, love your enemies! Do good things for them! Lend to them, and do not expect them to pay anything back! [If you do that, God will give] you a big reward. And you will be [acting like] his children [should]. Remember that God is kind to people who are not grateful and to people who are wicked, [and he expects you to be like that too]. **36** Act mercifully toward others, just like your Father [in heaven acts] mercifully [toward you]." **37** "Do not say how sinfully others have acted, and then [God] will not say how sinfully you have acted. Do not condemn others, and then [he] will not condemn you [DOU]. Forgive others [for the evil things that they have done to you], and then [God] will forgive you. **38** Give [good things to others], and then [God] will give [good] things to you. It will be [as though] [MET] [God is putting things in a basket] for you. He will give you a full amount, pressed down in the basket, which he will shake [so that he can put more in], and it will spill over the sides! [Remember that] the way you act [toward others] will be the way that [God] will act toward you!" **39** He also told [his disciples] this parable [to show them that they should be like him, and not be like the Jewish religious leaders]: "(You certainly would not [expect] a blind man to lead another blind man./Would you [expect] a blind man to lead [another] blind man?) [RHQ] If he tried to do [that], (they would both probably fall into a hole!/wouldn't they both probably fall into a hole?) [RHQ] [I am your teacher, and you disciples should be like me]. **40** A disciple should not [expect to be] better known than his teacher. But if a student is fully trained {if someone fully trains a student}, the student can become like his teacher [MET]. [So you should be content to be like me]. **41** (Why do you notice [someone else's small faults]?/None of you should be concerned about [someone else's small faults] [MET, RHQ].) [That would be like] noticing a speck in that person's eye. But you should be concerned about [your own big faults. They are like] planks in your own eye, [which you do not notice]. **42** (You [(sg)] should not say, 'Friend, let me take out that speck in your eye!' when you do not notice the log in your own eye!/Why do you say, 'Friend, let me take out that speck in your eye!' when you do not notice the log in your own eye?) [RHQ] [If you do that], you are a hypocrite! You should first [stop committing your own sins. That will be like] removing the plank from your own eye. Then, as a result, you will have the spiritual insight you need to help others get rid of the [faults that are like] specks in their eyes." **43** "[People are like trees] [MET]. Healthy trees do not bear bad fruit (OR, bear only good fruit), and unhealthy trees do not bear good fruit. **44** [Just like you] can tell if a tree is good or bad by looking at its fruit, [you can tell which people are good and which are bad by looking at the way they] conduct their lives. [For example, because thornbushes cannot produce figs], no one can pick figs from thornbushes. And [since bramble bushes cannot produce grapes], no one can [pick] grapes from bramble bushes. **45** [Similarly], good people will conduct their lives in a good way because they think a lot of good [things], and evil people will live in an evil way because they think a lot of evil [things]. The basic principle is that people speak [and act] according to all that they think." **46** "[Because people should obey what their masters tell them], (it is disgraceful that you say that I am your master but you do not do what I tell you!/why do you say that I am your master but you do not do what I tell you?) [RHQ] **47** Some people come to me, and hear my messages and obey them. I will tell you what they are like. **48** They are like a man who dug deep [into the ground to prepare to build his house]. He made sure that the foundation was on solid ground. Then when there was a flood, the water tried to wash away the house. But the river could not shake the house, because it was built {he

built it} on a solid [foundation]. **49** But some people hear my messages but do not obey them. They are like a man who built a house on top of the ground without [digging] a foundation. When the river flooded, the house collapsed immediately and was completely ruined. [So it is important for you to obey what I teach you]."

7 After Jesus finished saying this to the people, he went [with his disciples] to Capernaum [town]. **2** There was a Roman army officer there who had a slave whom he thought highly of. This slave was so sick that he was about to die. **3** When the officer heard about Jesus, he [summoned] some Jewish elders. He told them to go to Jesus and ask him to come and heal his slave. **4** When they came to where Jesus was, they earnestly asked Jesus [to return with them]. They said, "This officer deserves that you [(sg)] do this [for him], **5** because he loves us [Jewish] people, and he [paid the money to] build a synagogue for us." **6** So Jesus went with them. When he was near the [officer's] house, the officer [decided that it was not necessary for Jesus to come to his house. So he] summoned some friends. He [told them to] go to Jesus and tell him this: "Lord/Sir, do not bother to come. [Because I am a non-Jew], I am not worthy for you [(sg)], [a Jew], to come into my house [MTY] [and associate with me]. **7** I did not feel worthy to come to you, [either]. But [please] command [that] my servant [be healed], and he will become well! **8** [I believe this] because, as for me, there are people who have authority over me [and I obey them]. I also have soldiers under my [authority]. When I say to one of them, 'Go!' he goes. When I say to another 'Come!' he comes. When I say to my slave, 'Do this!' he does it. [And I believe that you speak with a similar kind of authority]." **9** When [the officer's friends arrived and] told that to Jesus, he marveled at what [the officer had said]. Then he turned and said to the crowd that was going with him, "I tell you, I have never before found anyone who trusted [in me like this non-Jewish man does]. No one from Israel, [where I would expect people to believe in me], has trusted in me like he has!" **10** When those men returned to the officer's house, they found that the slave was well. **11** Soon after that, Jesus went to a town called Nain. His disciples and a large crowd [of other people] went with him. **12** As they approached the town gate, the corpse of a young man who had just died was being carried out [on a stretcher] {[people] were carrying out [on a stretcher] the corpse of a young man who had just died}. His mother was a widow, and he was her only son. A large group of people from the town were accompanying them. **13** When the Lord saw her, he pitied her. He said to her, "Do not cry!" **14** Then, [ignoring the Jewish laws about not coming near a corpse], he came close and touched the stretcher [on which the body was lying]. So the men carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" **15** The man sat up and began to talk! Jesus returned him to his mother [to care for her]. **16** Then everyone [there] was amazed/awestruck. They praised God, saying, "A great prophet has come among us!" They also said, "God has come to help his people!" **17** [Then they] reported what Jesus [had done] throughout all of Judea [district] and other nearby areas. **18** The disciples of John [the Baptizer went to the prison where John was and] told him about those things. **19** So [one day] John summoned two [of his disciples] and [told them] to go to the Lord and ask him: "Are you [the Messiah who the prophets prophesied would come], or is it someone else that we should expect [to come]?" **20** When those two men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptizer sent us to ask you [(sg)] this: Are you [the Messiah that] we are expecting [God] to send, or shall we [(exc)] expect someone else?" **21** At that very time Jesus was healing many people of their diseases and [other] sicknesses, he was [casting out] evil spirits, and he was causing many blind people to be able to see. **22** So he answered those two men, "Go back and report to John what you have seen [me doing] and what you have heard [me telling people. I am enabling] blind people to see. [I am enabling] lame people to walk. [I am] healing people who have leprosy. [I am enabling] deaf people to hear. [I am causing] dead people to become alive again, [and I am] telling [God's] good message to poor people. **23** [Also tell John that God] is pleased with those who do not stop believing in me [because what I do is not what they expect the Messiah to do]." **24** When the men whom John had sent left, Jesus began to talk to the crowd of people about John. He said to them, "[Think about] what sort of person you went to see in the desolate area [when you went there to see John] [RHQ]. [You did not go there to listen to a man who constantly changed the nature of his message] [MET], [like] a reed that is blown back and forth by the wind [RHQ]. **25** Then what kind of man did you go there to see [RHQ]? Was he [RHQ] a man who wore expensive clothes? No! [You know very well that] people who wear beautiful clothes and live in luxury are in kings' palaces, [not in the desolate areas]! **26** Then what [kind of person] did you go to see? [Did you] [RHQ] [go there to see John because he was] a prophet? Yes! But I will tell you that [John is] more [important] than an [ordinary] prophet. **27** He is the one about whom [these words] that God said to the Messiah have been written {[the prophet Malachi] wrote [these words]} [in the Scriptures]: 'Listen! I am going to send my messenger ahead of you [(sg)] [SYN]. He will prepare [people] for your coming.' **28** I tell you that from

among all the people who have ever lived, [God considers that] no one is greater than John. However, [God considers] everyone who has let God rule their [lives] [MET] to be greater than [John], [even if they are] insignificant [people]." **29** When they heard [what Jesus said] (OR, [what John preached]), all the people, including tax collectors, [whom many people despised], agreed that God's way was right. By being baptized by John {By [letting] John baptize them}, [they had agreed that what God required people to do in order to be saved was right]. **30** But the Pharisees and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws were not baptized by John {did not [let] John baptize them} because they rejected what God wanted them to do. **31** [Then Jesus also said], "[Many of] you people have heard what [John and I] have taught. (I will illustrate what you are like./Do you know what [many of] you people who have heard what [John and I] have taught are like?) [RHQ] **32** You are like children who are [playing games] in an open area. [Some of them] are calling to [the others], saying, 'We [(exc)] played happy music for you on the flute, but you did not dance! Then we sang sad funeral songs for you, but you did not cry!' **33** [Similarly, you people are dissatisfied with both John the Baptizer and me]! When John came and [preached to you], he did not eat [ordinary] food [SYN] or drink wine, [like most people do]. But you [rejected him], saying, 'A demon is controlling him!' **34** In [contrast], [I], the one who came from heaven, eat [the same food] and drink [wine as others do]. But you [reject me], saying, 'Look! [This man] eats too much food and drinks too much wine, and he associates with tax collectors and [other] sinners!' **35** But those who are [truly God's] children [PRS] realize that [what John and I do is truly] wise." **36** [One day] one of the Pharisees [named Simon] invited Jesus to eat a meal with him. So Jesus went to the man's house and reclined [to eat]. **37** There was a woman in that city [who many people knew had been] a prostitute [EUP]. She heard that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee's house. So she went there, taking a stone jar that contained perfume. **38** [As the people there were reclining to eat], the woman stood behind [Jesus, at his] feet. As she was crying [because she was sorry for her sins, her tears fell on Jesus' feet]. Then she wiped his feet with her hair, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the perfume. **39** When the Pharisee who had invited [Jesus] saw that, he thought, "[Prophets know about other people's lives], [so] if Jesus were a prophet, he would have known who this woman is who is touching him, and what kind of a person she is. He would have known that she is a prostitute! [EUP]" **40** Jesus said to him, "Simon, there is something I want to tell you [(sg)]." He replied, "Teacher, what is it?" **41** Jesus replied, "Two people owed some money to a man who [earned money by] lending [it to others]. One owed him 500 silver coins, and the other owed him 50 silver coins. **42** Neither of them was able to pay back [what he owed], so the man [very kindly] said that they did not have to pay back anything. So, which of those two men will love that man more?" **43** Simon replied, "I think that the one who owed the most money and did not have to pay it back [will love him more]." Jesus said to him, "That is correct." **44** Then he turned toward the woman, and said to Simon, "(Think about [what] this woman [has done]!/Do you [(sg)] see [what] this woman [has done]?) [RHQ] When I entered your house, you [did not follow our custom of welcoming guests by] giving me any water [to wash] my feet, but this woman has wet my feet with her tears and then wiped them with her hair! **45** You did not [follow our custom of greeting by] kissing me, but since I came in, this woman has not stopped kissing my feet! **46** You did not [follow our custom of welcoming guests by] anointing my head with [olive] oil, but she has anointed my feet with fragrant perfume. **47** So I will tell you that even though this woman has sinned very much, she has been forgiven {[I] have forgiven her}. [By what she has done she has shown that] she loves [me] very much. But a person who has [sinned] just a little bit, but whom [I] have forgiven, will love [me just a little bit]." **48** Then he said to the woman, "You have been forgiven {[I have] forgiven [you]} [for] your sins." **49** Then those who were eating with him said among themselves, "(This man must [think that he is God]!/Who does this man [think that he] is [RHQ]), saying that he can forgive [people for] their sins?" **50** But Jesus said to the woman, "Because you have trusted [PRS] [in me, God] has saved you [from the guilt of your sins]. May [God] give you inner peace as you go!"

8 Soon after that, Jesus went, along with his twelve [disciples], through various cities and villages. As they went, he was telling people the good message about how God wants (to have complete control/to rule) [MET] [over their lives]. **2** Some women from whom he had expelled evil spirits and healed of diseases also [went with him]. These included Mary, the woman from Magdala [village], from whom [he had expelled] seven evil spirits; **3** Joanna, the wife of Chuza, who was one of [King] Herod [Antipas'] officials; Susanna; and many others. They were providing some of their own funds [to help Jesus and his disciples]. **4** A large crowd of people came to Jesus from many towns. Then he told them this parable: **5** "A man went out [to his field] to sow [some] seeds. As he was scattering them over the soil, some [of the seeds] fell on the path. Then [people] walked on those seeds, and birds ate them. **6** Some [of the seeds] fell on rock [on which there was a thin layer of]

moist [soil]. As soon as the seeds grew, the plants dried up because they had no moisture. **7** Some [of the seeds] fell on [ground that contained roots of] thorny [weeds]. The thorny weeds grew [together] with the young plants, and [they] crowded out [those plants]. **8** But some of the seeds fell on good soil and grew [well]. [Each seed later] produced 100 [grains]." Then Jesus called out to them, "If you want to understand [MTY] this, you must consider [carefully what I have just said]!" **9** Jesus' disciples [later] asked him about the meaning of the parable [he had just told]. **10** He said, "God is revealing to you what he did not reveal before, about [how he wants to] rule [MET] [over people's lives]. But when I am telling other people about [these things, I tell them] only in parables. The result will be [like a prophet predicted long ago]: They will see [what I am doing], but will not perceive [what it means]. They will hear [what I am saying], but will not understand [it]. **11** So this is the meaning of that parable: The seeds [represent] God's message. **12** [Some people are like] the path on which some of [the seeds fell]. When these people hear God's message, the devil comes and causes them to forget what they have heard. As a result, they do not believe it, and will not be saved {[God] will not save them}. **13** [Some people are like] the [soil with] rock [underneath]. When they hear [God's] message, they accept it joyfully. [But because it does not penetrate deeply] [MET] [into their inner beings], they believe it for [only] a [short] time. [They are like the plants that] did not have [deep] roots. When difficult things happen to them, they stop believing [God's message]. **14** [Some people are like] the [soil that had roots of] thorny [weeds] in it. They are people who accept [God's message], but later on they worry about things, and try to become rich, and enjoy [things that give them] a lot of pleasure. So they do not become [spiritually] mature. **15** But [some people are like] the good soil. They hear [God's] message and accept it. They [become] good, honest people, and they continue doing things [that please God] [MET]." **16** "After people light a lamp, they do not cover it with a basket or put it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a lampstand, so that those who enter [their house] can see [things from] its light [MET]. [Similarly, you must tell God's truth to others so that they can know what I can do for them]. **17** [God wants to] make clear all [of his truth] that was not evident previously. [He intends] that all of [the truth] that [he] had not revealed before be told openly {that [his people] openly tell [others] all [of the truth] that [he] has not revealed before}. **18** So listen carefully [to what I tell you], because [God] will enable those who accept [my truth] to [understand even] more. But [God] will cause those who do not accept [my truth] to not understand even [the little] that they think they have [understood]." **19** [One day Jesus'] mother and his [younger] brothers came to see him, but they could not get near him because there was a large crowd [around him in the house]. **20** Someone told him, "Your mother and your [younger] brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." **21** He replied, "Those who hear God's message and obey it are [as dear to me] [MET] as my mother and my brothers." **22** One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples. He said to them, "Let's go [around to] the other side of the lake." So they started to go. **23** As they were sailing, he fell asleep. A big windstorm struck the lake. Soon the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. **24** Jesus' disciples woke him up. They said [to him], "Master! Master! We [(inc)] are going to drown!" He got up and rebuked the wind and told the waves to be calm. The wind [immediately] stopped blowing and the waves calmed down. [The lake] became calm. **25** He said to them, "(I [am disappointed that] you did not trust me [to help you]!/Why did you not trust me [to help you]?)" [RHQ] They were afraid. They were also amazed. They said to each other, "(What kind of man is this?/This man is not like ordinary men!) [RHQ] He [not only commands people, but] when he commands the wind and the water, they also obey him!" **26** Jesus and his disciples arrived at the region near Gerasa, a [town] which [was on the eastern] side of Lake [Galilee]. **27** [There was] a man [in that region] in whom demons lived. [He was] from the town [of Gerasa]. (OR, [In that area there was] a man [from that town] whom demons controlled.) For a long time he had not worn clothes. He did not live in a house. Instead, he lived in burial caves. **28** Many times [demons] attacked him. He was guarded {[People] tried to guard him} [so that he would not injure others]. Chains were fastened {They fastened chains} on his hands and shackles on his feet, but he would break the chains and shackles. Then he would be sent away by the demons {the demons would send him away} to some desolate area. When Jesus stepped out of the boat onto the shore, the man saw him. He [ran to Jesus] and prostrated himself before him. Then Jesus commanded, "You evil spirit, come out of that man!" But it [did not leave immediately. Instead, it] caused the man to shout very loudly, "Jesus, Son of the great God in heaven, since we [(inc)] have nothing in common, [leave me alone] [RHQ]! I beg you, do not torture me [now]!" **30** [In order to expel the demon more easily], Jesus asked [the demon], "What is your [(sg)] name?" He replied, "My name is Crowd/Mob." [He said that] because many demons had entered that man. **31** [The demons] kept begging [Jesus] that he would not command them to go into the deep place [where God punishes demons]. **(Abyssos g12)** **32** There was a large herd of pigs (grazing/rooting for

food) on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus that he allow them to enter the pigs. So he did. **33** The demons left the man and entered the pigs. Then the herd [of pigs] rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. **34** When the men who were taking care of the pigs saw what happened, they ran! They told people inside the town and outside the town what had happened. **35** So people went out to see what had happened. When they came to where Jesus was, they saw that the man from whom Jesus had [expelled] the demons was sitting at the feet of Jesus, [listening to him]. He had clothes on, and his mind was normal again. Then those people became afraid [because they thought that Jesus would destroy more of their property] (OR, [because they realized that he must be very powerful]). **36** The people who had seen what happened told those [who had just arrived] how [Jesus] had healed the man whom demons were controlling [before]. **37** Then [those people and] many other people [HYP] from the area near Gerasa asked Jesus to leave their area. They were very afraid of [what else Jesus would do to them]. So [Jesus and the disciples] got into the boat to go back across the lake. **38** The man from whom he had [expelled] the demons begged him saying, "[Please], let me go with you!" But [Jesus refused. Instead], he said to him, **39** "[No], go home and tell people how much God has done for you!" Then he sent him away. So the man went away and told people throughout the nearby town how much Jesus had done for him. **40** When [Jesus and the disciples] returned [to Capernaum], a crowd of people who had been waiting for him welcomed him. **41** Just then a man named Jairus, who was one of the leaders (of the synagogue/of the Jewish meeting place) [there], came near and prostrated himself at Jesus' feet. He pleaded with Jesus, "Please come to my house [and heal my daughter], **42** my only daughter, who is about twelve years old, because she is dying!" As Jesus went with him, many people crowded close to Jesus. **43** Then a woman came near. She had been suffering from constant [vaginal] [EUP] bleeding for twelve years, but she could not be healed by anyone {no one could heal her}. **44** She came behind [Jesus] and touched the edge of his robe [in order to be healed]. At once her bleeding stopped. **45** Jesus said, "Who touched me?" When everyone said that they had not touched him, Peter said, "Lord, there is a large crowd of people around you [(sg)] and crowding against you, [so any one of them might have touched you]!" **46** But Jesus said, "[I know that] someone [deliberately] touched me, [because] my power has healed someone [who touched me]." **47** When the woman realized that she could not prevent [Jesus] (OR, [people]) from knowing that [she was healed], her body began to shake. [She was afraid that because she had disobeyed the law that a woman with such a condition should not touch others, Jesus might scold her for doing that]. She prostrated herself before Jesus. As the other people were listening, she told why she had touched him and how she had been healed immediately. **48** [Jesus] said to her, "(Ma'am/My dear woman), because you believed [PRS] [that I could heal you, I] have healed you. Go [from here, and may you experience God's] peace [within you]." **49** While he was still talking [to her], a man from Jairus' house came and said to Jairus, "Your daughter has died. So (it is useless that you bother the teacher any longer [by urging him to go to your house]!/why do you bother the teacher any longer [by urging him to go to your house]?) [RHQ]" **50** But when Jesus heard that, he said to Jairus, "Do not think that there is nothing more that can be done. Just believe that [I can help her. If you(sg) do that], she will live again." **51** When they arrived outside Jairus' house, Jesus allowed only Peter, John, James, and the girl's mother and father to go in Jairus' house with him. **52** All the people [there] were crying and beating their chests [to show that they were sad]. But, [knowing that he would cause the girl to live again], he said to them, "Stop crying! She is not dead! She is [just] sleeping [MET]!" **53** The people laughed at him, because they knew that [the girl] was dead. **54** But [Jesus] took hold of her hand and called to her, saying, "Child, get up!" **55** At once her spirit returned [to her body] and she got up. Jesus immediately said, "Give her something to eat!" **56** Her parents were amazed, but Jesus told them not to tell anyone [else yet] what had happened.

9 [One day] Jesus summoned his twelve [apostles], and gave them power to expel all [kinds of] demons and to heal [people with] diseases. He gave them authority to do that. **2** [Before] he sent them out to heal people and to tell people [what it meant to let] God (rule/have complete control [over]) [their lives], **3** he said to them, "Do not take things for your journey. Do not take a walking stick or a [traveler's] bag or food or money. Do not take (an extra shirt/extra clothes). **4** Whenever you enter some house [to lodge there], stay in that house until you leave that town. **5** [In towns] where the people do not welcome you, [you should not continue to stay there. Just] leave those towns. And as you leave, shake off the dust from your feet. [Do that to] warn them [that God will punish them for rejecting your message]." **6** Then they left and traveled through many villages. Everywhere [they went], they told people God's good message and healed sick people. **7** Herod [Antipas], the ruler of [that] district, heard about the things that [Jesus and his disciples] were doing. [He had previously commanded his soldiers to execute John the Baptizer, so now] he was perplexed,

because some people were saying that John had become alive again [and was doing those miracles]. **8** Others were saying that [the prophet] Elijah had appeared [again as had been prophesied]. Others were saying that one of the [other] former prophets had become alive again [and was doing those miracles]. **9** But Herod said, "[It cannot be John who is doing these things], [because] I [commanded my soldiers to] cut off his head. So who is [this man] that I am hearing these things about?" And he kept wanting to see [Jesus]. **10** When the apostles returned [from traveling to various towns], they told Jesus the things that they had done. Then he took them and they went by themselves [by boat] to a town called Bethsaida. **11** But when the crowds [of people who had been with Jesus] found out about that, they followed him [on land. When they got to where he was], he welcomed them. He taught them about how God is going to some day (rule as king/have complete control [over people's lives]). He also healed the sick people. **12** Late in the afternoon Jesus' twelve [apostles] came to him and said, "This is a place where nobody lives, so dismiss the people so that they can go to the surrounding villages and other places where they can get some food and find places to stay!" **13** But he said to them, "[No], you [yourselves] give them something to eat!" They replied, "We [(exc)] have only five small loaves and two [cooked] fish. Are you [(sg)] going to [give] us [the money] to go somewhere and buy food for all these people?" **14** There were about 5,000 men [there]. He replied to the disciples, "[No], [just] tell the people to sit down. Tell them to sit in groups, with about 50 people in each group." **15** After they told the people that, they all sat down. **16** Then he took the five small loaves and the two fish. He looked up towards heaven and thanked [God for them]. Then he broke them [into pieces] and gave them to the disciples so that they would distribute them to the crowd. **17** All [the people in the crowd] ate until they all had enough to eat. Then [the disciples] collected twelve baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over! **18** [One day] Jesus was praying in a place where only the disciples were with him. He asked them, "The crowds [of people], who do they say that I [really] am?" **19** They replied, "[Some people say that you are] John the Baptizer, [who has come back to life again]. Others say that you are [the prophet] Elijah, [who has returned from heaven as God promised]. Others say that you are one of the [other] prophets who lived long ago, who has come back to life again." **20** He asked them, "What about you [(pl)]? Who do you say that I am?" Peter replied, "You [(sg)] are the Messiah, who [has come from] God." **21** Then Jesus warned them strongly not to tell that to anyone [yet]. **22** Then he said, "[Even though I am] the one who came from heaven, it is necessary that I suffer very much. It is also necessary that I be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the men who teach the [Jewish] laws {that the [Jewish] elders and the chief priests and the men who teach the [Jewish] laws will reject me}. It is necessary that I be killed {that [people] will kill me}. Then on the third day [after that], I will become alive again." **23** Then he said to all of them, "If any one [of you] wants to be my disciple, you must not do [only] what you yourself desire [to do]. [Specifically], you must be willing each day [MET] [to let others hurt you and disgrace you. That is like what is done to criminals who are forced] to carry [MET] crosses [to the place where they will be executed]. [That is what anyone who wants to] be my disciple [must do]. **24** You must do that, because those who try to save their lives [by denying that they belong to me when people want to kill them for believing in me] will not live [eternally], but those who are killed because of being my [disciples] will live [forever with me]. **25** People might get everything that [they want] in this world, but (they are really gaining nothing if they do not get eternal life by [becoming my disciples]!/are they really gaining anything if they do not get eternal life by [becoming my disciples]?) [RHQ] **26** Those who reject my message [and] refuse to say that [they belong] to me, [I], the one who came from heaven, will also refuse to say that [they belong to me] when I come back with the holy angels, and have the glorious brightness that my Father has. **27** But listen carefully! Some of you [(pl)] who are here now will see God ruling [MET] [in many powerful ways]. You will see it before you die!" **28** About a week after [Jesus] said those things, he took Peter, James, and [James' brother] John and led them up a mountain so that he could pray [there]. **29** As he was praying, his face appeared very different to them. His clothes became as bright as lightning. **30** Suddenly, two men appeared who had the brightness [of heaven] surrounding them. They were [prophets who had lived long ago], Moses and Elijah. They started talking with Jesus about how he [would accomplish what God had planned when he died] [EUP] [very soon] in Jerusalem. **32** Peter and the other [disciples] who were with him were sound asleep. When they woke up, they saw [Jesus'] brightness. They also saw the two men standing with him. **33** As [Moses and Elijah] were starting to leave Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is wonderful for us to be here! Allow us to make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah!" But he really did not realize what he was talking about. **34** As he was saying that, a [bright] cloud appeared and covered them all. The disciples were afraid as the cloud surrounded them. **35** [God] [MTY/EUP] spoke to them from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son. He

is the one whom [I] have chosen [to do a great work for me]. [So] you must listen to him!" **36** After [God] [MTY/EUP] finished saying that, [the three disciples] saw that only Jesus was there. They did not tell anyone what they had seen until much later. **37** The next day, after they had come down from the mountain, a large crowd [of people] met Jesus. **38** Then a man from the crowd exclaimed, "Teacher, I plead with you, [do something to help] my son! He is my only child! **39** At various times an evil spirit suddenly seizes him and [causes] him to scream. The evil spirit shakes him violently and causes him to foam at the mouth. It does not leave until my child is completely exhausted. **40** I pleaded with your disciples [who were here] for them to expel [the evil spirit], but they were not able to do it!" **41** Jesus replied [by saying to everyone who had gathered there], "[You who have seen how I help people] do not believe [that you can do anything]. What you [think] is perverted! How long must I be with you [before you are able to do what I do] [RHQ]? [How long must I] endure your [lack of faith]?" [Then he said to the boy's father], "Bring your [(sg)] son here [to me]!" **42** While they were bringing the boy to Jesus, the demon attacked the boy, threw him to the ground, and shook him severely. But Jesus rebuked the evil spirit and healed the boy. Then he returned him to his father's [care]. **43** All the people [there] were amazed at the great [power] of God. Luke 9:43b-45 While they were all amazed at all the miracles [Jesus] was doing, he said to his disciples, **44** "Think carefully [MTY] about what I am about to tell you: [Even though I am] the one who came from heaven, [I will soon] be handed over to the authorities (OR, my enemies) {[someone] is about to enable [MTY] my enemies to seize me}." **45** But [the disciples] did not understand what he was saying; [God] prevented them from understanding it, so that they would not know [yet] what he meant. And they were afraid to ask him about [what he had said]. **46** The disciples began to argue among themselves about which one of them would be the greatest [when Jesus became king]. **47** But Jesus perceived what they were thinking. So he brought a young child to his side. **48** He said to [the disciples], "Those who, because they [love] me, (OR, because they want to behave like me) welcome a little child ([like] this one/[as] I [would]) [MTY], [God considers that] [MET] they are welcoming me. And those who welcome me, [God considers] that [MET] they are welcoming him, the one who sent me. Remember that those among you who think of themselves as being very unimportant will be the ones [whom God considers] to be great." **49** John replied to [Jesus], "Master, we [(exc)] saw a man who was expelling demons, [claiming] that [he had] authority from you [MTY] to do that. So we told him to stop doing it, because he is not one of us [disciples]." **50** But Jesus said to him [and the other disciples], "Do not tell him not to [do that]! Remember that those who are not opposing you are trying to [achieve the same goals that] you are!" **51** When it was almost time for [God] to take Jesus up to heaven, he firmly resolved to go to Jerusalem. **52** He sent some messengers to go ahead of him, and they entered a village in Samaria [district] to prepare for him [SYN] [to go there]. **53** But [the Samaritans did not like the Jews because of their insisting that it was necessary to go to Jerusalem to worship God. So], because Jesus had firmly resolved to go to Jerusalem, they would not let him come [to their village]. **54** When two of his disciples, James and John, heard about that, they said, "Lord, do you [(sg)] want us [(exc)] to pray that [God] will send fire down from heaven, [as the prophet Elijah did long ago], and destroy those people?" **55** But Jesus turned and rebuked them [for saying that]. **56** So they went to a different village. **57** As Jesus and the disciples were walking along the road, one man said to him, "I will go with you [(sg)] wherever you go!" **58** [In order that the man might know what he could expect if he went with Jesus], Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes [in the ground in which to live], and birds have nests, but [even though I am] the one who came from heaven, I do not have a home where I can sleep!" **59** Jesus told another man, "Come with me!" But the man said, "Lord/Sir, let me go [home] first. [After] my father [dies] I will bury him, [and then I will come with you]." **60** But Jesus said to him, "[God considers that those who do not have eternal life are] dead [MET]. Let those people [do the work of] burying people who die. As for you, go and tell people about how God wants (to rule/to have complete control [over]) [people's lives]!" **61** Someone else said, "Lord, I will come with you and be your disciple, but first let me go home to say goodbye to my relatives." **62** Jesus said to him, "Anyone who is plowing his field should not look back [to see what he has done. He must look forward to what is ahead. Similarly], [anyone who continues to be concerned about his family and other things he has left behind] is not fit [to serve me and tell others about how] God wants to rule [MTY] [people's lives]."

10 After that, the Lord Jesus appointed 72 other [people]. He [prepared to] send them out, two-by-two, to every town and village where he [SYN] intended to go. **2** He said to them, "The [people who are ready to receive my message] are like a field [of] [MET] [grain] that is ready for [people] to harvest {to be harvested}. But there are not many people [to bring them to God]. So pray and ask the Lord [God] to send [more] workers [who will gather people together and teach them my message, just like a landowner sends

workers] into his fields [to gather the] harvest. **3** Start going; but [remember that] I am sending you [(pl)] out [to tell my message to people who will try to get rid of you. You will be] like lambs among wolves. **4** Do not take along [any money in] a purse. Do not take a traveler's bag. Do not take [extra] sandals. Do not [spend a lot of time] greeting people along the way. **5** Whenever you enter a house [to lodge there], first say to those people, 'May [God give inner] peace to [you people] [MTY] [in] this house!' **6** If people who [live] there [are (desiring to have)/worthy of receiving) [God's] peace, they will experience the [inner] peace that you are [offering them]. If people who [live] there [are not desiring to have God's] peace, you [will experience God's inner] peace, [but they will not]. **7** [If they welcome you], stay in that same house [until you leave that village]. Do not move around from one house to another. Eat and drink whatever they provide for you. A worker deserves to get pay [MET] [from the people for whom he works, so you deserve to receive food and a place to stay from the people to whom you go]. **8** Whenever you enter a town and the people [there] welcome you, eat what is provided {what [they] provide} for you. **9** Heal the people there who are sick. Tell them, 'It is almost [time for] God to send his king to rule [MET] [your lives].' **10** But if you enter a town whose [people] do not welcome you, go into its [main] streets and say, **11** '[Because you have refused to hear our message, we(exc) will not only leave], we will also shake off the dust of your town that clings to our sandals, to warn you [that God will reject/punish you]. But [we want you to know that] it is almost [the time when] God will start to rule!' **12** I will tell you this: On the [MTY] [final] day when [God judges everyone], he will punish the wicked people [MTY] who long ago lived in Sodom, [the city that he destroyed because its people were so wicked]. But he will punish [even] more severely the people [MTY] of any town [whose people refused to hear your message]!" **13** "There will be terrible [punishment] for [you people who live in] [MTY] Chorazin and Bethsaida [cities]. I did great miracles in your cities [to show God's power, but you did not turn from your sinful behavior]. If the miracles that I performed in your [cities] had been done in Tyre and Sidon [cities], the wicked people who lived there would have long ago [shown that they were sorry for their sins by] sitting on the ground wearing coarse cloth and putting ashes on their heads. **14** [But they did not have the opportunity that you have, so when God punishes people, he will punish the wicked people who lived in] Tyre and Sidon, but he will punish you more severely [because you did not pay attention to my message]. **15** [I also have something to say to] you [people who live in] Capernaum [city]. (Do not [think that you will be honored] {[that God] will honor you} in heaven!/Do you [think that you will be honored] {[that God] will honor you} in heaven?) [RHQ] [That will not happen! On the contrary], [after you die, God] will send you down to the place where [sinful people] will be punished [forever]!" **(Hadēs g86)** **16** [Jesus also said to the disciples, "God will consider that] those who listen to your [message] are listening to me, and that those who reject your [message] are rejecting me. And [he will consider that] those who reject me are rejecting [God], the one who sent me." **17** The 72 [people whom Jesus appointed went and did as he told them to]. When they returned, they were very joyful. They said, "Lord, [people did what we(exc) told them to do]! Demons also obeyed us when by your [(sg)] authority [MTY] [we commanded them to leave people]!" **18** Jesus replied, "[When those demons were obeying you, because God had enabled you to defeat them, it was as though] [MET] I saw Satan fall from heaven [as suddenly and quickly] as lightning [strikes]. **19** Listen! I have given you authority so that if you oppose evil spirits [MET] [they will not hurt you]. I have given you authority to defeat our enemy, [Satan]. Nothing shall hurt you. **20** But [although] you can rejoice that evil spirits obey you, you should rejoice [more] that your names have been written {that [God] has written your names} in heaven, [because you will be with God forever]." **21** At that time the Holy Spirit caused [Jesus] to be very happy. He said, "Father, you [(sg)] rule over [everything in] heaven and [on] the earth! Some [people think that they are] wise [because] they are well-educated. But I thank you that you have prevented them from [knowing] these things. [Instead], you have revealed them to [people who accept your truth as readily] [MET] [as] little children [do]. Yes, Father, [you have done that] because it seemed good to you [to do] so." **22** [Jesus also said to the 72 disciples], "[God], my Father, has revealed to me all [I need to know and the power I need for my work]. Only my Father knows who I [really] am. Furthermore, only I and those [people] to whom I wish to reveal him know what [God] my Father is [like]." **23** Then when Jesus' disciples were alone with him, he turned toward them and said, "[God] is pleased with you [SYN] who have seen [the things that I have done]! **24** I want you to know that many prophets and kings [who lived long ago] desired to see the things that you are seeing [me do], but these things did not [happen] then. They longed to hear the things that you have been hearing [me say], but these things were not [revealed to them] then." **25** [One day as Jesus was teaching people], a man was there who had studied carefully the laws that [God gave Moses]. He wanted to ask Jesus a difficult question. So he stood up and asked, "Teacher, what shall I do in order to live [with God] forever?" **(aiōnios g166)** **26** Jesus said to him,

"You [(sg)] have read [RHQ] what [Moses] has written in the laws that [God gave him]. What did Moses write about living forever?" **27** The man replied, "[He wrote that] we [(inc)] must love the Lord our God. [We must show that] by what we feel and by what we do and by what we think. [He] also [wrote that we must love] people that we come in contact with as much as [we love] ourselves." **28** Jesus replied, "You [(sg)] have answered [your question] correctly. If you do all that [continually], you will live [with God forever]." **29** But the man wanted to defend [the way] he [acted toward people that he came in contact with] (OR, to defend why he [had asked a question that Jesus answered so simply]). So he said to Jesus, "Which people that I come in contact with [should I love]?" **30** Jesus replied [by telling him this illustration]: "A [Jewish] man was once going down along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Bandits attacked him. They took away [most of] the man's clothes [and everything else that he had], and they beat him until he was almost dead. Then they left him. **31** It happened that a [Jewish] priest was going along that road. When he saw that man, [instead of helping him], he passed by on the other side [of the road]. **32** Similarly, a man who worked in the temple [in Jerusalem] came to that place and saw the man. But he also passed by on the other side [of the road]. **33** Then a man from Samaria [province] came along that road to where the man was lying. [People from Samaria despise Jews. But] when he saw that man, he pitied him. **34** He went over to him and put some [olive] oil and wine on his wounds [to help heal them]. He wound strips of cloth [around the wounds]. He placed the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn and took care of him. **35** The next morning he gave two silver coins to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of this man. If you [(sg)] spend more than this amount [to care for him], I will pay you back when I return.'" **36** Then Jesus said, "Three people [saw] the man whom bandits attacked. Which one of them [acted in a loving way toward] that man?" **37** The man who studied the Scriptures replied, "The one who acted mercifully toward him." Jesus said to him, "You [(sg)] go and act like that [toward] everyone whom [you can help]!" **38** As Jesus and his disciples continued to travel, they entered a village [near Jerusalem]. A woman whose name was Martha invited them to come to her house. **39** Her [younger] sister, whose name was Mary, sat near Jesus. She was listening to what he was teaching. **40** But Martha was very much concerned about preparing [a meal]. She went to Jesus and said, "Lord, (you do not seem to care that my sister has left me to prepare everything by myself!/do you not care that my sister has left me to prepare everything by myself?) [RHQ] Tell her that she should help me!" **41** But the Lord replied, "Martha, Martha, you [(sg)] are very worried about many things. **42** But only one thing is truly necessary, and that is, [to listen to what I am teaching]. Mary has decided to [do that], and that is better [than worrying]. [The blessing that she is receiving from listening to me] will not be taken away from her {No one will take away from her [the blessing that she is receiving from listening to me]}."

11 One day Jesus was somewhere praying. When he finished [praying], one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us [what to say when] we [(exc)] pray, as John [the Baptizer] taught his disciples!" **2** He said to them, "When you pray, say [things like this]: 'Father, we want you [(sg)] [MTY] to be honored/revered. [We want people to let you(sg)] [MTY, MET] rule over their lives. **3** Give us [(exc)] each day the food [SYN] that we need. **4** Forgive us [for] the wrong things that we have done, because we forgive people for the wrong things that they do to us. Do not let us do wrong things when we are tempted {[someone or something] tempts us}.'" **5** Then he said to them, "Suppose that one of you goes to the house of a friend at midnight. Suppose that you [(sg) stand outside and] call out to him, 'My friend, please lend me three buns! **6** Another friend of mine who is traveling has just arrived [at my house], but I have no food [ready] to give to him!' **7** Suppose that he answers you from inside [his house], 'Do not bother me! The door has been locked {[We(exc)] have locked the door} and all my family are in bed. [So] I cannot get up and give you [(sg)] anything!' **8** I will tell you that even if he does not [want to] get up and give you [any food], to avoid being ashamed [for not helping you] because you are his friend (OR, if without being ashamed you continue asking him to do that), he certainly will get up and give you whatever you need. **9** So I tell you this: Keep asking [God for what you need]. If you do that, [he] will give it to you [(pl)]. Confidently keep expecting [God to give you the things that you need], and [he] will give them to you [MET]. [It will be like] looking for what you need and finding it. Keep on [praying urgently to God. Then God will answer you. It will be like] knocking [on a door] so that [God] will open [the way] for you [to get what you pray for]. **10** Remember that [God] will give things to everyone who continues to ask [him for them]. [He] will give things to whoever confidently keeps asking. [He] will open [the way] for people [to get the things that they keep urgently praying for]. **11** If one of you had a son who asked you [(sg)] for a fish [to eat], (you [(sg)] certainly would not give him a [poisonous] snake instead!/would you give him a [poisonous] snake instead?) [RHQ] **12** If he asked you for an egg, (you [(sg)] certainly would not give him a scorpion!/would you give him a scorpion?) [RHQ] **13** Even though you people are

evil, you know how to give good things to your children. So your Father in heaven will certainly [give good things] to those who ask him, [including] giving the Holy Spirit, [who is the best gift]." **14** [One day there was a man there who, because a demon controlled him] [MTY], was unable to speak. After [Jesus expelled] the demon, the man [began to] talk. [Most of] the people [there] were amazed. **15** But some of them said, "It is Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons, who enables [this man] to expel demons!" **16** Other [people there] asked Jesus to perform a miracle [to prove (he was the Messiah/that he had come] from God) [MTY/EUP]. They wanted to trap him [into not being able to perform a miracle or into doing something ridiculous]. **17** But Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said to them, "If [the people in] one nation fight against each other, their nation will be destroyed {[they] will destroy their nation}. If [the people in] [MTY] one house are divided, they will cease to remain as one [family]. **18** [Similarly], if Satan [and his demons] were fighting against each other, (his rule over them would [certainly] not last!/how would his rule over them last?) [RHQ] [I say this] because you are saying that I am expelling demons by [the power of] the ruler of [his own demons] **19** Furthermore, if [it is true that] Satan enables me to expel demons, [is it also true that] your disciples [who] expel demons [do so] by [Satan's] power [RHQ]? [No, that is not true]. So they will show that you [are not thinking logically]. **20** But because it is by the power [MTY] of God [that I expel demons], I am showing you [that the power of] God to [MET] rule [people's lives] has come to you." **21** Then, [to show that by expelling evil spirits he was making it clear that he was much more powerful than Satan, Jesus said] [MET], "When a strong man who has many weapons guards his own house, no one can steal the things in his house. **22** But when someone else who is stronger attacks that man and subdues him, he is able to take away the weapons in which the man trusted. Then he can take from that man's house anything he [wants to]. **23** [No one can be neutral]. Those who do not help me [are opposing] me, and those who do not gather [people to become] my [disciples] are causing [those people] to go away [from me]." **24** [Then Jesus said this]: "[Sometimes when] an evil spirit leaves someone, it wanders around in desolate areas seeking [someone in whom it can] rest. If it does not find anyone, it says [to itself], 'I will return to the person in whom I used to live!' **25** So it goes back and finds that [the Spirit of God is not in control of that person's life. The person's life is like] a house that has been {that someone has} swept clean and everything put {put everything} in order, [but a house that is empty]. **26** Then [this evil spirit] goes and gets seven other spirits that are [even] more evil than it is. They [all] enter [that person] and [begin] living there. [So], [although] that person's condition [was bad] before, it became much worse." **27** When Jesus said that, a woman who was listening called out [to him], "[God is] pleased with the woman who gave birth to you [(sg)] and let you nurse [at her breasts]!" **28** But he replied, "God [is] much more pleased with those who hear his message and obey it!" **29** When the group of people around [Jesus] got larger, he said, "[Many of] you people who have been observing my ministry are evil. You want [me to perform] a miracle [to prove that I have come from God], but the only miracle that [I] will perform for you is one [like happened to] Jonah. **30** [After Jonah was inside a huge fish for three days, God performed] a miracle [to restore] Jonah. [Jonah then went and testified about that] to the people in Nineveh [city. God will perform] a similar miracle [for me], the one who came from heaven. [When you people have seen that miracle, you will believe my message]. **31** [Long ago the] queen from [Sheba], [far] south [of Israel, traveled a long distance to hear Solomon speak many] wise things. But now [I, a man] who [is much] greater [and wiser] than Solomon, am here, [but you have not listened to what I have told you]. Therefore, at the time when [God] judges [all people], the queen from [Sheba] will stand there, [along] with you people, and will condemn you. **32** The people who lived in Nineveh [city] turned from their sinful ways when Jonah preached to them. But now I, who am greater than Jonah, have come [and preached to you], [but you have not turned from your sinful ways]. Therefore, at the time when God judges [all people], the people who lived in Nineveh will stand there with you and condemn you." **33** [Then, to show them that they did not need more miracles, but that they needed only to understand better what he had already told them, he said to them] [MET], "People who light a lamp do not then hide it, or put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so that those who enter [their house] can see [things from] its light. [Similarly, I have not concealed God's truth. I have revealed it to you]. **34** Your eyes [MET] are like a lamp for your body, because they enable you to see things. If your eyes are healthy, you are able to see everything well [MET]. [Similarly, if you(sg) accept my teaching, you will be able to know all that God wants you to know]. But if your eyes are bad, you are not able to see anything. It is like being in darkness [MET]. [And similarly, if you(pl) do not accept what I teach, you will not be able to know all the things that God wants you to know]. **35** Therefore, [you(pl) do not need to see more miracles. You need to think carefully about what I have already] told you, so that the things that you have heard from others do not cause you to remain in spiritual darkness [MET]. **36** If you [live completely according to God's

truth, you will be able to know everything that God wants you to know. It will be like] being in a room with a lamp shining brightly, enabling you to see everything clearly." **37** While Jesus finished saying those things, a Pharisee invited him to eat a meal with him. So Jesus went to [his house] and ate with him. **38** The Pharisee was surprised when he saw that Jesus did not follow the Pharisees' ritual by washing his hands before eating. [The Pharisees washed their hands in a certain way to be cleansed from anything that might have contaminated them. They were afraid that God might reject them if they] had [touched something unacceptable to God]. **39** The Lord [Jesus] said to him, "You Pharisees are [concerned about things that are outside your bodies, not with what is in your] ([inner beings/hearts]) [MET]. You wash the outside of cups and dishes [before you eat because you think that doing that will make you acceptable to God], but within yourselves you are very greedy and wicked. **40** You foolish people! [God] is concerned about things that are outside [our bodies], but (he is certainly also concerned about our inner [beings]!/isn't he also concerned about our hearts?) [RHQ] **41** Give [money] to those who are poor. [Give according to what you know within] your (inner [/heart]) [that you should give]. Then you [will be surprised to realize that] you will be acceptable [to God without having to perform all those rituals about washing]. **42** But there will be terrible punishment for you Pharisees! You give to God a tenth of [all you produce, even] the various herbs that you grow, but you do not [remember that you must act] justly [toward others] and love God! It is good to [give a tenth of your income to God], but you ought to do these other things also! **43** There will be terrible punishment for you Pharisees, because you like [to sit in] the best seats in our worship places [so that people will think highly of you], and you like people to greet you [respectfully] in the marketplaces. **44** There will be terrible punishment for you, because you are like ground where there is no marker [to indicate that there is a] grave [underneath]. People walk there, but they cannot see [what is rotten down below] [MET]! [Similarly, people who see you do not realize how polluted you are within yourselves]." **45** One of those who taught the [Jewish] laws replied, "Teacher, by saying this you [(sg)] are criticizing us [also]!" **46** Jesus said, "It will be terrible also for you who teach the [Jewish] laws! You require people [to obey many rules that are difficult to obey] [MET]. [That is like making them] carry heavy burdens on their backs. But you yourselves do not obey the laws [that you require others to obey]. (OR, you do not do anything to help [others to obey the laws].) **47** There will be terrible punishment for you! You decorate the tombs of the prophets whom your ancestors killed, [but you do not live according to what the prophets taught]. **48** So you are declaring that you approve of what your ancestors did. They killed the prophets, and you [are not honoring the prophets! You just] decorate their tombs! **49** So God, who is very wise [PRS], said, 'I will send prophets and apostles [to you Jews]. [You] will kill some of them and cause some of them to suffer greatly. **50** [As a result, I] will consider that many of you people [who have observed my Son's ministry] will be guilty [MTY] [of murder, as if you had] killed all the prophets that other people have killed, from the time I created the world, **51** starting from [Adam's son Cain] killing [his brother] Abel and continuing until they killed the prophet Zechariah [in the holy place] between the altar and the temple.' Yes, what I am saying [is true] [MTY]. [God] will punish you people who have observed my ministry, you people whom [he] considers to be guilty [MTY] for [killing] all those prophets! **52** There will be terrible punishment for you men who teach the [Jewish] laws, because you have [not let people] know [God's truth] [MET]! [It is as though you are] taking away a key [to a house]. You are not going into [the house] yourselves, and you are not letting other people enter it, either." **53** After Jesus finished saying those things, he left there. Then the men who taught the [Jewish] laws and the Pharisees began to act in a very hostile way toward him. They tried to make him say what he thought about many things. **54** They kept waiting for him to say something [wrong] for which they could accuse him.

12 While they were doing that, many thousands of people gathered [around Jesus]. There were so many that they were stepping on each other. Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware of [becoming] hypocrites [like] the Pharisees. Their [evil influence] [MET] [spreads to others like] yeast [spreads its influence in dough]. **2** People will not be able to continue concealing the things that [they or other] people try to conceal now. [God] will [some day] cause the things that are hidden now to be known {[everyone] to know the things that they hide now}. **3** All the things that you say in the dark [secretly, some day] will be heard {people will hear them} in the daylight. The things you have whispered [SYN] privately among yourselves in your rooms will be proclaimed {[people] will proclaim them} publicly." **4** "My friends, listen [carefully]. Do not be afraid of people who [are able to] kill you, but after they kill you, there is nothing more that they can do [to hurt you]. **5** But I will warn you about the one that you should truly be afraid of. You should be afraid of [God], because he not only has [the power to] cause people to die, he has the power to throw them into hell afterward! Yes, he is truly the one that you should be afraid of! **(Geenna g1067)** **6** [Think about] the sparrows. [They are worth so little] that

[you] can [RHQ] buy five of them for only two small coins. But not one of them is ever forgotten by God {God never forgets one of them}! 7 You are worth more [to God] than many sparrows. So do not be afraid [of what people can do to you! God] even knows how many hairs there are on each of your heads, [so that if you(sg) lose one hair, he knows about it. So nothing bad can happen to you without his knowing it]. 8 I want to tell you also that if people, [without being afraid, are willing to] tell others [that they are my disciples], [I], the one who came from heaven, will acknowledge before [God that they are my disciples]. [I will do that while] God's angels listen. 9 But if people [are] afraid to say in front of others that they are [my disciples], [I] will say, while God's angels listen, that they are not [my disciples]. 10 [I will tell you] also that [God is willing to] forgive people who say bad things about me, the one who came from heaven, but [he] will not forgive anyone who says evil things about what the Holy Spirit [does]. 11 [So] when people ask you in Jewish worship houses and in the presence of rulers and other authorities [about your trusting in me], do not worry about how you will answer them [when they accuse you]. Do not worry about what you should say, 12 because the Holy Spirit will tell you at that very time what you should say." 13 Then one of the people in the crowd said to [Jesus], "Teacher, tell my [older] brother to divide my father's property and give me [the part that belongs] to me!" 14 But Jesus replied to him, "Man, (no one appointed me in order that I would settle [matters when people are] disputing about property!/did anyone appoint me in order that I would settle [matters when people are] disputing about property?) [RHQ]" 15 Then he said to the whole crowd, "Guard yourselves very carefully, in order that you do not desire other people's things in any way! No one can make his life secure by [obtaining] many possessions." 16 Then Jesus told the people this illustration: "There was a certain rich man whose crops grew very well. 17 [So] he said [to himself], 'I do not know what to do, because I do not have any place [big enough] to store all my crops!' 18 Then he thought to himself, '[I know] what I will do! I will tear down my grain bins and build larger ones! Then I will store all my wheat and other goods in [the big new bins]. 19 [Then] I will say to myself [SYN], "Now I have plenty of goods stored up. [They will last] for many years. [So now] I will take life easy. I will eat and drink [all that I want to] and be happy [for a long time]!"' 20 But God said to him, 'You foolish [man]! Tonight you will die! (Then all [the goods] you have saved up [for yourself] will [belong to someone else, not to] you!/Do you think that you [will benefit from] all that you have stored up for yourself?) [RHQ]'" 21 [Then Jesus ended this illustration by saying], "That is what will happen to those who store up goods just for themselves, but who do not value the things [that] God [considers] valuable." 22 Then [Jesus] said to his disciples, "So I want to tell you this: Do not worry about [things you need] in order to live. Do not worry about [whether you will have enough food] to eat or [enough clothes] to wear. 23 It is important to have sufficient food and clothing, but (the way you conduct your lives is more important./is not the way you conduct your lives more important?) [RHQ] 24 Think about the birds: They do not plant [seeds], and they do not harvest [crops]. They do not have rooms or buildings in which to store crops. But God provides food for them. [And] you are certainly much more valuable than birds. [So God will certainly provide what you need]! 25 (There is not a one of you who can add a little bit to how long he lives by worrying about it!/Is there any of you who can add a little bit to how long he lives by worrying about it?) [RHQ] 26 Worrying is a small thing to do. So since you cannot add to your life, (you certainly should not worry about other things that [you need to have in order to live!]/why do you worry about other things that [you need to have in order to live]?) [RHQ] 27 Think about the way that flowers grow [in the fields]. They do not work [to earn money], and they do not make their own clothes. But I tell you that [even though King] Solomon, [who lived long ago, wore very beautiful clothes], his clothes were not as beautiful as one of those [flowers]. 28 God makes the flowers beautiful, but they grow in the fields for only a short time. Then [they are cut at the same time that the grass] is cut, and thrown into an oven [to be burned to make heat for baking] bread. [So they really are not worth very much. But you are very precious to] God, [and he] will [care for you] much more [than he cares for the grass by filling it with beautiful flowers]. So he will certainly provide clothes for you, who [live much longer than the grass. Why] [RHQ] [do you] trust him so little? 29 Do not always be concerned about having enough to eat and drink, and do not be worrying about those things. 30 The people who do not know God are always worried about such things. But your Father [in heaven] knows that you need those things, [so you should not worry about them]. 31 Instead, be concerned about letting [God] completely direct [your life]. Then [he] will also give you enough of the things [you need]. 32 [You who are my disciples are like a] small flock of sheep, [and I am like your shepherd]. So you should not be afraid. Your Father [in heaven] wants to let you rule with him [in heaven]. 33 [So now] sell the things that you own. Give [the money that you get for those things] to poor people. [If you do that, it will be as though] you are providing for yourselves purses that will not wear out, and [God will give] you a treasure in heaven

that will always be safe. There, no thief can come near [to steal it], and no termite can destroy it. **34** Remember that [the things] that you [think are the most] valuable are [the things] that you will be constantly concerned about." **35** "Be always ready [for doing God's work] [MET], like [people] who have put on their work clothes and are ready [during the day], with their lamps burning all night. **36** Be [ready for me to return] [MET], like servants who are waiting for their master to return after being at a wedding feast [for several days]. They are [waiting to] open the door for him and [start working for him again] as soon as he arrives and knocks at the door. **37** If those servants are awake when he returns, [he will] be very pleased with them. I will tell you this: He will put on [the kind of clothes] that servants wear and tell them to sit down, and he will serve them a meal. **38** [Even] if he comes between midnight and sunrise, if he finds that his servants are [awake and] ready [for him], he will be very pleased with them. **39** But you must also remember this: If owners of a house knew what time a thief was coming, they [would stay awake and] would not allow their house to be broken into [and their goods to be stolen] {[the thief] to break into the house [and steal their goods]}. **40** Similarly, you must be ready [for me to return], because [I], the one who came from heaven, will come [again] at a time when you do not expect [me to come]." **41** Peter said, "Lord, are you [(sg)] speaking this illustration [only] for us or for everyone [else also]?" **42** The Lord replied, "[I am saying it for you and for anyone else] [MET, RHQ] who is like a faithful and wise manager in his master's house. His master appoints him to [supervise affairs in his house] and to give all the [other] servants their food at the proper time. [Then he leaves on a long trip]. **43** If the servant is doing that work when his master returns, [his master] will be very pleased with him. **44** I tell you this: His master will appoint him to supervise all of his affairs [permanently]. **45** But that servant might think to himself, 'My master [has been away] for a long time, [so he probably will] not return soon [and find out what I am doing].' [Then he might] start to beat the [other] servants, both male and female ones. [He might also start] to eat [a lot of food] and get drunk. **46** [If he does that, and if] his master returns on a day when the servant does not expect him, then his master will (cut him into two pieces/punish him severely) [HYP] and put him [in the place where he puts all] those who do not [serve him] faithfully. **47** Every servant who knows what his master wants him to do but who does not get himself ready and does not do what his master desires will be beaten severely {[The master] will beat severely every servant who knows what his master wants him to do but who does not get himself ready and does not do what his master desires}. **48** But every [servant] who did not know [what his master wanted] him to do, and who did things for which he deserved to be punished, will be beaten lightly {[the master] will beat lightly every [servant] who did not know [what his master wanted] him to do and did the things for which he deserved that [his master] would beat him}. [God will treat his people similarly, because he] expects a lot from those people whom [he] has allowed [to understand a lot]. People who entrust things [to others' care] expect those people [to care for those things] very well. Similarly, [God] expects a lot from those people whom he has allowed [to understand a lot]. Furthermore, he expects the most from people to whom he has given the most [ability]." **49** "I came to earth to cause [there to be trials] [MET], [which will purify you as] fire [purifies metal] (OR, to cause judgment/divisions among you). I wish that the time when [you] will be purified {when [God] will purify you} (OR, when divisions will be caused {to cause divisions among people}) had already begun. **50** I must soon suffer [IDM] greatly. I am distressed, and I will continue to be distressed until my suffering is finished. **51** Do you think that as a result of my coming to earth people will live together peacefully? No! I must tell you, [that is not what will happen! Instead, people] will be divided. **52** Because some people in one house [will believe in me and some will not], they will be divided. [For example], three people in one house [who do not believe in me] will oppose two [who do believe], or two [who do not believe in me] will oppose three [who do believe]. **53** A man will oppose his son, or a son will oppose his father. A woman will oppose her daughter, or a woman will oppose her mother. A woman will oppose her daughter-in-law, or a woman will oppose her mother-in-law." **54** He [also] said to the crowds, "[In this country], when you see a [dark] cloud forming in the west, you immediately say 'It is going to rain!' and that is what happens. **55** [In this region], when the wind blows from the south, you say, 'It is going to be a very hot day!' and that is what happens. **56** You hypocrites! By observing the clouds and the wind, you are able to discern what is happening regarding [the weather]. It is disgusting that you are not able to discern [what God is doing] at this present time [RHQ]! **57** (Each of you ought to determine now what is the right thing for you to do, [while you still have time to do that]!/Why cannot each of you determine what is the right [thing for you to do now while you still have time to do that]?) [RHQ] **58** [If you do not do that, God will punish you] [MET]. [It will be like what happens when] someone takes one of you to court, saying that you [(sg)] have done something very bad. You should try to settle things with him while you are still on the way to the court. If he forces you to go to the judge, the judge will decide that

you are guilty and put you into the hands of the court officer. Then that officer will put you in prison. **59** I tell you that if you go to prison, you will never get out, [because you will never be able to] pay every bit [of what the judge says you owe] [MET]. [Similarly, you ought to settle accounts with God before you die, too]."

13 Some people who were [listening to Jesus] at that time told him about some people from Galilee [district who had gone to Jerusalem]. Pilate, [the Roman governor], had [ordered soldiers to] kill them [MTY] while they were offering sacrifices [in the Temple there]. **2** Jesus replied to them, "Do you think [that this happened to those] people from Galilee [because] they were more sinful than all the other people from Galilee? **3** I assure you, [that was] not [so]! But instead of [being concerned about them, you need to remember that God] will similarly punish you [eternally] if you do not turn away from your sinful behavior. **4** Or, [consider] the 18 people who died when the tower at Siloam [outside Jerusalem] fell on them. Do you think [that this happened to them because] they were more sinful than all the other people who lived in Jerusalem? **5** I assure you, [that was] not so! But instead, you [need to realize that God] will similarly punish you [eternally] if you do not stop your sinful behavior!" **6** Then Jesus told them this illustration [to show what God would do to the Jews, whom he continually blessed, but who did not do things that please him]: "A man planted a fig tree on his farmland. ([Each year/Many times]) he came to it looking for figs, but there were no figs. **7** Then he said to the gardener, 'Look [here]! I have been looking for fruit on this fig tree every year for the past three years, but there have been no figs. Cut it down! (It is just using up the nutrients in the soil for nothing!/Why should it continue using up the [nutrients in] the soil [for nothing]?) [RHQ]' **8** But the gardener replied to the owner, 'Sir, leave it here for another year. I will dig around it and put manure around it. **9** If it bears fruit next year, we [(inc)] will allow it to keep growing. If it does not bear fruit next year, you [(sg)] can cut it down.'" **10** One (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest), [Jesus] was teaching people in one of the Jewish meeting places. **11** There was a woman there whom an evil spirit [MTY] had crippled for 18 years. She was always bent over; she could not stand up straight. **12** When Jesus saw her, he called her over to him. He said to her, "Woman, [I am] freeing you [(sg)] from your illness!" **13** He put his hands on her. Immediately she stood up straight, and she praised God! **14** But the man in charge (of the synagogue/of the meeting place) was angry because Jesus had healed her (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day). [He considered that healing was doing work]. So he said to the people, "There are six days [each week] in which [our Jewish] laws permit people to work. [If you need healing], those are the days to come ([to the synagogue/to the meeting place]) and be healed. Do not come on our Jewish day of rest!" **15** Then the Lord replied to him, "You [(sg) and your fellow religious leaders are] hypocrites! (On the Sabbath/On our Jewish day of rest), [just like on every other day], (each of you unties his ox or donkey, and then leads it from the food trough to where it can drink water./does not each of you untie his ox or donkey, and then lead it from the food trough to where it can drink water?) [RHQ] [That is work, too]! **16** This woman [is more important than an animal; she is a Jew], descended from Abraham! But Satan has [kept her] [MET] [crippled] for 18 years, [as though] he had tied her up [and not let her escape]! So (it is certainly right that she be freed {that [I] free her}, [even if this] is a Sabbath day!/was it not right that she be freed {that [I] free her}, [even if this] is a Jewish rest day?) [RHQ]" **17** After Jesus said that, all the people [there] who opposed him were ashamed. But all the [other] people [there] were happy about all the wonderful things he was doing. **18** Then Jesus said, "(I will tell you how [the number of people who let] God rule [MET] [their lives will increase]./Do you know how [the number of people who let] God rule [MET] [their lives will increase]?) [RHQ] I will tell you what I can compare it to. **19** It is like a [tiny] mustard seed that a man planted in his field. It grew until it became [big, like] a tree. It was [so big that] birds built nests in its branches." **20** Then he said, "I will tell [RHQ] you something else, to illustrate how the people who let God rule [MET] [their lives can influence their society more and more]. **21** It is like [a little bit of] yeast that a woman mixed with about 50 pounds of flour. [That small amount of yeast made] the whole batch of dough swell up." **22** [Jesus] continued traveling, along [with his disciples], through various towns and villages on the way to Jerusalem. As they went, he was teaching [the people]. **23** Someone asked him, "Lord, will there be only a few people who are saved {whom [God] saves}?" He replied to them, "[There will not be many, because] the way [to heaven] [MET] is [like] a narrow door. **24** [Therefore, try hard] to enter that narrow doorway, because I tell you that many people will try to enter [heaven by some other way], but they will not be able to get in. **25** [God is like] the owner of a house. [Some day] he will lock his door. Then [some of] you will begin to stand outside that door and knock. You will say, 'Lord, open the door for us!' But he will reply, '[No, I will not open it, because] I do not know you, and I do not know where you are from!' **26** Then you will say, '([You must have forgotten!/Surely you know us, because]) [RHQ] we [(exc)] ate [meals] with you [(sg)], and you taught [people] in the

streets of our [towns]'! 27 But he will say, '[I tell you again], I do not know you, and I do not know where you are from. You [are] wicked people! Get away from here!'" 28 Then Jesus continued, saying, "[From where God will send you], you will see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the distance. All the prophets [who lived long ago will also be there], in the kingdom where God [is ruling]. But you will be outside, crying and grinding your teeth [because you will have severe pain]! 29 Furthermore, many [non-Jewish] people will [be inside]. There will be ones who have come from [lands to] the north, east, south, and west. They will be feasting in (that place where God is ruling/God's kingdom). 30 Think about this: Some people whom others do not [consider] important [now, God will make] them very important [then], and some people whom [others consider] very important [now, God will make] to be not important [then]." 31 At that very time, some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, "Leave this area, because [the ruler] Herod [Antipas] wants to kill you [(sg)]!" 32 He replied to them, "Herod is [MET] [as cruel as] a fox, [but also as insignificant as a fox]. [So I do not worry about him]. But [to show him that no one can harm me until it is the time and place God has determined], go tell him this [message from me]: 'Listen! I am expelling demons and performing miracles today, and [I will continue doing] it for a short time. After that, I will finish my work. 33 But I must continue my trip [to Jerusalem] during the coming days, because [they killed many other] prophets there, and [since I am also a prophet], no other place is appropriate for people to kill [me].'" 34 [Then Jesus said], "O [people of] [MTY] Jerusalem [APO]! You killed the prophets [who lived long ago, and you killed others], whom [God] sent to you, [by throwing] stones [at them]. Many times I wanted to gather you together [to protect you] [SIM] like a hen gathers her young chicks under her wings. But you did not want [me to do that]. 35 So listen to this: Your city [MTY] (OR, your temple) is going to be abandoned (OR, God will no longer protect it). I will [MTY] also tell you this: I [will enter your city only once more. After that], you will not see me until the time when [I return and] you say [about me], 'God is truly pleased with this man who comes with God's authority [MTY]!'"

14 One (Jewish day of rest/Sabbath day), Jesus went to eat [SYN] at the house of an important Pharisee. Some [men who studied the Jewish] laws and other Pharisees who were there were watching him carefully [to see if he would do something for which they could accuse him]. 2 Unexpectedly, there was a man in front of Jesus whose arms and legs were swollen. 3 Jesus said to them, "Is it permitted in [our(inc)] Jewish laws to heal [someone] (on our Jewish rest day/on the Sabbath), or not?" 4 [They knew that their laws permitted it, but they thought that healing was work, which they thought was wrong to do] (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day) (OR, [they knew that their laws permitted it, but they did not want to admit it]). So they did not reply. Then Jesus put his hands on the man and healed him. Then he told him to go [home]. 5 Then he said to the rest of them, "If you had a son or an ox that fell into a well on a (Sabbath/our day of rest), would you immediately [work to] pull him out, [or would you(sg) let him stay there until the next day]?" 6 [They knew that they would immediately work to pull him out, even on their day of rest, so they could not justly say that Jesus did wrong by healing the man on that day. So] they said nothing in reply to Jesus. 7 Jesus noticed that those people who had been {whom [the Pharisee] had} invited [to the meal] chose [to sit in] the places where important [people usually sit]. Then he gave [this advice] to them: 8 "When one of you [(sg)] is invited by someone {someone invites one of you [(sg)]} to a wedding feast, do not sit in a place where important people sit. Perhaps the man [giving the feast] has invited a man more important than you [(sg)]. 9 [When that man comes], the man who invited both of you will come to you [(sg)] and say to you, 'Let this man take your seat!' Then you [(sg)] will have to take the most undesirable seat, and you will be ashamed. 10 Instead, when you are invited {[someone] invites one of you} [to a feast], go and sit in the most undesirable seat. Then when the man who invited everyone comes, he will say to you [(sg)], 'Friend, sit in a better seat!' Then all the people who are eating with you [(sg)] will see that he is honoring you. 11 Also, [remember this]: [God] will humble those who exalt themselves. And [he] will exalt those who humble themselves." 12 [Jesus] also said to [the Pharisee] who had invited him to the meal, "When you [(sg)] invite people to a midday or evening meal, do not invite your friends or your family or your other relatives or your rich neighbors. They can later invite you [(sg) for a meal]. In that way they will repay you. 13 Instead, when you [(sg)] give a feast, invite poor [people], crippled [people], lame [people], or blind [people]. 14 They will be unable to repay you. [But God will bless you! He] will repay you [at the time] when [he causes] righteous people to become alive again." 15 One of those who were eating with Jesus heard him say that. He said to Jesus, "God [has truly] blessed [us Jews] who will eat [with the Messiah] when he starts to rule!" 16 But [to show that many Jews whom God had invited would not accept God's invitation] [MET], Jesus replied to him, "One time a man [decided] to prepare a large feast. He invited many people to come. 17 When it was the day for the feast, he sent his servant to tell those who had been {whom he had} invited, 'Come [now] because everything is

ready!' 18 But [when the servant did that], all of the people [whom he had invited] began to say why they did not want to come. The first [man the servant went to] said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please [ask your master to] forgive me for not coming!' 19 Another person said, 'I have just bought five pair of oxen, and I must go to examine them. Please [ask your master to] forgive me for not coming!' 20 Another person said, 'I have just been married. So I cannot come.' 21 So the servant returned to his master and reported what [everyone had said]. The owner of the house was angry [when he heard the reasons they gave for not] coming. He said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and alleys of the city [and find] poor and crippled and blind and lame [people, and bring] them here into [my house]!' 22 [After the servant went and did that], he [came back and] said, 'Sir, I have done what you [(sg)] told me to do, but there is still room [for more people].' 23 [So] his master said to him, 'Then go [outside the city]. Search for people along the highways. Search also along the narrow roads with hedges beside them [where homeless people may be staying]. Strongly urge the people in those places to come to [my house]. I want it to be full of [people]!'" 24 [Then Jesus said], "I tell you [(pl)] this: Very few of you [Jewish] people will enjoy my feast, even though [I] invited you [first to eat it with me when I become king]." 25 Large groups of people were traveling with [Jesus]. He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to me who loves his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters [more than] [HYP] [he loves me], he cannot be my disciple. He must even love me more than he loves his own life! 27 [People who are ready to execute a prisoner make] him carry his cross [MET] [to the place where others will nail him] on it. Only those who are willing [to allow others to hurt them and disgrace them] like that because of being my disciples, and who are willing to obey what I teach, can be my disciples. 28 [I will illustrate] [MET]. If one of you desired to build a (tower/big house), (you would surely first sit down and determine how much it would cost!/would you not first sit down and determine how much it would cost?) [RHQ] Then you would determine whether you had enough money to complete it. 29 [If you did not do that], if you laid the foundation and were not able to finish [the rest of the tower], everyone who saw it would make fun of you. 30 They would say, 'This man started to build [a tower], but he was not able to finish it!' 31 Or, if a king decided to [send his army to] war against another king, (he would surely first sit down [with those who] advised [him]./would he not first sit down [with those who] advised [him]?) [RHQ] They would determine whether [his army], which had only 10,000 soldiers, could defeat the [other army], which had 20,000 soldiers, and was about to attack his [army]. 32 If he [decided] that his army could not [defeat that army], he would send messengers to [the other king] while the other army was still far away. He would tell the messengers to say to that king, 'What things must I do to have peace with your country?' 33 So, similarly, if any one of you does not first decide that you [(sg)] are [willing to] give up all that you have, you cannot be my disciple." 34 [Jesus also said, "You are like] [MET] salt, which is useful [to put on food]. But (salt certainly cannot be made {[you] certainly cannot make salt} to taste salty again if it stops tasting salty!/can salt be made {can [you] make salt} to taste salty again if it quits tasting salty?) [RHQ] 35 [If salt does not taste salty any more], it is not good for the soil or even for the manure heap. [People] throw it away. [The same thing will happen to you if you become useless to God]. If you want to understand what I just said [IDM], you must consider [carefully] what you have heard!"

15 Many [HYP] tax collectors and [others whom people considered to be] habitual sinners kept coming to Jesus to listen to him teach. 2 The Pharisees and men who taught the [Jewish] laws [who were there] [SYN] began to grumble, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and he also [defiles himself by eating] with them!" 3 So Jesus told them this parable: 4 "Suppose that one of you had 100 sheep. If one of them were lost, (you [(sg)] would certainly leave the 99 sheep in the pasture, and go and search for the one lost sheep until you found it./would you not leave the 99 sheep in the pasture, and go and search for the one lost sheep until you found it?) [RHQ] 5 When you [(sg)] found it, you would put it on your shoulders and be happy. 6 When you brought it home, you would call together your friends and neighbors and say to them, 'Be happy with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost!' 7 I tell you [(pl)] that similarly [God] will be very happy about each and every sinner who turns from doing evil. God is not happy about 99 people who [think that they] are [IRO] righteous and think that they do not need to turn from doing evil. 8 Or, suppose that a woman has ten [very valuable] silver coins. If she loses one of them, (she will certainly light a lamp and sweep the floor and search carefully until she finds it!/will she not light a lamp and sweep the floor and search carefully until she finds it?) [RHQ] 9 When she finds it, she will call together her friends and neighbors and say, 'Be happy with me, [because] I have found the coin that I lost!' 10 I tell you that similarly the angels will be happy about [even just] one sinner who turns from doing evil." 11 Then [Jesus told them this parable to compare what the Pharisees and teachers of the Jewish law thought about those who turn from their sinful behavior with

what God thinks about such people]. He said, "A certain man had two sons. **12** One day the younger son said to his father, 'Father, [I do not want to wait until you(sg) die]. Give me now the share of your property that belongs to me!' So the man divided his property between his two sons. **13** A few days later, the younger son [sold his share]. He gathered his money and other things together and went to a country far away. There he spent all his money foolishly in reckless/wild living. **14** After he had spent all his money, there was a great famine throughout that country. And soon he did not have enough [food to] eat. **15** So he went to one of the landowners in that area and asked for work. The man sent him to work taking care of the pigs in his field. **16** [Because he was very hungry], he would have been glad to eat the bean pods that the pigs ate. But no one gave him anything to eat. **17** Finally he thought clearly about what he had done. He said to himself, 'All of my father's hired servants have plenty of food! They have more [SYN] than they can eat, but here I am dying because I do not have anything to eat [HYP]! **18** So I will leave here and go back to my father. I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against God [MTY, EUP] and against you [(sg)]. **19** I am no longer worthy to be called {of [you] calling me} your son. Just hire me to be like one of the other hired servants.'" **20** So he left there and went back to his father's house. But while he was still some distance from the house, his father saw him. He pitied him. He ran to his son and embraced him and kissed him [on the cheek]. **21** His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against God [MTY/EUP] and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called {of [you] calling me} your son.' **22** But his father said to his servants, 'Go quickly and bring to me the best robe [in the house]! Then put it on my son. Put a ring on his finger [to show that I am honoring him again as my son]! Put sandals on his feet [to show that I do not consider him to be a slave]! **23** Then bring the fat calf and kill it [and cook it]. We [(inc)] must eat and celebrate, **24** because my son has returned! [It is as though] [MET] he was dead and is alive again! [It is as though] he was lost and now has been found!' So they did that, and they all began to celebrate. **25** While all that was happening, the man's older son was out [working] in the field. When he came near to the house, he heard [people playing] music and dancing. **26** He called one of the servants and asked what was happening. **27** The servant said to him, 'Your [younger] brother has come [home] Your father has [told us to] kill the fat calf [to celebrate] because your brother has returned safe and healthy.' **28** [But] the older brother was angry. He refused to enter [the house]. So his father came out and pleaded with him [to come in]. **29** But he replied to his father, 'Listen to me! For many years I have worked for you like a slave. I always obeyed everything you told me to do. But you never even gave me a young goat, so that I could [kill it and cook it and] celebrate with my friends. **30** But this son of yours spent all the [money he got from] what you gave him. He spent it [to pay for sleeping with] prostitutes! Yes, now he has returned home, [but it is not fair that] you have told your [servants] to kill the fat calf [and cook it] for him!' **31** But his father said to him, 'My son, you have always been with me, and all my property [that I did not give to your brother] has been yours. **32** But [it is as though] [MET] your brother was dead and is alive again! [It is as though] he was lost and now he has been found! So it is appropriate for us to be happy and celebrate!'"

16 [Jesus] also said to his disciples, "Once there was a rich man who had a household manager. [One day] he was told {[someone] told him} that [the manager] was managing the rich man's money badly. **2** So he summoned [his manager] and said to him, '(It is terrible what they are saying about you [(sg)]!/Is it true what they are saying about you [(sg)] [RHQ]?) Give me a written account of [the funds] you have been managing, because you can no longer be my [household] manager!' **3** Then the manager thought to himself, 'My master is going to fire me, so (I do not know what to do./what shall I do [RHQ]?) I am not strong enough to [work by] digging ditches, and I am ashamed to beg [for money].' **4** [Suddenly he had an idea]. 'I know what I will do, so that people will take me into their houses [and provide for me] after I am dismissed {after my master dismisses me} from my work!' **5** So [one by one] he summoned the people who owed his master money. He asked the first one, 'How much do you [(sg)] owe my master?' **6** The man replied, 'Eight hundred gallons of olive oil.' The manager said to him, 'Take your bill and sit down and quickly change it to 400 [gallons]!' **7** He said to another man, 'How much do you owe?' The man replied, 'A thousand bushels of wheat.' The manager said to him, 'Take your bill and change it to 800 [bushels]!' [He did similar things for the others who owed his master money]. **8** When his master [heard what the manager had done], he admired the dishonest manager for the clever thing he had done. [The truth] is that the ungodly people in this world act more wisely toward other people than godly people [MET] act. **(aiōn g165)** **9** [So] I tell you [(pl)] this: Use the money that you have [here] on earth to help others so that they will become your friends. Then when [you die and] you cannot [take] any money with you, [God and his angels] will welcome you into a home [in heaven] that will last forever. **(aiōnios g166)** **10** People who faithfully manage small [matters] will also faithfully manage important [matters]. People who are dishonest in [the way they handle]

small [matters] will be dishonest [in the way they handle] important [matters]. **11** So if you have not faithfully handled the money that [God has given you here] on earth, (he will certainly not allow you to possess the true [spiritual] riches [in heaven!]/would he allow you to possess the true [spiritual] riches [in heaven]?) [RHQ] **12** And if you have not faithfully managed things that belong to other people, ([God] will certainly not allow you to receive [treasures in heaven that] would belong to you!/would God allow you to receive [treasures in heaven that] would belong to you?) [RHQ] **13** No servant is able to serve two [different] bosses [at the same time. If he tried to do that], he would prefer one of them more than the other one; he would be loyal to one of them and despise the other one. [Similarly], you cannot [devote your life] to worshipping God and [worshipping] money and material goods [at the same time]." **14** There were some Pharisees [there]. They loved [to acquire] money. When they heard Jesus say that, they ridiculed him. **15** But he said to them, "You try to make other people think that you are righteous, but God knows your (inner beings/hearts). [So he will reject you. Keep in mind that many] things that people think are important, God thinks are detestable. **16** The laws that [God gave Moses] and what the prophets [MTY] [wrote] were ([in effect/what you needed to obey]) until John [the Baptizer] came. Since then [I] have been preaching about how God wants to [rule people's lives in a new way], and many people are [accepting that message and] very eagerly asking God to control [their lives. But that does not mean that God has abolished the laws that he established previously]. **17** [All of God's] laws, [even those that seem] insignificant, are more permanent than heaven and earth. **18** [For example, because God considers that a marriage lasts until either the husband or the wife dies, he considers that] any man who divorces his wife and marries another woman is committing adultery. He also [considers that] any man who marries a woman who has been divorced by her husband {whose husband has divorced her} is [also] committing adultery." **19** [Jesus also said] [MET], "Once there was a rich man who wore [expensive] purple linen [garments]. He ate luxuriously every day. **20** And every day a poor man whose name was Lazarus was laid {[some people also] laid a poor man whose name was Lazarus} at the gate of the rich man's [house]. Lazarus' body was covered with sores. **21** He [was so hungry that he] wanted to eat the scraps [of food] that fell from the table where the rich man [ate]. Furthermore, [to make things worse], dogs came and licked his sores. **22** [Eventually] the poor man died. Then he was taken by the angels {the angels took him} to [start feasting] next to his [ancestor] Abraham. The rich man also died, and his body was buried {[some people] buried his body}. **23** In the place where dead people wait [for God to judge them], he was suffering great pain. He looked up and saw Abraham far away, and he saw Lazarus sitting close to Abraham. **(Hadēs g86)** **24** So he shouted, 'Father Abraham, I am suffering very much in this fire! So [please] pity me, and send Lazarus [here] so that he can dip his finger in water [and touch] my tongue to cool it!' **25** But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that while you [(sg)] were alive [on earth] you enjoyed [many] good things. But Lazarus was miserable. Now [it is fair that] he is happy here, and you are suffering. **26** Besides that, there is a huge ravine between you [(sg)] and us. So those who want to go from here to where you [(sg)] are, are not able to. Furthermore, no one can cross from there to where we [(exc)] are.' **27** Then the rich man said, 'If that is so, father [Abraham], I ask you [(sg)] to send [Lazarus] to my father's house. **28** I have five brothers [who live there]. Tell him to warn them [to turn away from their sinful behavior so that] they do not also come to this place, where [we(exc)] suffer great pain!' **29** But Abraham replied, '[No, I will not do that, because your brothers] are able to [go to the Jewish meeting places where the priests] read what Moses and the prophets [wrote]. They should listen to what Moses and the prophets [MTY] [wrote]!' **30** But the rich man replied, 'No, father Abraham, [that will not be enough] But if someone from those who have died goes back to them [and warns them], they will turn from their sinful behavior.' **31** [Abraham] said to him, 'No! If they do not listen to [what] [MTY] Moses and the prophets [MTY] [wrote], even if someone would become alive again [and go and warn them], they would not be convinced {he could not convince them} [that they should turn from their sinful behavior].'"

17 [One day Jesus] said to his disciples, "Things that will tempt [people] to sin are certain to happen, but it will be terrible for anyone who causes them to happen! **2** Suppose you caused one of these people who [do not believe in me very strongly] to sin. If a huge stone was fastened {someone fastened a huge stone} around your neck and you were thrown {and threw you} into the sea, [you would consider that a severe punishment, but God will punish] you even more severely [if you cause someone to sin!] **3** Be careful [how you act]. If you [know about] a fellow believer who sins, you [(sg)] should rebuke him. If he [says that he] is sorry for having sinned [and asks you to forgive him], forgive him. **4** Even if he sins against you [(sg)] seven times in one day, if he comes to you each time and says, 'I am sorry for what I did', you must continue forgiving him." **5** [One day] the apostles said to the Lord, "Help us to trust [in you] (OR, [in God]) more strongly!" **6** The Lord replied, "Mustard [seeds

are very small, but in this area they grow and produce large] [MET] [plants]. [Similarly], if your faith grows until you truly believe that God [will do what you ask him to, you will be able to do anything]. You could [even] say to this mulberry tree, 'Pull yourself out [with your roots] and plant yourself in the sea!' and it would obey you!" **7** [Jesus also said], "Suppose that one of you had a servant who was plowing [your fields] or taking care of your sheep. After he comes into the house from the field, you [(sg)] would not say [RHQ], 'Sit down and eat immediately!' **8** Instead, you would say to him, 'Put on your apron and prepare a meal for me! Then serve it to me so that I can eat and drink! Afterwards you [(sg)] can eat and drink.' **9** (You will not thank your servant for doing the work that he had been told {you had told him} to do!/Would you thank your servant because he did the work that he had been told {you had told him} to do?) [RHQ] **10** Similarly, when you [(pl)] have done everything that [God] has told you to do, you should say, 'We [(inc)] are not worthy [of God thanking us] {[being thanked]}. We are only God's servants. We have only done the things that he told us to do.'" **11** As [Jesus and his disciples] were walking along the road to Jerusalem, they were going through [the region] between Samaria and Galilee [districts]. **12** As they entered one village, ten lepers came near the road. [Because lepers were not permitted to come near other people], they stood at some distance **13** and called out, "Jesus, Master, pity us [and heal us]!" **14** When he saw them, he said [to them], "Each of you should go and show yourself to a priest [in Jerusalem so that he can see if you are healed]." As they were going [there], they were healed. **15** Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God loudly. **16** He [came to Jesus], prostrated himself at Jesus' feet, and thanked him. This man was a Samaritan, [not a Jew]. **17** Then Jesus said, "[I] healed ten [lepers] (I am disappointed that the other nine did not come back!/Where are the other nine?) [RHQ] **18** I am disappointed [RHQ] that this non-Jewish man was the only one who returned to thank God; none of the others came back to me!" **19** Then he said to the man, "Get up and continue on your journey. [God] [PRS] [has saved you and] healed you [(sg)] because you trusted [in me]." **20** [One day] Jesus was asked by [some] Pharisees [SYN] {[some] Pharisees [SYN] asked [Jesus]}, "When is God [going] to rule as king?" He replied, "God's ruling [MET] is not something people will be able to see with their eyes. **21** And people will not be able to say, 'Look! He is [ruling] here!' Or 'He is [ruling] over there!' because, [contrary to what you think], God's ruling is people's inner beings (OR, is already happening among you)." **22** [Jesus] said to his disciples, "There will be a time when you will want to see [me] [MTY], the one who came from heaven, [ruling powerfully]. But you will not see that. **23** [Some] people will say to you, 'Look, [the Messiah] is over there!' or [they will say] 'Look, he is here!' When they say that, do not believe them. Do not follow them [to go see the Messiah]. **24** Because when the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, [everyone can see it. Similarly] [SIM], at the time [MTY] when [I], the one who came from heaven, come back again, [everyone will see me]. **25** But before that happens, I must suffer in many ways (OR, very much). And I will be rejected by people {people will reject me}, [even though] they [have observed me doing good for people]. **26** But when [I], the one who came from heaven, [come again, people] will be doing things just like people were doing at the time when [MTY] Noah [lived]. **27** [At that time] people ate and drank [as usual], and they got married [as usual], up until the day when Noah [and his family] entered the big boat. But then the flood came and destroyed all those [who were not in the boat]. **28** Similarly, when Lot lived [in Sodom city], people [there] ate and drank [as usual]. They bought things and they sold things. They planted [crops] and they built [houses as usual]. **29** But on the day that Lot [and his family] left Sodom, fire and [burning] sulfur came down from the sky and destroyed all those [who stayed in the city]. **30** Similarly, when [I], the one who came from heaven, return to earth, [people will be unprepared] (OR, [enjoying normal life]). **31** On that day, those who are outside their houses, with all the things that they own inside [the houses], must not go [in] to take them away, [because there will not be enough time to do that]. Similarly, those who are working in a field must not go back home [to get anything]; [they must flee immediately]. **32** Remember Lot's wife! [Because she turned back and wanted to get some of her things from Sodom, she died immediately and became a pillar of salt]. **33** Anyone who wants to hold onto his life [and his possessions] will not [receive eternal] life. But anyone who is [willing to] die [for my sake] will live [eternally]. **34** I tell you this: On the night [when I return], there will be two people [sleeping] in one bed. The one [who believes in me] will be taken {[God] will take the one [who believes in me]} [to heaven], and the other one will be left [behind and punished] {and [he] will leave the other one [behind and punish him]}. **35** Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left {[God] will take one and leave the other} [behind]." **37** [His disciples] said to him, "Lord, where [will this happen]?" He replied to them, "Wherever there is an animal carcass, the vultures will gather [to eat it] [MET]. [Similarly, wherever there are people who are spiritually dead, God will punish them]."

18 [Jesus] told [his disciples] a parable to teach them that they always ought to pray confidently and not be discouraged [if God does not immediately answer their prayers]. **2** He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not revere God, and did not care about people, either. **3** There was a widow in that city who kept coming to him, saying, 'Please decide what is just [in the dispute between me and] the man who is opposing me [in court!'] **4** For a long time the judge refused [to help her]. But later he thought to himself, 'I do not revere God and I do not care about people, **5** but this widow keeps bothering me! So I will make sure that she is treated justly. [If I do not do that], she will exhaust me by continually coming to me!'" **6** Then the Lord [Jesus] said, "[Even though] the judge was not a righteous man, think carefully about what he said! **7** [Similarly], (God will certainly show that [what you] have done has been right!/will God not show that [what you] have done has been right?) [RHQ] He will do this for you whom he has chosen. [He will do this for you] who pray earnestly to him night and day, asking him to [help you]. He may delay [helping you]. **8** But I tell you, [some day] he will show that what you did was right, and he will do it quickly. But when [I], the one who came from heaven, return to earth, (there may not be [many people who will still] be trusting [that I will vindicate them] (OR, who will still be trusting in me)./will there be [many people who will still] be trusting [that I will vindicate them] (OR, who will still be trusting in me)?) [RHQ]" **9** [Jesus] also told a parable [to warn] people who mistakenly thought that they were doing things that made them acceptable to God. Besides, they also despised other people. **10** [He said this]: "Two men went up to the Temple [in Jerusalem] to pray. One was a Pharisee. The other was a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee stood and prayed silently, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men. [Some] extort money [from others]; some treat others unjustly; some commit adultery. [I do not do such things. And I am certainly not] like this tax collector [who cheats people]! **12** [Our law says that we(exc) should] (fast/abstain from food) [once a week], [but I do more than that. I] fast twice a week! I give [you] ten percent of all that I earn!' **13** But the tax collector stood far [from the other people in the Temple courtyard because he felt very unworthy]. He would not even look up toward heaven. Instead, he beat on his chest [to show that he was sorry for his sin]. He said, 'God, I am a sinner; be merciful to me [and forgive me]!'" **14** [Then Jesus said], "I tell you [(pl)] that as the tax collector went home, the record of his sins was erased {[God] erased the record of his sins}, not that of the Pharisee. [Remember this]: Those who exalt themselves will be humbled {[God] will humble all those who exalt themselves}, but those who humble themselves will be exalted {[he] will exalt those who humble themselves}." **15** [One day when many people were coming to Jesus], they were also bringing small children. They wanted him to put his hands on [the children and bless them]. When the disciples saw that, they rebuked [those who were bringing those children]. **16** But Jesus called the children [to come to him]. He said to his disciples, "Let the children come to me! Do not stop them! It is people who are [humble and trusting] like they are who can experience God ruling [their lives]. **17** Note this: Those who do not [trust God and] allow him to direct [their lives], as children [do], will not enter the [MET] place where God rules." **18** A [Jewish] leader asked [Jesus], "Good teacher, what shall I do in order to have eternal life?" **(aiōnios g166)** **19** Jesus said to him, "Only God is good! No one [else] is good! (So you(sg) should consider carefully what [you are implying by] calling me good!/[Do you realize that you are implying that I am God by] calling me good?) [RHQ] **20** [But to answer your question], you [(sg)] know the commandments that [God gave Moses. He commanded such things as] 'do not commit adultery, do not commit murder, do not steal, do not testify falsely [about what you have seen or heard], honor your father and mother.'" **21** The man said, "I have obeyed all those [commandments] ever since I was young. [So] ([there must be something else I have not done./is that enough]?)" **22** When Jesus heard [him say] that, he replied to him, "There is one thing that you [(sg)] have not [done] yet. Sell all that you own. Then give [the money] to poor people. [The result will be that] you will have [spiritual] riches in heaven. Then come and be my disciple!" **23** The man became sad when he heard that, because he was very rich [and he did not want to give everything away]. **24** Jesus looked at the man [as he left], and said, "It is very difficult for those who are wealthy [to decide] to let God rule [MET] their [lives]. **25** [You would say] that it is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. It is [almost] as difficult [HYP] for rich people [to decide] to let God rule their [lives]." **26** [The Jews thought that God favored rich people, so they thought that if God did not save rich people, he would not save others, either]. So [one of the disciples] who heard him say that replied, "If that is so, it seems that no one will be saved {[that God] will not save anyone} [RHQ]!" **27** But Jesus said, "It is impossible for people [to save themselves]. But [God can save them, because] God can do anything!" **28** Then Peter said, "[You know that we(exc) have left] everything we had and have become your disciples [RHQ]. [So what about us?] (OR, [So will God accept/save us?]") **29** He said to them, "Keep this in mind: Those who have left [their] homes, [their] wives, [their] brothers, [their] parents, [their] children, [or

any other family members], [to tell others] about how God wants to rule [MET] [people's lives], **30** will receive in this life many times as much [as they left]. And in the future age they will (live eternally [with God]/ have eternal life)." **(aiōn g165, aiōnios g166)** **31** [Jesus] took the twelve [disciples] to a place by themselves and said to them, "Listen carefully! We [(inc)] are [now] going up to Jerusalem. [While we are there], everything that has been written by the prophets {that the prophets have written} about [me], the one who came from heaven, will be fulfilled {will occur}. **32** I will be put into the hands of {[My enemies] will hand me over to} non-Jews. [The non-Jews] will make fun of me and mistreat me and spit on me. **33** They will whip me, and [then] they will kill me. But on the third day [after that] I will become alive again." **34** But [the disciples] did not understand any of those things that [he said]. They were prevented {[Something] prevented them} from understanding the meaning of what [he] was telling [them]. **35** As [Jesus and his disciples] came near to Jericho [city], a blind man was sitting beside the road. [He was] begging [for money]. **36** When he heard the crowd [of people] passing by, he asked someone, "What is happening?" **37** They told him, "Jesus, [the man] from Nazareth [town], is passing by." **38** He shouted, "Jesus, [you who are] descended from [King] David, [the Messiah], pity me!" **39** Those who were [walking] at the front [of the crowd] scolded the man [and] told him to be quiet. But he shouted more loudly, "You who are descended from [King] David, [the Messiah], pity me!" **40** Jesus stopped and told [people] to bring the man to him. When [the blind man] came near, Jesus asked him, **41** "What do you [(sg)] want me to do for you?" He replied, "Lord, enable me to see [again]!" **42** Jesus said to him, "[Then] see! Because you have trusted [PRS] [in me], [I] have healed you!" **43** Immediately he was able to see! And he went with [Jesus], praising God. And when all the people who were [going with Jesus] saw it, they also praised God.

19 Jesus and his disciples entered Jericho and were going through the [city]. **2** There was a man [there] named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector, who was rich. **3** He tried to see Jesus, but he was very short, and there was a big crowd of people [near Jesus]. So he was not able to see him. **4** So he ran further ahead [along the road] that Jesus was walking on. He climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see Jesus. **5** When Jesus got there, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, because [God wants] me to go [with you(sg)] to your house and stay there [tonight]"! **6** So he came down quickly. [He took Jesus to his house] and welcomed him joyfully. **7** The people [who saw Jesus go there] grumbled saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner!" **8** Then Zacchaeus stood up [while they were eating] and said to the Lord [Jesus], "Lord, I want you [(sg)] to know that I am going to give half of what I own to poor people. And as for the people whom I have cheated, I will pay them back four times the amount [I have gotten from them by cheating]." **9** Jesus said to him, "Today [God] has forgiven [PRS] [you and the other people in] [MTY] this house, because you [(sg)] also [have shown that you have trusted in God as] your ancestor Abraham [did]. **10** Remember this: [I], the one who came from heaven, came to seek and save [people like you(sg)] who have [gone astray from God, just like a shepherd who searches for his] lost [sheep]." **11** They were coming near to Jerusalem, and the people who were [going with Jesus] who heard him say these things thought that as soon as [he got to Jerusalem] he would become their king. **12** [So] he told them this parable: "A prince prepared to go to a distant country in order that [the Emperor] would make him a king. [He intended] to return later. **13** [Before he left], he summoned ten of his servants. He gave each of them a coin worth three months' wages. He said to them, 'Do business with these coins until I return!' [Then he left]. **14** But [many of] his fellow-citizens hated him. So after he left they sent some messengers to tell [the Emperor], 'We [(exc)] do not want this man to be our king!' **15** But [the Emperor] made him king anyway. [Later] the [new king] returned. Then he commanded that the servants to whom he had given the coins should be summoned {that someone should summon the servants to whom he had given the coins}. He wanted to know how much they had gained by doing business with the coins. **16** The first man came [to him] and said, 'Sir, with your one coin [I] have earned ten more [coins]!' **17** He said to this man, '[You are a] good servant! [You have] done [very] well! Because you have [handled] faithfully a small amount [of money, I will give you] authority [to rule] ten cities.' **18** Then the second servant came and said, 'Sir, with your one coin [I] have earned five more [coins]!' **19** He said to that servant similarly, '[Good! I will give you authority to rule] five cities.' **20** Then another servant came. He said, 'Sir, here is your coin. I wrapped it in a napkin and put it away, [so that nothing would happen to it]. **21** I did that [because] I was afraid [of what you would do to me if the business failed. I know] you are a man who does not do foolish things with your money. You [even] take [from others money] that does not really belong to you, [like a farmer who] harvests grain [from another man's field] where he did not [even] do the planting.' **22** The king said to that servant, 'You wicked servant! I will condemn you by the very words [MTY] that you [have just now spoken]. (You know that I do not [do foolish things with

my money]./Did you not know that I do not [do foolish things with my money]?) [RHQ] [You said] that I [even] take [from others money] that does not really [belong to me], [like a farmer who] harvests grain [from another man's field] where he did not [even] do the planting. **23** So (you should at least have given my money to money lenders!/why did you not [at least] give my money to bankers?) [RHQ] Then [when I returned] I could have collected that amount plus the interest [it would have earned]!' **24** Then [the king] said to those who were standing near, 'Take the coin from him and give it to [the servant] who has ten coins!' **25** They protested, 'But Sir, he already has ten [coins]!' **26** [But the king said], 'I tell you this: To the people who [use well what] they have [received], more will be given {[I] will give more}. But from the people who [do] not [use well what they have received], even what they [already] have will be taken away {[I] will take away even what they already have}. **27** Now, [as for] those enemies of mine who did not want me to rule over them, bring them here and execute them while I am watching!'" **28** After [Jesus] said those things, he [continued on the road] up to Jerusalem, going ahead of his disciples. **29** When they got near Bethphage and Bethany [villages], near the hill that is called {that they call} Olive [Tree] Hill, **30** he said to two of [his] disciples, "Go to the village just ahead [of you]. As you [two] enter [it], you will see a young animal that no one has ever ridden, that has been {someone has} tied up. Untie it and bring it [to me]. **31** If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say [to him], 'The Lord needs it.'" **32** [So] the [two disciples] went [to the village] and found the [animal], just like he had told them. **33** As they were untying it, its owners said to them, "Why are you two untying that young animal?" **34** They replied, "The Lord needs it." [So the owners said that they could take it]. **35** The [two disciples] brought [the animal] to Jesus. They threw their cloaks on the animal's back [for him to sit on] and helped Jesus get on it. **36** Then as he rode along, [others] spread their cloaks on the road [to honor him]. **37** As they came near [to Jerusalem], on the road that descends from Olive [Tree] Hill, the whole crowd of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God loudly for all the great miracles that they had seen [Jesus do]. **38** They were saying things like, "May the Lord [God] bless our king who comes representing [MTY] him!" "May there be peace [between God] in heaven [and us his people]!" "May [everyone] praise God!" **39** Some of the Pharisees who were in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples [for saying things like that]!" **40** He replied, "I tell you this: If these people would be silent, the stones themselves would shout [to praise me]!" **41** When [Jesus] came near [to] Jerusalem and saw the city, he cried about [its people]. **42** He said, "[My disciples know what they need to do] to have peace [with God]; I wish that even today [the rest of] you people knew it. But now you are unable to know [MTY] it. **43** I want you to know this: Soon [your enemies] will come and will set up a barricade around your [city]. They will surround [the city] and attack [it] on all sides. **44** They will [break through] the walls [and] destroy everything. They will smash you and your people/children. [When they finish destroying everything], there will not be one stone left on top of another. [All this will happen] because you did not recognize the time when God sent his [Messiah] to [save] you!" **45** [Jesus entered Jerusalem and] went into the Temple [courtyard]. He saw the people who were selling [things there], **46** and he began to chase them out. He said to them, "It has been written {[A prophet] wrote} [in the Scriptures that God said], '[I want] my house to be a place where people pray'; but you bandits have made it a cave where you can [hide]!" **47** Each day [during that week Jesus] was teaching people in the Temple [courtyard]. The chief priests and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws and [other Jewish] leaders tried to find a way to kill him. **48** But they did not find any way to do it, because all the people there listened eagerly to him [and would have resisted them if they had tried to hurt him].

20 One day [during that week, Jesus] was teaching the people in the Temple [courtyard] and telling them [God's] good message. As he was doing that, the chief priests, the men who taught the [Jewish] laws, and [other Jewish] elders came to him. **2** They asked him, "Tell us, by what authority are you doing these things? Who authorized you to do things [like you did here yesterday]?" **3** He replied, "I will also ask you a question. Tell me, **4** where did John [the Baptizer] get [his authority to] baptize [those who came to him]? [Did he get it] from God [MTY/EUP] or from people?" **5** They discussed this among themselves. They said, "[If we(inc) say], '[It was] from God [MTY/EUP],' he will say to us, '[Then] (you should have believed John's [message]!/why did you not believe what John preached?) [RHQ]' **6** But if we say, 'It was [from] people,' the people [here] will [kill us by] throwing stones at us, because they [all] believe that John was a prophet [from God]." **7** So they replied, "We [(exc)] do not know where [John got his authority]." **8** Then Jesus said to them, "[Because you did not answer my question], I will not tell you who authorized me to do those things [here yesterday]." **9** Then Jesus told the people this parable [to illustrate what God would do to the Jews who rejected the former prophets and himself]: "A [certain] man planted a vineyard. He rented the vineyard to some men [to care for it and to give him some of the grapes in return]. Then he went to another country and stayed there several years.

10 When [the vines started producing] grapes, he sent a servant to the men who were taking care of the vineyard. He expected that they would give him some of the grapes that the vineyard had produced. But [after the servant arrived], they beat him and they did not give him any grapes. They [just] sent him away. **11** [Later], [the owner] sent another servant. But they beat him and mistreated him [also]. They sent him away without giving him any grapes. **12** [Still later, the owner] sent another servant. That one they wounded and threw him out [of the vineyard]. **13** So the owner of the vineyard thought to himself, '(I do not know what to do!/What shall I do?) [RHQ]' [Then he had an idea. He thought to himself], 'I will send my son, [whom I] love [very much]. Perhaps they will respect him [and give him my share of the grapes].' **14** [So he sent his son], but when the men who were caring for the vineyard saw him [coming], they said to each other, 'Here [comes] the man who will [some day] inherit [the vineyard]. Let's kill him so that this vineyard will be ours!' **15** So they dragged him outside the vineyard and they killed him. So (I will tell you what the owner of the vineyard will do to them!/do you know what the owner of the vineyard will do to them?) [RHQ] **16** He will come and kill those men who were taking care of the vineyard. Then he will arrange for other people to take care of it." When the people listening to Jesus heard that, they said, "[We would] not do anything like those wicked men did!" **17** But Jesus looked directly at them and said, "You can say that, [but think about] the meaning of these words that are written {which [a prophet] wrote} [RHQ] [in the Scriptures], The men who were building a house rejected a certain stone. But others put that same stone in its proper place, and it has become the most important stone in the building [MET]. **18** [That stone represents me, the Messiah], and those who reject me are [like people who fall on this stone]. Everyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces {This stone will break to pieces everyone who falls on it}, and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." **19** The chief priests and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws realized that he was accusing them when he told the parable [about what those wicked men did]. So they immediately tried to find a way to seize [MTY] him, but [they did not seize him, because] they were afraid of [what] the people [there would do if they did that]. **20** So they watched him carefully. They also hired (spies/secret agents) who pretended to be sincere. [But] they really wanted to get him to say something for [which they could accuse] him. They wanted to be able to turn him over to the authority of the governor [of the province. But they also knew that the Jews were disgusted with having to pay taxes to the government]. **21** [So] one of them asked Jesus, "Teacher, we [(exc)] know that you [(sg)] speak and teach what is right. You tell the truth even if important people do not like it. You teach truthfully what God wants us to do. **22** [So tell us what you think about this matter]: Is it right that we pay taxes to the Roman government [MTY], or not?" **23** But Jesus knew that they were trying to trick him [to get him into trouble, either with the Jews, who hated to pay those taxes, or with the Roman government]. So he said to them, **24** "Show me a [Roman] coin. [Then tell me] whose picture is on it. And [tell me whose] name is on it." They [showed him a coin and] said, "It has the picture and name of Caesar, [the head of the Roman government]." **25** He said to them, "In that case, give to the government [MTY] what they [require], and give to God what he [requires]." **26** While the people were there, the [spies] were unable to find fault with him for what he said. And they were amazed at his answer. So they said nothing. **27** Some Sadducees came to [Jesus]. They are a Jewish sect who do not believe that people will become alive again after they die. **28** They [wanted to] ask [Jesus] a question [in order to discredit the idea that dead people will live again]. One of them said [to Jesus], "Teacher, Moses wrote for us [Jews] about situations where a man who has a wife but no children. If the man dies, his brother should marry the [dead man's] widow so that she can have a child by him. People [will consider] that the child is the descendant of the man [who died], [and in that way the dead man will have descendants]. **29** Well, there were seven brothers in one family. The oldest one married, but he and his wife did not bear any children. Later he died. **30** The second [brother followed this law and married the widow, but the same thing happened to him]. **31** Then the third [brother] married her, [but the same thing happened again]. All seven [brothers, one by one, married that woman], [but] they had no children, and [one by one] they died. **32** Afterwards, the woman died, too. **33** Therefore, [if it is true that there will be a time] when dead people will become alive again, whose wife [do you think that woman] will be [then]? ([Keep in mind that she was married to all seven brothers!/It will be impossible to decide because] she was married to all seven brothers!) [RHQ]" **34** Jesus replied to them, "Men who live here in this world take wives, or are given wives [by their parents] {their [parents] choose wives [for them]}. **(aiōn g165)** **35** But the men whom God considers worthy of [being in heaven after] they become alive again will not be married. **(aiōn g165)** **36** [You need to know also that] they cannot die any more, because they will be [immortal] [SIM] like angels. [The fact that God has caused] them to be alive again [will show] that they are God's children. **37** But [as for people] becoming alive again after they die, Moses wrote something about

that. In the place where [he wrote about] the [burning] bush, he mentions the Lord as being the God whom Abraham [worships] and the God whom Isaac [worships] and the God whom Jacob [worships]. **38** It is not dead people who worship God. It is living people who worship him. [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died long before Moses lived, but God said that they were still worshipping him, so we(inc) know their spirits were still alive]! All [people] whose [spirits] are alive [again after they die continue to live to honor God]!" **39** Some of the men who taught the [Jewish] laws replied, "Teacher, you [(sg)] have answered very well!" **40** After that, they no longer dared to ask him any more questions [like that to try to trap him]. **41** Then Jesus said to them, "I will show you (OR, prove to you) that people [are wrong who] say that the Messiah is [merely] a descendant of [King] David! [RHQ] **42** Because David himself wrote [about the Messiah] in the book of Psalms, God said to my Lord, Sit [here beside me] on my right, [where I will highly honor you(sg)] [MTY]. **43** [Sit here] while I completely defeat your enemies. **44** King David calls [the Messiah] '[my] Lord'! So ([the Messiah] cannot be [just someone] descended from [King] David!/how can the Messiah be [just] someone descended from [King] David?) [RHQ] [What I just said proves that he is much greater than David, isn't that right]?" **45** While all the [other] people were listening, [Jesus] said to his disciples, **46** "Beware that [you do not act like] the men who teach our [Jewish] laws. They like to put on long robes and walk around [to make people think that they are very important]. [They] also like [people to] greet them [respectfully] in the marketplaces. They like [to sit in] the most important places in the Jewish meeting places. At dinner parties [they like to sit in] the seats where the most honored people sit. **47** They swindle [MET] the houses [and property] of widows. [Then] they pretend they are good, as they pray [long] prayers [publicly. God] will [certainly] punish them very severely."

21 [Jesus] looked up [from where he was sitting] and saw rich people putting their gifts into the [offering] boxes [in the Temple courtyard]. **2** He also saw a poor widow putting in two [small] copper coins. **3** He said [to his disciples], "The truth is that these rich people have a lot of money, [but] they gave [only a small part of it]. But this woman, who is very poor, has put in all the money that she had to pay for the things she needs! So [God considers that] [HYP] this poor widow has put more money into the box than all the others." **5** Some [of Jesus' disciples] talked about the Temple. [They commented about] the beautiful stones [used in building the Temple] and the other decorations that [people] had given, decorations [that were on the walls]. But he said, **6** "[I want to tell you something about] these things that you are looking at. [They will be destroyed] {[Foreign invaders will] destroy [these buildings]} [completely]. Every stone [in these buildings] will be thrown down {They will throw down every stone in these buildings}. Not one stone will be left {They will not leave one stone} on top of another." **7** [Later] his disciples asked him, "Teacher, when will that happen? What will happen [to the temple] to indicate that the things [you(sg) just told us] are about to happen?" **8** He said, "[All that I will say is], be sure that you are not deceived {that they do not deceive [you]} [about these things]! Many [people] will come and say (that I [sent them]/that they have my authority) [MTY]. They will say, 'I am [the Messiah]!' They will also [say] 'It is now the time [when God will begin to rule]!' Do not follow them [to become their disciples] **9** Also, whenever you hear about wars and riots, do not be terrified. Keep in mind that [God has said that] those things must happen. But [when they happen], it will not mean that [the world] will end right away!" **10** Then he said to them, "[Groups in various] countries will fight each other, and [various] governments [will also fight] against each other. **11** There will be [big] earthquakes, and in various places there will be famines and plagues. [People will see] things that will terrify them. There will also be unusual things happening in the sky. **12** But before all these things happen, [some of] you will be persecuted and arrested {people will persecute some of you and arrest you} [MTY]. [Some of] you will be put {They will put [some of] you} [on trial] in the places where you gather to worship, and [you will be thrown] into prison. You will be put on trial {[They] will put you on trial} in front of high government authorities because you are my [MTY] [disciples]. **13** That will be a time for you to tell [them about me]. **14** So determine within yourselves not to be worrying before that happens what you will say to defend yourselves, **15** because I will make you wise [HEN] so that you will [know] what to say. As a result, none of your enemies will be able to oppose what you say or (refute you/show that you are wrong). **16** [And there will also be other evil things that will happen]: Even your parents and brothers and [other] relatives and friends [who do not believe in me] will (betray you/help your enemies to seize you). They will kill some of you. **17** [In general], most people will [HYP] hate you because [you believe in] me [MTY]. **18** But your souls will be absolutely safe [IDM]. **19** By enduring [all these things people will do to you], you will preserve your [eternal] life [SYN]." **20** "But when you see that Jerusalem has been surrounded by the armies of [your enemies], you will know that it is time for [this city] to be completely destroyed {[them] to completely destroy [this city]}. **21** At that time those [of you] who are in Judea [district] must flee to the [higher] hills.

Those who are in this city must leave [quickly]. Those who are in the nearby countryside must not go back into the city [to get any of their possessions before they flee]. **22** [You must obey what I tell you] because, in order that all the things that are written [in the Scriptures] will be fulfilled, [God] will very severely punish [the people who stay in this city]. **23** [I feel] very sorry for women [in this city] who will be pregnant, and women who will be nursing [their babies] in those days, [because it will be very difficult for them to run away! I] feel sorry [because] the people in this [land] will suffer greatly [MTY] [when God punishes them]. **24** Many of them will be killed {Their enemies will kill many of them} with swords. [Others will be captured] and taken {They will capture [others] and take them} to [HYP] [other] countries. Non-Jewish people will trample over Jerusalem until the time [that God has determined for them to rule the city] is ended." **25** "There will also be strange things that will [happen to] the sun, the moon, and the stars. In [many] nations, [people] will be very frightened, and they will be anxious [when they hear] the ocean roaring and [see huge] waves. **26** People will faint because they will be afraid as they wait for what will happen. [They will be afraid] because the powerful [objects] in the sky will be shaken {shake}. **27** Then they will see [me], the one who came from heaven, coming in a cloud powerfully and very gloriously. **28** So when these things that [I have just now described] begin to happen, stand up [straight and] be brave, because it will be close to the time when [God] will free you [from all suffering]." **29** [Then] Jesus told his disciples this parable: "Think about the fig tree, and all the [other] trees. **30** As soon as you see their leaves beginning to sprout, you know that summer is near. **31** Similarly, when you see these things that [I have just described] happening, you will know that it is almost time for God to [truly] rule as king. **32** Keep this in mind: All the things that [I have just now described] will happen before all the people who have observed the things that I have done have died. **33** [You can be certain that these things] that I have told [you] about will happen. That they will happen is more [certain] than that the earth and sky will continue to exist." **34** "But be on guard. Do not be getting drunk with carousing or let yourselves be distracted by worries [concerning] your lives [SYN] {or let worries [concerning] your lives [SYN] distract you}. [If you do wrong things like those, you may be suddenly surprised by my return] [MTY], like a trap [suddenly catches an animal in it]. **35** [You need to know that my return will surprise] everyone all over the earth. **36** So be ready at all times. Pray that you will be able to endure without being afraid of all these [difficult] things that will happen, so that you will then stand [confidently] before me, the one who came from heaven." **37** Each day [during that week Jesus] taught the people in the Temple [courtyard in Jerusalem]. But at night he [and his disciples] left [the city] and stayed on Olive [Tree] Hill. **38** Early [each] morning many people came to the Temple [courtyard] to listen to him.

22 It was now almost time to celebrate the festival of Unleavened Bread, which [began with] the Passover festival. **2** The chief priests and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws were seeking a way to kill Jesus. [But they wanted to do it secretly], because they were afraid that if [they did not do] it secretly, the people [might riot]. **3** Then [even though] Judas, who was called [the man from] Kerioth [village], was one of the twelve [disciples], Satan entered him. **4** Judas went and conferred with the chief priests and the officers of the Temple guards. He discussed with them how he could enable them to seize [Jesus]. **5** They were pleased [that he wanted to do that]. They offered to give him money [for doing it]. **6** So he agreed, [and they gave him the money]. Then he tried to find an opportunity to enable them to seize [Jesus] when there was no crowd around him. **7** Then the day during the [first part of the week-long festival] of Unleavened Bread came, [the day] when [the] lambs [for the] Passover [celebration] had to be killed. **8** So Jesus said to Peter and John, "Go and prepare the meal for the Passover [celebration]." **9** They replied to him, "Where do you [(sg)] want us to prepare it?" **10** He said to the [two of] them, "Listen carefully. When you [two] enter the city, a man who is carrying a [large] jar of water will meet you. Follow him. [When] he enters [a house], **11** tell the owner of the house, '[Our] teacher says [that we(exc) should] ask [you(sg) to please] show [us] the room that [he arranged with you] where he can eat the Passover [meal] with [us], his disciples [RHQ].' **12** He will show you a large room that is on the upper [floor of the house]. It will be all set up [for a meal]. Prepare the meal for us there." **13** So [the two disciples] went [into the city]. They found everything to be just like [Jesus] had told them. So they prepared [the meal for] the Passover [celebration there]. **14** When it was time [MTY] [to eat the Passover meal], Jesus [came and] sat down with the [twelve] apostles. **15** He said to them, "I have greatly desired to eat this Passover [meal] with you before I suffer [and die]. **16** I want you to know that I will not eat [the Passover meal] again until all those whose lives God rules completely realize [what it represents]." **17** Then he took a cup [of wine] and thanked [God for it]. Then he said, "Take this, and each of you drink some of it. **18** I want you to know that [from now on] I will not drink wine until God makes me king." **19** Then he took some bread and thanked God for it. He broke it [into pieces] and gave it to them [to eat]. He said, "This [bread

represents] my body, which [I] am about to sacrifice for you. Keep on [eating bread] this way [regularly] to remember what I [have done for you]." **20** Similarly, after [they had eaten] the meal, he took [another] cup [of wine]. He said, "[The wine in] [MTY] this cup [represents] my blood, which will soon flow [from my body when I die]. [With] this blood [I will sign] the new agreement [that God is making with] you. **21** But [note that] the one [SYN] who will enable my enemies to seize me is eating right here with me! **22** [It is certain that I], the one who came from heaven, will die, because that is what [God] has planned. But there will be terrible punishment for the man who will (betray me/enable my enemies to seize me)!" **23** Then they began to ask one another, "Which of us would do such a thing?" **24** [The apostles] began to argue among themselves, saying, "Which one of us [will be] the greatest [when Jesus becomes king]?" **25** So Jesus said to them, "The kings of the non-Jews [enjoy] showing that they are powerful. [Yet] they give [themselves] the title, 'ones who help the people.' **26** But you should not be like them! Instead, those who [want God to consider them] the greatest should [act as though they] were the youngest, [since the youngest are expected to serve the older ones]. Whoever is a leader should be one who serves [the others]. **27** Keep in mind who is the most important one [RHQ]. It is certainly the one who [just sits] at the table, not [RHQ] those who serve [the meal]. But I, [your leader], have been [an example for you] by serving you [while I have been] among you. **28** You are the ones who have stayed with me during all my troubles. **29** So now, just like my Father has appointed me to rule as a king, I am appointing you **30** so that you can sit and eat [and rule] [MET] with me when I become king. You will sit on thrones to judge the people of the twelve tribes of Israel." **31** "Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has asked [God to let him test you, and God has permitted him to do it. Satan wants to cause you to suffer distress] (OR, [distress you]) [so that you will not believe/trust in me any more/longer. He wants to shake you, just like a man shakes wheat in a sieve to sift it] [MET]. **32** But I have prayed for you, Simon, that you will not completely stop believing in me. So when you [(sg)] restore your relationship with me, help your fellow apostles [to trust in me more]!" **33** Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you [(sg)] if they put you in prison, or even to die with you!" **34** Jesus replied, "Peter, I want you [(sg)] to know that tonight, before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me!" **35** Then [Jesus] asked all of them, "After I sent you out [to other villages, and you went] without taking any money or a [traveling] bag or [extra] sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They replied, "[That's right], [we(exc) did] not [lack] anything." **36** Then, [to show them that now many people would oppose them], (OR, [to show them that they needed to be prepared to protect themselves],) he said to them, "Now [things will be different. So] whoever among you has some money should take it with him. Likewise, he should take a carrying bag. Whoever does not have a sword should sell his coat and buy a sword. **37** Because, I now tell you, [something must happen to me to fulfill these words that a prophet] wrote: 'He was treated {They treated him} as [though he were] a criminal.' Do not forget that everything that is {that they have} written about me [in the Scriptures] must be fulfilled." **38** [One of] the disciples said, "Lord, look! We [(exc)] have two swords!" [Realizing that they did not understand the meaning of what he said], he replied to them, "That is enough [talk about swords]"! **39** As [Jesus] left [the city], he went, as he usually did, to Olive [Tree] Hill. His disciples went with him. **40** When he came to the place [where he often spent the night], he said to them, "Pray that [God will help you] whenever something tempts you." **41** Then he went from them a distance of about 30 meters/yards. (OR, as far as someone can throw a stone.) He knelt and prayed, **42** "[My] Father, if you are willing [to do it], force me [to have to undergo] these terrible things that [are about to happen to me] [MTY]. But do not do what I want. Instead, do what you want." **43** Then an angel from heaven appeared to Jesus and caused him to become stronger. **44** He was greatly distressed. So he prayed more earnestly. His sweat fell down on the ground as though it was large drops of blood. **45** When he got up from praying, he returned to his disciples. He found that they were sleeping. They were exhausted because they were very sorrowful. **46** He [woke them and] said to them, "(I am disappointed that you are sleeping!/Why are you sleeping?) [RHQ] Get up! Pray that [God will help you] whenever you are tempted {when something [like this] tempts you}!" **47** While [Jesus] was still speaking, a crowd [came to him]. Judas, [even though he was] one of the twelve [disciples], was leading them. He came close to Jesus and kissed him [on the cheek as if to greet him, but was really a signal to those with him which one was Jesus]. **48** Jesus said to him, "Judas, (I am disappointed that it is by kissing me that you are enabling [my enemies] to seize [me], the one who came from heaven!/is it by kissing me [as though you loved me] that you are enabling [my enemies] to seize [me], the one who came from heaven?) [RHQ]" **49** When the [disciples] who were around Jesus realized what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, shall we [(exc)] strike [them] with our swords?" **50** One of his [drew his sword and] struck the servant of the high priest [to kill him, but only] cut off his right ear. **51** But Jesus said, "Do not [do] any more of that!" He

touched the [servant's] ear and healed him. **52** Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the Temple guards, and the [Jewish] elders who had come to [seize] him, "(It is ridiculous that you have come [here] with swords and clubs to capture [MTY] me, as [if I were] a bandit!/Why have you come here with swords and clubs to capture [MTY] me, as if I were a bandit?) [RHQ] Day after day [I was with you] in the Temple [courtyard], [and] you did not seize me! But this is the time [MTY] when [God is allowing] you [to do what you want]. It is also the time [MTY] when God is allowing [Satan, who rules] [MTY] [in] the darkness, [to do what he wants]." **54** They seized [Jesus] and led him away. They brought him to the high priest's house. Peter followed [them] at a distance. **55** They kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together. Peter sat among them. **56** As the light [from the fire] shone [on his face, a] female servant saw him and looked intently at him. She said, "This man was also with [the man whom they have arrested]!" **57** But Peter denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him!" **58** A little later someone else saw Peter and said, "You [(sg)] also are one of those who [were with] the man [they arrested]!" But Peter said, "Man, I am not [one of them]!" **59** About an hour later someone else said emphatically [about Peter], "[The way] that this man [speaks shows that he] is from Galilee [district]. Certainly this man was also with the man whom [they arrested, who is from Galilee]!" **60** But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you [(sg)] are talking about!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. **61** The Lord [Jesus] turned around and looked right at Peter. Then Peter remembered what the Lord had said to him, "This night, before the rooster crows, you [(sg)] will deny three times [that you know] me." **62** And Peter went out [of the courtyard] and cried very sorrowfully. **63** The men who were guarding Jesus made fun of him and beat him. **64** They put a blindfold on him and [beat him again. Then] they said to him, "[Because you(sg) say] [IRO] that you are a prophet, [prove it by] telling us who it was that struck you!" **65** They said many other evil things about him, insulting him. **66** At dawn [the next morning], many of the [Jewish] leaders gathered together. The group included the chief priests and the men who taught the [Jewish] laws. They took Jesus to the Jewish Council. There the men of the Council said to him, **67** "If you [(sg)] are the Messiah, tell us!" But he replied, "If I tell you that, you will not believe me. **68** If I ask you [what you think about the Messiah], you will not answer me. **69** But some day you will see [me], the one who came from heaven, sitting next to almighty God and ruling [MTY]!" **70** Then they all said, "If that is so, are [you(sg) saying that] you are (the Son of God/the Man who is also God)?" He said to them, "[Yes], it is just like you say [MTY]." **71** Then they said [to each other], "(We [(inc)] certainly do not need anyone else to testify [against him]!/Why should we ask for any more people to testify [against him]?) [RHQ]" We ourselves have heard him say [MTY] [that he is equal with God]!

23 Then the whole group got up and took Jesus to Pilate, [the Roman governor]. **2** They began to accuse Jesus, saying, "We [(exc)] have determined that this fellow has caused political trouble in our country. He has been [telling people that they should] not pay taxes to the Roman government [MTY]. Also, he says that he is the Messiah, a king!" **3** Pilate asked him, "Do you [(sg) claim that you are] the King of the Jews?" He replied, "[It is] as you have [just] now said." **4** Pilate said to the chief priests and [the rest of] the crowd, "I do not conclude that this man is guilty of any crime." **5** But they kept insisting, "He is inciting the people [to riot]! He has been teaching his [ideas] throughout all of Judea [district]. He started [doing it] in Galilee [district] and now he is doing it here!" **6** When Pilate heard that, he asked, "Is this man from Galilee [district]?" **7** When they told him that Jesus was [from Galilee, which was the district] that Herod [Antipas] ruled, [he told them] to take Jesus to Herod [Antipas], because Herod was in Jerusalem at that time. **8** [So they did]. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very happy. He [had heard about Jesus], and he had been hoping for a long time that he could see Jesus perform a miracle. **9** So he asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus did not reply [to any of them]. **10** The chief priests and men who taught the [Jewish] laws stood near Jesus, accusing him very strongly. **11** Then Herod and his soldiers (made fun of/ridiculed) [Jesus]. They put gorgeous clothes on him [to mock him as being a king]. Then Herod sent him back to Pilate. **12** Until that time Herod and Pilate had been very hostile to each other, but that very day they became friends. **13** Pilate then gathered together the chief priests and other [Jewish] leaders and the crowd [that was still there]. **14** He said to them, "You brought this man to me, saying that he had caused trouble among the people. But [I want you to know that] after having examined him while you were listening, I do not conclude that he is guilty of any of the things that you are accusing him about. **15** [Obviously] Herod did not [conclude that] either, because he sent him back to me [without punishing him]. [So it] is clear that this man has not done anything for which we [(inc)] should kill him. **16** So I will [have my soldiers] flog him and then release him." **18** But the whole crowd shouted, "Execute this man! Release Barrabas for us [(exc)]!" **19** Barrabas was a man who had tried to persuade people in the city to rebel [against the Roman government. While doing that], he had murdered

[someone]. So he had been put {they had put him} in prison, [where he was waiting to be executed]. **20** Because Pilate wanted to release Jesus, he tried to persuade the crowd again. **21** But they kept shouting, "[Command your soldiers to] kill him by nailing him to a cross!/Have him crucified!" **22** He [spoke to them] a third time and asked them, "Why? What crime has he committed? I have concluded that he has done nothing for which he deserves to die. So I will [have my soldiers] flog him and then release him." **23** But they kept insisting. They shouted loudly that [Jesus] should be nailed {that [Pilate] should [have his soldiers] nail [Jesus]} to a cross. Finally, because they continued to shout [PRS] [so loudly], **24** Pilate decided to do what the crowd requested. **25** The man who had been {whom they had} put in prison because he had rebelled [against the government] and who had murdered [someone], he released! That was the man whom the crowd had asked him [to release]. He handed Jesus over [to the soldiers], to do what [the crowd] wanted. **26** As the soldiers were taking [Jesus] away, they seized a man named Simon, [who was] from Cyrene [city in Africa]. He was returning [to Jerusalem] from out in the countryside. They [took from Jesus the cross that he had been carrying. Then] they put it on Simon's shoulders, and [told him to] carry it behind Jesus. **27** A large crowd followed Jesus. The crowd included many women who were beating their breasts [to show how sad they were], and wailing for him. **28** But Jesus turned to them and said, "You women of Jerusalem, do not cry for me! Instead, cry because of [what is going to happen to] yourselves and your children! **29** I want you to know that there will soon be a time when people will say, 'Women [SYN] who have never borne children or nursed babies are fortunate!' **30** Then, [in order that they will not have to suffer greatly when their enemies destroy this city], people who are left in the city will say to the mountains, 'Fall down on us!' And people will say to the hills, 'Cover us!' **31** [I am innocent] [MET]. [I am like] a living tree [that people do not try to burn. But the people of Jerusalem deserve that their enemies punish them. They are like] dry wood that is ready to [burn]. So if they [nail me to the cross], ([their enemies] will certainly do much worse things to them!/what worse things will happen to them?) [RHQ]" **32** Two other men who were criminals were also being led away {[The soldiers] also led away two other men who were criminals}. They were going to be executed {[The soldiers] were going to execute them} [with Jesus]. **33** When they came to the place which is called 'The Skull', they nailed [Jesus] to a cross [after removing his clothes]. They did the same thing to the two criminals. They crucified one at the right [side of Jesus] and one at his left [side]. **34** Jesus prayed, "[My] Father, forgive them, because they do not realize [whom] they are doing [this to]!" Then [the soldiers] divided Jesus' clothing by gambling with something like dice, [to decide which piece of clothing each one would get]. **35** Many people stood nearby, watching. And the [Jewish] leaders (made fun of/ridiculed) [Jesus], saying, "He [said] [IRO] [that he] saved other people! If he is the Messiah, the one God has chosen, he should save himself!" **36** The soldiers also ridiculed him because he [claimed to be a king]. They came up to him and offered him some sour wine. **37** They said to him, "If you [(sg)] are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" **38** [They] also [fastened on the cross] a sign [that stated] why [they] were nailing him to the cross. [But all it said was], 'This is the King of the Jews'. **39** One of the criminals who was hanging [on a cross] began to insult Jesus, saying, "You [(sg) said that you] are the Messiah, so [you must be powerful]! So save yourself, and save us, too!" **40** But the other [criminal] rebuked him, saying, "(You [(sg)] should be afraid of God [punishing you]!/Are you not afraid of God [punishing you]?) [RHQ] They are punishing him [and us] similarly. **41** They have justly decided that we [(inc) two] must die. They are punishing us as we deserve [for the evil things that we did]. But this man has done nothing wrong!" **42** Then he said, "Jesus, [please] remember me [and take care of me] when you become king!" **43** Jesus replied, "I want you [(sg)] to know that today you [(sg)] will be with me in the place where everyone is happy!" (OR, that today you will be with me in Paradise!) **44** [Then it] was about noontime. It became dark over the whole land, [and it stayed dark] until three o'clock in the afternoon. **45** There was no light from the sun. Then the [thick] curtain [that closed off the most holy place] in the Temple split into two pieces. [That signified that ordinary people could now go into the presence of God]. **46** [As that happened], Jesus shouted loudly, "Father, I put my spirit into your care [MTY]!" When he said that, he [EUP] died. **47** When the officer [who supervised the soldiers who were executing Jesus] saw what happened, he praised God [for the way Jesus died], saying, "[I am] sure that this man had done nothing wrong!" **48** When the crowd of people who had gathered to see those events saw what happened, they returned [to their homes], beating their chests [to show that they were sorrowful]. **49** All of Jesus' friends, including the women who had come with him from Galilee [district], stood at a distance and saw everything that happened. **50** There was a man named Joseph who [came there]. He was from the town of Arimathea in Judea. He was a good and a righteous man, and he was a member of the [Jewish] Council. **51** But he had not agreed with the other Council [members] when they decided [to kill Jesus] and when they

[planned how to] do it. He was waiting expectantly for [the time when] God [would send] his king to begin to rule. **52** He went to Pilate and asked [Pilate to permit him] to [take] Jesus' body [and bury it. After Pilate allowed him to do that], **53** he [and some others] took [Jesus' body] down [from the cross]. They wrapped it in a linen cloth. Then they put his body in a tomb that he had [hired others to] dig out of a rock [cliff]. No one had ever put a body in it before. **54** [They had to do it quickly because] that was [Friday], the day when [people] prepared [things for the Jewish day of rest]. (The Sabbath/The day of rest) was about to start [at sunset, so they had to finish burying Jesus' body before sunset]. **55** The women who had come with [Jesus] from Galilee [district] followed [Joseph and the men who were with him]. They saw the tomb, and they saw how the men laid [Jesus'] body [inside it, and saw the men roll a huge stone across the entrance]. **56** Then the women returned to the houses [where they were staying. That evening] they prepared spices and ointments to put [on Jesus' body], but (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day) they rested, according to what [Moses] had commanded.

24 Before dawn on Sunday those women went to the tomb. They took with them the spices that they had prepared [to put on Jesus' body]. **2** They discovered that the stone had been rolled away from [the entrance to] the tomb. **3** They went in the tomb, but the body of the Lord Jesus was not there! **4** They did not know what to think about that. Then suddenly two men wearing bright shining clothes stood by them! **5** The [women] were frightened. As they prostrated themselves on the ground, the two men said to them, "(You should not be seeking someone who is alive in [a place where they bury] dead people!/Why are you seeking in [a place where they bury] dead people someone who is alive?) [RHQ] **6** He is not here; he has (become alive again/risen from the dead)! Remember that while he was still with you in Galilee [district] he said to you, **7** '[Even though I] am the one who came from heaven, [someone] will enable sinful men to seize [MTY] me. They will [kill me by] nailing me to a cross. But on the third day [after that], I will become alive [again].'" **8** The [women] remembered that he had said that. **9** So they left the tomb and went to the eleven [apostles] and his other [disciples] and told them those things. **10** The ones who kept telling those things to the apostles were Mary from Magdala [village], Joanna, Mary who was the mother of James, and the other women [who were] with them. **11** But the apostles thought that what the women [said] was nonsense. They did not believe what the women said. **12** But Peter got up and ran to the tomb [anyway]. He stooped down [and looked inside]. He saw the linen cloths [in which Jesus' body had been wrapped]. [The cloths were] by themselves (OR, [He did not see] anything else). So, wondering what had happened, he went home. **13** That same day two of [Jesus' disciples] were walking to a village named Emmaus. It was about (seven miles/eleven kilometers) from Jerusalem. **14** They were talking with each other about all the things that had happened [to Jesus]. **15** While they were discussing those things, Jesus himself approached them and started walking with them. **16** But they were prevented {[something] prevented them} from recognizing [MTY] him. **17** [Jesus] said to them, "What have you two been talking about while you were walking?" They stopped, and their faces looked very sad. **18** One of them, whose name was Cleopas, said, "(You [(sg)] must be the only person who is visiting Jerusalem [for the Passover festival] who does not know the events that have happened there in recent days!/Are you the only person who is visiting Jerusalem [for the Passover festival] who does not know the events that have happened there in recent days?) [RHQ]" **19** He said to them, "What events?" They replied, "[The things that happened] to Jesus, [the man] from Nazareth, who was a prophet. Many people saw him [perform] great miracles, and God [enabled him] to teach wonderful [messages]! **20** But our chief priests and leaders handed him over [to the Roman authorities. The authorities] sentenced him to die, and they killed him by nailing him to a cross. **21** We [(exc)] were hoping that he was the one who would free [us] Israelites [from our enemies] But [this does not seem possible now, because] three days have [already] passed since that happened. **22** On the other hand, some women from our group amazed us. Early this morning they went to the tomb, **23** but Jesus' body was not there! They came [back] and said that they had seen some angels in a vision. The angels said that he was alive! **24** Then some of those who were with us went to the tomb. They saw that things were exactly as the women had reported. But they did not see [Jesus]." **25** He said to them, "[You two] foolish [men! You are so] slow to believe all that the prophets have written [about the Messiah]! **26** ([You should certainly have known that] it was necessary that the Messiah should suffer all those things [and die], and then enter his glorious [home in heaven]!/Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer all those things [and die], and then enter his glorious [home in heaven]?) [RHQ]" **27** Then he explained to them all the things that [the prophets] had written in the Scriptures about himself. He started with what Moses [MTY] [wrote] and then explained to them what all the [other] prophets [wrote]. **28** They came near to the village to [which the two men] were going. Jesus indicated that he would go further, **29** but they urged him [to not do that]. They said, "Stay with

us [tonight], because it is late in the afternoon and it will soon be dark." So he went in [the house] to stay with them. **30** When they sat down to eat, he took some bread and [asked God to] bless it. He broke it and gave [some pieces] to them. **31** And just then [God] enabled them to recognize [MTY] him. But [immediately] he disappeared! **32** The two men said to each other, "[While we were walking] along the road and he talked with us and [enabled] us [(inc)] to understand the Scriptures, we [became so excited that it was as though] [MET] a fire was burning within us [RHQ]! [We should not stay here; we should go tell the others what happened]!" **33** So they left immediately and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven [apostles] and others who had gathered together with them **34** who told [those two men], "It is true that the Lord has become alive again, and he has appeared to Peter!" **35** Then those two [men] told [the others] what had happened [as they were walking] along the road. They also [told them how] they both recognized Jesus as he broke some bread [for them]. **36** As they were saying that, Jesus himself [suddenly] appeared among them. He said to them, "[May God give] you [inner] peace!" **37** They were startled and afraid, [because] they thought that they were seeing a ghost! **38** He said to them, "(You should not be alarmed!/Why are you alarmed?) [RHQ] And (you should not be doubting [that I am alive]/Jesus!/why are you doubting [that I am alive]/Jesus?) [RHQ] **39** Look at [the wounds in] my hands and my feet! You can touch me and see [my body]. Then you can see that it is really I myself. [You can tell that I am really alive] because ghosts do not have bodies, as you see that I have!" **40** After he said that, he showed them [the wounds in] his hands and his feet. **41** They were joyful and amazed, [but] they still did not believe [that he was really alive] (OR, [that Jesus was the one that they were seeing]). [So] he said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" **42** [So] they gave him a piece of broiled fish. **43** While they were watching, he took it and ate it. **44** Then he said to them, "[I will repeat] what I told you while I was still with you: Everything that was written about me by Moses and the [other] prophets [MTY] and in the Psalms must be fulfilled!" **45** Then he enabled them to understand [the things that had been written about him in] the Scriptures. **46** He said to them, "This is what they wrote: That the Messiah would suffer [and die], but on the third day after that he would become alive again. **47** [They] also [wrote that the message] must be preached {[that his disciples] must preach [the message]} [everywhere that people] must turn from their sinful ways for [God] to forgive their sins. [They wrote that his followers should preach that message, claiming] his authority [MTY]. They wrote that they should start [preaching] it in Jerusalem, and then [go and] preach it to all ethnic groups. **48** You [apostles] must tell people that you know that those things [that happened to me] are true. **49** And I want you to know that I will send the [Holy Spirit] [MTY] to you, as my Father promised that [he would do]. But you must stay in this city until God fills you with the power [of his Spirit]." **50** Then [Jesus] led them outside [the city] until they came near Bethany [village]. There he lifted up his hands and blessed them. **51** As he was doing that, he left them [and went up to heaven]. **52** They worshipped him. And then they returned to Jerusalem very joyfully. **53** Each day [SYN] they went into the Temple [courtyard], and spent a lot of time praising God.

John

1 The one who expresses [MET] ([God's character/what God is like]) has always existed (from the beginning [MTY] [of everything/before everything began]). He has always existed with God, and he has God's nature. **2** He always existed with God [before] he began [MTY] [to create anything]. **3** He is the one by whom [God] caused everything to exist. He is the one who created absolutely everything [LIT]. **4** He is the one who [caused everything to] live. He, who caused us people to live, [revealed to us the truth about God as] a light [MET] [reveals what is in the darkness]. **5** People do not want him to reveal [that what they do is evil] [MET], just [like] darkness [is evil]. But [just like] darkness cannot put out light [MET], [evil people have never prevented the one who was like a light from revealing God's truth] (OR, [evil people have never] understood the [one who was like] a light.) **6** A man whose name was John was sent by God {God sent a man whose name was John}. **7** He came to tell people [about the one who was like] [MET] a light. He came to show that everything that the [one who was like a light] [MET] said was true, in order that he could enable all people to believe [in the one who was like a light]. **8** John himself was not the [one who was like a] light [MET]. Instead, he came to tell others about that [one who was like a] light. **9** [While John was doing that], the one who was truly [like] a light was about to show himself to the world. He was the one who enables all people [to know about God, as] a light [MET] enables [people to know what is in the darkness]. **10** Although the one [who was like a light] was [here] on the earth, and although he was the one whom [God] caused to create everything, [most] people [MTY, HYP] did not realize who he [was]. (OR, although he was the one whom [God] caused to create everything, [most] people did not accept him.) **11** Although he came to the land that belonged to him [because he created it, most of] his own people, [the Jews], rejected him (OR, did not accept him). **12** But those [of us who welcomed him, God] authorized [that we would have a relationship with] him [MET] [like] children [have a relationship with their father]. We were people who believed [that what he said] about himself [MTY] [was true]. **13** We became [like God's children], not because our ancestors [belonged to God], or because of someone's sexual desires, nor because some man desired to have children like himself. Instead, we were caused by God {God caused us} to become [like] his children. **14** The one who expresses [MET] ([God's character/what God is like]) became a human being, and he lived among us [for a while]. As a result, we saw how wonderful he is. He came from [God] his father, and there was no other person as wonderful as he. He was wonderful because he always acted (kindly toward us/in ways we did not deserve), and he always [spoke] truthfully to us [about God]. **15** [One day] when John was telling people about him, [he saw Jesus]. Then he shouted to them, "I told you [previously] that someone will come later who is more important than I am, since he existed [long] before me. This [is the man I was talking about]!" **16** We have all benefited very much from what he has done. Again and again, he has acted in kind way toward us in ways we did not deserve. **17** Moses proclaimed [God's] laws [to our ancestors]. But what Jesus Christ did for us [was much better]. He acted in kindness toward us in ways we did not deserve and told us the truth [about God]. **18** No one has ever seen God. But God's only Son, [Jesus], who has always had a very close relationship with God, has told us about God. **19** The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] in Jerusalem [city] sent some [Jewish] priests and (Levites/men who worked in the temple) to where John was, to ask him some questions. They said to him, "What do you [claim about] yourself?" **20** So John told them the truth, and he told them clearly [DOU]. He said, "[I] am not (the Messiah/God's chosen king)!" **21** Then they asked him, "Then what [do you say about yourself]? Are you [the prophet] Elijah [that was prophesied to return] {([someone/another prophet]) [prophesied would return]} [before the Messiah]?" He replied, "No, [I] am not." Then they asked him, "Are you the prophet [like Moses that] ([we are waiting for/God promised to send])?" He replied, "No." **22** So they asked him, "Then who do you [claim to be]? [Tell us] so that we can [go back and] report to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" **23** John replied, "[I] am the one [the prophet Isaiah said] would proclaim [this new message] loudly [to the people who would pass by] in this desolate area: 'Prepare [yourselves to receive] the Lord when he comes [MET], [just like people prepare] a road [for an important official]. **24** Some of those people [who were questioning] John were ones who had been sent by the Pharisee [religious group] {whom the Pharisee [religious group] had sent}. **25** They asked John, "Since [you say] you are not the Messiah, nor [the prophet] Elijah, nor the prophet [like Moses], [what authority] do you have? [Furthermore], why are you baptizing [Jews, treating them as though they were non-Jews who wanted to become Jews]?" **26** John replied, "I am [just] baptizing people with water [to prepare them to welcome the Messiah]. But [right now] someone is among you whom you people do not know. **27** He [will preach to you] after I [am gone]. [He is so important that] I am not worthy to [serve him as a slave] [MET] [by] untying his sandals." **28** Those things happened at [a place called]

Bethany, on the [east] side of the Jordan [River], where John was baptizing people. **29** The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him. He said to the people, "Look! Here is the [man whom] God [has appointed to be a sacrifice] [MET], [like] the lambs [that the people of Israel sacrificed! By sacrificing himself] he will [make it possible for everyone in] the world to be no longer [guilty for having] sinned. **30** He is the one about whom I said [before], 'Someone will come later who is more important than I am, since he existed [long] before me.' **31** I myself did not [previously] recognize that he [was the Messiah]. But [now I know who he is], and I have baptized people with water to enable [you people of] Israel to recognize who he is." **32** John spoke clearly [what God had shown him about Jesus]. He said, "I saw [God's] Spirit as he was descending from heaven in the form of a dove. The Spirit remained on Jesus. **33** I myself did not know [previously] that he [was the Messiah]. However, [God] sent me to baptize people with water, [people who said they wanted to turn from their sinful ways. While I was doing that], God told me, 'The man on whom you will see my Spirit descend and remain is the one who will put the Holy Spirit within you [(pl) to truly change your lives].' **34** I saw [the Spirit descend on him], and I tell you that he is (the Son of God/the person who is both God and man)." **35** The next day John was at the same place again (with two of us/with two of his disciples). **36** When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look! There is the man God [has appointed to be a sacrifice, like] the lambs [MET] [the people of Israel have sacrificed!]" **37** (When we/those two disciples) heard John say this, we/they went with Jesus. **38** Jesus turned around and saw us/them coming behind him. So he asked us/them, "What do you want?" We/They replied, "Teacher, [tell us] where you are staying, [because we want to talk with you]." **39** He replied, "Come [with me], and you will see [where I am staying]!" So we/they went with him and saw where he was staying. We/They stayed with him until about 4 o'clock (OR, from about 4 PM until the next day). **40** (One of us/One of the two men) who heard what John had said and who went with Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's [younger] brother. **41** [After Andrew left Jesus], the first thing he did was to find his own [older] brother Simon and say to him, "We have found the Messiah!" **42** Then he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked intently at him, and then said, "You are Simon. Your father's name is John. You will be given {[I] will give you} the name Cephas." [Cephas is an Aramaic name that means 'solid rock'. It] means [the same in Greek as the name] Peter. **43** The next day [Jesus] decided to leave [the Jordan River valley]. He went to Galilee [district] and (OR, on the way there he) found a man named Philip. Jesus said to him, "Come with me!" **44** Philip and Andrew and Peter were all from Bethsaida [town]. **45** Then Philip [searched for] Nathaniel and found him, and said to him, "We have met [the Messiah], the one Moses [wrote about]! The prophets also [prophesied that he would come]. He is Jesus, from Nazareth [town]. His father's name is Joseph." **46** Nathaniel replied, "Nazareth? (Nothing good can come from [such an unimportant place]!/Can anything good come from [such an unimportant place]?) [RHQ]" Philip replied, "Come and see!" **47** When Jesus saw Nathaniel approaching, he said about Nathaniel, "Here is an example of a good Israelite! He never deceives anyone!" **48** Nathaniel asked him, "How do you know what I [am like]?" Jesus replied, "I saw you before Philip called you, when you were [by yourself] under the fig tree." **49** Then Nathaniel declared, "Teacher, you [must be] (the Son of God/the person who is both God and man)! You are the King of Israel [we have been waiting for]!" **50** Jesus replied to him, "You [RHQ] believe [those things about me] because I told you I saw you when you were under the fig tree. [I was able to see you supernaturally even though I was far away from you]. But you will see [me do] things that are more surprising than that!" **51** Then Jesus said to him, "This is the absolute truth: [Just like what your ancestor Jacob saw long ago in a vision], some day you [(pl)] will see heaven opened up, and you will see God's angels ascending from me and descending on me, the one who came from heaven."

2 Two days later there was a wedding [celebration] in Cana [town], in Galilee [district]. Jesus' mother was there. **2** Jesus and [we] his disciples [were also there, because] we had been invited {someone had invited us} also. **3** When the guests had drunk all the wine [that was there], Jesus' mother said to him, "The wine is all gone; [can you do something about that]?" **4** Jesus said to her, "Ma'am/Woman, (do not [tell] me [what to do]!/why do you [tell] me [what to do]?) [RHQ] It is not yet time [MTY] [to show] that I am [the Messiah by working miracles]." **5** Then Jesus' mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you!" **6** There were six [empty] stone jars there. The Jews [habitually put water in them] to use for washing things [to make them acceptable to God]. Each jar held (20 to 30 gallons/80 to 120 liters). **7** Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water!" So they filled the jars to the brim. **8** Then he told them, "Now, ladle out some [of it] and take it (to the head waiter/to the master of ceremonies)." So the servants did that. **9** (The head waiter/The master of ceremonies) tasted the water, which had now become wine. He did not know where the wine had come from, but the servants who had ladled out the wine knew. [The wine was delicious]! So he

called the bridegroom over, **10** and said to him, "Everyone [else] serves the best wine first. Then when the guests have drunk so much [that they cannot tell the difference], [they serve] the cheap wine. But you [have not done what others do]. You have kept the best wine until now!" **11** That was the first miracle that Jesus did. He did it in Cana [town], in Galilee [district]. By doing it he showed how awesome he is, and as a result, [we] his disciples believed that he [truly was the Messiah]. **12** Jesus then went down to Capernaum [city] with his mother and [younger] brothers and [us] his disciples. We stayed there several days. **13** Later, when it was almost time for the Jewish Passover [celebration], Jesus [and we his disciples] went up to Jerusalem. **14** There, in the Temple [courtyard], he saw some men who were selling cattle, sheep, and pigeons [for sacrifices]. He also saw men who were sitting at tables, [making a big profit as they] gave people [Temple tax] coins in exchange for [their Roman] coins. **15** Then Jesus made a whip from some cords and [used it to] chase out the sheep and cattle from the Temple [courtyard]. By overturning their tables he scattered the coins of the men who were exchanging them. **16** He said to those who were selling doves, "Take these doves away [from here]! Stop [defiling] my Father's Temple [by] making it a market!" **17** Then [we] disciples remembered that these words had been written {that [someone/David] had written [these words]} [in the Scriptures prophesying what the Messiah would say]: "Others [PRS] will strongly oppose me because I greatly desire that [people respect] your Sacred Tent." **18** So [one of] the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] replied to him, "What miracle will you perform to show us that [you have authority from God] to do these things?" **19** Jesus replied to them, "If/When you destroy this temple, I will build it again within three days." **20** So the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] said, "We have been building this Temple for 46 years [and it is not finished yet]! So (there is no way you will build it within three days!/how will you build it within three days?) [RHQ]" **21** But when Jesus said that about the temple, [he was really talking about] his own body. **22** [Later], after Jesus had [died and had] become alive again, [we] his disciples remembered the words he had said. As a result, we believed [what had been prophesied in] the Scriptures [about the Messiah becoming alive again], and we believed that what Jesus said [was true]. **23** While Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many people came to believe [that he was the Messiah] because they saw the miracles he was performing. **24** But he did not let them tell him what he should do [as the Messiah], because he knew within himself what they were all [thinking]. **25** He did not need anyone to tell him what others were thinking, because he already knew what they were [thinking and wanting].

3 There was a man named Nicodemus, who was a member of the Jewish religious council. He belonged to the Pharisee [religious sect]. **2** He went to see Jesus at night, [to talk to him about God's kingdom]. He said to Jesus, "Teacher, [we believe that] you are a teacher who has come from God. [We believe this because] we know that someone could perform the miracles you are doing only if God were helping him." **3** Jesus replied to him, "Listen to this carefully: Unless people are born again and [have a new life from God], they cannot even see the place where God rules [MET]!" **4** Then Nicodemus said to him, "(No one can be born when he is old!/How can anyone be born when he is old?) [RHQ] (There is no way he can enter his mother's womb and be born a second time!/How can he enter his mother's womb and be born a second time?) [RHQ]" **5** Jesus answered, "Note this: Being born naturally is not [enough]; people need to also be born [spiritually] by God's Spirit. If that does not happen, they cannot experience God ruling [MET] [their lives]. **6** Humans give birth to humans. But those who are born [again] as a result of what [God's] Spirit [does receive a new] spiritual [nature from God]. **7** Do not be surprised about my telling you that you must be born again [and have a new life from God]. **8** [Let me illustrate]: The wind blows wherever it wants to blow. You hear its sound, but you do not know where the wind comes from or where it is going. Similarly, those [who do not know God cannot understand/control/predict] how people are born again as a result of what God's spirit [does]." **9** Nicodemus replied to him, "How can that happen?" **10** Jesus replied to him, "You [(sg)] are a [well-known] teacher among [us] Israelite people, so (I am surprised that you do not understand these things!/how is it that you do not understand these things?) [RHQ] **11** Listen to this carefully: (My disciples and I/I) tell you [(pl)] about the things that my disciples and I have seen and know [are true], but you [(pl)] do not admit that what my disciples and I are saying [is true]. **12** I have told you about the things [that happen here] on earth that are true, but you [(pl)] do not believe me. So if I tell you [(sg)] about things [that happen] in heaven, (you certainly will not believe me!/how will you believe me?) [RHQ] **13** I am the only one who has gone up to heaven; no one else has gone up there. I am also the one who came down from heaven. [So I know what happens there]. **14** [Long ago when the Israelite people rebelled against God] in the desolate area, [God sent poisonous snakes to bite them]. But when Moses lifted up [on a pole] the [model of a] poisonous snake, [everyone who looked at that model was healed from their snake bites]. Similarly, [even though I]

am the one who came from heaven, [some day people] will lift me up [on a cross to kill me]. **15** As a result, everyone who believes/trusts in me will have eternal life." **(aiōnios g166)** **16** God loved us people [MTY] in the world so much that he gave his only Son [as a sacrifice for us], in order that everyone who believes in him would not be separated from God forever. Instead, they would have eternal life. **(aiōnios g166)** **17** When God sent his Son into the world, his purpose was not to punish the [people in] [MTY] the world for their sins. Instead, he sent him in order that they might be saved by him {he might save them} [from being] ([guilty/punished]) [for their sins]. **18** Everyone who trusts in his Son, [God says that they] will not be punished {that he will not punish them}. But God has already [said that] everyone who does not trust in his Son will be punished {that he will punish everyone who does not trust in his Son}, because they have not trusted in what his only Son [has done for them]. **19** The [one who was like a] light [MET] [to reveal God's truth to us] came into the world. But people loved doing what was [evil, like] darkness [MET] [is evil], instead of loving the [one who was like a] light. That is the reason [God will] judge people [and condemn them]. **20** Everyone who does what is evil hates the [one who is like a] light, and they will not come to the [one who is like a] light, because it would be shown {[the one who is like a light] would show} that their deeds [are evil, and he would rebuke them]. **21** But those who live according to [God's] truth come to the [one who is like a] light, in order that it may be seen clearly {that people may see clearly} that the things they have done, they did them because [they have depended] on God. **22** Some time later Jesus and we disciples went to Judea district. He stayed with us there and [directed us as we] baptized people. **23** John [the Baptizer] was also baptizing people. He was doing that at Aenon [village] near Salim [town in Samaria district], because there were many springs in that area. [Many] people kept coming [to John] and were being baptized {he was baptizing them}. **24** That happened before John was put {they put John} in prison. **25** Then some of John's disciples and a certain Jew started arguing about the Jewish rituals of washing things [to make them acceptable to God]. **26** Then those disciples went to John and said to him, "Teacher, [do you remember] the man who was with you when you were baptizing people on the other side of the Jordan River? He is the one you were telling us about. Well, now he is baptizing people, and many people are going to him [instead of coming to us]!" **27** John replied, "A person can become [important] only if God [MTY] permits it. [So] we [should not be jealous about Jesus being popular]! **28** You yourselves can verify what I said. I told you that I am not (the Messiah/God's promised king). Instead, I [told you that] I was sent {that [God] sent me} to prepare the way for him. **29** [Let me illustrate] [MET]: [He is like a] ([bridegroom/man who is being married]), [and I am like his friend]. The friend of the bridegroom stands there and waits [for him to come]. That friend is very happy when he hears the bridegroom's voice [when he arrives]. Similarly, I am very happy [about what you have told me]. **30** It is necessary for Jesus to become more important [by making more disciples than I have], and for me to become less [important]." **31** [Jesus] came from heaven. He is more important than anyone else. Those who are born from [parents here] on earth [MTY] are just humans, and they speak about things [that happen here] on the earth. But since Jesus came from heaven, his [words are] more important than anyone else's. **32** He tells people what he has seen and what he heard [in heaven], but very few people [HYP] listen to what he says. **33** Those who have accepted what he has said verify that what God has said is true. **34** [We know it is true] because [Jesus], the one God sent, speaks the message of God. [That is also true] because God causes his Spirit to live [in Jesus] to completely [direct everything he says and does]. **35** God loves his Son, and has caused him to have control/power over everything. **36** Those who trust in [God's] Son have eternal life. But those who reject God's Son will never have [eternal] life. Instead, God is angry with them [and he will surely punish them]. **(aiōnios g166)**

4 [At that time, many people were asking] Jesus to baptize them. He did not baptize people; it was [we] his disciples who were doing the baptizing. But when some of the Pharisee [religious group] heard [people say that] Jesus was making more disciples than John [the Baptizer] and was baptizing them, [they became very jealous]. **3** When the Lord [Jesus] heard about that, [so that the Pharisees would not cause trouble for him], he left Judea [district], and went again [with us disciples] to Galilee district. **4** [He] knew that God wanted him to travel through Samaria [district]. **5** So we arrived at a town named Sychar in Samaria [district]. That was near the plot of ground that [our ancestor] Jacob had given to his son Joseph [long ago]. **6** The well that [used to] belong to Jacob was on that plot of ground. Jesus was tired from walking. So while [we] disciples went into the town to buy some food, he sat down alongside the well. It was about noontime. A woman who [lived there] in Samaria came to get some water [from the well]. Jesus said to her, "Will you give me [from the well] some water [to drink]?" The [woman knew that] Jews did not like ([to touch things that belong to] Samaritans/[to] come near Samaritans), (OR, Jews did not like to associate with Samaritans,) **9** so the woman said to

him, “You are a Jew, and I am from Samaria. Furthermore, I am a woman. So ([I am surprised] that you are asking me for a drink [of water]!/how is it that you are asking me for a drink [of water]?) [RHQ]” **10** Jesus replied to her, “If you [(sg)] knew what God [wanted to] give you, and if you knew who I am, the one who is asking you for a drink, you would have asked me, and I would have given you water that gives life.” **11** She [thought he was talking about] ordinary [water. So she] said to him, “Sir, you do not have a bucket [or a rope with which to get water from the well], and the well is deep. So [since you cannot get water from this well], where can you get that life-giving water? **12** Our ancestor Jacob left us this well. He drank water from it, and there was [enough good water] so that his sons and his flocks [of sheep] and goats drank from it also. [Do you claim that] you are greater than Jacob, [and because of that you can give us life-giving water]?” **13** Jesus replied to her, “Everyone who drinks water from this [well] will later become thirsty again. **14** But those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again. On the contrary, the water that I give them will become in their inner beings like a spring of water that will enable them to have eternal life.” **(aiōn g165, aiōnios g166)** **15** The woman [did not understand that Jesus was speaking figuratively about something that would sustain her spiritually. So she] said to him, “Sir, give me that kind of water so that I will not get thirsty again, and so that I will not have to keep returning here to get water!” **16** [Jesus knew that she did not understand, but he wanted to show her by his God-given knowledge of her personal life that because he was the Messiah he could supply her spiritual need. So] he said to her, “Woman, go and call your husband, and bring him here!” **17** She replied, “I do not have a husband!” Jesus said to her, “You said that you do not have a husband, and that is true. **18** It is also true that you have had five husbands [one by one]. And the man you are living with now is not your husband! What you have said is very true.” **19** The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive you must be a prophet [because you are] able [to know people’s secrets]. **20** But [let me ask you a different question]: Our ancestors worshipped God here on [Gerizim Mountain], but you [Jews] say that Jerusalem is the place where we must worship [God. So who is right]?” **21** Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me [when I say that] there will be a time when it will not [matter whether] you worship [God our] Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem [or somewhere else]. **22** You [people from Samaria] do not know the one you are worshipping. But we [(exc) Jews] know whom we worship, because it is from [us] Jews that [God has sent the one who] will save people [from the guilt of their sins]. **23** However, there will be a time when those who genuinely worship God will worship him as [God’s] Spirit [directs] and according to [God’s] truth. In fact, that time is now. Those are the kind of worshipers my Father seeks. **24** God is a spiritual being. So it is necessary that those who worship him must worship him as his Spirit [directs] and [according to God’s] truth.” **25** The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming. When he comes, he will tell us everything [we need to know].” (‘Messiah’ and ‘Christ’ [both mean ‘God’s promised king]’.) **26** Jesus said to her, “I, the one speaking to you, am [the Messiah]!” **27** Just then [we] disciples returned [from town]. [Since it was contrary to our custom for Jewish religious teachers to converse with a woman they did not know], we were surprised that he was talking to a woman. However, none of us asked her, “What do you want?” and none of us asked him, “Why are you talking with her?” **28** The woman left her water jar there and went into the town. She said to the people there, **29** “Come and see a man who [was able to] tell me all about my past life [HYP], [even though I never met him before] Could this man be the Messiah?” **30** So [many people] left the town and started going to where Jesus was. **31** Meanwhile, we disciples were urging him, “Teacher, eat [some of the food we brought]!” **32** But he said to us, “I have food to eat that you do not know anything about!” **33** So we started saying to each other, “(Surely no one has brought him any food [when we] were not [here]!/Has anyone brought him any food [when we] were not [here]?) [RHQ]” **34** Jesus said to us, “Doing what [my Father] who sent me wants [me to do] and finishing the work he [gave me to do] is ([what sustains me/like] my food) [MET]. **35** [At this time of the year] you are saying (OR, your ancestors used to say), ‘There are four months left before we harvest [the crops].’ But I say to you, look carefully [at the non-Jewish people around here. God says, ‘They are ready to accept my message] [MET], [like crops in] fields that are ready for people to harvest. **36** [If you help them to accept my message], I will reward you [MET], [as an owner of a field] pays those who harvest the crops. Because of your work, people will gain eternal life.’ [I have been telling people God’s message. That is like] [MET] a man who plants seeds. [You will help people to accept my message. That will be like] [MET] harvesting crops. [When that happens], both you and I will rejoice. **(aiōnios g166)** **37** As a result, this saying will become true: One person plants [seeds], but others harvest [the crops]. **38** I am sending you [to enable people to accept my message, but you will not be the first ones who tell them God’s message]. Others [previously] worked hard [to tell people God’s message], and now you will be harvesting the results of their work.” **39** Many of the Samaria [district] people who [lived] in that town

believed that Jesus [was the Messiah] because they heard what that woman said [about Jesus], "That man [was able to] tell me all about my past life [HYP]!" **40** So when those people of Samaria came to Jesus, they urged him to stay with them. So we stayed there two days. **41** Many more of those people believed ([in Jesus/that he was the Messiah]) because of what he said. **42** They told the woman, "We believe in Jesus [now], but not [just] because of what you told us. Now we have heard him ourselves. And now we know that this man truly is the one who [can] save [people] [MTY] [from the guilt of their sins]." **43** Jesus had said [previously] that people did not honor prophets [like himself when they tried to teach people] in their own home area. So, two days later, Jesus and [we] disciples left that area and went to [his own area in] Galilee [district, because he knew that people there would not think very highly of him, and as a result the Jewish leaders would not be jealous]. **45** However, when we arrived in Galilee [district, many] of the people there welcomed him, because they had been in Jerusalem during the [Passover] celebration and had seen all the things he did there. **46** Jesus went again to Cana in Galilee [district]. That was where he [previously] turned water into wine. There was one of the king's officials who lived in Capernaum, whose son was very sick. **47** When that man heard [others say] that Jesus had returned to Galilee [district] from Judea [district], he went to Jesus [in Cana] and pleaded with him, "Please come down [to Capernaum] and heal my son, who is about to die!" **48** Jesus said to him, "You people will believe my message only if you see me perform [more] miracles!" **49** But the official said to him, "Sir, ([I] believe [in you/I believe that you came from God]). [So please] come down [to my home] before my son dies!" **50** Jesus said to him, "Then you may go [home]. Your son (will live/not die)!" The man believed what Jesus said, and left. **51** [The next day] while he was on the way home, his servants met him. They told him, "Your child is going to live!" **52** He asked them, "At what time did my son start to become well?" They said to him, "His fever ceased yesterday [afternoon] at one o'clock." **53** Then the boy's father realized that this was the time Jesus told him, "Your son will (live/not die)." So he and all the people in his house believed [that Jesus was the Messiah]. **54** That was the second miracle that Jesus performed in Galilee [district], after he had returned from Judea [district].

5 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem when the Jews were having [another] celebration. **2** At one of the gates [into the city] called the Sheep Gate, there is a pool. In our language we call it Bethzatha. [Around the pool] were five open areas with roofs over them. **3** Many people were lying there. They were people who were blind, lame, or paralyzed. **5** One of those who was there had been paralyzed for 38 years. **6** Jesus saw him lying there and found out that the man had been like that for a long time. He said to the man, "Do you want to become well?" **7** The paralyzed man replied to him, "[Yes], sir, [I want to get well, but] there is no one to help me get down into the pool when the water is stirred {stirs}. While I am trying to get [to the pool], someone else always gets there before me." **8** Jesus said to him, "Get up! Then pick up your mat and walk!" **9** The man immediately was healed. He picked up his mat and started walking! The day on which this happened was a Jewish day of rest. **10** So the Jewish [leaders] said to the man who had been healed, "Today is (the Sabbath/our rest day), and [in our Jewish] laws [it is written that people should not work on our] ([Sabbath/rest day]), so you should not be carrying your mat!" **11** The man replied to them, "The man who healed me, he himself said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk!'" **12** They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick it up and walk!'?" **13** But since Jesus had disappeared in the crowd [without telling the man his name], the man did not know who it was [who had healed him]. **14** Later, Jesus found the man in the Temple [courtyard]. He [told the man his name, and] said to him, "Listen! You are healed! So stop sinning! If you do not stop sinning, something will happen to you that will be worse [than the illness you had before]!" **15** The man went away and told the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] that it was Jesus who had healed him. **16** So the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] started to harass Jesus, because Jesus was doing these things (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day). **17** Then Jesus replied to them, "My Father has always been working every day, [including] ([the Sabbath/the day of rest]), up until now. I am doing the same thing!" **18** The Jewish leaders [SYN] considered that he was disobeying their rules about (the Sabbath/the day of rest), and that by saying that God was his Father, he was making himself equal with God. And they considered that both these things were grounds for killing him. So they tried even harder to find a way to kill him. **19** Jesus replied to them by saying, "You need to know this: I can do nothing by my own [authority]. I do only the [kind of] things that I see [my] Father doing. Whatever kinds of things my Father is doing, those are the things I am doing. **20** [My] Father loves me, and he shows me everything that he is doing. He will show me [the miracles] that [he wants me to do] that will be greater than the ones that [you have already seen me do], so that you may be amazed. **21** [For example], just like [my] Father causes people who have died to become alive again, I will give [eternal] life to everyone that I want to. **22** Furthermore, [my] Father is not the one who judges people [concerning their sins]. Instead, he has

given to me the work of judging people, 23 in order that all people may honor me, just like they honor [my] Father. [My] Father [considers that] anyone who does not honor me is not honoring [him], the one who sent me. 24 Listen to this carefully: Those who hear my message and believe that [God] is the one who sent me have eternal life. [God will] not (condemn them/say that he will punish them). They are no longer separated from God. Instead, they have [eternal] life. (aiōnios g166) 25 Listen to this carefully: There will be a time when those who are (spiritually dead/separated from God) will hear the voice of me, (the Son of God/the man who is also God). In fact, it is that time already. Those who hear [and pay attention to my message] will have [eternal] life. 26 [My] Father has [power to] make things live. Similarly, he has given me the [power to enable] people to live [eternally]. 27 Because I am the one who came from heaven, he has given me the authority to judge people [concerning their sins]. 28 Do not be surprised about that, because there will be a time when all people who have died will hear my voice, 29 and they will become alive again. Those who have lived good [lives] will rise [from their graves] and live forever. But those who have lived evil lives will rise, and I will (condemn them/declare that I will punish them [for their sins]). 30 I do not do anything [like that] by my own authority. I judge people only according to what I hear [my Father tell me]. I will judge people fairly, because I do not want to please only myself. Instead, I want to please [my Father], who sent me. 31 If I were the [only] one to tell people about myself, [people could rightly say that] what I say is not true. 32 But there is someone else who tells people about me. And I know that what he tells people about me is true. 33 As for you, when you sent messengers to John [the Baptizer to ask about me], he told the truth [about me]. 34 I do not [need that] people tell others [about me]. But instead, I am reminding [you about what John told people about me], in order that you will [believe it and] be saved {[God] will save you}. 35 [John's message about me] (OR, [John]) [MET] was [like] a lamp that shines brightly. For a short while you were willing to be made happy [by that message] {to let [that message] make you happy}. 36 But there is something else that tells you about me. [It should prove who I am] more than what John [said about me]. The miracles [PRS] that [my] Father told me to do, the miracles that I am performing, show (OR, prove) to people that my Father sent me. 37 Furthermore, [my] Father, who sent me, tells people about me. You have never heard his voice or seen him. 38 Furthermore, you have not believed in [me], the one he sent. So you have not [believed] his message in your inner beings. 39 You carefully study (OR, Study) the Scriptures, because you think that by [studying] them you will [find the way to] have eternal life. And those Scriptures tell people about me! (aiōnios g166) 40 But you refuse (to come to me/to believe my message) in order that you may have [eternal] life. 41 It does not [matter to] me whether people praise me. 42 But you [want people to praise you]. I know that within yourselves you do not love God. 43 Although I have come to earth with my Father's authority [MTY], you do not accept me. But if someone else comes with his own authority [MTY], you accept him! 44 You accept your praising each other, but you do not try to do things that will result in God himself praising you. So (there is no way you can believe [in me]!/how can you believe [my message]?) [RHQ] 45 But do not think that I am the one who will accuse you while [my] Father is listening! No, it is Moses who will accuse you! You thought that he would [defend you]. 46 Moses wrote about me, so if you had believed what he [wrote], you would have believed what I [said] 47 But because you did not believe what he wrote [about me], (you will certainly not believe what I say!/how will you believe what I say?) [RHQ]"

6 Some time later, when Jesus was in Galilee district, near the time of the Jewish Passover celebration, Jesus went [with us disciples by boat] and crossed to another place along Galilee Lake. This lake is [also called] Tiberias Lake. 2 A large crowd of people kept following Jesus [on land] because they had been seeing the miracles he performed [by healing] sick people. 3 Jesus went up on the hillside and sat down with [us] disciples [to teach us]. 4 Then he looked up and saw a great crowd of people coming toward him. 5 He said to Philip, "Where will we buy food for all these people to eat?" 6 He asked this only to find out if Philip believed what [Jesus could do], because Jesus already knew what he himself was going to do. 7 Philip replied to him, "[Even if we had] the amount of money a man earns in eight months, that would not be enough to buy bread so that each person could have a little bit!" 8 Another one of [us] disciples, Andrew, who was Simon Peter's [younger] brother, said to Jesus, 9 "There is a boy here who has five small barley loaves and two [cooked] fish. But (they will not help much among so many people!/what good will that do among so many people?) [RHQ]" 10 Jesus said, "Tell the people to sit down!" There was plenty of grass there, so they all sat down [comfortably]. There were about 5,000 men [among the crowd]. 11 Then Jesus took the small loaves and the fish and thanked [God] for them. Then he [gave them to us, and we] distributed the small loaves and the fish to all the people sitting on the ground. [Because God caused the food to keep increasing], everyone ate as much as they wanted. 12 When everyone had all the food they wanted, he said to [us]

disciples, “Gather up the pieces that are left over. Do not let anything be wasted!” **13** So we gathered up the pieces of the small loaves that were left over by those who had eaten. We filled twelve baskets with those pieces! **14** After the people saw that miracle that Jesus had performed, [many of] them started to say, “Surely this is the prophet [like Moses] that [God promised] to send to the world!” **15** So, because Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him to make him [their] king, he left them again and went up into the hills by himself. **16** When it was evening, [we] disciples went down to [Galilee] Lake. **17** When it became dark and Jesus had still not joined us, [we] got into a boat and went across the lake towards Capernaum [city]. **18** A strong wind started to blow and caused the water (to become very rough/to have high waves). **19** After we had rowed (three or four miles/five or six kilometers), we saw Jesus coming near the boat; he was walking on the water! So we were terrified! **20** But he said to us, “Do not be afraid! It is I!” **21** We were glad to take him into the boat. As soon as [we] did that, the boat reached the shore where [we] were going! **22** The next day the crowd of people that had stayed on the other side of the lake [were perplexed about how Jesus had left that area]. They knew that there had been only one boat there [the previous day]. They knew that we had gone away in it by ourselves. They knew that Jesus had not gone with us. **23** Then some [men came] from Tiberias [city] in boats. [They were hoping to take some of the crowd back to Tiberias]. They arrived near the place where the people had eaten the food after Jesus had given thanks [and caused it to multiply]. **24** When the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor we disciples were there, [some of] them got into those boats and they sailed to Capernaum to find Jesus. **25** When they found him [in Capernaum] further around the lake, they asked him, “Teacher, [since you(sg) did not come in a boat], when [and how] did you get here?” **26** Jesus replied to them, “Listen to this carefully: Do you know why you are looking for me? It is not because you saw [me perform] miracles [and as a result have realized who I really am]. No! You are looking for me [only] because you had plenty of bread to eat [after I provided it for you by performing a miracle]. **27** Stop desiring food that will soon spoil! Instead, desire to get [spiritual] food that will last forever! Yearn for eternal life! That is what I, the one who came from heaven, will give you. God [my] Father has shown that he approves of me [enabling me to do that].” **(aiōnios g166)** **28** Then the people asked him, “What things should we do [to please] God?” **29** Jesus replied, “What God [wants you] to do is this: He wants you to believe that [I am] the one he has sent.” **30** So they said to him, “Then perform [another] miracle so that we may see it and believe that [you came from God]. What miracle would you like to perform? **31** Our ancestors ate the [food called] manna [that God provided for them by a miracle] in the desolate area. This is written {[The Psalmist] wrote this} [in the Scriptures] about [what Moses caused to happen:] ‘He gave them food from heaven to eat.’ [Will you perform a miracle like that]?” **32** So Jesus said to them, “The truth is that it was not Moses who gave your [ancestors] that food from heaven. No, it was my Father [who gave it to them. And my Father is the one] who gives you the true food from heaven. **33** The true bread from God came down from heaven, and he is the one who will give [eternal] life to [the people of] the world [MTY].” **34** [Not understanding what he meant], they said to him, “Sir, give us that kind of bread all the time!” **35** Jesus said to them, “[Just like] food [MET] [sustains physical life], I am the [one who enables you to have spiritual] life. Those who [eat ordinary food and drinks will later be hungry and thirsty]. But those who come to me [to receive that life] will never again [lack anything spiritually]. **36** I told you before that you have seen my [miracles, but after seeing them, instead of understanding who I am], you have not believed in me. **37** All the people that [my] Father entrusts to me will come to me, and I will certainly (welcome/never send away) [LIT] anyone who comes to me. **38** When I came down from heaven, it was not to do what I want. Instead, I came to do what ([God/my Father]), who sent me, wants. **39** What the one who sent me wants is that I (keep forever all/never lose any) [LIT] of those whom he has entrusted to me. He wants me to cause all of them to become alive again (on the last day/on the day [when I judge everyone]) [MTY]. **40** [Long ago in the desolate area when those who were bitten by snakes looked at the bronze replica of a snake, they were healed] [MET]. What my Father wants is that [similarly] everyone who looks at [what] I [have done] and believes in me will have eternal life. I will cause them to become alive again (on the last day/on the day [when I judge everyone]) [MTY].” **(aiōnios g166)** **41** The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] began to grumble about him because he said, “I am the one who is [like] true bread who came down from heaven.” **42** They said, “(This man is Jesus, the son of Joseph!/Isn’t this man the son of Joseph?) [RHQ] We know [the names of] both his father and his mother. [He certainly did not come from heaven], so (he is [lying] by saying ‘I came from heaven.’/why is he now saying, ‘I came from heaven?’) [RHQ]” **43** Jesus replied to them, “Stop grumbling among yourselves [about what I just said]! **44** [My] Father, who sent me, makes people want to come to me. No others will come to me [to receive eternal life]. Those who come to me are the only ones who will believe in me. I will (cause them to be alive again/raise them [from the dead])

(on the last day/on the [judgment] day). **45** It was written ([by one of the prophets/by the prophet Isaiah]) {([One of the prophets/The prophet Isaiah]) wrote} [about all those who will trust in me], 'God will teach them all.' Everyone who listens to what [my] Father [says] and learns from him will (come to/believe in) me. **46** I came from God. I am the only one who has seen [my] Father. No one else has seen him. **47** Listen to this carefully: Everyone who believes ([my message/in me]) has eternal life. **(aiōnios g166)** **48** [Just like] food [MET] [sustains your physical life], I am the [one who enables you to have spiritual] life. **49** Even though your ancestors ate the manna [while they were traveling] in the desolate area, they died [anyway]. **50** But the bread [I am talking about] is something that came down from heaven. If people eat that bread, their [spirits] will never die. **51** I am the one who came down from heaven to enable people to have [spiritual] life. If people take what I will give them, they will live forever. What I will give them is my flesh, which I will give to [all the people in] [MTY] the world in order that they may have [spiritual] life." **(aiōn g165)** **52** Then the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] began to argue among themselves. They said, "(There is no way this man can give us his flesh to eat!/How can this man give us his flesh to eat?)" [RHQ] **53** So, [speaking figuratively of the need for them to accept for themselves the benefits of his sacrificing himself and shedding his blood to atone for their sins] [MET], Jesus said to them, "Listen carefully to this: [Although] I am the one who came from heaven, if you do not eat my flesh and drink my blood, you will not have eternal life. **54** Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will cause them to become alive again at (the last day/the [judgment] day), **(aiōnios g166)** **55** because my flesh and my blood are truly spiritual food. **56** Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood will have a close relationship with me, and I will have a close relationship with them. **57** [My] Father, who is the [source of everything that] lives, sent me, and I live because [my] Father has [given me life]. Similarly those who eat my [flesh] will live [eternally] because of what I [do for them]. **58** [I am] the true bread that came down from heaven. Although our ancestors ate [manna], they [later] died [anyway]. But those who eat this bread will live forever." **(aiōn g165)** **59** He said this while he was teaching people in (the synagogue/the Jewish meeting place) in Capernaum. **60** After they heard him say that, many of his disciples said, "What he is teaching is hard [to understand]; (it is very difficult for anyone to accept it!/how can anyone accept it?) [RHQ]" **61** Jesus was aware that his disciples were grumbling about it, so he said to them, "(I am sorry that this is offending you./Is this offending you?) [RHQ] **62** ([Perhaps you will believe my message] if you see me, the one who came from heaven, ascending [there] to where I was before!/[(What will you think if you see me], the one who came from heaven, ascending [there] to where I was before)?) [RHQ] **63** [God's] Spirit is the one who gives people [eternal] life. Human efforts are no help at all [for giving people eternal life]. The message I have spoken to you [gives spiritual] life (OR, [comes from] God's Spirit [and gives eternal] life.) **64** But there are some of you who do not believe [my message." Jesus said that] because he knew from the time he started [MTY] [his ministry] which of them would not believe his message. He also knew who would (betray him/enable his enemies to seize him). **65** Then he continued by saying, "That is why I told you that only those whom my Father has enabled [to believe in me] will come to me [and receive eternal life]." **66** From that [time], many of his disciples left him and no longer went with him. **67** So he said to [us] twelve [apostles], "You do not want to leave me also, do you?" **68** Simon Peter replied to him, "Lord, [we] will not [leave you], [because] (there is no other person [like you] to whom we can go!/what other person is there like [you] to whom we can go?) [RHQ] You have the message about eternal life! **(aiōnios g166)** **69** We have come to believe for certain that you are the holy one [who has come] from God!" **70** Then Jesus replied to us, "[You are saying that as though all] you twelve [men] whom I have chosen [RHQ] believe that. But one of you is [under the control of] Satan!" **71** He was talking about Judas, the [son] of Simon, from Kerioth [village]. [Even though] Judas was one of us twelve [apostles], he was about (to betray Jesus/to enable Jesus' enemies to seize him).

7 After those things happened, Jesus went around in Galilee [province]. He did not want to travel in Judea [province], because he knew that the Jewish [leaders there] were wanting to kill him. **2** But when the time of the Jewish celebration [called] 'Celebration of [Living in] Shelters' was near, **3** Jesus' [younger] brothers said to him, "[Since many people] here [have left you], you should leave and go to Judea [province and perform] some miracles there, so that your disciples may see them! **4** No one who wants to become famous does things secretly. [You say] you are doing these miracles, [so do some miracles there] so that everyone [MTY] can see them!" **5** [They said this critically], because even [though they were] his own [younger] brothers, they did not believe he [was from God]. **6** So Jesus said to them, "It is not yet time for me [MTY] [to go to the celebration]. For you, any time is right [to go to the celebration]. **7** [The people] [MTY] [who] ([do not believe in me/do not belong to God]) cannot hate you, but they hate me because I tell them that what they are doing is evil. **8** You [(pl)] go ahead

to the celebration. I am not going up [to Jerusalem] to the celebration [yet], because now is not the right time for me [to go]." **9** After he said that, Jesus stayed [a little longer] in Galilee. **10** However, [a few days] after his younger brothers left to go up to the celebration, he went also. He went, along with [us] disciples, but no others went with us. **11** At the celebration, the Jewish [leaders] were looking for him. They were asking people, "Has Jesus come?" **12** Among the crowds, many people were whispering about Jesus. Some were saying, "He is a good man!" But others were saying instead, "No! He is deceiving the crowds!" **13** But no one was speaking so that others could hear them, because they were afraid of the Jewish [leaders] [SYN]. **14** In the middle of the days of the celebration, Jesus went to the Temple [courtyard] and began to teach people. **15** The Jewish [elders] were amazed [at what he was saying]. They said, "This man never studied [in one of our religious schools]! So (how can he have learned [so much about Scripture]?/it is difficult for us to believe that he has learned [so much about Scripture]!) [RHQ]" **16** Jesus replied to them, "What I teach does not come from myself. It comes from [God], the one who sent me. **17** Those who choose to do what God wants will find out whether what I teach comes from God or whether I am speaking with [only] my own [authority]. **18** Those who speak with [only] their own [authority] do that [only] so that others will honor them. But I am [doing things so that others] will honor the one who sent me, and I am someone who speaks the truth. I never lie. **19** [Think about] the laws that Moses gave you [RHQ]. None of you [completely] obeys those laws. So why are you trying to kill me, [saying I do not obey the laws concerning] ([the Sabbath/the Jewish day of rest])?" **20** Someone in the crowd answered, "[By saying this you show that] you are crazy (OR, A demon is controlling you)! Certainly no one is trying to kill you!" **21** Jesus replied to them, "Because I did a miracle [of healing someone] (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day), you are all shocked. **22** Moses gave you [a law that you must] circumcise [the male children and that you must do that exactly seven days after they are born. Actually], it was your ancestors, [Abraham and Isaac and Jacob], not Moses, who [started that ritual]. But because of that law, you sometimes circumcise them (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day), [but that is working, too] **23** You [sometimes] circumcise boys (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day) so that the law of Moses is not disobeyed {[you] do not disobey the law of Moses}, so (it is ridiculous that you are angry with me, saying [I worked] (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day) by healing a man!/why are you angry with me, saying [I worked] (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day) by healing a man?) [RHQ] [Healing someone is far more helpful than circumcising a baby boy]! **24** Stop deciding whether my healing this man is wrong according to what you see! Instead, decide according to what is really the right action [to help people]"! **25** Some of the people from Jerusalem were saying, "(This is the man that they are trying to kill!/Isn't this the man that they are trying to kill?) [RHQ] **26** He is saying these things (publicly/in front of many people), but our [Jewish] rulers are not saying anything to [oppose] him. Is that because they have decided that he is truly (the Messiah/God's chosen king)? **27** But [he cannot be the Messiah, because] we know where this man came from. When the Messiah really comes, no one will know where he comes from." **28** [They said that because they thought Jesus was born in Nazareth]. So while Jesus was teaching [people] in the Temple [courtyard], he shouted, "Yes, [you say that] you know me, and [you think] you know [IRO] where I am from. But I have come here not (because I appointed myself/with my own authority). Instead, [God] is the one who truly sent me. You do not know him. **29** But I know him, because I have come from him. He is the one who sent me!" **30** Then they tried to seize him [because he said that he had come from God]. But no one put their hands on him [to do that], because it was not yet the time [MTY] [for him to die]. **31** But many of the crowd believed that he [had come from God]. They said, "When the Messiah comes, he certainly will not do more miracles than this man has done, will he?" **32** The Pharisees heard them whispering these things about him. So they and the chief priests sent some Temple guards to seize him. **33** Then Jesus said, "I will be with you for only a short time. Then I will return to the one who sent me. **34** Then you will search for me, but you will not find me. And you will not be able to come to the place where I am." **35** So the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] said to themselves, "Where is this man about to go with the result that we will not be able to find him? [Some Jewish people have] dispersed [and live] among Greek people. He is not intending to go [and live among them] and teach them, is he? **36** When he said 'You will search for me, but you will not be able to find me,' and when he said 'You will not be able to come to the place where I am,' what [did he mean]?" **37** [On each of the seven days of the celebration, the high priest poured out some water on the altar in the Temple to remember how God provided water for the people in the desolate area long ago. But the water he poured did not help anyone who was thirsty. So] on the last day of the festival, which was the most important day, Jesus stood up [in the Temple courtyard] and said with a loud voice, "Those who are thirsty should come to me to drink [what I will give them]. **38** Just like the Scriptures teach, streams of

water shall flow out from within those who believe in me, and that water will cause them to live [eternally]." **39** When Jesus said that, he was referring to [God's] Spirit, whom those who believed in Jesus would receive later. Up to that time God had not sent the Spirit [to live within believers], because Jesus had not yet [died and returned to his] glorious [home in] heaven, [from where he would send the Spirit]. **40** When some of the crowd heard those words, they said, "Surely this man is the prophet [whom God promised to send who would be like Moses]!" **41** Others said, "He is the Messiah!" But others, [thinking Jesus was born in Galilee], said, "The Messiah will not come from Galilee [province], will he? **42** (Did [a prophet] not write in the Scriptures that the Messiah will come from [King] David's family, and be born in Bethlehem, where [King] David lived?/[It is written] in the Scriptures that the Messiah will come from [King] David's family, and be born in Bethlehem, where [King] David lived!) [RHQ]" **43** So the people were divided because of [what they thought about] Jesus. **44** Some people wanted to seize him, but no one tried [to do that]. **45** So the Temple guards returned to the chief priests and the Pharisees, [the ones who had sent them to arrest Jesus]. They said to the guards, "Why did you not [seize him and] bring him [here]?" **46** They replied, "No one ever spoke such [amazing things] as this man does!" **47** Then the Pharisees replied, "Have you been deceived {Has [he] deceived you}, too? **48** (None of our rulers nor any of us Pharisees have believed that (he [is the Messiah]!/he [came from God]!)/Have any of our [Jewish] rulers or any of us Pharisees believed that (he [is the Messiah]?/he [came from God]?)) [RHQ] **49** Not one! But, on the contrary, some of this crowd [have believed in him]. They do not know [the true teachings of] our laws! They will go to hell [for listening to him]!" **(questioned)** **50** Then Nicodemus spoke. He was the one who earlier went to Jesus [at night]. He was also a member of the Jewish council. He said to [the rest of the Council members], **51** "[We] have not listened to what he says to find out what he is doing. (It is not permitted in our [Jewish] law [PRS] for us to say, before questioning someone, that we must punish him!/Is it permitted in our [Jewish] law [PRS] for us to say, before questioning someone, that we must punish him?) [RHQ]" **52** They replied to him, "(Are you another [disgusting person] from Galilee?/[You talk like] another [disgusting person] from Galilee!) [RHQ] Read [what is written in the Scriptures] You will find that no prophet comes from Galilee [province, like he does]!" **53** [Then they all left and went to their own homes.

8 But Jesus went [with us disciples] to Olive [Tree] Hill [and we stayed near there that night]. **2** Early the next morning, we returned to the Temple [courtyard]. Many people gathered around Jesus, so he sat down to teach them. **3** Then men who taught the [Jewish] laws and some of [SYN] the Pharisee [religious group] brought a woman to him. She was seized {[They] had [arranged to] seize her} while she was having sex with a man who was not her husband. They made her stand up in front of the group [that was listening to Jesus]. **4** Then they said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was seized {[we] seized this woman} while she was having sex with a man who is not her husband. **5** Moses commanded us in the laws that [he gave us] that we should throw stones at such women [and kill them]. So what do you say [we should do]?" **6** They asked this question as a trap so that they could accuse him. [If he said that they should not kill her, they would shame him for disobeying the law of Moses. If he said that they should kill her, they could accuse him to the Roman governor]. But Jesus bent down and wrote something on the ground with his finger. **7** While they continued to question him, he stood up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has never sinned can be the first one to start throwing stones at her." **8** Then he stooped down and wrote [some more] on the ground. **9** After they heard what he said, those [who were questioning him] went away, one by one, the older ones first [and then the younger ones, knowing they were all sinners]. Finally only Jesus was there, along with the woman. **10** Jesus stood up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one said you must die for your sin?" **11** She said, "No, sir, no one." Then Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go [home] now, and do not continue your sinful [life] any longer!"] **12** Jesus spoke to the people again. He said, "I am [like] a light [MET] for [all the people in] [MTY] the world. [Just like a light reveals what has been in the darkness] [MET], [I reveal God's truth to them]. Those who walk in the darkness [are unaware of what is around them]. But those who become my disciples will always be aware [of God's truth] [MET]. They will have my light [which shows them how to have eternal] life." **13** So the Pharisees said to him, "You are just telling about yourself! [Since there is no one else to verify these things that you say about yourself], [we] do not [need to accept that] what you say is true." **14** Jesus replied, "Even if I were the [only one to] say these things about myself, what I say is true, because I know that I came from [heaven], and I know that I am going [back to heaven]. But you do not know where I came from or where I am going. **15** You judge people according to human standards. [The reason] that I am [here is] not (to condemn people/to say that I will punish people) [for their sins]. **16** But if I did judge [people], what I decided would be correct, because I am not the [only] one [who will decide those things]. I and the one who sent

me will both decide. 17 It is written {[Moses] wrote} in your law that if [at least] two people testify that [some event has happened], [people should consider] that what they say is true. 18 I am telling you about myself, and the other one who is telling you about me is [my] Father who sent me. [So you should believe that what we declare is true]." 19 Then they asked him, "[If you have a] father whom [we can question about you], where is he?" Jesus replied, "You do not know [who] I [really am]. If you knew who I [really am], you would know who my Father is also." 20 He said these things when he was in the Temple [courtyard], near the place where the people put their offerings. [This was also very close to the place where the Jewish council met]. But no one seized him to arrest him, because it was not yet time [MTY] [for him to suffer and die]. 21 Jesus also said to them, "I [will soon be] going away. Then [at the end of your life] you will seek me, but you will die [without God forgiving] your sins. Where I will go, you will not be able to come." 22 So the Jewish [leaders] said among themselves, "Is he going to kill himself? Is that the reason that he said, 'Where I go, you will not be able to come'?" 23 But Jesus continued by saying to them, "You were born here in this world, but I came from heaven. You belong to those who are opposed to God [MTY]. I do not belong to them. 24 I told you that you will die [without God forgiving] your sins. If you do not believe that I am [who I say that I am], you will die [without God forgiving] your sins." 25 So they said to him, "You! Who do you think you are?" Jesus said to them, "Ever since I began [teaching], I have been telling you who I am! 26 I could judge you and say that [you are guilty of] many things. But instead, [I will say only] what the one who sent me tells me to say. [What he says] is true, and I tell the people in the world [MTY] what I have heard from him." 27 They did not understand that he was talking about his Father [in heaven]. 28 So Jesus said, "I am the one who came down from heaven, but when you lift me up [on a cross to kill me], you will know who I am. You will also know that I do not do anything with my own [authority]. Instead, I say just what [my] Father has taught me. 29 He is the one who sent me, and he helps me. Because I always do the things that please him, he has never abandoned me." 30 As Jesus was saying these things, many people believed that he [was] ([from God/the Messiah]). 31 Then Jesus said to the Jews who now said they believed in him, "If you continue to [live in accordance with] my message, you will truly be my disciples. 32 Then you will know [God's] truth, and as a result of [your believing his] truth, he [PRS] will free you [from being controlled by the one who has made you his slaves]." 33 They replied to him, "We are descendants of Abraham. We have never been anyone's slaves. So why do you say [we will] be freed [from being someone's slaves]?" 34 Jesus replied, "Listen carefully to what I am going to tell you. All those who continue to sin are [forced to obey] their sinful desires [MET], [just like] a slave [is forced to obey his master]. 35 A slave is not a permanent member of a family. But a son is a member of a family forever. [Similarly, you say you are members of God's family because you are descendants of Abraham, but really, because you are like slaves of your sinful desires, you are no longer permanent members of God's family]. (aiōn g165) 36 So if you allow me to free you, you will truly be free. 37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants. But you are trying to kill me because [you are not] allowing [PRS] my message to continue [to change] your inner being. 38 I am telling you what I saw when I was with [my] Father. But you do the things that you have heard from your father." 39 They replied to him, "Abraham is our ancestor." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's descendants, [your character would be like Abraham's character, and] you would do [good] things like Abraham did. 40 I have been telling you the truth that I heard from God, but you are trying to kill me. Abraham did not do things like that. 41 No! You are doing the things that your [real] father does." They said to him, "[We do not know about you, but] we are not illegitimate children. And [spiritually], we have only one Father. That is God, and you do not know who your father is!" 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your father, you would love me, because I came from God, and now I have come here [to this world]. My coming was not (because I [appointed] myself/with my own [authority]). He sent me. 43 (And I will tell you why you do not understand what I say./Do you know why you do not understand what I say?) [RHQ] It is because you do not want to accept my message. 44 You belong to your father, (the devil/Satan), and you desire to do what he wants. He has [caused people to become] murderers from the time when [people] first [sinned]. He has abandoned [God's] truth because he is a liar by his nature. Whenever he lies, he is speaking according to his [nature], because he is a liar and is the one who originates [MET] all lies. 45 But because I tell you the truth, you do not believe me! 46 [Since I have never sinned], (none of you can show that I have sinned./can anyone among you show that I have sinned?) [RHQ] So, since I tell you the truth, (there is no good reason for your not believing me!/why is it that you do not believe me?) [RHQ] 47 Those who belong to God habitually obey God's message. You do not belong to God, so you do not obey his message." 48 The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] replied to him, "(We are certainly right by saying that you [believe what is false as] the Samaritans [do]!/Are we not right by saying that

you [believe what is false as] the Samaritans [do]?) [RHQ] And that (a demon/an evil spirit) [controls] you!" **49** Jesus replied, "A demon does not [control] me! I honor my Father, and you do not honor me! **50** I am not trying to honor myself. There is someone else who desires [to honor me], and he is the one who will judge [whether it is I who am telling the truth or whether it is you who are telling the truth]. **51** But the truth is that anyone who obeys what I say will never die!" **(aiōn g165)** **52** Then the Jewish [leaders] [SYN], [thinking that he was talking about ordinary death and not about spiritual death], said to him, "Now we are sure that a demon [controls] you! Abraham and the prophets died [long ago]! But you say that anyone who obeys what you teach will never die! **(aiōn g165)** **53** (You are certainly not greater than our ancestor Abraham!/Do you think you are greater than our ancestor Abraham?) [RHQ] He died, and all the prophets died, so who do you think you are [by saying something like that]?" **54** Jesus replied, "If I were honoring myself, that would be worthless. My Father is the one who you say is your God. He is the one who honors me. **55** Although you do not know him, I know him [and have a close relationship with him]. If I said that I did not know him, I would be a liar like you are. But I know him, and I obey what he says. **56** Your ancestor Abraham was happy when he thought about what I would [do during] my life [MTY]. [It was as though] he saw that, and was happy." **57** Then the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] said to him, "You are not 50 years old yet! So (you certainly did not see him!/how could you have seen him?) [RHQ] [Because he died long ago]!" **58** Jesus said to them, "The truth is that I existed before Abraham was born!" **59** So, [because they were very angry about Jesus thus saying that he] ([had eternally existed/was equal with God]), they picked up stones to throw at him [to kill him]. But [Jesus] caused them not to be able to see him, and he left the Temple courtyard.

9 As Jesus walked along [with us], he saw a man who had been blind from the time he was born. **2** We disciples asked him, "Teacher, was this man blind from when he was born because his parents sinned or because he himself sinned?" **3** Jesus replied, "His being blind was not because he or his parents sinned. Instead, [he has been blind] in order that [people can] see the power of God {the power of God can be seen} as a result of [what will now happen] to him. **4** While there is still time, I must do the work that the one who sent me [wants me to do. Just like daytime is followed by] nighttime when people do not work, [at the end of our lives] [MET] [it is too late for us to do what God wants]. **5** While I am still [living] in this world, I am the [one who enables people to know about God, like] [MET] [a] light enables the people in [MTY] this world [to see what is in the darkness]." **6** After he said that, he spat on the ground. He made [a little bit of] mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. **7** Then he said to him, "Go and wash in Siloam pool!" (That name means 'sent;' [just like they sent the water by a channel into the pool, God sent Jesus]). So the man went and washed [in the pool], and when he went home he was able to see! **8** His neighbors and others who previously had seen him when he was begging said, "He is the man who used to sit here and beg, isn't he?" **9** Some said, "[Yes], he is." Others said, "No, [he is not]. It is [just] a man who looks like him!" But the man himself said, "Yes, I am that man!" **10** So they said to him, "How is it that now you can see?" **11** He replied, "The man whose name is Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. Then he told me to go to Siloam [pool] and wash. So I went there and washed, and then I could see." **12** They said to him, "Where is that man [now]?" He said, "I do not know." **13** They took to the Pharisees the man who was previously blind. **14** The day on which Jesus made the mud and enabled the man to see again was a (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest). [The Pharisees considered that healing someone was work, and their rules did not permit people to do any work] ([on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day]). **15** So the Pharisees also asked that man, "How did you become able to see?" He said to them, "The man put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I can see!" **16** So some of the Pharisees said, "Since this man [Jesus] disobeys [our rules about working] (on the Sabbath/on the Jewish rest day), he is not from God." But others said, "If he was a sinner, (he could certainly not do such miracles!/how could he do such miracles?) [RHQ]" So they were divided. **17** So one of them said to the blind man again, "You are the man whom he enabled to see. What do you yourself say about him?" The man said, "[I think] he is a prophet!" [So they told him to go]. **18** The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] still did not believe that the man was blind when he was born, and that he was [now] able to see. So they sent someone to bring the man's parents. **19** [When they got there], one of [the Jewish leaders] asked them, "Is that man your son? Do you say that he was blind when he was born? [If that is true], how is he now able to see?" **20** His parents replied, "We know that he is our son. We know that he was blind when he was born. **21** But we do not know how he is able to see now. We also do not know who enabled him to see. Ask our son! He is old enough [to answer questions from authorities like you] He can tell you himself!" **22** The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] had previously declared that they would prevent anyone who declared that Jesus was the Messiah from [entering] their synagogues. His parents [knew that, so] they were afraid of the Jewish [leaders] [SYN].

23 That is the reason that they said, "He is old enough [to answer questions], so ask him!" **24** So they sent someone to bring back to them the man who had been blind. [When he got there], the [Jewish leaders] said to him, "Knowing that God [is listening] [IDM], tell the truth! We know that the man who healed you is a sinner." **25** He replied, "I do not know if he is a sinner or not. But one thing I do know is that I was blind, but now I can see!" **26** So they said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he enable you to see?" **27** He replied, "I told you that already, but you did not [RHQ] pay attention! Why do you want to hear me tell you again? (Do you also want to become his disciples?/You talk as though [IRO] you also want to become his disciples [RHQ])." **28** Then they insulted him angrily. They said, "You are that man's disciple, but we are Moses' disciples! **29** We know that God spoke to Moses; but this man, we do not know where he is from or where he [gets any authority] from!" **30** The man replied, "That is very surprising! You [say that] you do not know where he [gets any authority]. But he enabled me to see! **31** We know that God does not help sinners [who ask God to help them]. Instead, he listens to [and helps] godly people who pray. He listens to people who do what God wants. **32** No one has ever enabled a man to see who was blind when he was born [like I was]. That has never happened since the world began! **(aiōn g165)** **33** So if this man had not come from God, he would not be able to do anything [like that]!" **34** They replied to him, "You (were born [as a result of your parents'] sin [EUP]/bastard)! (Do you think you are qualified to teach us?/You are not qualified to teach us!) [RHQ]" Then they threw him out [of the synagogue]. **35** Jesus heard [people say] that they had thrown that man out. He found the man and said to him, "Do you believe that the one who came down from heaven [is the Messiah]?" **36** The man answered, "Sir, who is he? [Tell me], in order that I may believe in him." **37** Jesus said to him, "You have seen him. [In fact, it is I], the one who am speaking to you." **38** The man said, "Lord, I believe that [you are the Messiah]!" Then he [knelt down before] Jesus and worshipped him. **39** Jesus said, "I have come into this world to judge [the people in the world]. The result will be that [those who realize that they do not know God's truth will perceive it. That is like] [MET] [enabling] those who are blind to see. But the result will also be that people who [falsely think] [IRO] that [they understand God's truth will never understand it. That is like] [MET] [people] who are blind remaining blind permanently." **40** Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard him say that, and said to him, "You are not suggesting that we are [like] blind people, are you?" **41** Jesus said to them, "If you [realized that you did not yet know God's truth, but you wanted to, then you would be like] blind people [who wanted to see. God would be able to] forgive your sins. But you are now [falsely] claiming that you [know God's truth, so you are like people who are blind who claim that they] can see. [Because of that, God is not able to] forgive your sins."

10 [Jesus continued by saying to us], "Listen carefully to what I say. Anyone who does not enter [the sheep pen] through the gate, if he climbs in some other way, he is a thief or a bandit. **2** The man who enters [the pen] through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. **3** The man who watches the gate at [night] opens the gate for him. The sheep recognize the shepherd's voice. He summons his own sheep by [calling out] the names [he has given] them. Then he leads them outside [the pen]. **4** After he has brought out all his own [sheep], he goes in front of them. His sheep follow him because they recognize [and pay attention to] his voice. **5** But they will never follow a stranger. Instead, they will run away from him, because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." **6** Jesus said that [MET] [to illustrate the difference between himself and the Pharisees, who were deceiving the people]. But they did not understand what he was telling them. **7** So Jesus spoke to them again. He said, "Listen carefully to what I am saying. I am [like] [MET] a gate for the sheep [to enter the sheepfold, because I am the one who allows people to enter God's presence]. **8** All of [your religious leaders] who have come previously [without my authority] are [like] [MET] thieves and bandits [because they act violently and dishonestly for their own benefit]. But [just like] sheep do not [obey strangers, God's people do not] pay attention to them. **9** I am [like] a gate. Those will be saved {[God] will save all those} who come [to God] by [trusting in] me. [Just like sheep] go in and out [through the gate safely] to find pasture [MET], [I will provide for them and protect them]. **10** Thieves come [to a sheep pen] only to steal or kill or destroy [sheep] [MET]. [Similarly, your religious leaders injure God's people spiritually]. But I have come in order that people may have [eternal/spiritual] life, and that they may have abundantly [all they need to sustain them spiritually]. **11** I am [like] a good shepherd. A good shepherd [is willing to] die to save the sheep [MET]. [Similarly, I am ready to sacrifice myself to save those who belong to me]. **12** A worker whom someone has hired [to look after the sheep] is not [like] the shepherd or the one who owns the sheep. So when he sees a wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock of sheep and [seizes one sheep and] causes [the others] to scatter. **13** The worker runs away because he is [only] a man whom someone has hired. He is not [really] concerned about [what happens to] the sheep [MET]. [Similarly, your religious teachers do

not really care what happens to you]. **14** I am [like] a good shepherd. [Just like a good shepherd knows his] sheep [MET], I know those who belong to me, and they know me **15** in the same way as [my] Father knows me and I know [my] Father. Furthermore, I am [ready to] sacrifice myself for [those who belong to me]. **16** And I have other people [who are not Jews] who [will some day] belong to me. They will be [like] [MET] sheep from another sheep pen. I must bring them [to God/myself] also. They will pay attention to what I say, and eventually [all those who belong to me] will be [like] one flock, and [I] will be [like] [MET] their one shepherd. **17** The reason [my] Father loves me is that I will sacrifice my life. But [after I do that], I will become alive again. **18** No one is causing me to die. Instead, I [have chosen to] sacrifice myself. I have authority to sacrifice myself and I have authority to become alive again. That is what my Father has commanded me to do." **19** After hearing these words [that Jesus said], the Jews were divided again. **20** Many of them said, "A demon is [controlling] him and has caused him to become crazy. (It is useless to listen to him!/Why should we listen to him?) [RHQ]" **21** But others said, "What he is saying is not something a man whom a demon is controlling would say. (No demon could enable a blind man to see [like he did!/] How could a demon enable a blind man to see [like he did]?) [RHQ]" **22** Then it was time for the celebration [to remember when our ancestors] rededicated [the Temple in Jerusalem]. It was in winter. **23** Jesus was in the Temple [courtyard], walking in [the place that people called King] Solomon's porch. **24** The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] gathered around him and said, "How long will you keep us from knowing for sure [if you are the Messiah]? If you are the Messiah, tell us clearly!" **25** Jesus answered them, "I have told you [that I am the Messiah], but you do not believe me! You should know who I am because of the miracles I do with my Father's authority [MTY]. **26** But instead, you do not believe in me because you do not belong to [me. You are like] [MET] sheep [who belong to a different shepherd]. **27** [Just like sheep] heed the voice [of their true shepherd] [MET], my [people pay attention to what I say]. I know them, and they have become my disciples. **28** I will give them eternal life. No one will separate them from me, not ever. No one shall ever pull them away from belonging to me. **(aiōn g165, aiōnios g166)** **29** [Those] that my Father has given to me are more precious than anything else (OR, My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than anything that opposes them). So no one can pull them away from belonging to him [MTY]. **30** [My] father and I are equal." **31** The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] again picked up stones to throw at Jesus [and kill him because they were angry at his saying that he was equal with God]. **32** But Jesus said to them, "You have seen me perform many miracles that my Father [told me to do. You should realize from seeing them that I am equal with God]. So, because of which of these miracles [IRO] are you wanting to [kill me by] throwing stones at me?" **33** The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] replied, "We are [wanting to] throw stones at you not because you performed a great miracle. Instead, [we are wanting to do it] because you are dishonoring God. You are just a man, but you are saying that you are God!" **34** Jesus replied to them, "In the Scriptures it is written {([someone/the Psalmist]) has written} [RHQ] [what God said to the rulers whom he had appointed], 'I have said that you are [like] gods.' **35** God said that [to those leaders when he appointed them. No one objected to that]. And nothing that is in Scripture can be set aside {no one can set aside anything that is in Scripture}. **36** But I am the one [my] Father set apart to completely belong to him. He sent me here into this world. So (why are you angry with me for saying that [I am equal with God when I say] that I am the man who is also God?/you should not be angry with me for saying that [I am equal with God when I say] that I am the person who is both God and man!) [RHQ] **37** If I were not doing the miracles that my Father [told me to do, I would not expect] you to believe in me. **38** But because I perform these miracles, believe [what] these miracles [show about me], even though you do not believe what I [say]. If you do that, then you will know and understand that [my] Father has a close relationship with me, and I have a close relationship with [my] Father." **39** After they heard that, they tried to seize him again, but he got away from them. **40** Then Jesus went, along [with us], back across [to the east side of] the Jordan [River]. We went to the place where John was previously baptizing [people]. He/We stayed there [for a few weeks]. **41** Many people came to Jesus. They were saying, "John never performed a miracle, [but this man has performed many miracles]! Everything that John said about this man is true!" **42** Many people [who came] there believed ([that Jesus was the Messiah/that Jesus truly had come from God]).

11 [One time] there was a man whose name was Lazarus who was [very] sick. He lived in Bethany [village], where his [older] sisters Mary and Martha also lived. **2** Mary was the woman who [later] poured perfume on the feet of the Lord [Jesus], and then wiped his feet with her hair. **3** So the two sisters sent [someone to tell] Jesus [about Lazarus], saying, "Lord, the one you love [very much] is very sick." **4** [They hoped that Jesus would come], but when Jesus heard the message, he said, "His being sick will not end in his dying. Instead, it will result in [people realizing] how great God is, and that I, God's son, may be honored {that

people may honor me, God's son}, because of [what I will do]." 5 Jesus loved Martha and her [younger] sister [Mary] and Lazarus. 6 But when Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed [where he was] for two more days. 7 But Jesus [wanted to see Lazarus]. So he said to us disciples, "Let's go back to Judea." 8 We said, "Teacher, just a short while ago the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] wanted to [kill you by] throwing stones at you. So ([we think that you should not] go back there again!/[are you sure that you want to] go back there again?) [RHQ]" 9 [To show us that nothing bad could happen to him until the time that God had chosen] [MET], Jesus replied, "There are [RHQ] twelve hours in the daytime, [which is enough time to do what God wants us to do]. People who walk in the daytime will not stumble [over things they cannot see], because they see things by the light from the sun. 10 It is when people walk in the nighttime that they stumble over things, because they have no light." 11 After he said that, he told us, "Our friend Lazarus has gone to sleep. But I will go there so that I can wake him up." 12 So we said to him, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will get well. [So you do not need to risk your life by going there]." 13 Jesus was speaking [figuratively] about Lazarus' death, but we thought that he was talking about really being asleep. 14 So then he told us plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15 But for your sake I am glad that I was not there [when he died], because I want you to believe [more firmly that I] ([am the Messiah/came from God]). So now, [instead of staying here], let's go to him." 16 Then Thomas, who was {whom they} called 'The Twin', said to the rest of us disciples, "Let's all go, so that we may die with Jesus [when his enemies kill him]." 17 When we arrived [close to Bethany], someone told Jesus that Lazarus [had died and had been buried and his body had] been in the tomb for four days. 18 Bethany is less than (two miles/three kilometers) from Jerusalem. 19 Many Jews had come [from Jerusalem] to console Martha and Mary over [the death of] their [younger] brother. 20 When Martha heard [someone say] that Jesus was coming, she went [along the road] to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. 21 When Martha [got to where Jesus was], she said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died [because you would have healed him]! 22 But I know that even now God will do for you whatever you ask [concerning my brother]." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will become alive again!" 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will become alive again when all people become alive again on the [Judgment] day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the one who [enables people to] become alive again and who [causes people to] live [eternally]. Those who believe in me, even if they die, will live [again]. 26 Furthermore, all those who believe in me while they are alive, [their souls] will not die [forever]. Do you believe that?" (aiōn g165) 27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord! I believe that you are the Messiah, (the Son of God/the man who is also God). You are the one [God promised to send] into the world!" 28 After she said that, she returned [to the house] and took her [younger] sister, Mary, aside and said to her, "The Teacher is close [to our village], and he wants to talk to you." 29 When Mary heard that, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Jesus had not yet entered the village; he was still at the place where Martha met him. 31 The Jews who were in the house with Mary, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go outside. So they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb [where they had buried Lazarus], in order to cry there. 32 When Mary got to where Jesus was and saw him, she prostrated herself at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my [younger] brother would not have died!" 33 When Jesus saw her crying, and saw that the Jews who had come with her were also crying, he was very angry [that Satan had caused Lazarus to die] (OR, very troubled) and disturbed in his spirit. 34 He said, "Where have you buried (him/his body)?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus began to cry. 36 Then [some of] the Jews said, "Look how much he loved Lazarus!" 37 But some others said, "He enabled a blind man to see. So (he should have been able to [heal this man so that] he did not die!/why did he not [heal this man so that] he did not die?) [RHQ]" 38 Within himself Jesus was again very angry [about Lazarus dying] (OR, very troubled). He came to the tomb. It was a cave. The entrance had been covered with a large stone. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone!" Martha, [who, as I mentioned before, was an older] sister of the man who had died, said, "Lord, his [body] has been [in the tomb] for four days, so now there will be a bad smell!" 40 Jesus said to her, "I told [RHQ] you that if you believed [in] ([me/what I can do]), you would see how great God is! Have [you forgotten that]?" 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up [toward heaven] and said, "My Father, I thank you that you heard me [when I prayed about this earlier]. 42 I know that you always hear me [when I pray]. But instead [of just praying silently], I said that for the sake of the people who are standing here. I want them to believe that you sent me." 43 After he said that, he shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The man who [had been] dead came out! The strips of cloth were still wrapped around his [hands and feet], and a cloth was still around his face, [but he came out]! Jesus said to them, "Take off the cloths so that he can walk easily!" [So they did that]. 45 As a result, many of the Jews who had come to [see] Mary and who had seen what Jesus did, believed that he ([was the Messiah/had come from

God]). 46 But some of the [others] went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. 47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered all the members of the [Jewish] Council together. They started saying [to each other], "What are we going to do [about Jesus]? He is performing many miracles! 48 If we allow him to keep [doing this], everyone will believe (in him/that he [is the Messiah]), [and they will make him their king]. Then the Roman [army] will come and destroy our Temple and our whole nation of Israel!" 49 One of the [Jewish Council] members was Caiaphas. He was the Jewish high priest that year. [Hinting that they should get rid of Jesus], he said to them, "You [talk as though you] do not know anything [HYP]! 50 You do not realize that it would be much better for us if one man died for the sake of the people rather than that [the Romans kill] all the [people of our Jewish] nation." 51 He said that, not because he thought of it himself. Instead, since he was the high priest that year, he was prophesying that Jesus would die for the whole [Jewish] nation. 52 But he was also prophesying that Jesus would die, not just for the Jews, but for all the people living in other lands who [would belong] to God, in order that he would unite [all of them into] one [group]. 53 So from that day the [Jewish leaders] started to make plans how they could kill Jesus. 54 Because of that, Jesus no longer traveled around publicly among the Jewish people. Instead, he left [Jerusalem, along] with us disciples, and went to a village called Ephraim, in an area near the desolate region. We stayed there [for a while]. 55 When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover [celebration], many [Jews] went up to Jerusalem from other places in the country. They went there to perform the rituals to make themselves acceptable [to God] before the Passover [celebration started]. 56 The Jewish chief priests and Pharisees issued an order that if anyone found out where Jesus was, that person should report it to them, in order that they could seize him. [So the people thought that Jesus would] probably [not dare to come to the celebration]. But they kept looking for him, and as they were standing in the Temple [courtyard] they were saying to each other, "What do you think? He will not come to the celebration, will he?"

12 Six days before the Passover [celebration started], Jesus arrived in Bethany [village, along with us]. That was where Lazarus lived. He was the man Jesus [previously] caused to be alive again after he died. 2 There they gave a dinner to [honor] Jesus. Martha served the meal. [Her younger brother], Lazarus, was among the people who were eating with Jesus. 3 Then Mary took [a bottle] of expensive perfume [called] nard and poured it on Jesus' feet [to honor him]. Then she wiped his feet with her hair. The whole house was filled with the [beautiful] smell of the perfume. 4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]) objected. He was the one who later enabled Jesus' enemies to seize him. 5 He said, "(We should have sold this perfume and given [the money] to poor people!/Why did [we] not sell this perfume and give [the money for it] to the poor people?) [RHQ] We could have gotten 300 days' wages for it!" 6 He said that, not because he cared about the poor people, but instead, because he was a thief. He was the one who kept the bag [of funds that people gave to help Jesus and us his disciples], and he often stole some of the money that was {that [people]} put into it. 7 Then Jesus said, "Do not bother her! [She bought this perfume] in order to save it until the day when they will bury me [after I die]. 8 There will always be poor people among you, [so you can help them whenever you want to]. But I will not be with you much longer, [so it is good that she showed right now how much she appreciates me]." 9 A large crowd of Jews heard [people say] that Jesus was there [in Bethany]. So they came, not only [to see] Jesus but also to see Lazarus, the man whom he had caused to become alive again after he died. 10 So the chief priests decided to kill Lazarus also, 11 because many of the Jews were [deserting them and] going to Jesus and believing in him because of [Jesus causing] Lazarus [to be alive again]. 12 The next day the huge crowd of people that had come [to Jerusalem] for the [Passover] celebration heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they [cut] branches from some palm trees and took the branches out [of the city] to [wave them when they] met him. Some of them were shouting things like, "Hooray!" "May the Lord [God] bless the one who is coming with his authority [MTY]!" Some other people were shouting, "[May God bless] the King of Israel!" 14 When Jesus [came near to Jerusalem], he got a young donkey and sat on it [as he rode into the city]. By doing this, [he fulfilled] what had been written {what [a prophet] had written} [in Scripture], 15 You people of Jerusalem, do not be afraid! Look! Your king is coming! He is riding on a donkey's colt! 16 At first [we] disciples did not understand those things. But after Jesus had returned to heaven, we realized that those things had been written {that [a prophet] had written those things} about him, and that [by] doing those things for him [the people had fulfilled what the prophet prophesied]. 17 The crowd that was with him continued to tell other people that he called Lazarus to come out of the tomb, [and that Lazarus had then become alive again]. 18 Because of that, many people, because they heard [others say] that he had performed this miracle, went to meet him. 19 So the Pharisees said to each other, "It is obvious that we are

making no progress [in trying to stop him! It looks like] [HYP] everyone [MTY] is becoming his disciple!" **20** Among those who went up [to Jerusalem] to worship [God] during the [Passover] celebration were some Greeks. **21** They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida [town] in Galilee [province]. They [wanted him] to do something for them. They said, "Sir, we would like to talk with Jesus." **22** So after Philip went and told that to Andrew, they both went and told Jesus. **23** Then, [to show them that he must die in order to give eternal life to non-Jews like those Greeks], Jesus replied to them, "It is time for [God] to honor me, the one who came from heaven. [That will happen when I die]. **24** Listen to this carefully: [My life is like a seed] [MET]. If [someone] does not plant a kernel of grain in the ground, it does not change. It remains only one [seed]. But if it changes [after it is planted in the ground, it will grow and] produce many seeds. **25** Anyone who strongly wants to keep on living [here on earth] will surely lose his life forever. But anyone who is willing to die [HYP] [for my sake] will surely gain eternal life. **(aiōnios g166)** **26** If [any of these Greeks or] anyone [else] wants to serve me, they must become my disciples. Then, [after they die], they will be where I am, [in heaven]. My Father will honor all those who serve me. **27** Now I am deeply disturbed. (I do not know what to say./What shall I say?) [RHQ] Should I say, '[My] Father, save me from this time [when I will suffer and die!']? No, [I should not say that, because] the reason I came ([into this world/from heaven]) was that I would [suffer] [MTY] now. **28** My Father, show how great you are!" John 12:28b-36a Then [God] spoke [EUP] from heaven, saying, "I have already shown how great [I am], and I will do it again!" **29** The crowd that was there heard [it but they did not understand the words. Some said] it was thunder. Others said an angel had spoken to him. **30** Jesus replied to them, "The voice that you heard speaking [was God's voice, but] it was not for my benefit. It was for your benefit! **31** Now is the time for [God] to judge [the people in] [MTY] the world. Now is the time when [I] will destroy [the power of Satan], the one who rules this world. **32** But as for me, when I am lifted {when [men] lift me} up from the ground [on a cross, I will make a way for] gathering everyone to myself." **33** He said this to show us the way in which he was going to die. **34** [Someone in] the crowd answered him, "We understand from the Scriptures that the Messiah will live forever. So why do you say that the one who came from heaven, [who is the Messiah], will be lifted up {that [men] will lift up the one who came from heaven, [who is the Messiah], } on a cross? What kind of man who came from heaven are you [talking about]? (OR, That's not the [kind] of Messiah [we are expecting]!)" **(aiōn g165)** **35** Then Jesus said to them, "[My message is like] [MET] a light for you. [I] will be with you for only a little while longer. Live and act [as you should] while I am still with you, [because suddenly you will have no more opportunity to hear my message! You do not want to be like] [MET] [someone] who cannot see where he is going any more [when it suddenly] becomes dark! **36** Believe in my message [MET] while you still have an opportunity to do it, in order that you may become people who have accepted my truth [MET]!" John 12:36b-43 After Jesus said those things, he left them and hid from them. **37** Although he had done many miracles while people were watching, [most of] them refused to believe that he [is] ([the Messiah/from God]). **38** [Their stubbornness and refusal to believe was similar to the stubbornness of the people that] the prophet Isaiah wrote about long ago: Lord, (hardly anyone has believed our message!/who has believed our message?) [RHQ] Most people refused to accept it, even though you showed them your power! **39** That was the reason why they were unable to believe. [It was like] Isaiah wrote somewhere else that God said: **40** They have [refused to understand; they acted as though they were] blind people! They were insensible in their inner beings! As a result, they have not perceived [my truth]! They have not understood it in their inner beings! They have not turned [from their sinful lives], and because of that I cannot help them! **41** Isaiah wrote that because [it was as though] he saw [ahead of time] how great Jesus would be, and he prophesied [those things] about him. **42** Although most of the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] did not believe that Jesus is ([the Messiah/from God]), some of them believed in him. But they would not tell anyone that they believed in him, because [they were afraid that if they said that], the Pharisees would not let them worship in the synagogues. **43** They wanted people to praise them more than they wanted God to praise them. **44** [Another day, when] Jesus [was teaching the people, he] shouted, "Those who believe in me, they are not believing in [me alone]. Instead, [it is as though] they also believe in the one who sent me. **45** When they see me [and what I am doing, it is as though] they are seeing the one who sent me. **46** I have come into the world [to show people God's truth], as a light [shows people what is around them]. I have come in order that people who believe in me will not remain [ignorant of God's truth] [MET], [as those who are] in the darkness [are ignorant of what is around them]. **47** As for those who hear my message but do not obey [its commands], I am not [the one who] judges them. [The main reason] that I came ([into the world/from heaven]) was not to judge [the people of] [MTY] the world. Instead, I came to save them [from being punished for their sins]. **48** There is something that will judge those who reject me

and do not accept my message. On the judgment day [God] will condemn them [because they rejected] the message that I have told them. **49** I have not said things from my own [authority]. Instead, [my] Father, the one who sent me, instructed me what to say and how I should say it. **50** I know that [paying attention to] what he has instructed us [leads to] eternal life. So whatever I say is exactly (OR, only) what [my] Father has told me to say." **(aiōnios g166)**

13 When it was the evening before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that it was time for him to leave this world and [to return] to [his] Father [in heaven]. He loved us who [were his disciples]. He knew [we would continue to live here] in this world, so now he [showed us] how completely he loved us. **2** We were eating [the Passover meal]. (The devil/Satan) had already suggested to Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]), the son of Simon, that he should (betray Jesus/enable Jesus' enemies to seize him). **3** But Jesus knew that his Father had given to him complete authority [to control the situation]. He knew that he had come from God and would soon return to God. **4** [But before he left us, he wanted to show us how we should love each other]. [So] he got up from where he was eating. He took off his [outer] cloak and wrapped a [long] towel around his waist, [as a slave would do]. **5** Then he poured some water in a basin. He began to wash our feet, and then dry them with the towel that he had wrapped around himself. **6** When he came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, it is not right for you [RHQ] to [humble yourself by] washing my feet!" **7** Jesus replied to him, "Now you do not understand [the meaning of] what I am doing, but you will understand later." **8** Peter said, "I will never, ever, [allow you to] wash my feet!" Jesus replied to him, "If I do not wash you, you cannot continue (to be my [disciple/to belong to] me)." **(aiōn g165)** **9** So Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, [in that case], do not wash only my feet. Wash my hands and my head, [too]!" **10** [Then, to show him that after God had cleansed people from being guilty for sin, they needed only for God to forgive their daily sins] [MET], Jesus said to him, "Those who have recently bathed need only to have their feet washed, [because they get dirty very quickly on the dusty roads]. The [rest of their bodies are] clean. Similarly, I have made you [disciples] free/clean [from the guilt of your sins], although not all of you are free from guilt." **11** He knew which one [of us] was going to betray him. That is the reason he said, "Not all of you are free from guilt." **12** After he finished washing our feet, he put his cloak back on. Then he sat down and said to us, "Do you understand what I have done for you? **13** You [show that you respect me by] calling me 'Teacher' and 'Lord'. You are right to say that, because I am your teacher and your Lord. **14** But if I, who am your teacher and your Lord, have washed your feet, you ought to [serve each other by doing things like] washing each other's feet. **15** I have made myself an example for you in order that you should [humbly serve each other] as I have done for you. **16** Listen to this carefully: A servant is not greater than his master. A messenger is not greater than the one who has sent him. [So, since you are not greater than I am, you should not be proud and unwilling to serve each other]. **17** Since you now know these things, [God will] be pleased with you if you do them." **18** "I am not saying that [God will bless] all of you. I knew [what all of you were like when] I chose you. But [I also chose the one who will betray me], in order that what is written in Scripture might be fulfilled {to fulfill what someone/the psalmist wrote in Scripture}, 'The one who is [acting like he is my friend by] eating with me has become my enemy [IDM].' **19** I am telling you [about someone betraying me] before it happens, in order that when it happens, you may continue to believe that I am ([the Messiah/who I say I am]). **20** Listen to this carefully: Those who accept any one of you whom I am sending out, [God will consider that] they are accepting me. And those who accept me, [God will consider that] they are accepting [my Father], who sent me." **21** After Jesus said this, he was very troubled. He solemnly declared, "Listen to this carefully: One of you is going to enable [my enemies] to seize me." **22** We looked at each other. We had no way [to know] whom he was talking about. **23** [I], the [man other people call] 'the one Jesus loved', was sitting very close to Jesus. **24** Simon Peter motioned to me to indicate that I should ask Jesus whom he was talking about. **25** So I leaned close to Jesus and asked him, "Lord, who is it?" **26** Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread after I dip it [in the sauce in the dish]." Then, [to show us that he knew who would enable his enemies to seize him], after he dipped the bread [in the sauce], he gave it to Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]). **27** As soon as [Judas ate] the bread, Satan took control of him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly." **28** But none of the rest of us who were sitting there knew why Jesus said that to him. **29** Since Judas took care of the money [people gave us to help us], some thought Jesus was telling him to [go and] buy some things we needed for the [Passover] celebration. [Some thought he was telling him] to give some money to poor people. **30** As soon as Judas had eaten the bread, he left. It was dark [outside], and it was dark [MET] [in his soul, too]. **31** After Judas left, Jesus said, "Now it will be shown {[my Father] will show} how wonderful I, the one who came from heaven, am. And by what I do it will be seen {people

will see} how great God is. 32 Since by what I do people will see how awesome God is, God himself will show people how awesome I am. And he will do that very soon. 33 [You whom I love as though you were] my children, I will continue with you only a short time longer. Then you will look for me, but I will not be here. Just like I told the Jewish [leaders] [SYN], I am telling you now, that where I am going, you cannot come [yet]. 34 Now I am giving you a new commandment: You must love each other. You must love each other in the way that I have loved you. 35 If you keep loving each other, everyone [who is aware of that] [HYP] will know that you are my disciples." 36 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus replied, "The place where I am going, you cannot come with me now, but you will come there later." 37 Peter said, "Lord, why can I not come with you now? I [am ready] to die for you!" 38 Jesus answered, "[You say] [RHQ] that you [are ready] to die for me. But the truth is that before the rooster crows [early tomorrow morning], you will say three times that you do not [know] me!"

14 [Jesus continued by saying to us], "Stop being anxious/worried. Keep on trusting in God (OR, You are trusting in God); also keep trusting in me. 2 Where my Father is [in heaven] there is plenty of room! If that were not true, I would have told you. I am about to go [there] to prepare a place for you. 3 And because I will go [there] and prepare a place for you, I will return and take you there to be with me. I will do that so that you may also be where I am. 4 You know the road to the place where I am going." 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. [So] how can we know the road?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the road [MET] [to where my Father is]. I am the [one who reveals] [MET] the truth [about God] and the [one who gives eternal] life [to people]. I am the only one who can [enable people] to come to [my] Father. There is no other way. 7 If you [really] knew who I was, you would have known my Father also. From now on, you know him, and [it is as though] you have seen him." 8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us your Father and that will be enough for us!" 9 Jesus said to him, "Philip, I have been with you for a long time. So (surely you should know who I [really am]!/why have you not come to know who I [really am]?) [RHQ] Those who have seen me, [it is as though] they have seen [my] Father. So (why do you say 'Show us [your] Father'?/you should not say 'Show us [your] Father'!) [RHQ] 10 Do you not [RHQ] believe that I have a close relationship with [my] Father, and that [my] Father has a close relationship with me? The messages that I tell you do not come from me. They come from my Father, who has a close relationship with me. He is enabling me to [teach these things, and] to perform the miracles that he [wants me to perform]. 11 Believe that I have a close relationship with [my] Father and that [my] Father has a close relationship with me. If you do not believe that just because of what I say, believe it because of the miracles themselves [that I have done]. 12 Listen to this carefully: [You] who trust in me will do the [kinds of] miracles [that I have done]. [Because of what I will do for you] (OR, [Because I will send God's Spirit to you]) after I go to my Father, you will be able to do [miracles] that will be greater than [the ones I have done]. 13 And whatever you, using my authority, ask me to do, I will do it, in order that I can show [you] how great [my] Father is. 14 Anything that you ask [my Father to do, anything that you ask] with my [authority] [MTY], I will do." 15 "If you love me, you will do what I have commanded you. 16 Then I myself will request [my] Father, and he will send you someone else who will (encourage/be like a legal counsel for) you. (aiōn g165) 17 [I am talking about] the Spirit, who [will teach you God's] truth. He will be with you forever. Those who are opposed to God [MTY] cannot receive him, because they cannot understand what he [does], and they cannot know who he is. But you know who he is, because he is with you and he will be inside you. 18 [When I leave you], I will not let you be alone/helpless [MET]. [When I send the Spirit, it will be like] I am coming back to you (OR, [When I rise from the dead], I will come back to you.) 19 Soon those who do not belong to God [MTY] will not see me any more. But [when the Spirit comes to you, it will be as though] you will be seeing me again (OR, But [after I become alive again], you will see me again.) Because I will be alive again, you also will have [eternal] life. 20 At that time you will know that I have a close relationship with my Father, and you will have a close relationship with me, and I will have a close relationship with you. 21 Those who have accepted my commands and obey them are the people who love me. My Father will love those who love me. I also will love them, and I will fully reveal to them [what I am like]." 22 Then Judas spoke to him. He was not Judas Iscariot (OR, Judas, the man from Kerioth [Town]), [but instead a disciple whose other name was Thaddeus]. He said, "Lord, what has happened so that you can fully reveal to us what you are like, and not reveal that to those who do not belong to God [MTY]?" 23 Jesus replied to him, "Those who love me will obey what I have told them. My Father will [also] love them. It is those people whom my Father and I will [be able to] come to and (live with/have a personal relationship with). 24 But those who do not love me will not obey what I have told them. [So I cannot reveal to them what I am really like]. These words that I am telling you have not come just from me. They came from [my] Father, the one who sent me. 25 I have told you all these things

while I am still with you. **26** But [my] Father will send the Holy Spirit. He is the one who will (encourage/be like a legal counsel for) you. He will come with my authority [MTY]. He will teach you all of [God's truth that you need to know]. He will also cause you to remember all the things that I have told you. **27** As I leave you, I am causing you to have [inner] peace. This [inner] peace comes from me. I am not causing you to have something that those who do not belong to God [MTY] can give you. [So] stop being anxious/worried, and do not be afraid. **28** You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, but [later] I will come back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going back to [my] Father, because [my] Father is greater than I am, [and there he will honor me and will send the Spirit to you]. **29** I have told you [these things now] before they happen, so that when they happen you will believe [that what I said is true]. **30** I will not [be able to] talk to you much longer, because what happens to me will be as though [Satan], the ruler of this world, is coming [to attack me]. But he has no [control over what happens to] me. **31** Instead, the people who do not belong to God [MTY] must learn [from what happens to me] that I love [my] Father, and I am doing the things that he has commanded me to do. Now, let's get up and leave here."

15 [Jesus talked to us as we were walking along. Speaking figuratively of the need for us to live in a way that God wants us to, he said], "I am like [MET] a genuine vine, [not like those Jewish leaders who do not teach the truth]. My father is like [MET] a gardener who [works to] take care of a vineyard. **2** [Just like a gardener] cuts off the branches that bear no grapes [MET], [God gets rid of those who do not please him even though they say that they belong to him]. Those branches that bear fruit, [the gardener] trims so that they may bear more grapes. [Similarly, my Father disciplines/corrects those who live as he wants them to live]. **3** You are already [like] the branches [that a gardener] trims because [you have believed] the message that I have told you. **4** Remain having a close relationship with me. [If you do that], I will remain having a close relationship with you. A branch [of a vine] cannot bear fruit [if it is cut off and left] by itself. To bear fruit, it must remain attached to the vine. Similarly, you cannot [live the way that God wants you to] if you do not remain united to me [MET]. **5** I am [like] [MET] a vine. You are [like] [MET] the branches. All those who have a close relationship with me and with whom I have a close relationship will [do much that pleases God, like] [MET] [a vine that] bears much fruit. [Remember that] you can do nothing [HYP] [that truly pleases God] without my [help]. **6** [A gardener cuts off and] throws away useless branches. Then, after they dry up, [he] picks them up and throws them into a fire and burns them [SIM]. Similarly, everyone who does not remain having a close relationship with me, [God] will get rid of. **7** If you remain having a close relationship with me and you keep [living in accordance with] my message, you can ask [God to do] anything for you, and he will do it. **8** The way my Father is honored is by your {The way you honor my Father is by} doing much that pleases him [MET], and by doing that, you will show that you are my disciples. **9** I have loved you just as [my] Father has loved me. Now keep living in [a way that is appropriate for those whom] I love. **10** If you obey what I have commanded you, you will be acting in [a way that is appropriate for those whom] I love, just like I have obeyed what my Father has commanded me and I act [in a way that is appropriate for someone] whom he loves. **11** I have told you these things so that you may be joyful as I [am joyful], and that you may be completely joyful. **12** What I am commanding you is this: Love each other just like I have loved you. **13** The best way that people can show that they love someone is to die for that person. There is no way that you can love someone in a greater way than that. **14** You [show that you] are my friends if you keep doing what I have commanded you. **15** I will no longer call you my servants, because servants do not know [why] their masters [want them to] do things. Instead, I have said that you are my friends, because I, [acting like a friend], have revealed to you everything that my Father told me. **16** You did not decide to become my [disciples]. Instead, I chose you, so that you would do many things that please him [MET]. The results of what you do will last [forever]. I also chose you so that [my] Father will do for you whatever you, using my authority, ask him to do [MTY]. **17** [I repeat what] I have commanded you: Love each other." **18** "The people who are opposed to God will hate you. When that happens, remember that they hated me first. **19** If you belonged to those who are opposed to God [MTY], they would love [you like they love] those who belong to them. But you do not belong to those who are opposed to God [MTY]. Instead, I chose you so that you would separate yourselves from [MTY] them. That is why those who are opposed to God [MTY] hate you. **20** Remember these words that I told you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' [That means that you, who are like my servants, cannot expect people to treat you better than they treat me]. So, since they have (persecuted me/caused me to suffer), they will (persecute you/cause you to suffer) also. If they had paid attention to the things I taught them, they would pay attention to what you teach them. **21** They will treat you like that because you [belong to] me [MTY], and because they do not know the one who sent me. **22** If I had not come and spoken [God's message] to them, they would

not be guilty [of rejecting me and my message]. But now [I have come and told them God's message, so] they will have no excuse [when God judges them] for their sin. **23** All those who hate me, [it is as though] they hate my Father as well. **24** If I had not done among them the [miracles] that no one else ever did, they would not be guilty of the sin [of rejecting me]. But now, [although] they have seen [those miracles], they have hated both me and my Father. **25** But this has happened in order that these words that have been written in their Scriptures might be fulfilled {to fulfill this that [(someone/the Psalmist]) wrote in their Scriptures}: 'They hated me for no reason.' **26** [Later] I will send to you from [my] Father the one who will (encourage/be like a legal counsel for) you. He is the Spirit [who will teach you God's] truth. He will come from my Father. He will tell people about me. **27** But you [disciples] must also tell people [about me], because you have been with me from the time when I started [my ministry] [MTY]."

16 [Jesus continued by saying to us], "I have told you these things in order that you will not stop trusting in me [when people] ([cause you to suffer/persecute you]). **2** They will not allow you to worship in (synagogues/[their] meeting places). In fact, there will be a time when anyone who kills you will think that he is serving God [by doing that]. **3** They will do such things because they have never known who I [really am], nor who [my] Father [is]. **4** I have told you these things in order that when [they start] ([to cause you to suffer]/to [persecute you]) [MTY], you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you these things when you first started [to accompany me] [MTY] because I was with you, [and they were causing trouble for me, not for you]." **5** "Now I am [about to] return to the one who sent me. But [I am disappointed that] none of you is asking me, 'Where are you going?' **6** Instead, because I have told you these things, you are very sad. **7** But the truth is that it is good for you that I am going away, because if I do not go away, the [Holy Spirit], who will (encourage/be like a legal counsel for) you will not come to you. But when I go, I will send him to you. **8** When he comes, he will prove that those who do not belong to God [MTY] [are wrong about what is] sinful and about who is really righteous and about whom [God will] judge [and condemn for their sin]. **9** [He will tell people that their greatest] sin is that they do not believe in me. **10** [He will tell people that] because I am going [back] to my Father, and you will no longer see me, [you will know that I am the one who was truly] righteous. **11** [He will tell people that the fact] that [God] has already determined that [he] will punish [Satan], the one who rules this world, shows that [some day God] will also punish [those who do not belong to him]. **12** I have many more things that [I would like] to tell you, but you are not able to accept them now. **13** But [God's] Spirit is the one who will teach you [God's] truth. When he comes, he will guide you so that you [understand] all [spiritual] truth. He will not speak from his own [authority]. Instead, it is the things that he hears [my Father say] that he will tell you. He will also tell you about things that will happen [later]. **14** He will honor me by revealing my [truth] to you. **15** Everything that [my] Father has is mine. That is why I said that the Spirit is able to reveal my truth to you." **16** "After a short time [I will leave you, and] you will not see me. Then a short time [after that] you will see me [again]." **17** [So] some of us said to each other, "What does he mean by saying 'After a short time you will not see me,' and 'A short time after that you will see me again'? And [what does he mean by] 'Because I am going back to [my] Father'?" **18** We kept asking each other, "What [does he mean by] saying 'After a little while'? We do not understand what he is saying." **19** Jesus realized that we wanted to ask him [about that]. So he said to us, "You are asking [RHQ] each other [what I meant] when I said, 'After a short time you will not see me, and then a short time [after that] you will see me [again].' **20** Listen to this carefully: [After I] ([leave you/die]), those who oppose God [MTY] will be happy, but you will be sad. But [later] you will stop being sad and you will become joyful. **21** A woman who is about to bear a child feels pain, because that is [what happens] [MTY] [at] that time. But after her baby is born, she forgets that pain, because she is very joyful that her child has been born. **22** It will be the same with you. [I will soon die and] you will be sad. But after that, I will see you again. Then you will be joyful, and no one will be able to stop you from being joyful. **23** When that happens, you will not ask me any questions [about anything]. Listen to this carefully: [After that happens, my] Father will do for you anything you ask, because of his relationship with me [MTY]. **24** Up to the present time, using my authority you have not asked [God to do] anything for you [MTY]. Now keep asking [him for things that you need. If you do that], you will receive them, and then you will be completely joyful. **25** Although I have been speaking these things using figurative language, there will soon be a time when I will no longer use that kind of language. Instead, I will tell you plainly (about my Father/what my Father [wants]). **26** At that time, you will ask [him for things] (because you belong to me/with my authority) [MTY]. I will not [need to] ask [my] Father to do what you ask. **27** [My] Father himself loves you because you have loved me and because you have believed that I came from God [my Father], [so he wants you to ask] him (OR, [so he does not need anyone to persuade] him [to help you]) **28** I came from [my] Father into

this world. Very soon I will be leaving this world and going [back] to my Father." 29 Then [we], his disciples, said, "Now you are speaking plainly, without using figurative language. 30 Now we understand that you know everything. You do not need anyone to ask you questions [about anything, because you know what we want to ask before we ask you]. That [also] leads us to believe that you came from God." 31 Jesus replied, "Now you [RHQ] say that you believe [that I came from God]. 32 But listen! There will soon be a time, and that time is already here, when you will all run away! Each of you will run away to your own home. You will leave me, and I will be alone. But I will not [really] be alone [at that time], because [my] Father is always with me. 33 I have told you these things in order that you may have [inner] peace because of your relationship with me. In this world you will have trouble. But be courageous! I have defeated those who are opposed to me [MTY], and [you can defeat them, too]!"

17 After Jesus said those things, he looked [up] toward heaven. Then he prayed, "[My] Father, it is now the time [MTY] [for me to suffer and die]. Honor me [as I do that], in order that I may honor you. 2 You gave me authority over all people, in order that I might enable all those whom you chose [to come] to me to live eternally. **(aiōnios g166)** 3 [The way for people] to live eternally is for them to know that you are the only true God, and to know that [I], Jesus, am the Messiah, the one you have sent. **(aiōnios g166)** 4 I have honored you here on this earth by completing all the work that you gave me to do. 5 [My] Father, now honor me when I am with you [again], by causing me to have the greatness I had when I was with you before the world began." 6 "I have revealed [what] you [are like] to the people whom you brought to me from among those who do not belong to you [MTY]. Those [who came to me] belonged to you, and you brought them to me. Now they have obeyed your message. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me, [your message and your work], comes from you. 8 I gave them the message that you gave me, and they have accepted it. They now know for certain that I came from you. They now believe that you sent me. 9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for those [who do not belong to you] [MTY]. Instead, [I am praying] for those whom you have brought to me, because they belong to you. 10 All [the disciples] that I have belong to you, and all those who belong to you also belong to me. They have shown how great I am. 11 I will not be [staying] in the world any longer. I will be coming back to you. They, however, will be [here] in the world [among those who are opposed to you]. [My] Holy Father, protect them from spiritual harm by your power [MTY], the power that you gave me, in order that they may be united as we are united. 12 While I have been with them, I have [completely] protected them by the power [MTY] that you gave me. As a result, only one of them will be eternally separated from you. He is the one who was doomed to be eternally separated from you. [That has happened] to fulfill [what a prophet wrote] in the Scriptures [would happen]. 13 [Father], now I am about to return to you. I have said these things while I am still [here] in the world in order that my [disciples] may fully experience being joyful, as I have been joyful. 14 I have given them your message. As a result, those who are opposed to you [MTY] have hated them, because [my disciples] do not belong to those who oppose you [MTY], just like I do not belong to those who oppose you [MTY]. 15 I am asking you, not that you take them out of this world, but instead that you protect them from [Satan], the evil one. 16 They do not belong to those who are opposed to you [MTY], just like I also do not belong to them. 17 Set [my disciples] apart so that they may (completely belong to/serve) you, by [enabling them to live in accordance with] what is true. Your message is true. 18 Just like you sent me here into this world, now I surely will be sending them [to other places] in [MTY] the world. 19 I dedicate myself to completely belong to you, in order that they also may truly be dedicated {dedicate themselves} completely to you." 20 "I am praying not only for these [eleven disciples]. I am praying also for those who [will] believe in me as a result of [hearing] their message. 21 [My] Father, [I want] all of them to be united, just like I am united with you because of my relationship with you, and as you are united with me because of your relationship with me. I also want them to be united with us. [I want that to happen] so that those who do not know you [MTY] may know that you sent me. 22 I have honored my disciples just like you honored me, in order that they may be united, as we are united. 23 I want them to be united just like they are united with me and as you are united with me. May they be completely united, in order that those who do not belong to you [MTY] may know that you sent me and that you have loved them just like you have loved me. 24 [My] Father, I want [the disciples] you have brought to me to [some day] be with me [in heaven], where I will be. I want them to see my greatness. I want them to see the greatness you gave me because you loved me. You gave me that greatness before you created the world. 25 [My] righteous Father, although the people who do not belong to you [MTY] do not know what you [are like], I know what you [are like], and my disciples know that you sent me. 26 I have revealed to them [what] you [are like], and I will continue to reveal to them [what] you [are like]. I will do that in order that they may love [others] just like you love me, and in order that I may be in them [by my Spirit]."

18 After Jesus finished praying, he went across the Kidron Brook, along with [us] disciples, to a grove [of olive trees]. **2** Judas, who was [about to] enable Jesus' enemies to seize him, knew that [he would probably be] there. [He knew that because] Jesus often gathered there with us. **3** So Judas came to that grove. He was leading a troop of Roman [soldiers] and some Temple guards who had been sent by the Pharisees and chief priests. They were carrying torches and lamps and weapons. **4** Jesus knew everything that was about to happen to him. So [as they approached], he stepped forward and asked them, "Who are you looking for?" **5** They replied to him, "Jesus, the man from Nazareth." He replied, "That is who I am." Judas, the one who was enabling his enemies to seize him, was with them. **6** When Jesus told them, "That is who I am," they lurched backward and fell down on the ground [because of his power]. **7** He asked them again, "Who are you looking for?" They said, "Jesus, [the man] from Nazareth." **8** Jesus replied, "I told you that I am Jesus. So since I am the one you are looking for, allow these [disciples of mine] to go." **9** [This happened] in order that [when they did what he asked them to do], the words would be fulfilled that he had prayed, "I will never lose any of those whom God has brought to me." **10** Simon Peter had a [long] dagger. So he drew it and [tried to kill] the high priest's servant, [but he only] cut off the man's right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. **11** Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword [back] into its sheath! (I must endure what [my] Father wants me to suffer./Do you not think that I must endure what [my] Father wants me to suffer?) [MET, RHQ]" **12** Then the troop of soldiers, along with their commander and the Jewish Temple guards, seized Jesus. They tied his hands [behind his back]. **13** Then they took him first to Annas, [who was previously the high priest]. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas. Caiaphas was the high priest that year. **14** Caiaphas was the one who [previously] advised the Jewish [Council] that it would be better if one man died for the sake of the people [than for all the people of the Jewish nation to die]. **15** Simon Peter and [I] were following Jesus. Because the high priest knew [me], [his doorkeeper permitted me] to enter the courtyard. **16** But Peter [had to] wait outside near the doorway. However, since I knew the high priest, I went back to the doorway and spoke to the girl who was guarding the entrance. Then [she allowed] Peter to come in. **17** The servant girl who was guarding the doorway said to Peter, "Surely you are not another disciple of that man [they have arrested], are you?" He said, "I am not." **18** It was cold, so the high priest's slaves and Temple guards made a charcoal fire and were standing around it to keep warm. Peter was also standing near it, warming himself. **19** [While Peter was doing that], the high priest asked Jesus about his disciples and about what he was teaching people. **20** Jesus replied, "I have always spoken where many people [MTY, HYP] could hear me. I have taught them in (the synagogues/their meeting places) and in the Temple courtyard, in places where many [HYP] Jews come together. I have spoken nothing secretly. **21** [So] (why are you asking me questions [like this illegally]?/you should not be asking me questions [like this illegally]!) [RHQ] Ask the people who heard what I taught! They certainly know what I said!" **22** After Jesus said that, one of the Temple guards standing near him slapped him on his face. He said, "(That is not the way you should answer the high priest!/Is that the way you should answer the high priest?) [RHQ]" **23** Jesus replied to him, "If I said something that was contrary [to your laws], you could tell [me that what I said that] was wrong. But because I said only what was right, (you should not be striking me!/why are you striking me?) [RHQ]" **24** Then after Jesus' hands were tied {after they tied Jesus hands} [again], Annas sent him to Caiaphas, the high priest. **25** As Simon Peter was standing warming himself [at the fire], someone else said to him, "You are not one of that man's disciples, are you?" He denied [that he was], and said, "I am not." **26** [Later] one of the high priest's servants, a man who was a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off [before], said to him, "I saw you with that man in the grove [of olive trees], did I not?" **27** Peter again denied it. Immediately a rooster crowed, [as Jesus had said would happen]. **28** Then the [Jewish leaders] [SYN] led Jesus from the [home of] Caiaphas to the headquarters [of Pilate, the Roman governor]. It was before dawn. [Pilate was a non-Jew], [and they thought that if they entered his headquarters], they would become unacceptable to God {God would reject them}, [and as a result] they would not be able to eat [the food during] the Passover [celebration]. [Because of that, they did not want to enter Pilate's headquarters]. **29** So Pilate came out to [talk to] them. He said, "What law do you say that this man has disobeyed?" **30** [They knew that Jesus had not disobeyed any Roman law, so they did not want to answer him. Instead], they said, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have brought him to you!" **31** Then Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your own laws!" Then the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] said, "[No! We want him executed, but we want you Romans to execute him, because] we Jews have no right to execute anyone!" **32** [The Romans executed people by nailing them to a cross]. [So], as a result of what [the Jewish leaders said], it was fulfilled {[the Romans] would fulfill} what Jesus had said previously about the way he was going

to die. 33 Pilate then went back inside his headquarters. He summoned Jesus. [Because the Jewish leaders had said that Jesus claimed to be a king], Pilate said to Jesus [scornfully], "Are you the king of the Jews?" 34 Jesus replied, "Are you asking that because you yourself [want to know if I claim to be a king], or because (someone else/Caiaphas) said [that I claim to be their king]?" 35 Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, [so] ([I cannot understand these matters!/how can I understand these matters]?) [RHQ] It was your fellow Jews and your chief priests who brought you to me! What have you done [to make them want to execute you]?" 36 Jesus replied, "It is not people in [MTY] this world who are [making me] king. If it was people in this world who were making me a king, my disciples would have fought in order that the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] would be prevented {to prevent the Jewish [leaders] [SYN]} from seizing me. But it is not [someone here in] this world who is making me a king." 37 Then Pilate said to him, "So [are you saying that] you are a king?" Jesus replied, "[Yes], what you have said about my being a king [is correct]. I was born to become a king, and I came into this world to tell people the truth [about God]. Everyone who [believes] the truth pays attention to what I say." 38 Pilate said to him, "[How can anyone know] what the truth is?" After he said that, he went outside and talked to the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] again. He said to them, "I do not find that he has done anything at all for which I should punish him. 39 But you [Jews] customarily, [every year] during the Passover [celebration], ask me to release for you [someone who is in prison]. So would you like for me to release for you the [man who you] Jews [say is your] king?" 40 They shouted again, "No, do not [release] this man! Instead, [release] Barrabas!" But Barrabas was [in prison because he was] a revolutionist!

19 Then Pilate took Jesus [inside and had soldiers] (scourge Jesus/strike Jesus with a whip that had pieces of metal or bone fastened to it). 2 The soldiers also took [some branches with] thorns and wove them to make [something like] a crown. Then they put it on his head. They also put a purple robe on him. [They did these things to ridicule him by pretending that he was a king]. 3 Then they kept coming to him and saying, "Hooray for the King of the Jews [IRO]!" and slapping him [on his face]. 4 Once more Pilate came outside and said to the crowd, "Look! I am bringing him out to you so that you may know that I do not find that he has done anything for which we should punish him [any more]." 5 When Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, "Look at this [wretched] man!" 6 When the chief priests and Temple guards saw him, they shouted, "Command your soldiers to kill him by nailing him to a cross! Crucify him!" Pilate, [knowing that they could not legally do it themselves], said to them, "You yourselves take him and nail him to a cross! As for me, I do not find that he has done anything for which we should punish him." 7 The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] replied, "[Our ancestor Moses gave us] the law that says we must kill anyone [who claims to be God]. This man claims that he is (the Son of/the man who is also) God, [so you must have him killed] {[command your soldiers to kill him]}." 8 When Pilate heard that, he was more afraid [of what would happen to himself if he commanded the soldiers to kill Jesus]. 9 So he [took Jesus] back inside the headquarters. He said to Jesus, "Where do you [really] come from?" But Jesus did not answer him. 10 So Pilate said to him, "Are you refusing to answer me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and I [also] have authority to [have] you crucified {command my soldiers to crucify you}?" 11 Jesus replied, "The only authority you have is what has been given to you by God [MTY] {what God [MTY] has given you}. The [high priest] put me into your hands. [He has done to me what he wanted to do, and you do not really want to do it]. So he is guilty of committing a greater sin than you are." 12 Because of that, Pilate kept trying to release Jesus. But the Jewish [leaders][SYN], [threatening to report to the Emperor that Pilate was not going to punish a man who claimed he was a king], continued to shout, "Anyone who claims that he is a king is opposing the Emperor! So if you release this man, [we will make sure that] the Emperor [learns about it, and then he will not consider you as] his friend!" 13 When Pilate heard that, he brought Jesus out again. He sat down at the place where he made decisions [about punishing people]. The place was called {People called it} The Stone Pavement. In the Aramaic language its name was Gabbatha. 14 It was almost noontime, on the day that they prepared [things for] the Passover [celebration] (OR, the day before the [Sabbath during] the Passover [celebration]). Pilate said to the Jewish [leaders] [SYN], [ridiculing them], "Look at your king!" 15 They shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! [Have] him crucified {Command your soldiers to nail him to a cross}!" Pilate said to them, "[He is] your king! Do you really want me to [tell my soldiers to] nail him to a cross?" The chief priests replied, "The Emperor is our king! We do not have any other king!" 16 Then [at last] Pilate agreed to do [what they wanted, and he told the soldiers] to crucify Jesus. John 19:16b-24 Then the soldiers took Jesus away. 17 [As they left], he himself was carrying the cross [on which they were going to nail him]. They went to a place called The Place of a Skull. In the Aramaic language it is called {they call it} Golgotha. 18 There, [after removing most of his clothes], the soldiers nailed him to the cross. They also

[nailed] two other [criminals to crosses]. There was one on each side, and Jesus was in the middle. **19** Pilate also [had them] write [on a board] a notice [that stated why they were executing him], and fasten it to the cross. But all they wrote was 'Jesus from Nazareth, the King of the Jews'. **20** Many Jews were [able to] read this sign, because the place where Jesus was nailed {where they nailed Jesus} to the cross was very close to [Jerusalem, where many people had come for the celebration], and because it was written {they wrote it} in three languages: Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. **21** So the Jewish priests went back to Pilate and protested, saying to him, "Change what they have written from 'The King of the Jews' to 'This man said that he is the King of the Jews'!" **22** Pilate replied, "What I [told them to] write is what they have written, [and I] will not [change it]." **23** After the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. But they kept his cloak [separate]. This cloak was without seam, woven [from top to bottom], one piece of cloth. **24** So they said to each other, "Let's not tear it. Instead, let's [decide] ([by] throwing lots/[by] gambling) who will get it." So that is what the soldiers did. As a result, these words were fulfilled {they fulfilled these words} that [the Psalmist had written] in Scripture, They divided [most of] my clothes among themselves. They cast lots for [one piece of] my clothing. **25** Near the cross where [they had nailed] Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the [wife] of Clopas, and [another] Mary, the woman from Magdala [village]. **26** Jesus saw his mother standing there. He also saw me standing nearby. Then he said to his mother, "This man [will now be like] your son." **27** And he said to me, "[Treat this] woman as [MET] your mother." So from that time I took her to my home [and took care of her]. **28** Later, Jesus knew that everything [that God sent him to do] had now been completed {that he had now completed everything [that God sent him to do]}, [but he knew that something else that was written in] the Scriptures [had] to be fulfilled {[that he had] to fulfill [something else that they had written in] the Scriptures}. So he said, "I am thirsty!" **29** There was a jar of sour wine there. So [someone took] a stalk of [a plant called] hyssop and [fastened] a sponge [to it. Then] he dipped [the sponge into the wine and] lifted it up to Jesus' lips. **30** When Jesus tasted the sour wine, he shouted, "[I] have finished [all that I came to do]!" Then he bowed his head and (died/handed over his spirit [to God]). **31** That was the day that they prepared [everything for their] ([Sabbath/day of rest]). The next day was a special day of rest, [because it was the day of rest during the Passover celebration]. The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] did not want the bodies [of the three men] to remain on the cross during their (Sabbath/day of rest) [because leaving bodies hanging overnight would be contrary to their Jewish laws]. So they went to Pilate and asked him [to command that] the legs [of the three men on the crosses] be broken {the [soldiers] to break the legs [of the three men on the crosses]}, [so that they would die quickly]. Then their [bodies] could be taken down [and buried] {someone could take down their bodies [and bury them]}. **32** So, [after Pilate agreed], the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man whom they had nailed on a cross near Jesus. Then they broke the legs of the second man. **33** But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was dead already. So they did not break his legs. **34** Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear [to make sure that Jesus was dead]. Immediately blood [clots] and [other] liquid flowed out, [which showed that Jesus was really dead]. **35** I, [John], saw this myself, and what I am writing is true. I [know that] I am telling the truth, and I am saying this in order that you may believe [in] (OR, [my testimony about]) [Jesus]. **36** These things happened in order that these words would be fulfilled {to fulfill these words} [that are written in] Scripture: "Not one of his bones will be broken {No one will break any of his bones}." **37** And [they fulfilled] another Scripture passage [that has these words]: 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced'. **38** Later, Joseph, from Arimathea [town, went to Pilate and] asked Pilate [to allow him] to take Jesus' body [down from the cross]. Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but he did not tell anyone that, because he was afraid of the [other] Jewish [leaders] [SYN]. Pilate permitted him to take Jesus' body, so he went, along [with others], and they took Jesus' body [down from the cross]. **39** Nicodemus was one of them. He was the man who previously went to visit Jesus at night. Nicodemus bought an [expensive] mixture of myrrh and aloe [spices to put on the body]. It weighed about (75 pounds/35 kilograms). **40** They took the body of Jesus and wrapped strips of linen cloth around it, putting the spices in with the strips of cloth. They did this according to the Jewish customs [about burying bodies in tombs]. **41** Close to the place where Jesus was crucified {where they nailed Jesus to the cross} there was a grove [of trees], and [at the edge of] that grove was a new burial cave. Nobody had ever been put in that cave [previously]. **42** The Jewish day of rest would start [at sunset, and they had to finish burying his body before then]. So, since that cave was nearby, they laid Jesus' body there [and rolled a huge stone in front of the entrance].

20 Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary, the woman from Magdala [village], went to the [burial] cave [with some other women]. They saw that the stone had been removed {that someone had removed the stone} from

the [entrance to the] cave. 2 So Mary ran to where Simon Peter and I [were staying in Jerusalem]. She said to us, "They have taken the Lord's [body] out of the burial cave, and we do not know where they have put it!" 3 So Peter and I started going to the cave. 4 We were both running, but I ran faster than Peter and got there first. 5 I stooped down [at the entrance] and looked inside. I saw the strips of linen cloth lying there [where his body had been laid], but I did not go inside. 6 Then Simon Peter, who was running behind me, arrived. He went inside the cave. He, too, saw the strips of linen cloth lying there. 7 He also [saw the] cloth that they had [wrapped] around Jesus' head. It had been folded and put {Someone had folded it and put it} aside, separate from the linen strips. 8 Then I also went inside. I saw [those things] and I believed [that Jesus had truly become alive again]. 9 Before this happened, we did not understand from [what the prophets had written in] the Scriptures, that he had to become alive again after he died. 10 Then [we two] disciples went back to where we were staying. [In the meantime], Mary [returned to the cave]. 11 As she stood outside the cave crying, she stooped down to look inside the cave. 12 She saw two angels in very white [clothing], sitting at the place where Jesus' body had been laid. One was where his head had been, and the other was where his feet had been. 13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you crying?" She said to them, "They have taken away [the body of] my Lord, and I do not know where they have put it!" 14 After she said that, she turned around and saw Jesus standing [there], but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 He said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" Thinking that he was the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have taken his [body] away, tell me where you have put it. Then I will get it [and bury it properly]." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned toward him [again and recognized him]. Then she exclaimed in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" which means 'Teacher'. 17 Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to me, because I have not yet returned to my Father. Go to my disciples and tell them, 'I am about to return to my Father and your Father, to the one who is my God and your God'." 18 So Mary went to where [we] disciples were and told us that she had seen the Lord [alive again]. She also told us what Jesus said that she [should tell us]. 19 On that Sunday evening [we] disciples gathered together. The doors were locked {[We] locked the doors} because we were afraid that [the Jewish leaders] [SYN] [might arrest us. Suddenly] Jesus appeared [miraculously] and stood among us! He said to us, "May God give you [inner] peace!" 20 After he said that, he showed us [the wounds in] his hands and his side. We were very happy when we saw the Lord! 21 Jesus said to us again, "May God give you peace! Just like [my] Father sent me, now I am sending you [to proclaim my message]." 22 After saying that, he breathed on us and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit! 23 If you forgive people for their having sinned, [God will already] have forgiven them. If you do not forgive them, [God] has not forgiven them." 24 One of us disciples, Thomas, the one whom we called The Twin, was not with us when Jesus appeared to us. 25 When the rest of us told him that we had seen the Lord, he said to us, "If I do not see the marks of the nails in his hands and put my fingers in the place where the nails were, and put my hands into the place in his side [where the soldier thrust the spear], I will certainly not believe [that he was the one you saw]!" 26 A week later we were in [the house] again. This time Thomas was with us. Although the doors had been locked {[we] had locked the doors}, Jesus [again] appeared [miraculously] and stood among us. He said, "May God give peace to you!" 27 Then he [showed] Thomas [his hands] and said to him, "Put your finger here! Look at [the wounds in] my hands! Reach out your hand and put it in [the wound in] my side! Stop doubting [LIT/DOU]! Instead, believe [that I am alive again]!" 28 Thomas answered him, "[You are truly] my Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed [that about me]. But God [is truly] pleased with those who have believed [that about me], even though they have not seen me!" 30 [We] disciples saw Jesus perform many other miracles, but [I] have not written about them in this book. 31 But these [that I have written about, I] have written about them in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, (the Son of God/the man who is also God), and in order that you may have [eternal] life [by trusting] (in him/ in what he [has done for you]) [MTY].

21 After that, Jesus showed himself to [us] disciples when we were at Tiberias Lake, [which is another name for Galilee Lake]. This is what happened: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas who was called {whom [we] called} The Twin, Nathaniel from Cana [town] in Galilee, my older brother and I, and two other disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to us, "[I] am going to [try to] catch some fish." We said, "We will go with you." So we went down [to the lake] and got into the boat. But that night we caught nothing. 4 Early the next morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but we did not know that it was Jesus. 5 He called out to us, "My friends, you have not [caught] any fish, have you?" We answered, "You are correct, [we have not caught any]." 6 He said to us, "Throw your net out from the right-hand side of the boat! Then you will find some!" We did that, and we caught so many fish [in the net] that we were unable to pull the net into [the boat]! 7 [But I knew that it was Jesus], [so] I said to

Peter, “It is the Lord!” Peter had taken off his cloak [while he was working], but as soon as he heard [me say] “It is the Lord!” he wrapped his cloak around himself and jumped into the water [and swam to shore]. **8** The rest of us came [to the shore] in the boat, pulling the net full of fish. We were not far from shore, only about 100 yards/meters. **9** When [we] got to the shore, we saw that there was a fire of burning coals there, with a [large] fish on the fire, and [some] buns. **10** Jesus said to us, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught!” **11** Simon Peter got in [the boat] and dragged the net to the shore. It was full of large fish. There were 153 of them! But in spite of there being so many fish, the net was not torn. **12** Jesus said to us, “Come and eat some breakfast!” None of us dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because we knew that it was the Lord. **13** Jesus took the buns and gave them to us. He did the same with the fish. **14** That was the third time that Jesus appeared to [us] disciples after [God] caused him to become alive again after he died. **15** When we had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “John’s [son] Simon, do you love me more than these [other disciples do]?” Peter said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that you are dear to me (OR, that I love you).” Jesus said, “Give to [those who belong to] me [what they need spiritually, like] [MET] [a shepherd provides] food for his lambs.” **16** Jesus said to him again, “John’s [son] Simon, do you love me?” He replied, “Yes, Lord, you know that you are dear to me (OR, that I love you).” Jesus said to him, “Take care of [those who belong to] me, [like] [MET] a [shepherd takes care of his] sheep.” **17** Jesus said to him a third time, “John’s son Simon, am I really dear to you (OR, do you really love me)?” Peter was grieved because Jesus asked him this three times, [and because the third time he changed the question]. He said, “Lord, you know everything. You know that you are dear to me (OR, that I love you).” Jesus said, “Give to [those who belong to] me [what they need spiritually, as] [MET] [a shepherd provides] food for [his] sheep. **18** Now listen to this carefully: When you were young, you put your clothes on by yourself, and you went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your arms, and someone will fasten them [with a rope] and will lead you to a place where you do not want to [go].” **19** Jesus said this to indicate how Peter would die ([violently/on a cross]) in order to honor God. Then Jesus said to him, “Keep being my faithful disciple [until you die].” **20** Peter turned around and saw that I was following them. I was the one who leaned close to Jesus during the [Passover] meal and said, “Lord, who is going to enable your enemies to seize you?” **21** When Peter saw me, he asked, “Lord, what [is going to happen] to him?” **22** Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain [alive] until I return, (that is not your concern!/what is that to you?) [RHQ] You be my [faithful] disciple!” **23** Some of the other believers heard [a report of] what Jesus had said about me, and [they thought that Jesus meant] that I would not die. But Jesus did not say that I would not die. He said only, “If I want him to remain [alive] until I return, (that is not your concern!/what is that to you?) [RHQ]” **24** [I, John], am the disciple who has seen all these things and I have written them down. My [fellow apostles] and I know that what [I have written] is true. **25** Jesus did many other things. If they would [all] be written {If people would write them [all]} down [in detail], I suppose that the whole world would not have enough space [HYP] to contain the books that would be written {that they would write} [about what he did].

Acts

1 [Dear] Theophilus, In my first book [that I wrote for you], I wrote about many of the things that Jesus did and taught **2** until the day on which he was taken {[God] took him} up [to heaven]. Before [he went to heaven], saying what the Holy Spirit [told him], he told the apostles whom he had chosen [the things that he wanted them to know]. **3** After he had suffered [and died on the cross], [he became alive again]. As he appeared to them [often] during [the next] 40 days, the apostles saw him many times. He proved to them in many ways that he was alive again. He talked [with them] about [how] God would rule [MET] [the lives of people who accepted him as their king]. **4** [One time] while he was with them, he told them, "Do not leave Jerusalem [yet]. Instead, wait [here] until my Father sends [his Spirit] [MTY] [to you], as he promised [to do]. You have heard me speak [to you] about that. **5** John baptized people in water [because they said that they wanted to change their lives], but after a few days [LIT] [God] will put the Holy Spirit within you(pl) [to truly change your lives]." **6** One day when the [apostles] met together [with Jesus], they asked him, "Lord, will you [(sg)] now become the King [MET] over [us] Israelite people [like King David, who ruled long ago]?" (OR, "Lord, will you [(sg)] now [defeat the Romans and] restore the kingdom [to us] Israelite people?") **7** He replied to them, "You do not [need] to know the time [periods] and days [when that will happen]. My Father alone has decided [when he will make me king]. **8** But [you do need to know that] the Holy Spirit will make you [spiritually] strong when he comes to live in you. Then you will [powerfully] tell people about me in Jerusalem and in all [the other places in] Judea [district], in Samaria [district], and in places far away all over [IDM] the world." **9** After he said that, he was taken {[God] took him} up [to heaven], while they were watching. [He went up into] a cloud [PRS], which prevented them from seeing him [any more]. **10** While [the apostles] were [still] staring towards the sky as he was going up, suddenly two men who were wearing white clothes stood beside them. [They were angels]. **11** One [of] them said, "You men from Galilee [district], (you do not need to stand [here any longer] looking up at the sky!/why do you still stand [here] looking up at the sky?) [RHQ] [Some day] this same Jesus, whom [God] took from you up to heaven, will come back [to earth]. He will return in the same manner as you [just now] saw him when he went up to heaven, [but he will not return now]." **12** Then [after the two angels left], the apostles returned to Jerusalem from Olive [Tree] Hill, which was about (a half mile/one kilometer) [MTY] from Jerusalem. **13** When they entered [the city], they went upstairs to the room [in the house] where they were staying. [Those who were there included] Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, [another] James [the son] of Alphaeus, Simon who belonged to the group that wanted to expel the Romans, and Judas [the son] of [another man named] James. **14** All these apostles agreed concerning the things about which they continually were praying [together. Others who prayed with them] included the women [who had accompanied Jesus], Mary who was Jesus' mother, and his [younger] brothers. **15** During those days Peter stood up among his fellow believers. There were [at that place] a group of about 120 of [Jesus' followers]. Peter said, **16** "My fellow believers, [there are words that King] David wrote [MTY] in the Scriptures long ago that needed to be fulfilled {to happen [as he said they would]}. The Holy Spirit, [who knew that Judas would be the one who would fulfill those words], told David what to write. **17** [Although] Judas had been chosen {[Jesus] had chosen Judas}, along with [the rest of] us [(exc)] to serve [as an apostle], Judas was the person who led to Jesus the people who seized him." **18** [The Jewish leaders] gave Judas money when he [promised to] treacherously/wickedly [betray Jesus. Later Judas returned that money to them]. When Judas [hanged himself], his body fell down [to the ground]. His abdomen burst open, and all his intestines spilled out. [So] the [Jewish leaders] bought a field [using] that money. **19** All the people who reside in Jerusalem heard [about that], so they called that field in their own [Aramaic] language, Akeldama, which means 'Field of Blood', [because it was where someone bled and died]. **20** [Peter also said], "[I perceive that what happened to Judas is like what the writer of] Psalms [desired to happen]: 'May his house become deserted, and may there be no one to live in it.' (OR, '[Judge him, Lord, so that neither he nor] anyone [else] may live in his house!)' And it seems that [these other words that David wrote also refer to Judas:] 'Let someone else take over his work as a leader.'" **21** "So it is necessary [for us apostles] to choose a man [to replace Judas. He must be one who] accompanied [MTY] us all the time when the Lord Jesus was with us. **22** [That would be] from [the time when] John [the Baptizer] baptized [Jesus] until the day when Jesus was taken {when [God] took Jesus} from us up [to heaven]. He must be one who saw Jesus alive again [after he died]." **23** So the [apostles and other believers] suggested [the names of two men who qualified. One man was] Joseph, who was called {whom people called} Barsabbas (OR, Joseph Barsabbas) who [also] had the [Roman] name Justus. The other man was Matthias. **24** Then they prayed like this: "Lord [Jesus], Judas stopped being an apostle. [He died and] went to the place where

he [deserved to be] [EUP]. [So we(exc) need to choose someone] to replace [Judas in order] that he can serve [you(sg) by becoming] an apostle. You [(sg)] know what everyone is really like. So [please] show us which of these two men you have chosen." **26** Then they cast lots [to choose between the two of] them, and the lot fell for Matthias. (OR, Then [one of] the [apostles] shook [in a container] small objects/stones [that] they [had marked to determine which man God had chosen]. And the small object/stone [that they had marked] for Matthias fell [out of the container]). So Matthias was considered {they considered Matthias} [to be an apostle] along with the [other] eleven apostles.

2 On the day when [the Jews were celebrating the] Pentecost [festival], the [believers] were all together in one place [in Jerusalem]. **2** Suddenly [they heard] a noise [coming] from the sky [that sounded] like a strong wind. Everyone in the entire house where they were sitting heard the noise. **3** Then they saw [what looked] like flames of fire. These flames separated [from one another], and [one of them] came down on [the head of] each of the believers. **4** Then all of the believers were (completely controlled/empowered) by the Holy Spirit {the Holy Spirit (completely controlled/empowered) all of the believers}, and he enabled them to begin speaking other languages [MTY] [that they had not learned]. **5** At that time [many] Jews were staying in Jerusalem [to celebrate the Pentecost festival. They were people who] always tried to obey [the Jewish] laws. [They had come] from many different [HYP] countries. **6** When they heard that [loud] noise [like a wind], a crowd came together [to the place where the believers were]. The crowd (was amazed/did not know what to think), because each of them was hearing [one of] the believers speaking in that person's own language. **7** They were completely amazed, and they said [to each other], "All these men who are speaking have [RHQ] [always] resided in Galilee [district, so they would not know our languages]. **8** ([We(inc) do not understand] how these men can speak our own native languages!/How can these men speak our own native languages?) [RHQ] [But] all of us hear them [doing that] **9** [Some of us are from the regions of] Parthia and Media and Elam, and [others of us] reside [in the regions of] Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia. **10** There are some from Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the regions in Libya [that are] near Cyrene [city]. [There are others of us] who are [here] visiting [Jerusalem] from Rome. **11** [They include native] Jews as well as non-Jews who have accepted what we Jews believe. And others of us are from Crete [Island] and from [the region of] Arabia. [So how is it that these people] are speaking our languages [MTY], telling us [about] (the great/the mighty things) [that] God has done?" **12** All [those people] were amazed, and did not know what to think [about what was happening]. So they asked one another, "What does this mean?" **13** But [some] of them (made fun of/laughed at) [those who believed in Jesus]. They said, "[These people are talking like this because] they are drunk!" **14** So Peter stood up with the [other] eleven [apostles] and spoke loudly to the [crowd of] people, saying, "[My] fellow Jews and you [others] who are staying in Jerusalem, listen to me, all of you, and I will explain to you what is happening! **15** [Some of] you think that [we(exc) are drunk], but we are not drunk. It is [only] nine o'clock in the morning, [and people here never get drunk this early] in the day! **16** Instead, [what has happened to us is] the [miraculous] thing that the prophet Joel wrote about [long ago]. [Joel wrote]: God says, **17** 'During the last/final days [before I judge all people], I will give my Spirit abundantly/generously to people [SYN] everywhere. [As a result], your sons and daughters will tell [people] messages from me, the young men among you will see visions [from me], and the old men among you will have dreams [that I will give them]. **18** During those days I will abundantly/generously give my Spirit [even] to men and women believers [who are] my slaves/servants, so they can tell [people] messages from me. **19** I will cause amazing things to happen in the sky, and I will do miracles on the earth that will show [that I am powerful]. [Here] on the earth [CHI] I [will cause wars with] blood, fire and thick/dark smoke [everywhere]. **20** [In the sky] the sun will [appear] dark [to people] and the moon [will appear] red [to them. Those things will happen] before the important and splendid/amazing day [MTY] [when I], the Lord [God, will come to judge everyone]. **21** [Before that time], all those who ask [me] [MTY] [to save them from the guilt of their sins] will be saved {[I], the Lord, will save all those who ask [me] [MTY] [to save them from the guilt of their sins].}'" **22** [Peter continued], "[My fellow] Israelites, listen to me! [When] Jesus from Nazareth [town lived] among you, God proved to you [that he had sent him] by enabling him to do many amazing miracles. You yourselves know [that this is true]. **23** [Even though you knew that], you turned this man [Jesus] over to his enemies. [However], God had already planned for that, and he knew all about it. Then you urged men [SYN] who do not obey [God's] law to kill Jesus. They did that by nailing him to a cross. **24** He suffered terribly [when he died, but God caused him to become alive again]. God did not let him continue to be dead, because it was not possible for him [PRS] to remain dead." **25** "[Long ago King] David wrote [what] the Messiah [said], "knew [that] you, Lord [God, would always] be near me. You are right beside [MTY]

me, so I will not be afraid of [those who want to harm me]. **26** Because of that I [SYN] joyfully praise [you, O God]. And I am completely confident that [you(sg) will] ([cause my body] to become alive [again]/[raise me from the dead]). **27** You will not allow my spirit to remain in the place where the dead are. You will not [even] let my body decay, [because] I am devoted to you and always obey [you]. **(Hadēs g86)** **28** You have told me [that you will cause my body] to become alive [again]. You will make me very happy [because] you will be with me [forever]." **29** [Peter] continued, "My fellow Jews, I can tell you confidently that [our royal] ancestor, [King] David, died, and that his [body] was buried {that [people] buried his [body]}. And the place [where they] buried his body is [still] here today. **30** So [we(inc) know that David was not speaking those words about himself. But] because he was a prophet, [he spoke about the Messiah]. David knew that God had strongly promised him that he would cause one of his descendants to become king [MTY] like David was king. (OR, to [be the Messiah who would] rule [God's people] like David had ruled [them].) **31** David knew beforehand [what God would do], so he [was able to] say that God would cause the Messiah to live again [after he died]. He said that God would not let the Messiah remain in the place of the dead, nor let his body decay." **(Hadēs g86)** **32** "[After] this [man] Jesus [had died], God caused him to become alive [again]. All of us(exc), [his followers], have seen [and tell people] that Jesus has become alive again. **33** God has greatly honored Jesus [by causing him to rule] right beside him [MTY] [in heaven]. Jesus has received the Holy Spirit from [God] his Father, [just like] God promised. [So] Jesus has generously/abundantly given us the Holy Spirit, [and he has shown that by] what you are seeing and hearing. **34** [We(inc) know that David was not speaking about himself] because David did not go up into heaven [as Jesus did]. [Besides that], David himself said [this about the Messiah]: The Lord [God] said to my Lord [the Messiah], 'Reign here beside me, **35** while I completely defeat [MTY] your enemies.'" **36** [Peter concluded], "So I [want you and] all [other] Israelites [MTY] to acknowledge that God has caused this Jesus to be both [our] Lord/Ruler and the Messiah. [But God considers that] you are the ones who nailed Jesus to a cross." **37** When the people heard what [Peter said], they felt very guilty [IDM]. So they asked him and the other apostles, "Fellow-countrymen, what should we [(exc)] do [so that God will forgive us]?" **38** Peter [answered] them, "Each of you should turn away from your sinful behavior. Then [we(exc)] will baptize you, if [you now believe] in Jesus Christ. Then [God] will give you the Holy Spirit. **39** [God] has promised [to do that] [MTY] for you and your descendants, and for all [others who believe in him], even those who [live] far away [from here]. The Lord our God [will give his Spirit] to everyone whom he invites [to become his people]!" **40** Peter spoke much more [and] spoke strongly/forcefully to them. He pleaded with them, "[Ask God] to save you [so that he will not punish you when he punishes] these evil people [who have rejected Jesus]!" **41** So the people who believed Peter's message were baptized. There were about 3,000 [SYN] [who] joined the group [of believers] that day. **42** They continually obeyed what the apostles taught, and they very frequently met together [with the other believers]. And they continually ate [together and celebrated the Lord's Supper], and continually prayed [together]. **43** All the people [SYN] [who were in Jerusalem] were greatly revering [God because] the apostles were frequently doing many kinds of miraculous things. **44** All of those who believed [in Jesus] were united [and regularly met] together. They were also sharing everything that they had with one another. **45** [From time to time some of] them sold [some of] their land and [some of the other] things that they owned, and they would give [some of] the money [from what they sold] to others [among them], according to what they needed. **46** Every day they continued meeting together in the temple [area]. And every day they gladly and generously shared their food [SYN] [with each other], as they ate together [and celebrated the Lord's Supper] in their houses. **47** [As they did so], they were praising God, and all the [other] people [in Jerusalem] were [thinking] favorably about them. [As those things were happening], every day the Lord [Jesus] increased the number of people who were being saved {whom he was saving} [from the guilt of their sins].

3 [One day] Peter and John were going to the Temple [courtyard]. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, which was the time when people prayed [there publicly]. **2** There was a man there who had been lame from the time he was born. He [was sitting by] the gate called Beautiful [Gate], at the entrance to the Temple [area]. People put him there every day, so that he could ask those who were entering [or leaving] the temple courtyard to give him some money. **3** As Peter and John were about to enter [the Temple courtyard], the lame man saw them and asked them several times to give him some money. (OR, The lame man said to them several times, "Please give me some money!") **4** As Peter and John looked directly at him, Peter said to him, "Look at us!" **5** So he looked directly at them, expecting to get some [money] from them. **6** Then Peter said to him, "I do not have any money [MTY], but what I [can do], I will [do] for you. Jesus Christ, [who was] from Nazareth [town], has authorized [MTY] me [to heal you! So get up and] walk!"

7 Then Peter grasped the man's right hand and helped him to stand up. Immediately the man's feet and ankles became strong. 8 He jumped up and began to walk! Then he entered the Temple [area] with them, walking and leaping and praising God! 9 All the people [there] saw that man walking and praising God. 10 They recognized that he was the man who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate in the Temple [courtyard] and ask [people] for money! So all the people there were greatly amazed at what had happened to him. 11 As the man clung to Peter and John, all the people were so surprised [that they did not know what to think] So they ran to the two apostles at the place [in the Temple courtyard] that is called {that [people] call} Solomon's Porch. 12 When Peter saw that, he said to the crowd, "Fellow Israelites, (you should not be surprised about what has happened to this man!/why are you so surprised about what has happened to this man?) [RHQ] And you should not stare at us, either! You seem to [RHQ] think that the two of us enabled this man to walk because we [(exc)] ourselves are powerful or because we please God very much! 13 [So I will tell you what is really happening]. Our ancestors, including Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, worshipped God. And now he has greatly honored Jesus, who always served him. Your [leaders] brought Jesus [to the governor, Pilate], so that [his soldiers would kill him]. And [God considers that] in front of Pilate you [were the ones who rejected] Jesus [as your king], after Pilate had decided that he should release Jesus. 14 [Although Jesus] always did what was right/just and good, you rejected him. [Pilate wanted to release him, but] you urgently asked Pilate to release (a murderer/someone who had killed people)! 15 [God considers that] you killed [Jesus], the one who gives people [eternal] life. But God has greatly honored him (by causing him to become alive again after he died/by raising him from the dead). Many of us saw [him after that, and now] we [(exc)] are telling [you] about it. 16 It is because [we two] trusted in what Jesus [MTY, PRS] [could do, that he] made this man, whom you see and know, strong again. Yes, it is because we [(exc)] trusted in Jesus that he has completely healed this man for all of you to see." 17 "Now, my fellow-countrymen, I know that you and your leaders did that [to Jesus] because you [and they] did not know [that he was the Messiah]. 18 However, [your putting him to death] was what God had predicted that people would do. [Long ago] he told all the prophets [MTY] to write [what people would do to the Messiah. They wrote] that the Messiah, whom God [would send], would suffer [and die]. 19 So, turn away from your sinful behavior and ask God [to help you] do what pleases [him], in order that he may completely forgive you for your sins. 20 [If you do that], there will be times [when you will know that] the Lord [God is] helping [you]. And some day he will [again] send back [to earth] the Messiah, whom he appointed for you. That person is Jesus. 21 Jesus must stay in heaven until the time when God will cause all that he has created to become new. Long ago God promised [to do that, and] he chose holy prophets to tell [that to people]. (aiōn g165) 22 For [example, the prophet] Moses said [this about the Messiah]: 'The Lord (your God/the God whom you [worship]) will cause someone to become a prophet to tell you [God's message. God will send him] as [he sent] me, [and he will be] from among your own people. You must listen to everything that this prophet tells you [and obey him] [SYN]. 23 [Those who] do not listen to [that prophet and obey] him will no longer belong to God's people, and [God] will get rid of them'." 24 [Peter continued], "All the prophets have told [about what would happen during] the time [MTY] [in which we(inc) are living. Those prophets include] Samuel [and all the others who] later also spoke [about these events] before they happened. 25 You [as well as we(exc)] are the people [to whom God sent the Messiah, as] the prophets said [MTY] [that he would]. And when God strongly promised [to bless] our ancestors, he also surely promised to bless you. He said to Abraham [concerning the Messiah], '[I] will bless all people on the earth as a result of [what] your descendant [will do].'" 26 [Peter concluded], "[So] when God sent [to the earth] (Jesus, the one who always obeys him/his servant Jesus), he sent him first to you [Israelites] to bless you. [God will] enable you to stop doing what is wicked [and to start doing what pleases him]."

4 [Meanwhile, in the temple courtyard, there were some] priests, the officer who was in charge of the temple police, and [also some] [SYN] Sadducee [sect members]. These men came to Peter and John while the two of them were speaking to the people. 2 These men were very angry, because the [two] apostles were teaching the people [about Jesus]. What they were telling the people was that because ([God caused Jesus to become alive again/God raised] Jesus [from the dead]), [God] would cause other people who had died to become alive again. 3 So those officials seized Peter and John. Then they put them in jail. [They had to wait] until the next day [to question Peter and John], because it was already evening [and it was contrary to their Jewish law to question people at night]. 4 However, many people who had heard the message [from Peter] believed [in Jesus]. (OR, But many people had [already] believed [in Jesus, because] they had heard the message [from Peter].) So the number of men [who believed in Jesus] increased to about five 5,000. 5 The next day [the supreme priest summoned] the [other] chief priests, the teachers of the [Jewish] laws, and the other

members [of the Jewish Council, and they] gathered together [in one place] in Jerusalem. **6** Annas, [the former] supreme priest, Caiaphas [who was the new supreme priest], [two other former supreme priests whose names were] John and Alexander, and other men who were related to the supreme priest [were there]. **7** They [commanded guards to] bring Peter and John into the courtroom [MTY] and have them stand in front of them. [Then one of] the leaders questioned [the two of] them, saying, "Who [do you two claim] gave you the power [to heal this man]? And who authorized [MTY] you to do this [DOU]?" **8** So as the Holy Spirit completely controlled Peter, he said to them, "You [fellow Israelites] who rule us and [all of you other] elders, [listen]! **9** Today you are questioning us concerning our doing something good for a man who was crippled, and you asked us how he was healed. **10** So [we(exc) want] you and all [of our other] fellow Israelites to know this: It is because Jesus the Messiah [MTY] from Nazareth healed this man that he is able to stand here. [God considers that] it was you who nailed Jesus to a cross, but God caused him to become alive again. **11** [In the Psalms this was written about the Messiah:] He is [like] [MET] the stone that was rejected by the builders {that the builders rejected}. But that stone became the most important stone in the building [that they were building]. [Jesus is that stone, and] you [are those builders who threw away the stone that was the most important one]. **12** So he alone can save us [MTY]. [God] has sent only one person [MTY] into the world who can save us [from the guilt of our sins, and that person is Jesus]!" **13** The [Jewish leaders] realized that Peter and John (were not afraid [of them]/spoke boldly). They also learned that the two men were ordinary people who had not studied in schools. So the leaders were amazed, and they realized that these men had associated with Jesus. **14** They also saw the man who had been healed standing there with [the two of] them, so they were not able to say anything [to oppose Peter and John]. **15** So the [Jewish leaders] commanded [guards] to take Peter, John, and the man outside of the room [where those leaders were meeting. After they did so], the leaders talked with each other [about Peter and John]. **16** [Being frustrated, one after another], they said, "(There is really nothing that we can do to [punish] these [two] men!/How can we [(inc)] do anything to [punish] these [two] men?) [RHQ] Almost everyone [HYP] who is living in Jerusalem knows that they have done an amazing miracle, so we cannot tell people that it did not happen! **17** However, [we] must not allow other people to hear about [this miracle]. So we must tell these men that [we will punish them if they] continue to tell other people about this [MTY] man [who they say gave them the power to do it]." **18** So the Jewish leaders [commanded guards] to bring the two apostles [into that room again. After they did so], they [commanded] them both that they should never speak about Jesus, and they should not teach [anyone about him] [MTY] [again]. **19** But Peter and John replied, "Would God think that it is right [for us two] to obey you and not [to obey] him? [We(exc) will let] you decide [which of those you think is proper]. **20** [But as for us, we cannot obey you]. We will not stop telling people about the things that we [(exc)] have seen [Jesus do] and what we have heard [him teach]." **21** Then the [Jewish leaders] again told [Peter and John] not to disobey them. But all the people [there] were praising God about what had happened [to the lame man. The leaders knew that only God could have enabled Peter and John] to miraculously heal the man, because the man was more than 40 years old [and he was lame when his mother bore him. They also knew that the people would become angry if they punished the two apostles]. So, because they could not decide how to punish Peter and John, [they finally] let them go. **23** After Peter and John had been released, they went to the other believers and reported all that the chief priests and [other Jewish] elders had said to them. **24** When they heard that, they [all] agreed as they prayed to God, and [one of] them prayed, "O Lord! You [(sg)] made the sky, the earth and the oceans, and everything in them. **25** The Holy Spirit caused our ancestor, [King] David [MTY], who served you, to write these words: [It is ridiculous] [RHQ] that the non-Jews became angry and the Israelite people planned uselessly [to oppose God]. **26** The kings of the world prepared to fight [God's Ruler], and the [other] rulers assembled together [with them] to oppose the Lord [God] and the one whom he had appointed [to be the Messiah]. **27** [Lord, we know that what you(sg) said long ago was true], because [King] Herod and the [governor], Pontius Pilate, and many other people, both non-Jews and Israelites, assembled together [here] in this city. [They] planned [to kill] Jesus, who devotedly served you [and] whom you appointed [MTY] [to be the Messiah]. **28** [Because] you [(sg)] are all-powerful, those people did [only] what you [SYN] allowed [them to do]. It was what you decided long ago would happen." **29** "So now, Lord, listen to what they are saying about punishing us! Help us who serve you [(sg)] to very boldly speak messages from you [(sg) about Jesus] **30** [Also], by your power [MTY] miraculously heal [sick people] and do other amazing miracles [SYN] that show people your power! Ask Jesus, who always serves you, [to give us the authority] [MTY] [to do such miracles]!" **31** When the believers had finished praying, the place where they were meeting shook. All of them were (completely controlled/empowered) by the Holy Spirit {the Holy Spirit

(completely controlled/empowered) all of them}, with the result that they began to speak boldly the words that God [told them to speak]. **32** The group of people who had believed [in Jesus] were completely agreed about what they thought and what they wanted/desired. Not one of them claimed that he [alone] owned anything. Instead, they shared with one another everything that they had. **33** The apostles continued to tell others, very powerfully, [that God] had (caused the Lord Jesus to become alive again/raised the Lord Jesus from the dead). [People knew that God] was graciously helping all the believers. **34** [Some of] the believers who owned land or houses would occasionally sell [some of] their property. Then they would bring [the money for what they sold] **35** and they would present it to the apostles [MTY]. Then [the apostles] would give money to any [believer] who needed [it]. So no one among the believers was lacking anything. **36** [For example, there was] Joseph. [He was] a descendant of Levi [and he was born] on Cyprus [Island]. The apostles called him Barnabas; [in the Jewish language] that name means a person who [IDM] always encourages [others]. **37** He sold one of his fields, and brought the money to the apostles [for them to distribute to other believers].

5 But there was one of [the believers] whose name was Ananias, and whose wife's name was Sapphira. He [also] sold some land. **2** He kept for himself some of the money [he had received for the land], and his wife knew that he had done that. Then he brought the rest of the money and presented it to the apostles [MTY]. **3** Then Peter said, "Ananias, you [(sg)] let Satan completely control you [MTY] so that you [(sg) tried to] deceive the Holy Spirit [and us(exc)]. (That was [terrible!/Why did you do such a terrible thing]?) [RHQ] [You] have kept for yourself some of the money you [(sg)] received for [selling] the land, [pretending that you(sg) were giving us all of it]. **4** Before you [(sg)] sold that land, you truly owned [RHQ] it. And after you sold it, you could [RHQ] certainly still have used the money any way you wanted [to]. So why did you [(sg) ever] think [RHQ] about doing this [wicked] thing? You were not [merely trying to] deceive us! No, [you tried to deceive] God [himself!]!" **5** When Ananias heard that, [immediately] he fell down dead. So all [who were there] who heard [about Ananias' death] became terrified [PRS]. **6** Some young men came in, wrapped his [body in a sheet], and carried it out [and] buried it. **7** About three hours later, his wife came in, [but] she did not know what had happened. **8** [As] Peter [showed her the money] that [Ananias had brought], he asked her, "Tell me, is this the amount [of money you two received for] the land you sold?" She said, "Yes, that's [what we(exc) received]." **9** So Peter said to her, "[You both did a terrible thing!] You two agreed [RHQ] to try to determine if you could do that without the Spirit of the Lord [God] revealing [to anyone that you two tried to deceive them!] Listen! [Do you(sg) hear the] footsteps [SYN] of the men who buried your husband? They are right outside this door, and they will carry your [corpse] out [to bury it, too]!" **10** Immediately Sapphira fell down dead at Peter's feet. Then the young men came in. When they saw that she was dead, they carried her [body] out and buried it beside her husband's [body]. **11** So all the believers [in Jerusalem] became greatly frightened [PRS] [because of what God had done to Ananias and Sapphira. And] all [the others] who heard [people tell about] those things also [became greatly frightened]. **12** [God was enabling] the apostles to do many amazing miracles among the people. All the believers were meeting together regularly [in the temple courtyard] at [the place called] Solomon's Porch. **13** All of the other people [who had not yet believed in Jesus] were afraid to associate with the believers, [because they knew that if they did anything evil, God would punish them, as well as revealing it to the believers]. However, those people continued to greatly respect the believers. **14** Many more men and women started believing in the Lord [Jesus], and they joined the [group of] believers. **15** [The apostles were doing amazing miracles], so [people] were bringing those who were sick into the streets, and laying them on stretchers and mats, in order that [when] Peter came by [he would touch them, or] at least his shadow might fall upon some of them [and heal them]. **16** Crowds of people were also coming [to the apostles] from the towns near Jerusalem. They were bringing their sick [relatives/friends] and those who were being tormented/troubled by evil spirits {whom evil spirits were tormenting/troubling}, and [God] healed all of them. **17** Then the high priest and all who were with him, who were members of the [local] Sadducee [sect in Jerusalem], became very jealous [of the apostles, because many people were accepting the apostles' message]. **18** So they commanded the Temple guards to seize the apostles and put them in the public jail. **19** [The guards did that], but during the night an angel from the Lord [God] opened the jail doors and brought the apostles outside! [The guards were not aware of what the angel had done]. **20** Then the angel said [to the apostles], "Go to the Temple [courtyard], stand there, and tell the people all about [how God can give them eternal] life!" **21** So having heard this, about dawn they entered the Temple [courtyard] and began to teach the people again [about Jesus]. Acts 5:21b-24 Meanwhile, the high priest and those who were with him summoned the other Jewish Council members. Altogether they made up the

entire Council of Israel. [After they all gathered together], they sent [guards] to the jail to bring in the apostles. **22** But when the guards arrived at the jail, they discovered that the apostles were not there. So they returned to the Council, and [one of] them reported, **23** "We [(exc)] saw that the jail [doors] were very securely locked, and the guards were standing at the doors. But when we opened [the doors and went in to get those men], none [of them was] inside [the jail]!" **24** When the captain of the temple guards and the chief priests heard that, they became greatly perplexed, [wondering] what might result from all this. **25** Then someone came [from the Temple courtyard] and [excitedly] reported to them, "Listen [to this! Right now] the men whom you put in jail are standing in the Temple [courtyard] and they are teaching the people [about Jesus]!" **26** So the captain [of the Temple guards] went [to the Temple courtyard] with the officers, and they brought the apostles [back to the Council room. But they] did not treat them roughly, because they were afraid that the people would [kill them by] throwing stones at them [if they hurt the apostles]. **27** After [the captain and his officers] had brought [the apostles to the Council room], they commanded them to stand in front of the Council members, and the high priest questioned them. **28** He said to them [accusingly], "We [(exc)] strongly commanded you not to teach people about that man [MTY] [Jesus] But [you have disobeyed us, and] you have taught people all over Jerusalem [about him]! Furthermore, you are trying to make it seem that we [(exc)] are the ones who are guilty [MTY] for that man's death!" **29** But Peter, [speaking for himself] and the other apostles, replied, "We [(exc)] have to obey [what] God [commands us to do], not what [you] people [tell us to do]! **30** God considers that you are the ones who killed Jesus by nailing him to a cross! But God, whom our ancestors [worshipped], (caused Jesus to become alive again after he died/raised Jesus from the dead). **31** God has greatly honored Jesus. [He has taken him up to heaven! He has authorized him] to be the one who will save us and to rule [over our lives! God did this] so that he might enable [us] Israelites [MTY] to turn away from [our] sinful behavior and [that he might] forgive [us for our sins]. **32** We [(exc)] tell people about these things [that we know happened to Jesus], and the Holy Spirit, whom God has sent to [us] who obey him, is also confirming [that these things are true]." **33** When the Council members heard those words, they became very angry [with the apostles], and they wanted to kill them. **34** But [there was a Council member] named Gamaliel. He was a Pharisee, and one who taught people the [Jewish] laws, and all the [Jewish] people respected him. He stood up in the Council and told [guards] to take the apostles out [of the room] for a short time. **35** [After the guards had taken the apostles out], he said to the other Council members, "Fellow Israelites, you need to think carefully about what you are about to do to these men, [and I will tell you why]. **36** Some years ago [a man named] Theudas rebelled [against the Roman government]. He told people that he was an important person, and about 400 men joined [him. But he was killed] {[soldiers] killed him} and all those who had been accompanying him were scattered. [So they] were not able to do anything [that they had planned]. **37** After that, during the time when they were (writing down names of the people/taking the census) [in order to tax people, a man named] Judas from Galilee [province] rebelled [against the Roman government]. He persuaded some people to accompany him. But [soldiers] killed him, too, and all those who had accompanied him went off in different directions. **38** So now I say [this] to you: Do not harm these men! Release them! I say this because if [this is just something] that humans have planned, they will not be able to do it. They will fail, [like Theudas and Judas did] **39** But, if God [has commanded them to do it], you will not be able to prevent them [from doing it, because] you will find out that you are opposing God!" The other members of the Council accepted what Gamaliel said. **40** They told the [temple guards to bring the apostles and flog them. So the guards] brought them [into the Council room] and flogged them. Then the Council members commanded them not to speak to people about [MTY] Jesus, and they released the apostles. **41** So the apostles left the Council. They were rejoicing, because [they knew God] had honored them [by letting people] disgrace them because they were followers [MTY] of Jesus. **42** And every day [the apostles went to] the temple [area] and to various [people's] houses, [and] they continued [LIT] teaching [people] and telling [them] that Jesus is the Messiah.

6 During that time, many more people were becoming believers. [Some of them were from other countries and spoke only the Greek language, but most of them had always lived in Israel and spoke the Hebrew language]. Those who spoke Greek began to complain about those who spoke Hebrew. They were saying. "When [you Hebrew-speaking believers] distribute [food or money] to widows every day, you are not giving fair amounts to the widows who speak Greek!" **2** So, [after the] twelve [apostles had heard what they were complaining about], they summoned all the [other] believers [in Jerusalem to meet] together. Then the apostles said [to those other believers], "We [(exc)] would not be doing right if we stopped [preaching and teaching] God's message [about Jesus] in order to distribute food [MTY] [and money to the widows]! **3** So, fellow believers, carefully choose seven

men from among you, men whom [you] know that the Spirit [of God] controls completely and who are very wise. Then we [(exc)] will appoint them to do this work, **4** and we [(exc)] will devote our time to pray and to preach and teach the message [about Jesus]." **5** What the apostles recommended pleased all of the [other] believers. So they group chose Stephen. He was a man who strongly believed [in God] and whom the Holy Spirit controlled completely. [They also chose] Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas who was from Antioch [city]. Nicolas had accepted the Jewish religion [before he had believed in Jesus]. **6** They brought these [seven] men to the apostles. Then after the apostles prayed [for those men], they placed their hands on [the heads of each one of] them [to appoint them to do that work]. **7** So [the believers] continued to tell many people the message from God. (The number of people in Jerusalem who believed [in Jesus] was increasing greatly./More and more people in Jerusalem were believing in Jesus.) [Among them] were many [Jewish] priests who were believing the message [about Jesus]. **8** God was enabling Stephen to do many things by God's power. He was doing many amazing miracles among the [Jewish] people. **9** However, some people opposed Stephen. They were Jews from a group [that regularly met together in a Jewish meeting place that was] {[that people]} called the Freedmen's Meeting Place. [Those people were from] Cyrene and Alexandria [cities] and [also] from Cilicia and Asia [provinces]. They all began to argue with Stephen. **10** But they were not able (to refute [what he said/to prove that what he said was wrong]), [because God's] Spirit enabled him to speak very wisely. **11** Then that group secretly persuaded [some] men to [falsely accuse Stephen. saying], "We [(exc)] heard him say bad things about Moses and God." **12** So, [by saying that], they made the [other Jewish] people angry [at Stephen, including] the elders and the teachers of the [Jewish] laws. Then [they all] seized Stephen and took him to the Jewish Council. **13** They [also] brought in some other men who accused Stephen falsely [about several things]. They said, "This fellow continually says bad things about this holy Temple and about the laws [that Moses received from God]. **14** Specifically, we [(exc)] have heard him say that this Jesus from Nazareth [town] will destroy this Temple and will tell us to obey different customs than Moses [taught our ancestors]." **15** When all [the people] who were sitting in the Council [room heard that, and as they] all stared at Stephen, they saw that his face was [shining] [SIM] like the face of an angel.

7 Then the high priest asked Stephen, "Are the things that [these people are saying about you(sg)] true?" **2** Stephen replied, "Fellow Jews and respected leaders, [please] listen to me! The glorious God [whom we(inc) worship] appeared to our ancestor Abraham while he was still [living] in Mesopotamia [region], before he moved to Haran [town]. **3** God said to him, 'Leave this land where you [(sg)] and your relatives [are living], and go into the land to which I will lead you.' **4** So Abraham left that land, [which was also called] Chaldea, and he arrived in Haran and lived there. After his father died, God told him to move to this land in which you [and I] are now living." **5** "[At that time] God did not give Abraham any [land here], not even a small plot of [this] land that would belong to him. God promised that he would [later] give this land to him and his descendants, and that it would [always] belong [to them. However], at that time Abraham did not have any children [who would] ([inherit it/receive it after he died])." **6** "[Later] God told Abraham, 'Your descendants will go and live in a foreign country. They [will live there] for 400 years, and [during that time their leaders] will mistreat your descendants and force them to work as slaves.' **7** But God [also] said, 'I will punish the people who make them work as slaves. Then, after that, your descendants will leave [that land] and they will [come and] worship me in this land.'" **8** "Then God commanded Abraham that [every male in his household and all of his male descendants] should be circumcised [to show that they all belonged to God] and that they would obey what he had told Abraham to do. Later Abraham's son, Isaac, was born, and when Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him. [Later] Isaac's son, Jacob, was born, and Isaac [similarly circumcised] him. And Jacob [similarly circumcised] his twelve sons. They are the twelve men [from whom we(inc) Jews have all descended]." **9** "[You know that] Jacob's [older] sons became jealous [because their father favored their younger brother] Joseph. So they sold him [to merchants/traders who took him] [MTY] to Egypt. There he became a slave [of an official who lived there]. But God [helped] Joseph. **10** He protected him whenever people caused him to suffer. He enabled Joseph to be wise; and he caused Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to think well of Joseph. So Pharaoh appointed him to rule [over] Egypt and to look after all of Pharaoh's property [MTY]." **11** "[While Joseph was doing that work], there was a time (when there was very little food/of famine) throughout Egypt and also throughout Canaan. People did not have enough food to eat. People were suffering. [At that time] Jacob and his sons [in Canaan] also could not find [enough] food. **12** When Jacob heard [people report that] there was grain/food [that people could buy] in Egypt, he sent Joseph's older brothers [to go there to buy grain. They went and bought grain from Joseph, but they did not recognize him. Then they returned

home]. 13 When Joseph's brothers went to Egypt the second time, [they again bought grain from Joseph]. But this time [he] told them who he was. [And] people told Pharaoh that Joseph's people were Hebrews [and that those men who had come from Canaan were his brothers]. 14 Then after Joseph sent [his brothers back home, they] told their father Jacob [that Joseph wanted] him and his entire family to come [to Egypt. At that time] ([Jacob's family consisted of] 75 people/there were 75 people in Jacob's family) [SYN]. 15 [So when] Jacob [heard that, he and all his family] went to [live in] Egypt." Acts 7:15b-16 "[Later on], Jacob died [there], and our [other] ancestors, [his sons, also died there]. 16 [But] the bodies [of Jacob and Joseph] were brought {[they] brought the bodies [of Jacob and Joseph]} [back to our land], and [Jacob's body] was buried {they buried [Jacob's body]} [in the tomb that Abraham had bought, and they buried Joseph's body] in Shechem in the ground that [Jacob] had bought from Hamor's sons." 17 "Our ancestors had become very numerous when it was almost time for [God to rescue them] from Egypt, [as] he had promised Abraham that he would do. 18 Another king had begun to rule in Egypt. He did not know that Joseph, [long before that time, had greatly helped the people of Egypt] [MTY]. 19 That king cruelly tried to get rid of our ancestors. He oppressed them and caused them to suffer greatly. He [even commanded] them to leave their baby [boys] outside [their homes] so that they would die." 20 "During that time Moses was born, and he was a very beautiful [LIT] [child]. So his parents [secretly] cared for him in their house for three months. 21 Then they had to put him outside [the house, but] Pharaoh's daughter [found him and] adopted him and cared for him as [though he were] her own son. 22 Moses was taught {[The Egyptian teachers] taught Moses} many kinds of wise things [HYP] that the people in Egypt knew, and [when he grew up], he spoke powerfully and did things powerfully." 23 "[One day] when Moses was about 40 years old, he decided that he would [go and] see his fellow Israelis. [So he went to the place where they worked]. 24 He saw an Egyptian beating one of the Israelis. So he went over to help [MTY] the Israeli man who was being hurt/beat {whom [the Egyptian] was hurting/beating}, and he (got revenge on/paid back) the Israeli man by killing the Egyptian [who was hurting/beating him]. 25 Moses was thinking that his fellow Israelis would understand that God had sent him to free them [from being slaves]. But they did not understand that. 26 The next day, Moses saw two Israeli men fighting [each other]. He tried to make them stop fighting by saying to them, 'Men, you two are fellow [Israelis! So] (stop hurting each other!/why are you hurting each other?) [RHQ]' 27 But the man who was injuring the other man pushed Moses away and said to him, '(No one appointed you [(sg)] to rule and judge us [(exc)]!/Do you [(sg)] think someone appointed you [(sg)] to rule and judge us [(exc)]?) [RHQ] 28 Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' 29 When Moses heard that, [he thought to himself, 'Obviously, people know what I have done, and someone will kill me.' He was afraid, so] he fled [from Egypt] to Midian land. He lived there [for some years]. He [got married, and he and his wife] had two sons." 30 "[One day] 40 years later, [the Lord God appeared as] an angel to Moses. He appeared in a bush that was burning in the desert near Sinai Mountain. 31 When Moses saw that, he was greatly surprised, [because the bush was not burning up]. As he went over to look more closely, he heard the Lord [God] say [to him], 32 'I [am] the God [whom] your ancestors [worshipped]. I [am] the God that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob [worship].' Moses [was so afraid that he] began to shake. He was afraid to look [at the bush any longer]. 33 Then the Lord [God] said to him, 'Take your sandals off [to show that you(sg) revere me]. Because I [am here], the place where you are standing is holy/sacred. 34 I have surely seen how the people of Egypt are continually causing my people to suffer. I have heard my people when they groan [because those people continually oppress them]. So I have come down to rescue them [from Egypt]. Now get ready, because I am going to send you [back] to Egypt [to do that].'" 35 "This Moses [is the one who had tried to help our Israeli people, but] whom they rejected [by saying], 'No one [RHQ] appointed you to rule and judge [us!'] Moses [is the one whom] God [himself] sent to rule them and to free them [from being slaves. He is the one whom] an angel in the bush [commanded to do that]. 36 Moses [is the one who] led our ancestors out [from Egypt]. He did many kinds of miracles in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and during the 40 years [that the Israelite people lived] in the desert. 37 This Moses is the one who said to the Israelite people, 'God will appoint a prophet for you from among your own people. [He will speak words from God], just like I [speak his words to you].' 38 This man [Moses] was [our people's leader] when they gathered together in the desert. It is Moses to whom [God sent] the angel on Sinai Mountain to [give him our laws], and [he was the one who told] our [other] ancestors [what the angel had said]. He was the one who received [from God] words that tell us how to live [eternally, and Moses] passed [them] on to us." 39 "[However], our ancestors did not want to obey [Moses]. Instead, [while he was still on the mountain], they rejected him [as their leader] and decided that they wanted to return to Egypt. 40 So they told [his older brother] Aaron, 'Make idols for us who will be our gods to lead us [back to

Egypt]! As for that fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt we [(exc)] do not know what has happened to him!' **41** So, they made [out of gold] an image [that looked like] a calf. Then they sacrificed [animals and offered other things] to [honor] that idol, and they sang and danced to honor the idol that they themselves had made. **42** So God rejected them. He abandoned them to worship the sun, moon and stars in the sky. This agrees with the words that one of the prophets wrote that God said, You Israelite [people] [MTY], when you [repeatedly] killed animals and offered them as sacrifices during those 40 years [that you were] in the desert, (you [most certainly] were not offering them to me!/what makes you think that you were offering them to me?) [RHQ] **43** [On the contrary], you carried [with you from place to place] the tent [that contained the idol] representing [the god] Molech [that you worshipped]. You also [carried with you] the image of the star [called] Rephan. [Those] were idols that you had made, [and you] worshipped [them instead of me]. So I will [cause you to] be taken away {[people to] take you} [from your own country. You will be taken] {[They will take you]} [far from your homes to regions] even farther than Babylon [Country]." **44** "While our ancestors were in the desert, they worshipped God at the tent that showed [that he was there with them]. They had made the tent exactly like God had commanded Moses [to make it. It was] exactly like the model that Moses had seen [when he was up on the mountain]. **45** [Later on], other ancestors of ours carried that tent with them when Joshua led them [into this land]. That was during the time that they took this land for themselves, when God forced the people [who previously lived here] to leave. So the Israelis were able to possess this land. [The tent remained in this land and was still here] when [King] David ruled. **46** David pleased God, and he asked God to let him build a house where [he and] all of our Israeli people could worship God. **47** But [instead, God let David's son] Solomon build a house [where people could worship] God." **48** "However, [we(inc) know that] God is greater than everything, and he does not live in [houses that] people [SYN] have made. It is like the prophet [Isaiah] wrote. He wrote [these words that God had spoken:] **49** Heaven is (my throne/the place from which I rule the entire universe), and the earth is (my footstool/[merely like] a stool on which I may rest my feet). I myself [SYN] have made everything [both in heaven and on the earth]. So you [human beings], ([you] really cannot build a house that would be [adequate] for me!/do you think you can build a house that would be [appropriate] for me?) [RHQ] You cannot [RHQ] make a place good enough for me [to live in]!" **51** "You people are extremely stubborn [MET], not wanting to obey God or listen [MTY] [to him!] You are exactly like your ancestors! You always resist the Holy Spirit [as they did]! **52** Your ancestors caused [RHQ] every prophet to suffer, [including Moses]. They even killed those who long ago announced [that the Messiah] would come, the one who always did what pleased God. [And the Messiah has come! He is the one whom] you [recently] turned over [to his enemies] and [insisted that] they kill him! **53** You [are the people] who have received God's laws. [Those were laws] that God caused angels to give [to our ancestors]. However, [incredibly], you have not obeyed them!" **54** When the Jewish Council members [and others there] heard all that [Stephen said], they became very angry. They were grinding their teeth [together because they were so angry] at him! **55** But the Holy Spirit completely controlled Stephen. He looked up into heaven and saw a dazzling light from God, and [he saw] Jesus standing at God's right side. **56** "Look," he said, "I see heaven open, and I [see] the one who came from heaven standing at God's right side!" **57** [When the Jewish Council members and others heard that], they shouted loudly. They put their hands over their ears [so that they could not hear Stephen, and immediately] they all rushed at him. **58** They dragged him outside the city [of Jerusalem] and started to throw stones at him. The people who were accusing him [took off] their outer garments [in order to throw stones more easily, and] they put their clothes [on the ground] next to a young man whose name was Saul, [so that he could guard them]. **59** While they continued to throw stones at Stephen, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" **60** Then Stephen fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not punish them (OR, forgive them) [LIT] for this sin!" After he had said that, he died.

8 Then some men who revered God buried Stephen's body in a tomb, and they mourned greatly and loudly for him. On that same day [people] started severely persecuting the believers [who were living] in Jerusalem. So most [of the believers] fled [to other places] throughout Judea and Samaria [provinces]. The apostles were the only [believers who remained in Jerusalem]. **3** While the people were killing Stephen, Saul was there approving of their killing Stephen. So Saul [also] began trying to destroy the group of believers. He entered houses one by one, he dragged away men and women [who believed in Jesus], and then he [arranged for] them to be put in prison. **4** The believers who had left Jerusalem went to different places, where they continued preaching the message about Jesus. **5** [One of those believers whose name was] Philip went down [from Jerusalem] to a city in Samaria [province]. There he was telling [the people that Jesus is] [MTY] the Messiah. **6** Many people there heard Philip [speak] and saw the

miraculous things that he was doing. So they all (paid close attention to/listened carefully to) his words. 7 For [example, when Philip commanded] evil spirits who controlled many people [that they should come out of them], they came out, while those spirits screamed. Also, many people who were paralyzed and [many others] who were lame were healed. 8 So [many people] [MTY] in that city greatly rejoiced. 9 There was a man in that city whose name was Simon. He had been practicing sorcery for a long time, and he had been amazing the people in Samaria [province by doing that]. He continually claimed that he was a great/important person. 10 All the people there, both ordinary and important people, listened to him. [Various ones of] them were saying, "This man works in extremely powerful ways [because] God has caused him to be a great [person]." 11 They continued to listen to him carefully, because for a long time he had astonished them by practicing sorcery. 12 But then they believed Philip's [message] when he preached to them about [how] God desires to rule [MET] [the lives of people who believe in him], and about Jesus being the Messiah [MTY]. Both the men and the women who believed in Jesus were baptized. {[Philip] was baptizing both the men and the women [who had come to believe in Jesus]}. 13 Simon himself believed [Philip's message] and, after he was baptized {after [Philip] baptized him}, he began to constantly accompany Philip. Simon was continually amazed because he often saw [Philip] doing many kinds of miraculous things. 14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that [many people] [PRS] [throughout] Samaria [district] had believed the message from God [about Jesus], they sent Peter and John there. 15 When Peter and John arrived in Samaria, they prayed for those [new believers] in order that the Holy Spirit's [power] would come to them. 16 [Peter and John realized that] the Holy Spirit had not yet begun to empower any of them. They had been baptized {[Philip] had baptized them} [because they had believed] in [MTY] the Lord Jesus, [but they did not know about the Holy Spirit]. 17 [Then Peter and John] placed their hands on [the heads of] each person, and they received the [power of] [MTY] the Holy Spirit. 18 Simon saw [things that convinced him] that [God] had given the Spirit's [power to people] as a result of the apostles placing their hands on them. So he offered [to give] money to the apostles, 19 saying, "Enable me also to do what [you are doing], so that everyone on whom I place/put my hands may receive the Holy Spirit's [power]." 20 But Peter said to him, "May you [(sg)] and your money go to hell, because you [mistakenly] think that you can buy [from us] what God [alone] gives to [people] **(questioned)** 21 [God] has not authorized you to have any part of this ministry of giving [the Holy Spirit's power], because he knows that you are not thinking rightly! (OR, because he knows that you are thinking completely wrongly.) 22 So stop thinking wickedly [like] that, and plead that the Lord, if he is willing, will forgive you [for what] you [wickedly] thought/planned [to do] 23 [Turn away from your evil ways], because I perceive that you [(sg)] are extremely envious of [us], and you [are] a slave of your [continual desire to do evil! God will certainly punish you severely]!" 24 Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord [God] that [he] will not do to me what you just said!" 25 After [Peter and John] told [people there] what they knew personally [about the] Lord [Jesus] and declared to them the message about Jesus, they both returned to Jerusalem. [Along the way] they preached the good message [about Jesus to people] in many villages in Samaria [province]. 26 [One day] an angel whom the Lord [God] had sent commanded Philip, "Get ready and go south along the road that extends from Jerusalem to Gaza." [That was] a road in a desert area. 27 So Philip got ready and went [along that road]. Suddenly he met a man from Ethiopia. He was an important official who took care of all the funds for the queen [of] Ethiopia. [In his language people called their queen] Candace. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship [God], 28 and he was returning [home] and was seated [riding] in his chariot. [As he was riding], he was reading [out loud from] what the prophet Isaiah [had written] [MTY] [long ago]. 29 [God's] Spirit told Philip, "Go near to that chariot and keep walking close to [the man who is riding in] it!" 30 So Philip ran [to the chariot and kept running close to it]. Then he heard the official reading what the prophet Isaiah [had written]. He asked the man, "Do you [(sg)] understand what you are reading?" 31 He answered Philip, "[No!] (I cannot possibly [understand it] if [there is] no one to explain it to me!/How can I [understand it] if [there is] no one to explain it to me?) [RHQ]" Acts 8:31b-35 Then the man said to Philip, "Please come up [and] sit beside me." [So Philip did that]. 32 The part of the Scriptures that the official was reading was this: He will [be silent when] they lead him away to kill him [like when] a sheep [is led away to be killed]. As a young sheep is silent when its wool is being cut off {someone cuts off its wool}, [similarly] he will not protest [MTY] [when people cause him to suffer]. 33 When he will be humiliated by being accused falsely {people will humiliate him [by accusing him falsely]}, [the rulers] (will not consider him innocent/will consider him guilty). No one will possibly be able to tell about his descendants, because he will be killed {people will kill him} without him having [any descendants] on the earth. 34 The official asked Philip [about these words that he was reading], "Tell me, who was the prophet writing about? [Was he writing] about himself or

about someone else?" 35 So Philip began [to explain] that Scripture passage. He told him the good message about [MTY] Jesus. [So the official understood and believed in Jesus]. 36 While they were traveling along the road, they came to [a place where there was a pond of] water [near the road]. Then the official said [to Philip], "Look, [there is a pond of] water! (I would like you to baptize me, because I do not know of anything that would prevent me from being baptized {prevent [you] from baptizing me.}/Do you know of anything that would prevent me from being baptized {prevent [you] from baptizing me}?) [RHQ]" 38 So the official told [the driver] to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the official went down into the [pond of] water, and [Philip] baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water, suddenly God's Spirit took Philip away. The official never saw Philip again. But [although he never saw Philip again], the official continued going along the road, very happy [that God had saved him]. 40 Philip then realized [that the Spirit had miraculously taken him to] Azotus [town]. While he traveled around [in that region], he continued proclaiming the message [about Jesus] in all the towns [between Azotus and Caesarea. And he was still proclaiming] it when he finally arrived in Caesarea [city].

9 Meanwhile, Saul angrily continued to say, "I will kill those who believe that [Jesus is] the Lord!" He went to the supreme priest [in Jerusalem] 2 and requested him [to write] letters [introducing him] to [the leaders of] [MTY] the Jewish meeting places in Damascus [city. The letters asked them to authorize Saul] to seize any men or women who followed the way [that Jesus had taught], and to take them as prisoners to Jerusalem [so that the Jewish leaders could judge and punish them]. 3 Saul took those letters, and while he [and those with him] traveled toward Damascus, as they were approaching the city, suddenly a [brilliant] light from heaven shone around Saul. 4 [Immediately] he fell down to the ground. Then he heard the voice [of the Lord] say to him, "Saul, Saul, (stop causing me to suffer!/why are you causing me to suffer?) [RHQ]" 5 Saul asked him, "Lord, who are you?" He replied, "I am Jesus, [and] you [(sg)] are causing me to suffer [by hurting my followers]! 6 Now instead [of continuing to do that], stand up and go into the city! [Someone there] will tell you [(sg)] what I [want] you to do." 7 The men who were traveling with Saul [became so frightened that they] could not say anything. [They just] stood there. They only heard the sound [when the Lord spoke], but they did not see anyone. 8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could not see anything. So the men [with him] took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. 9 For the next three days Saul could not see [anything], and he did not eat or drink anything. 10 In Damascus there was [a Jew] named Ananias who believed in Jesus. While [Ananias was seeing] a vision, the Lord [Jesus] said to him, "Ananias!" He replied, "Lord, I [am listening]." 11 The Lord Jesus told him, "Go to Straight Street to the house that belongs to Judas. Ask [someone there if you(sg) can talk to] a man named Saul from Tarsus [city], because, surprisingly, at this moment he is praying [to me]. 12 [Saul has seen] a vision in which a man named Ananias entered [the house where he was staying] and put his hands on him in order that he might see again." 13 But Ananias [protested], saying, "But Lord, many people have told me about this man! He has done many evil things to the people in Jerusalem who [believe in] you! 14 And the chief priests have authorized him to come here [to Damascus] in order to seize all of us who believe in you [(sg)] [MTY] [and take us to Jerusalem]!" 15 But the Lord [Jesus] told Ananias, "Go to [Saul! Do what I say], because I have chosen him to serve me in order that he might speak about me [MTY] both to non-Jewish people and [their] kings and to the Israeli people. 16 I myself will tell him that he must often suffer greatly because of [telling people about] me [MTY]." 17 So Ananias went, and [after he found] the house [where Saul was], he entered it. Then, [as soon as he met Saul], he put his hands on him, and he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus [himself] commanded me to come [to you]. He is the [same] one who appeared to you [(sg)] while you were traveling along the road. [He sent me to you] in order that you might see again and that you might be completely controlled by the Holy Spirit {that the Holy Spirit might completely control you}." 18 Instantly, things like [fish] scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he was able to see again. Then he stood up and was baptized {[Ananias] baptized him} [immediately]. 19 After Saul ate some food, he felt strong again. Saul stayed with the [other] believers in Damascus for several days. 20 Right away Saul began to preach [to people about Jesus] in the Jewish meeting places [in Damascus. He told them] that Jesus is (the Son of/the man who is also) God. 21 And all the people who heard him [preach] were amazed. [Various ones of] them were saying, "([We(inc) can hardly believe that] this is the [same man] who persecuted the believers in Jerusalem!/Is this really the [same man] who persecuted the believers in Jerusalem?) [RHQ, MTY] And we [(inc)] know that he has [RHQ] come here to seize us and take us to the chief priests [in Jerusalem]!" 22 But [God] enabled Saul [to preach to many people even] more convincingly. He was proving [from the Scriptures] that Jesus is the Messiah. So the Jewish leaders in Damascus could not think of anything (to refute [what he said/to prove that what he said was not true]). 23 Some time later, [after Saul had left Damascus and then returned], the Jewish [leaders]

[SYN] [there] plotted to kill him. **24** [During each] day and night those Jews were continually watching [the people passing through] the city gates, in order that [when they saw Saul] they might kill him. However, someone told Saul what they planned to do. **25** So some of those whom he had helped [to believe in Jesus] took him [one] night [to the high stone wall that surrounded the city]. They [used ropes to] lower him in a [large] basket through an opening in the wall. [So he escaped from Damascus]. **26** When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he began trying to associate with other believers. However, [almost] all of them continued to be afraid of him, because they did not believe that he had become a believer. **27** But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He explained to the apostles how, [while Saul was traveling] along the road [to Damascus], he had seen the Lord [Jesus] and how the Lord had spoken to him [there. He] also told them how Saul had preached boldly about Jesus [MTY] [to people] in Damascus. [The apostles believed Barnabas and told the other believers about that]. **28** So Saul began to associate with the apostles [and other believers] throughout Jerusalem, and he spoke boldly [to people] about [MTY] the Lord [Jesus]. **29** Saul was [also] speaking [about Jesus] with Jews who spoke Greek, and he was debating with them. But they were continually trying [to think] ([of a way] to kill him/of [how they could] kill him). **30** When the [other] believers heard that [those Jews were planning to kill him, some of] the believers took Saul down to Caesarea [city. There] they arranged for him to go [by ship] to Tarsus, [his hometown]. **31** So the groups of believers throughout [the entire regions of] Judea, Galilee, and Samaria lived peacefully [because no one was persecuting them any more]. The Holy Spirit was strengthening them [spiritually] and encouraging them. They were continuing to revere/honor the Lord [Jesus, and the Holy Spirit] was enabling many other people [to become believers]. **32** While Peter was traveling throughout those [regions, once] he went to [the coastal plain to visit] the believers [who lived] in Lydda [town]. **33** There he met a man whose name was Aeneas. Aeneas had not been able to get up from [his] bed for eight years, because he was paralyzed. **34** Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you [(sg) right now]! Get up and roll up your mat!" Right away Aeneas stood up. **35** Most of the people who lived in Lydda and on Sharon [Plain] saw Aeneas [after the Lord had healed him], so they believed in the Lord [Jesus]. **36** In Joppa [town] there was a believer whose name was Tabitha. [Her name] in the [Greek] language was Dorcas. [Both of these names mean gazelle/deer/antelope]. That woman was continually doing good deeds [for others. Specifically], she was helping poor people [by giving them things that they needed]. **37** During the time [that Peter was in Lydda], she became sick and died. [Some women there] washed her body [according to the Jewish custom so that the people could bury it]. Then they [covered her body with cloth and] placed it in an upstairs room [in her house]. **38** Lydda was near Joppa, so when the believers heard that Peter was [still] in Lydda, they sent two men to [go] to Peter. [When they arrived where Peter was], they repeatedly urged/begged him, "Please come immediately with us [to Joppa]!" **39** So [right away] Peter got ready and went with them. When they arrived [at the house in Joppa], the two men took Peter to the upstairs room [where Dorcas' body was lying]. All the widows [there] around Peter. They were crying and showing him the cloaks and [other] garments that Dorcas had made for people while she was still alive. **40** But Peter sent them all out of the room. Then he got down on his knees and prayed. Then, turning toward Tabitha's body, he said, "Tabitha, stand up!" [Immediately] she opened her eyes and, when she saw Peter, she sat up. **41** He grasped one of her hands and helped her to stand up. After he had summoned the believers and [especially] the widows [among them to come back in], he showed them that Tabitha was alive [again]. **42** [Soon] people everywhere in Joppa knew about that miracle, and as a result many people believed in the Lord [Jesus]. **43** Peter stayed in Joppa many days with a man named Simon who made leather [from animal skins].

10 [There was] a man [who lived] in Caesarea [city] whose name was Cornelius. He was an officer who commanded 100 men in a large group of [Roman] soldiers from Italy. **2** He always tried to do what would please God; he and his entire household [MTY] [were non-Jews who] habitually worshipped God. He sometimes gave money to help poor [Jewish] people, and he prayed to God regularly. **3** [One day] at about three o'clock in the afternoon [Cornelius saw] a vision. He clearly saw an angel whom God [had sent]. The angel came into [his room] and said to him, "Cornelius!" **4** Cornelius stared at the angel and became terrified. Then he asked [fearfully], "Sir, what do you [(sg)] want?" The angel answered him, "You [(sg)] have pleased God because you have been praying [regularly to him] and you often give money to [help] poor people. [Those things have been] like a sacrifice [to God]. **5** So, now command some men to go to Joppa and [tell them to] bring back a man named Simon whose other name is Peter. **6** He is staying with a man, [also] named Simon, who makes leather. His house is near the ocean." **7** When the angel who spoke to Cornelius had gone, Cornelius summoned two of his household servants and a soldier who served him, one who also worshipped God. **8** He explained to them everything [that the angel had

said. Then] he told them to go to Joppa [to ask Peter to come to Caesarea]. **9** About noon the next day those [three men] were traveling [along the road] and were coming near [Joppa. As they were approaching Joppa], Peter went up on the [flat] housetop to pray. **10** He became hungry and wanted something to eat. While someone was preparing the food, [Peter] saw [this] vision: **11** (He saw heaven open/He saw an opening in the sky) and something like a large sheet was being lowered [to the ground]. [It was tied at] its four corners [with ropes]. **12** Inside the sheet were all kinds of creatures. [These included animals and birds that the Mosaic laws forbade Jews to eat]. Some had four feet, others scurried across the ground, and others were wild birds. **13** Then [he heard] God [SYN] say to him, "Peter, stand up, kill [and cook some of these] and eat [their meat]!" **14** But Peter replied, "Lord, surely you [(sg)] do not [really want me to do that]! I have never eaten any [meat] that [our Jewish law says] is unacceptable to God or [something that we(exc)] must not eat!" **15** [Then Peter heard] [MTY] God talk to him a second time. He said, "[I am] God, [so] if I have made something acceptable [to eat], do not say that it is not acceptable [to eat]!" **16** [This happened] three [times, so Peter knew that he had to think carefully about what it might mean]. Immediately [after God had said that the third time], ([the] sheet [with the animals and birds] was the pulled back into heaven/[someone] pulled the sheet [with the animals and birds] up into the sky again). **17** While Peter was trying to understand what that vision meant, the men who had been sent by Cornelius {whom Cornelius had sent} [arrived in Joppa. They asked people how to get to] Simon's house. [So they found his house] and were standing outside the gate. **18** They called and were asking if a man named Simon, whose other name was Peter, was staying there. **19** While Peter was still trying to understand [what] the vision [meant], [God's] Spirit said to him, "Three men [are here who] want to see you. **20** So get up and go downstairs and go with them! Do not think that you [(sg)] should not go with them [because of their being non-Jews], because I have sent them [here]!" **21** So Peter went down to the men and said to them, "[Greetings!] I am [the man] you are looking for. Why have you come?" **22** One of them replied, "Cornelius, who is a [Roman] army officer, [sent us here]. He is a righteous man who worships God, and all of the Jewish people [HYP] [who know about him] say that he is a very good man. An angel (who was sent from God/whom God sent) said to him, 'Tell some men to [go to Joppa to see Simon Peter and] bring him here, so that you [(sg)] can hear what he has to say.'" **23** So Peter [said that he would go with them, and then he] invited them into [the house] and told them that they could stay [there that night]. Acts 10:23b-26 The next day Peter got ready and went with the men. Several of the believers from Joppa went with him. **24** The day after that, they arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them. He had also invited his relatives and close friends [to come to his house, so they were there, too]. **25** When Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and bowed low in front of him to worship him. **26** But Peter [grasped Cornelius by the hand and] lifted him to his feet. He said, "Stand up! [Do not revere/worship me] I myself am only human, [like you]!" **27** While he was talking to Cornelius, Peter [and the others] entered [a large room inside the house]. Peter saw that many people had gathered together [there]. **28** Then Peter said to them, "You all know that any [of us] Jews think we are disobeying [our Jewish] laws if we [(exc)] associate with a non-Jewish person or [if we even] visit him. However, God has shown me [in a vision] that I should not say about anyone that God will not accept him. **29** So when you sent [some men] to ask me to come [here], I came [right away. I] did not say that I could not go [with non-Jewish people. So, please tell me], why have you asked me to come [here]?" **30** Cornelius replied, "About this time four days ago I was praying [to God] in my house, [as I regularly do] at three o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly a man whose clothes [shone] brightly stood in front of me, **31** and said, 'Cornelius, when you [(sg)] have prayed, you have been heard by God {God has heard [when] you [(sg)] have prayed [to him]}. He has also noticed that you have [often] given money to [help] poor people, [and he is pleased with that]. **32** So now, send [messengers to go] to Joppa, [in order] to ask Simon whose other name is Peter to come [here]. He is staying near the ocean in a house that belongs to [another] man named Simon, who makes leather. [When Simon Peter comes, he will tell you a message from God].' **33** So I immediately sent [some men who asked] you [(sg) to come here], and I [certainly] thank you for coming. Now we [(exc)] all are gathered [here, knowing that] God is with us, in order to hear all the things that the Lord [God] has commanded you [to say. So please speak to us]." **34** So Peter began to speak [MTY] to them. He said, "[Now] I understand that it is true that God does not favor only certain groups [of people]. **35** Instead, from every group of people he accepts [everyone who] honors him and who does what pleases him. **36** [You know] the message that God sent to [us] Israelis. [He] proclaimed [to us the good news that he] would cause [people] to have peace [with him] because of what Jesus Christ [has done]. This [Jesus is Lord not only over us Israelis. He] is [also the] Lord [who rules] over all [people]. **37** You know what [he] did throughout the land of Judea, beginning in Galilee. He began [to do

those things] after John had been proclaiming [to people that they should turn away from their sinful behavior before] he baptized them. **38** You know that God gave [MTY] his Holy Spirit to Jesus, [the Man] from Nazareth [town], and gave him the power [to do miracles. You also know] how Jesus went to many places, always doing good deeds and healing [people. Specifically], he was continually healing all the people whom the devil was causing to suffer. [Jesus was able to do those things] because God was always helping him." **39** "We [apostles] tell people about all the things that [we saw Jesus] do in Jerusalem and in the [rest of] Israel. [The leaders in Jerusalem] had him killed by being nailed to a cross. **40** However, God caused him to become alive again on the third day [after he had died]. God [also] enabled [some of us(exc)] to see him [so that we would know that he was alive again]. **41** God [did] not [let] all the [Jewish] people see him. Instead, he had chosen us [apostles] beforehand to see [Jesus after he became alive again], and to tell others [about him]. We [apostles are the people] who ate meals with him (after he had become alive [again]/after he had risen from the dead). **42** God commanded us to preach to the people and tell them that Jesus is the one whom he has appointed to judge [everyone some day. He will judge all] those who will [still] be living and all those who will have died [by that time]. **43** All of the prophets [who wrote about the Messiah long ago] told [people] about him. [They wrote] that if people believe in the Messiah [MTY], God would forgive [them for] their sins, because of what [the Messiah would do] for them." **44** While Peter was still speaking those words, suddenly the Holy Spirit (came down on/began to control) all [those non-Jewish people] who were listening to the message. **45** The Jewish believers who had come with Peter [from Joppa] were amazed that [God] had generously given the Holy Spirit to the non-Jewish people, too. **46** [The Jewish believers knew that God had done that] because they were hearing those people speaking languages [MTY] [that they had not learned] and telling how great God is. **47** Then Peter said [to the other Jewish believers who were there], "[God] has given them the Holy Spirit just like [he gave him] to us [Jewish believers], so (surely all of you would agree that [we(exc)] should baptize these people!/would any of you forbid that these people should be baptized?) [RHQ]" **48** Then Peter told those [non-Jewish] people that they should be baptized [to show that they had believed] [MTY] in the [Lord] Jesus Christ. [So they baptized all of them. After they were baptized], they requested that Peter stay [with them] several days. [So Peter and the other Jewish believers did that].

11 The apostles and [other] believers who lived in various towns in Judea [province] heard people say that [some] non-Jewish people had believed the message [from] God [about Jesus]. **2** So when Peter [and the six other believers] returned [from Caesarea] to Jerusalem, [some] Jewish believers criticized Peter, [because they thought that Jews should not associate with non-Jews] [MTY]. **3** They said to him, "Not only was it wrong for you(sg) to visit non-Jewish people, you [even] ate with them!" **4** So Peter began to explain exactly [what had happened concerning Cornelius]. **5** He said, "I was praying [by myself] in Joppa [town], and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw that something like a large sheet was being lowered from heaven. [It was tied with ropes] at its four corners, and it came down to where I was. **6** As I was looking intently into it, I saw some tame animals [but also animals that our laws forbid us to eat, including] wild animals, snakes, and wild birds. **7** Then I heard God [MTY] commanding me, 'Peter, get up, kill [some of these], and [cook and] eat [their meat]!' **8** But I replied, 'Lord, [you(sg)] surely do not [really want me to do that], because I have never eaten [MTY] meat [from any animal] that [our laws say] that we [(exc)] must not eat [SYN]!' **9** God spoke from heaven [to me] a second time, '[I am] God, [so] if I have made something acceptable [to eat], do not say that it is not acceptable [to eat]!' **10** Then [after that happened three times, the sheet with] all [those animals and birds] was pulled up into heaven again." **11** "At that exact moment, three men who had been {whom [Cornelius] had} sent from Caesarea arrived at the house where I was staying. **12** [God's] Spirit told me that I should be willing to go with them [even though they were not Jews]. These six [Jewish] believers [from Joppa] went with me [to Caesarea], and then we [(exc)] went into that [non-Jewish] man's house. **13** He told us that he had seen an angel standing in his house. The angel told him, 'Tell some [men] to go to Joppa and bring back Simon whose other name is Peter. **14** He will tell you [(sg)] how you and everyone [MTY] else in your house will be saved {how [God] will save you and everyone [MTY] else in your house}.' **15** After I started to speak, the Holy Spirit [suddenly] came down on them, just like he had first [MTY] come on us [during the Pentecost festival]. **16** Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John caused people to be baptized in water, but [God] will cause the Holy Spirit [to enter you and change your lives.'] **17** God gave those non-Jews the same Holy Spirit that he had given to us [(inc)] after we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. So, ([I] could not [possibly] tell God that he did wrong [when he gave them the Holy Spirit!]/how could I [tell] God that he did wrong [when he gave them the Holy Spirit]?) [RHQ] [He was

showing that he had received them]!" 18 After [those Jewish believers] heard what Peter said, they stopped criticizing [him. Instead], they praised God, saying, "Then it is [clear to us that] God has also accepted the non-Jews so that they will have eternal life, if they turn from their sinful behavior [and believe in Jesus]!" 19 After [people had killed] Stephen, many of the believers left [Jerusalem and went] to other places, because people were causing them to suffer [there in Jerusalem. Some of] them went to Phoenicia [region], some went to Cyprus [Island], and others went to Antioch [city in Syria province. In those places] they were continually telling people the message [about Jesus], but they told only other Jewish people. 20 Some of the believers were men from Cyprus and from Cyrene [city in north Africa]. They went to Antioch, and [although they told other Jews about] the Lord Jesus, they also told non-Jewish people [there]. 21 The Lord [God] [MTY] was powerfully enabling those [believers to preach effectively. As a result], very many [non-Jewish] people believed [their message and] trusted in the Lord [Jesus]. 22 The group of believers in Jerusalem heard [MTY] [people say that many people in Antioch were believing in Jesus. So] the [leaders] of the congregation in [Jerusalem] asked Barnabas to go to Antioch. 23 When he got [there], he realized that God had acted kindly toward [the believers. So] he was very happy, and he continually encouraged all of the [believers] to continue to trust completely in the Lord [Jesus]. 24 Barnabas was a good man [whom] the Holy Spirit completely controlled, one who trusted [God] completely. [Because of what Barnabas did], many people [there] believed in the Lord [Jesus]. 25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus [in Cilicia province to try] to find Saul. 26 After he found him, Barnabas brought him [back to] Antioch [to help teach the believers. So during] a whole year [Barnabas and Saul] met [regularly] with the congregation [there] and taught many of them [about Jesus. It was] at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians {[that people] first called the believers Christians}. 27 During the time [that Barnabas and Saul were] at Antioch, some [believers who were] prophets arrived there from Jerusalem. 28 One of them, whose name was Agabus, stood up [in order to speak]. [God's] Spirit enabled him to prophesy (that there would soon be a famine in many countries/that [people] in many countries [HYP] would soon [suffer because they] would not have enough [food] to eat). (That famine happened when Claudius was the [Roman Emperor].) 29 When the believers [there heard what Agabus said], they decided that they would send [money] to help the believers who lived in Judea. Each [of them decided to give as much money] as he was able [to give]. 30 They sent [the money] with Barnabas and Saul to the leaders of the congregation [in Jerusalem].

12 It was about this time that King Herod [Agrippa sent soldiers] [MTY] who seized [and put in prison] some of the [leaders] of the congregation [in Jerusalem. He did that] because he wanted to make the believers suffer. 2 He commanded [a soldier] to cut off the head of [the apostle] James, the [older] brother of [the apostle] John. 3 When Herod realized that he had pleased the [leaders of the] Jewish people by [doing that], he commanded [soldiers] to arrest Peter [in order to kill him], too. This happened during the festival [when the Jewish people ate] bread [that] did not have yeast. 4 After [they] seized Peter, they put him in prison. They arranged for four groups of soldiers to guard Peter. Each [group] had four soldiers. [Every three hours a different group began to guard him while the others rested]. Herod wanted to bring Peter out [of prison and judge him] in front of the [Jewish] people after the Passover [Festival was finished. He then planned to command soldiers to execute Peter]. 5 So [for several days] Peter was kept {they kept Peter} in prison. But the [other believers] in the congregation at [Jerusalem] were praying earnestly to God [that he would help] Peter. 6 The night [before] Herod planned to bring Peter out [from prison to have him executed] publicly, Peter was sleeping [in the prison] between two soldiers, with two chains binding his arms [to the arms of the soldiers. Two other] soldiers were guarding the prison doors. 7 Suddenly an angel [from] the Lord [God] stood [beside Peter], and a [bright] light shone in his cell. The angel poked Peter in the side and woke him up and said, "Get up quickly!" [While Peter was getting up], the chains fell off from his wrists. [However, the soldiers were not aware of what was happening]. 8 Then the angel said to Peter, "Put on your clothes and sandals!" So Peter did. Then the angel said to him, "Fasten your belt/girdle [around you(sg)] and put on your sandals!" So Peter did that. Then the angel told him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me!" 9 So, [after Peter put on his cloak and sandals], he followed [the angel] out [of the prison cell], but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening. He thought [that he] was seeing a vision. 10 Peter and the angel walked by the soldiers who were guarding the two doors, [but the soldiers did not see them. Then] they came to the iron gate that [led] out into the city. The gate opened by itself, and Peter and the angel walked out [of the prison]. After they had walked [a ways] along one street, the angel suddenly disappeared. 11 Then Peter [finally] realized that [what had happened to him was not a vision, but] it had really happened. So he said [to himself], "Now I really know that the Lord [God] sent an angel

[to help me]. He rescued me from what Herod planned to do [MTY] [to me], and [also] from all the things that the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] expected [that Herod would do to me]." **12** When Peter realized [that God had rescued him], he went to Mary's house. She was the mother of John whose other name was Mark. Many [believers] had assembled there, and they were praying [that God would help Peter somehow]. **13** When Peter knocked at the outer entrance, a servant girl named Rhoda came to find out [who was outside the door]. **14** [When Peter answered her], she recognized his voice, but she was so happy [and excited] that she did not open the door! Instead, she ran back [into the house]. She [excitedly] announced [to the other believers] that Peter was standing outside the door. **15** But [one of] them said to her, "You [(sg)] are crazy!" But she continued saying that it was [really true. Then] they repeatedly said, "[No], [it cannot be Peter]. It is [probably] the angel [who was guarding] him [who has come] (OR, It is the angel [who has guarded/protected] him, [and he has come to tell us that] Peter [has died].)" **16** But Peter continued knocking [on the door. So when someone finally] opened the door, they saw that it was Peter, and they were completely amazed! **17** Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet. Then he told them exactly how the Lord [God] had led him out of the prison. He [also] said, "Tell James, the [leader] of our [congregation], and our [other] fellow believers what has happened." Then [Peter left and] went away to another town. **18** The next morning the soldiers [who had been guarding] Peter became terribly distressed, [because they did not know] what had happened to him. **19** Then Herod [heard about it]. So he [commanded soldiers] to search for Peter, but they did not find him. Then he questioned the soldiers [who had been guarding Peter], and asked them, "[How did Peter get away when you were there guarding him?]" [But they could not explain it. So] he commanded them to be led away [to be executed] {[other soldiers] to lead them away [to execute them]}. [Afterwards], Herod went from Judea [province] down to Caesarea, where he stayed [for some time]. **20** King Herod had been furiously angry with the people [who lived] in Tyre and Sidon [cities. Then] one day some men [who represented them] came unitedly [to Caesarea in order to meet with] Herod. They persuaded Blastus, who was one of Herod's important officials, to tell [Herod] that the people [in their cities] wanted to make peace [with him. They wanted to be able to trade with the people that Herod ruled], because they needed to buy food from those regions. [Herod had commanded the people in the areas he ruled to stop selling food to the people in those cities]. **21** On the day that Herod had planned to [meet with them], he put on (very expensive clothes that showed that he was king/his royal robes). Then he sat on his (throne/chair from which he ruled [people]), and [formally] addressed [all] the people [who had gathered there]. **22** Those who [were listening to him] shouted repeatedly, "[This man who] is speaking is a god, not a man!" **23** So, because Herod [let the people praise him] instead of praising God, immediately an angel [from] the Lord [God] caused Herod to become seriously ill. [Many] worms ate his intestines, and [soon] he died [very painfully]. **24** [The believers] continued telling God's message to people in many places, and ([the number of people who believed in Jesus] was continually increasing/there were continually more and more people who were believing in Jesus). **25** When Barnabas and Saul finished [delivering the money to help the Jewish believers in Judea], they left Jerusalem and returned [to Antioch, in Syria province]. They took John, whose other name was Mark, with them.

13 Among [the people in] the congregation at Antioch there were (prophets/those who spoke messages from God) and those who taught [people about Jesus. They were] Barnabas; Simeon, who was also called Niger/Blackman; Lucius, from Cyrene [city]; Manaen, who had grown up with [King] Herod [Antipas]; and Saul. **2** While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said [to them], "Appoint Barnabas and Saul to [serve] me and to [go and do] the work that I have chosen them [to do]!" **3** So they continued (to fast/to abstain from eating food) and pray. Then having put their hands on Barnabas and Saul and [praying that God would help them], they sent them off [to do what the Holy Spirit had commanded]. **4** Barnabas and Saul, guided by the Holy Spirit, went down [from Antioch] to Seleucia [port]. From there they went by ship to Salamis [port on Cyprus Island]. **5** While they were in Salamis, [they went] to the Jewish meeting places. There they proclaimed the message from God [about Jesus]. John [Mark went with them and] was helping them. **6** [The three of] them went across the entire island to Paphos [city]. There they met a magician whose name was Bar-Jesus. He was a Jew who falsely [claimed] (to be a prophet/to speak messages from God). **7** He often accompanied the governor [of the island], Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. The governor sent [someone] to ask Barnabas and Saul to come to him, because he wanted to hear God's message. [So Barnabas and Saul came and told him about Jesus]. **8** However, the magician, whose name was Elymas [in the Greek language], was opposing them. He repeatedly tried to persuade the governor not to believe [in Jesus]. **9** Then Saul, who now called himself Paul, empowered by the Holy Spirit, looked intently at the magician and said, **10** "You [(sg)] are serving

the devil and you oppose everything that is good! You are always lying [to people] and doing [other] evil things to them. (You must stop saying that the truth about the Lord [God is a lot of lies!]/When will you stop changing what is true about the Lord [God and saying] what is not true about him?) [RHQ] **11** Right now the Lord [God] [MTY] is going to punish you! You will become blind and not [even] be able to see light for [some] time." At once he became [blind, as though he was] in a dark mist, and he groped about, searching for someone [to hold him by the] hand and lead him. **12** When the governor saw what had happened [to Elymas], he believed [in the Lord Jesus]. He was amazed by [what Paul and Barnabas] were teaching about the Lord [Jesus]. **13** [After that], Paul and the two men with him went by ship from Paphos to Perga [port] in Pamphylia [province. At Perga] John [Mark] left them and returned to [his home in] Jerusalem. **14** Then Paul and Barnabas traveled [by land] from Perga, and arrived in Antioch [city] near Pisidia [district in Galatia province]. (On the Sabbath/On the Jewish rest day) they entered the synagogue/the Jewish meeting place and sat down. **15** [Someone] read [aloud] from what [Moses had written. Then someone read from what the other] prophets [had written] [MTY]. Then the leaders of the Jewish meeting place gave [someone this] note [to take] to Paul and Barnabas: "Fellow Jews, if [one of] you wants to speak to the people [here] to encourage them, please speak [to us(exc) now]." **16** So Paul stood up and motioned with his right hand [so that the people would listen to him]. Then he said, "Fellow Israelis and you [non-Jewish people] who [also] worship God, [please] listen [to me]! **17** God, whom we [(inc)] Israelis worship, chose our ancestors [to be his people], and he caused them to become very numerous while they were foreigners living in Egypt. [Then after many years], God helped them [MTY] powerfully and led them out of there. **18** [Even though they repeatedly disobeyed him, he] cared for them for about 40 years [while they were] in the desert. **19** He [enabled the Israelis] to conquer seven tribal groups [who were then living] in Canaan [region], and he gave their land to us Israelis for us to possess. **20** [Our ancestors began to possess Canaan] about 450 years after [their ancestors had arrived in Egypt]." Acts 13:20b-22 "After that, God appointed leaders [to rule the Israeli people. Those leaders continued to rule our people] until the time when the prophet Samuel [ruled them]. **21** Then, [while Samuel was still their leader], the people demanded that he [appoint] a king [to rule them. So] God appointed Saul, the son of Kish, from the tribe of Benjamin, [to be their king]. He [ruled them] for 40 years. **22** After God had rejected Saul [from being king], he appointed David to be their king. God said about him, 'I have observed that David, son of Jesse, is exactly the kind of man that I desire [IDM]. He will do [everything that] I want [him to do].'" **23** "From [among] David's descendants, God brought one of them, Jesus, to [us] Israeli people to save us, just like he had told [David and our other ancestors] that he would do. **24** Before Jesus began his work, John [the Baptizer] preached to all of our Israeli people [who came to him. He told them] that they should turn away from their sinful behavior [and ask God to forgive them. Then he] would baptize them. **25** When John was about to finish the work [that God gave him to do], he frequently said [to the people], 'Do you think [RHQ] that I am [the Messiah whom God promised to send]? No, I am not. But listen! The Messiah will [soon] come. [He is so much greater than I am that] I am not [even] important enough to be his slave [MET].'" **26** "Fellow Israelis, you who are descendants of Abraham, and [you non-Jewish people who] also worship God, [please listen! It is] to [all of] us that [God] has sent the message about [how he] saves people. **27** The people who were living in Jerusalem and their rulers did not realize that this man [Jesus was the one whom God had sent to save them]. Although messages from [MTY] the prophets have been read [aloud] {someone has read [aloud] messages from [MTY] the prophets} every (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest), they did not understand [what the prophets wrote about the Messiah. So] the [Jewish leaders] condemned Jesus [to die], which was just like the prophets predicted. **28** [Many people accused Jesus of doing wicked things], but they could not prove that he had done anything for which he deserved to die. They insistently asked Pilate [the governor] to command that Jesus be executed {to command soldiers to execute Jesus}. [So Pilate did what they asked him to do]. **29** They did [to Jesus] all the things that [the prophets long ago had] written [that people would do to] him. [They killed Jesus by nailing him to a cross. Then] his body was taken {[some people took] his body} down from the cross and placed it in a tomb. **30** However, God (raised him from the dead/caused him to live again after he had died) **31** and for many days he [repeatedly] appeared to [his followers] who had come along with him from Galilee [province] to Jerusalem. Those [who saw him] are telling the [Jewish] people about him now." **32** "[Right] now we [two] are proclaiming to you this good message. We want to tell you that God has fulfilled what he promised to [our Jewish] ancestors! **33** He has now done that for us [(inc) who are] their descendants, [and also for you who are not Jews], by causing Jesus to live again. That is just like what [David] wrote in the second Psalm that [God said when he was sending his Son], You [(sg)] are my Son; Today I have shown everyone [that I really am] your Father.

34 [God] has (raised [the Messiah] from the dead/caused [the Messiah] to live again after he had died) and will never let him die again. [Concerning that, God] said [to our Jewish ancestors], 'I will surely help you, as I [promised] David [that I would do].' 35 So [in writing] another [Psalm, David] said this [to God about the Messiah]: 'Because I am devoted to you and always obey [you, when I die] you [(sg)] will not let my body decay.' 36 While David was living, he did what God wanted him to do. And when he died [EUP], his [body] was buried, [as] his ancestors' [bodies had been buried], and his body decayed. [So he could not have been speaking about himself in this Psalm]. 37 [Instead, he was speaking about Jesus. Jesus also died], but God (raised him from the dead/caused him to live again), and [therefore] his body did not decay." 38 "Therefore, [my] fellow Israelis [and other friends], it is important for you to know that [we(exc)] are declaring to you [that God] can forgive you for your sins as a result of [what] Jesus [has done]. Because of [what] Jesus [has done], [God] considers that everyone who believes [in Jesus] is no longer guilty (OR, the record has been erased {[God] has erased the record}) concerning everything that they [have done that displeased God. But] when [God] does [that for you], it is not as a result of [your obeying] the laws [that] Moses [wrote]. 40 Therefore be careful that [God] does not judge you [MTY], as one of the prophets said [MTY] that God would do! 41 [The prophet wrote that God said], You who ridicule [me], you will [certainly] be astonished [when you see what I am doing], and [then] you will be destroyed. You will be astonished because I will do something [terrible to you] while you are living. You would not believe [that I would do that] even though someone told you!" 42 After Paul [finished speaking], while he and Barnabas were leaving the Jewish meeting place, [many of] the people there repeatedly requested that on the next (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest) [the two of them] should speak to them [again] about those things [that Paul had just told them]. 43 After they began to leave [that meeting], many [of them] went along with Paul and Barnabas. They consisted of Jews and also of non-Jews who had accepted the things that the Jews believe. Paul and Barnabas continued talking to them, and were urging them to continue [believing the message that] God kindly [forgives people's sins because of what Jesus did]. 44 On the next Jewish rest day, most of the [people in Antioch came to] the Jewish meeting place to hear [Paul and Barnabas] speak about the Lord [Jesus]. 45 But [the leaders of] [SYN] the Jews became extremely jealous, because they saw that large crowds of [non-Jewish people were coming to hear Paul and Barnabas. So] they began to contradict the things that Paul was saying [and also] to insult [him]. 46 Then, speaking very boldly, Paul and Barnabas said [to those Jewish leaders], "[We two] had to speak the message from God [about Jesus] to you [Jews] first [before we proclaim it to non-Jews, because God commanded us to do that. But] you are rejecting God's message. [By doing that], you have shown that you are not worthy (to have eternal life/to live eternally [with God]). [Therefore], we are leaving [you, and now we] will go to the non-Jewish people [to tell them the message from God]. **(aiōnios g166)** 47 [We are doing that also] because the Lord [God] has commanded us [to do it]. He said to us, 'I have appointed you [to reveal things about me] to non-Jewish people [MET] that will be [like] a light to them. [I have appointed] you to tell people everywhere [MTY] in the world [about the one who came] to save [them].'" 48 While the non-Jewish people were listening [to those words], they began to rejoice, and they repeatedly said that the message about the Lord [Jesus] was wonderful. And all of the non-Jewish people whom [God] had chosen (to have eternal [life/to live eternally with God]) believed [the message about the Lord Jesus]. **(aiōnios g166)** 49 [At that time, many of the believers] traveled around throughout that region. As they did that, they were proclaiming the message about the Lord [Jesus] [MTY]. 50 However, [some leaders of] [SYN] the Jews incited the most important men in the city, and [some] important/influential women who had accepted what the Jews believe, to oppose [Paul and Barnabas. So those non-Jewish people] incited [other people also] to persecute Paul and Barnabas. As a result they expelled the two men from their region. 51 So, [as the two apostles were leaving, they] shook the dust from their feet [to show those Jewish leaders that God had rejected them and would punish them. They left Antioch] and went to Iconium [city]. 52 Meanwhile, the believers [in Antioch] continued to rejoice greatly, and they continued to be completely controlled by the Holy Spirit.

14 At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish meeting place and spoke very convincingly [about the Lord Jesus]. As a result, many Jews and also non-Jews believed [in Jesus]. 2 But [some of] the Jews refused to believe [that message, and] told the non-Jews not to believe it. They told the non-Jewish people that the message [about Jesus] was not true. As a result, [some of] the non-Jews became angry towards the believers [there]. 3 So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there speaking boldly for the Lord, and the Lord Jesus enabled them to do many miracles. In this way he showed [people] that the message about how the Lord saves us in a way that we do not deserve is true. 4 The people [who lived] in [Iconium] city strongly disagreed with each other [concerning the message about Jesus]. Some of them agreed with the

Jews [SYN] [who did not believe that message]. Others agreed with Paul and Barnabas. **5** Then the non-Jewish people and the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] [who opposed those two] talked among themselves about how they could mistreat them. Some of the important men in that city agreed to help them. Together, they decided that they would [kill Paul and Barnabas by] throwing stones at them. **6** But Paul and Barnabas heard about that, so they quickly went away to Lycaonia [district. They went] to Lystra and Derbe [cities in that district] and to the area surrounding [those cities]. **7** [While they were] in that area, they continually told people the message [about the Lord Jesus]. **8** [Once while Paul was preaching to people] in Lystra, a man was sitting there who was crippled in his legs. When [his mother] bore him he had crippled legs, so he was never able to walk. **9** He listened as Paul was speaking [about the Lord Jesus]. Paul looked directly at him and could see [in the man's face] that he believed that [the Lord Jesus] could make him well. **10** So Paul called out [to him], "Stand up!" [When the man heard that], he [immediately] jumped up and began to walk [normally]. **11** When the crowd saw what Paul had done, [they thought that Paul and Barnabas] [were/must be]) [the gods that they worshipped]. So they shouted [excitedly] in their [own] Lycaonia language, "[Look! These people are] the gods [that we(inc) worship! They] made themselves look like people and have come down [from the sky/heaven to help us]!" **12** They began to say that Barnabas was [probably the chief god, whose name was]. And [they began to say that] Paul was Hermes, [the messenger/spokesman for the other gods. They mistakenly thought that] because Paul was the one who had been speaking. **13** Just outside [the gates of] the city there was a temple [where the people worshipped Zeus. The priest who was there heard what Paul and Barnabas had done, so he came] to the city gate, where many people had already gathered. He brought [two] bulls with wreaths [of flowers around their necks]. The priest and the other people wanted to kill the bulls [as part of a ceremony] to worship Paul and Barnabas. **14** But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard about that, [and understood that the people thought that they were gods and wanted to sacrifice the bulls to worship them], they [were very distressed], so they tore their own clothes. They rushed among the people, shouting, **15** "Men, (you must not kill those bulls [to worship us(dl)!]/why are you doing this?) [RHQ] [We are not gods]! We are just human beings like you! We have come to tell you some good news! [We have come to tell you about] God who is all-powerful. He wants you to stop worshipping other gods, because they cannot help you. This true God made the heaven/sky and the earth and the oceans and everything in it. **16** In the past, all of you non-Jewish people [worshipped whatever gods that you wanted to]. God let you worship them, [because you did not know him]. **17** But he has shown us [LIT] [that] he acts kindly [toward us(inc)]. He is the one who causes it to rain and causes crops to grow. He is the one who gives you plenty of food, and makes you very happy." **18** The people heard what [Paul] said, but they still thought that they should sacrifice those bulls to worship Paul and Barnabas. [But finally, the people decided not to do it]. **19** [However], after that, some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and persuaded many of the people of Lystra [that the message Paul had been telling them] was not true. The people [who believed what those Jews said became angry with Paul. They let the Jews] throw stones at him [until he fell down, unconscious]. They [all] thought that he was dead, so they dragged him outside the city [and left him lying there]. But some of the believers [in Lystra had followed them outside the city]. **20** They came and stood around Paul, [where he was lying on the ground]. And Paul [became conscious! He] stood up and went back into the city [with the believers]. Acts 14:20b-23 The next day, Paul and Barnabas [left Lystra and] traveled to Derbe. **21** They [stayed there several days and they kept telling] the people the good message [about Jesus]. Many people became believers. After that, Paul and Barnabas [started on their way back. They] went again to Lystra. [Then they went from there] to Iconium, and [then they went] to Antioch [in Pisidia province]. **22** [In each city], they helped the believers [SYN] to become strong [spiritually], and they urged them to keep on trusting in [the Lord Jesus]. They told [the believers], "It is necessary that [we endure] people often persecuting us [(inc)] before we enter the place where God will rule [over us forever]." **23** Paul and Barnabas appointed leaders for each congregation. [And before Paul and Barnabas left each town, they gathered the believers together and spent some time] praying and (fasting/not eating any food). Then Paul and Barnabas entrusted the [leaders and other believers] to the Lord [Jesus], in whom they had believed, [in order that he would care for them]. **24** After Paul and Barnabas had traveled through Pisidia [district], they went [south] to Pamphylia [district]. **25** [In that district], they [arrived] at Perga and preached God's message [about the Lord Jesus to the people there. Then] they went down [to the seacoast] at Attalia. **26** There they got on a ship and went back to Antioch [in Syria province]. That was the place where Paul and Barnabas had been appointed {where [believers] had sent Paul and Barnabas} to go [to other places] and preach. [Antioch was the place where the believers] had asked God to kindly help Paul and Barnabas in the work that they had

now completed. 27 When they arrived in Antioch, they called the believers together. Then Paul and Barnabas told them all that God had helped them to do. [Specifically, they told them how God] had enabled [IDM] [many] non-Jewish people to believe [in Jesus]. 28 Then Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch with the [other] believers for several months.

15 [Then] some [Jewish] believers went down from Judea [province] to Antioch. They started teaching the [non-Jewish] believers [there, and said], "[You] ([must] be circumcised/must have God's mark put on you) [to indicate you belong to God], as Moses [commanded] in the laws that [he received from God]. If you do not do that, you will not be saved {[God] will not save you}." 2 Paul and Barnabas strongly disagreed with those Jews and started arguing [with them. So the believers at Antioch] appointed Paul and Barnabas and some of the other believers to go to Jerusalem, in order that they would/could discuss this matter with the apostles and [other spiritual] leaders. 3 After Paul, Barnabas, and the others were given things for their trip by the congregation [at Antioch] {After the congregation [at Antioch] gave Paul, Barnabas, and the others things for their trip}, they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria [provinces. When they stopped at different places in those provinces], they reported [to the believers] that [many] non-Jews [in Antioch] had become believers. As a result, all the believers [in those places] rejoiced greatly. 4 And when Paul, Barnabas, and the others arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the apostles, the [other] elders, and the [other members of the] congregation [there] {the apostles, the [other] elders, and the [other members of the] congregation [there] welcomed them}. Then Paul and Barnabas reported the things that God had enabled them to do [among non-Jewish people]. 5 But some of the [Jewish] believers who belonged to the Pharisee sect stood up [among the other believers and] said to them, "The non-Jews [who have believed in Jesus] must be circumcised, and they must be told to obey the laws [that God gave to] Moses." 6 Then the apostles and [the other] elders met together in order to talk about this matter. 7 After they had discussed it for a long time, Peter stood up and spoke to them. He said, "Fellow believers, you [all] know that a long time ago God chose me from among you [other apostles, in order that] the non-Jewish people might [also] hear me [SYN] tell [them] the good message [about the Lord Jesus], so that they could hear [it] and believe [in him. So Paul and Barnabas are not the first ones to tell non-Jews about Jesus]. 8 God knows [and judges] people according to what they think, [not according to who their ancestors were]. By sending the Holy Spirit to [the non-Jews], just like [he had] also done for us [(inc)] Jews, he showed [me and others] that he had accepted them [also to be his people]. 9 [God] saved us [Jews] and those [non-Jews] similarly, making them clean spiritually simply as a result of their believing [in the Lord Jesus. That was exactly how he has forgiven us]. 10 [You are wanting to force the non-Jewish believers to obey our Jewish rituals and laws]—laws that God has shown that he does not require them to obey [MET]. [Your doing that is like] putting a heavy burden on them! So then, (stop making God angry by doing that!/why are you making God angry by doing that?) [RHQ] Our ancestors and we [(inc) Jews] have never been able to bear [the burden of obeying those laws]! 11 But we [(inc) know that it is not because] we [(inc) try to obey those laws that God saves us(inc) Jews. On the contrary], we [(inc)] know that it is because of what the Lord Jesus did for us [(inc)] that we did not deserve that we [(inc)] are saved {that [God] saves us} [from the guilt of our sins. God saves non-Jews who believe in the Lord Jesus] exactly like [he saves] us Jews." 12 All the people [there] became silent [after Peter had spoken]. Then they [all] listened to Barnabas and Paul, [as the two of] them told about the many great miracles that God had enabled them to do among the non-Jewish people, [miracles that showed that God had accepted the non-Jews]. 13 When Barnabas and Paul had finished speaking, James, [the leader of the group of believers there in Jerusalem], spoke to all of them. [He said], "Fellow believers, listen to me. 14 Simon [Peter] has told you how God previously blessed the non-Jews. God did that by choosing from among them a people who would belong to him [MTY]. 15 [These] words that [God spoke], words that were written by [one of] the prophets {that one of the prophets wrote} [long ago], agree with that: 16 Later on I will return and I will re-establish the kingdom [MET] that David [ruled] and that has been {that [people] have} destroyed. My [doing that will be like] rebuilding [a house] that has been {that [people] have} torn down. 17 I will do that in order that all other people might seek [me], the Lord [God. I will do that in order that] all the non-Jews whom I have called [to belong] to me [MTY] might seek me. [You can be certain that this will happen because I] the Lord [God], who will do those things, have spoken [these words]. 18 I [caused my people to know about them] long ago." (aiōn g165) 19 [James continued by saying], "Therefore I have decided [that we(inc)] should stop bothering the non-Jewish people who are turning [away from their sins and turning] to God. [That is, we should stop demanding that they obey] all [our laws] and rituals. 20 Instead, we should write [a letter] to them [requiring only four things: They should] not eat [meat/food that people] have offered to idols, they should

not have sex with someone to whom they are not married, they should not [eat meat from animals that have been killed by] being strangled {[people have strangled]}, and [they should not eat] the blood [of animals]. **21** In many cities, for a very long time people have been proclaiming [the laws that] Moses [wrote] [MTY], [laws prohibiting those things]. And every (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest) [those laws] are read {someone reads [those laws]} in the Jewish meeting places. [So if the non-Jews want to know more about those laws, they can find out in our meeting houses]." **22** The apostles and the [other] elders, along with all the [other] members of the congregation, accepted [what James had said]. Then they decided that they should choose men from among themselves and that they should send them, along with Paul and Barnabas, to Antioch, to [let the believers there know what the leaders] at Jerusalem had decided. So they chose Judas, who was also called Barsabbas, and Silas, who were leaders among the believers [at Jerusalem]. **23** Then they wrote the following letter [that they asked Judas and Silas to take to the believers at Antioch]: "[We(exc)] apostles and [other] leaders who are your fellow believers [send our greetings to you as we write this to you] non-Jewish believers [who live] in Antioch and [other places in] Syria and Cilicia [provinces]. **24** People have told us that some men from among us went [to you], although we had not told [them to do that]. They troubled/distressed you [SYN] [by telling you things] that confused your thinking. **25** So [while we(exc) met together here], we decided to choose some men and ask them to go to you, along with Barnabas and Paul, whom we [(exc)] love very much. **26** Those two have put their lives in danger because of their [serving] our Lord [MTY] Jesus Christ. **27** We [(exc) have also chosen] Judas and Silas to go to you. They will tell you the same things [that we are writing]. **28** The Holy Spirit and [also] we decided that you should not be required {that we should not require you} to obey a lot of burdensome [Jewish] laws. Instead, [we] only [require you to obey] the following instructions, **29** You should not eat food that people have sacrificed to idols. You should not eat blood from animals, and you should not eat meat from animals that people have killed by strangling them. Also, you should not have sex with someone to whom you are not married. Those things [especially offend Jewish believers. So if] you avoid doing them, you will be doing what is right. That is all." **30** The [four] men whom [they] had chosen went [from Jerusalem] to Antioch [city. When] all the believers [there] had assembled together, [Judas and Silas] gave the letter to them. **31** When the believers there read the letter, they rejoiced, [because its message] encouraged them. **32** [Just like Paul and Barnabas were] ([prophets/men who spoke messages from God]), Judas and Silas were also prophets. They spoke for a long time and encouraged the believers [there], and helped them to trust more strongly [in the Lord Jesus]. **33** After [Judas and Silas] had stayed in Antioch for some time [and were ready to return to Jerusalem], the believers [there] wished them well, and the believers [prayed that God] would protect [them as they traveled. So the two men] started to go back to the leaders [in Jerusalem] who had asked them to go [to Antioch]. **35** However, Paul and Barnabas continued to stay in Antioch. [While they were there], they, along with many others, were teaching [people] and preaching to them the message about the Lord [Jesus]. **36** After some time Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's go back and visit the fellow believers in every city where we [previously] proclaimed the message about the Lord [Jesus. In that way, we will know] how [well] they are continuing [to believe in the Lord Jesus]." **37** Barnabas [agreed with Paul, and said that he] wanted to take John, whose other name was Mark, along with them [again]. **38** However, Paul [told Barnabas that he] thought that it would not be good to take Mark [with them, because] Mark had deserted them when they were previously in Pamphylia [region], and had not continued to work with them. **39** Paul and Barnabas strongly disagreed [with each other about that], so they separated. Barnabas took Mark [along with him and they got] on a ship and went to Cyprus. **40** Paul chose Silas, [who had returned to Antioch, to work with him]. The believers [there] asked the Lord [God] to graciously help [Paul and Silas. Then] the two of them departed [from Antioch]. **41** Paul continued traveling [with Silas] through Syria and Cilicia [provinces]. In those places he was helping the congregations to trust strongly [in the Lord Jesus].

16 Paul [and Silas] to Derbe [city and visited the believers there]. Next [they went to] Lystra [city]. A believer whose name was Timothy lived there. His mother was a Jewish believer, but his father was a Greek. **2** The believers in Lystra and Iconium said good things about Timothy, **3** and Paul wanted to take Timothy with him [when he went] to other places, so he circumcised Timothy. [He did that so that] the Jews who lived in those places [would accept Timothy], because they knew that his non-Jewish father [had not allowed him to be circumcised] {[anyone to circumcise his son]}. **4** [So Timothy went with Paul and Silas] and they traveled to many other towns. [In each town] they told [the] believers the rules that had been decided by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem {that the apostles and elders in Jerusalem had decided} that [non-Jewish] believers should obey. **5** [God was helping] the believers in those towns to trust more strongly [in the Lord Jesus], and every day

more people became believers. 6 Paul and his companions wanted/planned to enter Asia [province] preach the message [about Jesus] there, but they were prevented by the Holy Spirit {the Holy Spirit prevented them} [from going there. So] they traveled through Phrygia and Galatia [provinces]. 7 They arrived at the border of Mysia [province] and they wanted to go [north] Bithynia [province]. But [again] the Spirit of Jesus showed them that they should not [go there]. 8 So they went through Mysia [province] and arrived at Troas, a [port city. I, Luke, joined them there]. 9 That night [God gave] Paul a vision in which he saw a man [who was a native] of Macedonia [province]. He was standing [some distance away], and he was earnestly calling to Paul, "[Please] come over [here] to Macedonia and help us!" 10 [The next morning] we [(exc)] immediately got ready to go to Macedonia, because we believed that God had called us to [go and] preach the good message to the people there. 11 So we [(exc)] got on a ship in Troas and sailed across [the sea] Samothrace [Island. We spent the night there], and the next day [we sailed again across the sea and arrived] at Neapolis [port/town]. 12 Then we [left Neapolis and] went [by land] to Philippi. It was a very important city in Macedonia [province, where many] Roman citizens lived. We stayed in Philippi several days. 13 On the first (Sabbath/Jewish day of rest) [after we(exc) arrived], we went outside the city gate [down] to the river. We had heard [someone say] that [Jewish] people gathered to pray there. [When we arrived there, we saw] some women who had gathered [to pray]. So we sat down and began to tell them [the message about Jesus]. 14 A woman whose name was Lydia was one of those who were listening [to Paul. She was a non-Jewish woman], from Thyatira [city, who bought and] sold [expensive] purple cloth. She had accepted what the Jews believe about God. The Lord [God] caused her to pay attention to the message that Paul preached, and she believed it. [The members of her household also heard the good message and believed in Jesus] [MTY]. 15 After [Paul and Silas] baptized Lydia and the others who lived in her house [MTY] {After Lydia and the others who lived in her house were baptized}, she invited us to [go and stay in] her home. She said, "You [(pl)] know that I [now] believe in the Lord [Jesus], so [please] come and stay in my house." She persuaded us [to do that, so we(exc) stayed there]. 16 Another day, while we [(exc)] were going to the place where people regularly gathered to pray, we met a young woman who was a slave. An evil spirit was enabling her to be a ventriloquist and to tell people what would happen [to them]. People paid a lot of money to [the men who were] her owners, in return for her telling them things that [she said] would happen [to them]. 17 This young woman followed Paul and the rest of us. She continually shouted, "These men serve the God who is the greatest [of all gods]! They are telling you how ([God] can save you [so that he will not punish you/to be] saved)" 18 She continued to do that for many days. Finally Paul became irritated. So he turned [toward the young woman] and rebuked the evil spirit [that was in her. He said], "By the authority [MTY] of Jesus Christ, I command you [(sg)] to come out of this young woman!" Right away the evil spirit left her. 19 And then her owners realized that she could no longer earn money for them [because she could no longer predict what would happen to people, so they were angry]. They grabbed Paul and Silas and forcefully took them to the public square, to [the place where] the government authorities and [a lot of other people were gathered]. 20 The owners [of the young woman] brought Paul and Silas to the city officials and told them, "These men are Jews, and they are greatly troubling [the people in] [MTY] our city. 21 They are teaching that we [(inc)] should follow customs that our laws do not allow us Romans to consider [to be correct] or to obey!" 22 Many of the crowd joined [those who were accusing] Paul and Silas, and started beating them. Then the [Roman] authorities commanded [soldiers] to tear the shirts off Paul and Silas and to beat them [with rods/sticks]. 23 [So the soldiers] beat Paul and Silas vigorously [with rods]. After that, they [took them and] shoved them into the prison. They told the jailer that he should lock them up securely. 24 [Because the officials] had [commanded] him [to do that], the jailer shoved Paul and Silas into the cell that was farthest inside. [There, he made them sit down on the floor/ground and stretch out their legs]. Then he fastened their ankles in [grooves] between two large wooden beams, [so that Paul and Silas could not move their legs]. 25 About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying [aloud] and praising God by singing hymns. The [other] prisoners were listening attentively to them. 26 Suddenly there was a very strong earthquake. It shook the entire jail [SYN] and its foundation [SYN]. [The earthquake caused] all the doors [of the jail] to open suddenly, and [caused] all the chains that fastened the prisoners to fall off. 27 The jailer woke up and saw that the doors of the jail were open. He thought that the prisoners had escaped. So he pulled out his sword in order to kill himself, [because he knew that the officials would kill him if the prisoners escaped]. 28 Paul [saw the jailer and] shouted to him, "Do not harm yourself! We [(exc) prisoners] are all here!" 29 The jailer shouted [to someone] to bring torches/lanterns, [and after they brought them], he rushed into the jail and knelt down in front of Paul and Silas. [He was very afraid, so] much so that he was trembling/shaking. 30 Then he brought

Paul and Silas out [of the jail] and asked: "Sirs, what do I need to do to be saved [from being punished for my sins]?" **31** [They answered], "Trust in [what] the Lord Jesus [has done for you], and you will be saved {[God] will save you}, and the others who live in [MTY] your house will [also] be saved [if they believe in Jesus]." **32** Then the jailer took Paul and Silas into his house, washed their wounds, and gave them a meal. [He woke up all the people in his house, and] Paul and Silas told all of them the message about the Lord [Jesus. They all believed in him]. Immediately [after that, the jailer and all his family were baptized] {[Paul and Silas] baptized the jailer and all his family}. They were very happy, because now they all believed in God. **35** The next morning, the [Roman] officials commanded [some] police officers [to go to the jail to say to the jailer], "[Our bosses] say, 'Let those [two] prisoners go [now]!'" **36** [After the officers went and told that to] the jailer, he [went and] told Paul, "The [Roman] authorities have sent a message [(sg)] saying that I should release you [(sg)] and Silas [from prison]. So you [two] can leave [the jail] now. Now you can go peacefully!" **37** But Paul said to the police officers, "The authorities [commanded men to] beat us in front of a crowd before [those authorities] had learned if we [(exc)] had done anything wrong! Then they [ordered men to] shove us into jail! [But that was not legal, because] we [(exc)] are Roman citizens! And now they want [RHQ] to send us away secretly! We will not accept that! Those [Roman] officials must come themselves and [tell us that they are sorry], and take us out [of jail]." **38** So the police officers [went and] told the city authorities [what Paul had said]. When those authorities heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were afraid [that someone would report to more important officials what they had done, and as a result they would be punished] {[those officials would punish them]}. **39** So the city authorities came to Paul and Silas and told them that they were sorry for what they had done to them. The authorities brought them out of the jail, and repeatedly asked them to leave the city [soon]. **40** After Paul and Silas left the jail, they went to Lydia's house. There they met with her and the [other] believers. They encouraged the believers [to continue trusting in the Lord Jesus], and then the two apostles left [Philippi].

17 Paul and Silas traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia [towns] and arrived at Thessalonica [city]. There was a Jewish meeting place there. **2** (On the Sabbath/On the Jewish rest day) Paul went into the meeting house, as he usually did. For three weeks [he went there] on each Jewish day of rest. Referring to the Scriptures [about the Messiah], he spoke to the people who were there. **3** He explained and showed that [the prophets wrote that] the Messiah needed to die and (to become alive again/to be raised from the dead [afterwards]). He told them: "This man Jesus, whom I am telling you about, is our Messiah. [He died and became alive again, just like the prophets predicted]." **4** Some of the Jews [there] were persuaded by {believed} [what Paul had said] and began to associate with Paul and Silas. There were also many non-Jewish people there who worshipped God and many important women [who also believed the message about Jesus], and they began to associate with Paul and Silas. **5** But [some leaders of] the Jews there in Thessalonica became jealous [because many people believed what Paul taught]. So they went to the public square and persuaded some lazy men [who were loitering there] to follow them. [In this way, the leaders of] the Jews gathered a crowd and incited them to become noisy and start a riot [against Paul and Silas]. Those [Jews and others] ran to the house of [a man named] Jason. [He was the man who had invited Paul and Silas to stay at his house]. They wanted to bring Paul and Silas outside to where the crowd [of people was waiting]. **6** They discovered that Paul and Silas were not there, but they found Jason [and grabbed him]. They dragged him and some of the [other] believers to where the city officials/authorities and [many other people were gathered]. The men [who had brought Jason] shouted, "Those [two] men have caused trouble [IDM] everywhere [HYP] [they have gone]. Now they have come to our city, **7** and [this fellow] Jason invited them to stay at his house. All the people [of this sect] oppose what our Emperor has decreed. They say that another person, whose name is Jesus, is [the real] king!" **8** When the crowd of people [that had gathered] and the city authorities heard that, they became very angry and excited. **9** [They wanted to put the believers in jail. But instead], the officials made Jason and the other [believers] pay a fine and told them that they [would give the money back to them if Paul and Silas did not cause any more trouble]. Then the authorities let Jason and those other believers go. **10** [So] that same night, the believers sent Paul and Silas [out of Thessalonica] to Berea [town]. When Paul and Silas arrived there, they went to the Jewish meeting place, [on a day when people had gathered there]. **11** The [Jews] in Thessalonica had not been very willing to listen to God's message, but the [Jews] who lived in Berea were very willing to listen, so they listened very eagerly to the message [about Jesus]. Every day they read the Scriptures [for themselves] to find out if what Paul said [about the Messiah] was true. **12** As a result, many of the Jewish people believed [in Jesus], and also some of the important non-Jewish women and many non-Jewish men [believed in him]. **13** But then the Jews in Thessalonica

heard [people tell them] that Paul [was] in Berea and that he was preaching the message from God [about Jesus]. So they went to Berea and [told people there that what Paul was teaching was not true. Thus], they caused many of those people to get angry [at Paul]. **14** So [several of] the believers [in Berea] took Paul to the coast [to go to another province]. But Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea. **15** When Paul and the other men from Berea [arrived at the coast, they got on a ship and] went to Athens [city]. Then Paul said [to the men who had come with him], "Tell Silas and Timothy to come to me [here in Athens] as soon as they can." Then those men left [Athens and returned to Berea]. **16** In Athens, Paul waited for Silas and Timothy [to arrive. In the meantime, he walked around in the city. He] became very distressed/disturbed because he saw that throughout [HYP] the city there were many idols. **17** So he went to the Jewish meeting place and talked [about Jesus] with the Jews, and also with the Greeks who had accepted what the Jews believe. He also went to the public square/center every day and talked to the people [whom he met] there. **18** Paul met some teachers who liked to talk about what people should believe. [People called] some of them Epicureans and [they called] others Stoics. They told Paul [what they believed], and they asked him [what he believed. Then] some of them said [to one another], "This ignorant person is just talking nonsense [RHQ]!" Others said, "[We(exc) think] that he is teaching people about (foreign gods/[new] gods that we [(exc)] have not heard about)." They said that because Paul was telling them that Jesus [had died and] had become alive again [afterwards. They had not heard that message before]. **19** So they took Paul to the place where the city council met. [When they arrived] there, they said to Paul, "[Please] tell us, what is this new message that you [(sg)] are teaching people? **20** You are teaching some things that startle us [(exc)], so we want to know what they mean." **21** [They said that, because] the people of Athens and also the people from other regions who lived there continually talked about what was new [to them], or they listened to [others tell] what was new. **22** Then Paul stood up before the men of the city council and said, "Citizens of Athens, I see that you (are very religious/think that it is very important to worship many gods). **23** I [say that] because, while I was walking along and observing the objects [that represent different gods that] you worship, I even saw an altar that had these words [that someone had] carved [on it: THIS HONORS] THE GOD [THAT WE(exc)] DO NOT KNOW. So now I will tell you about [that God] whom you worship but you do not know. **24** He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Because he rules over all [beings in] heaven and [on] earth, he does not dwell in shrines that people have made. **25** He does not need to have anything made for him by people [MTY] {to have people [MTY] make [MTY] anything for him}, because everything that exists belongs to him. He is the one who causes (us [(inc)]/all people) to live and breathe, and [he gives us] all the things [that we(inc) need]. **26** [In the beginning], God created one couple, and from them God produced all (the ethnic groups/the nations) that now live everywhere on the earth. He also decided where each ethnic group of people should live and how long they should live [there]. **27** He wanted people to realize that they need him. Then maybe they would seek him and find him. [God wants us to seek him], although he is [really] close [LIT] to each one of us. **28** As someone has said, '[It is only] because he enables us that we [(inc)] live and move and do [what we do].' And, as some of your own poets have said, 'We [(inc)] are God's children.' **29** Therefore, because we are God's children [and can communicate like God does], we [(inc)] should not think that he is anything like an image [that people have made] of gold or silver or stone [which cannot communicate]. Those images are designed and skillfully made {People design and make those images}, [but they are not alive]. **30** During the times when people did not know [what God wanted them to do], he did not [immediately] punish [them for what they did]. But now God commands all people everywhere to turn away from their evil behavior. **31** [He tells us] that on a certain day that he has chosen he is going to judge [all of us(inc) people in] [MTY] the world. He has appointed a [certain] man to judge [us, and that man will judge each of us] fairly/justly. God has shown to all [people that he has appointed that man to judge everyone], because God (caused him to become alive again after he had died/raised him from the dead)." **32** When the men of the council heard [Paul say] that ([a man] had become alive again after he had died/[someone] had been raised from the dead), some of them laughed scornfully. But others said, "We [(exc)] would like you [(sg)] to tell us more about this, some other time." **33** After they said that, Paul left the council [meeting]. **34** However, some of the people there went along with Paul and became believers. Among those [who believed in Jesus] was a member of the council whose [name was] Dionysius. Also, an [important] woman whose name was Damaris and some other people [who had heard Paul's message also believed in Jesus].

18 After that, Paul left Athens [city] and went to Corinth [city]. **2** There he met a Jew whose name was Aquila, who grew up in Pontus [province]. Aquila and his wife Priscilla had recently come from [Rome, in] Italy. [They had previously left Rome] because Claudius, [the Roman

Emperor], had ordered that all the Jews must leave Rome. Paul later went to see Aquila and Priscilla. **3** Those two made tents [to earn] ([money/a living]). Paul also made tents, so he stayed with them, and they all worked together. **4** Every Sabbath, Paul [went] to the Jewish meeting place, where he spoke forcefully to both Jews and non-Jews. He repeatedly tried to persuade them [that Jesus is the Messiah]. **5** Then Silas and Timothy arrived there from Macedonia province. After they arrived, Paul [did not make tents any more. He] used all his time preaching [the message about Jesus in the Jewish meeting place]. He continued to tell the Jews [that] the Messiah they had been waiting for was Jesus. **6** But the Jews began to oppose Paul and to say evil things about him. So he shook [the dust from] his clothes [to show them that they were displeasing God. Then] he said to them, "If God punishes you, it will be your [SYN] own fault [MTY], not mine! From now on I will go [and preach] to non-Jewish people!" **7** So Paul left [the Jewish meeting place] and went into a house that was next to it, [and preached there]. Titius Justus, the owner of the house, was a non-Jewish man who had accepted what the Jews believe. **8** [After that], the ruler of the Jewish meeting place, [whose name was] Crispus, and all of his family [MTY] believed in the Lord [Jesus]. Many other people in Corinth who listened [to Paul] also believed [in Jesus]. Then they were baptized. [But there were people who still opposed Paul and his preaching]. **9** One night Paul had a vision in which the Lord [Jesus] said to him, "Do not be afraid [of those who oppose you]. Instead, you should continue speaking [to people about me]. Do not stop, **10** because I [will help] you, and no one will be able to harm you [(sg) here. Keep telling people about me], because there are many in this city who will [believe in] me." **11** So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching people the message from God [about Jesus]. **12** When Gallio was the [Roman] governor of Achaia [province], the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] there got together and seized Paul. They took him before Gallio [and accused him], **13** saying, "This man is teaching people [a false religion, leading them] to worship God in ways that are contrary to our [Jewish] laws." **14** When Paul was about to speak [MTY] [to defend himself], Gallio said to the Jews, "If this man had acted deceitfully or disobeyed [any of our Roman] laws, I would listen [patiently] to what you Jews [want to tell me]. **15** However, you are merely arguing about words and names and your own [Jewish] laws, so you yourselves need to resolve this. I refuse to judge these things!" **16** After Gallio [had said that], he [commanded some soldiers/guards] that [they] expel those [Jewish leaders] from the courtroom. **17** Then [the mob outside] grabbed the leader of the Jewish meeting place, Sosthenes [because they considered that he was responsible for those accusations against Paul]. They beat him, right there in front of the courthouse. But Gallio did nothing about it. **18** Paul stayed on with the believers in Corinth for (many days/some time). Then he left the believers there, and went with Priscilla and [her husband] Aquila. They went down to Cenchrea, [a port city]. There Paul had his head shaved {[someone] shave his head} in order to partially complete a vow that he had taken. Then they got on a ship and sailed for Syria [province]. **19** They arrived at Ephesus [city], and Priscilla and Aquila stayed there. [Before Paul left Ephesus], he entered the Jewish meeting place and lectured to the Jews. **20** They asked him to stay longer, but he refused. **21** But, as he left, he told them, "I will come back, if God wills/desires [me to do that]." Then, [because he wanted to be in Jerusalem to finish completing his vow], he got on [a ship that] sailed from Ephesus. **22** When the ship arrived at Caesarea, Paul [got off. He] went up [to Jerusalem] and greeted the believers there. Then he went back down to Antioch [city in Syria province]. **23** Paul spent some time [with the believers] there. Then he left Antioch and traveled to several towns [that he had visited previously] in Galatia and Phrygia [provinces]. He taught all of the believers more [of the message from God about Jesus]. **24** [While Paul was traveling in Galatia and Phrygia], a Jewish man whose name was Apollos came to Ephesus. He was a native of Alexandria [city]. He [spoke eloquently] and he knew the Scriptures thoroughly. **25** [Other believers] had taught him [some things] about how the Lord [Jesus desires that people] should conduct themselves, and he taught those things very enthusiastically [to people. He had heard about] some of the things that Jesus did and said, and he taught those facts accurately [to people. However, he was teaching incompletely about Jesus, because] he knew only what John [the Baptizer had taught people whom he] baptized. **26** Apollos went to the Jewish meeting place, and he told the people there very confidently the things that he had learned. When Priscilla and Aquila heard what Apollos taught, they invited him [to their home]. There they explained more accurately to him the way [that] God [gives people eternal life]. **27** When Apollos decided that he would like to go to Achaia [province], the believers in Ephesus told him that it would be good for him to do that. So they wrote a letter to the believers [in Achaia saying that they] should welcome Apollos. [So Apollos got on a ship to go to Corinth]. After he arrived, he greatly helped those whom [God] had kindly enabled to believe [in Jesus]. **28** Apollos was vigorously arguing publicly with [the leaders of] the Jews while many other people listened. [By quoting] from the Scriptures, he proved to people that Jesus was the Messiah.

19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul [left the places in Phrygia and Galatia] provinces where he had been visiting, and traveled through [Asia province] back to Ephesus. He met some people [who said that they] were believers. **2** He asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed [God's message]?" They answered, "No, we [(exc) did not]. We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." **3** So Paul asked, "So when you were baptized, what [were you showing]?" They replied, "[We were showing] that we [(exc)] believed what John [the Baptizer] taught." **4** Paul said, "John baptized people who turned away from their sinful behavior. He [also] told the people to believe in the one who would come after he [had come], and that was Jesus." **5** So, when those men heard that, they were baptized [to affirm that they believed] [MTY] in the Lord Jesus. **6** After that, Paul placed his hands on their heads [one by one], and the [power of the] Holy Spirit came upon [each of] them. The [Holy Spirit] enabled them to speak in various languages [MTY] [that they had not learned], and they also spoke messages [that the Holy Spirit] revealed to them. **7** There were about twelve men [whom Paul baptized and who received the power of the Holy Spirit]. **8** For three months after that, Paul entered the Jewish meeting place [in Ephesus on each] Sabbath/Jewish day of rest, and he spoke boldly. He convincingly taught [the people] about how God wanted to rule [MET] [their lives]. **9** [A few of the people in the meeting house believed the message about Jesus]. But some of the people would not believe that message and did not want to [continue to] hear it. While many people were listening, they said many bad things about the way [for people to receive eternal life about which Paul was preaching]. So Paul left them and took the believers with him [to meet in another place]. He taught every day in a lecture hall [that a man whose name was] Tyrannus [lectured in/owned]. **10** For two years Paul continued to teach people in that building. In this way, most of [HYP] the Jews and non-Jews who lived in Asia [province] heard the message about the Lord [Jesus]. **11** Also, God gave Paul the power [MTY] to do amazing miracles. **12** [If those who were sick could not come to Paul, handkerchiefs or aprons that Paul had touched would be taken and] placed on the sick people {[others] would take [and place on] the sick people handkerchiefs or aprons that Paul had touched}. As a result, those sick people would become well, and evil spirits that troubled people would leave. **13** There were also some Jews who traveled around [to] various places, [and] they commanded the evil spirits in those places to depart [from people. Certain ones of those Jews once] tried to command the evil spirits to come out of people by saying "I command you by the authority [MTY] of the Lord Jesus, the man about whom Paul preaches, to come out!" **14** There were seven men who were doing that. They were sons of a man named Sceva, a Jew, [who called himself] a chief priest. **15** But [one day as they were doing that], the evil spirit [refused to come out of that person. Instead, he] said to them, "I know Jesus, and I know [that he has authorized] Paul [to expel demons]. (But no one has authorized you [to do anything to me!]/who authorized you [to do anything to me]?) [RHQ]" **16** [After saying that, suddenly] the man who was controlled by the evil spirit jumped on the seven Jewish men, [one after another], knocked all of them down, and beat each of them severely. He tore off their clothes and wounded them, causing them to bleed. So, [greatly frightened, they all] ran out of the house. **17** All the people who lived in Ephesus, both Jews and non-Jews, heard what had happened. So they were afraid [MTY]. They honored the Lord Jesus [MTY] [because they realized that he was very powerful]. **18** [At that time], while other believers were listening, many believers confessed the evil things that they had been doing. **19** Several of those who had [previously] practiced sorcery gathered up their scrolls [that told how to work] magic and burned them in a public place. When people added up how much those scrolls had cost, they realized that altogether the amount was 50,000 valuable silver coins. **20** As a result, many more people heard [MTY] the message about the Lord [Jesus], and the message powerfully [changed their lives]. **21** After those things had happened, Paul decided that he wanted to go to Jerusalem, but he decided that [first] he would visit [the believers in] Macedonia and Achaia [provinces again]. Paul said, "After I have been to Jerusalem, I must also go to Rome." **22** He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, ahead to Macedonia. But Paul stayed a little longer [in Ephesus city], in Asia [province]. **23** [Soon after that], some of the people there tried to make a lot of [LIT] trouble for the people who believed the way [God revealed for us(inc) to receive eternal life]. **24** There was a man there whose name was Demetrius who made little images out of silver. [They were models] of the temple of [a goddess whose name was] Artemis. Demetrius and the other men [who made those little images] earned a lot of [LIT] money [from selling those images]. **25** Demetrius called a meeting of his workmen and also of others who made the little silver images. He said to them, "Men, you know that we [(inc)] earn a lot of money doing our kind of work. **26** Also, you know that [this fellow] Paul has persuaded many people who live in Ephesus [to no longer buy the images that we make. Now even the people from] many other towns in our province [no longer want to buy what we make]. This fellow tells people that the gods

that we have made [and worship] are not gods [and that we should not worship them]. **27** [If people continue to listen to him], soon they will ruin our business. Besides, they will no longer think that they should [come to] the temple of Artemis [to worship her. People] all over our Asia [province] and everywhere [HYP] else worship [our great] goddess [Artemis. Soon people] may no longer consider that Artemis is great!" **28** All the men there were very angry [at Paul] when they heard what Demetrius said. They began to shout, "The goddess Artemis of us Ephesians is very great!" **29** Many of the other people in the city heard the shouting and went [and joined the crowd. They also became angry at Paul] and began shouting. [Several of] the people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, two men [from Macedonia] who had been traveling with Paul. [Then the whole crowd of people ran, dragging those men along with them], to the city stadium. **30** Paul also wanted to go [to the stadium and speak to] the people, but the other believers would not let him go there. **31** Also, some government officials of that province who were friends of Paul [heard what was happening]. So they sent someone to tell him [urgently] not to go into the stadium. **32** The crowd of people [in the stadium] continued shouting. Some shouted one thing, and some shouted something else. But most of them did not even know what the meeting was about! **33** One of the [Jews there was named Alexander. Some of] the Jews pushed him to the front of the stadium, [so that he could speak to the crowd of people]. So Alexander motioned with his hands to the crowd, [wanting them to be quiet]. He wanted to tell them that [the Jews] were not responsible [for the riot]. **34** But [many of the non-Jewish people] knew that Alexander was a Jew. [They also knew that the Jews did not worship the goddess Artemis. So the non-Jews there] unitedly [and] repeatedly shouted for about two hours, "Great is [the goddess] Artemis [whom we(inc)] Ephesians [worship]!" **35** Then the city secretary made the crowd stop shouting, and he said to them, "My fellow-citizens, everyone in the world knows [RHQ] that [we(inc) people who live in] Ephesus [city] guard the temple [where we worship] the great [goddess] Artemis. Also, [everyone knows that we(inc) watch over] the [sacred] image [of our goddess] that fell down from heaven! **36** Of course everyone knows that, and no one can say that these things are not true. So you should be quiet now. Do not suddenly do anything (foolish/that will cause us trouble). **37** You [should not] have brought these [two] men [here, because they have not done anything evil]. They have not gone into our temples and taken things [from there]. And they have not spoken evil of our goddess. **38** Therefore, if Demetrius and his fellow-workmen want to accuse anyone [about anything bad, they should do it in the right way]. There are courts [that you can go to when you want to accuse someone], and there are judges [there who have been appointed by the government] {[whom the government has appointed]}. You can accuse [anyone there]. **39** But if you want to ask about something else, [you should ask] for [other officials to] resolve it when [those] officials legally assemble. **40** [And this is certainly not a legal meeting! Resolve this legally] because, if [we(inc) do] not, I am afraid [that the governor] will hear about all this noise [that you have made] and will say that we [(inc)] were trying to rebel [against the government]. If he would ask me what you were all shouting about, I would not be able to give him an answer." **41** That is what the city secretary said [to the crowd]. Then he told them all to go [home. So they left].

20 After the people at Ephesus had stopped rioting, Paul summoned the believers. He encouraged them [to continue to trust in the Lord Jesus. Soon] after that, he told them goodbye and left to go to Macedonia [province]. **2** [After he arrived] there, he visited [each town where there were believers], and encouraged them. Then he arrived in Greece [province], [which is also called Achaia]. **3** He stayed there for three months. Then he planned to return to Syria by ship, but [he heard that] some of the Jews [SYN] [in that area] were planning to kill him [as he traveled. So] he decided instead to go [by land, and he traveled] again through Macedonia. **4** The men who were going to travel with him [to Jerusalem were] Sopater, [who was] a son of Pyrrhus, who grew up in Berea [town]; Aristarchus and Secundus, who were from Thessalonica [city;] Gaius, [who was] from Derbe [town;] Timothy, [who was from Galatia province;] and Tychicus and Trophimus who were from Asia [province]. **5** Those [seven] men went ahead of [Paul and me, Luke, by ship from Macedonia, so] they got to Troas [before we did and] waited for [the two of] us there. **6** [But we two(exc) traveled by land as far as] Philippi [city]. After the Jewish festival [when they eat] unleavened bread, we got on a ship [that was going from] the port near [Philippi to Troas city]. After five days we [(exc)] arrived at Troas and we met the other men who had traveled there [ahead of us]. Then we [all] stayed in Troas for seven days. **7** (On Sunday evening/On the evening of the first day of the week), we [(exc) and the other believers there] gathered together to celebrate the Lord's Supper [and to eat other food] [SYN]. Paul spoke to the believers. He continued teaching them until midnight, because he was planning to leave [Troas] the next day. **8** Many [oil] lamps were burning in the upstairs room in which we [(exc)] had gathered, [so the fumes caused some people to become sleepy]. **9** A young man whose name was Eutychus was there. He was seated on [the sill

of] an [open] window [on the third story of the house]. As Paul continued talking for a long time, Eutychus became sleepier and sleepier. Finally, he was sound/really asleep. He fell [out of the window] from the third story down [to the ground. Some of the believers went down] immediately and picked him up. [But he was] dead. **10** Paul [also] went down. He lay down and stretched out on top of the young man and put his arms around him. Then he said [to the people who were standing around], "Do not worry, he is alive [again now]!" **11** Then Paul, [along with the others], went upstairs again and they ate the Lord's Supper and other food [SYN]. Afterwards, Paul conversed with the believers until dawn. Then he left. **12** The [other] people took the young man [home], and were greatly encouraged because he was alive [again]. **13** We then went to the ship. Paul did not get on the ship [with us in Troas], because he preferred to go [more quickly] overland to Assos [town]. The rest of us got on the ship and sailed for Assos. **14** We [(exc)] met Paul in Assos. He got on [the ship] with us, and we sailed to Mitylene [town]. **15** The day after [we reached Mitylene], we [sailed from there and] arrived [at a place] near Kios [Island]. The day after that, we sailed to Samos [Island]. The next day we [left Samos and] sailed to Miletus [town]. **16** [Miletus was just south of Ephesus city]. Paul had [earlier] decided that he would not get on a ship that would stop at Ephesus, because he did not want to spend [several] days in Asia [province]. If possible, he wanted to arrive in Jerusalem by the [time of the] Pentecost festival, [and the time of that festival was near]. **17** [When the ship arrived at] Miletus, Paul sent [a messenger] to Ephesus to ask the elders of the congregation to come to talk with him. **18** When the elders arrived, Paul said to them, "You personally know how I [conducted myself among you the entire time] that I was with you, from the first day when I arrived [here] in Asia [province until the day I left]. **19** [You know how] I was serving the Lord [Jesus] very humbly and how I sometimes wept [about people. You also know how] I suffered because the Jews [SYN] [who were not believers often] tried [to harm me]. **20** You also know that, as I preached [God's message] to you, I never left out anything that would help you. You know that I taught you [God's message] when many people were present, and I [also went to your] homes and taught it there. **21** I preached both to Jews and to non-Jews, telling them [all] that they must turn away from their sinful behavior. [I also told them they should] believe in our Lord Jesus." **22** "And now note this: I am going to Jerusalem, because [God's] Spirit has clearly shown me that I must go there. I do not know what will happen to me [while I am there]. **23** But I do know that in each city [where I have stopped], the Holy Spirit has (told me/[caused the believers to] tell me) that [in Jerusalem] people will put me in prison [PRS] and will cause me to suffer [PRS]. **24** But I do not care even if people kill me, if first I am able to finish the work [MET] that the Lord Jesus has told me [to do. He appointed me] to tell people the good message that God [saves us] by doing for us what we do not deserve. **25** I have preached to you the message about how God desires to rule [people's lives]. But now I know that today is the last time that you fellow believers will see me [SYN]. **26** So I want you all to understand that if anyone [who has heard me preach] dies [without trusting in Jesus], it is not my fault [MTY], **27** because I told you [LIT] everything [HYP] that God has planned for us [(inc)]. **28** [You leaders] must continue to believe and obey [God's message. You must also help] all the other believers [MET] for whom the Holy Spirit has caused you to be responsible [MTY]. Watch over [MET] yourselves and the other believers [as] a shepherd [watches over his sheep]. God bought them with the blood [that flowed from] his [Son's body on the cross]. **29** I know [very well] that after I leave, [people who teach] [MET] [false doctrines] will come among you and will do great harm to the believers. [They will be like] fierce wolves [that kill sheep]. **30** Even in your own group of believers there will be some who will deceive [other] believers by teaching them messages that are false. They will teach those messages so that some people [will believe them and] will become their followers. **31** So watch out [that none of you stops believing the true message about our Lord Jesus]. Remember that day and night for [about] three years I repeatedly taught you that message, and warned you with tears [in my eyes not to believe any other message]." **32** "[Now as I leave you], I ask God to protect you and to keep you believing the message [that he saves us(inc)] by doing for us what we do not deserve. [If you continue believing] the message [that I told you], you will become [spiritually mature], and God will give you the blessings that he has promised to give to all of those who belong to him. **33** [As for myself], I have not desired anyone's money [MTY] or [fine] clothing. **34** You yourselves know that I have worked [with my hands] [MTY] to earn the money that my companions and I needed. **35** In everything that I did, I showed you that we [(inc)] should work hard in order [to have enough money] to give some to those who are needy. We [(inc)] should remember that our Lord Jesus himself said, 'You are happy when people give you what you need, but God will be happy with you when you give other people what they need.'" **36** When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of the elders and prayed. **37** They all cried a lot, and they hugged Paul and kissed him. **38** They were especially sad because he had

said that they would never see him [SYN] again. Then they [all] went with him to the ship.

21 [After] we said goodbye to the elders [from Ephesus], we [got on the ship and] sailed to Cos [Island, where the ship stopped for the night]. The next day we sailed from Cos to Rhodes [Island, where the ship stopped again. The day after] that we sailed to Patara [town, where the ship stopped. This was on Patara Island]. **2** [At Patara we left that ship, and someone told us that] there was a ship that would be going to Phoenicia [region. So] we got on that ship, and it left. **3** [We sailed until] we could see Cyprus [Island]. We passed to the south of the island and continued sailing until we arrived at [Phoenicia region, in] Syria [province]. We arrived at Tyre [city. The ship was going to stay there several days, because its workers] had to unload the cargo. **4** [Someone told us] where the believers in Tyre lived, so we [(exc) went and] stayed with them for seven days. Because [God's] Spirit revealed to them ([that people would cause Paul to suffer/Paul would suffer]) [in Jerusalem], they told Paul that he should not go there. **5** But when it was time [for the ship to leave again], we [prepared to] continue going [to Jerusalem]. When we left [Tyre], all the believers, including their wives and children, went with us [to the edge of the sea]. We all knelt down there on the sand/shore and prayed. **6** After we all said goodbye, Paul and we [his companions] got on the ship, and the [other] believers returned to their own homes. **7** After we [(exc)] left Tyre, we continued on [that ship] to Ptolemais [city]. There were believers there, and we greeted them and stayed with them that night. **8** The next day we left [Ptolemais] and sailed to Caesarea [city], where we stayed in the home of Philip, who [spent his days] telling others how to become disciples of Jesus. He was one of the seven [men whom the believers in Jerusalem had chosen to care for the widows]. **9** He had four daughters who were not married. Each of them [frequently] spoke messages that the Holy Spirit had revealed to them. **10** After [we(exc) had been in Philip's house for] several days, a believer whose name was Agabus came down from Judea [district] and arrived [in Caesarea]. He [frequently] spoke messages that the Holy Spirit had told him. **11** Coming over to where we were, he took off Paul's belt. Then he tied his own feet and hands with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'The Jewish [leaders] [SYN] in Jerusalem will tie up [the hands and feet of] the owner of this belt, like this, and they will hand him over to non-Jewish people [as a prisoner].'" **12** When [the rest of] us heard that, we and [other] believers there repeatedly pled with Paul, "Please do not go up to Jerusalem!" **13** But Paul replied, "(Please stop crying and trying to discourage me [IDM] [from going!]/Why are you crying and trying to discourage me [IDM] [from going]?) [RHQ] I am willing to be put {[for people] to put me} in prison and also to be killed {[for them] to kill me} in Jerusalem because I [serve] [MTY] the Lord Jesus." **14** When [we(exc) realized that] he was determined [to go to Jerusalem], we did not try [any longer] to persuade him [not to go]. We said, "May (the Lord [God] do what he wants/the Lord's will be done)!" **15** After those days [in Caesarea], we [(exc)] prepared [our things] and [left to] go [by land] up to Jerusalem. **16** Some of the believers from Caesarea also went with us. [On the way to Jerusalem], we stayed [one night] in the house of [a man whose name was] Mnason. He was from Cyprus [Island], and he had believed [in Jesus] when people were first beginning to hear the message [about him]. **17** When we arrived in Jerusalem, [a group of] the believers greeted us happily. **18** The next day Paul and the rest of us went to speak with James, [who was the leader of the congregation there]. All of the [other] leaders/elders [of the congregation in Jerusalem] were also there. **19** Paul greeted them, and then he reported all of the things that God had enabled him to do among the non-Jewish people. **20** When they heard that, James and the other elders said, "Praise the Lord!" Then [one of] them said to Paul, "Brother/Friend, you [(sg)] know that there are very many thousands of us [(inc)] Jewish people [here] who have believed [in the Lord Jesus]. Also, you know that we [(inc)] all continue very carefully to obey the laws [that Moses gave us]. **21** [But our fellow Jewish believers] have been told {have heard [people say]} that when you are among non-Jews, you tell the Jewish believers who live there that they should stop obeying [the laws] [MTY] ([of] Moses/[that] Moses [received from God]). [People say that] you tell [those Jewish believers] not to circumcise their sons and not to practice our [other] customs. [We(exc) do not believe that this is true]. **22** But our fellow [Jewish] believers will certainly hear that you have arrived, [and they will be angry with you]. So [you] need to do something [RHQ] [to show them that what they heard about you is not true]. **23** So you should do what we suggest to you. There are four men among us who have strongly promised [to God] about [something]. **24** Go with these men [to the Temple] and [ritually] purify yourself along with them. Then, [when it is time for them to offer the sacrifices for that ritual], pay for what they offer [as sacrifices]. After that, they can shave their heads [to show that they have done what they promised to do. And when people see you in the courts of the Temple with those men], they will know that what they have been told {what people have told them} about you is not true. Instead, all of them will know that you obey all our Jewish laws [and rituals]. **25** As for the non-Jewish believers, [we elders here

in Jerusalem have talked] about [which of our laws] they [should obey, and] we [(exc)] wrote them [a letter, telling them] what we decided. [We wrote] that they should not eat meat that people have offered as a sacrifice to any idol, [that they should not eat] blood [from animals], and that [they should not eat] meat from animals [that people have killed by] strangling [them. We also told them that] they should not have sex with someone to whom they are not married." **26** So Paul [agreed to do what they asked], and the next day he took the [four] men, and together they ritually purified themselves. After that, Paul went to the Temple [courts and] told [the priest] what day they would [finish] purifying themselves [ritually] and when [they] would offer [the animals as sacrifices] for each of them. **27** When the seven days [for purifying themselves] were nearly finished, Paul [returned] to the Temple [courtyard]. Some Jews from Asia [province] saw him there, [and they were very angry at him]. On another day they had seen Paul [walking around] in Jerusalem with Trophimus, who was a non-Jew. Their laws did not permit non-Jews to be in the Temple, and they thought that Paul had brought Trophimus into the Temple [courtyard that day. So] they called out to many other Jews [who were in the Temple courtyard] to [help them] seize [MTY] Paul. They shouted, "Fellow Israelites, come and help [us punish this] man! This is the one who is [constantly] teaching people wherever [he goes that they] should despise the [Jewish] people. [He teaches people that they should no longer obey] the laws [of Moses] nor respect this holy [Temple]. He has even brought non-Jews here into [the court of] our Temple, causing God to consider it no longer holy!" **30** [People] throughout [MTY] the city heard that there was trouble [at the Temple courtyard], and they came running there. They grabbed Paul and dragged him outside of the Temple [area]. The gates [to the Temple courtyard were shut] {[The Temple guards] shut the doors [to the Temple courts]} immediately, [so that the people would not riot inside the Temple area]. **31** While they were trying to kill Paul, someone [ran to the fort near the Temple] and told the Roman commander that many [HYP] people [MTY] in Jerusalem were rioting [at the Temple]. **32** The commander quickly took some officers and [a large group of] soldiers and ran to [the Temple area where] the crowd was. When the crowd of people [who were yelling and beating Paul] saw the commander and the soldiers [coming], they stopped beating him. **33** The commander came to [where Paul was and] seized him. He [commanded soldiers] to fasten a chain to [each of] Paul's [arms]. Then he asked [the people in the crowd], "Who is this man, and what has he done?" **34** Some of the many people there were shouting one thing, [and] some were shouting something else. Because they continued shouting so loudly, the commander could not understand [what they were shouting. So] he [commanded] that Paul be taken {[the soldiers] to take Paul} into the barracks [so that he could question him there]. **35** [The soldiers] led Paul to the steps [of the barracks], but many people continued to follow them, trying to kill [Paul. So the commander told] the soldiers to carry Paul [up the steps into the barracks]. **36** The crowd that followed kept shouting, "Kill him! Kill him!" **37** As Paul was about to be taken {[the soldiers] were about to take Paul} into the barracks, he said [in Greek] to the commander, "May I speak to you?" The commander said, "(I am surprised that you can speak the Greek [language]!/Can you [(sg)] speak the Greek [language]?)" [RHQ] **38** "(I [thought] that you [(sg)] were that fellow/Are you not that fellow) from Egypt [RHQ] who wanted to rebel [against the government not long ago], and who took 4,000 violent terrorists [with him] out into the desert, [so that we could not catch him]?" **39** Paul answered, "[No, I am not!] I am a Jew. I [was born] in Tarsus, which is an important [LIT] city in Cilicia [province]. I ask that you [(sg)] let me speak to the people." **40** Then the commander permitted Paul [to speak. So] Paul stood on the steps and motioned with his hand [for the crowd to be quiet. And after] the people in the crowd became quiet, Paul spoke to them in [their own] Hebrew language [MTY].

22 Paul said, "[Jewish] elders and my other fellow Jews, listen to me now while I reply to [those who are accusing me]!" **2** When the crowd of people heard Paul speaking to them in [their own] Hebrew language, they became even more quiet and really listened. Then Paul said to them, **3** "I am a Jew, [as are all of you]. I was born in Tarsus [city], in Cilicia [province], but I grew up here in Jerusalem. [When I was young, for many years] I studied the laws [that Moses gave to our ancestors]. I was taught by [the famous teacher] Gamaliel [MTY] {[The famous teacher] Gamaliel taught [MTY] me}. [I have] carefully [obeyed those laws, because] I have wanted to obey God. I [am sure that] many of you also carefully obey [those laws]. **4** [That is why] I previously persecuted those who believe the message [that people call] the Way [that Jesus taught. I continually looked for ways] to kill [them. Whenever I found] men or women [who believed that message], I [commanded that] they should be seized and thrown {[people to] seize them and throw them} into jail. **5** The supreme priest knows this, and so do the [other respected men who belong to our Jewish] Council. They gave me letters to [take to] their fellow Jews in Damascus [city. By means of those letters, they authorized me to] go to there and find people who believed in [Jesus. They had written in the letters that I was to bring

those people] as prisoners to Jerusalem, so that they would be punished here {[the leaders here] could punish them}. [So I went on my way to Damascus]. **6** About noon, my companions and I were getting near Damascus. Suddenly a bright light from the sky flashed all around me. **7** [The light was so bright that] I fell to the ground. Then I heard the voice [of someone] speaking to me [from up in the sky. The one who was speaking to me said], 'Saul! Saul! Why do you [(sg)] do things to harm me?' **8** I answered, 'Who are you?' He replied, 'I am Jesus from Nazareth. I [am the one] whom you [(sg)] are harming [by doing things to harm my followers].' **9** The men who were [traveling] with me saw the [very bright] light, [and they heard a voice], but they did not understand what the voice said to me. **10** Then I asked, 'Lord, what [do you want] me to do?' The Lord told me, 'Get up and go into Damascus! [A man] there will tell you [(sg)] all that I have planned for you to do.' **11** [After that, I could not see], because the [very bright] light had caused me to become blind. So my companions took me by the hand and led me until [we(exc) arrived] in Damascus. **12** [A couple of days] later, a man whose name was Ananias came to [see] me. He was a man who [greatly respected God and] carefully obeyed [our Jewish] laws. All the Jews living in Damascus said good things about him. **13** He came and stood beside me and said to me, 'Brother Saul, see [again]!' Instantly I could see! I saw Ananias [standing there beside me]. **14** Then he said: 'The God whom [we(inc) worship and] whom our ancestors [worshipped] has chosen you and will show you what he wants [you to do. He has allowed you] to see the righteous one, [the Messiah], and you have heard him speaking [to you]. **15** He wants you to tell people everywhere what you have seen and heard [from him]. **16** So now (do not delay!/why delay?) [RHQ] Stand up, let [me] baptize you, and by praying to the Lord [Jesus ask God] to forgive you [(sg)] for your sins!'" **17** "Later, I returned to Jerusalem. [One day] I went to the Temple courtyard. While I was praying there, I saw a vision [in which] **18** I saw the Lord speaking to me. He said to me, '[Do not stay here]! Leave Jerusalem immediately, because the people [here] will not (believe/listen to) what you [(sg)] tell [them] about me!' **19** But I [protested and] said to him, 'Lord, they know that I went to many of our meeting houses looking for people who believe in you. I was putting in jail those [whom I found] who believed in you, and I was even beating them. **20** [They remember that] when Stephen was killed [MTY] {when people killed [MTY] Stephen} because he told people about you, I stood there [watching it all] and approving [what they were doing]. I [even] guarded the outer garments that those who were murdering him [had thrown aside. So if I stay here, the fact that I have changed how I think about you will surely impress those leaders of our people].' **21** But the Lord said to me, 'No, [do not stay here]! Leave [Jerusalem, because] I am going to send you [(sg)] far away [from here] to non-Jewish people!'" **22** The people listened [quietly] to what Paul was saying until [he mentioned the Lord sending him to non-Jewish people]. Then they began shouting [angrily], "Kill him! [He does not deserve to live any longer]!" [They said that because they could not believe that God would save anyone except Jews]. **23** While they continued shouting, ["Kill him!"] they took off their cloaks and threw dust into the air, [which showed how angry they were]. **24** So the commander [commanded] that Paul be taken {[soldiers] to take Paul} into the barracks. He told [the soldiers] that they should strike Paul with a whip [that had pieces of bone/metal on the end of it], in order to make him tell what he had done that made the Jews shout so angrily. [So the soldiers took Paul into the barracks]. **25** Then they stretched his arms out [and tied them] so that they could whip him [on his back. But] Paul said to the officer who was standing nearby [watching], "[You(sg) should think carefully about this]! You will certainly be [RHQ] acting unlawfully if you whip me, a Roman [citizen whom] no [one has put on trial and] condemned!" **26** When the officer heard that, he went to the commander and reported it to him. He said [to the commander], "This man is a Roman [citizen] (Surely you would not [command us to whip him]!/Do you really want [us to whip him]?) [RHQ]" **27** The commander [was surprised when he heard that. He himself] went [into the barracks] and said to Paul, "Tell me, are you [(sg) really] a Roman [citizen]?" Paul answered, "Yes, I [am]." **28** Then the commander said, "[I am also a Roman citizen]. I paid a lot of money to become a [Roman] citizen." Paul said, "But I was born a [Roman] citizen, [so I did not need to pay anything]." **29** The soldiers [were about to whip Paul and to ask him questions about what he had done. But when they heard what Paul said, they] left him immediately. The commander also became afraid, because he realized that Paul was a Roman [citizen] and that he had [illegally commanded soldiers to] tie up Paul's [hands]. **30** [The commander still] wanted to know exactly why the Jews were accusing Paul. So the next day he [told the soldiers to] take the chains off Paul. He also summoned the chief priests and the [other Jewish] Council [members]. Then he took Paul [to where the Council was meeting] and [commanded] him to stand before them.

23 Paul looked straight at the Jewish council members and said: "My fellow Jews, all my life I have lived respecting our God, and I do not know of anything that I

have done that I knew was wrong/evil." 2 When Ananias the supreme priest [heard what Paul said], he commanded the men who were standing near Paul to hit him on the mouth. 3 Then Paul said to Ananias, "God will punish you [(sg) for that], you hypocrite [MET]! You sit there and judge me, using the laws that [God gave Moses]. But you [yourself] disobey those laws, because you commanded me to be struck {[these men] to strike me} [without having proved that I have done anything that is wrong!]" 4 The men who were standing near Paul [rebuked him. They] said, "Are not you [(sg)] afraid to insult God's [servant, our] supreme priest?" 5 Paul replied, "My fellow Jews, I [am sorry that I said that]. I did not know that the man [who told one of you to hit me] is the high priest. [If I had known that, I would not have insulted our supreme priest], because I [know that] it is written {[that Moses] wrote} [in our Jewish law], 'Do not speak evil of any of your rulers!'" 6 Paul realized that some of the [Council members] were Sadducees and others were Pharisees. So, [in order to cause the Pharisees and Sadducees to argue among themselves instead of accusing him], he called out loudly in the Council [hall], "My fellow Jews, I am a Pharisee, like my father was. I have been put {[You] have put me} on trial [here] because I confidently expect that [some day God] will (cause people who have died to become alive again/raise people from the dead)." 7 When he said that, the Pharisees and Sadducees started to argue with one another [about whether people who have died will become alive again or not]. 8 The Sadducees believe that after people die, they will not become alive again. They also believe that there are no angels and no [other kinds of] spirits. But the Pharisees believe [that all people who have died will one day become alive again. They also believe] that there are [angels and other kinds of spirits]. 9 So the Council members (were divided/did not agree with each other), and they began shouting at one another [as they argued]. Some of the teachers of the laws that [God gave Moses] who were Pharisees stood up. One of them said, "We [(exc)] think that this man has done nothing wrong." Another said, "Maybe an angel or some [other] spirit [really] spoke to him [and what he says is true]." 10 Then the [Pharisees and Sadducees] argued even more loudly [with one another]. As a result, the commander (was afraid/thought) that they would tear Paul to pieces. So he [commanded] soldiers to go down [from the barracks] and forcefully take Paul away from the Council members and bring him up into the barracks. [So the soldiers did that]. 11 That night, [in a vision Paul saw] the Lord [Jesus come and] stand near him. The Lord said [to him], "Be courageous! You [(sg)] have told people [here] in Jerusalem about me, and you must tell people in Rome [about me], too." 12 The next morning [some] of the Jews [MTY] [who hated Paul] met secretly and talked [about how they could kill him]. They promised [themselves] that they would not eat or drink anything until they had killed him. They asked God to curse them [if they did not do what they promised]. 13 There were more than 40 men who planned to do that. 14 They went to the chief priests and [Jewish] elders and told them, "God has heard us promise/vow that we [(exc)] will not eat [or drink] anything until we [(exc)] have killed Paul. 15 So [we request that] you go to the commander and ask him, on behalf of the whole Jewish Council, to bring Paul down to us [from the barracks]. Tell the commander that you want to question Paul some more. But we [(exc)] will be waiting to kill Paul while he is on the way here." 16 But the son of Paul's sister heard what they were planning to do, so he went into the barracks and told Paul. 17 [When Paul heard that], he called one of the officers and said to him, "[Please] take this young man to the commander, because he needs to tell him something [important]." 18 So the officer took Paul's nephew to the commander. The officer said to the commander, "That prisoner, Paul, called me and said, 'Please take this young man to the commander, because he needs to tell him something [important].'" 19 The commander took the young man by the hand, led him off by himself, and asked him, "What do you [(sg)] need to tell me?" 20 The young man said, "[There are some] [SYN] Jews who have planned to ask you [(sg)] to bring Paul before their Council tomorrow. They will say that they want to ask him some more questions. [But that is not true]. 21 Do not do what they ask you [(sg)] to do, because there are more than 40 [Jewish] men who will be hiding and waiting [to attack Paul when he passes by on the way to the Council]. They even promised/vowed to God that they will not eat or drink anything until they have killed Paul. They are ready [to do it], and right now they are waiting for you [(sg)] to agree [to do what they are asking you to do]." 22 The commander said to [Paul's] young nephew, "Do not tell anyone that you [(sg)] have told me [about their plan]." Then he sent the young man away. 23 Then the commander called two of his officers and told them, "Get a group of 200 soldiers ready [to travel]. Take along 70 soldiers riding horses, and 200 other soldiers carrying spears. [All of you must be ready] to leave at nine o'clock tonight, to go [down] to Caesarea. 24 And take along horses for Paul [and those accompanying him] to ride, and safely escort him to [the palace of] Governor Felix." 25 Then the commander wrote a letter [to send to the governor]. This is what he wrote: 26 "[I am] Claudius Lysias [writing to you]. You, Felix, are our governor whom we [(exc)] respect, [and I sincerely send you] my greetings. 27 I [have sent you(sg)]

this man, [Paul, because certain] Jews seized him and were about to kill him. But I heard [someone tell me] that he is a Roman citizen, so I and my soldiers went and rescued him. **28** I wanted to know what those Jews were saying that he had done wrong, so I took him to their Jewish Council. **29** I listened [while they asked this man questions and he answered them]. The things [they] accused him about were entirely concerned with their [Jewish] laws. But Paul has not disobeyed any of our [Roman] laws. [So our officials] should not execute him or [even] put him in prison [MTY]. **30** [Someone] told me that some [SYN] Jews were secretly planning to kill this man, so I immediately am sending him to you, [so that you(sg) may give him a fair trial there]. I have also [commanded] the Jews who have accused him to [go there to Caesarea and] tell you [(sg) what they are accusing him about]." **31** So the soldiers did what [the commander commanded] them, [taking this letter with them]. They [got Paul and] took him with them during the night [down] to Antipatris [city]. **32** The next day, the foot soldiers returned to the barracks [in Jerusalem], and the soldiers who rode horses went on with Paul. **33** When the men escorting Paul arrived in Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor, and they delivered Paul to the governor. [Then the horsemen returned to Jerusalem]. **34** The governor read the letter, and then he said to Paul, "What province are you [(sg)] from?" [Paul answered], "I am from Cilicia [province]." **35** Then the governor said, "When the people who have accused you [(sg)] arrive, I will listen [to what each of you says] and then I will judge your case." Then he [commanded] that Paul be guarded {[soldiers] to guard Paul} in the palace that King Herod [the Great had built].

24 Five days later Ananias the high priest, [having heard that Paul was now in Caesarea], went down [there from Jerusalem], along with some [other Jewish] elders and a lawyer [whose name was] Tertullus. There they formally told the governor what Paul had done [that they considered] wrong. **2** [The governor commanded] Paul to be brought {[a soldier] to bring Paul} in. [When Paul arrived], Tertullus began to accuse him. He said [to the governor], "Honorable Governor Felix, during the many years that you [(sg)] have ruled us, we [(exc)] have lived well/peacefully. By planning wisely, you have improved many things in this province. **3** [Therefore], sir, we [(exc)] always gratefully acknowledge everything that [you have done] for all [of us], wherever [you have done those things]. **4** But, so that I will not take up too much of your time, I earnestly request that you kindly listen to me very briefly. **5** We [(exc)] have observed that this man, [wherever he goes], causes trouble. [Specifically], he causes all the Jews everywhere [HYP] to riot. [Also], he leads the entire group [whom people call] 'the followers of the Nazarene', a [false] sect. **6** He even tried to do things in the Temple [in Jerusalem] that would (defile it/make it unholy). So we [(exc)] seized him. **7** But Lysias, the commander at the Roman fort, came with his soldiers and forcefully took him away from us [SYN]. **8** Lysias also commanded Paul's accusers to come here and accuse Paul before you. If you question him yourself, you will be able to learn that all these things about which we are accusing him are true." **9** When the Jewish [leaders who were listening heard that, they] told [the governor that] what Tertullus had said was true. **10** Then the governor motioned with [his hand to Paul that] he should speak. So Paul replied. He said, "[Governor Felix, I know that you(sg) have judged this Jewish] province for many years. Therefore I gladly defend myself, confident [that you will listen to me and will judge me fairly]. **11** You [(sg)] can [easily] ascertain that (it has not been more than twelve days since/only twelve days ago) I went up went up to Jerusalem to worship [God. That is not enough time to cause a lot of trouble]. **12** No one [can claim legitimately that they] saw me arguing with anyone at the Temple courts [because I did not do that. No one can claim legitimately that they saw me] causing people to riot in [any Jewish meeting place], or causing trouble anywhere [else] in [Jerusalem] city, [because I did not do that]. **13** So they cannot prove to you the things about which they are now accusing me. **14** But I admit to you [(sg) that this is true]: I do worship the God that our ancestors [worshipped. It is true that] I follow the way that [Jesus taught us]. The Jewish leaders call that a false religion/teaching. I also believe everything that was written [by Moses] {that [Moses wrote]} in the laws that [God gave him], and everything that was written by the [other] prophets {that the [other] prophets wrote} [in their books] [MTY]. **15** I confidently expect, just like [some of] these men also expect, that [some day God] will cause everyone who has died to become alive again. He will (cause to become alive again/raise from the dead) both those who were righteous and those who were wicked. **16** [Because I am confidently waiting for that day], I always try to do what pleases God and what other people think is right. **17** After I [had been in other places for] several years, I returned to Jerusalem. I went there to deliver some money to my fellow Jews [who are] poor, and to offer sacrifices [to God]. **18** Some [Jews] saw me in the temple [courts] after I had completed the ritual by which a person is made {that makes a person} pure. There was no crowd with me, and I was not causing [people] to riot. **19** But it was some [other] Jews [who had come] from Asia [province who really caused people to riot. They] should be here in front of you [(sg)] to accuse me, if they thought that I

[did] something [wrong]. 20 [But if they] do not [want to do that] (OR, [But because they] are [not] here), these [Jewish] men who are here should tell you [(sg)] what [they think] I did that was wrong, when I [defended myself] before their Council. 21 [They might say that] one thing that I shouted as I stood before them [was wrong. What I said] was, 'You are judging me today because I believe that [God] will (cause [all people] who have died to become alive again/raise [all people] from the dead).'" 22 Felix already knew quite a lot about [what people called] 'the way [of Jesus']. But he did not let Paul or his accusers continue to speak. [Instead], he said [to them], "[Later], when Commander Lysias comes down here, I will decide these matters that concern you all." 23 Then he told the officer [who was guarding Paul] to [take Paul back to the prison and] make sure that he was guarded all the time. But he said that Paul was not to be chained {that the officer was not to fasten chains on him}, and if his friends came to visit him, [the officer] should allow them to help Paul [in any way that they wished]. 24 Several days later Felix and his wife Drusilla, who was a Jew, came [back to Caesarea after having been away for a few days]. Felix [commanded] Paul to be brought in {[a soldier to] bring Paul in}. Then Felix listened to what Paul [said to him]. Paul spoke about what [Christians] believe about the Messiah Jesus. 25 Paul explained [to them about what God requires people] to do in order to please him. [He also explained about God requiring people to] control how they act. [Paul also told him that there will be a time when God] will judge [people]. Felix became alarmed [after hearing those things. So] he said to Paul, "That is all I [want to hear] now. When there is a time that is convenient I will ask you [(sg)] to come [to me again]." 26 [Felix said that because] he hoped that Paul would give him some money [to allow Paul to get out of prison]. So he repeatedly sent for Paul to come, and Paul [repeatedly went and] talked with him. [But he] did not [give Felix any money, and Felix did not command his soldiers to release Paul from prison]. 27 Felix let Paul remain in prison, because he wanted to please the Jewish [leaders and he knew that they did not want him to release Paul]. But when two years had passed, Porcius Festus became governor in place of Felix.

25 Festus, [who was now the governor] of the province, arrived in Caesarea, and three days later he went up to Jerusalem. 2 In Jerusalem, the chief priests and [other] Jewish leaders formally told [Festus] about [the things that they said] that Paul [had done that were wrong]. 3 They urgently asked Festus to do something for them. [They asked him to command soldiers] to bring Paul to Jerusalem, [so that Festus could put him on trial there]. But they were planning that some [of them] would hide [near the road] and wait [for Paul] and kill him when he was traveling [to Jerusalem]. 4 But Festus replied, "Paul is in Caesarea, and is being guarded {[soldiers] are guarding him} [there]. I myself will go down to Caesarea in a few days. 5 Choose some of your leaders to go there with me. [While they are there], they can accuse Paul of the wrong things that you say that he has done." 6 After Festus had been [in Jerusalem] eight or ten days, he went back down to Caesarea. [Several of the Jewish leaders also went there]. The next day Festus [commanded] that Paul be brought {someone to bring Paul} to him [in the assembly hall] so that he could judge him. 7 [After] Paul was brought to [the assembly hall], the Jewish [leaders] from Jerusalem gathered around him [to accuse him]. They told [Festus] that Paul had committed many crimes. But they could not prove [that Paul had done the things about which they accused him]. 8 Then Paul [spoke] to defend himself. He said to Festus, "I have done nothing wrong against the laws of us [(exc)] Jews, and I have not disobeyed the rules concerning our Temple. I have also done nothing wrong against your government [MTY]." 9 But Festus wanted to please the Jewish [leaders, so] he asked Paul, "Are you [(sg)] willing to go up to Jerusalem so that I can listen as these men accuse you [there]?" 10 But Paul [did not want to do that. So] he said [to Festus], "[No], I [am not willing to go to Jerusalem]! I am [now] standing before you, and you [(sg)] are the judge [whom the Roman] Emperor [MTY] [has authorized. This is the place] where I should be judged {where you should judge me}. I have not wronged the Jewish people [at all], as you know very well. 11 If I had done something bad [for which I] should be executed {[concerning which the law said that they] should execute me}, I would not plead [with them that they] not kill me. But none of these things about which they accuse me is [true, so] no one can [legally] surrender me to [these Jews]. So I formally request that the emperor [MTY] [should judge me at Rome]." 12 Then after Festus conferred with the [men who regularly] advised him, he replied to Paul, "You [(sg)] have formally requested [that I should send you] to the emperor [in Rome. So I will arrange for] you to go there [in order that he can judge you]." 13 After several days, King [Herod] Agrippa arrived at Caesarea, along with [his younger sister] Bernice. They had come to [formally] welcome Festus [as the new Governor of the province]. 14 King Agrippa and Bernice stayed many days in Caesarea. While [they were] there, Festus told Agrippa about Paul. He said to the king, "There is a man here whom Felix kept in prison [while he was governor]. He left him [there when his time as governor ended]. 15 When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and [the other] Jewish elders told me that

this man had done many things [against their laws]. They asked me to condemn him [to be executed] {judge him [so that people could kill him]}. **16** But I told them that when someone has been accused [of a crime, we] Romans do not immediately (condemn that person/declare that person to be guilty). First, we [command] him to stand before the people who are accusing him and to say whether or not he has done those things. [After that, the judge will decide what to do with] him. **17** So those Jews came [here to Caesarea] when I came. I did not delay. The day after [we(exc) arrived], after I sat down at the place where I make decisions, I [commanded] that Paul be brought {[soldiers] to bring Paul} into [the courtroom]. **18** The Jewish leaders did accuse him, but the things about which they accused him were not any of the [evil] crimes about which I thought [they would accuse him]. **19** Instead, what they argued about with him were some teachings that [some] Jews believe [and others do not believe. They argued] about a man whose name was Jesus who had died, [but the man they were accusing, whose name is] Paul, kept saying, 'Jesus is alive again.' **20** I did not know what questions to ask [them, and I did not know how to judge] concerning their dispute. So I asked Paul, 'Are you [(sg)] willing to go [back] to Jerusalem and have the dispute [between you and these Jews] judged there {and [let me] judge there the dispute [between you and these Jews]}?' **21** But Paul answered, '[No]. I [am not willing to go to Jerusalem]! **22** Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself." **23** The next day Agrippa and Bernice came very ceremoniously to the assembly hall. Some [Roman] commanders and prominent men in [Caesarea] came with them. Then, Festus told an officer to bring Paul. So after the officer [went to the prison and] brought him, **24** Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all [the rest of you] who are here, you see this man. Many [HYP] Jews in Jerusalem and also those here [in Caesarea] appealed to me, screaming that we [(exc)] should not let him live any longer. **25** But [when I asked them to tell me what he had done, and they told me], I found out that he had not done anything for which he should be executed {[anyone should] execute him}. However, he has asked that our emperor [should judge his case], so I have decided to send him to Rome. **26** But I do not know what specifically I should write to the emperor concerning him. That is why I have brought him here. I [want] you all [to hear him speak], and I especially want you [(sg)], King Agrippa, to hear him. Then, after we [(inc)] have questioned him, I may know what I should write [to the emperor about him]. **27** It seems to me [that it would be] unreasonable to send a prisoner [to the emperor in Rome without my] specifying the [things about which people] are accusing him."

26 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You [(sg)] are permitted [now] to speak [to defend] yourself." Paul stretched out his hand ([dramatically/to salute the king]) and began to defend himself. He said, **2** "King Agrippa, I consider that I am fortunate that today, while you [(sg)] listen, I can defend myself from all the things about which the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] are accusing me. **3** I am really fortunate, because you [(sg)] know all about the customs of us Jews and the questions that we [(exc)] argue about. So I ask you, please listen patiently to what I say." **4** "Many [HYP] of my fellow Jews know about how I have conducted my life, from the time I was a child. They know how I lived in the area where I [was born] and [also later] in Jerusalem. **5** They have known for many years, and they could tell you, if they wanted to, that [since I was very young] I obeyed the customs of our religion very carefully, just like the [other] Pharisees do. **6** Today I am being put on trial {[they] are putting me on trial} because I am confidently expecting that God will do what he promised our [(exc)] ancestors. **7** Our twelve tribes are [also] confidently waiting for God to do [for us what he promised], as they respectfully worship him, day and night. [Respected] king, I confidently expect [that God will do what he promised, and they also believe that! But that is the reason] that these Jewish leaders [SYN] are accusing me! **8** They believe that God can cause those who have died to become alive again, so (why [do any of you refuse to believe that he raised Jesus from the dead?/none of you should refuse to believe that he raised Jesus from the dead!]) [RHQ]" **9** "[Formerly] I, too, was sure that I should do everything that I could to oppose Jesus [MTY], the man from Nazareth [town]. **10** So that is what I did [when I lived] in Jerusalem. I put many of the believers in jail, as the chief priests there had authorized me [to do]. When [the Jewish leaders wanted] those Christians killed {someone to kill those [Christians]}, I voted [for that]. **11** Many times I punished the believers [whom I found] in Jewish meeting places. [By punishing them], I tried to force them to speak evil [about Jesus]. I was so angry with the followers of Jesus that I even traveled to other cities to [find them and] do things to harm them." **12** "[One day], I was on my way to Damascus [city] to do that. The chief priests [in Jerusalem] had authorized and sent me [to seize the believers there]. **13** [My respected] king, [while I was going] along the road, at about noon I saw a [bright] light in the sky. It was even brighter than the sun! It shone all around me, and also around the men who were traveling with me. **14** We [(exc)] all fell to the ground. Then I heard the voice of someone speaking to me in my own Hebrew language

[MTY]. He said 'Saul, Saul, (stop causing me to suffer!/why are you causing me to suffer?) [RHQ] You [(sg)] are [hurting yourself by trying to hurt me] [MET], [like an ox] kicking against [its owner's] goad.' **15** Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord said to me, 'I am Jesus. You [(sg)] are harming me [by harming my followers]. **16** But instead [of continuing to do that], stand up now! I have appeared to you [(sg)] to tell you that I have chosen you to serve me. You must tell people about [what I am showing you] as you are seeing me [now], and about what I [will show you when] I will [later] appear to you. **17** I will protect you [from those who will try to harm you, both] your own people and [also] those who are not Jewish. I am sending you to non-Jews **18** to help them to realize [MTY] what is true and to stop believing what is false [MET]. I am sending you to them so that they may let God control them and not let Satan control them any more. [Then God] will forgive their sins and will accept them as his people because they believe in me.' [That is what Jesus said to me]." **19** "So, King Agrippa, I fully obeyed [LIT] what [the Lord Jesus told me to do when he spoke to me] from heaven. **20** First, I preached to [the Jews] in Damascus. Then I [preached to the Jews] in Jerusalem and throughout [the rest of] Judea [province]. After that, I also preached to non-Jews. I preached that they must turn away from their sinful behavior and turn their lives over to God. I told them that they must do things that would show that they had truly stopped their sinful behavior." **21** "It is because I [preached] this message [that some] [SYN] Jews seized me [when I was] in the Temple [courtyard and] tried to kill me. **22** However, God has been helping me [from that time, and he is still helping me] today. So I stand here and I tell [all of you people], those who are important and those who are not, [who Jesus is]. Everything that I say [about him] is what Moses and the [other] prophets wrote [about long ago, things that they said] would happen. **23** They wrote that [people would cause] the Messiah to suffer and die. They also wrote that he would be the first person to become alive again, to proclaim [the message that would be like] light, [that he would save] both [his own Jewish] people and non-Jewish people." **24** Before Paul could say anything [further] to defend himself, Festus shouted: "Paul, you are crazy! You have studied too much, and it has made you insane!" **25** But Paul answered, "Your Excellency, Festus, I am not raving [insanely]. On the contrary, what I am saying is true and sensible! **26** King Agrippa knows the things [that I have been talking about], and I can speak confidently to him [about them]. I am sure that he knows [LIT] these things, because people everywhere [IDM] have heard [LIT] about what happened [to Jesus]." **27** Then Paul asked, "King Agrippa, do you believe [what] the prophets [wrote]? I know that you [(sg)] believe it." **28** Then Agrippa [answered] Paul, "([I hope that you(sg)] do not think that by the few things [that you have just now said] you can persuade me to become a Christian!/You do not think, [do you], that by the few things [that you have just now said] you can persuade me to become a Christian?)" [RHQ] **29** Paul replied, "Whether it takes a short time or a long time, it does not matter. I pray to God that you and also all of the others who are listening to me today will also [believe in Jesus] like I do, but I do not want you to become prisoners [MTY] [like I am]." **30** Then the king, the governor, Bernice, and all the others got up **31** and left [the room. While] they were talking to one another they said to each other, "There is no reason why (the authorities/we) should execute this man, or that he should even be kept in prison [MTY]." **32** Agrippa said to Festus, "If this man had not asked that the Emperor judge him, he could have been released {[we(inc)] could have released him}."

27 When [the Governor and those who advised him] decided that it was time for us [(exc)] to get on a ship and go to Italy, they put Paul and some other prisoners into the hands/care of an army captain whose name was Julius. [He was the one who would guard us on the journey]. Julius was [an officer] in charge of [a group of] 100 [soldiers that people called] 'the Emperor Augustus Group'. **2** So we got on a ship that had come from Adramyttium [city in Asia province. The ship] was going to [return there, stopping at] cities along the coast of Asia [province]. Aristarchus, [a fellow believer who was] from Thessalonica [city] in Macedonia [province], went with us. **3** The day after [the ship sailed], we arrived at Sidon [city]. Julius kindly told Paul that he could go and see his friends [who lived there], so that they could give him whatever he might need. [So Paul visited the believers there]. **4** Then the ship left [Sidon], but the winds were blowing against us [(exc)], so [the ship] went along [the north] side of Cyprus [Island], the side that is sheltered [from the wind]. **5** After that, we crossed over the sea close to the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia [provinces. The ship] arrived at Myra [city, which is] in Lycia [province]. [We got off the ship there]. **6** In Myra, [people told] Julius that a ship [was there that had come] from Alexandria [city] and would [soon] sail to Italy. So he arranged for us to get [on that ship], [and we left]. **7** We sailed slowly for several days and finally arrived close to the coast [of Asia province], near Cnidus [town. After that], the wind [was very strong and] did not allow the ship to move straight ahead [westward. So instead], we sailed [southward] along the side of Crete [Island that is] sheltered [from the wind], and we passed [near Cape] Salmone. **8** [The wind was still strong, and it

prevented the ship from moving ahead fast]. So we moved slowly along the coast [of Crete], and we arrived at a harbor that was called Fair Havens, near Lasea [town]. **9** Much time had passed, so it would have been dangerous if we [(exc)] had traveled [farther] by ship [because after that time of the year] [MTY] [the sea often became very stormy]. So Paul said to the men [on the ship], **10** "Men, I perceive that [if we(inc) travel by ship] now, it will be disastrous for us. A storm may destroy the ship and the cargo, and possibly we will drown." **11** But the officer [did not listen to] what Paul said. Instead, he decided to do what the pilot [of the ship] and the owner of the ship advised. **12** The harbor where the ship had stopped was not a good place to remain during the winter [when the weather frequently becomes stormy. So most of the people on the ship decided that we(exc) should leave there, because they hoped that we] could stay at Phoenix [port] during the winter, if we could possibly arrive there. That harbor was open to the sea in two directions, [but the strong winds did not blow there]. **13** Then a gentle wind began to blow [from the south], and the [crew members] thought that they could travel as they had decided [to do. So] they lifted [the anchor up out of the sea], and the ship sailed [westward] along the [southern] shore of Crete [Island]. **14** But after a while, a wind that was very strong blew across the island [from the north side and hit the ship. That wind was called] {[People] called that wind} "the Northeast Wind." **15** It blew strongly against the [front of] the ship. The result was that we could not keep going in the direction [in which we had been going]. So the sailors let the wind move the ship in the direction [that the wind] was blowing. **16** The ship then passed a small island named Cauda. We passed along the side [of the island that] sheltered [the ship from the wind]. Then [while the ship was moving along], the sailors lifted the lifeboat up [out of the water] and tied it [on the deck. But the strong wind made it] difficult even to do that. **17** After the sailors [hoisted/lifted] the lifeboat onto the ship, they tied ropes around the ship's hull to strengthen the ship. The sailors were afraid that, [because the wind was pushing the ship], it might run onto the sandbanks off the coast of Libya to the south [and get stuck there. So] they lowered the largest sail [so that the ship would move slower. Even so], the wind continued to move the ship along. [The wind and the waves] continued to toss the ship about roughly, so on the next day the sailors began to throw overboard the things that the ship was carrying. **19** On the third [day after the stormy wind had begun to blow], the sailors/we [MTY] threw overboard [most of] the sails, ropes, and poles, [in order to make the ship lighter]. **20** The wind continued to blow very strongly, [and the sky was full of dark clouds] day and night. We could not see the sun or the stars for many days, [so we could not determine where we were. And the wind] continued to blow violently. So we [(exc)] finally thought that we would drown in the sea. **21** None of us on the ship had eaten for many days. [Then one day], Paul stood up in front of us and said, "[Friends], you should have listened to me [when I said] that we [(inc)] should not sail from Crete. Then we would have been safe, and the ship and its cargo would be in good condition [LIT]. **22** But now, I urge you, do not be afraid, because none of us will die. [The storm] will destroy the ship but not us. **23** I [know this], because last night God, the one to whom I belong and whom I serve, [sent] an angel [who came and] stood by me. **24** The angel said to me, 'Paul, do not be afraid! You [(sg)] must [go to Rome] and stand before the Emperor there [so that he can judge you]. I want you to know that God has made it clear to me that all those who are traveling by ship with you [will also survive].' **25** So cheer up, [my] friends, because I believe that God will make this happen, exactly as [the angel] told me. **26** However, [the ship] will crash on some island, [and] we [(inc)] will go ashore [there]." **27** On the fourteenth night [after the storm had begun, the ship] was still being blown {the wind was still blowing [the ship]} across the Adriatic sea. About midnight, the sailors sensed that the ship was getting close to land. **28** So they lowered [a weight on a rope] to measure how deep [the water was]. When they pulled the rope up again, they measured it and saw that the water was (120 ft./37 meters) deep. They went a little farther and lowered the rope again. [That time], they saw that the water was [only] about (90 ft./28 meters) deep. **29** They were afraid that the [ship] might go onto some rocks, so they threw out four anchors from the [ship's] stern/back and continued to wish/pray that it would soon be dawn [so that they could see where the ship was going]. **30** Some of the sailors were planning to escape from the ship, so they lowered the lifeboat into the sea. In order [that no one would know what they planned to do], they pretended [that] they wanted to lower some anchors from the [ship's] front/bow. **31** But Paul said to the army officer and soldiers, "If the sailors do not stay in the ship, you have no hope of being saved." **32** So the soldiers cut the ropes and let the lifeboat fall into the water. **33** Just before dawn, Paul urged everyone [on the ship] to eat some food. He said, "For the past 14 days you have been waiting and watching and not eating anything. **34** So, [now] I urge you to eat some food. We [(inc)] need to do that in order to stay alive. I [tell you to do that because I know that] none of you will drown [IDM]." **35** After Paul had said that, while everyone was watching, he took some bread and thanked God [for it. Then he broke the bread and began

to eat some of it]. **36** The [rest of us] became encouraged, so we [(exc)] all ate some food. **37** Altogether there were 276 of us [SYN] on the ship. **38** When everyone had eaten as much as they wanted, they threw the grain [that the ship was carrying] into the sea, and this made the ship lighter. **39** At dawn, [we(exc) could see] land, [but the sailors] did not recognize [the place]. However, they could see that there was a bay and [a wide area of] sand at the water's edge. They planned that, if it was possible, they would steer the ship onto [the beach]. **40** [So some of the sailors] cut the anchor [ropes and] let the anchors fall into the sea. At the same time, [other sailors] untied the [ropes that] fastened the rudders, [so that they could steer the ship again]. Then [the sailors] raised the sail at the front/bow of the ship so that the wind [would blow the ship forward], and the ship headed towards the shore. **41** But the ship hit a sandbank. The front of the ship stuck there and could not move, and big waves beat against the back of the ship and it began to break apart. **42** The soldiers said [to one another, "Let's] kill [all] the prisoners [on the ship], so that they will not [be able to] swim [away and] escape." [They planned to do that because they were sure] that officials [would order them to be executed if they let the prisoners escape]. **43** But [Julius], the army captain, wanted to save Paul, so he stopped the soldiers from doing what they planned to do. Instead, he [commanded] first that everyone who could swim should jump into the water and swim to land. **44** [Then he told] the others [to hold] onto planks or pieces from the ship [and go towards shore. We(exc) did what he said, and] in that way all of us arrived safely on land.

28 After we [(exc)] had arrived safely [on the shore], we learned that it was an island called Malta. **2** The people who lived there received us kindly. They lit a fire and invited us to come and warm ourselves, because it was raining and it was cold. **3** Paul gathered some sticks and put them on the fire. But [among those sticks was] a snake that had come out [from the fire to escape] from the heat, and it fastened itself on Paul's hand. **4** [The islanders knew that the snake was poisonous, so] when they saw it hanging from Paul's hand, they said to each other, "Probably this man has murdered someone. Although he has escaped from being drowned, [the god] ([who] pays [people back/who punishes people]) for their [MTY] sins will cause him to die." **5** But Paul simply shook the snake off into the fire, and nothing happened to him. **6** The people were expecting that Paul's body would soon swell up or that he would suddenly fall down and die. But after they had waited a long time, they saw [that the snake] had not harmed him [at all]. So then the people changed their minds and said [to one another], "This man is not a murderer! Probably he is a god!" **7** Near where the people had made the fire, there were some fields that belonged to a man whose name was Publius. He was the chief official on the island. He invited us to [come and stay in] his home. He took care of us for three days. **8** [At that time] Publius' father had a fever and dysentery, and he was lying [in bed]. So Paul visited him and prayed [for him. Then] Paul placed his hands on him and healed him. **9** After Paul had done that, the other people on the island who were sick came [to him] and [he] healed them, too. **10** They brought us gifts and [showed in other ways that] they greatly respected us. When we were [ready] to leave [three months later], they brought us food and other things that we would need [for the trip]. **11** After [we had stayed there] three months, we [got on] a ship [that was going to Italy and] sailed away. The ship had been in [a harbor on] the island during the months when there are many storms. It had come from Alexandria [city]. On the front of the ship there were carved images of the twin gods [whose names were Castor and Pollux]. **12** We [sailed from the island and] arrived at Syracuse [city on Sicily island] and stayed there three days. **13** Then we traveled on by ship and arrived at Rhegium [port in Italy]. The next day, the wind was blowing from behind us, [so we sailed along fast]. The day after that, we reached Puteoli [town, where we left the ship]. **14** In Puteoli we met some believers who invited us to stay with them for a week. [After visiting them], we [left there and started to travel by land] to Rome. **15** [A group of] believers [who lived in Rome] had heard that we [(exc) were coming]. So they came out [from Rome] to meet us. [Some of] them met us at [the town called] 'The Market on Appian [Road',] and others met us at [the town called] 'The Three Inns'. When Paul saw those believers, he thanked God and was encouraged. **16** After we [(exc)] arrived in Rome, Paul was permitted {[a Roman official who was responsible for guarding Paul] permitted Paul} to live [in a house] by himself. But [there was always] a soldier there to guard him. **17** After [Paul had been there] three days, he sent a message to the Jewish leaders [to come and talk with him. So] they came, and Paul said to them, "My fellow Jews, although I have not opposed our people nor spoken against the customs of our ancestors, [our leaders] in Jerusalem [seized] [MTY] [me. But before they could kill me, a Roman commander rescued me and later sent me] to Caesarea for Roman [authorities/officials to put me on trial]. **18** The Roman authorities/officials questioned me and wanted to release me, because I had not done any [bad] thing for which I should be executed {they should kill me}. **19** But when the Jewish [leaders] [SYN] there opposed [what the Roman authorities wanted to do], I had to formally request that the

Emperor [judge me here in Rome]. But my reason for doing that was not that I wanted to accuse our leaders about anything. **20** So I have requested you [to come] here so that I can tell you why I am a prisoner. It is because I believe in [MTY] our Messiah, the one [God long ago promised to send] to us [(inc)] Jews." **21** Then [the Jewish leaders] said, "We [(exc)] have not received any letters from [our fellow Jews] in Judea about you. Also, none of our fellow Jews who have arrived [here from Judea] has said anything bad about you. **22** But we [(exc)] want to hear what you [(sg)] think about this [Christian] sect/group, because we know that in many places [HYP] bad things are being said {people are saying bad things} about it." **23** So they [talked with Paul and decided that they would come back on another day to hear him. When that day arrived], those Jews came back to the place where Paul was staying, and they brought more Jews with them. Paul talked to them from morning until evening. He talked to them about how God wants to rule [people's lives] [MET]. He tried to convince them that Jesus [is the Messiah] by reminding them what Moses and the other prophets had written [MTY]. **24** Some of those Jews believed that what was said [by Paul] {what [Paul] said} about Jesus [was true], but others did not believe [that it was true]. **25** So they began to argue with one another. [Paul realized that some of them did not want to listen to him, so] when they were about to leave, he said, "The Holy Spirit said something to your/our(incl) ancestors. He spoke these words to Isaiah the prophet, [and what he said is also true about you]: **26** Go to your fellow Israelites and tell them, 'You repeatedly listen [to the message of God], but you never understand [what God is saying]. You repeatedly look at and see [the things that God is doing], but you never understand [what they mean]. **27** God also said to the prophet, These people do not understand, because they have become stubborn. They have ears, but they do not understand what they hear, and they have closed their eyes [because they do not want to see]. If they wanted to obey what I say to them, they might understand what they see [me doing] and what they hear [me saying]. Then they might turn from their sinful behavior and I would save them.' **28** [That is what God said to the prophet Isaiah about our ancestors. But you Jews today do not want to believe God's message]. Therefore, I am telling you that [God] has sent to the non-Jews this message about how he saves people, and they will listen [and accept it]!" **30** For two whole years Paul stayed [there] in a house that he rented. Many people came to see him, and he received them all gladly [and talked with them]. **31** He preached [and taught people] about how God could rule [their lives] [MET] and taught them about the Lord Jesus Christ. He did that without being afraid, and no one tried to stop him.

Romans

1 [I], Paul, who serve Christ Jesus, [am writing this letter]. God chose me to be an apostle, and I was appointed by him {he appointed me} in order that [I should proclaim] (the good message/the gospel) that [comes from him]. **2** Long before [Jesus came to earth, God] promised [that he would reveal] this good message by means of what his prophets [wrote] in the sacred Scriptures. **3** This good message is [about the one whom we know as] his Son. As to his Son's physical/human nature, he was born a descendant of [King] David. **4** As to his divine nature, it was shown {[God] showed} powerfully that he is (God's own Son/the man who is also God). [God] showed this by his Holy Spirit causing him to become alive again after he died. He is Jesus Christ our Lord. **5** He is the one who appointed me, who did not deserve it, [to be] an apostle. He did that in order that [many] among the non-Jews would honor [him] and would obey him as a result of their believing [my message about him]. **6** You [believers] who are living in Rome [city] are included among those whom God has chosen to belong to Jesus Christ. **7** [I am writing this letter] to all of [you in Rome] whom God loves and whom he has chosen [to become his] people. [I pray that] God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord will [continue to] act kindly toward you and [will continue to] cause you to have [inner] peace. **8** As I begin [this letter], I thank my God for all you [believers in Rome]. It is because of [what] Jesus Christ [has done for us that] I [am able to do that]. I thank him because your trusting [in Jesus Christ] is something that people all over [the Roman Empire] [HYP] are talking about. **9** God, whom I devotedly serve as I [proclaim to people] the gospel concerning his Son, knows that I tell the truth when I say that I always mention you whenever [DOU] I pray [to God] [HYP]. **10** I especially ask God that if he desires [me to visit you], somehow at last I shall be able to do so. **11** [I pray this] because I long to visit you to help you spiritually, in order that you will become stronger [spiritually]. **12** I long to visit you in order that you and I might encourage each other [by means of our sharing with each other] how each of us trusts [in Jesus]. **13** My fellow believers, many times I planned to visit you. I certainly want you to know [LIT] that. [But I have not been able to come to you because] I have been hindered {[things] have always prevented me} until the present time. I have wanted to come in order that I might help you to mature spiritually [IDM], as [I have helped people to mature spiritually] in many other non-Jewish groups [HYP]. **14** I feel obliged [to proclaim the gospel to all non-Jewish people], specifically to [people who know] the Greek [language and culture] and to those who do not know it, to people who are educated and to those who are uneducated. **15** So what I have eagerly desired is that I might proclaim this good message to you who are living in Rome also. **16** [That leads me to say that] I very confidently proclaim [LIT] the good message [about what Christ has done], because this good message is the powerful [means] that God [uses] to save [from the guilt of their sins] all people who trust [in what Christ has done for them]. Specifically, God first has saved the Jews [who believe the good message], and then he has saved non-Jews. **17** By means of this good message God reveals how he erases the record of people's sins (OR, declares people no longer guilty for having sinned); and his doing this is entirely because [IDM] they trust [in Christ. This is confirmed] by what [a prophet long ago] wrote [that God said], "Those (whose record of sin [I] have erased/whom [I] have declared no longer guilty for sin) because they trust [in me] will live [forever]." **18** From [where God rules in] heaven he is making it clear to all [non-Jewish] people who show no respect for God and who do wicked things, that he is angry with them [and that they deserve to be punished] {[that he would punish them]} [MTY]. By means of [their behaving] wickedly, they keep other people [from believing what they know] to be true [about God]. **19** [Everyone] can clearly know what God [is like], because God himself has revealed to everyone [what he is like]. **20** [People] cannot see what God is like. But ever since he created the world, by means of what he created he has clearly revealed what he is like. He has made clear to everyone that he has always been able to do very powerful things. [Therefore, we should recognize that] God is powerful, [completely different from all that he created]. So no one has a basis for saying, ["We never knew about God]." **(aïdios g126)** **21** Although [the non-Jews] knew what God [is like], they did not honor him as God, nor did they thank [him for what he had done]. But instead, they began to think foolish [things about him], and they became unable to understand [MET] [what he wanted them to know]. **22** Although they claimed that they were wise, they became foolish, **23** and they refused to [admit that] God is glorious and will never die. Instead, they made and worshipped idols [that resembled people who] will some day die, and [then they made other idols that resembled] birds and four-footed animals, and [finally] they made idols that resembled reptiles. **24** So God allowed [the non-Jews] do immoral sexual things that they [SYN] strongly desired, things [that their desires were compelling them to do]. As a result, they [began to] dishonor each other's bodies [by their sexual actions]. **25** Also, they [chose to worship] false [gods] instead (of admitting/of choosing to believe) what is true [about] God. They worshipped and served things

[that God] created instead of [worshipping and serving God himself], the one who created [everything. They did this even though] he [deserves that those he created] would forever praise him. Amen!/May it be so! **(aiōn g165)** **26** So, God allowed [the non-Jews to do] shameful [sexual] things that they [strongly] desired. As a result, many women did not have natural sexual relations [with their husbands] [EUP]. Instead, they were doing sexual actions with other women [EUP]. **27** Similarly, [many] men stopped having/did not have natural sexual relations with women [EUP]. Instead, they strongly desired to have sexual relations with other men. They committed [homosexual] acts with other men, acts that were shameful. As a result, [God has] punished them [by sicknesses] in their bodies, which is what they deserve [because] they [thought] wrongly [that God would not punish them for doing that]. **28** Furthermore, because they decided that it was not [worthwhile] to know God, he allowed their own worthless thoughts [to completely control them]. As a result, they began doing [evil] things that [God says that people] should not do. **29** They strongly desire to do all [kinds of] unrighteous [things]. They strongly desire to do all [kinds of] evil things [to others]. They strongly desire to possess things that [belong to others]. They strongly desire to harm [others] in various ways. [Many non-Jews] are constantly envying [other people. Many] constantly desire to murder [people. Many] constantly desire to cause strife [between people. Many] constantly desire to deceive [others. Many] constantly desire to speak hatefully [about others] (OR, [to speak harmful things about others, things that are not true]). [Many] gossip [about others]. **30** [Many] slander [others. Many] act especially hatefully toward God. [Many] speak or act in an insulting way [toward others. Many] treat others contemptuously. [Many] boast [about themselves to others. Many] invent new ways to do evil things. [Many non-Jewish children] disobey their parents. **31** [Many non-Jews] act in other morally foolish ways. [Many] do not do what they promised [others that they would do. Many] do not [even] love [their own family members. And many] do not act mercifully [toward other people]. **32** Although they know that God has declared that those who do such things deserve to be killed, they not only habitually do these [kinds of evil] things, but they also approve of others who habitually do them.

2 [God will severely punish non-Jewish people who habitually do evil things, because he has clearly revealed that he is angry with them]. So, [when God judges people], he will not excuse any one of you Jews [to whom I am writing]. You [(sg)] say that [God should] punish [non-Jews for doing evil things]. But when any one of you says that, it is you yourself whom you are saying that God should punish, because you [(sg)] do [some of] the same [evil] things [that the non-Jews do]. **2** We know very well that God will judge and punish fairly [non-Jewish] people who do such [evil] things. **3** So, you who [say God should punish] others for doing evil things yet you do evil things yourself, (you should certainly not think that you yourself will be able to escape from being punished by God!/do you think that you yourself will be able to escape from being punished by God?) [RHQ] **4** And you should not say, "God is acting very tolerantly and patiently toward me, [so I do not need to stop sinning] [DOU]." (You should realize that God is acting in a kind manner [toward you] in order to encourage you [(sg)] to turn away from your sinful behavior!/Do you not realize that God is acting in a kind manner [toward you] in order to encourage you [(sg)] to turn away from your sinful behavior?) [RHQ] **5** But instead, by your stubbornly refusing to turn away from your sinful behavior [DOU], you are causing [MET] God to punish you even more severely. [He will do that] at the time when he shows that he is angry and judges people fairly. **6** God will pay back everyone according to [what they deserve for] what they have done. **7** [Specifically], some people, by continuing to doing good things, strive to be highly honored [by God] [DOU] and to receive a life that will not end. [God will reward them by enabling them] to live forever. **(aiōnios g166)** **8** But some people act in a selfish way and refuse to believe that [what God says is] true, and they do the things that [God says] are wrong. [God will] punish them very severely [DOU, MTY]. **9** He will cause everyone who habitually does evil deeds to suffer greatly, [with the result that they will become severely] distressed [DOU]. This certainly will happen to the Jews [who refuse to accept God's message, because God gave them the privilege to be his special people], but it will also happen to the non-Jews. **10** But [God will] greatly reward spiritually [MET, DOU] every person who habitually does good deeds. He will [certainly] do this for the Jews [because God chose them as his special people], but he will also do it for the non-Jews. **11** God [will do this fairly], because people's status does not influence him. **12** Although [non-Jews do not have] the laws that [God gave to Moses], all [non-Jews] who sin will be eternally separated from God. He will [not consider whether or not they knew] the laws that he [gave to Moses]. And all the [Jews] who have sinned in spite of knowing the laws that [God gave to Moses will also be punished] {[God will also punish them]}. [They will be punished for disobeying] God's laws. **13** [It is right for them to be punished] {[God to punish them]} [because] it is not those who [merely] know God's laws whom he considers to be righteous. On the contrary, it

is only those who continually have obeyed [all] (of [God's] laws/of the laws that [God gave to Moses]) (whom God will consider righteous/whose record of sins God will erase). **14** Whenever the non-Jews, who do not have the laws [God gave to Moses], naturally obey those laws, [they prove that] they have a law within their own minds, even though they do not have the laws [God gave to Moses]. **15** They show that they know in their own minds what God [commands in his] laws [MET], as each person in his very own conscience either accuses or excuses/defends himself [concerning his own behavior]. **16** God [will punish people] at the time when he will judge them according to what they have thought and done. He will judge them [even] for the things that they have done secretly. He will judge people by [authorizing] Christ Jesus [to judge them]. This is [what I tell people when] I preach the gospel to them. **17** [Now I have something to say to any one of] you [Jews to whom I am writing]: You [(sg)] boast about yourself saying, "I am a Jew." You [(sg)] trust [that God will save you because you possess] the laws [that he gave to Moses]. You boast that [you belong to] God. **18** You know what God desires. Because you have been taught {[people] have taught you} [God's] laws, you are able to know which things are right and to choose to do them. **19** You are certain that you [are able to] show [God's truth to non-Jews], as guides [show the road] to those who are blind [MET]. You are certain that by what you say you can show God's way to the [non-Jews who do not understand it], as a light shows the way to [those who walk in] the darkness [MET, DOU]. **20** [You are certain that you] can instruct/correct [non-Jews, whom you consider] foolish [because of their not understanding God's message]. Because you have in [God's] laws a [written] expression of true knowledge [HEN], you are certain that you can teach [people who, being like] children, do not know [God's truth] [MET]. **21** [Since you claim that you have all these advantages because you are a Jew], (it is disgusting that you who teach other people [that they should obey the laws God gave Moses] do not [obey the laws that you] yourself teach!/why is it that you who teach other people [that they should obey the laws God gave Moses] do not [obey the laws that you] yourself teach?) [RHQ] You who preach that people should not steal things, it is disgusting that you yourself steal things! [RHQ] **22** You who command people not to have sexual relations with someone to whom they are not married, it is disgusting that you commit adultery yourself! [RHQ] You who detest idols, it is disgusting that you rob temples [where people worship idols]! [RHQ] **23** You who boast saying, "[I have God's] laws," it is disgusting that you disobey those same laws! [RHQ] As a result you are insulting God! **24** [You must not be like our ancestors, about whom] were written [these words in the Scriptures:] "The non-Jews speak evil about God because of [the evil actions of] many of you [Jews]." The non-Jews say God must be a hypocrite if he condones the behavior of people like you. **25** Any one of you who [is] circumcised [to show that he belongs to God] can benefit from that if he obeys the laws [God gave to Moses]. But if you [(sg), a circumcised person], disobey [God's] laws, [God will consider that] you who are circumcised are no better [in God's sight] than [someone who is] not circumcised. **26** This means that God will certainly consider that even [non-Jews who are] not circumcised can become his people if they obey the things that he commanded in his laws. [RHQ] **27** [If any one of] you disobeys God's laws, even though [you(sg) have] the Scriptures and even though someone has circumcised you {you are circumcised} [God will punish you]. And those people who are not circumcised, but who obey God's laws, [will declare that God is right] when he says that he will punish you. **28** It is not those who perform rituals [to show they are God's people] who are [true] Jews, and it is not being circumcised in their bodies [that causes God to accept them] [MTY]. **29** On the contrary, we whom [God has changed] inwardly are [true] Jews [MTY]. And [God has accepted us because we have allowed God's] Spirit to change our hearts, not because we perform rituals. Even if [other] people will not praise us [for that change], God will praise us.

3 [Someone may object to this, saying], "[If being circumcised does not cause God to accept us Jews], (there is no advantage in being a Jew [over being a non-Jew]./is there any advantage in being a Jew [over being a non-Jew]?) [RHQ] Being circumcised does not benefit [us Jews at all]!" **2** [I would reply that being Jews] benefits [us] in many ways [HYP]. First of all, it benefits us because it was to [our ancestors] that God's words, [words that contain his promises], were given {that [God] gave his words, [words that contain his promises]}. **3** Many [Jews did not obey God as they promised that they would. So someone might ask], "Does their not being faithful mean that God will not [bless us Jews] as he promised [that he would]?" **4** [I would reply], "No, it certainly does not mean that! God always does [what he has promised], even though [people do not]. All those who accuse God [of not keeping his promises to us Jews] are very mistaken." [What King David wrote about God's justly saying that he would punish him for his sins is also true of those who accuse God of not keeping his promises. What he said to God was], "So everyone must acknowledge that what you [(sg)] have said [about them] (OR, [their sin]) is true, and you will always win the case when you are accused

{when [people] accuse you}." 5 So if we [Jews'] being wicked [PRS] shows that it is right that God [does not bless us], what shall we say/conclude? Shall we conclude that it is not right for God to be angry [and punish us Jews] [MTY]? I [should not be saying these things], [but] I am speaking as ordinary humans [speak]. 6 We should certainly not [conclude that God should not judge us], because if God [did not judge us Jews], (it would not possibly be right for him to judge [anyone in] the world [MTY]!/how could he judge [anyone in] the world?) [MTY, RHQ] 7 But [someone might object and say to me], "The fact that God truly [keeps his promises] becomes very clear/evident because of my not doing [what God has commanded]. But the result is that people praise God! So (God should no longer say that I should be punished {that [he] should punish me} on account of my having sinned!/why should God still say that I should be punished {that [he] should punish me} on account of my having sinned?) [RHQ] 8 [If what you, Paul, say is true], then (we might as well/it is all right for us to) do evil things in order that good things [like that] will result! For example, [then people will praise God]!" Some people speak evil about me by their [falsely] saying that I say [such things. God] will fairly/justly punish [people who say such things about me]! 9 [If someone would ask], "[Shall we conclude that God] will treat us [Jews] more favorably [and will treat] the non-Jews less [favorably] [RHQ]?" [I would reply that we can] certainly not [conclude that]! I have already shown you that all people, the Jews and also the non-Jews, have sinned and [so they deserve to be punished] {[that God will punish them]} [PRS]. 10 [The following words] that are written {prophets have written} [in the Scriptures support this], No person is righteous. There is not even one righteous person! 11 There is no one who understands [how to live properly] (OR, [about God]). There is no one who seeks/desires [to know] God! 12 Absolutely everyone has turned away [MET] [from God]. God considers them depraved (OR, Everyone has become useless [to God]). There is no one who acts righteously; no, there is not even one! 13 What people say [MTY] [is foul/bad, like the smell that comes from] a grave that has been {that [people] have} opened [MET]. [By what people say] [MTY], they deceive people. [By what they say] [MTY] [they injure people, just like] the poison of snakes [injures people] [MET]. 14 They are continually (cursing/asking God to do harmful things to) others and saying (cruel/harsh/hateful) things [MTY]. 15 They (go quickly/are eager) to murder people [MTY]. 16 Wherever they go, they ruin everything and make [people] miserable [MTY]. 17 They have not/never known how [to live] peacefully [with other people]. 18 They absolutely refuse to fear/reverence God [SYN]! 19 Furthermore, we know that it is to [Jewish] people, [who are] required to obey [God's] laws, that Moses wrote those laws [PRS]. [We can infer from this that] there are no [Jews or non-Jews] [SYN] who are able to say anything [in reply to God's saying that he will punish them for having sinned]. God has declared everyone in the world [MTY] guilty! 20 It is not because people have done the things that God's laws [require] that [God] will (erase the record of their sins/declare them no longer guilty for sin), [because no one has done those things completely]. In fact, the result of [our knowing God's] laws is that we know clearly that we have sinned (OR, are sinful). 21 But God's (erasing the record of our sins/declaring us no longer guilty) does not depend on [our obeying] the laws [that he gave Moses]. It has now been {[God] has now} revealed [to us] how he erases the record of our sins [by a different way]. It was written about [by Moses] {[Moses] wrote about it} in the laws [PRS] [God gave] him, and it was also written about by the prophets {the prophets also wrote about it}. 22 God erases the record of our sins because we trust in [what] Jesus Christ [has done for us]. God does this for every person who trusts [in Christ], because [he considers] that there is no difference [between Jews and non-Jews]. 23 All people have done evil, and all people have failed to accomplish the glorious [goals] that God [set for them]. 24 Our record of sins has been erased {God erased the record of our sins} by God acting kindly [to forgive our sins], without our doing anything to earn it. Christ Jesus accomplished this [by dying for us]. 25 God showed that Christ was the one who would atone for (OR, forgive) our sins [with the] blood [that flowed from his body when he died. God redeems/forgives] us because of our trusting [in Christ's having died for us. God wanted] to show that he acts justly. [He wanted to do that] because, before [Jesus came, God] did not punish [everyone who sinned. So it seemed as though he was not being just]. But he was overlooking people's sins during [that time], 26 because he is patient. [God arranged for Jesus to die for us]. By doing that, God now shows that he is just, and he shows that he is justly able to erase the record of sins for everyone who trusts/believes in Jesus. 27 It is not at all [RHQ] because of [our obeying the] laws [of Moses that God erases the record of our sins]. So, (there is no way that we can boast [that God does that because of our obeying those laws]./how can we boast [about God erasing the record of our sins because of our obeying those laws]?) [RHQ] Instead, [it is because of our] believing/trusting [in Christ that God erases the record of our sins]. 28 [We cannot boast about that], because we conclude that the record of our sins is erased {God erases the record of our sins} because of our trusting [in Christ]. God does not erase the record of our sins

because of our obeying the laws [that he gave to Moses, because it is impossible for us to completely obey them]. 29 (You who are Jews certainly should not [think that you] are the only ones whom God [will accept]!/Do you Jews [think it is you] alone whom God [will accept]?) [RHQ] You certainly should [realize that he will accept] non-Jews, too. [RHQ] Of course, [he will accept] non-Jews also, 30 because, [as you firmly believe], there is only one God, who will erase the record of Jews' [MTY] sins if they trust [in what Christ has done], and who will similarly erase the record of non-Jews' [MTY] sins if they trust [in Christ]. 31 So, [if someone should ask concerning the laws that God gave Moses], "By saying [that God erases the record of our sins because of our] trusting [in Christ], does that mean that those laws now are useless?", [I would reply], "Certainly not. Instead, we truly fulfill the laws [that God gave Moses]."

4 Abraham is the [revered] ancestor of us [Jews]. So think about what we can conclude [from what happened to Abraham about how God can erase the record of our sins]. [RHQ] 2 If it was because of Abraham's doing [good] things that the record of his sins was erased {that [God] erased the record of his sins}, Abraham could then have been able to boast [about that to people], but he would not have [had any basis to] boast to God [about it]. 3 [Remember that] in the Scriptures it is written {someone wrote} [PRS] that Abraham believed what God [promised] [RHQ], and as a result the record of his sins was erased {[God] erased the record of his sins}. 4 If we receive wages for work that we do, those wages are not considered to be a gift. Instead, they [are considered] to be what we have earned. [Similarly, if God erases the record of our sins because we did things to earn God's favor], we would not consider that [God's erasing the record of our sin] was [a gift. Instead, we would consider it as what we had earned]. 5 But suppose that we do not do things [to gain God's acceptance]. Suppose that we instead trust [in God], who erases the record of sins of wicked people. Then the erasing of the record of our sins because of our trusting [in Christ] is considered to be a gift to us, [not something that we earned]. 6 Similarly, it is as David wrote [in the Psalms] about people being happy whose record of sins God has erased even though they have not done things [to earn it. David wrote]: 7 [God] is pleased with people whose sins have been {whose sins [he] has} forgiven, and whose sins he [has decided] to forget [DOU]. 8 [God] causes to be happy the people whose sins he no longer keeps a record of. 9 As for our being happy [because God has erased the record of our sins], (it is not something that [only] we Jews [can experience]./is it [MTY] something that [only] we Jews [can experience]?) [RHQ] [No, it is] also something that non-Jews [can experience] [MTY]. [What is written in the Scriptures], that it was because Abraham trusted [in God] that the record of his sins was erased {[God] erased the record of his sins}, [also shows that this is true]. 10 ([Think about] when [God erased the record of Abraham's sins]./When did [God erase the record of Abraham's sins]?) [RHQ] (Consider whether [it happened] after someone circumcised [Abraham to mark him as one who belonged to God], or before someone circumcised him./[Did it happen] after [Abraham was] circumcised [to be marked as one who belonged to God], or before he was circumcised?) [RHQ] It happened before he was circumcised, not after he was circumcised. 11 [Many years later, God commanded that] Abraham [be] circumcised. Abraham's accepting that ritual simply showed [that he knew that God had accepted him]. [He knew that God] had [erased the record of his sins] because he trusted [in God] while he was still, [in effect, a non-Jew because] he had not been circumcised. [So we can understand that] Abraham became (a spiritual ancestor/like an ancestor) to [all] of us whose record of sins has been erased {whose sins [God] has erased the record of} because we believe [in God's promise, even though some of us] are not circumcised. 12 Likewise, Abraham is the [spiritual] ancestor of all us Jews who are not merely circumcised but who, more importantly, [believe in God's promise] as our ancestor Abraham did, even before he was circumcised. 13 God promised Abraham and his descendants that they would receive [the blessings that he promised to give to the people in] the world. But when he promised that, it was not because Abraham [obeyed] the laws [that God later gave to Moses]. Instead, it was because Abraham believed [that God would do what he promised that he would do]. As a result, God erased the record of his sins. 14 If [we think that] it is those who [obey God's] laws who will receive [what he has promised], it is useless [for us to trust in him. And what he] promised is worthless. [Remember that] it is [stated] in God's law [PRS] [that] he will punish [people who do not perfectly obey them], and remember that wherever [MTY] laws exist, [people] disobey them [LIT]. 16 So it is because [we] trust [in God that we will receive the things that he has promised]. [It is not because we perfectly obey God's laws. He wants] (to [erase the record of our sins/to declare us no longer guilty]) without our earning it. As a result, what God now promises, he guarantees to give to all people who are [Abraham's spiritual] descendants. [He promises to do that not only for us Jewish believers], who [have] God's laws [and trust in him as Abraham did], but also for those [non-Jews who do not have God's laws but] who trust [in him] as Abraham did.

Abraham is the [spiritual] ancestor of all of us [believers]. **17** What is written {What [Moses] wrote} [in the Scriptures about what God promised Abraham shows that this is true]. [God said to him], "It is in order that you [(sg)] may be the ancestor of many ethnic groups that I have chosen you." Romans 4:17b-22 God [guaranteed that he would give Abraham many descendants]. Abraham confidently believed that God [would do that], **18** even though there was no physical reason for him to hope [that he would have descendants, because he and his wife were too old to bear children]. But God is the one who causes dead people to live again, and who talks about things that do not yet exist as already existing. [God said to Abraham], "You will have so many descendants that they will be [as impossible to count as the stars]." And Abraham believed that, and he believed that he would become the ancestor of many ethnic groups. **19** He did not doubt [that God would do what he promised], even though he knew that his body was already [as incapable of begetting children as if he were] dead [MET] because he was about 100 years old. And [even though he realized that] Sarah had never been able to become pregnant [IDM], **20** he did not doubt at all that God [would do what he had] promised. Instead, he trusted [in God] more/very strongly, and he thanked God [for what God was going to do]. **21** He was also convinced {very sure} that the thing that God promised, God was able to do. **22** And that is the reason that the record of his sins was erased {[God] erased the record of his sins}. **23** The words [in the Scriptures], "The record of his sins was erased {[God] erased the record of his sins}," are not only about Abraham. **24** They were also written {[They] also wrote that} for us whose record of sins would be erased {[God] would erase}. They were written {[They] wrote it} for us who believe [God], the one who caused our Lord Jesus to become alive again after he died. **25** Jesus allowed [men] to execute [MTY] him so that [God could forgive] our evil deeds. And [God] caused Jesus to live again because [God wanted to show that because of the death of Jesus he was able to] erase the record of our sins.

5 Because we trusted [in Christ], the record of our sins has been erased {[God] has erased the record of our sins}. So we [now] have a peaceful relationship with God because of our trust in what our Lord Jesus Christ [has done for us]. **2** Because of [what] Christ [has done], God has also enabled us to begin experiencing his continually acting toward us in ways that we do not deserve. Also, we rejoice because we are confidently expecting that God [will gladly show] us how great he is. **3** We rejoice even when we suffer [as a result of our trusting in Christ], because we know that when we are suffering, the result is that we learn to endure things [patiently]. **4** And [we know] that when we endure things [patiently], the result is that [God] approves [of us]. And when we [know that God] approves [of us], the result is that we confidently expect [that he will do great things for us]. **5** And we are very confident [PRS] that we will receive the things that we wait expectantly [for], because God loves us very much. His Holy Spirit, who has been {whom [he] has} given to us, [causes] us to understand how much God loves us. **6** When we were unable [to save ourselves], it was Christ who, at the time [that God chose], died on behalf of [us] ungodly [people]. **7** Rarely would anyone die on behalf of another person, [even if] that person were righteous, although someone might be courageous enough to die on behalf of a truly good person person. **8** Nevertheless, as for God, the way he showed us that he loves us is that Christ died on our behalf while we were still rebelling against God. **9** The record of our sins has been erased {[God] has erased the record of our sins} because of [what Christ accomplished when] his blood [MTY] [flowed when he died]. So it is even more certain that we will be saved by Christ {that Christ will save us} from God's punishing us [eternally] [MTY]. **10** Even when we were acting hostilely towards God, he enabled us to have a peaceful relationship with him as a result of his Son dying [for us]. So it is even more certain that we will be saved {Christ will be able to save us} [from God's punishing us] [MTY] because Christ is alive [again] and because [God] has enabled us to have a peaceful relationship [with himself]. **11** And that's not all! Now we also rejoice about [the things that] God [has done for us] because of our Lord Jesus Christ [dying for us] and enabling us to have a peaceful relationship with God. **12** [What you can learn from what I have written so far is as follows]: All people are sinful [PRS], and that is the result of [Adam, the first] man whom [God created, sinning long ago]. Adam died [PRS] because he sinned. So, all people [who have lived since then] die, because [it is as though] all people sinned [when Adam sinned]. **13** [People in] [MTY] the world sinned before [God gave his] laws [to Moses]. But people are not considered [by God] {[God] does not consider people} to be guilty for their sins if there is no law [stating that what they did was sinful]. **14** But [we know] that from [the time when] Adam [lived] until [the time when] Moses [lived], all people sinned, and they died [as a consequence] [PRS, MET]. Even people who sinned differently from the way Adam [sinned, died]. [Adam's sin] affected [all people], just like what [Christ did], the one who came later, can affect all people. **15** But [the results of God's erasing the record of our sins as] a gift to us are not like [the results of Adam's] sinning. The result of one man, [Adam], sinning was that many/all people have died. But [it

is certain], [however], that many people have abundantly experienced God's acting kindly toward them in a way they did not deserve. [It is also certain] that they have experienced God's erasing the record of their sins as the result of one man, Jesus Christ, acting kindly toward them/towards them in a way they did not deserve. **16** And [there is another way in which God's] freely [erasing the record of our sins] is not like [the results of Adam's] sinning. One person, [Adam, sinned]. As a result, God declared that all people deserve to be punished. Many people sinned. But what God did was that he erased the record of their sins without their earning it. **17** All people die [MET, PRS] because of what one man, [Adam], did. But now many of us experience that God has abundantly acted towards us in ways we did not deserve, and we experience that he has erased the record of our sins without our earning it. It is also very certain that we will rule [with Christ] (OR, share [the glory] of Christ's being king), [in heaven. This will happen] because of [what] one man, Jesus Christ, [did for us]. **18** So, [because one man, Adam], disobeyed [God's law], that resulted in all people deserving to be punished {that God punish them}. Similarly, because one man, [Jesus], acted righteously [by obeying God when he died], the result was that God is [able to erase the record of] all people's sins and [enable them to] live eternally. **19** It was because one person, [Adam], disobeyed [God] that many/all people became sinners. Similarly, it is because one person, [Jesus], obeyed [God when he died] that the record of many people's sins will be erased {that [he] will erase the record of many people's sins}. **20** [God gave] [PRS] his laws [to Moses] [PRS] in order that [people might realize] how greatly they had sinned; but as people sinned more, God continued to act even more kindly toward them, in a way that they did not deserve. **21** He did that in order that just like people everywhere inevitably sin, [which results in their] dying [MET, PRS], people everywhere might inevitably experience God's acting kindly towards them in a way they do not deserve [MET, PRS] by [erasing the record of their sins]. [The result is that people can] live eternally because of what Jesus Christ our Lord [did for them]. **(aiōnios g166)**

6 Someone might [RHQ] say [in reply to what I have written] that [since God acted kindly toward us] in a way we did not deserve [because we sinned], perhaps we should continue to sin in order that he may continue to act even more kindly toward us [and keep on forgiving us]! [RHQ] **2** [I would reply], No, certainly not! We [ought to consider that] our sinful desires [MET] [cannot make us do what they want us to do], [just like we cannot make] a corpse do what we want it to do. So it is not right that we continue to sin! [RHQ] **3** When we were baptized {[asked someone to] baptize us} in order to show that we have a relationship with (OR, are united to) Jesus Christ, our [being baptized was to declare that it was as though] we died with Christ. ([I want] you to remember that!/Do you not know that?) [RHQ] **4** So, when we were baptized {someone baptized us}, [it was as though] we were buried with Christ. [We were baptized] in order to indicate that [we would not let our sinful desires make us do what they want us to do, just like people cannot make] a corpse [do what they want it to] do [MET]. We [were baptized] to [signify that we would] continually conduct our lives in a new way, just like Christ was caused to live again in a new way by the great [power] of [God his] Father. **5** Because of our close relationship with Christ, we have [separated ourselves from the former way in which we conducted our lives], just like he [was separated from his physical life when he] died [MET]. But God will also certainly [enable us to live in a new way, just like he] enabled Christ to live again. **6** We must keep remembering that when Christ died on the cross [MET], [it was as though] our sinful nature [died with him. It has] lost its power to make us do what it wants us to do [MET]. That happened in order that we would not do the sinful [things that our bodies] [MET], which desire to sin, want us to do, and in order that we would no longer have to sin [MET], as slaves [have to do what their masters want]. **7** [We are, as it were, freed] {[free]} [from] sinful [desires] [MET] [controlling us, just like] those who have died are free [from anything controlling them]. **8** Since [it is as though] we died with Christ, we believe that we will continue to live with him. **9** We know that since [God] enabled Christ to live again after he died, Christ will never die again. Nothing will ever be able to make him die again [PRS]. **10** When he died, he died once for [people] who had sinned, and he will never die again; but in regard to his living [again now], he lives in order to [serve/honor] God. **11** Similarly, you must consider that [it is as though] you have become [unable to do what your] sinful [desires] [MET] want, as a corpse [is not able to do what anyone wants it to do]. You must also consider that because of your relationship to Christ Jesus you are living [in a new way] in order to [serve/honor] God. **12** So, do not let the [desire to] sin [PRS] control your bodies [MET] with the result that you do the sinful things that you desire to do. [Remember that] your bodies will surely die, [but your spirits will never die]. **13** Do not let any of your body parts do wicked things, as [you did] [MET] [when you were spiritually] dead. Instead, present yourselves to God as people who are alive [spiritually]. Present all your body parts to God, [to allow him] to use them to [do] righteous things. **14** Do not let a [desire to] sin control you [PRS]. The laws [that God gave Moses] did not

enable you [to stop sinning]. But [now] God controls you and kindly helps you [not to sin]. **15** [I suppose that certain people might think about what I have just said and they might] say [RHQ], "[You say that] the laws [God gave Moses] did not [enable us to stop sinning, but that God is now] treating us kindly in ways we do not deserve. ([That seems to mean that God permits] us to continue sinning./[Does that mean that God permits] us to continue sinning?) [RHQ]" My reply to that is no, we should certainly not continue [sinning] **16** [Slaves] have to obey [what their masters command] [MET] [them to do]. (I want you to remember this./Do you not know this?) [RHQ] Similarly, if you present yourselves to someone [in order to] obey him, you will be the slaves [MET] of the person you obey. Similarly, [if you have yielded yourselves to do the] sinful things [you desire], you are slaves of your sinful desires [PRS], and you will be eternally separated from God. [If you have yielded yourselves] to obey [God], you are slaves of God and you need to [live] righteously. **17** You were once slaves [to] your sinful [desires]. But you began to sincerely obey the new teaching [MET] that you were taught {that [people] taught you}. I thank God for that. **18** [I] also [thank God that] you have been freed {[that] he has freed you} from [being controlled by a desire to] sin, and that you have become [as though you were] slaves [MET] to [living] righteously [MET]. **19** I am illustrating what I say [by talking about slavery] because your human nature prevents you from understanding [spiritual truth] easily. [In the past] you willingly did the immoral and unlawful things that [your minds compelled] your bodies to do [MET], [just like] slaves [do what their masters compel them to do]. As a result, you did even more unlawful things. Now, [you need to] willingly allow [your minds to compel] your bodies to [act] righteously [MET], in order that you will behave in a holy/pure way. **20** When you were [like] slaves [because your sinful desires compelled you to do] sinful things [MET], you were not [concerned about behaving] righteously [MET]. **21** Nevertheless, [doing] those things resulted in your being separated from God, so you did not benefit at all from [doing] the [sinful] things that you are now ashamed of. [RHQ] **22** But you have been freed {[God] has freed you} from [letting the desire to] sin control you. You have become [as though you are] [MET] the slaves of God. So now the result is that God has caused you to completely belong to him and, as a result, you will live eternally. **(aiōnios g166)** **23** [What people receive for] sinning [is that they are] eternally separated from God. That is [like] wages that [people receive] [MET]. But what God gives us is a gift. What he gives us is that we live eternally because of [our relationship with] (OR, because [we are united to]) Christ Jesus our Lord. **(aiōnios g166)**

7 My fellow believers, you know about laws. So you certainly know (OR, I want you to remember) that people have to obey laws [PRS] [only] while [they are] alive. [RHQ] **2** For example, a woman is required by the law {the law requires a woman} [to obey and be faithful to her husband] as long as he is alive. But if her husband dies, she is freed [from having to] {[no longer has to]} [obey] the law about [remaining married to] her husband. **3** Therefore, a woman will be called {people will call a woman} an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she no longer [has to obey] that law. Then she will not be an adulteress if she marries another man. **4** Likewise, my fellow believers, [just like people are free from having to obey any law after they die] [MET], you [and I] have been freed {[God] has freed you [and me]} from having [to obey] all the Jewish rituals and laws [MET]. [That is because it is as though] we died with Christ [when he was crucified]. Now you [and I] belong to someone else [MET], [like a woman who marries again after her husband dies belongs to another man]. Specifically, you [and I] belong to [Christ], who has come back to life {whom [God] has caused to live again after he died}, in order that we may live righteously [IDM] to [honor] God. **5** When our self-directed nature [controlled] us, desires [that led us to] sin were acting in our bodies. [Those desires were increased because of our knowing God's] laws [PRS]. As a result [we did evil things] [IDM] [that] caused us to be separated from God. **6** But now we are freed {free} from [having to obey all the Jewish] rituals— [it is as though] we have died. The result is that now we are not controlled by those rituals {those rituals do not control us now}. So we serve God, not by [having to obey] those rituals, which is the old way, but in the new way, as [God's] Spirit [helps us to serve him]. **7** [Someone might object], saying, "(The laws [that God gave Moses] must be evil [if our sinful desires] are increased because of our knowing those laws. [MTY]/Are not the laws [that God gave Moses] evil [if they stir up our sinful desires]?)" [MTY, RHQ] [I would reply] that they certainly are not [evil, even though our sinful desires are increased]. What I would reply is that I, [for example], realized that [what I was doing] was sinful only because [of what is written] {[Moses wrote]} [in] those laws. For example, I realized that coveting [is sinful] only because he wrote in those laws [PRS], "You must not covet." **8** And because of what that commandment [stated], my sinful [desire to have things that belong to others] [PRS] caused me to covet in many ways. [Our desire to] sin is not stimulated [MET] when there is no law [that prohibits our doing sinful things]. **9** Formerly, when I did not [know] what God's laws [required], I used to live [without worrying about what I was doing]. But when I [became aware

that God] commanded, ["You must not covet]," I suddenly realized [PRS] that I was sinning, **10** and [I realized that] I was separated from God. The laws that [I thought would enable me to] live [eternally as a result of my obeying them] caused me [to realize that] I was separated from God! **11** [My desire to] sin found a way [PRS] to deceive me [by making me think wrongly that] I could keep [on sinning and at the same time obey] those laws [enough so that I would live eternally], and [thus it] caused me to be separated from God [PRS]. **12** So [we conclude that] the laws [that God gave to Moses] are holy. What God commanded [about not coveting, along with all the other things that he commanded], is also holy, and it is just and good. **13** So, [if someone were to object] saying, "[The laws that God gave Moses], which are good, (resulted in my being separated from God!/did they result in my being separated from God?) [RHQ]" [I would reply], "Certainly they did not [do that]!" But instead, those [laws], which are good, stimulated [my desire to] sin. I knew that the result was that I was separated from God. And also, because I [learned what God had] commanded, [I knew that] what I was doing was [truly] sinful. **14** We know that the laws [that God gave Moses came from God's] Spirit. But as for me, I am [influenced by my] self-directed nature. [It is as though] I have been forced to become a slave of [my desire to] sin [MET]. **15** The things that I do, I [often] [HYP] do not understand. That is, [sometimes] [HYP] it is [the good things] that I want [to do] that I do not do. [And sometimes] [HYP] it is the [evil] things that I detest that I do. **16** Since I [do] the [evil] things that I do not want [to] do, I agree that the laws [of God] are good. **17** So, it is not that I do [evil things because I wish to do them]. Instead, [what happens is that] I do sinful things because the desire to sin [causes me to do them]. The [desire to] sin (is within/permeates) me [PRS]. **18** I know that my self-directed nature will not [let me] [PRS] [do] anything that is good. I know this because I want [to do what is good], but I do not do what is good. **19** I do not do the good things that I want to do. Instead, it is evil things that I do not want to do that I do. **20** Because I do [evil things] that I do not want to do, it is not that I do [evil things because I want to]. Instead, [I do them because] my self-directed nature, which permeates me [PRS], [causes me to do them]. **21** I find, then, that what always happens is that when I want to do what is good, there is an evil [desire] present within me that [PRS] [prevents me from doing good]. **22** With my new inner nature I like the laws of God very much. **23** Nevertheless, I sense that there is a different force that is in (my body/me) [PRS, SYN]. It is opposed to what with my mind [I desire to do] [MET], and it puts me inescapably under the control of [MET] the sinful [desires] that I have [SYN]. **24** [When I consider this], I [feel that I] am a very wretched person. I want someone to set me free from the control of what my body [desires], in order that I might not be separated from God. [RHQ] [I also think that what I have experienced is the same as what all believers experience]. **25** I thank God that it is by Jesus Christ our Lord [that we can be free from the control of what our bodies desire]. So, [with our minds, you and] I on the one hand want to obey God's laws. [But also], [you and] I [often let] our sinful [desires control us] because of our self-directed nature.

8 Because [God has erased the record of our sins because we trust in what Christ has done for us], now [God will] not condemn and punish those/us who have a relationship with (OR, are united to) Christ Jesus. **2** [God's] Spirit causes us to live [in a new way] [PRS] as a result of what Christ Jesus [did for us]. And he has set up a way by which he frees [each of] us from continually being forced to sin (OR, to obey our self-directed natures) and from being separated from God. **3** What [we] could not do [by trying to obey] the laws [of God] [PRS], because our self-directed nature was too weak [to obey them], God did. He sent his own Son [into the world in order that his Son might atone] for our sin. His Son came having a body (OR, human nature) that was like [the body] (OR, the [human nature]) of us people who sin. [By sending his Son in this way], he condemned and punished [his Son, who never sinned, instead of punishing us, who] sinned [MTY]. He did that [by making his Son's] body [a sacrifice] (OR, [by causing his Son's] body [to suffer/die]) for [all our] sin. **4** So we can [now] fulfill all that God required in his laws. We do this, not by our acting the way our sinful human nature [desires], but instead by living as [God's] Spirit [desires us to live]. **5** People who live according to what their self-directed nature [desires] think about and are concerned about what their self-directed nature [desires]. But people who [live] according to what [God's] Spirit [desires think about and are concerned about] what [God's] Spirit [desires]. **6** Those people who [PRS] think about and are concerned about what their self-directed nature [desires] will not live eternally (OR, will be separated from God). But those people who think about and are concerned about what [God's] Spirit [desires] will live [eternally] and have [inner] peace. **7** Let me explain this. [To the extent that] people [PRS] think about and are concerned about what their self-directed nature [desires], they are acting contrary to God. They do not obey the laws of God. In fact, they are not even able [to obey his laws]. **8** The people who let their self-directed nature [control them] cannot do what pleases God. **9** But we do not have to let our self-directed nature [control us]. Instead, we can [let] God's Spirit [control us], because he lives within us. If people do

not have [living in them] the Spirit [who comes from] Christ, they do not belong to Christ. **10** But since Christ [is living in you/us by his Spirit, although] your/our bodies [are certain to] die because you/we sin, your/our spirits are alive because God has erased the record of your/our sins. **11** [God] caused Jesus to live again after he died. And because his Spirit lives in you/us, [God] will also make your/our bodies, which [now] are sure to die, live [again after you/we die]. God, who caused Christ to live again after he died, will make you/us live again by [causing] his Spirit, who lives within you/us, [to do it]. **12** Therefore, my fellow believers, we must [live as the Spirit directs us]. What we do not have to do is to live as our self-directed nature [guides us]. **13** If you live the way your self-directed nature [directs], you will surely not live [eternally] (OR, will surely be eternally separated from God). But if by [the power of God's] Spirit you quit doing the [sinful] things that your bodies [desire] [MET], you will live eternally. **14** We who are guided by the Spirit of God {allow the Spirit of God to guide us} are God's children. **15** [You have showed that this is true], because you received [from God] a Spirit that is not one that makes you fear [God] again. You are not like slaves who [fear their masters] [MET]. On the contrary, we have received a Spirit by whose [work in our hearts God] has adopted us. The Spirit now enables us to cry out [to God], "[You(sg) are my] Father [DOU]!" **16** The Spirit himself confirms what our spirits [say], that we are God's children. **17** Because we are [God's] children, we also will some day receive/inherit [eternal blessings/privileges]. We will receive/inherit them from God, and we will [also] receive/inherit [them] just like Christ has [inherited them]. But we must suffer [for doing good] as Christ did, in order to receive splendor as he did. **18** I consider that what we suffer during the present time is not worth [paying attention to, because] the future splendor/glory that will be revealed {that [God] will reveal} to us [is so great]. **19** The [things that God has] created are very eagerly waiting for [the time] [PRS, DOU] when God will reveal who his [true] children are. **20** [God] caused the things that he created to be unable to achieve [what he had purposed. That was] not because they wanted to [be unable to do that]. On the contrary, [God] made them that way because he wanted them to keep confidently expecting **21** that the things that [he] created will be freed {that [he] will free the things that [he] created} from their sure decay [MET]. [He] will free them in order that [he can give them] the same glory that belongs to his children. **22** We know that until now [it is as though] all [things] that God created have been groaning together, [and they long for that glory, just like a mother having the pains before bearing a child] groans [and longs for her baby's birth] [MET]. **23** Not only [do those things groan], but we ourselves also groan inwardly. We who have [God's] Spirit, who is like a partial gift [MET] we have received as we wait for [the future glory, groan inwardly]. We groan while we wait eagerly for the time when we will receive our [full] rights as God's adopted children. That [will include] his freeing our bodies [from the things that hinder us on earth. He will do this by giving us new bodies]. **24** Ever since we were saved {since [God] saved us}, we have continued to confidently expect [that future glory]. If we had what we waited for, we would not [need to] wait for it any longer, because those who have something, certainly do not continue to wait for it! [RHQ] **25** But because we keep waiting expectantly to receive what we do not yet have, we wait for it eagerly and patiently/perseveringly. **26** Similarly, in addition to our continuing to wait for what God will give us, God's Spirit helps us when our spirits feel weak. We do not know what is proper/necessary for us to pray. But God's Spirit knows, and he prays for us when we groan (OR, he groans) in a way that cannot be expressed in words (OR, prays with us, groaning in a way that cannot be expressed in words). **27** God, who examines our inner feelings, understands what his Spirit desires. What God understands is that his Spirit prays for us who belong to God exactly as God wants him to pray. **28** And we know that to those/us who love God, he works out all things that happen [to them/us] in a way that produces good [spiritual] benefits [for us]. He does these things for those/us whom he has chosen, because that was (OR, was according to) what he planned to do. **29** God knew previously [that we would believe] in him (OR, [would be saved]). We are those who God also decided previously would develop a character like his Son's character. The result of that is that [Christ is like] a firstborn/highest-ranking [son], and [those/we who are God's children] [MET] are [like] [MET] many [younger] brothers [of Jesus]. **30** And us who God decided previously [that we would become like his Son], he also summoned. And for us whom he summoned, he also erased the record of our sins. And for us whose record of sins he has erased, he also will surely give future splendor. **31** So (I will tell you what we must conclude from [all] these things [that God does for us]./what shall we conclude from [all] these things [that God does for us]?) [RHQ] Because God [is acting] on our behalf, (no one can win against us!/can anyone defeat us? (OR, it does not matter if anyone opposes us)!) [RHQ] **32** God did not spare even his very own Son. Instead, he turned him over [to others to cruelly kill him] in order that all we [who believe in him] may benefit [from his dying for us. Therefore, because God did that], (he will also certainly give us freely everything [that we need to live for him], in

addition to [giving us] Christ./will he not also certainly give us freely everything [that we need to live for him], in addition to [giving us] Christ?) [RHQ] **33** It is God himself who erases the record of our sins. So (no one who accuses us [before God will win against us] (OR, [it does not matter] if anyone tries to accuse us) whom God has chosen./is it possible that anyone who accuses us [before God] will win against us (OR, does it matter if anyone tries to accuse us) whom God has chosen?) [RHQ] **34** It is Christ Jesus himself who pleads [with God] for us, so (no one can condemn us (OR, say that we are still guilty for our sin)./can anyone condemn us (OR, say that we are still guilty for our sin)?) [RHQ] Christ died [for us], but he was also brought back to life {[God] also raised him from the dead}, and he is now at the place of honor [ruling] with God [MTY]. **35** Absolutely no one and nothing can cause Christ to stop loving us! [RHQ] That could not [RHQ] happen [because someone] caused us to have trouble [DOU], or [because someone did things to] harm us, or [because we did] not have anything to eat, or [because we did] not have enough clothes, or [because we lived in a] dangerous situation, or [because someone killed us with] a sword [MTY] (OR, murdered us). **36** [Such things may happen to us, just like] it is written {[as David] wrote} [that David said to God], "Because we are your [(sg)] people, [other people repeatedly attempt to] kill us. They consider that we are [only people to be killed], [like a butcher considers] that sheep are [only] animals to be slaughtered [MET]." **37** But even though all these bad things [may happen to us], we win a great victory/triumph [over these things because Christ], who loves us, [helps us]. **38** I am absolutely certain that neither being dead (OR, being killed), nor [what happens to us while] we live, nor angels, nor demons, nor present events, nor future events, nor powerful [beings/forces], **39** nor [powerful beings] above [the horizon] or below [the horizon] [MTY], nor anything else that [God has] created can cause God to stop loving us. [God showed us that he loves us by sending] Jesus Christ our Lord [to die for us].

9 [Now I would like to discuss the fact that most of my fellow Israelites have rejected Christ]. Because of my relationship with Christ, I say completely truthfully [what I will now tell you]. I am not lying [DOU]! My conscience confirms what I [say] because the Holy Spirit [controls it]. **2** [I tell you that] I grieve very greatly and deeply [DOU] [about my fellow Israelites]. **3** I personally would be willing to let [God] curse me [and, as a result, be separated] from Christ, [if that would] help my fellow Israelites, my natural kinsmen, [to believe in Christ]. **4** We [Jews] are [Israelites, God's chosen] descendants of [Jacob]. [God has always considered] us as his children [MET]. It was to our ancestors [that he used to appear] gloriously [while they were in the desert]. It was with them that [God made] covenants [several times]. It was to them [that God] gave the laws [at Sinai Mountain]. They were the ones [to whom God showed how they should] worship him. They were the ones [to whom God] promised many things, [especially that the Messiah would come from their race]. **5** It was our ancestors, [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom God chose to found our nation]. And, [most importantly], it was from us Israelites that the Messiah received his human nature. [Nevertheless, most of my fellow Israelites have rejected Christ], who is the one who controls all things! He is God, the one who is worthy that we praise him forever! This is true! (OR, Amen!) **(aiōn g165)** **6** [God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that their descendants would all inherit his blessings]. But [although most of my fellow Israelites have rejected Christ], that does not [prove] that God has failed [to do] the things that he promised, because it is not all who are descended from Jacob and who [call themselves the people of] Israel whom [God considers] to be truly his people. **7** And it is also not all of Abraham's natural descendants that [God considers] to be his people. Instead, [God considers only some of them to be Abraham's children]. [This agrees with what God told Abraham]: "It is Isaac, [not any of your(sg) other sons], whom [I] will consider [to be the true father of] your descendants." **8** That means that it is not all the natural-born descendants [of Abraham] whom God [considers as] his children. Instead, it is those who [believed what God] promised whom [he] considers to be his children. **9** [You know that what God] promised [to Abraham] was this: "About this time [next year] Sarah [your wife] will bear a son [as a result of my enabling] [MTY] [her to do so]." [So Abraham knew that it was not through Ishmael, the son that he already had, that God would fulfill what he had promised him] (OR, [that his true descendants would come]). **10** And not only then did God show [that he did not determine who would be his true children according to who their ancestors were. He showed it again] when Rebecca conceived [twins] by our ancestor Isaac. **11** Before [the twins, Jacob and Esau], were born, when neither one had yet done anything good or bad, [God] said to Rebecca [about the twins she was to bear], "The older one shall later serve the younger one, [contrary to normal custom]." [God said this] in order that [we] might [clearly] understand that what he purposed [for people] was according to what he himself determined. That is, people's [eternal destiny] does not depend on what they do. Instead, their destiny depends on [God], the one who chooses them. **13** And [this teaching is] ([supported/shown

to be true]) [by] what is written [in the Scriptures] {what [a prophet] recorded} [that God said]: "I favored Jacob, [the younger son]. I did not favor [HYP] Esau, [the older son]." **14** [Someone] might say, "(Is God unjust [by choosing the ones he wants to choose?/I think] that God is unjust [by choosing the ones he wants to choose!])" [RHQ] [I would reply], "[He is] certainly not [unjust]!" **15** God told Moses, "I will pity and help anyone whom I choose [DOU]!" **16** So [God chooses people], not because they want [God to choose them] or because they try hard [to do things so that he] will [accept them]. Instead he chooses people because he himself has mercy [on undeserving ones]. **17** [Moses] recorded [PRS] [that God had told] Pharaoh, "This is why I gave you [(sg)] authority [MTY]: It was in order that I might show [by how I oppose] you [how exceedingly] powerful I am, and in order that people everywhere [HYP] would hear about me [MTY]." **18** So [we conclude that God] kindly helps the ones he wants to act kindly towards. But he makes stubborn the ones [such as Pharaoh] that he wants [to make stubborn]. **19** [One of] you may [object to this by] saying to me, "[Because God determines ahead of time everything that people do, that also implies that he wants us to do everything that we do]. (No one has resisted what God has willed!/Who has resisted what God has willed?) [RHQ] Therefore, (it would not be right that God would still condemn [a person for having sinned]!/why does God still condemn [a person for having sinned]?) [RHQ]" **20** [I would reply that since] you [(sg)] are [just a] human being, (you do not [have any right at all to] criticize God!/[who are you to] say that what God does is wrong?) [RHQ] [As a potter is the one who creates a clay pot, God is the one who created you]. (A clay pot [MET] certainly would not [have a right to criticize] the potter by asking [PRS], "Why did you [(sg)] make me this way?"/Would a clay pot [have a right to criticize] the potter by asking [PRS], "Why did you [(sg)] make me this way?") [RHQ] **21** Instead, (the potter certainly has the right to [take] some clay and from one lump [of clay] make one pot that people will honor and [make another] one for ordinary purposes [MET]./does not a potter have the right to [take] some clay and from one lump [of clay] make one pot that people will honor and [make another] pot for ordinary purposes?) [MET, RHQ] [Similarly, God has the right to carry out what he purposes for people]. **22** Although God desires to show that he is angry [about sin], and [although he desires to] make clear that he can powerfully [punish people who have sinned], he tolerated very patiently the people [MET] who caused him to be angry and who deserved to be destroyed (OR, who were made to be destroyed). **23** [God has been patient] in order that he might make clear how very wonderfully [he acts toward those] [MET] whom he intended to act mercifully towards and whom he prepared ahead of time in order that they might [live] gloriously [in heaven]. **24** That means us whom he chose—not only [us] Jews but also non-Jews. **25** [These words that] Hosea wrote [MTY] that [God] said also (show that God has the right/[support God's right]) [to choose from among both Jews and non-Jews] [MTY]: I will declare that many people who were not my people are now my people. I will declare that many people whom I did not love [HYP] before, I love now. **26** And [another prophet wrote]: What will happen is that in the places where [God] told them before, "You are not my people," in those same places [people] will declare truthfully that they are children of God, who is completely powerful. **27** Isaiah also exclaimed concerning the Israelites: Even though the Israelites are [so many that no one can count them, like] sand [particles on the beach beside] the ocean, [only] a small part of them will be saved {[God] will save [only] a small part of them}, **28** because the Lord will punish completely and speedily the [people who live on] this earth, as he said that he would do. **29** [Also, we can understand from what the prophet] Isaiah said [that God would not save] anyone if he did not show mercy: If the Lord, who controls everything in heaven, had not mercifully allowed some of our descendants to survive, we would have become like the people of [the cities of] Sodom and Gomorrah, who were [SIM, DOU] completely destroyed. **30** We must conclude this: [RHQ] Although non-Jews did not search out [a way by which] God would erase the record of their sins, they actually found that way because they trusted [in what Christ did for them]. **31** But although [the people of] Israel sought a basis [by which God would] erase the record of their sins, they did not succeed in [fulfilling the true purpose of the] laws [that God gave to Moses]. **32** The reason [RHQ] [that they did not succeed] is that they did not trust that [God would provide a way to save them]. Instead, they were trying to do certain things [in order that God would accept them. Because they did not expect the Messiah to die, the Israelites] felt disgusted about [Jesus' death, which is like] the stone [MET] on which people stumble. **33** This is what [a prophet] predicted when he wrote these words that [God said about the Messiah]: Listen! I am placing in Israel [MTY] [one who is like] a stone [MET] on which people will stumble. What he does will offend people [DOU]. Nevertheless, those who believe in him will not be disappointed.

10 My fellow believers, what I deeply desire and what I pray to God earnestly for is that he will save [my own people], [the Jews]. **2** I declare truthfully about them that although they (zealously seek/very much want to know) God,

they do not understand [how to seek/know him correctly]. 3 They did not (submit themselves to/accept) the way that God erases the record of people's sins. They did not [want to] recognize [that way] because they wanted him to do it their own way. 4 They wanted God to erase the record of their sins [as a result of their obeying his laws. But] because of what Christ has done, it is no longer necessary for [people to obey] the laws [God gave Moses in order for the record of their sins to be erased]. Now God will erase the record of sins of everyone who trusts [in what Christ has done]. 5 In regard to [the old] way, Moses wrote [concerning people who obey God's] laws, "It is the people who have done [perfectly] the things [that the laws require] who will gain [eternal] life by [doing] them." 6 But those whose record of sins God has erased as a result of their believing [in Christ] can say [to anyone] [PRS] [as Moses said], "You should not [critically] think inwardly, '(Someone will have to go up and enter heaven!/Who will go up and enter heaven?)' [RHQ]" That is to say, someone will have to [go up and] bring Christ down [to bring the message of salvation to us]! 7 "Or [you should not think inwardly], '(Someone will have to go down and enter the place where [the spirits] of dead persons are!/Who will go down and enter the place where [the spirits] of dead persons are?)' [RHQ]" That is to say, someone will have to [go down and] bring Christ up [from there to bring the message of salvation to us. You should not say that because Christ has already come down to save us, and has already become alive after he died]! **(Abyssos g12)** 8 But instead, [those who believe in Christ] [PRS] can say what [RHQ] [Moses also said], "You [(sg)] can find out about [God's] message very easily. You can speak [MTY] about it; you can think [MTY] about it." This is the message that we proclaim, that people must believe [in Christ]. 9 [This message is that] if anyone of you confesses/says publicly that Jesus is Lord, and if you [(sg)] believe that God (caused him to become alive again after he died/raised him from the dead), you will be saved {[God] will save you}. 10 If people believe [that Christ died and that God caused him to become alive again] [CHI], the result is that [God will erase the record of their sins]. And [for] those who state/declare publicly [that Jesus is their Lord], the result is that [God] will save them. 11 [It is written] {[Isaiah wrote]} in the Scriptures [PRS] [about the Messiah], "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed." 12 [God] treats Jews and non-Jews similarly. Because he is the same Lord for all people [who believe in him], he abundantly [blesses] all who ask him [to save them]. 13 This is [just like what the prophet Joel wrote]: "All those who ask the Lord [God] to save them will be saved {The Lord [God] will save all those who ask him to save them}." 14 [In regard to the people of Israel rejecting the gospel, some people might object by saying], (OR, [This raises another problem about the Jews]:) "(They certainly cannot ask [Christ to save them] if they have not [first] believed [in him]!/How can they ask [Christ to help/save them] if they have not [first] believed [in him]?) [RHQ] And (they certainly cannot believe [in him] if they have not heard about him!/how can they believe [in him] if they have not heard about him?) [RHQ] And (they certainly cannot hear [about him] if someone does not preach to them [about him]!/how can they hear [about him] if someone does not preach to them [about him]?) [RHQ] 15 And those who preach to them [about Christ], (certainly cannot preach if they are not sent [by God] {if [God] does not send them} [to preach!]/how can they preach if they are not sent [by God] {if [God] does not send them} [to preach]?) [RHQ] [His sending messengers to them would be] just like it is written {like someone wrote} [in the Scriptures], 'The arrival [MTY] of those who preach the good message is wonderful!'" 16 [I would reply in this way to people who say such things: God has indeed sent people to preach the message about Christ]. But not all [the people of Israel] have paid attention to the good message! [It is like what] Isaiah said [when he felt very discouraged], "Lord, it seems as if hardly anyone believed what they heard us [(exc)] preach! [RHQ]" 17 So then, [I tell you that people] are believing [in Christ] as a result of hearing [the message about him], and people are hearing [the message] as a result of [people] preaching [about] Christ! 18 But [if someone were to] ask, "Have not [the people of Israel] heard [the message about God?]" [I would reply that they] certainly [have heard it]! It is like [what is written in the Psalms], [People living] all over the world [PRS, MTY] [have seen the stars], and what they indicate [about God's character has reached people living in] the most remote places in the world [DOU]! 19 But [someone might ask], "[Is it true that the people of] [MTY] Israel understood [the message about Christ]?" [I would reply that certainly they understood it, but they rejected it! Remember that] Moses was the first [one who warned the people of Israel about disobeying God. He told them that God said], [You consider that] non-Jewish groups are not nations at all [CHI]. But some of them [will believe in me, and I will bless them]. Then you will envy them. I will cause you to be angry with those people whom [you Jews think] do not understand [my ways] [IRO]. 20 Remember also [what God] said [very] boldly to Isaiah: Non-Jews who did not (try to know/seek) me will surely find me [DOU]! I will surely reveal what I am like to those who did not ask for me! 21 But concerning [the people of] Israel, [Isaiah] tells [us that God said]: For a long time I have held out my arms to people who

disobeyed and rebelled against me, [in order] to invite them to return to me.

11 Because of that, [if anyone should ask], "Has God rejected his people [the Jews?" I would declare that] he certainly has not [rejected all of us! You can realize that by remembering that] I also belong to the [people of] Israel. I am a descendant of Abraham, and I belong to the tribe of Benjamin, [but God has not rejected me]! **2** No, God has not rejected his people, whom he chose long ago [to be people whom he would bless in a special way]. Remember [RHQ] what is written [PRS] in the Scriptures about Elijah when he [mistakenly] complained to God about [the people of] Israel, saying, **3** "Lord, they have killed [the rest of] your [(sg)] prophets, they have destroyed your altars. I am the only one [who believes in you] who remains [alive], and now they are trying to kill me!" **4** God answered him like this: "[You(sg) are not the only one who believes in me]! I have protected for myself [not just you, but] 7,000 [other] men who have not worshipped [the false god] Baal. (Remember that!/Do you not remember that?) [RHQ]" **5** So, similarly, there is also at this time a small group [of us Jews] who have become [believers. God] has chosen us [to become believers] (OR, [his people]) only because he acts kindly toward us, in ways that we do not deserve. **6** Since it is because he acts kindly [toward those whom he chooses, it is] not because they have done good things [that he has chosen them]. If [God chose people because they did good deeds], then it would not be because he was acting toward them in a way that they did not deserve. **7** [Since God chose only some people of Israel], [this is what I conclude: [RHQ] Most of the people of] Israel did not find [the way for him to erase the record of their sins], even though some of them were earnestly looking for it. The [people of Israel whom God had] chosen found it, but the rest [of them] were {[God]} made spiritually insensitive/unresponsive. **8** [Our] fellow Jews are just like the [ones] about whom Isaiah wrote, God (caused their senses to be dull/made them unable to think clearly). Up to this very day, [they have] eyes but they cannot see [spiritually] [MET]. [They have] ears, but they cannot understand [spiritually] what they hear. **9** And [they remind me of what King] David said, [when he asked God to cause his enemies' senses to be dull] [MET], [Make them stupid] [MTY], [like animals that are] caught in snares! May they [feel secure because of the things that they enjoy but which will catch them like a] trap [DOU, MET], with the result that you will destroy them. **10** May their ability to perceive [danger] be dulled {Dull their ability to perceive [spiritually]} [MET], with the result that they will not [become alarmed] [MET] [when there is danger]. May you cause them to carry heavy loads on their backs continually [as slaves do] [MTY]. **11** [Perhaps someone will ask], "[When the Jews] sinned [by not believing in Christ, did] it result in their separating themselves from God [permanently?]" Then I [would reply], [No], they have certainly not [separated themselves from God permanently]! What is happening is that because they sinned, [God] is saving non-Jews in order to cause [the Jews] to envy [the way he blesses non-Jews and so ask Christ to save them]. **12** [When the Jews] sinned (OR, rejected Christ), [the result was that God] abundantly [blessed other people in] [MTY] the world by [offering them the opportunity to believe]. And [when the Jews] failed [spiritually, the result was that God] abundantly [blessed] the non-Jews. Since that is true, think how wonderful it will be when the complete number [of the Jews whom God has chosen will believe in Christ] [RHQ]! **13** Now it is to you non-Jews that I am saying [what follows]. I am the one who is the apostle to non-Jews, and I highly esteem this work [that God appointed] me to do. **14** But I also hope that [by my labors] I will make my fellow Jews (jealous/want what you non-Jews have), [with the result that] some of them will [believe and] be saved. **15** [God] has rejected [most of my fellow Jews because they refused to believe, with the result that] he reconciled [many other people in] the world [MTY] [to himself]. But he will accept [my fellow Jews again when they trust in Christ]! And (this is what the result will be./do you know what the result will be?) [RHQ] It will be [as though God is making them] alive again after they have been dead! **16** [Just like] the whole lump [of dough] will belong to God if [people offer] to God [MET] the [bread baked from] the first part [of it] [MET], [so the Jews will belong to God because their ancestors belonged to God]. And just like the branches [of a tree] will be good if the roots are good [MET], [so the descendants of our great Jewish ancestors who belonged to God will also some day belong to God]. **17** [God has rejected] many of [the Jews] [MET], [like] branches [of a tree] are broken off {[like people] break off [dead] branches [of a tree]}. And each of you [non-Jews whom God has accepted is like] [MET] [a branch of] a wild/uncultivated olive tree [that] was {[that someone]} grafted among the branches (OR, onto one of the branches) [that were left on a cultivated olive tree]. [God has caused] you [to benefit from how he blessed our(exc) first Jewish ancestors, as branches] benefit from the nutritious sap from the roots of a [cultivated] olive tree [MET]. **18** However, you [non-Jews] must not despise [the Jews whom God rejected] [MET], [who are like] the branches that [were broken off from the tree] If any of you [wants to] boast [about having received blessings from God], [remember this: Branches] do not nourish the roots. Instead the roots nourish [the

branches] [MET]. [Similarly, you are blessed by God because of what] you [have received from the Jews! It is not what the Jews have received from] you [that blesses them] [MET]! **19** If one of you then says, "[God rejected the Jews] [MET] [like] branches [MET] that are broken {that people broke} off [a tree and rejected], in order that [he might accept us non-Jews, as] branches [MET] of a tree are grafted in {[as people] graft in branches of a tree}," **20** [I would reply that] this is true. However, it is because the Jews did not believe [in Christ] that they were rejected [MET] {that [God] rejected [MET] them}. As for you, it is [only] because you believe [in Christ] that [God has accepted] you! [So] do not [any of you] become proud, but instead beware [of what could happen to you] **21** Since God did not spare [the unbelieving Jews] [MET] [who were like a tree's] natural branches, he will not spare any of you [if you do] not [keep trusting in him]! **22** Note then, that God acts kindly, but he also acts severely. He has acted severely toward [the Jews] who have stopped trusting in him. On the other hand, he acts kindly toward each of you [non-Jews only] if you continue [to appreciate his acting] kindly [toward you]. However, you will be rejected {[he] will reject you} if you do not [keep trusting in him]. **23** And if the Jews believe [in Christ] [LIT], God also will [reunite them to himself as] branches are grafted {[as people] graft branches} into [a tree again], because God is able to do that. **24** Each of you [non-Jews who were previously separated from God has benefited from the ways in which God blessed the Jews] [MET]. [That is like taking branches] that have been cut {that someone has cut} from a wild olive tree that just grew [without being planted] {[someone planting it]} and, contrary to what people usually do, grafting them into a cultivated olive tree. So God will much more readily [receive back the Jews because they belonged to him before] [MET]! [That will be like] the original branches [that had been cut off] being grafted {like grafting the original branches [that someone cut off], } back into the olive tree to which they [originally belonged]! **25** My [non-Jewish] fellow believers, I certainly want you to understand [LIT] this truth that God has now revealed [about my fellow Jews who are refusing to believe]. You should not proudly think [that] God [now favors you] more [than the Jews] (OR, [that you understand God's further plans for the Jews]). Many [people of] Israel will continue to be stubborn until all the non-Jews [whom God has chosen have believed in Jesus]. **26** And then all [HYP] [the people of] Israel will be saved {[God] will save all [HYP] [the people of] Israel}. Then these words that are written {that [a prophet] wrote} [in the Scriptures will] ([become true/be fulfilled]): The one who sets [his people] free will originate from [the place where] God dwells (OR, from the Jews) [MTY]. Then he will remove the guilt of the Israelite people (OR, descendants of Jacob) [MTY]. **27** And [as God says], The contract that I will make with them is that I will forgive their sins. **28** With regard to [the Jews rejecting] the good message [about Christ, God treats] them as enemies, which has benefited you [non-Jews]. But in regard to [their being the people whom God] chose, [God still] loves them because of [what he promised] their ancestors. **29** [He still loves them], because he never changed his mind about the privileges/blessings he [gave to them] and about his choosing [them to be his people]. **30** You [non-Jews] once disobeyed God, but now he has acted mercifully towards you because the [Jews] disobeyed him. **31** Now the Jews have disobeyed God. The result is that by the very same way in which he acted mercifully towards you, he will act mercifully towards them [again]. **32** God has declared and proved that all people, [both Jews and non-Jews] [MET], disobey ([him/his laws]). He has declared that because he wants to act mercifully towards us all. **(eleēsē g1653)** **33** [I marvel how] vast and great are the wise things that God [has done] and what he has [always] known [DOU]! We are completely unable to understand the things that he has decided and the ways [in which he acts toward us] [DOU]! **34** [I remember the Scriptures that say], (No one has known what the Lord thinks./Who has known what the Lord thinks?) [RHQ] (Absolutely no one has given him advice [about what he should do!]/Who has advised him [about what he should do]?) [RHQ] **35** And, (No one has given anything to God that [he did not previously receive from God!]/Has anyone given anything to God that [he did not previously receive from God]?) [RHQ] So God (is not obligated to/does not have to) pay back anything to anyone! **36** God [is the one who created] all things. He is also the one who [sustains all things]. The reason that he created them was that [everything he created might praise] him. May [all people] honor him forever! (May it be so!/Amen!) **(aiōn g165)**

12 My fellow believers, since God has acted mercifully [toward you] in so many ways, I appeal to [all of] you that you present yourselves [SYN] [to him by making yourselves like] holy sacrifices [MET]. [Make yourselves sacrifices] that he is pleased with, sacrifices that are living/alive, [not ones that are dead/killed. Since God has done so much for you/us], this is the [only] appropriate way to serve him. **2** Do not let anything non-Christian determine how you should act. Instead, let God change your [way of life] by making your way of thinking new, in order that you may know what he wants you to do. That is, you will know what is good, and you will know what pleases [God], and you will know how to be all that he wants you to be. **(aiōn g165)** **3** Because God has kindly appointed me [to be his apostle], which I did

not deserve, I say this to every one of you: Do not think about yourselves more highly than what is right for you to think! Instead, think [about yourselves] in a sensible way that [corresponds to the abilities] that God has given you [because] you trust [in Christ]. **4** Although a person has one body, it consists of many parts. All of the parts are needed for [the body], but they do not all function the same way. **5** Similarly we, [although we are] many, are [united into] one group because of our relationship with Christ, and we belong to one another. [So no one should act as though he] is needed by God more [than others are!] **6** [Instead], since each one of us can do various things that differ according to the abilities that [God has] given to us, [we should do them diligently and cheerfully]! Those whom [God has enabled] to speak messages from him [should speak] what corresponds to what they believe [God told them]. **7** [Those whom God has enabled] to serve [others] should do that. [Those whom God has enabled] to teach [his truth] should do that. **8** Those [whom God has enabled to] encourage/exhort [his people] should do that. Those who share [their goods/money with others] should do it sincerely/generously. Those who lead [the congregation] should do it wholeheartedly. Those who help the needy should do it cheerfully. **9** Love others sincerely! Hate what is evil! Continue to eagerly do what [God considers to be] good! **10** Love one another as members of the same family do; and, you should be (the first ones/eager) to honor each other! **11** Do not be lazy. [Instead], be eager [to serve the Lord] God! **12** Rejoice because you are confidently awaiting [what God will do for you]! When you suffer, be patient! Keep praying and never give up! **13** If any of God's people lacks anything, share with them [what you have]! Readily take care of [travelers who need a place to stay]! **14** [Ask God to] be kind to those who (persecute you/cause you to suffer) [because you believe in Jesus! Ask him to] be kind to them; do not [ask him to] cause bad things to happen to them. **15** If someone is joyful, you should rejoice also! If someone is sad, you should also be sad! **16** Desire for others what you desire for yourselves (OR, Live harmoniously with each other)! Do not do things because you want to be [famous]! Instead, be content to do [tasks that others consider that only] unimportant people do (OR, [to associate with unimportant] people). Do not consider yourselves wise. **17** Do not do something evil to anyone [who has done] something evil to you. Act in a way that all people will recognize as good! **18** Live peacefully with other people whenever it is possible, to the extent that you [can influence the situation]. **19** [My fellow believers] whom I love, do not do something evil in return when people do something evil to you! Instead, allow [God] to punish them [MTY], because it is {someone has} written [in the Scriptures that] the Lord [said], "'It is my responsibility to take revenge; I am the one who will punish [people who do something something evil to you] [DOU],' says the Lord." **20** Instead of [doing something evil to those who have done something evil to you], [do as the Scriptures teach]: "If your [(sg)] enemies are hungry, feed them! If they are thirsty, give them something to drink! By doing that, you [(sg)] will cause them to feel ashamed [and perhaps they will change their attitude toward you] [IDM]." **21** Do not let evil [things that others have done to you] overcome you [(sg) by making you do evil things to them!] [PRS] Instead, overcome the evil [things that they have done] by [doing] good [deeds to them]!

13 Every [believer] must be subject to the authorities. [Remember that] God is the only one [who gives officials their] authority. Furthermore, those officials that exist are ones who have been appointed by God {God has appointed}. **2** So whoever resists the officials is resisting what God has established. Furthermore, those who resist officials will bring on themselves [from the officials] the punishment [that God considers fitting]. **3** What rulers [do] is not [to cause people who] do good deeds to be afraid. Instead, [what they do is to cause people who do] evil to be afraid. So, if any of you [RHQ] wants to be unafraid of officials, do what is good! [If you(sg) do good], they will commend you [instead of punishing you!] **4** It is in order to serve God [by doing their work that every official exists], in order that they may benefit each of you. If any of you does what is evil, you [(sg) will rightfully have reason to] be afraid, because the authority that they have to punish people [MTY] is very real [LIT]! The officials exist to serve God. That is, they act as God's agents as they punish those who do evil. **5** So, it is necessary for you [(pl)] to be subject [to officials], not only because they will punish you [MTY] [if you disobey them], but also because you know [that you should be subject to them] **6** It is for this reason that you also pay taxes, because the officials are ones who serve God as they continually do their work. **7** Give to all [the officials] what you are supposed to give to them! Pay taxes to [those who require that you pay taxes]. Pay duties [on goods to those who require that you pay those] duties. Respect [those who ought to] be respected. Honor [those who ought to] be honored. **8** Pay all of your debts [when you are supposed to pay them]. The only thing [that is like] a debt that [you] should never stop paying is to love one another. Whoever loves others has fulfilled all that [God requires in] his laws. **9** [There are many things that God] commanded [in his laws, such as] do not commit adultery, do not murder [anyone], do not steal, and do not desire anything that belongs to someone else. But the

command by which they are all summed up {that includes them all} is this: Each of you must love the people with whom you come in contact, just like you [(sg)] love yourself. **10** If you love people with whom you come in contact [PRS], you will not do any evil to them [LIT]. So, whoever loves [others] fulfills all that [God's] laws [require]. **11** [Do] what I have just told you, especially since you know [the significance of] the time [in which we are living. You know that it is] time for you to be [fully alert and active] [MET], [like people who have] awakened from sleeping [MET], because [the time when Christ will finally] deliver us [from this world's pain/sin and sorrow] is near. That time (is closer than/was not so close) when we first believed [in Christ]. **12** [Our time to live in this world] [MTY] [is almost ended] [MET], [like] a night that is nearly ended. The time [when Christ will return] [MTY] is near. So we must quit doing wicked deeds [MET] [such as people do] in the darkness, and [we must be doing the things that will help us resist Satan/evil] [MET], [as soldiers who] put on their armor in the daytime [get ready to resist their enemies]. **13** We must behave properly, as though the time [when Christ will return] [MTY] [were already here]. We must not participate in drunken carousing [HEN]. We must not commit any kind of sexual immorality [MTY, DOU]. We must not quarrel. We must not be jealous [of other people]. **14** On the contrary, you/we should [be like] the Lord Jesus Christ [so that others will see that we belong to him], just as [people] put on [special clothes so that others will see what group they belong to] [MET]. You/We should stop thinking about [doing the things that your/our] self-directed nature desires.

14 Accept those who are not sure [whether God will permit them to do certain things some people think are wrong]. But [when you accept them], do not argue with them about what they think/their opinions. **2** Some people believe that they may eat all [kinds of food]. Others believe [that God does not want them to eat certain things, so they] believe that they may not eat meat. **3** Anyone who [thinks that it is all right to] eat [all kinds of food] must not despise those who [think it is] not [all right to] eat [all kinds of food]. Anyone who [thinks it is] not [all right to] eat [all kinds of food] must not (condemn/say that [God] will punish) those who [think that it is all right to] eat [all kinds of food], because God himself has accepted those people. **4** [God is the master of us all, so] ([he is the one who will decide whether those people have done wrong!/who are you to decide whether they have done wrong]?) [RHQ] [Therefore], you have no right [RHQ] to condemn those who eat everything, because they are [also God's servants! And just like] it is the servants' own master who accepts or condemns [MTY] his servants, [it is God who accepts or condemns us]. And [believers] will be accepted [by] the Lord {[the Lord] will accept [believers]} [regardless of whether they eat meat or not], because he is able to keep them [trusting in him]. **5** Some people regard certain days as [holy] and think that the other [days] are not [holy]. Other people regard all days as [equally suitable for worshipping God]. Each person should be fully convinced [about such matters], thinking and deciding for himself [and not for others]. **6** As for those who believe that they should worship on [a certain] day [of the week], it is to [honor] the Lord [that they worship on that day]. And as for those who [think that it is all right to] eat [all kinds of food], it is to [honor] the Lord [that they eat those foods], as is clear from their thanking God [for the food that they eat]. As for those who abstain from [eating certain kinds of] food, it is to [honor] the Lord that they do not eat [those foods], and they also thank God [for the food that they do eat. So doing either of those things is not wrong in itself]. **7** None of us should live [merely] to [please] ourselves, and none of us [should choose when or how we will] die, [merely] to [please] ourselves. **8** While we live, it is the Lord whom we belong to [and should be trying to please, and not just ourselves]. And when we die, it is the Lord whom we should [be trying to please]. So, while we live and also when we die, we should be trying to please the Lord to whom we belong, [not just ourselves], **9** because the very purpose for which Christ died and became alive again is that he might be Lord whom all people should try to please, both of those who have already died and of those who are still living. **10** (It is disgraceful that you [who practice certain religious regulations] say that God will punish your fellow believers [who do not practice those regulations]!/Why do you [who practice certain religious regulations] say God will punish your fellow believers [who do not practice such regulations]?) [RHQ] [I say this because the time will come when] all of us will stand before God in order that he will say whether or not he approves [MTY] [of what we have done]. So you [who do not practice such regulations], (should not despise your fellow believers [who practice them]!/why do you despise your fellow believers [who practice them]?) [RHQ] **11** [We know this] because it is written {[a prophet/Isaiah] wrote} [what God has said]: Everyone will bow down before me! That is as [certain as the fact that] I live [IDM]! Everyone [SYN] will acknowledge [that because I am] God, I have the [right to judge and punish people.] **12** So [it is clear that] it is God who will decide [whether or not he approves of] what each of us has done. **13** Since [it is God who will judge everyone], we must stop saying that [God should] punish some of our fellow believers! Instead, you/we should decide

that you/we will not do anything that would [be an example that might cause] fellow believers to stop trusting in God [DOU]. **14** I am absolutely certain [DOU] because of [my close relationship with] (OR, [my belonging to]) the Lord Jesus that there is nothing that by itself is wrong [to eat]. But if people think it is wrong to eat something, then to them it is wrong to eat it. [So you should not encourage them to eat it]. **15** If you [eat] food [MET] that anyone for whom Christ died [thinks that it is wrong to eat, that person might be encouraged] {[you might be encouraging that person]} [to do something that he believes is wrong. As a result, you might cause that] fellow believer [to stop trusting in God]. In that way he would be ruined [spiritually] just because you have stopped behaving as one who loves [others should behave]! **16** Similarly, do not [do something that you think is] good if, [as a result, your fellow believer would sin and then] others would speak evil [of you who say that you are Christians]. **17** Letting God rule our lives [MET] does not mean [that we must obey regulations about] eating or drinking [something]! Instead, [it means we must] live righteously, [act] peacefully [towards others], and be joyful by [the power of] the Holy Spirit. **18** Those who serve Christ [by acting] in such ways please God, and others will also respect them. **19** So we should always eagerly try to [live in a way that will cause] peace [among fellow Christians], and we should try to do what will help each other to mature [spiritually]. **20** Do not destroy what God has done [in the life of any believer] just because of [your eating certain kinds of] food [MET] [which that person considers wrong to eat! God] permits us to eat every [kind of food]. But if, by your eating [certain kinds of food], you encourage another person to sin [by doing what he believes is wrong], you are doing wrong. **21** It is good neither to eat meat nor to drink wine, nor [to do anything else at any time if it] will cause one of your fellow believers to stop trusting in God. **22** Let God tell you [what things are right for you to do, but do not try to force others to accept what you believe. God is] pleased with those who do what they know is right and as a result do not feel guilty [concerning what they have done], [because they have done only] those things that they believe are right. **23** But some believers are not certain [that God will approve of their eating a certain kind of food]. So if they eat it, [they think that God will punish] them. And they [truly] will be punished {[God truly] will punish them}, because [they have done things that they] believe [are not right]. Those who do anything without being certain [that God considers it to be right] are sinning.

15 Most of us are sure [that God will not punish us for doing certain things that the laws and rituals God gave Moses said the Jews should not do. But we] should be patient with those who are uncertain [about such things], and we should not let them irritate us. We should not [simply] please ourselves. **2** Each of us should [do the things that] please the fellow [believers with whom we come in contact, and things that will] benefit them. [We should do those things] in order to help them mature [spiritually]. **3** [We should please our fellow believers], since Christ [has set us an example]. He did not [do things to] please himself. On the contrary, [he tried to please God even when others insulted him. That was] as it is written {as ([someone/the Psalmist]) wrote} [in Scripture that the Messiah said to God]: "When people insulted you [(sg)], [it was as though] they were also insulting me." **4** And [you need to remember that] what was written previously {what [God's servants] previously wrote} [in the Scriptures], was written {[they] wrote} to teach us in order that we would be patient and be encouraged by [reading/believing] what they wrote. If we do that, we can confidently expect [God to do for us all he has promised]. **5** God is the one who enables us to be patient and encourages us. ([Ask/Pray to]) [him that he would] enable you [all] to live harmoniously with each other, doing as Christ Jesus [did]. **6** Then, as you are united in what you think and say [MTY], you will praise God, [who is the heavenly] father [MET] of our Lord Jesus Christ. **7** So [I say to all of you believers at Rome], accept each other. [If you do that], people will praise God [as they see you behaving like Christ. Accept each other] just like Christ accepted you! **8** I want [you to remember] that Christ [helped us] Jews [MTY] by what he did, in order to show that God (is faithful/does what he says he will do). That is, [his coming as our Messiah] fulfilled what God promised to [our Jewish] ancestors. **9** And [by acting mercifully to them, he also caused] non-Jews to praise him. [What he has done for non-Jews] fulfills what is written [in the Scriptures that David said to God]: "So I will praise you [(sg) when I am] among the non-Jews, and I will sing to you [MTY]." **10** [David] also wrote, "You non-Jews, rejoice with us who are God's people." **11** [And Moses wrote in] the [Scriptures], "Praise the Lord, all [you] non-Jews, and may everyone praise him [DOU]." **12** And Isaiah wrote [in the Scriptures], "There will be a descendant [MET] of [King] David who will begin to rule the non-Jews. They will confidently expect him [to fulfill what he has promised]." **13** God is the one who causes you to confidently expect [him to do what he has promised. I pray/ask] that he will cause you to be completely joyful and peaceful as you trust [in him]. As you do that, the Holy Spirit will enable you to more and more confidently expect [to receive what God has promised you]. **14** My fellow believers, I myself am [completely] sure that you yourselves [have acted toward others] in a completely

good way. You have done that because you have known completely [all that God wants you to know] [HYP], and because you are able to teach each other. **15** However, I have written to you quite frankly [in this letter] about some things in order to remind you [about those things]. [I have written this letter] because I have been appointed by God {God has [appointed] me}, which I did not deserve, **16** in order that I would work for Jesus Christ among non-Jews. [God has appointed me] to act like a priest as I [proclaim] his good message in order that he will accept the non-Jews [who believe in Christ. They will be] like an offering [MET] [to God] as a result of their being dedicated [to him] by the Holy Spirit {the Holy Spirit dedicating them [to God]}. **17** It follows that, because [of my relationship with] (OR, because [I belong to]) Christ Jesus, I am happy about [my work for] God. **18** I will speak boldly only [LIT] about the work that Christ has enabled me to do. [I do that work] in order that non-Jews might pay attention to [the message about Christ] as a result of what I have said and done, **19** specifically, by [my performing] many powerful miracles [DOU]. [I have done those things] as a result of [God's] Spirit powerfully [enabling me]. As a result [of doing those things, while traveling] all the way around from Jerusalem to Illyricum [province], I have completed [my work] of proclaiming the message about Christ [in those places]. **20** As [I proclaim] that message, I am always eagerly trying to proclaim it [in places] where people have not already heard about Christ. I do that in order that [as I work for God] I might not [be continuing the work for him that someone else already started] [MET]. [I do not want to be like a man who] builds [a house] on someone else's foundation. **21** On the contrary, [I teach non-Jews, so that what happens may be like] what was written {the prophet Isaiah wrote} [in the Scriptures about the Messiah]: "Those who did not hear about him previously will know [the truth about him]. Truly, those who have not heard [about him will hear and] understand [his message] [DOU]." **22** Because [I have attempted to preach the message about Christ in places where they have not heard about him], I have been hindered {things have hindered me} many times [from being able] to visit you. **23** But now there are no more places in these regions [where people have not heard about Christ]. Furthermore, for several years I have wanted to visit you. **24** [So I hope to go/come to see you]. I hope to do that as soon as I am on my way to [the provinces in] Spain. I hope to see you as I journey through [your area], and I hope that [by whatever you give me] [EUP] you will help me on my journey to Spain. But before [I go there], I want to enjoy being with you for a little while, although [I would like to stay with you longer]. **25** But [I cannot visit you] now, because I am about to go to Jerusalem in order to take money [EUP] for God's people [there]. **26** [The believers in] Macedonia and Achaia [provinces] [MTY] decided to contribute some [money] [EUP] for those of God's people in Jerusalem who are poor. **27** They themselves decided [to do this, but] truly they owe something to God's people in Jerusalem. The non-Jewish [believers] benefited spiritually from Jewish [believers as a result of hearing the message about Christ from them], so the non-Jews should also help the Jewish believers [in Jerusalem by giving them] material things (OR, money) [EUP]. **28** So when I have finished this [task] by safely delivering all this money [MET, EUP] [that the believers in Macedonia and Achaia have given], I will leave [Jerusalem and visit] you [in Rome while I am] on my way to Spain. **29** And I know that when I visit you, Christ will abundantly bless [us] (OR, enable [me] to bless [you]). **30** Because [we belong to] our Lord Jesus Christ and because the Spirit [of God causes us to] love [each other], I urge you [all] that [you help me] by fervently/intensely praying to God for me. **31** [Pray that] I will be protected {[that God] will protect me} so that the [Jews] in Judea who do not believe [the message about Christ will not harm me]. Also pray that God's people in Jerusalem will accept the money [EUP] that I [take] to them. **32** Pray these things in order that I may go/come to you if God wants me to go/come, and that I may go/come joyfully, and that then God will refresh my [spirit as a result of my visiting/being] with you. **33** [I pray that] God, who [causes us to have inner] peace, will be with all of you [and will help] you. (May it be so!/Amen!)

16 [By means of this letter] I am introducing and recommending to you our fellow believer Phoebe, [who will be taking this letter to you]. She is a deacon in the congregation in Cenchrea [city]. **2** [I request that] you receive her because of her relationship with the Lord. [You should do that because] those who are God's people ought to receive [their fellow believers]. [I am also requesting] that you help her [by giving her] [EUP] whatever she needs, because she has helped many people, including me. **3** Tell Priscilla and [her husband] Aquila that I (send greetings to/am thinking fondly of) them. They worked with me for Christ Jesus, **4** and they were even willing to die [IDM] in order [to save] my life. It is not only I who thank them [for helping me], but the people in all [HYP] the non-Jewish congregations also [thank them for saving my life]. **5** Also tell the congregation [that meets] in their house that I (send my greetings to/am thinking fondly of) them. Tell my dear friend Epaenetus the same thing. He is the first man in Asia [province] who [believed] in Christ. **6** Tell Mary, who has worked hard [for Christ] in order to [help] you, that I (send my greetings to/am thinking

fondly of) her. **7** Tell the same thing to Andronicus and [his wife] Junia (OR, and [his sister] Junia) who are my fellow Jews and who were also [previously] in prison with me. They are well-known/respected (OR, respected by the) apostles, and they became Christians before I did. **8** I also send my greetings to Ampliatus, who is a dear friend because of his relationship with the Lord. **9** I also send my greetings to Urbanus, who works for Christ with us, and to my dear friend Stachys. **10** I also send my greetings to Apelles, whom Christ has approved [because Apelles successfully endured trials]. Tell the [believers] who [live in the house] of Aristobulus that I send my greetings to them. **11** Also tell Herodion, who is my fellow Jew, that I send my greetings to him. Tell the same thing to those who [live in the house] of Narcissus who belong to the Lord. **12** Tell the same thing to Tryphaena and [her sister] Tryphosa, who work hard for the Lord. I also send my greetings to Persis. [We all] love her and she has worked very hard for the Lord. **13** Tell Rufus, who is an outstanding Christian, that I send my greetings to him. [Tell the same thing to] his mother, [who has treated me as though] I [were her son] [MET]. **14** Tell Asyncritus and Phlegon and Hermes and Patrobas and Hermas and the fellow believers who [meet] with them that I am sending my greetings to them. **15** I also send my greetings to Philologus, to [his wife] Julia (OR, [his sister] Julia), to Nereus and his sister, and to Olympas, and to all God's people who [meet] with them. **16** Greet one another affectionately, but in a pure way, [when you gather together]. The [believers in] all the Christian congregations [HYP] [in this area (send their] greetings to/say they are thinking fondly of) you. **17** My fellow believers, I exhort you that you beware of those people who are causing divisions among you and who cause people to turn away [from God] [MTY] [because they teach things that] are contrary to the message [about Christ] that you have learned (OR, that others taught you). Keep away from such people! **18** They do not serve our Lord Christ! On the contrary, they only want to satisfy their own desires [MTY]! Also, by all the eloquent things that they say [DOU] they deceive those people who do not realize [that their teaching is false]. **19** [Believers] everywhere know that you have paid attention to [the good message about Christ], with the result that I rejoice about you. But I also want you to be wise, [with the result that you do] what is good. I also want you to avoid doing what is evil. **20** [If you avoid people who teach what is false], what will [soon happen] [MET] [will be as though] God, who causes us to be peaceful, will be crushing Satan under your feet! [I pray that] our Lord Jesus will continue to act kindly towards you. **21** Timothy, who works with me, and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, who are my fellow Jews, [want you to know that they are] (sending their greetings to/thinking fondly of) you. **22** I, Tertius, [one who belongs to] the Lord, [also want you to know] that I am (sending my greetings to/thinking fondly of) you. [I am writing this letter as Paul tells me what to write for him]. **23** I, [Paul], am staying in the house of Gaius, and the whole congregation [here meets] in his house. He [also wants you to know] that he is (sending his greetings to/thinking fondly of) you. Erastus, the treasurer of [this] city, also [wants you to know that] he is (sending his greetings to/thinking fondly of) you. Our fellow believer Quartus also (sends his greetings to you./says he is thinking fondly of you.) **25** As [I] proclaim [the good message about] Jesus Christ, [I tell about God], the one who is able to strengthen you [spiritually]. I also proclaim the [truth] that was not revealed {which [God] did not reveal} in all previous ages/times **(aiōnios g166)** **26** but which has now been {which [he] has now} revealed. [I, along with others, have proclaimed] what the prophets wrote [about Christ]. We are doing what the eternal God commanded [us(exc)/me to do]. We want [people in] all ethnic groups to know [Christ] so that they can believe [in him] and obey [him]. **(aiōnios g166)** **27** [I desire that by] Jesus Christ [enabling us, we] will forever praise the one who alone is God, who alone is [truly] wise. (May it be so!/Amen!) **(aiōn g165)**

1 Corinthians

1 I, Paul, [am writing this letter]. Sosthenes, our fellow
believer, is with [me as I write it]. [God] appointed me to
be an apostle of Christ Jesus because that is what God
desired. **2** [I am sending this letter] to all you who are God's
believers in Corinth [city]. You have been set apart [by
God] {[God] has set you apart} for himself because (of your
close relationship with/you belong to) Christ Jesus. God has
appointed you to be his people and to live in a morally pure
way, just like he has appointed all the people everywhere
who belong to him to live in a morally pure way. You and
they have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ [MTY]. He is their
sovereign Lord as well as the sovereign Lord of all of us
[(inc)] who have trusted in him. **3** We [(exc)] desire that
God, who is our [heavenly] Father, and Jesus Christ, who is
our sovereign Lord, will continue to act kindly toward you
and cause you to experience [inner] peace. **4** I very often
[HYP] thank God for you because he has acted toward you
kindly, acting in ways that you do not deserve. He has done
this because of your (having a close relationship with/being
united to) Christ Jesus. **5** That is, [God] has [HYP] helped
you spiritually very much because of your (having a close
relationship with/being united to) Christ. Specifically, God
has very much [HYP] enabled you to speak messages [that
his Spirit revealed to you], and he has very much enabled
you to know many things [HYP] that his Spirit revealed to
you. **6** In that way, [he] confirmed to you that what we [(exc)]
proclaimed about Christ is true. **7** As a result, while you
wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to return, within your group
you truly have [LIT] every ability that [God's] Spirit gives [to
believers]. **8** God will also cause you to steadfastly [trust
Christ to the very end of your lives] [EUP]. The result will
be that God will not consider you guilty [of any sin] when
our Lord Jesus Christ returns to earth [MTY]. **9** You can
depend on God to do that. He is the one who chose you to
become intimately associated with his Son, Jesus Christ,
who is our Lord. **10** My fellow believers, by the authority of
[MTY] our Lord Jesus Christ, I urgently appeal to all of you
to agree with one another. What I mean is, stop dividing
into groups. Instead, be united [MET] concerning what you
understand [about spiritual matters], and be united in what
you decide. **11** My fellow believers, [I urge this] because
some members of Chloe's household have told me that you
are quarreling among yourselves. **12** That is, some of you
say, "Paul is the one to whom we [are loyal]," and others say,
"Peter is the one to whom we [are loyal]," and still others say,
"Christ is the one to whom we [are loyal]." **13** [It is ridiculous
that] [RHQ] [you are quarreling and] dividing up [into groups
instead of being loyal to] Christ alone. Christ certainly has
not divided himself into parts and distributed those parts out
[to groups of people who oppose each other]! [MET, RHQ]
I, Paul, certainly did not die on the cross for you! [RHQ]
When you were baptized {When someone baptized you},
you certainly did not promise that you were submitting to
me! [RHQ] **14** I thank [God] that Crispus and Gaius were the
only ones from among you whom I baptized. **15** As a result,
no one [there in Corinth except those two] can say, "Paul
baptized me so that I would become (his disciple/submissive
to him)." **16** [Now I remember that] I also baptized the
household of Stephanas, but I do not remember baptizing
anyone else [there]. **17** Christ sent me not [primarily] to
baptize people but to preach the good message about him.
When I do that, he does not want me to use words that
human philosophers [consider] wise [IRO]. I do not want
the message about [what] he [accomplished when he was
nailed to] the cross [MTY] to lose its power. **18** Those who
are perishing spiritually [because they do not believe that
message consider] that the message [about what Christ
accomplished when he was nailed to the] cross [MTY] [is]
foolish. But to us who are being saved {whom [God] is
saving} [spiritually because we believe that message], it
[demonstrates that] God acts powerfully [in order to save
us]. **19** [It is like what God said that] a prophet wrote long
ago, [By the things that I will do], I will show that the ideas
of those who [think] [IRO] they are wise are completely
useless. I will ignore the ideas that they think are [IRO] so
smart. **20** So, do you know [what God thinks] about what
[RHQ] people who [IRO] consider themselves to be wise and
scholars and philosophers say? [He does not pay attention
to what they say, because] [RHQ] he has shown clearly that
what unbelievers [think is] [IRO] wise is [not wise at all],
but is really foolish. **(aiōn g165)** **21** God, acting very wisely,
made it impossible for unbelievers to know God by doing
what they thought was [IRO] wise. Instead, he was happy to
save those who trust [in Christ] as the result of their hearing
[the message that] was proclaimed to them, a message that
others consider to be foolish. **22** The Jews want [people to
prove, by performing] miracles, [that their message is true].
The non-Jews want to hear only messages consisting of talk
that they consider to be very wise. **23** As for us, we proclaim
[the message about what] Christ [accomplished for us when]
he was nailed {[when they] nailed him} to the cross. That
message offends Jews [because they do not think that the
Messiah will die, and] non-Jews think it is [IRO] a foolish
message. **24** But to us whom God has chosen to belong
to himself, both Jews and non-Jews, that message shows
that God acted powerfully and wisely [by sending] Christ [to

die] for us. 25 [Unbelievers may think] [IRO] [that] God was [acting] foolishly [by doing that], but [the truth is that] he was acting more wisely than unbelievers who [just think that] [IRO] they are wise. And unbelievers may think that God was [acting] weakly [by sending his son to die], but he was acting more powerfully than unbelievers who [just think] [IRO] [that they] act powerfully. 26 My fellow believers, remember what [kind of people you] were when God chose you. [Not many of you] whom he chose are people whom [unbelievers considered to be] wise. Very few of you were considered to be important. Very few of you came from families with a high social standing. 27 Instead, it was [usually] those whom [unbelievers considered to be] foolish whom God chose. He did that in order to shame/discredit those whom [unbelievers consider] [IRO] wise. It was [usually] those [whom unbelievers] considered [IRO] unimportant whom God chose, in order to shame/discredit those whom unbelievers consider important. 28 It was usually those who are despised and considered {whom [unbelievers] despise and consider} worthless whom God chose, in order to make completely ineffective [what unbelievers consider to be important]. 29 [He did that] in order that no one could boast to God about being wise or important. 30 It is because of what God [has done] that you (have a close relationship with/belong to) Christ Jesus. God [put into effect] his wise [plan to save us] by what Christ did for us. As a result of what Christ did, God erases the record of our sins, sets us apart for himself, and frees us from our being guilty [for our sins]. 31 So, it is the Lord whom we should boast about, [not about one spiritual leader being better than another]. We should do as ([a prophet/Jeremiah]) wrote [in the Scriptures that we should do]: Those who boast should boast [only] about what the Lord [has done].

2 My fellow believers, when I came to you, I proclaimed to you the message that God had revealed to me. But I did not proclaim it using eloquent words that would make people think highly of me, nor did I argue in a way that unbelievers would think was very wise. 2 I did that because I decided that I would speak only about Jesus Christ. Specifically, I told you [what he accomplished for us when] he was killed by being nailed {[when they] killed him by nailing him} to a cross. 3 Furthermore, when I was with you, I felt that I was not adequate [to do what Christ wanted me to do]. I was afraid [that I would not be able to do it], and because of that I was trembling very much. 4 When I taught you and preached to you, I did not speak words that [unbelievers would consider] [IRO] wise in order to convince them that my message was true. Instead, [God's] Spirit showed that it was true by [enabling me to] powerfully [perform miracles]. 5 [I taught and preached that way] in order that you might believe [my message], not because you heard words that people [considered to be] [IRO] wise, but [because you recognized] God's power. 6 I do teach a message that people who are [spiritually] mature [consider to] be wise. But I do not teach a message that unbelievers [consider to be] wise. I also do not teach a message that unbelieving rulers in the world consider to be wise. [What they think about it does not matter], because [some day] (they will lose their power/not be ruling any more). (aiōn g165) 7 Instead, I teach about what God planned wisely [long ago]. It is something that people did not know about previously because [God] did not reveal it previously. But God determined before he created the world that he would greatly benefit us by his wise plan. (aiōn g165) 8 None of those who rule this world knew that wise plan. If they had known it, they would not have nailed our wonderful Lord to the cross. (aiōn g165) 9 But [we believers need to remember these words that a prophet] wrote [in the Scriptures]: Things that no one has ever seen, things that no one ever heard, things that no one ever thought could happen, those are the things that God has prepared for those who love him. 10 God has caused his Spirit to reveal those things to us [(inc)] believers. His Spirit can do that because he knows thoroughly the meaning of all things. He even knows the things about God that are very difficult to understand. 11 Only a person himself (OR, a person's spirit) knows what he is thinking. Similarly, only God's Spirit knows what God is thinking. 12 It was not the ideas that unbelievers teach that we accepted. Instead, it was the Spirit who came from God that we received, in order that we might know the things that God has freely done for us. 13 Those are the things that I tell you about. As I do that, I do not tell you things that someone [whom others thought] was [IRO] wise taught me. Instead, I tell you truths that [God's] Spirit taught [me], and I explain those spiritual truths to people whose thinking is guided by God's Spirit (OR, I teach spiritual [truths to] spiritual [people]). 14 Those who are unbelievers reject the truths that [God's] Spirit teaches us [(inc)], because they [consider those truths to be] foolish. They cannot understand them, because it is God's Spirit who enables us to evaluate those truths correctly, [and those people do not have God's Spirit]. 15 We who have God's Spirit can judge correctly the [value of] all truths [that the Spirit reveals], but [unbelievers] cannot evaluate us correctly. 16 As [one of our prophets wrote:] No human [RHQ] has known what the Lord is thinking. No human [RHQ] is able to instruct him. But we believers are able to think about things [MTY] in the way that Christ thinks about them.

3 My fellow believers, [when I was with you previously], I was not able to teach you as [I would teach people who are controlled by the Holy] Spirit {[whom the Holy] Spirit [controls]}. Instead, [I had to teach you as I would teach] people whom their self-directed nature controls. [I taught very simple concepts to you who had recently believed] in Christ, [as a parent would speak very simple words] to a baby. **2** I did not [teach] you [things that were difficult for you to understand, just like a woman does not] give [her baby] solid food [that the baby cannot chew and digest]. [And just like a woman] ([gives her baby milk/breast-feeds her baby]), [I taught you simple spiritual concepts], because at that time you were not able to understand difficult things. And you are still not able to understand difficult concepts, **3** because you are still controlled by your self-directed nature. Some of you are jealous and quarreling. (That shows that your self-directed nature is controlling you!/Does not that prove your self-directed nature is controlling you?) [RHQ] It shows that [you are acting like] unbelievers act. **4** By some of you saying, "I am [loyal to] Paul," and others saying, "I am [loyal to] Apollos," (you show that [you are acting like] unbelievers./does not it show that [you are acting like] unbelievers?) [RHQ] **5** [So what you really ought to think about] Apollos and me [RHQ] is that we(dl) are merely men who serve God. As a result of our [telling you the message about Christ], you trusted in him. Both of us [(dl)] are merely doing the work that the Lord appointed us to do. **6** I was [the first one who preached God's message to you. I was like] [MET] someone who plants seeds. [Later], Apollos [taught you more of God's message. That was like] [MET] someone who waters plants [after they start to grow]. But it is God who [enables people to grow spiritually, just like he is the one who] causes [plants] to grow. **7** So [the person who first preaches God's message to people is not important, and the person who later teaches people more of God's message is not important, just like] [MET] it is not the person who plants [the seeds] or the person who waters [the plants] who is important. Instead, it is God, who causes plants to grow [and who causes people to grow spiritually, who is important]. **8** The person [who first preaches God's message to people and the one who later teaches them more of God's message] [MET] both (are [trying to reach the] same [goal]/have the same [purpose]). And [God] will reward each of them according to how they served him. **9** Remember that Apollos and I are both working together for God. [You do not belong to us]. Just like a field [belongs to its owner, not to those who work in it], you belong to God, [not to us who work for him]. 1 Corinthians 3:9b-15 Also, a house belongs to its owner. [It does not belong to the man who built it. Similarly, God is the one to whom you belong]. **10** [Just like] a skilled person puts a foundation in the ground [before he builds a house], as a result of God kindly helping me [MET], [I was the first one who declared the message about Christ to you. And, just like] others build a house on its foundation, there were [others who later taught you more about Christ]. But [just like each person who builds a house] must be careful about what materials he uses to build it [MET], each person [who teaches God's truth must be careful about what he teaches]. **11** Just like people can put in [only] one foundation [for a house] [MET], [there is only one message that we can give to people. That message is about] Jesus Christ. **12** Furthermore, people can build a house on its foundation [with materials that are valuable and do not burn easily, such as] gold, silver, and expensive jewels. Or they could build a house with [materials that are not valuable and that burn easily, such as] wood, hay, and straw. **13** Later it will become clear/evident what kind of material they used to build the house. [Similarly, when people teach others God's truth], it will later become clear [what kind of things they taught]. [God] will make that clear/evident at the time [when he judges us] [MTY]. **14** When a fire [starts burning a house], it becomes clear whether the builders used [materials in their] work [that will burn, or materials that will not burn]. Similarly [MET], when God judges us, it will be clear whether we taught others things that were long-lasting and valuable or not. If [the materials that are used to] build a house [are materials that] do not burn, the builder will receive a reward [MET]. [Similarly, if we have taught others things that are valuable and long-lasting, God will give us a reward]. **15** If [the things that we have taught] are not valuable and long-lasting [MET], [we will not get a reward]. We will be saved {[God] will save us} [from hell], but [that is all that we will get. We will be like a man who] escapes from a fire [without saving any of his possessions]. **(questioned)** **16** You need to remember that God [is present among] you [(pl) as he was present in the] Temple [in Jerusalem]. [RHQ] God's Spirit lives within you. **17** So, [just like] God will destroy anyone who tries to destroy his Temple, [he will destroy anyone who destroys the unity of a congregation. He will do that] because [he has set] you, [his people, apart for himself, just like he set] his Temple [apart for himself]. **18** Some among you think that you are wise because unbelievers thought you were wise previously. Stop deceiving yourselves. [If you really want to be wise, by accepting what God considers to be wise] you should [be willing to let unbelievers consider that you are] foolish [IRO]. **(aiōn g165)** **19** You should do that because things that unbelievers [consider to be] [IRO] wise, God considers to be foolish. [We can learn from] the Scriptures [what God

says about] that: Those who think that they are [IRO] wise, he messes up their plans by the mistakes they make! **20** And [we can learn from] these words of Scripture, The Lord considers as useless the thoughts of [humans who think that they are] [IRO] wise. **21** So, stop boasting about [how good one Christian leader is or how good another Christian leader is]. All [of us(exc) exist as leaders only to help] you! **22** Specifically, do not boast about me, or about Apollos, or about Peter! Everything in the world exists to [benefit] you [believers]. Whether you live or whether you die, the things that are happening now or the things that will happen in the future, they are all to benefit you. **23** [You should boast about] Christ, [not about your leaders, because] you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

4 So, people ought to consider us [apostles] (OR, Apollos and me) to be [merely] servants of Christ. God has given to us [(exc) the work of] telling others the message that God has now revealed to us. **2** With respect to doing that, those who are given work are required {give others some work to do require them} to do that work faithfully. **3** I am not concerned whether you or [the judges in] some court decide whether I have done my work faithfully or not. I do not even judge myself [about that]. **4** I do not think that I have done anything wrong, but that does not prove that I have done nothing wrong. The Lord is the one who judges me. **5** So, stop evaluating any of us [(exc)] before the time [when God judges everyone] [MTY]! Do not judge us before the Lord comes. He is the one who will reveal the sinful things that people have done secretly. He will even reveal what people have thought. At that time God will praise each person as [each one of them deserves]. **6** My fellow believers, I have [told you] all these things as illustrations of myself and Apollos. I have done this for your sake, in order that you may learn [to live according to] the saying, "Do not act contrary to what is {what they have} written [in the Scriptures]." If you follow that rule, you will not be proud of one [spiritual leader] and despise another. **7** (No one has made any of you superior to others!/Why do any of you think that you are superior to others?) [RHQ] [All the abilities] that you have, you received [from God]. [RHQ] So if you received them all [from God], (you should not boast [thinking], "I got these abilities [from myself], [not from God]!"/why do you boast [thinking], "I got these abilities [from myself], [not from God]?") [RHQ] **8** [It is disgusting that you act as though] [IRO] you have already received everything that you need [spiritually]. You act as though [IRO] you were [spiritually] rich (OR, you had received all [the spiritual gifts you need]). You act as though [IRO] you had already begun to rule as kings with Christ. Well, I wish that you really were ruling [with him], in order that we [apostles] might also rule with you! **9** But it seems as though God has put us [apostles] on display, [like prisoners] at the end [of the victor's parade]. We [(exc)] are like men who have been condemned to die, who have been put in the arena where everyone can see [the wild animals] killing them. And not only people, but even angels all over the world [are watching us, as people] watch those who are performing a play [in a theater]. **10** Many people consider us to be [IRO] fools because [we preach about] Christ, but you proudly [think [IRO] that] you are wise because (of your close relationship with/you belong to) Christ. Many people [consider us] [IRO] to be unimpressive, but you [proudly think that you] impress others. People respect you, but they do not respect us. **11** Up to this present time we have often been hungry. We have often been thirsty. We have ragged clothes. Often we have been beaten {others have beaten us}. We [have traveled so much that we] have no regular homes to live in. **12** We work very hard [to earn a living]. When we are cursed [by people] {When [people] curse us}, we [ask God to] bless them. When we are persecuted {When [people] cause us to suffer}, we endure it. **13** When we are slandered [by people] {When [people] slander us}, we reply kindly to them. Up to now, [unbelievers consider us to be worthless] [MET], [as though we were] just garbage. **14** I am writing this to you, not to make you feel ashamed, but instead to warn you as [though you were] my own dear children. **15** I say that because as [an apostle of] Christ Jesus I [was the first one who] proclaimed the good message to you. As a result, I was the one who enabled you to have eternal life. So even if there were thousands of Christians who instruct you [MET], I am the only one who became [like] a father to you. **16** So I urge you to [live for Christ] the way I do. **17** In order to [help you do that], I have sent/will be sending Timothy to you. I love him [as though he were] my son. He serves the Lord faithfully. He will remind you of the way I conduct my life [as one who] (has a close relationship with/belongs to) the Lord. The way I conduct my life is the same as how I teach [others to live] in all the congregations [to whom I have spoken]. **18** Some of you have become proud, thinking that I will not come there [to rebuke your congregation about what they are doing]. **19** But if the Lord wants me to come, I will come to you soon. Then I will not [pay any attention to] what those proud people say. Instead, I will find out [whether they have God's] power. **20** Remember that God [judges whether or not we are letting him] rule [our lives], not by [listening to how we] talk, but [by seeing whether his] power [is present] ([among us/in our lives]). **21** So which do you prefer? Do you want me to come to you and punish you [because you have not changed your ways], or shall I come to you and

act lovingly and gently toward you [because you have done what I told you to do]?

5 [Now I want to discuss another matter]. It has been {People have} reported to me, and I believe that it is true, that some people among you have been acting in a sexually immoral way, in a way that is so bad that not even (pagans/people who do not know about God) act that way. People tell me that a man is living with his stepmother (OR, his father's other wife). **2** You should be sad about what that man is doing! He should have been expelled {[You] should have expelled him} from your congregation! [But you] have not [done that], so (how can you be proud, [thinking that you are spiritually mature?]/it is disgusting that you are proud, [thinking that you are spiritually mature]!) [RHQ] **3** As for me, I have already decided [how you should] punish that man. And even though I am away from you, my spirit is with you, and you should do as I would do if I were there with you. **4** [What I have decided is that] when you have gathered together with the authority [MTY] of our Lord Jesus, and my spirit is with you, and the power of our Lord Jesus [is with you], **5** you should hand that man over to Satan. Then Satan can injure/punish his body, in order that [he will turn away from his sinful behavior] and his spirit will be saved on the day when the Lord [returns] [MTY]. **6** It is not good that, [while you are letting that immoral man continue to be in your congregation], you are boasting [about being spiritually mature]. (You know that a small amount of yeast affects all the bread dough [MET] [into which it is put] {[a woman puts it]}./Do you not know that a small amount of yeast affects all the bread dough [MET] [into which it is put]?) [RHQ] [Similarly, one person who continues to sin will have a bad effect on all the congregation]. **7** So, [just like we Jews] expel the old yeast [from our houses during the Passover celebration] in order that we may have a fresh batch of dough without yeast in it [MET], [you must expel such evil people from your congregation]. Do [that so that you can truly be holy people], as [I know that] you really are. Remember that Christ was sacrificed {sacrificed himself} [so that God could spare us from being punished for our sins, just like the Jews sacrificed lambs during] the [first] Passover celebration [so that God would spare their firstborn sons from being killed]. **8** So let us celebrate [the fact that God has freed us from being punished us for our sins] [MET], [just like the Jews] in [later years] celebrated Passover [to celebrate God freeing them from being slaves in Egypt. They made sure that there was] no old yeast in the dough. [They ate bread that] had no yeast in it. [Similarly], [we should make sure that there are no people in our congregations] [MET] [who act] maliciously [toward others] or [act] wickedly. Instead, [make sure] [MET] [that all those in our congregations are ones who act] sincerely and [speak] truthfully. **9** In the previous letter that I wrote to you, I said that you should not associate with sexually immoral people. **10** I did not mean that you should not associate with unbelievers who are immoral, or who desire things that belong to others, or who (forcefully seize things that belong to others/are swindlers), or who worship idols. You would have to leave this world [to avoid all people] like that. **11** But now [I am stating clearly that] when I wrote, I [meant that] you should not associate with those who say that they are fellow believers, if they are sexually immoral or if they desire and forcefully seize things that belong to others, or worship idols, or slander others, or become drunk. You should not associate with people like that, and you should not even eat with them! **12** It is certainly not [RHQ] my business to judge people who are not believers and who do not belong to [Christian congregations]. But it certainly is [RHQ] your business to judge those who are in [your congregation]! **13** God is the one who will judge those who are not believers. [Do as the Scriptures command]: "Expel the wicked person from your midst!"

6 [Now another matter]: When any of you [believers] accuses another believer about some matter, he takes that matter to judges who are not believers, [for them to decide the case], instead of asking God's people [to decide it]. (That is disgusting!/Why do you do that?) [RHQ] **2** [I want] you to know that [we who are] God's people will [some day] judge those who are unbelievers. [RHQ] So, since you will be judging unbelievers, you certainly are capable of judging between [believers who disagree on] small matters! [RHQ] **3** (You should keep in mind that we will even judge angels!/Do you not know that we will even judge angels?) [RHQ] So we certainly should be able to judge about [matters that relate to how we] conduct our lives here on earth! **4** Therefore, when you [believers] have a dispute, you should certainly not choose as judges [to decide your case] people whom the congregation cannot respect [because those judges are not believers]! [RHQ] **5** I am saying this to make you ashamed. Surely there is someone among you who is wise enough to judge disputes between believers! [RHQ] **6** But instead, some believers [among you] accuse other believers in a legal court. And what is worse, you let the cases be judged by unbelievers {unbelievers judge the cases}! **7** The fact that you have any lawsuits among you [shows that] you have completely failed [as Christians] (OR, [allowed Satan to] defeat you). You should [allow other believers] to wrong you [without taking them to court!]! [RHQ] You should not accuse them when [they] cheat you! [RHQ] **8** But [what is happening is that] some of you are cheating

others and doing wrong to them. [That is bad]. But you are doing that to fellow believers, [and that is worse]! **9** (You should keep in mind that wicked people will not become [members of] the group over whom God will rule./Do you not know that wicked people will not become [members of] the group over whom God will rule?) [RHQ] Do not be deceived {Do not deceive yourselves} [by thinking wrongly about these matters]. People who are sexually immoral, or who worship idols, or who (commit adultery/have sex with someone to whom they are not married), or who happily allow others to commit homosexual acts with them, or who take the initiative in committing homosexual acts, **10** or who are thieves, or who desire and forcefully seize things that belong to others, or who are drunkards, or who slander others, or who are swindlers, will not enter the place where God rules. **11** Some of you previously did things like that. But [God] has freed/cleansed you [MET] [from your sinful behavior]. [He] has set you apart for himself. [He] has erased the record of your sins [because you trusted] [MTY] in the Lord Jesus Christ and because of what the Spirit of our God [has done for you]. **12** [Some of you may say], "God allows us to do anything [that he does not forbid]." But [I would reply], "[That is true], but not everything that God permits us to do helps us." [Yes, as some of you say], God permits us to do anything [that he does not forbid]. But as for me, I will not let anything make me [its slave; that is, I will not do anything that will gain control over me in such a way that I will not be able to stop doing it]. **13** [Some of you may also say], "Food is just for [us to put in] the stomach, and the stomach is just for [us to put] food [in]. And since God will do away with food and stomachs [when he gives us our new bodies, what we do with our bodies sexually does not affect us any more than eating food does." But what you have concluded is wrong, because] the Lord does not [want us to use] our bodies to do sexually immoral things. Instead, the Lord [wants us to use our bodies in ways that please him]. Also, the Lord [wants us to do what is good] for our bodies. **14** God, by his power, caused the Lord [Jesus] to live again after he died, and he will cause us to live again after we die, [which shows that he is very concerned about our bodies]. **15** You should keep in mind that your bodies belong to Christ. [RHQ] So, should I [or any other believer] [RHQ] take our body, which belongs to Christ, and join it [sexually] to a prostitute? No, certainly not! **16** When a man has sexual relations [EUP] with a prostitute, [it is as though] their two bodies become one body. (You should never forget that!/Do you not know that?) [RHQ] What [Moses] wrote [about people who join together sexually is], "The two of them will become [as though they are] one body." **17** But anyone who is united {who joins himself} to the Lord becomes one with him spiritually. **18** Always (run away from/avoid) committing sexually immoral acts. Other sins that people commit do not affect their bodies, but those who commit sexually immoral acts sin against their own bodies. **19** (Keep in mind that your bodies are [like] [MET] temples of the Holy Spirit./Do you not know that your bodies are [like] [MET] temples of the Holy Spirit?) [RHQ] The Spirit, whom God gave you, lives within you. You do not belong to yourselves. You belong to God, **20** [because when his Son died for you it was as though] [MET] [God] paid a price for you. So honor God by [how you use] your bodies!

7 Now [I will reply to] the things that you wrote to me about. It is good for people not to get married. **2** But because many people are committing sexual immorality, [which God detests], every man should have his own wife [with whom he can have sexual relations], and every woman should have her own husband [with whom she can have sexual relations]. **3** Every man must continue having sexual relations [EUP] with his wife, and every woman must continue having sexual relations with her husband. **4** A man's wife does not have the right over her own body [to be the only one to decide about having sexual relations with her husband]. Instead, her husband also has a right [to decide about that]. Similarly, a woman's husband does not have the right over his own body [to be the only one to decide about having sexual relations with his wife]. Instead, his wife also has a right [to decide about that]. **5** You may refuse [to have sexual relations with] each other [EUP] only if you both first agree to do that for a short time, in order that you may both have more time to pray. Then after that, begin having sexual relations again [EUP] in order that Satan will not be able to persuade you [to have sex with someone else] because you are unable to control your sexual desires. **6** I am telling you these things to say that [God] allows [you to get married, but he] does not say that you must [get married]. **7** I myself wish that all people would stay [unmarried/single], as I am. But God has enabled each person to live in ways that seem right for them. He has enabled some people to [live without getting married], and he has enabled other people to [get married]. **8** Now I want to say this to you unmarried people and to you whose spouses have died: It would be good for you to remain [unmarried] as I am. **9** But if you cannot control your [sexual desires] [EUP], you should get married. It is better to be married [so that you can satisfy your sexual desires with your spouse] than to constantly have a strong desire [EUP] [for sexual relations]. **10** And now I will give a command for [believers who are] married. This is not a command from me alone; it also comes from the Lord Jesus. You married women must not (separate from/divorce) your husbands! **11**

But if any of you do that, you must remain unmarried, or else you should be reconciled with your husband [and live with him again]. Similarly, men must not (separate from/divorce) their wives. **12** Now I say this to the rest of you, [to those who became believers after they were married. This is what] I [am saying], not what the Lord [has commanded]. If someone has a wife who is not a believer, if she is willing to keep living with him, he must not divorce her. **13** Similarly, if a woman has a husband who is not a believer, if he is willing to keep living with her, she must not divorce him. **14** [I say that] because God has set apart every woman's unbelieving husband [for himself] because of his wife [being a believer], and God has set apart every man's unbelieving wife [for himself] because of her husband [being a believer]. If that were not true, [God would consider] their children unacceptable. But, the fact is that [God does consider] them acceptable to him. **15** However, if a woman's husband who is not a believer or a man's wife who is not a believer wants to leave, let [him or her] do so. The husband or wife who is a believer should not force the other one to stay. God has chosen us in order that we may live peacefully. **16** [You women believers should allow your unbelieving spouses to leave you if they want to], because there is no way that you can be sure that God will save your husband if you stay together [RHQ] (OR, perhaps God will save your husband if you stay together.) Similarly, you men [who are believers], there is no way that you can be sure that God will save your wives if you stay together [RHQ] (OR, perhaps God will save your wives if you stay together.) **17** However, each person should continue in the status that the Lord gave him, the status that he had when the Lord called him [to belong to him]. That is the rule that I tell people in all the congregations [where I speak]. **18** If a man had already been circumcised [RHQ] when he became a Christian, he should not [try to pretend that he is not] circumcised. If a man had not been circumcised [RHQ] before he became a Christian, he should not become circumcised. **19** [You should not try to change your status that way], because it means nothing [to God] whether someone is circumcised or not. What is important is that we obey what God has commanded. **20** [Generally], each person should remain in the status that he had when he became a Christian. **21** If one of you was a slave when you [(sg)] became a Christian [RHQ], do not be concerned about it. However, if you get an opportunity to be free, do [what you need to do to become free]. **22** [Do not worry about your previously being a slave], because those who were slaves before they became Christians, the Lord has freed them [from Satan's control]. Similarly, those who were not slaves before they became Christians, [it is as though] [MET] they are Christ's slaves [because they must do what he tells them to do] [MET]. **23** [Christ] paid a price to buy you [when he died for you]. So do not [act as if you are evil people's] slaves [by doing the evil things that they tell you to do]. **24** My fellow believers, [I repeat that in general] each believer, being in fellowship with God, should continue in the status that he had before he became a Christian. **25** Now [I will answer your question] about women who have never married. There is nothing that the Lord has commanded me [to write about them], but I am writing this to tell you what I think [is best], because the Lord [Jesus] has mercifully enabled me to [say] what is reliable. **26** There are a lot of distressing events [happening] now (OR, that will soon happen), so I think that it is better for people to remain in the marital status that they now have. **27** If any of you [men] are married [RHQ], do not try to divorce your wife. If any of you are unmarried [RHQ], do not seek a wife. **28** But if [any of] you [men] get married, you have not committed a sin [by doing that]. Likewise, if an unmarried woman gets married, she has not committed a sin [by doing that]. However, those who get married will have many troubles, [so I am urging you to remain unmarried in order that] you may not experience [such troubles]. **29** My fellow believers, this is what I mean: There is not much time left [before Christ returns]. So, from now on those men who are married should [devote themselves to serving the Lord as much] as they would if they were not married. **30** Those who are sad should [devote themselves to serving the Lord as much] as they would if they were not sad. Those who are rejoicing [should devote themselves to serving the Lord as much] as they would if they were not joyful. **31** Those who are buying things should [devote themselves to serving the Lord as much] as they would if they did not possess those things. Because this world as it exists now will soon be gone, those who are actively involved in the affairs of this life [should not devote all their time] to be involved in those things. **32** [Another reason why] I [encourage you to remain unmarried is that] I desire that none of you be anxious [about the everyday affairs of this life]. Unmarried men are [able to be primarily] concerned about serving the Lord Jesus and trying to please him. **33** But married men are [often] greatly concerned about the affairs of this life. Specifically, they are concerned about pleasing their wives. **34** So their thinking is divided. Unmarried women are [able to be] concerned about serving the Lord. They want to set apart their minds and their bodies for serving the Lord. But married women are [often] concerned about the affairs of this life. Specifically, they are concerned about how to please their husbands. **35** I am telling you this for your own good. I am not saying it in order to restrict you. Instead, I am saying it in order that

you may do what is proper and be able to serve the Lord without being distracted {things distracting you}. **36** [Some of you men have asked about your unmarried daughters]. [I suggest that] if any man thinks that he may be treating his daughter unfairly [by keeping her from marrying], and if it is already past [the right] time for her to get married, and if he thinks that she ought to be married, he should do what he wants to do. He should let her get married. He will not be sinning [by doing that]. **37** But if a man feels absolutely sure [that it is better that his daughter not get married], and if nothing is forcing [her to get married], and if he is free to do what he decides to do on the matter, if he decides that his daughter should not get married, he is doing what is right in [keeping her from marrying]. **38** So any man who decides that his daughter should get married is doing what is good, but if he decides that she should not get married, he is doing something even better. (OR, [Some of you men have asked about the women to whom you are engaged to marry]. If any man thinks that he may be treating that woman unfairly [by not marrying her], and if it is already past [the right] time for her to get married, and if he wants to marry her very much, he should do what he wants to do. He should marry her. He will not be sinning [by doing that]. But if a man feels absolutely sure [that it is better] for him not to get married, and if nothing is forcing [them to get married], if he is free to make his own decision on the matter, if he decides not to get married, he is doing what is right. So any man who decides that he should get married to the woman he is engaged to is doing what is good, but if he decides that he should not get married, he is doing something even better.) **39** Women must remain married to their husbands while their husbands are still alive. But if a woman's husband dies, she is free to marry any [unmarried] man whom she wants to marry, but he must belong to the Lord. **40** However, I think that she will be happier if she does not marry again. And I believe that the Spirit of God is [directing] me [as I say that].

8 Now [I will answer what you asked] about [us believers] eating meat that has been sacrificed to idols. [We know what some of you say, that God has enabled] all of us [to] know [the truth about things such as idols. But often we become] proud because we say that we know [all those things]. But instead of being proud about what we know, we should show that we love [our fellow believers by helping them to] become spiritually mature. **2** Those who think that they thoroughly know something do not yet know it as they should. **3** But as for those who love God, they know that they belong to him. **4** So [I will tell you] about eating meat that people have sacrificed to idols. We know that it is true, [as you say], that idols are not really alive. We also know that there is only one real God. **5** It is true that there are gods whom people think live in the heavens or whom they think live on earth. Truly, there are many beings that [people] call gods, and whom [they] call lords. **6** But for us [believers] there is only one real God. He is [our heavenly] Father who created everything. He is the one whom we [worship and serve]. Also, for us believers Jesus Christ is the one and only Lord. He is the one whom [God caused] to create everything. It is because of what he [has done for us on the cross] that we have [spiritual] life. **7** Nevertheless, some people do not understand [that idols are not really alive]. In the past, some among you who are believers now were accustomed to believing that idols [were really alive]. As a result, when they eat such meat [now], they still think that it was sacrificed to an idol [that is alive]. They are not sure [that God allows believers to eat meat that has been offered to idols]. So, [when they eat such meat], they think that they have sinned. **8** But God will not think more highly about us [if we eat certain] foods, or if we do not eat [certain foods]. That is, we are not more acceptable to God if we do not eat certain foods, nor are we more acceptable to him if we eat those foods. **9** However, be sure that you do not do anything that God allows you to do, if by doing that you would encourage any of [your fellow believers to do something that] they are not sure [God allows them to do]. As a result, you would be causing them to sin. **10** For example, you know [that idols are not really alive]. Suppose that in a temple [where they worship] idols you eat [food that has been sacrificed to idols]. Suppose that someone who is not sure whether God allows us to eat that food sees you eating it. [You] would be encouraging him to eat it, too. [RHQ] **11** As a result, you who know that [idols are not really alive], might cause that fellow believer, one for whom Christ died, (to be ruined [spiritually]/to stop believing [in Christ]). **12** By sinning against your fellow believer by causing him to do something that he thinks God does not allow us to do, [it is as though] you are sinning against Christ himself! **13** So if [I, Paul, think that by] eating a certain food I might cause a fellow believer to be ruined spiritually, I will never eat such food again. I do not want to cause any fellow believer (to be ruined spiritually/to stop believing in Christ). [And you should] ([do as I do/imitate my example]). **(aiōn g165)**

9 I am certainly free [to do all the things that God allows me to do.] [RHQ] I am an apostle. [RHQ] [You] certainly [know that] I have seen Jesus our Lord. [RHQ] It is a result of my work that you [have believed in] the Lord [Jesus]. [RHQ] **2** And even though other people may think that I am not an apostle, you certainly should know that I am an apostle. [Remember that] your having become Christians [MET] [as a

result of my telling you about] the Lord (confirms/shows that it is true) that I am an apostle. **3** In order to defend myself, this [is what I say] to those who criticize me [by claiming that I do not act like an apostle]. **4** As for Barnabas and me, we certainly have the right [as apostles] to receive [from you and other congregations] food and drink [for our work]. [RHQ] **5** [We have the] same right [that] the other apostles and the Lord Jesus' [younger] brothers and [especially] Peter have. They all take along a wife who is a believer [when they travel various places in order to tell people about Christ. And they have a right that the people whom they work among will support their wives, too]. So Barnabas and I certainly have those same rights. [RHQ] **6** It would be ridiculous to think that Barnabas and I are the only apostles who must work to earn money to pay our expenses [while we are doing God's work! [RHQ]] **7** Soldiers certainly do not pay their own wages. [RHQ] Those who plant a vineyard would certainly eat some of the grapes [when they become ripe]. [RHQ] Those who care for sheep would certainly drink the milk from those sheep. [RHQ] [Similarly, those who tell others about Christ certainly have a right to receive] ([financial help/food]) [from the people to whom they preach]. **8** I am saying that, not only because people think that it is right. [RHQ] [No], I am [RHQ] saying it because it is what [God said] in the laws [that he gave to Moses]. **9** Moses wrote in one of those laws, "While an ox is threshing [grain], you must not tie its mouth shut [so that it cannot eat the grain]." (God was not only concerned about oxen [when he gave that law]./Was God [only] concerned about oxen [when he gave that law]?) [RHQ] **10** [No], he was [RHQ] concerned about us, also! Yes, [God caused Moses to] write those words [because he is concerned] about us! Those who plow the ground confidently expect [to eat some of] the crop [that grows]. Those who thresh grain confidently expect [to eat some of the grain that they thresh. Similarly, we who proclaim the message about Christ have the right to confidently expect to receive financial help for our work]. **11** And because we have proclaimed God's message to you, we certainly have the right to receive from you the things that we need for our bodies [MET]! [MET, RHQ] **12** Since other people [who preached to you] had that right, certainly Barnabas and I have the same right. [RHQ] However, neither of us insisted [that you give us the things that] we have a right [to receive from you]. Instead, we were willing to endure anything in order that we not hinder [anyone from believing] the message about Christ. **13** You should keep in mind that [the priests and servants] in the Temple eat [some of the food that people bring to] the Temple. [RHQ] Specifically, the priests who work at the altar eat some of [the food that the people bring to sacrifice on] the altar. **14** So the Lord has commanded that those who proclaim the good message [about him] should receive from [those who hear that] message what they need to live on. **15** However, I have not requested that you [give me] those things that I have a right [to receive from you]. Furthermore, I am writing this to you, not in order to request you to begin [giving me financial help now]. I would rather die than to [receive help from you]. I do not want anyone to prevent me from boasting [about my proclaiming God's message to you without receiving financial help from you]. **16** When I proclaim the message about Christ, I cannot boast [about doing it], because [Christ] has commanded me [to do it]. I would be very miserable (OR, [I am afraid that] God would punish me) if I did not proclaim that message. **17** If I had decided by myself to proclaim it, [God] would reward me. But I did not decide by myself to do that. I am simply doing the work that [God] entrusted to me. **18** So perhaps you wonder what my reward is. [RHQ] [I will tell you]. When I proclaim the good message [about Christ], I do not ask people for financial help. It [makes me very happy not to ask for help, and being happy is the] reward I get. I do not want to use the rights that I have [when I proclaim] the gospel. **19** I am not obligated to do what anyone else thinks that I should do. Nevertheless, when I have been with any group of people, I have made myself [do what they believed that I should do, just like a slave does what his master wants him to do]. I have done that in order that I might convince more people [to trust in Christ]. **20** Specifically, when I was with fellow Jews, I did the things that Jews [think that people should do]. I did that in order that I might convince some of them [to trust in Christ]. Although I am now not obligated to obey the Jewish laws and rituals, when I was with those who believe that they are obligated to obey those laws, I did the things that they [think that people should do]. I did that in order to convince some of them [to trust in Christ]. **21** When I was with (non-Jews/those who do not know those laws), I did the things that non-Jews [think that people should do], in order that I might convince some of them [to trust in Christ]. I do not mean that I disobey God's laws. No, I obey the things that Christ commanded us to do. **22** When I was with those who doubt [whether God will permit them to do certain things that others] ([disapprove of/think it is not right to do]), I [avoided doing those things], in order that I might convince some of them [to trust in Christ]. In summary, I have done all the things [that the people I have been with think that others should do], in order that by every possible means I might convince some of them [to trust in Christ]. **23** I do all these things in order that [more people will believe] the message about Christ, and in order that I, along with other

believers, may receive the good things [that God promises to give us]. 24 When people run in a race, they all run, but only one of them wins the race and as a result gets a prize. You certainly know that [RHQ]. So, [just like] runners [exert themselves fully to win a race] [MET], [you should exert yourselves fully to do the things that God wants you to do], in order that you may receive the reward [that God wants to give you]. 25 All athletes exercise their bodies strenuously in many ways. They do that in order to receive a wreath [as a reward to wear on their heads]. Those wreaths fade, but we will receive a reward that will last forever [LIT]. 26 For that reason, I [try hard to please God] [MET], [like a] runner who runs toward the goal [LIT]. I [try hard to accomplish what God wants me to accomplish, like] a boxer tries hard to hit his opponent, not to miss hitting him. 27 I beat my body [to make it do what I want it to do] [MET], [as] slaves [obey their masters], in order that, after I have proclaimed [God's message] to others, he will not [say that I do] not deserve to receive a reward.

10 My fellow believers, I want to remind you about our(exc) [Jewish] ancestors. They were all under the cloud [by which God miraculously led them and protected them when they left Egypt with Moses]. All those ancestors crossed the [Red] Sea [after God miraculously made the water separate so that they could walk through it]. 2 God caused all of them to begin to live under the authority of [MTY] Moses [when they walked] under that cloud and [walked through the Red] Sea. 3 All [those ancestors of ours ate the same food that God] miraculously [provided]. 4 They all drank water that [God] miraculously [provided]. That is, they all drank water that God miraculously made come out of the rock. That rock was [a symbol of] [MET] Christ, who went with them. [So we conclude that God helped all of those people in many ways]. 5 However, [we also conclude that] God was angry [LIT] with most of those people [because they sinned against him. He caused almost all of them to die, and as] a result their bodies were scattered in the desert. 6 Those things [that happened long ago] became examples to teach us [the following things]: We should not desire to [do] evil things as those people desired to do. 7 We should not worship idols as many of those people did. [Remember that Moses] wrote, "The people sat down. They ate and drank [to honor the golden calf that they had just made]. Then they got up to dance [immorally]." 8 We should not have sexual relations with someone to whom we are not married, as many of them did. As a result, God [punished them by] causing 23,000 people to die in [only] one day. 9 We should not try to see how much we can sin without the Lord punishing us. Some of them did that, and as a result they died because [poisonous] snakes [bit them]. 10 We should not complain [about what God does]. Some of them did that, and as a result an angel destroyed them. [So God will certainly punish us if we sin like they did]. 11 All those things [that happened to our ancestors long ago] are examples for us. [Moses] wrote those things to warn us [who are living at this time which is near the end]. We are the people for whom God has done [the things that he decided to do in] the previous periods of time. (aiōn g165) 12 So [I say this to] all those who confidently [think that they will always] steadfastly continue to [believe what God said and will never disobey what he commanded]: Be careful that you [(sg)] do not sin [when you are tempted]. 13 [Remember that] your desires to sin are the same desires that other people have. But when you are tempted to sin, you can trust God [to help you]. He will not permit you to be tempted {anything to tempt you} more than you are able to resist. Instead, when you are tempted {things tempt you}, he will also provide a way [for you] to endure it [without sinning]. 14 So, [I say to] you people whom I love, [avoid] worshipping idols [just like you would] run away from [anything that is dangerous]. 15 It is to people who [think that they] are wise that I write. So, you, as wise people, judge whether what I am writing [is true]. 16 [During the Lord's Supper, after we ask God to] bless (the [wine]/the [juice]) [in the] cup, we give thanks for it [and drink it]. By doing that, we certainly are [RHQ] sharing in what Christ [did for us when] his blood [flowed from his body when he died. During the Lord's Supper, when we break] the bread [and eat it], we are certainly sharing in [MTY] what Christ [did for us when] his body [suffered for us on the cross]. [RHQ] 17 Because it is one loaf of bread that we [break and eat during the Lord's Supper, it symbolizes that] we who are many are one group, because we all eat from the one loaf. 18 Consider [what happens when] the Israeli people [eat the food that the priests] sacrifice on the altar [outside the Temple]. They participate in [what the priests do at] [MTY] the altar. [RHQ] [Similarly, if you eat food that non-believers have offered to an idol in a temple, you are participating in their worship of the idol there]. 19 By saying that, [I] do not mean that offering food to an idol makes it anything [more than just ordinary food [RHQ].] I do not mean that an idol is anything [more than just an idol]. 20 No! Instead, I mean that what people sacrifice [to idols], they are sacrificing to demons, not to God. So, [if you eat food that has been sacrificed to idols, you are participating in worshipping the demons that the idols represent]. And I do not want you to participate in worshipping demons! 21 When you drink the [grape juice/wine in] [MTY] the cup [at the Lord's Supper], you cannot participate in the [blessings that] the Lord [Jesus]

brought to us and at the same time drink the [wine in the] [MTY] cup that people offer to demons! When you eat at the Lord's table, you cannot participate in the blessings the Lord provided [MTY] when he died for us and at the same time participate in the things that represent demons [by eating food that has been sacrificed to idols] **22** [If you participate in honoring demons in that way], you will certainly make the Lord very angry [RHQ]! (Remember that you are certainly not stronger than he is./Do you think that you are stronger than he is?) [RHQ] [Certainly not, so you will not escape his punishing you if you honor demons in that way!] **23** [Some people say], "[God] permits [believers to do] anything." But [I say that] not everything that people do benefits [those who do it! Yes, some people say], "God permits [believers to do] all things." But not everything that people do helps them to become [spiritually] mature. **24** No one should try to benefit [only] himself. Instead, each person should try to benefit other people [spiritually]. **25** [This is what you should do]: Eat any [food] that is sold {that people sell} in the market. Do not ask questions [to find out if that food has been offered] {[someone offered that food]} [to idols, just] because you think it would be wrong [to eat such food]. **26** [Remember that the Psalmist wrote], "Everything on the earth belongs to [the] Lord [God because he created it!]" [So, food that has been offered to idols belongs to the Lord, not to the idols, and you may eat it]. **27** If a non-believer invites you to a meal, go if you want to, and eat any food that is set {that [he] sets} before you. Do not ask [whether it was offered to idols, just] because you think that it would be wrong [to eat such food]. **28** But if someone says to you, "This is food that was sacrificed [to an idol]," do not eat it, for the sake of the person who told that to you, and also because someone there may think that it is wrong [to eat such food]. **29** I do not mean that you [should be concerned about whether it is all right to eat such food]. What I mean is that you should be concerned about others who may think that it is wrong to eat such food. Since I know that I (am free/have the right) [to eat such food without God punishing me], no one should [RHQ] say that what I am doing is wrong just because he himself thinks that it is wrong. **30** If I thank [God] for the food when I eat [food that has been offered to an idol], no one should criticize me for eating food for which I have thanked God [RHQ]! **31** So [I say to you in conclusion], when you eat [food], or drink [something], or do anything else, do everything in order that [people will] praise God. **32** Do not do anything that would hinder Jews or Greeks [from becoming believers], and do not do things that would encourage members of God's congregations to sin. **33** [Do as I do]. I try to please everyone in every way. I do this by not seeking to benefit myself. Instead, I try to benefit many others, in order that they may be saved {that [God] may save them} [from the guilt of their sins].

11 [Follow my example], just like I [try to] follow Christ's example. **2** I praise you because you remember all the things [that I taught you] and because you follow the instructions that I gave you. You have done just like I told you to do. **3** [Now], I want you to know that the one who has authority over [MTY] every man is Christ, and the ones who have authority over women are men (OR, their husbands), and the one who has authority over Christ is God. **4** [So] if any man [wears a covering over] his head when he prays or speaks a message God gave him, he disgraces himself [SYN]. **5** Also, if any woman does not wear a covering over her head when she prays or speaks a message that God gave her, she disgraces herself (OR, she dishonors her husband). That would be acting like [SIM] [women who are ashamed because] their heads have been shaved. **6** So, if women do not wear coverings over their heads [when they pray or speak messages that God gave them], they should let someone shave their heads [so that they will be ashamed]. But since women are ashamed if someone cuts their hair [short] or shaves off their hair, they should wear coverings over their heads [when they pray or speak messages that God gave them]. **7** Men should not wear coverings over their heads [when they pray or speak messages that God gave them], because they represent what God is like [MET] and they show how great God is. But women show how great men (OR, their husbands) are. **8** [Remember that God intends that men have authority over women. We know that] because [God] did not make [the first] man, [Adam], from the [first] woman, [Eve]. Instead, he made that woman [from a bone that he took] from the man. **9** Also, [God] did not create [the first] man [to help] the woman. Instead, [he] created the woman [to help] the man. **10** For that reason, women should wear something [to cover] their heads [as a symbol of their being under their husbands'] [MTY] authority. They should also [cover their heads] so that the angels [will see that and rejoice]. **11** However, remember that [even though God created the first] woman from [the first] man, all other men [have been born] from women. So men cannot be independent of women, nor can women be independent of men. But all things, [including men and women], come from God. **13** Consider this for yourselves: Is it proper for [RHQ] women to pray to God while they do not have coverings over their heads? **14** (Everyone senses that it is disgraceful for men to have long hair./Doesn't everyone sense that it is disgraceful for men to have long hair?) [RHQ] **15** But it is very delightful if women have long hair, because

[God] gave them long hair to be like a [beautiful] covering [for their heads]. **16** But whoever wants to argue [with me about my saying that women should have a covering over their heads when they pray or speak a message from God should consider the fact that] we [apostles] do not [permit] any other custom, and the [other] congregations of God do not have any other custom. **17** Now I want to tell you [about some other things]. I do not praise you about them, because whenever you believers meet together, good [things do not happen]. Instead, bad things [happen]. **18** First of all, people have told me that when you gather together as a group [to worship God], you divide into groups [that are hostile to each other]. To some extent I believe that is true. **19** It seems that you must divide into [groups that despise each other] in order that it might be clear/evident which people among you [God] approves of! **20** When you gather together, you [IRO] eat the meal [that you say is to remember the death of] the Lord [Jesus for us]. **21** But [what happens when] you eat is that each person eats his own meal before [he thinks about sharing his food with anyone else]. As a result, [when the meal is over], some people are [still] hungry and others are drunk! [So it is not a meal that honors the Lord]. **22** ([You act as though] you do not have your own houses in which you can eat and drink [whatever you want to]!/Do you not have your own houses in which you can eat and drink [whatever you want to]?) [RHQ] Do you not realize [RHQ] [that by acting selfishly in this way], it is God's people whom you are despising, and it is the poor people [in your group] whom you are treating as though they were not important? What shall I say to you about that [RHQ]? Do [you expect] me to praise you [about what you do] [RHQ]? I certainly will not praise you! **23** The Lord taught me these things that I also taught you: During the night that Jesus was betrayed {[Judas] enabled [the enemies of] the Lord Jesus to seize him}, he took some bread. **24** After he thanked God for it, he broke it into pieces. [Then he gave it to his disciples] and said, "This bread [represents] [MET] (OR, is) my body, that [I am about to sacrifice] for you. Eat bread in this [way again and again] to remember my [offering myself as a sacrifice for you]." **25** Similarly, after they ate their meal, he took a cup [MTY] [of wine]. He [thanked God for it. Then he gave it to his disciples], saying, "[The wine in] [MTY] this cup [represents] [MET] (OR, is) my blood [that will flow from my body] ([to put into effect/to establish]) the new agreement [that God is making with people]. Whenever you drink wine in this way, do it to remember that [my blood flowed for you]." **26** [Remember that] until the Lord [Jesus] returns [to the earth], whenever you eat the [bread that represents his body] and drink the wine [MTY] [that represents his blood], you are telling other people that he died [for you]. **27** So, those who eat that bread and drink that wine [MTY] in a way that is not proper [for those who belong to the Lord] are guilty of [acting in a way that is contrary to what] our [Lord intended when he offered] his body [as a sacrifice] and his blood [flowed when he died]. **28** Before any believer eats that bread and drinks that wine [MTY], he should think carefully about [what he is doing], **29** because if anyone eats [the bread that represents Christ's body] and drinks [the wine that represents his blood] without recognizing that all God's [people should be united, God will] punish him [for doing that]. **30** Many people in your group are weak and sick, and several have died [EUP] because of [the way they acted when they ate that bread and drank that wine]. **31** If we would think carefully about what we [are doing], [God] would not judge [and punish] us [like that]. **32** But when the Lord judges [and punishes] us [for acting wrongly], he disciplines us [to correct us], in order that he will not [need to] punish us when he punishes [the people who do not trust in Christ] [MTY]. **33** So, my fellow believers, when you gather together to eat [food to remember the Lord's dying for you], wait until everyone [has arrived so that you can find out who does not have enough food]. **34** Those who are so hungry [that they cannot wait to eat until everyone else has arrived] should eat in their own homes [first], in order that when you gather together God will not judge [and punish them for] ([being inconsiderate of/not being concerned about]) [others]. And when I come [to Corinth] I will give you instructions about other matters [concerning the Lord's Supper].

12 Now, my fellow believers, [I will answer your questions] about the things God's Spirit [enables believers to do]. I want you to know clearly [LIT] [about these things]. **2** You know that before you became Christians, various things led you to [worship] idols, which are unable to tell you [any of God's message]. **3** So [the first thing] that I will tell you now is that it is not the Spirit of God who would cause anyone to say, "Jesus deserved to die," and that the Holy Spirit is the only one who can enable anyone to say, "Jesus is [truly] the Lord." **4** There are various things [that God's] Spirit enables [various believers to do], but it is that same Spirit [who enables us to do them]. **5** There are many different ways to serve [the Lord], but it is the same Lord [whom we all are serving]. **6** [We believers] have the power to do various [tasks], but it is the same God who gives all of us the power [to do] these things. **7** [God's] Spirit gives his power to each believer in order to benefit all the other [believers]. **8** To some, the Spirit gives the ability to speak very wise messages. To others, the same Spirit gives the ability to know [things that he reveals to them]. **9** To others, the same

Spirit gives the ability to believe [that God will work miracles]. To others, the Spirit gives the ability to heal [sick people]. **10** To others, he gives the power [to perform] miracles. To others, he gives the ability to speak messages that come directly from God. To others, he gives the ability to tell [if a message is really from God or not]. To others he gives the ability to speak messages in languages [MTY] [that they have not learned]. To others, he gives the ability to tell the meaning of those messages [MTY]. **11** It is the same Spirit who gives all these abilities. He gives whatever abilities he wants to give, to whatever person he wants to give them. **12** Although a person's body has many parts, all the parts form just one body [DOU]. It is like that [with those who belong to] Christ. **13** When we were baptized {When people baptized us}, the one [Holy] Spirit caused us to become one group [of believers]. It does not matter whether we are Jews or non-Jews. It does not matter whether we are slaves or not slaves. [When we believed in Christ], the one Spirit came to live [MET] within all of us. **14** [Our] bodies do not have only one part. They have many parts [with various functions]. **15** If our foot could [talk and] say [to us], "Because I am not [your] hand, I am not a part of [your] body," it would still be a part of [our] body. **16** If our ear could [talk and] say, "Because I am not [your] eye, I am not a part of your body," it would still be a part of our body. **17** If our body were only an eye, (we would not be able to hear./how could we hear?) [RHQ] If our body were only an ear, (we would not be able to smell [anything]!/how could we smell [anything]?) [RHQ] **18** But the truth is that God has put all the parts of our bodies together exactly as he wanted to put them. **19** If [our body] had only one part, it would not be a body. [RHQ] **20** But the truth is that there are many parts [in our body], but it is still only one body. **21** That is why if our eye [could talk], it should never say to our hand, "I do not need you!" And if our head [could talk], it should not say to our feet, "I do not need you!" **22** Instead, the parts of our body that seem to be weaker are the ones that are absolutely necessary. **23** And the parts that we do not think highly of are the parts that we clothe carefully. And we protect carefully those parts that we do not show to people. **24** The parts that are [all right to] show people, we do not need to protect. Instead, God, who has put all the parts of our bodies together, causes us to care for in a special way the parts that we think are less important. **25** He does that in order that all the parts of our body will work together harmoniously [LIT], and so that all the parts will care for all the other parts equally. **26** If one part of our body hurts, [it is as though] all the parts of our body are hurting. If we pay special attention to one part of our body, [it is as though] all the parts of our body feel pleasure [MET]. **27** [Everything I have just said about how the parts of our bodies relate to each other applies to how] all of you who belong to Christ [should relate to each other]. Each of you belongs to him, [but you have not all been given the same abilities and work]. **28** God has placed apostles in our congregations. Apostles are first [in rank]. Next [in rank] are those who speak messages which come directly from God. Next [in rank] are those who teach [spiritual truth]. Then there are those who have the power to work miracles, those who have the ability to heal [sick people], those who have the ability to help [others], those who have the ability to govern [the affairs of the congregation], and those who have the ability to speak [messages] in languages [MTY] [that they have not learned]. **29** Certainly not all [believers] are apostles. [RHQ] They all do not have the ability to speak messages that come directly from God. [RHQ] They do not all have the ability to teach [spiritual truth]. [RHQ] They do not all have the power to work miracles. [RHQ] **30** They do not all have the ability to heal people. [RHQ] They do not all have the ability to speak [messages] in languages [MTY] [they have not learned]. [RHQ] They do not all have the ability to tell others the meaning of those messages. [RHQ] [Certainly not!] **31** But you should eagerly desire to have [the abilities that will help other believers] the most (OR, [the abilities that God considers] to be the most important). But now I will tell you the best way [to use the abilities that God's Spirit has given you].

13 Supposing we could speak [all] the various languages [MTY] that people [in the world speak] and even speak [the language] that angels [speak]. If we did not love [others, speaking those languages] would be [as useless as beating] a brass gong or clanging cymbals [together]. **2** Supposing we had the ability to speak messages that come directly from God, and we could understand the plans that he has not yet revealed [to others], and we could know everything [about everything], and we believed in God so strongly that we could [do impossible things like] causing mountains to move. If we did not love [others, God would consider all that] to be worthless. **3** And supposing we would give everything that we own to poor people, and would let others kill us in order that we could boast about [sacrificing our] own bodies. If we did not love [others], we would not get any reward [from God]. **4** Those who [PRS] truly love [others] act patiently and kindly toward them. Those who [PRS] truly love [others] are not jealous of them, they do not boast [about what they themselves have done], and are not proud. **5** Those who [PRS] truly love [others] do not act in disgraceful/disrespectful ways towards them. They do not (act selfishly/think only of themselves and what they

want). They do not quickly become angry. They do not keep remembering the bad things [that others have done to them]. **6** Those who [PRS] truly love [others] do not rejoice when [people do] evil things, but they do rejoice when [people act] righteously. **7** Those who truly love [others] patiently put up [the faults of others]. They do not quickly assume [that others have done something bad]. They confidently expect [that others will act righteously]. They patiently endure [all their own troubles]. **8** We should never [PRS] let anything stop us from continuing to love [others]. As for the ability to speak messages that come directly from God, some day that will come to an end. As for the ability to speak languages [MTY] [that we have not learned], that will [also] come to an end some day. And as for the ability to know things that God reveals to us, that will come to an end some day [because it will not be necessary any more]. **9** God does not reveal everything to us, and we cannot know everything that he knows. **10** But when everything is perfect [after Christ returns], things which are not perfect [now], [such as the abilities which God's Spirit gives us], will (disappear/come to an end). **11** When we were children, we talked like children talk, we thought like children think, we reasoned like children reason. But when we grew up, we got rid of our childish ways [MET]. [Similarly], [you need to get rid of your childish thinking about the abilities that the Spirit has given you]. **12** In this life we do not understand everything fully. It is like [MET] looking at something indirectly by seeing it in a mirror. But [when we get to heaven] [MTY], we will [understand everything clearly. It will be like] talking to someone face-to-face. Now we know only part [of everything that God wants us to know]. Then we will know everything completely, just like [God] knows us completely. **13** So now there are three things [that we must] continue [to do]: To trust [in God], to confidently expect [to receive what he will give us], and to love [others]. But the greatest of those three things is loving [others].

14 You must want to love others more [than you want anything else]. But you should [also] eagerly desire the abilities that [God's] Spirit [gives to believers]. And you should desire most of all to have the ability to speak messages that come directly from God [MTY]. **2** [I say that] because those who speak messages that come directly from God [are speaking in languages that they and the other believers in the congregation know, and so] they are able to strengthen them [spiritually] and to encourage and comfort them. But those who speak in languages [MTY] [that they have not learned] are not speaking to people. Instead, they are [only] speaking to God. No one understands them. By [the power/guidance of God's] Spirit (OR, From within [their own] spirit) they speak things that others do not know. **4** Those who speak in languages [that they have not learned] are receiving a blessing for themselves, but those who speak messages that come directly from God are giving a blessing to [all the believers in] the congregation [because they are speaking in a language that the congregation knows]. **5** I would like you all to have the ability to speak in languages [MTY] [you have not learned]. But I would like even more for you to have the ability to speak messages that come directly from God. People can speak messages in a language that they have not learned, but if there is no one there who can explain the meaning, that situation is not as helpful to the congregation as speaking messages that come directly from God [in the language that the congregation knows]. **6** My fellow believers, suppose I came and spoke to you in a language that none of you knows [and I did not explain the meaning of what I told you]. Even if I told you something that God had revealed to me, or told you some message that had come directly from him, or taught you something that you needed to know, (that certainly would not help you!/how would that help you?) [RHQ] **7** [It is like] lifeless [musical instruments], like flutes and harps for example. When they are played, if the notes are not played {if [those playing those instruments] do not play the notes} clearly, no one will know what tune is being played {what tune they are playing}. [RHQ] **8** If someone playing the trumpet [wants to signal that the soldiers should prepare to fight a battle], [the soldiers] certainly will not get ready if [the call to battle] is not played {he does not play [the call to battle]} clearly. [RHQ] **9** It is the same with you! If you do not speak words that other people can understand, (no one will know what you are saying./how will anyone know what you are saying?) [RHQ] [It will be as though] you are just speaking to the air! **10** There are many different languages in the world, and all of them convey meaning [LIT] [to the people who know those languages]. **11** But if we do not understand the language that others are speaking, [it will be as though] they are foreigners to us, and we will be foreigners to them. **12** So [I say this to] you: Because you are eager to have the abilities that God's Spirit gives, earnestly desire those abilities that will do the most to help [all the believers in] the congregation. **13** So, those who have the ability to speak in languages [MTY] [that they have not learned] should pray that [God will give them the ability to] explain the meaning of what they say. **14** If they pray in a language [MTY] [that they have not learned], their spirits are praying, but they are not using their minds. **15** So I will tell you [RHQ] what we should do. [At times] we may pray, [using] only our spirits, [in languages we have not learned. And at other times] we

should pray using our minds, [thinking about the words that we are praying. Similarly], at times we may sing using only our spirits, using languages that we have not learned, and at other times we should sing using our minds, [thinking about the words that we are singing]. **16** Suppose that any one of you praises God (OR, thanks God for what he has done), using only your [(sg)] spirit [and not using your mind]. Maybe some people [will be present who] do not know about [the abilities that God's Spirit gives to believers]. Because they do not know what you are saying, after you thank God, they will not [RHQ] know when to say "Amen!/I agree!" **17** You may be thanking God very well, but you are not helping them. **18** I thank God that I speak in languages [MTY] [that I have not learned] more than any of you do. **19** But during a worship service, [in order that others will understand what I am saying], I would prefer to speak five words using my mind, in order that I may teach others, rather than to speak 10,000 words in a language [MTY] [that is not understood by the congregation]. **20** My fellow believers, stop being like little children in the way that you think [about these abilities that God's Spirit gives]. Instead, think about them in a mature way. If you really want to be like little children, do as few wicked things as babies do! **21** [When the Jews long ago refused to obey God, he warned them about what would happen when he allowed their enemies to punish them]. In the Scriptures it is written {[the prophet Isaiah] wrote} what the Lord [God] said [about that], [They didn't listen to prophets speaking their own language, so I will send] people from foreign [lands to attack] my people. Those foreigners will speak languages that my people do not know [DOU]. [In that way], I will warn my people, but they will still not pay attention to what I say. **22** If we speak in languages [MTY] [that we have not learned], unbelievers [who are there will realize that the Spirit of God is truly among us]. That will warn them [that they need to fear God]. But believers do not [need such a warning]. **23** Suppose during the worship service everyone started to speak in languages [MTY] [that they have not learned]. If unbelievers or people who do not know [about the abilities that God's Spirit gives to believers] come in [and hear that], they will surely think that you are crazy. [RHQ] **24** But if an unbeliever or someone who does not know [about those abilities] comes in while all of you believers are [one by one] speaking messages that come directly from God, everything that you [say] will show that person that he is a sinner and that [God] will punish him [if he does not turn from his sinful behavior]. **25** He will realize that [God knows the evil things that he has done that], things that other people do not know. Then he will kneel down and worship God and say, "God is truly among you!" **26** So, my fellow believers, I will tell you [RHQ] what I think that you should be doing. When you come together [to worship God], some of you may have a hymn to sing. Others may have something to teach [the congregation]. Others may have [something to say that God has] revealed to them. Others may give messages in languages [that they have not learned]. Others will explain the meaning of those messages. Make sure that all of these things that you do will make the congregation become more mature spiritually. **27** [It is all right] if two people, or at the most three people, speak in languages [MTY] [that they have not learned]. But they must speak one at a time, and someone must explain the meaning of what the others have said. **28** If [those who want to speak in a language that they have not learned realize that] there is no one [there] who will be able to explain the meaning [of what they will say], they should not speak in that language during the meeting. Instead, they should speak to God by themselves, [somewhere else]. **29** [During a meeting], two or three people should speak messages that come directly from God, and others who are there should think carefully about what those people have said. **30** If someone receives a new message directly from God while someone else is speaking, the one who is speaking should stop speaking [and let the other person tell what God has revealed to him]. **31** You can all, one by one, speak messages that have come directly from God, in order that you can teach others and all be encouraged {encourage everyone}. **32** Those who speak messages that come directly from God are in control of their own spirits, [so they can wait for their turn to speak]. **33** Remember that God does not desire that things be done in a disorderly way [during your worship services]. Instead, he desires that everything be done in an orderly way. Just like it happens in all the other congregations of believers, **34** the women should not be permitted {do not permit the women} [to interrupt the meeting by] asking [questions]. They must keep quiet. They must be subject [to their husbands]. What Moses wrote [PRS] [about how God created the first two people] suggests [that the women should do that]. **35** If they want to know [more] about something [that a speaker said], they should ask their husbands when they get home, for it is disgraceful for women to [interrupt a service by] asking [such questions]. **36** [If you do not agree with these things that I have been telling you], remember that [RHQ] the message from God did not first come from you [people in Corinth]. Also, you are not [RHQ] the only ones who have heard it! [Many others have heard it and accepted it, so you should not act as though you are the only believers who have heard the message from God]. **37** Those of you who think that you have the ability to speak messages that come

directly from God, or think that you have some other ability [that God's] Spirit gives, should realize that the things that I have written about in this letter are things that the Lord has commanded. **38** But if they are not willing to accept [my authority], [God] will not accept them (OR, they will not be accepted [by the congregation]). **39** So, my fellow believers, be eager to speak messages that come directly from God, and do not prevent anyone from speaking in a language [that he has not learned]. **40** But make sure [that] everything that you do [during the worship services] is done in a proper and orderly way.

15 Now, my fellow believers, I want to remind you about the message about Christ that I preached to you. It is the message that you received and that you have continued to trust firmly. **2** If you keep on firmly [believing] this message that I preached to you, you will be saved {[God] will save you}. If you do not continue to believe it, your believing [in Christ] was (all for nothing/useless)! **3** The most important part of the message that I received [from the Lord Jesus], and that I told you, was this: Christ died to [take away the guilt] of our sins, as the Scriptures [said that he would do]. **4** His [dead body] was buried {They buried his [body]}. On the third day [after that], [God] caused him to become alive again, as the Scriptures [said would happen]. **5** After that, [Christ] was seen by {appeared to} Peter. Then he appeared to [eleven of] the [original] twelve [apostles]. **6** Later he was seen by {appeared to} more than 500 of our fellow believers. Most of those are still living, but some of them have died [EUP]. **7** Then he was seen by {appeared [to]} [his younger brother] James, [who became the leader of the congregation in Jerusalem]. Then he appeared to all of the apostles. **8** Finally, he was seen by {appeared to} me, but I became an apostle in a way that was very unusual [MET]. **9** The fact is, I [consider that I] am the least important of the apostles. I do not deserve to be an apostle, because I (persecuted God's groups of believers/caused God's groups of believers to suffer) [everywhere I went]. **10** But it is because God acted kindly toward me in ways that I did not deserve that I became what I am now. And his acting kindly toward me produced a great result [LIT], which is that I worked harder [for Christ] than all the other apostles. But it was not that I [was working with my own ability]. Instead, God was helping me in a way I did not deserve. **11** So it does not matter whether it was I [who was preaching or whether it was the other apostles who were preaching]. We all preached [the same message], and that message is what you believed. **12** So now [let me ask you this]: Since [we] have all preached to you that Christ was raised again {that [God] caused Christ to become alive} after he died, (no one among you should be saying that [God] will not cause [believers] to become alive again after they die!/why do some of you say that [God] will not cause [believers] to become alive again after they die?) [RHQ] **13** If [it is true that God] will not cause anyone to become alive again, that situation would mean that Christ was not raised from the dead {[he] did not cause Christ to become alive again}! **14** And if Christ was not raised from the dead {if [God] did not cause Christ to become alive again}, then what we preached to you was useless, and your believing [in Christ] is useless. **15** [If it is true that] no one will be raised from the dead {[that God] will not cause anyone to become alive again after he dies}, we [(exc)] have been guilty of lying to you about God, because we told you that God caused Christ to become alive again. **16** But if it were really true that no one who has died will be raised {that [God will] not cause anyone who has died to become alive} again, then Christ was not raised {[he] did not cause Christ to become alive} again either! **17** If it were true that Christ was not raised {that [God] did not cause Christ to become alive} again after he died, you have believed in Christ for nothing, [because] God will still [punish] you for [MTY] your sins. **18** And those people who died [EUP] [while they were trusting] in Christ will go to hell. **(questioned)** **19** In this life [many of us have suffered much for Christ] because we confidently expect [that he will reward us in heaven]. If we have confidently expected this in vain, people should pity us more than they pity anyone else! **20** But [the truth is that] Christ has been raised from the dead {that [God] has caused Christ to live again after he had died}, and (that guarantees/because of that, it is certain) [MET] that he will also cause those [believers] who have died [EUP] to become alive again. **21** What one man, [Adam, did affects us all]. We all die. Similarly, what one man—[Christ]—did [affects us(inc) all]: God will cause [all believers] to become alive again. **22** Because of what Adam did, all [of us who are descended] from him die. Similarly, because of what [Christ did], all of us who have a close relationship with him will be brought back to life {[God] will make alive all of us who have a close relationship with Christ}. **23** But we must all take our turn. [God raised] Christ first [MET]. And when Christ returns, [God will cause] those who belong to Christ to become alive again. **24** Then, after Christ has destroyed all [DOU] the evil powers that oppose God, [the world] will end. Then Christ will give to God, his Father, his kingdom to completely rule over it. **25** You must realize that Christ must rule [here on earth] until he has completely defeated [MTY] all his enemies. **26** The last thing that [he] will get rid of is death. [But he certainly will get rid of death, which is like] an enemy [to us]. **27** [In the Scriptures the Psalmist wrote that]

God will cause everything to be under Christ's [authority] [MTY]. But it is clear that the word 'everything' here does not include God, because God is the one who will cause everything to be under Christ's [authority] [MTY]. **28** After everything is put under [the authority of] God's Son, then Christ will put himself completely under [the authority of] God, the one who gave him that authority. Then God will be completely in control of everything [IDM], everywhere. **29** [Now think about this: Some among you] are being baptized (OR, are baptizing people) on behalf of those who died [before someone baptized them] (OR, who died [before they became believers]). If, [as some people say, believers] will not be raised [from the dead] {[God] will not cause [believers] to become alive again}, (what is the value in those people doing that?/there is no value in those people doing that!) [RHQ] If [God] will not cause any [believers] to become alive again, it is senseless to be baptized {baptize anyone} on behalf of someone who has died. [RHQ] **30** Furthermore, [if God will not cause us believers to become alive again], it is [RHQ] very foolish for me and the other apostles to be constantly [putting ourselves] in danger [because we tell people the gospel]. **31** My fellow believers, every day I [am in danger of] being killed {people killing me}! That is as true as it is that I am pleased with you because of your close relationship with Christ Jesus our Lord. **32** [If God will not cause us believers to become alive again after we die], (I will receive no benefit at all [from having opposed those who attacked me so strongly] in Ephesus [city]./what will I gain [from having opposed those who attacked me so strongly] in Ephesus [city]?) [RHQ] They were [fighting me like] wild beasts! If we [believers] will not be raised [from the dead] {If [God] will not cause us [believers] to live again}, we might as well say [as people often say]: "Tomorrow we are going to die, so we might as well enjoy now everything that we can. We might as well feast and get drunk!" **33** Do not let [yourselves be deceived by those who say that God will not cause believers to live again] {Do not let [people who say that God will not cause believers to live again] deceive you}. If you associate with evil people [who say such things], they will (influence you to do evil things/destroy your good moral way of living). **34** Start thinking correctly again [about these matters], as you should, and [stop your sinful behavior which has resulted from] your wrong thinking. [I say that] because [it seems that] some among you do not know God, and as a result they [are thinking wrongly]. I say that to make you ashamed. **35** But some of you are asking, "How will dead people be raised {How will [God] cause dead people to become alive} again? What kind of bodies will they have?" **36** [Anyone who asks such questions is] foolish. You [know that] a seed that is planted in the ground must completely change its form [MET] before it sprouts. **37** A seed, such as a wheat seed, is very different from the plant that sprouts from it. **38** God gives everything that lives the form that he desires. He gives each seed its own form. **39** [Similarly], people, animals, birds, and fish all have flesh, but each one has a different kind of flesh. **40** Also, there are angelic beings in heaven (OR, stars and planets in the sky), and there are people with bodies on the earth. The angelic beings (OR, stars and planets) are beautiful in one way, and people on earth are beautiful in a different way. **41** The sun is bright in one way, and the moon is bright in a different way, and the stars are bright in a different way. And even the various stars are different from each other in how bright they are. **42** And it is the same way [with our bodies. The bodies that we will have when God causes us] to live again after we die [will not be the same as the bodies that we have now] [MET]. [The bodies that we have now] will die and decay. [The new bodies that we will have] will never die. **43** We despise [the bodies that we have now], before we die. But our [new bodies] will be glorious. The [bodies that we have before we die] are weak. But our new bodies will be strong. **44** The bodies that we have before we die are natural bodies. But [our new bodies] will be ones that [God's] Spirit ([controls/gives us]). Just like there are natural bodies, there are bodies that [God's] Spirit [completely] controls (OR, makes alive). **45** [In the Scriptures] it is written {we read} that [when] the first man, Adam, [was created], he became a living human being. [Christ later also became a human being]. But [he is different from Adam, because he] became a person who gives us [spiritual] life. **46** But our bodies that God's Spirit (will completely control/will give us) are not the first bodies that we have. We have our natural bodies first. **47** The first man, [Adam], was created {[God] created the first man, Adam} from the dust of the earth. But [Christ], the one who came later, came from heaven. **48** Everyone on earth [has a body] like the first man on the earth had. And in heaven, [everyone will have a body like Christ], the man who came from heaven, has. **49** And just like [God] gave us bodies like the first man on earth had, so we [believers will have bodies] like [Christ] has, who is now in heaven. **50** My fellow believers, I want you to know that we [(inc)] [SYN] cannot go [to heaven, where] God rules [over everything], with our physical bodies, because our bodies [cannot last forever]. They will die and decay. **51** But I will tell you something that [God] has not revealed [before]: [Some of] us [believers] will not die [EUP]. However, all of us will be changed {[God] will change all of us}. **52** [It will happen] suddenly, as [fast as someone can] blink his eye

[MET], when [we hear the sound of God's] trumpet for the last time. When we hear that trumpet, all [the believers] who have died will come back to life and will have bodies that are changed {that [God] has changed}, bodies that will never decay. **53** And the [bodies of us who are alive at that time] will [also] be changed {And [God] will [also] change the [bodies of us who are alive at that time]}. These bodies of ours that die and decay must be transformed into [new bodies that] will never die; [it will be like someone] [MET] getting rid of [his old clothes] and putting on [new ones]. **54** When that happens, what is written {what ([a prophet/Isaiah]) wrote} [in the Scriptures] will come true/happen: [God] will completely get rid of [MET] death. Our dying will no longer have any power to defeat us; **55** Death [APO] will not win a victory over us. Death will not be able to hurt us. **(Hadēs g86)** **56** It is because we sin [MET] [that we die, and it is because we] have God's laws that we [know that we] have sinned. **57** But because of what our Lord Jesus Christ [has done], he enables us to be free [from having to obey God's laws to be saved and to be free of being afraid to die]. We should thank God for that! **58** So, my fellow believers whom I love, continue to hold strongly to [the things that you believe]. Do not let anything cause you to doubt them. Always be doing enthusiastically the work that the Lord [gives you]. And remember that the work that you do for the Lord is never (in vain/useless), [as it would be if God will not cause us to live again after we die].

16 Now [I will reply to another question that you asked. You asked] about the [money you are] collecting [to send] to God's people [in Jerusalem]. Do what I told the congregations in Galatia to do. **2** Every Sunday each of you should set aside [at home] some funds [EUP] [for this purpose], in proportion to how much [God] has prospered you. Then you should save it up, so that when I arrive there, you will not need to collect [any more money. Choose some men whom you approve of, to take] this money to Jerusalem. **3** Then, when I arrive, I will write letters stating that you have authorized these men to take the funds there. **4** And if [you] (OR, [I]) think that it is appropriate, I will go with them. **5** Now I plan to travel through Macedonia [province]. I [plan to] come to visit you, but I want to go through Macedonia first. **6** Perhaps I will stay with you for a short while, or I may stay with you for the whole winter, in order that you yourselves can provide some of the things [that I will need] [EUP] for my next trip. **7** I do not want to see you just for a short time and then continue my trip. I am hoping to stay with you for a while, if the Lord [Jesus] allows me to do that. **8** But I will stay [here] in Ephesus [city] until [after] the Pentecost [festival]. **9** [I want to do that] because [God] has given me a great opportunity [MET] [to proclaim his good message here]. [As a result of my work here, God is producing] great results. I also want to stay here because there are many people here who oppose [my work, and I need to refute them]. **10** When Timothy arrives [there in Corinth], treat him respectfully [LIT], because he is working for the Lord just as I am. **11** Do not let anyone despise him. And when he leaves there, give him some of the things that he needs [for his trip] [EUP] [here], and also [ask God to] bless him. I am waiting for him to come, along with the other fellow believers [who have been traveling with him]. **12** [You also asked] about our fellow believer, Apollos. I urged him strongly that he should go back to you with the three fellow believers [who came here from Corinth]. He was not at all willing to go [now], but he will go later, when he has an opportunity. **13** Be on guard [against anything that would hinder you spiritually]. You have believed [the true message]; continue believing it firmly. Be courageous. Keep strong [in your relationship with God]. **14** Act in a loving [way] in everything that [you do]. **15** You know that Stephanas and his family were the first ones [there] in Achaia [province to believe in Christ] [IDM]. They have devoted themselves to helping God's people. **16** My fellow believers, I urge you to submit yourselves to them and to people like them who do [God's] work and who work hard. **17** I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus arrived here [from Corinth], because [they did things for] me that you were not able to do [because you were not with me]. **18** They comforted and encouraged me [SYN], and [I expect that this news from me] will do the same for you. You should honor [them, and you should also honor] others like them. **19** The congregations [here] in Asia [province] (send their greetings to/say that they are thinking fondly of) you. Aquila and [his wife] Priscilla and the congregation that meets in their house (send their warm greetings to/say that they are thinking fondly of) you because both they and you belong to the Lord. **20** All your fellow believers [here] (send their greetings to/say that they are thinking of) you. Greet each other affectionately, as fellow believers [should]. **21** Now I, Paul, having taken the pen from the hand of my secretary, write with my own hand to say that I am thinking fondly of you/to give you my greetings. I do this to show you that this letter really comes from me. **22** (I pray that God will/May God) curse/cause bad things to happen to (anyone who does not love the Lord Jesus. I pray that our Lord will come soon/May our Lord come soon)! **23** I pray that our Lord Jesus will/May our Lord Jesus (continue to act toward you all kindly/in ways that you do not deserve.) **24** I love all of you who have a close relationship with Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians

1 [I], Paul, who [write this letter to you], became an apostle of Christ Jesus because God chose me for that. [Timothy, our] fellow believer, [is with me. I am sending this letter] to you who are God's people in the congregations in Corinth [city. I want] the believers who live in [other places] in Achaia [province to also read this letter]. **2** [We(exc) desire] that you will [experience] God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ [acting] kindly toward you and causing you to have [inner] peace. **3** [We should] praise God, who is the father of our [(inc)] Lord Jesus Christ. He always pities us and helps us [because he is like] [MET] a father to us [and we are like his children]. He always encourages us [(inc)]. **4** He has encouraged us [(exc)] whenever we suffered hardships. As a result, we [(exc)] are able to encourage others whenever they suffer hardships, just as/just like God has encouraged us [(exc)]. **5** It is true that just like Christ suffered, we [who serve him] also continually suffer [because we belong to him]. But also, because we [belong to] Christ, God greatly strengthens us (just as/just like) [God strengthened him]. **6** So, whenever we [(exc)] experience sufferings, we [learn how to encourage] you [when you experience sufferings. As a result, you will become more and more the kind of people God] wants you to be. Whenever [God] strengthens us [(exc) when we are suffering, he] does that in order that you [may see how he makes us strong when we are suffering. Then, as God] encourages [you in that way], you will learn to continue patiently [trusting him] when you suffer as we do. **7** As a result, we [(exc)] strongly expect that because you suffer just as/just like we do, [God] will encourage you (just as/just like) [he] encourages us. **8** [Our] fellow believers, we [(exc)] want you to know [LIT] about the trouble that we suffered in Asia [province]. That trouble was so very great that it was much more than we were able to endure. As a result, we [(exc)] thought that we would certainly die. **9** Indeed, we felt [like a person feels when he has heard a judge say], "I condemn you to die/be executed [MET]." But [God allowed us to think that we were going to die] so that we would not (rely on/trust in) our own [strength. He wanted us] instead [to rely] only on his [strength, because he] is the one who [has power even to make] those who have died live [again]. **10** And [even though] we [(exc)] were [in terrible danger and were] about to die, God rescued us. And he will continue to rescue us [whenever we are in trouble]. We confidently expect that he will continue to rescue us [time after time]. **11** [And we are also relying on] you to help us by praying for us [(exc)]. [If many people pray for us], many people will also thank [God] when [he] kindly answers those many prayers [and delivers us from danger]. **12** I am happy [to say] that I have behaved toward all people [MTY] in an honest and sincere way. My conscience assures me [that this is true]. Especially, I have behaved toward you [honestly and sincerely because that is what] God wants us to do. As I have done that, [my thoughts] have not been the thoughts that unbelieving people [MTY] [think are] wise. Instead, [I have behaved toward people only as God wants me to, depending on] God to help me in ways that I do not deserve. **13** [I say that] because [in all my letters to you] I have always written [LIT] clearly in a way that you can easily and completely understand [when you] read them. **14** [Previously some of] you, but not all of you, have completely understood [that I am always honest and sincere with you]. But I confidently expect that [soon] you will all be fully convinced [about that]. Then when the Lord Jesus [MTY] [returns, you will all be able to say that] you are pleased with me, just like I will [be able to say that] I am pleased with you. **15** It was because I felt sure [that all of you were pleased with me] that I was planning to visit you on my way from [here] to Macedonia [province]. I also planned to visit you again on my way back from there, so that I could [spend time with you] twice, and be able to help you more, and I was hoping that you would [give me things that I needed] [EUP] for my journey to Judea [province]. **17** So then, even though I [changed my mind later and did not do what] I [first] planned to do, [it was not because I did not have an important reason for changing my plans]. Surely you do not [really think] that I decide what I am going to do like people who do not know God do! [RHQ] I am [not like that]. I am not [a person who] says [to people], "Yes, [certainly I will do that]," and then [for no good reason changes his mind and says], "No, [I will not do it]." **18** Just as surely as God always does what he says [he will do, it is true that I have never said], "Yes, [I will do this]" when I [really meant] "No." **19** [I follow the example of] God's Son, Jesus Christ. When I, along with Silas and Timothy, taught you [about Christ], we told you that he was not [someone who said that he] would do [something] and [then] did not [do it]. Jesus Christ never [said to anyone], "Yes, [I will do what you desire]," and [then did] not [do it]. **20** [We(inc) know that is true], because everything that God promised to do [for his people], he has done completely by [sending] Christ [to save us]. That is why we say, "Yes, it is true! [God has done everything that he promised to do]!" And we praise him for that! **21** Now it is only God himself who causes us [(exc)], as well as you, to keep on [believing] strongly in Christ. God is the one who chose us [(inc) to belong to him and to have a close relationship] with Christ. **22** He also sent his Holy Spirit into our [(inc)] lives to mark us

as belonging to himself [MET]. Also, since he has sent his Spirit to live in us [(inc)], [he wants us to know by this that] he guarantees [MET] [to give us every other] ([blessing/good thing]) [that he has promised]. **23** So now [I will tell you why I changed my mind and did not visit you as I intended to do]: God himself knows [that what I am telling you is true]. The reason that I did not return to Corinth was so that I might not have to [speak to you severely about the wrong that you had done]. **24** It is not that Silas, Timothy and I want to boss you [and tell you that you must] believe only what we say. [Not at all]! On the contrary, we [(exc)] are working as partners [with you] in order to make you happy. [We do not try to force you to believe everything that we believe, because we are sure that you are continuing to] trust [the Lord Jesus Christ] and that you are remaining firmly committed to him.

2 Anyway, I definitely decided that I would not come to visit you again [now. If I had come, I would have spoken severely to you again, and] I would have made you unhappy as I did the last time [I visited you]. **2** [And] if I make you unhappy, I will have made unhappy [the only people who can cheer me up], so (there will be none of you to cheer me up!/who would cheer me up?) [RHQ] **3** So, [instead of going to visit you at that time], I wrote a letter [and sent it to you]. I wrote it the way I did so that [you would know what you should do. Then] when I come to visit you, you will not make me unhappy when you should be causing me to rejoice. I was quite sure that all of you [would do what I told you to do in that letter, and because of that] I would be happy and you would be happy, too. **4** I wrote to you [the way I did] because I felt very troubled and distressed about you. I was even crying very much as I wrote. [My purpose in writing was] not in order to make you feel bad, but, instead, in order that you might know how deeply/much I love you. **5** [Now I want to write about the man who] caused all this anguish. [What he did was very wrong, but] I know that it has caused you much more sorrow than it has caused me, because [what he did] has [affected] all of you [to some extent. I say], "to some extent," [because I do not want to say that he has] done more harm [than he really has done]. **6** [Since he has now stopped sinning in that way], the punishment that nearly all of you [decided was right for him] has continued long enough. **7** So now, instead [of punishing him any longer], you need to forgive him and deal kindly with him. [If you do not forgive him], he may become so sad that he will begin to [think that you will never forgive him] (OR, will stop [believing in Christ]). **8** For those reasons, I beg you to [forgive him and accept him into your group again, and by doing that] assure him that you truly love him. **9** [I feel sure that you will do as I ask], because when I wrote [severely] to you [before], I did it to test you by finding out whether or not you really would do everything [that I, as your apostle, asked you to do]. **10** So [since you obeyed what I told you before, I feel sure that now you will obey what I am writing in this letter] and forgive the man, as I have done, because I indeed have forgiven him for the wrong thing that he did. Anything he needed me to forgive him for, I have forgiven, and Christ knows [that I have forgiven him sincerely. I have done that mainly] to help you [so that you and I will again have fellowship with each other, and that you will accept him into your group again]. **11** [I want you to forgive him] so that Satan will not be able to take advantage of [the problems among] us [and make the situation worse]. We know very well [LIT] that Satan is always planning to [cause problems among us]. **12** [I will continue by telling you what I did after I wrote to you from Ephesus city]. I went to Troas [city] in order to [tell people] the message [about] Christ. [When I arrived there], I found [many people] who had been prepared by the Lord [Jesus] [MET] [to listen to what I told them about him]. **13** But because my fellow believer Titus had not [arrived with a report from you], I still felt very anxious and concerned [about you]. So, [after spending only a short time at Troas], I said goodbye to [the believers who were there] and came [here] to Macedonia [province to find Titus]. **14** However, [before I tell you any more about that], I [want to] thank God [for what he is doing. As a great leader of fighting men causes all his prisoners to take part in his victory parade] [MET], God leads us [who are his workers] to always be victorious [over Satan because of our(exc) close relationship with Christ. God causes people to come to] know Jesus Christ as a result of our [(exc) teaching his message. That message is like] [MET] the smell of perfume. **15** [When we(exc) tell God's message] about Christ, it [spreads out among people] like the smell of perfume. [Those who believe the message that we tell them] are saved {[Jesus Christ] saves them} [from the guilt of their sin. But those who reject that message] will be separated from God [forever]. **16** To those who [are on the way to hell, our message is like] [MET] a foul smell [because it is about dying] and being separated from God forever. But, to those [on the way to heaven, the message that we teach is like] a pure fragrant smell, [because we tell them] that they will live [forever with God. As we think about that, we think] (no one is able [to do] such important work [for God!]/how can anyone be able [to do] such important work [for God]?) [RHQ] **(questioned)** **17** [But perhaps God considers us(exc) able], because we do not work/act like so many [others whom you know]. They teach God's message in a way that [they think people will like, and they think that] people will pay them for teaching that way. We [(exc)

certainly do not do that]. On the contrary, [as servants of] Christ, and knowing that God is watching us [(exc)], we teach sincerely [the message that] God sent us to proclaim.

3 [As I write these things about myself], I am [RHQ] not [doing it] to boast about how good I am, [as some of you say I do]. Some people always carry letters with them that tell how well they work, [that other people] have [written]. But I do not [RHQ] need [to bring] letters like that [when I come to you]. Nor do I need to ask you [to write] letters like that [for me when I go to other congregations]. **2** You yourselves are [MET] [like a] letter that recommends my work [for God to everyone]. People see [how Christ changed] your [lives when you believed the message that I taught you]. Everyone [who knows you] can see [the result of my work for God]. **3** You are [MET] [like] a letter that Christ himself [has written] that says good things about [my work for God in your lives]. You show [people by the way you now conduct your lives that God has changed your lives] as a result of my work [among you. People did] not [find out about you by] reading [a letter that was written to them on paper] with [pen and] ink. Instead, [they saw how] the Spirit of the all-powerful God [has changed your lives]. Nor [did people find out about you by reading] a letter that was carved on stone slabs [like the stone slabs that God gave to Moses]. Instead, [it was the change that God's Spirit made in] your lives [MET] [that they saw]. **4** I [can very] confidently [write these things about the work that Silas, Timothy, and I did among you, because God knows that what I write is true. We(exc) are true workers] for God [because of what] Christ [has done for us]. **5** We [(exc)], by ourselves, do not have the ability [to do this work]. None of us [apostles] can say, "[I have changed the lives of these people]." God is the one [who has given us this ability]. **6** He is the one who enables us [(exc)] to be his messengers. [He has enabled us to tell people the message] about the new agreement [that he is making with them]. This is not a [message about obeying all the] written laws [of his old agreement that he made with the Jewish people]. Instead, [it is a message about God giving us his] Spirit. [Previously, God condemned people to be] separated from him forever [if they did not obey his laws]. But by [God's new agreement] his Spirit enables people to live [eternally]. **7** [Moses] taught [the people that if they did not obey God's laws completely they would be] separated from God forever. [God] wrote [his laws] on stone [slabs. Then he gave them to Moses to teach them to the people. Although God's laws condemned the people] to die, [when Moses brought those laws down from Sinai Mountain, God caused Moses' face to shine] Moses' face to shine radiantly [to show the people that these laws were God's laws. It shone]. so brightly that the people of Israel could not keep looking at Moses' face. [They had to look away]. But the brightness was slowly fading away. **8** [So], [since God showed in such a wonderful way that those laws that condemned the people to die were from him], surely when we [(exc)] teach [people about how God's] Spirit will [change their lives], [God will show] in an even more wonderful way [that] it is [his message.] [RHQ] **9** The message [that Moses taught them was wonderful, but when people heard] that message, [they realized that they were sinners and that God] would punish them. But God's message that we [(exc) teach is a] much more wonderful message. We teach people that God will (erase the record of/declare people no longer guilty for) [the sinful things that they have done]. **10** [The truth is that, although the work of teaching the people to obey God's laws] was once important, it is not as important now, because [the work of teaching people that God will forgive them and] enable them to live to please him is far more important. **11** Furthermore, [the message that Moses taught was not a lasting message, just like] the brightness on his face was not lasting and soon faded away. But [when God gives his Spirit to people], the wonderful work that [God's Spirit does in their lives] is much greater [because] it lasts forever. **12** We [(exc)] know that the message that we teach is a [much more wonderful message than the message that Moses taught]. So we [can preach] boldly. **13** We do not [need to put a veil over our faces when we teach people], as Moses did. Moses put a veil over his face so that the Israelites would not see that the radiance [on his face] soon faded away. [Similarly, the glory of the old agreement has also faded away]. **14** But the Israelis stubbornly refused to [understand that the old agreement would end]. Even now, when they read the old agreement, [they still do not realize that it has ended. It is as if] [MET] that same veil [that Moses put on his face] is now over their [minds, keeping them from understanding God's true message]. They will [understand that message] only when [they come to trust] in Christ. Then [it will be as though God] has removed the veil. **15** [Throughout all these years], even until now, when [the Israelis] read what Moses [write, it is as though] a veil is covering their minds. **16** But when any of them believes in the Lord [Jesus], [God] removes that veil from them. **17** [It is by the power of his] Spirit that the Lord [works in our lives], and the Lord's Spirit has set us free [from trying to obey all the rules and rituals that God gave Moses]. **18** [It is as though God] has removed the veil from our faces [MET]. We realize how awesome Jesus is. As we realize that, we are continually being changed {[the Holy Spirit is] continually changing us} to become more and more like Jesus, [so that people can see], more and more, how

awesome [Jesus is]. It is the Spirit of the Lord who does [this].

4 So, because God has acted so kindly [toward me], enabling [me to teach] this great [message to people], I never get [so] discouraged [that I stop teaching it]. **2** And I have determined that we [(exc)] will be honest [LIT] in everything that we do. We will not [do anything that would cause] us to be ashamed [if people found out about it]. We never try to deceive [you with clever arguments, as some other people do]. We never [try to deceive you] by changing God's message, [as those same people do]. Instead, we always teach [people only] the truth [about Christ], and we teach it clearly. Knowing that God is watching what we do, we [teach his message in an honest way, with the result that] no one can [accuse] us [(exc) of being deceitful]. **3** And if, [as some of you say, some people are] not able to understand the message [that we teach about Christ, it is not because we do not teach it clearly]. It is because those people [do not want to believe it]. They are going to perish eternally. **4** [Satan, who is] the one [who rules] this world, controls the thoughts of those unbelievers. He prevents them from understanding the message about how wonderful Christ is. [They are not able to understand that] Jesus is like God [in every way]. **(aiōn g165)** **5** That is why, [when we(exc) teach people], we do not boast about ourselves, [as some people say that we do]. Instead, [we teach you] that Jesus Christ is our Lord. We ourselves are [only] your servants. [We want to honor and obey] Jesus. **6** When God [created the world], he commanded the light to shine [where there was nothing but] darkness. He is the one who has [made his message about Jesus to be like] [MET] a light shining into our [(inc)] minds. [God] has done that [for all of us who believe in Jesus. He has done that so that we will understand that when people saw] Christ, they saw how awesome God himself was. **7** [This work that God has given to] us [(exc)] is [MET] [like] a very valuable treasure. But we who have that treasure [are as weak as fragile] [MET] clay pots. [God has planned it like that] in order that [people] will know that the power [that changes lives] is God's power, and not any power of our own. **8** We are continually oppressed {[People] continually oppress us} in many ways, but [we have] not been prevented {[God has] not [allowed them to] prevent us} [from teaching the message about Jesus Christ]. We often do not know what to do [in difficult situations], but we never say, "God has abandoned us." **9** [We are frequently] persecuted {[People frequently] cause us to suffer}, but [God] never abandons us. [Sometimes we are] badly wounded {[people] badly wound us}, but [God does] not [allow] us [to] be killed {[them to] kill us}. **10** [Wherever we(exc) go], we continually [realize that because people killed] Jesus, [people may] kill us [for teaching his message. But we are willing to go on living this way] in order that [people] will know that Jesus is alive and [that he is directing] us [SYN]. **11** [So, although] we are [still] alive, we always realize that we may be killed {that [people some day] may kill us} because [we teach about] Jesus. [God allows us to suffer] in order that [people] will see that Jesus is alive and that he is [strengthening] our bodies that are some day going to die. **12** So [I conclude that although] we [apostles] are constantly [suffering and may soon] die, [the result of that is that all of] you [have now received eternal] life. **13** We are not discouraged. We are like [the person who] wrote [in the Scriptures], "[God], I trusted [in you] and so I continue speaking [your message]." We [(exc)] also trust [in God], so we continue speaking [his message]. **14** [We do this] because we [(exc)] know that [although people might kill us, God], who caused the Lord Jesus to live again after he died, will also cause us [(exc)] to live again [after we die. God will do this because we belong to] Jesus. [And then God] will bring us [(exc)], together with you, to be with him. **15** [So I say that] all these things [that we(exc) suffer] happen in order to help you. [We have suffered all this] in order that more and more people, [as a result of hearing that God will] kindly/freely [forgive their sins], will thank [him and praise him. Then] they will greatly honor him [and worship him]. **16** So, [because we know that as a result of our suffering many people will honor God], we [(exc)] never get so discouraged [that we stop teaching his message]. Although our bodies are getting weaker, [God] encourages us every day and strengthens us spiritually. **17** [I know that] all these troubles that [happen to us in this life are] not significant and will not last forever. [When we think of] the glorious things [that God is preparing] for us [to enjoy] forever [in heaven], all [our suffering now] is not important. **(aiōnios g166)** **18** That is why we say, "We will not continue thinking about [all the suffering that we] are experiencing now. Even though [we] cannot see [all the things that God has prepared for us in heaven], those are what we should be thinking about." [That is how we should think], because [all these troubles] that [we(exc)] have [now] will last only a short time. But what [we will have in heaven], what [we] cannot see [now], will last forever. **(aiōnios g166)**

5 We know that [these bodies] we live in [here in this world are like] [MET] tents. [They are like temporary living/dwelling places]. [So we should not be concerned about what happens to our bodies]. We know that if we are killed {if [someone] kills us}, God will give us [permanent living places. Those permanent living places] [MET] will not be houses that people have made. They [will be new bodies

in which we will live forever] in heaven. **(aiōnios g166)** **2** [While we are here on earth, we suffer]. We often groan because we desire [to go] to heaven [where God] will give us our new [bodies] [MET]. **3** When [God gives us(inc) our new bodies] [MET], our [spirits will have] [LIT, MET] bodies to live in [that will last forever]. **4** [It is true that] while we are still living in these bodies [MET] [that do not last forever], we often groan [DOU] [because we desire to be free from them]. We are not longing to be without a body. Instead, [we groan because] we desire to receive our new bodies [MET] in heaven. We long for this to happen so that these bodies that are going to die some day will suddenly be changed [into bodies] that will live [forever]. **5** It is God himself who has prepared us to [receive] these [new bodies]. He is also the one who has guaranteed/assured us [(inc)] that this will happen. He has guaranteed it by sending his Spirit [to live inside us now]. **6** So, [because God's Spirit lives in us], we are always confident [that God will give us new bodies]. We know that as long as we have bodies here on [earth], we are not yet [living together] with the Lord [Jesus in heaven]. **7** While we [(exc)] live [here, we] do not have our [new bodies, but we are] trusting [that God will give them to us]. **8** [As I said], we [(exc)] are confident [that he will give us new bodies]. We [(exc)] would much prefer to leave these bodies [which we have now], and be with the Lord [Jesus in our] home in [heaven]. **9** Because of all that, we always want to please [Jesus in everything that we do]. Whether we [(exc)] are [still living] here [in these] bodies or whether we have [left] them and are living in our home [in heaven], we want to please him. **10** [And we need to try hard to do that] because each one of us [believers] must stand before Christ [to be] judged [by him] {[when he will] judge [his people]}. [At that time] he will [reward each one of] us according to what we have done [while we lived in this world] in these bodies. [He will reward us according to] whether we have done good things or whether we have done evil things. **11** It makes me fearful [to think that some day I will stand before the Lord for him to judge me]. So I [do everything that I can to] convince people [that they should believe] (OR, [that I teach] sincerely) [God's message]. God knows very well [how I conduct my life and what I teach], and I really believe that you know it, too. **12** Once again [I say, as I write this], I am not just [trying to] make you think well/highly of me, [as some people will probably say that I am]. Instead, I am [telling you in this letter why you have] good reason [to tell those who criticize me] that you think highly of me. [I am telling you this] so that you will know what to say to those [teachers of false doctrine among you]. They are proud [of what they have done], instead of [making sure that] they [are right with God and being pleased with that]. **13** [Some of them say that after God has enabled me to see visions], I [talk like] a crazy person. If [that is so, I want you to realize that I talk that way in order to please] God. On the other hand, if [you think that] I [speak and act] wisely, [that is good. I want you to know that I do] speak and act wisely in order to [help] you. **14** [I speak and act the way I do] because the love that Christ [has for people] influences me [in everything that I say and do]. When Christ died, [he suffered the punishment] for [the sins of] all people. So, we should all [think of ourselves as having] died with him, [being as unresponsive to sinful desires as] [MET] a corpse is. **15** When [Christ] died for the everyone, he died in order that [we believers who are alive now] should not conduct our lives in a way that will just [please ourselves]. Instead, [we should conduct our lives in a way that will please] Christ, [because] he is the one who died for us and was brought back to life {whom [God] raised} again. **16** So, [because I realize how much Christ loves everyone], I no longer think about people in the way that those who do not believe [in Christ] think about [them]. Before I [was a believer], I thought about Christ in the way that other non-believers did. But I do not think of him that way any more. **17** The fact is that God makes every one [of us] who [trusts] in Christ to be completely different [than we were before]. Our old [way of conducting our lives] is gone. We now have a [completely] new way of [conducting our lives]. **18** This [complete change in our lives] is all something that God [does]. It is God who made it possible for us to have a peaceful relationship with him. [He was able to do that] because of what Christ [did for us]. Now God [has sent] me, and those [who work] with me, to tell [people that they] can have a peaceful relationship with him. **19** That is, [he sent us(exc) to tell them that] when Christ [died], God was [making it possible for everyone] [MTY] in the world to have a peaceful relationship with him. He no longer keeps a record of the sinful things that [we believers] have done. The message that [God] has given to us [to tell people is how we can have a] peaceful relationship with him. **20** So, it is I and my companions who are Christ's representatives [in this world. When we tell people the message about Christ], it is God himself who is pleading with them by means of what we [say]. So, as true representatives of Christ, we plead with you: [Believe God's true message about Christ in order that you may] be reconciled to {have a peaceful relationship with} him. **21** [You must believe that even though] Jesus never sinned, God [punished him for all the] sinful things [that people do, just] as [if Jesus had done those sinful things himself]. And because of our close relationship with Christ,

God has erased the record of our sins/declared us no longer guilty for our sins.

6 [Therefore], because I am working together with God [himself], I say this to you very strongly: God has [already] kindly [forgiven you because Christ died for you], so do not now [say] "It does not matter [if I live just to please myself]." **2** For God said [long ago in the Scriptures]: When it is the right time [for me] to help you, [you will ask me to help you], and I will hear you. Then I will [send] a Savior to help you. [So listen to what] I am telling you: God [has sent] his Savior, so now is the time when [God is ready to] save [people from the guilt of their sins]. **3** Neither I nor the men [working] with me do anything that would hinder people from trusting in Christ, and so we cannot be accused {no one can accuse [us]} [of not] serving [God properly]. **4** Instead, in everything [that we(exc) say and do], we show [people] that we serve God faithfully. We patiently endure [all the things that happen to us. People cause us] many troubles and, as a result, we are anxious [and often do not know what to do]. **5** Sometimes we have been beaten [and bound] {People have beaten [us and tied us]} [with] chains in prison. [Angry mobs] have attacked us, [wanting to kill us]. We have continued working [for God until we had no more strength to work]. We have had many sleepless nights, and we have [often been without food]. **6** [All that we think about and all that we do is] pure [in God's sight]. Knowing [how God wants us to conduct our lives, we do what pleases him]. We are patient [with those who oppose us]. We are kind [to everyone. We depend on] the Holy Spirit [to help us]. We love people sincerely [as God wants us to love them]. **7** We faithfully teach [the true] message [about Christ], and God [gives us] his power [as we teach it. Like soldiers] using weapons [MET] [in a battle], we, by [living] righteously, [defend God's message and refute those who attack it]. **8** [We serve God faithfully], whether [people] praise us [(exc)] or [whether they] despise us, whether [people say] bad things [about us(exc)] or [whether they say] good things [about us. We keep teaching] the truth, [even though some people say that] we are deceiving [people]. **9** [Some people] know [well that we are true servants of God, and yet others], who know us, refuse to [believe that. People have often tried to] kill us [(inc)], yet we are still alive. We have [often] been beaten, but we have not been killed {[People have often] beaten us [(exc)], but [they] have not killed us}. **10** Although we [(exc)] are often very sad [because people have rejected our message], we are always joyful [because of all that God has done for us]. Even though we [(exc)] are poor, we make [it possible for] many people to be [spiritually] rich. It is true that [in this world] we [(exc)] have nothing [valuable] [HYP], but [because we belong to God's family], all [that God has] belongs to us. **11** You [fellow believers] in Corinth, [I have been] completely honest with you. [I have told you exactly how we(exc) feel about you, that] we love you very much [IDM]. **12** We are not [treating you as though we do not] love you, but you are [treating us as though you do] not love us. **13** In return [for our loving you, will you not] love [us] [IDM] just as [much as we love you?] I am writing [to you] as if you were my own children. **14** Do not (team up/have a close relationship) with anyone who does not trust [in Christ. I say this] because we who [trust in Christ and do] what is right should not [RHQ] [want to do things] with wicked people. Or [to say it in another way], just like light and darkness never join together, so [those who belong to Christ and those who belong to Satan should never join together] [RHQ]. **15** There is no [RHQ] agreement of any kind between Christ and Satan. [So], believers have no [RHQ] common [spiritual] interests with unbelievers. **16** [Just] as no one would [dare to bring] idols into the Temple [in Jerusalem], believers should never [RHQ] join with those who worship idols. [I say that] because [MET] [the Holy Spirit is in us, and so] we are [like] the Temple of the all-powerful God. [It is] as God himself said [in the Scriptures]: I will live in [my people]. I will always be with/helping them. [They will say to me], "You are our God," and [I will say to them], "You are my people." **17** [In another place in the Scriptures we read that] the Lord said: Get away from those who do evil things; keep yourselves separated from them. Do [nothing sinful that would make you] unacceptable to me. Then I will welcome you [as members of my family]. **18** [The Lord also said]: I will [care for you] as [MET] a loving father [cares for his children], and [it will be as though] you are my own sons and daughters. I, the all-powerful Lord, am saying this [to you].

7 My friends, whom I love, because [God] has promised [to accept us(inc) as his children], we [(inc)] must stop doing anything that is sinful. We must not do sinful things with our bodies, and we must not [think] sinful thoughts. [Because] we greatly revere God, we must strive to [live] a completely pure life. By doing that we will become the kind of people that he wants us to be. **2** So, as I just wrote, I want you to love me (OR, us [IDM] [who are true apostles of Christ]). I/we [(exc)] have never done anything wrong to any of you. I/we have not done anything to harm any one of you spiritually or financially. And I/we have not tried to get money from [you] (for myself/for ourselves). **3** [It is true that some people among you have said that I have done such things. Nevertheless], I am not trying to make you all feel ashamed because, as I wrote before, I will continue to love you all very much [IDM], whether I live with you or

die with you. I am very confident about you. 4 I am very pleased with you. You have greatly encouraged me, so that I am now very joyful in spite of all the hardships that I have endured. 5 Now [I will write more about what I was saying about Titus]. When I [left Troas and] came [here to] Macedonia [province], I still did not get any rest. Everywhere we [(exc)] went, [people were constantly] causing us trouble. [And not only were] people [constantly causing us] trouble, but I was greatly concerned [about you all]. 6 But God, who always encourages his people when they are discouraged, encouraged us by [sending] Titus back to us. 7 I was encouraged by [seeing] Titus, [but when I heard how] you had encouraged him, that encouraged me even more. He told me how much you wanted [to see me. He told me] that you were very sorry [that you had made me so unhappy. He also told me] that you are very eager for me [to continue to serve as your apostle. When Titus told me those things], I was very, very happy. 8 Even though what [I wrote] in my letter (distressed you/made you sad), I am not sorry [that I wrote it]. For a while I was sorry that I had written it, [because I knew that it would distress you]. Now [Titus has also told] me that it did distress you [when you read it], but you were distressed only for a short time. 9 [So now] I am happy [that I wrote it]. I am not happy that you were distressed {that [I] distressed you}, but [I am happy] because, when you became distressed, you felt sorry for what you had done and [you asked God to forgive you. What I mean is that you felt sorry in the way that God wanted you to feel sorry, so my making] you feel sorry did not harm you at all. 10 [The fact is that] when God causes [us to feel] truly sorry for having sinned and we turn from our sinful behavior, then God saves us [and will not punish us for the sinful things that we have done]. And no one is ever sorry about that. [However], the people who do not trust [in God] [MTY] may be sorry [for the sinful things that they have done]. But [if they do not turn from their sinful behavior and ask God to forgive them], they will remain separated from him forever. 11 But [think about what happened when you read my letter]: God caused you to be truly sorry [for what you had done]. You eagerly [wanted to do what was right], and you wanted to show [God] (OR, [me]) that you had done the right thing. You were angry [about what had happened], and you were worried [that God would punish you if the situation continued]. You also wanted me [to visit you to encourage and help you]. You wanted me to know [that you really do accept me as your apostle, and that you punished the man who had sinned, as I told you to do. By doing] all of those things, you have shown [me] that you have done what is right in this matter. 12 So, even though I wrote that [severe] letter to you, I did not [write it just] so that [you would punish] the man who had done what was wrong. Also, I [did not write it] for the benefit of the person whom [he] had wronged. Instead, [I wrote it] so that, when you [read the letter], God would enable you to realize how much you really do respect [my authority]. 13 So, [because you listened to me and did what I asked you to do], (I was/we [(exc)] were all) encouraged. Not only (was I/were we) encouraged, but (I was/we [(exc)] were) [also] very happy to see how happy Titus was [when he arrived here. He told me/us that] he did not need to worry any more, because [he saw] that you all [had a good attitude toward me]. 14 I had told Titus that I was pleased about you. And I did not need to be ashamed [for feeling that way about you, because you did what I knew that you would do]. Just like everything that I have taught you [and written to you] has been the truth, the good things that I told Titus about you were also true. 15 Now he happily remembers how you all [were willing to] do [what I asked you to do]. He is [also happy about the way you] treated him with great respect. [When he thinks about those things], [it makes] him love you even more [than he did when he was with you]. 16 [As for me], I am very happy [because now] I am certain that I can depend on you [to do what you know God wants you to do].

8 Now, my fellow believers, I want to tell you [what happened because of] God's [acting] kindly [in the lives] of [the believers in] the congregations [here] in Macedonia [province]. 2 Even though [the non-believers here] have been causing the believers to suffer severely, the believers are always very joyful. [Although they] are very poor, [they gave] very generously [to help other believers]. 3 [I know that this is true], because I have seen for myself that they not only gave [money] [EUP] that they were able [to give], they gave [so much money that they did] not even keep enough [to buy what they needed for themselves]. Without anyone telling them [to share their possessions], 4 they themselves kept requesting us to let them participate in what [other believers] are doing in [sending a gift of money to] [EUP] God's people [in Judea province]. 5 I thought [that they would give only a little of their money, but] they did much [more than that]. First, they told the Lord [Jesus] that they wanted to do [what pleases him. After that, they told] me that they wanted to do [whatever I thought was good for them to do, because they were sure that] would be what God [wanted them to do]. 6 So, because Titus was the one who [helped you to] begin [gathering the money] [EUP, MTY] for your gift, I urged him to also [help you] finish [collecting the rest of] your generous and loving gift. 7 You are doing very well in so many [other] ways. [God's Spirit enables you to] believe that [God] will [do miracles. His Spirit has given you the ability to]

tell [God's message to others. His Spirit makes you able to] know things that he reveals to you. You eagerly [want to help people], and you love us [(exc)] very much. [So now], try to also do well in getting your generous [gift of money] [EUP] [ready to send to the believers in Judea province]. **8** I am not commanding you [to do this]. But [because I have seen how believers in] other [places] are eager [to help other believers who do not have] ([what they need/enough to live on]), I want you similarly to show that you love others sincerely. **9** You already know [how much] our Lord Jesus [did for you] that you did not deserve. Everything [in heaven] belonged to him. But in order to benefit you, [he left all of those things behind and became a human being. Here on earth he had] very few possessions [of his own]. But because he became poor like that, he is [able to cause] you [(pl)] to become [spiritually] rich. **10** So, [as you think of our Lord's example, I will tell you] what I think that you should do in this matter [of giving money. As you know], last year, because you desired [to give money to help God's people in Judea province], you began [collecting money] [EUP]. **11** So now you should finish [collecting] the money [EUP] that you began [to gather]. In that way, [everyone will know that you are just] as ready to finish [collecting this gift] as you were to begin collecting it. Give what you are able to give. **12** [Keep in mind that] if you really want to [give something to help others], whatever any one of you is [able to give] will be pleasing [to God. God does not expect his people to give more] than they can afford to give. **13** I do not mean that [you should give so much to help others that] you yourselves do not have what you need. No, what I want is that [both you and others] will have what [you need]. **14** Right now, when you have (more [than you need/]) and [the believers in Judea] do not have (enough/all that they need), [with your gift you will enable them to have enough. Maybe some day] when you do not have (enough/all that you need) and they have more than they need, they will [be able to] help you. Then everyone will have enough (OR, In that way each will share alike). **15** [If that happens, the result will be like it is written] {[like someone/Moses] wrote} [in the Scriptures about the time when God provided manna for his people], If someone gathered a lot [of manna], he still did not have more than he needed, [because he gave some to someone who did not have enough]. And those who gathered only a little [manna] still had all that they needed [LIT], [because others who gathered more than they needed gave some manna to them]. **16** [So now I am sending Titus to visit you again]. God has caused him to be just as eager [to help you prepare your gift] as I am. I thank God for that. **17** [He is going there], not only because we urged him to go, but because he himself is very eager [to visit you again]. **18** I am sending with Titus another believer [whom you know well]. All the groups of believers [in this area] think highly of him because he has [faithfully taught] the good message [about Christ]. **19** Not only that, but he was appointed by the congregations [in this area] {the congregations [in this area] appointed him} to [go] to Jerusalem with us [(exc)]. He [will go] with us [when we take] the generous gift of money [EUP] [to the believers in Jerusalem. We are taking this] gift to honor the Lord [Jesus] and to show them that we all [very much] want to [help them]. **20** [The believers have] given money [EUP] generously. So, [by sending that fellow believer along with Titus] to take the money [to Jerusalem], we are trying to make sure that no one will be able to accuse us [(exc) of taking some of the money for ourselves]. **21** [I say that] because we [(exc)] want to make sure that the Lord [God] will see that what we [(exc)] do is right, and other people will see it, too. **22** Furthermore, there is also another believer [here] whom we are sending [to you along with the two] men [whom I have just mentioned]. Many times I have seen his good work [for the Lord], and I know that he is eager [to serve the Lord]. Now, because he knows for sure that you [want to give this gift the same as other believers do], he is even more eager than he was before [to go with the two other men]. **23** As for Titus, [I have chosen him because] he is my partner, and he has worked faithfully with me [to help you]. As for the other two men, the congregations [in this area] are sending them as their messengers. These two men honor Christ [by everything they do]. **24** So then, show them that you truly love [others], and [in that way] help other congregations to understand [why] we [(exc)] are always saying such good things about you.

9 Now [I want to write] more about the gift [of money] [EUP] that [you and other believers are preparing to send] to the believers [in Judea province]. I do not [really] need to [continue writing to you about it], **2** because I already know that you really want to help them. In fact, I have been boasting [about you], telling the [believers here in] Macedonia [province] that [you people in] Achaia [province] have been ready to help, since last year. As a result, because you are very eager to help [the believers in Judea province], you have made most of [the believers here in Macedonia province also want] to give [a gift]. **3** However, I am sending Titus and the other two believers in order that [they will be able to help you finish collecting the money. Then when I and others arrive later, the people with me will see for themselves that] the things that I have been boasting about you are true [LIT]. [I want] you [to have your gift] ready [for us(exc) to take to Jerusalem], just like I have been telling others that

you were ready. 4 When I come, if any of [the believers from] Macedonia come with me, [I do not want them to find that your gift is] [MTY, EUP] not ready. If that were [to happen], I would be very ashamed, and you yourselves would be even more ashamed. 5 So that is why I felt that it was necessary to urge these [three] believers to go [and visit] you before I [come. In that way, they would be able to help you finish] collecting the generous gift [EUP] that had been promised by you {you had said you would give}. [If you do that, not only will] the gift be ready [by the time that we arrive, but everyone will see that you have given because you really want to give, and] not because anyone has forced you to give. 6 Do not forget this: "[A farmer] who sows only a few [seeds] will not gather/reap a large [harvest], but the one who sows a lot [of seeds] will gather/reap a large [harvest] [MET]." [Similarly, if you give just a little to help others, God will give you only a few blessings. But if you give willingly and cheerfully to help people, you will receive in return many blessings from God]. 7 Each of you should decide how much you [(sg)] should give, [and then give that amount]. You [(sg)] should not [be thinking to yourself], "[I really] do not want to give this money." [And you(sg) should] not give [just] because someone tells [you to give. Instead, you should give willingly and cheerfully], because God loves those who give cheerfully. 8 Moreover, God can enable you to [give to others cheerfully. If you give that way], God will [in return] give you many good blessings. He will do that so that at all times you will always have everything that you need. Indeed, you will have even more [than you need. As a result, you will be able to do] many more good things [to help others]. 9 [Those who give willingly and cheerfully will be rewarded like the man about whom] it is written {[about whom] (someone/the Psalmist) wrote} in the Scriptures, He generously [helps others], [he gives to those] who are poor. [God will remember] the good things that he did, [and reward him with] good things forever. **(aiōn g165)** 10 [God always] gives seeds to farmers to plant, and also gives them food to eat. [So, similarly, God will] always make it possible for you to have enough money [MET], so that you will be able more and more to generously [help those who are needy]. 11 [God] will [give you] many blessings in many different ways as a result of your generously [helping others]. Furthermore, [the] generous [gift that you are getting ready for] us [(exc) to take to the believers in Judea province] will cause [many people] to thank God. 12 [Also remember that] when you give money to [EUP] help God's people, you not only give them what they need, but also, [because of that], [many people will] thank God very much [for you and for what you have done]. 13 As a result of your giving [money to help others], they will praise God, not only because you have believed the good message about Christ, but also because you have [generously given some of your possessions] so that they and other [believers will all have] ([enough/their needs supplied]). 14 Also, when they pray for you, [asking God to bless you, they will remember how grateful they are] [IDM] that God [caused you to give] very willingly and cheerfully. 15 [Finally, we should all] thank God [because he gave us the greatest gift of all when he sent his Son to save/rescue us(inc)] ([from the guilt of our sin/from being punished for our sin]). That is a gift too wonderful for anyone to be able to tell about completely!

10 Now I myself, Paul, appeal to you in a gentle and humble way, like Christ [would. Certain people among you have falsely accused me by saying], "When [Paul] is with you, he is humble [and speaks gently] to you, but when he is away from you, [in the letters he writes to you] he threatens [to punish] you." [Those people claim that I do not have authority over you as an apostle]. 2 I strongly plead with you, "[Please do not listen to people who say things like that!]" [I strongly plead with you not to listen to them], so that when I am there [with you] I will not [need to] speak severely [to you] in the same severe way as I [plan to] speak to those people who think that I behave like people who are not believers. 3 [Remember that] although I am [human like everyone else] in the world, I do not fight [against those who oppose me] in the way that people who are not believers fight those who oppose them. 4 [I will tell you what I mean by that: Just like soldiers use] various weapons [to fight their enemies] [MET], [I] ([fight against/oppose]) [those who] oppose God's message, but I do it in a different way. I do not [use human arguments and clever/sweet talk], like unbelievers do. Instead, [I fight against my opponents] with the powerful means that God [has given me]. With that power [I destroy their arguments against God's message and against me, just like soldiers destroy] [MET] the fortresses [of their enemies]. 5 [Specifically], I show that the [human] arguments that they use to deceive [people are completely wrong]. When they [proudly say things that] keep other people from knowing God, [I show them that they are completely wrong. I also enable people to] change their ways of thinking so that they think about everything as Christ [wants them to think]. 6 I am also ready to discipline everyone [among you] who has not obeyed [the things that Christ taught. I will do this] as soon as you [who truly want to obey Christ show me that] you are [going to] obey him completely. 7 [I want you to understand what is] happening among you. There are certain [people there who are telling you that] they know for sure that they are

Christ's [representatives and that I am not]. Those people should realize that I [represent] Christ as much as they do. **8** [I say that] because the authority that the Lord gave me [as his apostle] is to help you to become mature believers, not to cause you to stop [trusting in Christ]. So even if I were to boast a little more than I have [already done] (OR, proudly talk a little more than I have [already talked] about the authority the Lord gave me [as his apostle]), [no one would be able to make me] ashamed [by proving that Jesus has not given me that authority]. **9** I do not intend to make you afraid of me by the letters that I [write to you]. **10** [I say that] because some people are saying, "[When Paul writes] letters, he says severe things [in order to make you obey him], but when he is here with you, [people look at him and say] he is weak, and he certainly is not a skillful speaker." **11** The [people who say] such things should think carefully about this: The kind of [severe] person that [you think] me to be when you read my letters is exactly the kind of person I will be when I come. [I will do what I wrote that I would do]. **12** [Those who oppose me] tell others how good they are. [If they really were superior to me] [IRO], I would not be so bold as to say that I [was equal to them, or] to compare myself with them. [But they are not superior to me]. They make up their own standards [about what God's servants should be like], and then they look at their own [conduct] and decide [whether or not they meet those standards. By doing that, they show that] they are foolish. **13** But as for me, I will not boast about [working among people living in] areas outside of the areas [that God sent/assigned me to work in]. But [it is right for] me to say that [I have worked] in the areas that God assigned to me. [And since those areas] include the one where you live, **14** [when I talk about working among you], I am not boasting [about working in an area where God did not give me the right to work. What those who oppose me say about my not having authority as an apostle to you might be true] if I had not already come all the way to your area. [But that is not true], because I was the one who first brought the message about Christ to you. [I came to Corinth before they did]! **15** Also, [my opponents] boast about work that others have done [as if it were their own work]. It is improper for them to do that, but I do not do as they do. I confidently expect that as you trust more and more [in the gospel that I preach], you will more and more [agree that God has given me the right to] work [as Christ's representative] among you. **16** Then I will be able to go to places beyond where you [are]. I will be able to tell the good message about Christ [to people in areas where no one has yet gone to tell that message]. And [I will be able to talk about the work I myself have done in that area], instead of boasting about work that someone else has already done [as if it were my work]. **17** [I try to do according to what someone/Jeremiah wrote in the Scriptures], If anyone wants to boast [about something], he should boast [only] about what the Lord [God has done]. **18** [You can realize, then, that] it is not those who (praise themselves/tell you what great things they have done), [as my opponents do], whom you should accept [as apostles]. Instead, you [should accept as true apostles only] those whom the Lord commends.

11 [But now, because my opponents are saying that Christ sent them to you as his representatives and that he did not send me], please be patient with me, too, [while I say a] few things [that may sound as if] [IRO] [I am praising myself, like] a foolish person [would do. You have been] ([putting up with/tolerating]) [those who teach what is false;] now then, (put up with/tolerate) me [too]. **2** I really do care about [what happens to] you, just as God cares about [what happens to you. Just like a father wants his daughter to be sexually pure when he presents her to the man she will marry] [MET], I [want you to belong] to Christ [alone and to no other]. I want to present you [to him] as people who remain faithful to him [only, and who have not believed the deceitful message of those who are teaching what is false]. **3** However, just like [Satan, when he] cunningly [appeared as a] snake, deceived Eve [and caused her to disobey the Lord God], I am concerned that [those teachers] will cause you to think wrongly so that you will no longer [be faithful to] Christ alone. **4** [I say that] because some people have come among you who are teaching [their own thoughts about] Jesus. They [are saying about him] things that are [entirely] different from what I taught you. [They are urging] you to receive a [powerful] spirit who [would come to live in you], but it is not the same [Spirit] that you received [from God when you believed in Christ]. They preach [what they call] a good message, and you accept [their message, even though it is not the same as the good message about Christ that you heard from me. And] you have gladly accepted them and their message! **5** I consider that [LIT] none of those [men, even though they think of themselves as being] [IRO] extra-special apostles, are in any way greater than I am. **6** [I admit that] I am not an eloquent speaker, but I do know [God's message]. I have made that clear to you by everything [that I have done among you and by everything that I have taught you]. **7** [I refused to accept money] from you as pay for teaching you God's message about Christ. (It is ridiculous for you to think that what I did was wrong!/Was that wrong?) [RHQ] [I know that by teaching you without pay], I made myself seem [IRO] unimportant to you. [But I did it] to honor you. **8** [Some people might say that it was as

though] [IRO] I was robbing other congregations because I accepted money from them in order that I might work among you. **9** Furthermore, when I was [there] with you and had no [money to buy the things that I needed], I did not cause any [of you] ([to have difficulties by my depending on you/by asking you for money/support]), because our [(inc)] fellow believers who came from [here in] Macedonia [province] brought enough [money for me to buy everything] that I needed. So I have not caused you any difficulty at all [by asking you for money], and I never will [ask you for money] [EUP]. **10** [And] as [sure as you know that] everything that Christ says is true, [you can be sure that what] I say [to you now is true. Wherever I go] there in Achaia [province], [I do not let you believers pay me for doing God's work among you]. And no one will be able to prevent me from boasting [about that]. **11** No one should wrongly [RHQ] think that it is because I do not love you that [I do not take pay from you]. God knows [that you truly/really are very dear to me]. **12** There are [some men there among you] who would like to be able to say boastfully that they [work among you] just as I do. So, in order to make it impossible [IDM] [for them to say that], I have [refused to accept pay from you], and I will continue doing that. **13** Those men are lying [when they say that they are] apostles. They work deceitfully. [Even though they say that they work for God, they are working only for themselves]. They try to make people think that Christ [sent them] as his apostles, [but they do not truly represent him]. **14** I am not surprised [that they act like that], because Satan himself causes people to think [that he has come] as a shining messenger [from God]. **15** So it should not surprise [you] if these men, who [really] serve [Satan, do good things in order] to make you think they [serve God]. Some day God will [punish them] according to what they deserve because of the [evil] things that they do. **16** I say again: I do not want any of you to think that my [boasting about myself] is like foolish [people] boast. But even if anyone [thinks that I am boasting about myself like a foolish person boasts, listen to] what I [have to say anyway, just like you listen to those false apostles]. They really [speak] foolishly! Listen to me while I also boast a little. **17** About the things that I am [going to tell you], boasting confidently [about myself, surely you know that they are not the kind of things] that the Lord [Jesus] would say. Instead, [I will speak] as a foolish [person would speak]. **18** Because many among you are boasting [about their own work], as unbelievers do, I will also boast [about myself and my work] [MTY, IRO]. **19** [I am sure that you, who think that you are so wise, will accept what I say] because you gladly [accept the] false teachers and the foolish things [that they say]. **20** When people [treat] you as if they were your bosses, you gladly submit [to them. You think that it is all right when others] force you to provide for their needs. You think that it is all right [when people] take control over you, when they boast about themselves, [or when they insult you by] slapping you in the face. **21** I agree that I was not bold enough to treat you in such ways. [Ha! Do you think that] [IRO] I should feel ashamed [because I did not do that?] So now, talking like a person who does not have any sense, I will boldly tell you [some things about myself, just like those false apostles tell you things about themselves]. **22** Do [they tell you] that they are Hebrews [and can speak the Hebrew language?] Well, I can say the same thing [about myself]. Do they [tell you that they] belong [to God's people], the nation of Israel? Well, I can say the same thing [about myself]. [Do they tell you that] they are descendants of [our great] ancestor Abraham? Well, he is my ancestor, too. **23** [Do they tell you how much] work they have done for Christ? Now I am talking like a crazy person talks [EUP]. Well, I work for Christ much more [than they do. I have been] in prison many more times [than they have. Many times I] have been beaten {[people] have beaten me} very severely [because I believe in and obey Christ]. Many times I almost died [because of serving Christ]. **24** On five occasions Jewish [religious leaders] beat me 39 times with a whip. **25** On three occasions I was beaten {[Roman] officials beat me} with wooden sticks. On one occasion [a large crowd of people] threw stones at me [to kill me]. On three occasions the ship [that I was traveling on] was wrecked [and sank. On one of those occasions] I was [floating] in the water a night and a day [before I was rescued]. **26** As I have often traveled to other places, [I have often risked losing my life. For example], sometimes I have been in danger [crossing] rivers. [I have been] in danger [traveling in places] where there were bandits. [At times I have been in] danger among people of my own nation, [the Jews], and [at other times I been in] danger among those who are not Jews. [I have been] in danger in cities, and I have been in dangerous situations in barren areas. I have been in dangerous situations [when I was traveling in ships]. [I have been in] danger among people who falsely [claim to be] fellow believers. **27** I have worked very hard [DOU] [to earn] ([a living/what I need]), and often I did not sleep. At times I was hungry and thirsty, and at times I did not have enough time to eat. Sometimes I was cold [because] I did not have enough clothes [to wear]. **28** In addition to all that, I am constantly and deeply concerned about all the congregations [that I have helped to begin]. **29** [Every time that I hear about fellow believers] [RHQ] who are not strong [spiritually], I sympathize with them [and try to help them.

Every time that I learn about a fellow believer] [RHQ] who causes [another believer] to do something wrong, that makes me very angry. **30** Because [it seems that] it is necessary for me to [continue] boasting [about myself], I will boast about things that [caused some people to think of me] as being weak. **31** God, who is the Father of our [(inc)] Lord Jesus, and who is the one [whom we should] praise forever, knows that I am not lying [about this]. **(aiōn g165)** **32** [One time when I was] in Damascus [city], the governor whom King Aretas [had appointed] to rule [part of his area, told his soldiers] to guard [the gates of] the city so that they could seize me [if I tried to leave the city]. **33** But [my friends] helped me to escape [by] putting me in a large basket and lowering me [to the ground by a rope] through an opening in the [city] wall. [That was really humiliating]!

12 [It seems that] I must go on boasting [about myself]. Although [I do] not [think that my telling you about] this will help [you to accept me as Christ's representative to you], I [will say this anyway]. I will tell you about visions that the Lord [gave a certain man] and about things that he [supernaturally] revealed [to that man. I will tell you this because some of the people among you boast that it was in visions that they received the things that they teach]. **2** The man that I will tell you about is one [who believes] in Christ. Fourteen years ago he was taken {[Christ] took him} up into the third heaven, [the highest heaven, the place where God is]. I do not know whether he went there [in his physical body] or whether he was outside of his body [at that time and only his spirit went]. Only God really knows. **3** But he was [suddenly] taken {[Christ suddenly] took him} up to [a place called] Paradise, [that wonderful place where God lives. I repeat that] I do not know whether his body [went there] or only his spirit. Only God knows [that. While he was there, God] told him some things that he does not allow [human beings] to tell [others about]. **5** I will proudly talk about that man. However, I will not be boasting [as] I say that I [am the one who saw and heard those wonderful things]. I will talk only about the things that [cause others to think of] me as a weak [human being like everyone else]. **6** But even if I should choose to boast [to you about such wonderful things that happened to me], I would not be [speaking like] a fool, because I would be telling you the truth. But I will not [talk proudly about such things], because I do not want any of you to think highly of me [because of the things that have happened to me]. Instead, [I want you to decide what kind of person I am by the way you see] me [acting] and by what you hear me teach. **7** In order that I might not become proud because of those many wonderful things [that Christ] revealed to me, [God permitted] Satan to send a messenger [to humble me] (OR, to [make me sick]). [What that messenger did to me was painful, like] [MET] a thorn pricking my body. **8** Three times I prayed to the Lord about it, begging him to take this away from me. **9** But he said to me, "[No, I will not take this away from you. Instead], I will kindly help you, and that will be all that you need, because it is [when you are] weak that I [can] best [work] powerfully [to help you]." So, because of [what the Lord said to me], I will very gladly boast about [the things that make] me [seem] weak, so that [people may realize] that it is Christ who gives me power [to serve him]. **10** For that reason, [whenever I am] weak, or [when people] insult me, [or when I have to endure] hardships, or [when I am persecuted] {[people] cause me to suffer}, or [when I am in situations that] distress me, I am content because [I am serving] Christ. [I can say that] because at any time when I myself am weak, that is the [very] time when [Christ] powerfully [helps me]. **11** It has been foolish for me [to talk about myself like this], but it is you who forced me to do it. Truly [if the Lord would not help me], I would be worthless, [as my opponents say that I am]. But none of the men whom you [wrongfully think] [IRO] are great apostles are greater in any way than I am. So it would have been right/proper for you to say good things about me. **12** [You should have done that, because] when I was with you [I] repeatedly did the things that showed you that [I am truly] an apostle, such as performing many [DOU] miracles. **13** And I have [certainly treated] you as well as [I treated] the other congregations [that I helped to start. Or do you think that] by not asking you [to pay me for my work], I was not treating you as well as I treated the other congregations? (It is foolish for you to [think that] [IRO] [it] was wrong for me not [to ask for pay from you for my work, and therefore I should ask] you to forgive me for that!/Do you [think that it] was wrong for me not [to ask for pay from you for my work, and therefore I should ask] you to forgive me for that?) [RHQ] **14** Now listen to me! It is time for me to come to you for a third [visit. When I come], I [still] will not insist that you [pay me for my work], because I do not want [any of] your [money] [EUP]! What I want is for you [MTY] [to love and appreciate me]. It is not [normally the duty of] children to save [money to provide for the needs of] their parents. Instead, it [is the duty of] parents to [provide] for their children [MET]. In the same way, [it is not your duty to provide for me. Instead, it is my duty to provide spiritual help for you because you are my spiritual children]. **15** So, for my part, [as a good parent would do], I will be very happy to use everything that I have, and do everything that I possibly can, [in order to help you]. And because I love you very much, (I will be very disappointed if [you] do not love me a little bit,

too./will [you] not love me a little bit, too?) [RHQ] **16** [You all] know that I did not depend on you [to provide for my needs]. However, [there are some who accuse me, saying that] [IRO] I was very clever and got money from you by tricking you. **17** But did I ever do that? No! I never [RHQ] asked any of the men whom I sent to you [to get money] from you [and bring it to me] **18** Titus went [and visited you because] I urged him to do so. I also sent the other believer, [whom you know], to go with Titus. [You know that] Titus did not [RHQ] trick [you in order to get money from you. And you certainly know that] he and I have always [RHQ] acted in exactly the same [honest] way [towards you]. **19** While [you have been reading this letter, if] you have been thinking that I have [just] been [saying these things to] defend myself [against those who accuse me, you are wrong]. I have been saying [these things honestly, knowing] that God is listening [to me. I also speak as one who has a close relationship] with Christ. Everything that I do and [everything that I say is] to [help you] whom I love (to grow [spiritually/] to become [spiritually] mature). **20** [I have written this way to you] because I worry that when I come [to visit you], I will see that [some of] you are [not conducting your lives the way] that I want you [to]. If that is so, [when I get there] you will see that I will have [to act] in a [very severe way toward you, and I am sure] that you do not want that. Specifically, I am afraid that [some of you] may be quarreling, or that you are being jealous [of each other], or that you quickly get very angry [with them], or that you are acting selfishly, or that [some of] you are saying bad things about others, or that you are (spreading false rumors/saying false things) about each other, or that you are acting proudly, or that you are [doing things] in a disorderly manner. **21** [I] ([feel anxious/am concerned]) [about you. I worry that] when I visit you again, God, the one whom I [serve], will make me feel ashamed of you [when I see that] you [still are not conducting your lives as believers should]. Then I will feel very sad about [some of] you who were sinning previously and have not stopped your sinful behavior. [Some of you] may still have impure [thoughts. Some of you] may be having sexual intercourse with those to whom you are not married. [And some of you] may be doing other shameful things.

13 [In the Scriptures it is stated that when one person] accuses [another of wrongdoing, you must not believe his] accusation [right away]. [First, you must listen to at least] two or three people who actually saw what happened. [So keep in mind that] this will be the third time that I will visit you! **2** When I visited you the second time, I warned you [that I was going to punish all the wrongdoers among you]. [And now] I am [warning you] again while I am still away [from you]. When I visit you this third time, I will punish those who were sinning [at the time when I visited you] before [and who are still sinning], and I will [punish] the others [who have been sinning since then, if they have not stopped their sinful behavior]. **3** Because you have demanded that I prove to you that Christ is speaking [to you when] I [speak to you, I will show you that I speak to you as his apostle. Christ] does not approve of your sinful behavior. On the contrary, he will powerfully [discipline you]. **4** [It is true that] Christ [seemed to be] weak when he was crucified {when [people] killed him by nailing him to the cross}. But [it is also true that] he [now] lives because God [worked] powerfully [to bring him back to life. Similarly], as I [serve] God, I also am a weak human [being as Christ was]. But I also [have a close relationship with] Christ [who is now alive again]. And with his [authority] I will use God's power [to discipline] you. **5** Each of you should ask yourself: "[Do I] believe [God's message about Christ?]" Each of you should [examine yourselves to] make sure that you truly do [believe] in Christ [and so truly belong to him], and that [his Spirit lives] in you [(pl)]. When you examine yourselves [in that way], I am sure that you will [RHQ] say [to me], "Yes, of course we [belong to] Christ." **6** I am [also] certain that you will know that I [belong to Christ, just like you do]. **7** But [because I do not want to have to punish you], I am praying to God that he will help you not to do anything evil [that would cause me to have to punish you. I pray this], not in order that when people [who say that I am not your apostle] realize [that my ministry among you has been very successful, they will have to agree] that I do have authority from Christ. Instead, [I pray this because I want] you to do what is right, even though that might mean that [my opponents would think] that I do not have authority from Christ, [since I would not have an opportunity to show my authority to discipline you]. **8** [If you do what is right, I will not discipline you], [because it would] not [be right for me to do that if you are conducting your lives the way you should, like] God's true [message says that you should. What God asks me to do is to help people to know and obey his] true [message]. **9** I am happy [whenever] you are strongly [trusting and obeying Christ, and because of that I do not have to use my authority to discipline you. It does not matter to me if that makes people think that I do not have any authority]. Truly, what I am praying for is that [God] will [help] you to completely change your conduct. **10** That is why I am writing these things while I am still away from you. [What I want is that] when I visit you, [you will already be conducting your lives as God wants you to], and so I will not have to [discipline you] severely, as the [Lord Jesus Christ gave me] the authority to do. The authority that I have from the Lord is to help you to become [spiritually] mature believers, not

to cause you to stop [trusting in him]. **11** Finally, my fellow believers, [I say to you], be joyful. Completely [change how you conduct your lives], and do what I have urged you [to do]. Be united in what you think [about the matters about which I have written to you]. Live peacefully [with each other. If you do those things], God, who [enables you to] love [each other] and be peaceful, will bless [MTY] you. **12** Greet each other affectionately as [fellow members] of God's family [should]. **13** All God's people [here] send you greetings. **14** [I pray that] the Lord Jesus Christ will act kindly [toward] all of you, in ways that you do not deserve, that God will [show all of you how much he] loves you, and that the Holy Spirit [will cause you to have good] fellowship [with him and with each other].

Galatians

1 [I], Paul, [write this letter to you. I remind you that I am] an apostle. That is not because a group of people [appointed me], nor because a human being [sent me to be an apostle]. Instead, Jesus Christ and God [our heavenly] Father, who caused Jesus to become alive again after he died, have [appointed and] sent [me to be an apostle]. **2** All the fellow believers [who are here] with me [approve of this message that I am writing. I am sending this letter] to the congregations that [are] in Galatia [province]. **3** [I pray that] God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ will kindly [help] you and enable [you to have inner] peace. **4** Christ offered himself [as a sacrifice] in order that [he might remove the guilt for] our sins. He did that in order that he might enable us to not [do the evil things that people who do not know him] do. [He did this] because God, who is our Father, wanted it. **(aiōn g165)** **5** [I pray that people will] praise God forever. (May it be so!/Amen!) **(aiōn g165)** **6** I am very disappointed [IRO] that so soon [after you trusted in Christ] you have turned away from [God]. He chose you in order that [you might have what] Christ freely/kindly gives. I am also disappointed that so soon you are believing a different [message which some say is] "good news." **7** Their message is not a true message. [What is happening is that] certain persons are confusing your [minds]. They are desiring to change the good message (that Christ [revealed/about] Christ) [and are creating another message]. **8** But even if we [(exc) apostles] or an angel from heaven would tell you a message that is different from the good message that we told you [before], I [appeal to God] that [he] punish such a person [forever]. **9** As I told you previously, so now I tell you this once more: Someone is telling you [what he says is] a good message, but it is a message that is different from [the good message] that I gave you. So I [appeal to God] that [he] severely punish that person. **10** [I said that] because [RHQ] I do not desire that people approve me, [contrary to what some have said about me]. It is God whom I desire to approve me. [Specifically, I do not say and do] [RHQ] things just to please people. If it were still people whom I was trying to please, then I would not be one who [willingly and completely] serves Christ. **11** My fellow believers, I want you to know that the message about Christ that I proclaim to people is not one that some person [created/thought up]. **12** I did not receive this message from a human [messenger], and no [human being] taught it to me. Instead, Jesus Christ revealed it to me. **13** People have told you how I used to behave when [I practiced] the Jewish religion. They told you that I continually did very harmful things to the groups of believers that God [established], and they told you that I tried to get rid of those people. **14** I practiced the Jewish religion more thoroughly than many [other Jews] who were my age practiced it. I much more enthusiastically tried to get others to obey the traditions that my ancestors [kept]. **15** Nevertheless, before I was born, [God] (set me apart/selected me). He chose me [to live eternally], something that I did not deserve. **16** He wanted me to know that Jesus is (his Son/the man who is also God), so that I would tell others the message about him in regions where non-Jews live. But I did not immediately go to any human beings [SYN] in order to gain [an understanding of that message. I received it directly from Christ!]! **17** I did not [immediately] leave Damascus and go to Jerusalem [for that purpose] to those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away to Arabia [region, a desert area]. Later I returned once more to Damascus [city]. **18** Then three years after [God revealed this good message to me], I went up to Jerusalem in order that I might meet Peter. But I stayed with him for [only] 15 days, [which was not long enough for him to teach me thoroughly about Christ]. **19** I also saw James, the brother of our Lord [Jesus and the leader of the believers there, but] I did not see any other apostle. **20** God knows that what I am writing to you is completely true [LIT]! **21** After [I left Jerusalem], I went to [the regions of] Syria and Cilicia. **22** [At that time, people in] the Christian congregations that are in Judea [province] still had not met me [SYN] personally. **23** They only heard [others say about me] repeatedly, "[Paul], the one who was formerly doing harmful things to us, is now telling the [same message] which we believe and which formerly he was trying (to destroy/to cause people to stop believing)!" **24** And they praised God because of [what had happened to] me.

2 After 14 years passed, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas. I took Titus also. **2** But [I tell you that] I went up there because of what God revealed to me. [It was not because someone there asked me to come]. I told people what was the good message that I was preaching in regions where non-Jews live. But I talked privately to those whom your new teachers highly respect. I did that in order that what I was doing and what I had done [MET] might not become useless [MET] [as a result of people rejecting my message because they thought that I was teaching something that was not true]. **3** But [even though the leaders of the believers usually insisted that when non-Jews trusted in Christ someone must circumcise them], they did not even insist that Titus be circumcised, even though he was a Greek man who was with me. **4** [I talked to them privately] because some people [successfully] pretended that they were fellow believers and associated with the true believers. They did

that in order that they might observe closely what we do because we are free [from having to obey all the Jewish laws and rituals] because of our close relationship with Christ Jesus [MET]. Those people wanted to make us [like] slaves [MET] [of those rituals by convincing us that we cannot trust Christ solely but that we must also obey all the Jewish rituals]. **5** But not even briefly did we [(exc)] do what they wanted [about circumcision. We(exc) resisted them] in order that the truth of the message about Christ might continue to [benefit] you. **6** The [leaders in Jerusalem], whom your new teachers respect, did not add anything to what I preach. [And I would add that] what status those leaders had did not influence me, because God does not favor certain/important persons [IDM] more than others. **7** Instead of those leaders adding to the message that I tell people, they understood that I had been given the good message {God had given the good message to me} so that I might proclaim it to the non-Jews [MTY], just like [God] had given the good message to Peter so that he might tell it to those who are Jews [MTY]. **8** That is, just like [God] had empowered/authorized Peter in order that he might be an apostle [to bring God's message] to the Jews [MTY], he also had empowered/authorized me in order that I might be an apostle to [bring his message to] the non-Jews. **9** And [those leaders] knew that God had kindly given to me this special work. So James, Peter, and John, the ones whom your new teachers [respect because they are] leaders [MET] [of the believers], shook hands with us [IDM] [to show that they agreed that Barnabas and I are serving the Lord just like they are, and that we are preaching the same message that they are preaching]. They also agreed that we [(exc)] are the ones whom God was sending to [tell his message to] non-Jews, but that God is sending them to [tell his message to] Jews [MTY]. **10** They merely urged that we [(exc)] still remember to help the poor [fellow believers who live in Jerusalem]. That is exactly what I have been eager to do. **11** But [later while I was at] Antioch [city], after Peter came there, I told him directly [SYN] that what he was doing was wrong. **12** [This is what happened]: [Peter went to Antioch and started eating regularly with non-Jewish believers there]. Later there were certain [Jewish believers who] came [to Antioch who claimed that] James, [the leader of the congregations in Jerusalem], had sent them. But when [those certain] men came, Peter gradually quit [eating] with the non-Jewish believers and would not associate with them. He was afraid that the Jewish [believers from Jerusalem would criticize him for associating with non-Jews]. **13** Also, the other Jewish [believers who were in Antioch] [SYN] acted (insincerely/in a way that they knew was not right) along with [Peter]. The result was that they convinced even Barnabas to [stop associating with the non-Jewish believers]! **14** But when I realized that they were not acting according to the truth of the message about Christ, [when] all [the fellow believers there] were present, I told Peter [the following]: "Although you [(sg)] are a Jew, [you often conduct yourself] like non-Jews [do by disregarding Jewish laws about food. When you are among non-Jews], you [(sg)] do not customarily conduct yourself at all like Jews [do]. So, (now it is wrong that you [(sg)] are causing non-Jews [to think that they must obey all] the Jewish rituals and customs!/why are you [(sg)] causing non-Jews [to think that they must obey all] the Jewish rituals and customs?) [RHQ]" **15** Some of us [believers] were born as Jews. We [(exc)] were not born as non-Jews. [We Jews have always considered non-Jews to be] 'sinners' [because they do not obey the Jewish rituals and laws]. **16** But we [(exc)] now know that it is not because some person obeys the laws [that God gave to Moses] that [God] erases the record of that person's sins. [God erases the record of a person's sins only if that person trusts in what Jesus Christ has done]. Even we [(exc)] Jews trusted Christ Jesus. We [(exc)] did that in order that [God] would erase the record of our sins because of our trusting Christ, and not because of our obeying the laws [that God gave to Moses. God has said that] he will [never] erase the record of people's sins just because of their obeying those laws. **17** Furthermore, because we [(exc) Jews] desired that [God] would erase the record of our sins because of our relationship with Christ, [it means that] we realized that we ourselves were sinners [like non-Jews, whom we called] sinners, [because we(exc) also were not obeying the Jewish rituals and laws]. [But] ([we(inc) certainly cannot conclude] that it is Christ who causes us to sin./[should we conclude] that it is Christ who causes us to sin?) [RHQ] [No, Christ] certainly does not [cause anyone to sin]. **18** So if I should again believe [that God would erase the record of my sins because of my obeying the laws that he gave to Moses] [MET], [I would be like a man who] rebuilds an old building that he tore down. It would [soon] be clear that I am one who disobeys those same laws [that God gave to Moses]. **19** When [I realized that I could not earn God's favor] by [obeying] the laws [that he gave to Moses, I decided not] to [respond to what those laws demanded] [MET], [just like] a dead person [does not respond to anything]. Now I live to [honor/serve] God. **20** [It is as though] I was with Christ when he was crucified {died on the cross} [MET] (OR, [It is as though] my [old way of life ended when] Christ died on the cross.) No longer am I [directing the way I behave as I did before I believed in Christ]. Now Christ [is directing how] I [behave. And whatever I do] now while I live, I do it trusting in

God's Son. He is the one who loved me and offered himself [as a sacrifice] for me. **21** I am not rejecting [as useless] what God [did for me] ([kindly/that I did not deserve]), [as my opponents are doing. I fully accept that God saved me by acting kindly towards me]. If it is because people [obey the] laws [that God gave to Moses] that God erases the record of their sins, then Christ died (for nothing/needlessly).

3 You [fellow believers who live in] Galatia are very foolish! (Someone must have put an evil spell on you!/Did someone put an evil spell on you?) [RHQ] I clearly explained to you [SYN] [what] Jesus Christ [accomplished when] he was crucified {he died on the cross}. **2** [So], I want you to tell me one thing: [Do you think that] it was because you obeyed the laws God gave Moses that you received the [Holy] Spirit? [Do you not know that] [RHQ] it was because [when you] heard [the good message concerning Christ, you] trusted in him? **3** (You are acting so foolishly/Why are you being so foolish?) [RHQ]! You first [became Christians] as a result of God's Spirit [enabling you]. So, (you should not now think that it is by what you yourselves do that you will continue [to grow spiritually]/do you now think it is by your own human efforts that you will continue [to grow spiritually?]!) [RHQ] **4** Keep in mind that [if what God has done for you was because of your obeying the laws that God gave to Moses and] not because of trusting in Christ, when others caused you to suffer, you suffered many things needlessly! [RHQ] [I certainly hope that you did not suffer like that] needlessly. **5** [When God now] generously gives to you his Spirit and performs miracles among you, [do you think that it is] [RHQ] because you obey the laws [that God gave to Moses? Surely you know that] it is because when you heard [the good message about Christ], you trusted in him [RHQ]! **6** [What you have experienced is] as [Moses wrote in the Scriptures about] Abraham. [He wrote that Abraham] trusted God, and as a result, he was considered as being righteous {[God] erased the record of his sins}. **7** You must realize, therefore, that it is those who trust [in what Christ has done who] are [like] Abraham's descendants [MET] [because they trust in God as Abraham did]. **8** Furthermore, God planned beforehand that it was [when] non-Jews trusted [him] that he would erase the record of their sins. [Moses wrote in] the Scriptures [PRS] this good message that God told Abraham: "Because of [what] you [did], I will bless [people in] [MTY] all nations." **9** So, [we can conclude that] it is those who trust [in what Christ has done] whom [God] blesses. That includes [all non-Jews and Jews who trust him], along with Abraham, the one who trusted him [long ago]. **10** That is, God will eternally punish all those who [mistakenly] think [that God will erase the record of their sins] as a result of their [obeying] the laws [that God gave to Moses]. What is written in the Scriptures is that [God] will eternally punish everyone who does not continuously and completely obey all the laws [that Moses wrote]. **11** But God has declared that if he erases the record of anyone's sins, it will not be as a result of their obeying the laws God gave Moses. [This is evident because the Scriptures say], "Every person whose record of sins God erases because that person trusts God will live [spiritually]." **12** But [when God gave] his laws [to the Jews, he did] not [say that a person must] trust [him]. Instead, [God said that] it is those who obey [all God's laws, continuously and completely], who will live. **13** Even though we humans have not continuously and completely obeyed God's laws, Christ rescued us from [God] punishing us eternally. Christ rescued us by his being [the one God condemned] instead of God condemning us. What is written {[someone/Moses] wrote} [in the Scriptures] shows that this is true. It is written {[He] wrote}, "[God] has cursed anyone [whom people have executed for his crimes and whose body they] have hung on a tree." **14** Jesus Christ rescued us in order that as a result of what he [has done, God might bless the non-Jews, in a way similar to the way] God blessed Abraham. He also desired that as a result of our trusting [Christ], we [all] might receive the Spirit [whom God] promised to [give to] us. **15** My fellow believers, I will now [illustrate] by referring to human [relationships. After an agreement is confirmed by two people] {[two people have signed] an agreement}, no one can reject it or add to it. **16** [God] declared to Abraham and his descendant that he was promising [to give blessings to Abraham]. [The words that God spoke were not "and your] descendants." [He was not] referring to many persons. Instead, he was referring to one person, who is Christ, [because the words that God spoke were], "and your descendant." **17** This is what I am saying: [Since God] gave the laws [to the Jews] 430 years after [he declared to Abraham what he was promising to do for Abraham], those laws do not cancel that agreement [with] Abraham that God himself had previously agreed about [PRS]. **18** Remember that if it is because [we obey God's] laws [that he gives to us] what [he has] promised [to give to us], then it is not [just] because he [has] promised [that he would give those things to us]. God freely gave to Abraham [what he had promised to give to him, just] because [God had] promised [that he would give it to him. Similarly, it is not because we obey God's laws that God gives to us what he has promised to give to us]. **19** So, [if someone should ask], "Why [did God later give] his laws [to Moses?" I would reply that] it was in order that [people might realize] how sinful they were. [Those laws were valid] until [Jesus came. He was] the

descendant that God [was referring to when he made] the promises to Abraham. [The laws] were given {[God] gave [his laws]} [to Moses] by God's causing angels to [speak to him. Moses was the] mediator, [the one who told the laws to the people]. **20** Now, [when] a mediator [functions], one [person] is not [speaking with another] directly; but God himself [made his promises directly to Abraham]. **21** [If someone should ask, "When God gave his] laws [to Moses] long [after he told Abraham] what he was promising [to give to him, was he] changing his mind?" [I would reply that God] certainly did not [change his mind when he did that]! If God had given a law that could enable people to live [eternally], then it actually would be because of people [obeying that] law that God would erase the record of their sins. **22** But instead, [what we read in] the Scriptures [PRS] is that God [caused all people to be unable to escape being punished for] their [sins] [MET], just like [people] in prison [are unable to escape] [PRS, MET]. [God did that in order that he might give what he promised to those who trust Jesus Christ, just] because they trust him. **23** Before [God revealed the good message about] trusting [in Christ], the laws [PRS] that God gave to Moses were [confining/imprisoning us Jews] [MET], [as] a prisoner [in jail is] confined. [We] were unable to escape [obeying those] [MET] [laws]. This happened in order that [we might believe] the good message [concerning Christ, the message that God would] reveal [later]. **24** [Like a father supervises his immature son by appointing a] servant to take care of him [MET], [God] was supervising us [by] his laws [MET, PRS] until Christ came. [He did this] in order that he might erase the record of our sins [only] because we trust [Christ]. **25** But [now that God] has revealed the message [about trusting in Christ], the laws [that God gave to Moses] are no longer supervising us [Jews] [PRS, MET]. **26** Now all of you [Jews and] non-Jews are [as though you are] God's children because you trusted Christ Jesus. **27** That is, you who [began a relationship] with Christ when you were baptized identified yourselves [MET] with Christ. **28** [If you are believers, it does] not [matter to God if you are] Jews or non-Jews; slaves or ones [who are] not slaves; males or females, because all of you are [as] one [sort of person because of your relationship] with Christ Jesus. **29** Furthermore, since you belong to Christ, you are [like] Abraham's descendants [because you trust God as Abraham did], and you will possess/receive all that God has promised [MET].

4 Now, I [will further] discuss [children and heirs]: [An heir is a person who will later] control all that his father has. But as long as that heir is a child, others [control] him, with the result that he is just like a slave [MET]. **2** Until the [day that] his father [previously] determined, [other] persons supervise him and manage his father's property. **3** Likewise, when we [(inc)] (OR, we [(exc) Jews]) were [like] young children [MET], we were controlled by the spiritual powers of this world. They controlled us like [masters control their slaves] [MET]. **4** But exactly at the time [MTY] [that God had previously determined], he sent [Jesus], who is (his Son/the man who is also God), into the world. Jesus was born to a [human] mother. He had to obey the laws [that God gave to Moses]. **5** God sent Jesus in order that he might redeem us who had to obey [God's] laws. God wanted us all to receive from [God] the status of being his children [MET]. **6** Furthermore, we know that we are God's children because God sent the Spirit, who is intimately related to Jesus, to live in our (inner beings/hearts). [The Spirit enables us to] pray fervently, "Daddy, Father!" [This shows that we are God's children]. **7** So, [because of what God has done], no longer is [each of] you [like] a slave. Instead, [each of you is] a child [of God]. Furthermore, since [each of you is God's] child, God has also made you his heir, [one who will receive all that he has promised]. **8** When you did not have a relationship with God [MET], you served gods that really did not exist [MET]. You were their slaves. **9** But now you have come to know God. Perhaps [it would be better to say that] now God knows you. [So now you are acting foolishly]! (You are again believing [that by obeying] rules and rites [you will benefit spiritually]! [RHQ] [Those rules are] ineffective and inadequate! You are wanting to [obey them] again [MET] like slaves obey their masters. [RHQ] **10** You [non-Jews] are carefully practicing [Jewish rules and rituals about what you should do] (on [Sabbaths/on Jewish days of rest]) and [on the first day of each] month and on [special] seasons and years. **11** I (worry/am concerned) about your [mistaken ideas. I do not want] to have [so] strenuously served you in vain. **12** My fellow believers, I strongly urge you that you do as I do. [Stop thinking that you have to obey (Jewish rules and rituals/ceremonial laws]). [When I was with you], I [did not obey all the Jewish rules and rituals], just like you [did not obey them]. [At that time] you treated me entirely as you should have [LIT]. **13** You know that the first time I preached to you, [I went to your area to regain my health, because I was physically weak]. **14** [Although] you might have [despised me because] I was physically weak, you did not despise me or act contemptuously/disrespectfully toward me. Instead, you welcomed me like [you would welcome] an angel from God. [You welcomed me] like [you would welcome] Christ Jesus! **15** (I am disappointed that you have forgotten [that then] you [declared that you were] pleased with [me]./Have you forgotten [that then] you [declared that

you were] pleased with [me]?) [RHQ] I can testify that you [would have done anything to help me]. You would have gouged out your eyes [and] given them to me, [if that would have helped me]! **16** So I am very disappointed that you [now] act as though [RHQ] I have become hostile to you [because I have kept] speaking the true [message about Christ] to you. **17** Those [who are insisting on obeying Jewish rules] are eagerly [showing interest in] you, but [what they are doing is] not good. They even want you not to associate with [me and other true] believers, because they want you to eagerly show [interest in] them, [not in us]. **18** But [just like] it always feels good to have others show that they appreciate you, [I would like you] always [to appreciate me], and not only when I am with you. **19** You [who are like] my children, [once] again I am very worried/concerned about you [MET], [and I will continue to] be worried/concerned until Christ's [nature becomes developed] in you [completely and wholeheartedly] [MET] [as a child] becomes developed [in his mother's womb]. **20** But I do wish that I could be with you now and that I might talk [more gently with you], because I do not know [what to do about] you [while we are apart]. **21** Some of you desire [to obey all the laws] that God gave Moses. [I say that] you [should] consider [RHQ] [the implications of what Moses wrote in] the Scriptures. **22** [He] wrote that Abraham became the father of two sons. His female slave, [Hagar], bore one son, and his [wife Sarah], who was not a slave, bore the other. **23** Also, [the sons differed. Ishmael], the [son born by] the female slave, was conceived naturally. But [Isaac], the [son born by] his wife who was not a slave, was conceived [miraculously] as a result of what [God] had promised [Abraham]. **24** [I am telling you this] as an illustration. These [two women] symbolize two agreements. [God made] the first [agreement, which involved obeying the laws that God gave to Moses] at Sinai Mountain. [Because that agreement forces those who accept it to keep obeying all its rules] [MET], [it is like a slave mother who] gives birth to slaves. [So] Hagar, [the female slave, symbolizes] that [agreement]. **25** Also, the [word] 'Hagar' is [associated with] Sinai Mountain, [which is] in Arabia [land. Hagar, the female slave, also] represents Jerusalem as it is today. Jerusalem is [like] [MET] a slave [mother, and those who live there] [PRS] [are like] her slave children [MET] [because they all must obey the laws that God gave to Moses]. **26** But there will be a [new] Jerusalem in heaven [MTY], and we [who will go there] are free [from having to obey Jewish laws]. We [who belong to that city consider it to be] our mother [MET] [city because we are God's true children]. **27** [Our new city will have more people than those who live in Jerusalem now. It will be just like] Isaiah foretold about [the people whom he expected would come back to Jerusalem from exile. He expected that they would be more numerous than those who] were taken into exile. He wrote: [You who live in Jerusalem, you will] rejoice! Now you have no children, like a barren [woman] who does not give birth to [children! But some day you will] shout [joyfully], (without restraint/as loudly as you can), [even though now you are few in number, like a woman who] cannot give birth [to children, and you] feel deserted. [You will be very happy] because [you will have many children who will come to you. Those children will be] more than [the children] any woman with a husband [could have borne]. **28** Now, [my] fellow believers, you have become children [of God as a result of believing God's] promise to us, as Isaac [was born as a result of Abraham believing what God promised to him] [MET]. **29** [Also, long ago Abraham's son] Ishmael, the one who was conceived naturally, caused trouble for [Abraham's son] Isaac, who [was conceived] supernaturally [MET]. Similarly, now [those who think that we must obey the laws that God gave Moses in order that God will save us are causing trouble for those who are trusting Abraham's descendant, Christ]. **30** But these are [RHQ] the words in the Scriptures [PRS]: "The son of the [woman] who was not a slave will inherit [what his father has]. The female slave's son will certainly not inherit those things. So send away from [this place] the female slave and her son [MET]!" [That means that you should certainly expel from your groups those who insist that we obey all the laws God gave Moses] [MET]. **31** [My] fellow believers, [Hagar symbolizes the laws that God gave to Moses. But we are not those who must obey all the laws that God gave to Moses] [MET]. [So] we are not [the] female slave [Hagar's spiritual] descendants [MET]. But [Sarah's descendants are those who were born as a result of believing what God promised to Abraham. So we are] the [spiritual] descendants of [Sarah, the woman] who was not a slave [MET].

5 It is in order that we might live without (being obliged [to/having to]) [obey all the Jewish rituals] that Christ freed us [from God condemning us because of our disobeying those rituals]. So, firmly [reject the false teaching that someone must circumcise you, and] do not [live like] slaves again [MET] [by letting others force you to obey those rules and rituals again]. **2** Consider very carefully what I, Paul, [an apostle], now tell you: If, [to fulfill Jewish ritual laws], you are permitting yourself to be circumcised {someone to circumcise you}, what Christ [has done for you] will not benefit you at all. **3** Instead, I solemnly declare again to every man who is circumcised {has someone circumcise him} [in order for God to accept him], that you must [perfectly] obey all of

the laws [that God gave Moses, in order for God to save you]. **4** Those of you who are sure that God will erase the record of your sins because you obey the laws [that God gave to Moses], you have separated yourselves from Christ. You have abandoned/rejected [God's true method of saving you, which was] by kindly erasing the record of your sins, in a way that you did not deserve. **5** But we who have a relationship with Christ and who trust in Christ are eagerly waiting to receive what God's Spirit assures us that we can expect. We can expect to receive it because God has erased the record of our sins. **6** As for us who have a relationship with Christ Jesus, God is not concerned whether we are circumcised or not circumcised. Instead, God is concerned about whether we trust [in] Christ, with the result that we love [other people]. **7** You were progressing well [spiritually] [MET]. You should not have let someone influence you so that [now you] are not believing the true [message about Christ] [RHQ]! **8** [God], the one who chose you, is not the one who is persuading you to think like this! **9** [Remember that this false doctrine that someone is teaching you will affect all of you, just like] [MET] a little yeast causes all of the dough to swell up. **10** [Nevertheless], because of my relationship with the Lord, I am certain that you will think only as I do [about forcing people to obey rules and rituals]. Furthermore, [God] will punish anyone who is confusing you [by teaching this false message], even if he is an important person. **11** But, my fellow believers, [although someone claims that I am proclaiming that men must be circumcised, I certainly am not still proclaiming that. Remember that the Jews are still] ([persecuting me/causing me to suffer]). If I were still proclaiming that men must be circumcised [in order for God to accept them], (the Jews would not be persecuting me./why would the Jews be persecuting me?) [RHQ] [They would] [RHQ] not be [persecuting me]/causing me to suffer [because] then [the Jews] would no longer be offended. [They] ([are offended/do not want to accept what I teach]) [because I proclaim that Christ, the Messiah, died on] the cross [MTY]. **12** I [would even] wish that those who are disturbing you [by insisting that men be circumcised] would also emasculate [EUP] themselves, [with the result that they would be expelled from your congregations]! **13** My fellow believers, [God] chose you in order that [you might live] without having to [obey rules and rituals]. But [do not assume that because] you are free [from having to obey rules and rituals], [God] permits you to [do whatever your] self-directed nature [desires]. Instead, constantly, as you love [each other], serve each other. **14** Keep in mind that we can sum up all of the laws [that God has] given us in one law, which is: "You must love each person you come in contact with, just like [you love] yourself." **15** Since you are attacking and injuring [MET] each other [by the things that you say] [MET], I warn you that [if you continue doing that], you will totally ruin each other [spiritually]. **16** [So] I tell you this: Constantly let [God's] Spirit direct you. [If you do that], you will certainly not do the things that your self-directed nature wants [you to do]. **17** Your self-directed nature (opposes [God's] Spirit/does not [want you to do what] God's Spirit [wants you to do]), but also his Spirit opposes your self-directed nature. These two are always (fighting with/opposing) each other. The result is that you do not [constantly] do the [good] deeds that you truly desire [to do]. **18** But when you are led by God's Spirit {when God's Spirit directs you}, you [can do what pleases God], now that you are no longer obligated [to obey all] the laws [that God gave Moses]. **19** [You already know] how [people think and] act [PRS] because of their self-directed nature. These are [some of the things that they do: People] are sexually immoral. [People] commit unnatural sexual acts. [People] act indecently. **20** [People] worship false gods [and] things [that] represent those gods. [People] perform (rituals in order that evil spirits might act for them/sorcery). [People] are hostile [to others. People] quarrel [with each other. People] are (jealous/resent other people's status). [People] behave angrily. [People] try (to get others to think highly of them/to exalt themselves) and (do not consider what others want/act selfishly). People do not associate [with others. People] associate only with those who agree [with them]. **21** [People] want what others have. [People] get drunk. [People] (revel/participate in wild parties). And [people do other] things like these. I warn you [now], just like I warned [you previously], that the ones [who constantly] act [and think] like that will not receive [what] God [has for his own people when he begins] to rule over us. **22** But [God's] Spirit causes [us to do these things]: We love [others]. We are joyful. We are peaceful. We are patient. We are kind. We are good. We are [ones whom] others can trust. **23** We are gentle. We control our behavior. There is no law that says people should not [think and act in such ways]. **24** Furthermore, we who belong to Christ Jesus have [stopped obeying] our self-directed nature and [stopped doing] all the evil things that we desire to do [MET]. [It is as though] [MET] we nailed them to the cross! **25** Since [God's] Spirit has caused us to [be spiritually] alive, we should [conduct our lives the way the] Spirit [directs us]. **26** We should not be saying how great we are. We should not be making ourselves more important than others. We should not envy each other.

6 My fellow believers, if [you] discover that a person [among your congregation] is sinning, [those of] you

whom [God's] Spirit [is directing and empowering] should gently correct that person. [Furthermore, each of] you [who corrects another person should] be very cautious in order that you might not [sin like that when] you are tempted {[when something] tempts you}. **2** [When there are ones who have] problems, you should help each other. By doing that, you will complete what Christ requires. **3** Keep in mind that those who [refuse to help others because they think that they are more important than other people, although they are] not really more important, are deceiving themselves. **4** Instead, each [of you] should [constantly] test/judge [and decide if you can approve what you yourself are doing and thinking]. Then you can boast because of what you yourself [are doing and thinking], and not because what you are doing is superior to what other persons [are doing]. **5** Keep in mind that you must each perform your own [individual] tasks. **6** [You] who are being taught {whom others are teaching} [God's truth] should share your various [material] things [EUP] with your teachers. **7** You should not deceive yourselves. [Remember that] God is never outwitted {no one ever fools God}. [Just like] a farmer will reap exactly the kind [of crop that] he plants [MET], [God will reward people according to what they have done] [MET]. **8** [God] will punish eternally those who do what their self-directed natures urge them to do. But those who please [God's] Spirit will live forever [with God] because of what [God's] Spirit does for them. **(aiōnios g166)** **9** But we should not (tire of/become discouraged while) doing what pleases God, because [eventually], at the time [that God] has determined, we will receive a reward [MET], if we do not stop [doing the good things that we have been doing]. **10** So, whenever we have opportunities, we should do [what is] good to all people. But especially we should do what is good to all our fellow believers. **11** I am now writing this last part of this letter to you in my own handwriting. Notice the large letters with which I am now writing. I am doing this in order that I might emphasize this: **12** Some Jewish believers are trying to force you to perform certain rituals so that other Jews will think highly of them. They are insisting that you be circumcised {that someone must circumcise you}. They are doing that only in order that other Jews would no longer (persecute them/cause them to suffer) for proclaiming that God will save us because of our trusting in what Christ accomplished when he died on the cross [MTY, MET]. **13** The reason that I say that is that the ones who are insisting that you be circumcised {that someone circumcise you} do not themselves fully obey the laws that God gave to Moses. Instead, they desire that you let someone circumcise you in order that they might boast to those Jews who would (persecute them/cause them to suffer) that you did that because they insisted [MTY] that you do it. **14** I myself, however, strongly desire that I never boast about anything like that. The only thing I will boast about is what our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished by dying on the cross [MTY]. Because of what Christ did on the cross, I no longer am interested in the things that those who do not trust Christ [MTY] think are important, and those people are no longer interested in the things that I [MET] think are important. **15** I will boast about Christ dying on the cross because God is concerned neither that people are circumcised nor that people are not circumcised. Instead, he is concerned only that people conduct their lives in a completely new way. **16** I pray that God will give inner peace and act kindly towards all who will act according to this new way of life. It is all those who live according to this new way of life who are now truly God's people [MET], as the Israeli people were God's people previously. **17** Finally, I say that people have persecuted me/caused me to suffer for declaring the truth about Jesus, and as a result I have scars on my body. Your new teachers do not have scars like mine! So do not trouble/bother me about these matters again! **18** My fellow believers, I pray that our Lord Jesus Christ will kindly accomplish what he desires within you. (Amen!/May it be so!)

Ephesians

1 I, Paul, am an apostle whom God appointed (to represent/to proclaim the message about) Christ Jesus because that is what God wanted. [I am writing this letter] to you who are the people of God in Ephesus [city. You are people who] (faithfully/continue to) trust in Christ Jesus and who have a close relationship with him. **2** [I pray that] God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord will continue to act kindly toward you and cause you to have [inner] peace. **3** Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Because of our relationship with Christ, he has blessed us spiritually in every way by giving us blessings that come from heaven. **4** Before God created the world, he chose us to be his people because of our (relationship with/union with) Christ, in order that [God could consider] us to be completely holy [DOU]. Because [God] loves [us], **5** he decided long ago that he would adopt us to be [as though we were] his own children because of what Jesus Christ [has done]. He decided to do that because it pleased him to do that. **6** He did it in order that we would praise him for acting very kindly toward us in a wonderful way that we did not deserve. He did it because of our relationship with his beloved Son {[one, who is also God, whom he] loves}. **7** When the blood of Christ [flowed when he died] [MTY], [it was as though] he paid a price to free/save us [from the guilt of our sins]. [That] ([provided a way/made it possible]) [for] God to act very kindly toward us to forgive us for having sinned. **8** He acted very kindly toward us and enabled us to become wise about many [HYP] things and to understand his truth. **9** He has enabled us to know the things that he had planned secretly (OR, that he had not revealed to anyone yet). He did that because he wanted to do that, and because he planned to do that by means of the things Christ would do. **10** God planned that at the time that [he appointed], he would unite all things/beings in heaven and all things/beings on earth (OR, all beings in heaven and all things on earth), and cause Christ to be the one who will rule them [MET]. **11** Because of our close relationship with Christ, God has also chosen us [(inc)] (OR, us [(exc)] Jews) to receive what he has promised [to give] us. He decided long ago to do that. It was exactly what he planned. He accomplishes everything exactly as he plans and desires, **12** in order that we(exc) Jews, who confidently expected the Messiah to do great things for us before the non-Jews expected such things (OR, we [(inc)] who were already confidently expecting Christ [to do great things for us]) will praise him for his greatness. **13** You [Ephesians] also heard the true message, the good message about how God saves you. [People] put their seal on something to show that [it belongs to them]. Similarly, when you believed [in Christ], God [showed that you also belong to him by sending you] the Holy Spirit as he promised to do [MET]. **14** The Holy Spirit is [like] [MET] a (deposit/down payment). That is, he (guarantees/assures us) that [we will receive] all that God has promised to give us, at the time when God will give to those who belong to him [MET] everything that [Christ] freed us to receive. [God also assures you that you belong to him], in order that you would praise him for his greatness. **15** Because of [what God has done for you], and because [people] told me that you continue to trust in the Lord Jesus and that you love all those who belong to God, **16** I thank God for you constantly [LIT, HYP]. I (mention/pray for) you constantly, whenever I pray. **17** [I pray] that God, who is the glorious/wonderful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may cause his Spirit to make you wise, and that his Spirit will reveal [God to you] so that you may fully know him. **18** And I pray that God would enable you to understand [MTY] his truth, in order that in your (inner beings/hearts) you may know the things that we believers should confidently expect to receive because he chose us [to be his people]. And I pray that you will know how God will bless his people in a very wonderful way [when we finally receive] all that he has promised to give us. **19** And [I pray that] you will know how very powerfully [God helps] us who continue to trust [in Christ]. He works powerfully for us **20** just like he acted powerfully for Christ when he caused Christ to become alive again after he died, and put him in the place of highest/greatest honor [MTY] in heaven. **21** [There], Christ is the supreme ruler over every powerful spirit of every level of authority. His rank is much higher than any powerful spirit can receive, not only now, but forever. **(aiōn g165)** **22** God has caused all beings to be subject to Christ [MTY], and he has also appointed Christ, who rules over all things, to rule [MET] over all believers. **23** We believers [relate to Christ like the parts of a person's] body [MET] [relate to its head]. Christ uses all [his power among us] just like he uses his power throughout the whole universe.

2 Formerly, because you were habitually sinning [DOU], you were ([spiritually] dead/[as unable to please God as a] corpse [MET] is). **2** You were acting in the same [evil] way as those who oppose Christ [MTY] act. That is, you were behaving in the [evil] ways [that Satan wanted you to behave]. He rules over evil spiritual beings that no person can see [MTY]. He is the spirit who now powerfully controls the people who disobey God. **(aiōn g165)** **3** Formerly, we all used to disobey God as they do. We did the things that our self-centered nature wanted us to do. We habitually did those [evil] deeds that our bodies and our minds wanted to

do. When we were acting like that, it was certain that [God] would punish [MTY] us, just like he will certainly punish all other [evil people]. **4** But God always acts very mercifully, and he loves us very much. **5** As a result, even when we were ([spiritually] dead/[as unable to please God as] a corpse [MET] is) because we were habitually sinning, he enabled us to receive [spiritual]/[eternal] life because of our relationship with Christ. [Do not forget this: It is only] because God has acted so kindly toward you, in a way that you did not deserve, that you are saved {that [he] saved you} [from the guilt of your sin] **6** And [it is as though] God gave us spiritual life when he caused Christ Jesus to be alive again after he died [MET]. And [it is as though] God caused us to sit [and rule] [MTY] with him in heaven, **7** in order that he might show to everyone at all times in the future that he has acted toward us in an extremely kind way because of what Christ Jesus [did for us]. **(aiōn g165)** **8** It is [only] by [God] acting [PRS] [toward you] in a way that you did not deserve that you have been saved {that he has saved you} as a result of your trusting [in Christ]. You did not save yourselves. His saving you was his gift to you. **9** He did not save any of you because of anything you yourselves did. Because you have done nothing [to save yourselves], you cannot be proud of your efforts to save yourselves. **10** It is God who has made us what we are now. Because of our relationship with Christ Jesus, he has enabled us to receive [spiritual/eternal] life in order that we should conduct our lives habitually doing the good deeds that God previously planned for us to do. **11** You [Ephesians] have been non-Jews from the time that you were born. The Jews ([insult you/say that you are not God's people]) [by] calling you 'those who are not circumcised'. They [proudly] call themselves 'we [(exc)] who are circumcised'. [They have allowed people to] circumcise [them to indicate that they are God's people, but] that has [only] changed their bodies, [not their] ([inner beings/hearts]). **12** You should constantly remember these things: Formerly you did not have any relationship with Christ. You did not belong to the people of Israel, [the people whom God chose]. You did not know about the things God promised in his agreements [with his people]. You did not confidently expect to go to heaven after you die (OR, [that God would save you]). You [lived] in this world without knowing God. **13** But now, because of your relationship with Christ Jesus, God has brought you, who had no relationship with him [MET], into his family [MET]. He did that because [you trusted in what Christ accomplished when] his blood [MTY] [flowed from his body when he died on the cross]. **14** Christ himself [has caused us Jewish and non-Jewish believers] to have peace [with each other]. He has made both [of our groups] to become one [group]. [Just like people] (tear down/demolish) a wall that separates [groups of people] [MET], he has destroyed the hatred [between Jews and non-Jews]. **15** By dying [MTY] [for us on the cross] he made it no longer [necessary for us to obey] all the [Jewish] laws and rituals [in order to be saved]. He did that in order to enable the two [groups] to become one new group because of our relationship with him. The result was that he has caused us to have peace [with each other]. **16** By [dying on] the cross [MTY] he caused both Jews and non-Jews to have a peaceful relationship with God. That is how he caused us to no longer be [MET] enemies [with God] (OR, [with each other]). **17** He came [to earth] and proclaimed that you [non-Jews], who did not have a relationship with [MET] [God], and [us(exc) Jews], who [considered that we(exc) belonged to] [MET] God's [family], can [all] now have peace [with God]. **18** [We know that he has done that] because we both, [Jews and non-Jews], are [now] able to approach God the Father in prayer by the help of his Spirit, because of what Christ [has done]. **19** So [God no longer treats] you [non-Jews] as [people treat] [MET] foreigners and strangers [who live among them] [MET]. Instead, along with all God's people, [it is as though] you have become citizens of a country that he rules over, and [as though you have become] members of the family [of which he is the father] [MET]. **20** [Just like] a building is built {[as someone] builds a building} on a foundation, [God has joined you into one group that originated/began] from what the apostles and prophets [taught]. Christ Jesus is the [most important one in that group, just like a] cornerstone [is the most important part of a building]. And **21** just like [a builder might] join together all the parts of a building to make it a temple that [people will] dedicate to the Lord [MET], [Christ is continually causing all of] you who have a relationship with [him to be united, in order that you will become one holy group]. **22** And because of your relationship with Christ, [God] is joining you [non-Jews] together with [Jewish believers] to be [like] one building [MET] in which his Spirit lives.

3 Because [God has done all this for] you non-Jews, I, Paul, [pray for you. I want you to know that it is because I serve] Christ Jesus for your sake that I am in prison. **2** I (assume that/think that probably) someone has told you how God acted very kindly toward me, appointing me [so that I would proclaim the gospel to you non-Jews]. **3** God revealed to me the message that he had not revealed to others. When you read what I have already written briefly about that, **4** you will be able to understand that I understand clearly that message about Christ. **5** Formerly, [God] did not reveal that message to anyone, but now his Spirit has revealed that message to (his holy apostles and prophets/people who tell messages

that come directly from God). 6 That message, which he has now revealed, is that because of our [(inc)] relationship with Christ Jesus, [all of us], non-Jews as well as Jews [MTY], will receive the [great spiritual blessings that God has] promised as we all form one group [MET] [as a result of our believing] the good news [about Christ]. 7 By God powerfully enabling me, and because God acted kindly toward me, doing what I did not deserve, and chose me [to do that work], I became someone who tells others this good message. 8 Although I am the least [worthy] of all God's people, God kindly [appointed] me to proclaim to the non-Jews the message about the great spiritual blessings that [they can receive] from Christ, 9 and to enable everyone to understand clearly how God accomplished what he planned. God, who created everything, [has now revealed] this message, which he never revealed to anyone before. **(aiōn g165)** 10 [What he planned] was that all (believers/people who belong to Christ) would be the ones who would reveal to all the ranks [DOU] of spiritual beings in heaven that what God had planned is wise in every way. 11 That is what God had always planned, and it is what he accomplished by what our Lord Jesus [has done]. **(aiōn g165)** 12 Because of what he has done and because of our relationship with him, [when we pray] we can approach God confidently and without being afraid. 13 So I ask that you do not be discouraged because of my suffering many things for you [here in prison]. You should feel honored that I am [willing to] suffer [these things for your sake]. 14 Because [God has done all this for you], I kneel [and pray] [MTY] to [God our] Father. 15 He is the one who is [like] a father of all [the believers who are now in] heaven and those who are still on the earth. 16 I pray that, using his unlimited resources, he will cause you to be strengthened by his Spirit {cause his Spirit to strengthen you} in your (inner beings/hearts) with all [God's] power. 17 That is, I pray that because of your trusting in Christ, his [Spirit] may live in your (inner beings/hearts) (OR, he may live in your hearts). And I pray that because you love [Christ] firmly and faithfully/continually [MET], you, 18 along with all other believers, may be able to know how very [DOU] much Christ loves [us(inc)]. 19 I want you to experience how very deeply he loves us, even though it is not possible for us to understand fully [how much he loves us]. And I pray that God will enable you to be filled with {have a full measure of} all the [qualities of his character that] he himself has. 20 [God] is able to do much (greater things/more) than we could ask him to do, or even that we might think that he can do, by his power that is working within us. 21 Because of our relationship with Christ Jesus, may all (believers/those who belong to him) praise him forever. (Amen!/May it be so!) **(aiōn g165)**

4 Therefore I, who am in prison because [I serve] the Lord [Jesus], urge you, whom God has chosen [to be his people, to do these things]: Conduct your lives as [God's people] should. 2 Always be humble, and do not demand your own rights. Be patient [with each other], and, because you love each other, endure each other's ([irritating] behavior/behavior that you do not like). 3 [God's] Spirit has caused you to be united [with one another], so do all that you can to remain united [with one another] by acting peacefully [toward each other]. 4 [All we believers form just one group] [MET], and we have only one [Holy] Spirit. Similarly, you were chosen {[God] chose you} in order that you all might confidently keep expecting one [set of good] things [from God]. 5 There is only one Lord, [Jesus Christ]. We all believe the same [teaching about him. It was to show that we belong to him] alone that [we had someone] baptize us. 6 There is one God, who is the [spiritual] Father of all [us believers]. He [rules] over all his people; he enables all his people [to do powerful things] (OR, he sustains all his people); and his [Spirit lives] in all his people. 7 Christ has generously given to each one of us spiritual gifts, just like he decided to give them. 8 [When Christ gave] gifts to his people, [it was similar to what the Psalmist said about God receiving tribute money] from those whom he had conquered, When he ascended to heaven, he gave as gifts to people the things [that he had taken] from the people whom he captured: 9 The words 'he ascended' certainly imply/indicate [RHQ] that Christ had also previously descended to the earth. 10 Christ, who descended [to earth], is also the one who ascended to the most exalted position in heaven, in order that he might show his power [MTY] throughout the universe. 11 He appointed some people to be apostles. He appointed some people to be (prophets/ones who reveal messages that come directly from God). He appointed some people to be (evangelists/ones whose work is to tell others the message about Christ). He appointed some people to lead and teach [the congregations]. 12 [He appointed all of these] in order that they would prepare God's people to do [God's] work, so that all the people who belong to Christ [MET] might become [spiritually] mature. 13 He wants all of us [believers] to be united [because] we all believe in the Son of God (OR, the man who was also God) and [because] we all know [him]. He wants us to become spiritually mature; that is, he wants us to be (perfect/all that God wants us to be), [just like] Christ was ([perfect/all that God wanted him to be]). 14 Then we will no longer be [spiritually immature], like [MET] little children [are immature]. We will no longer be constantly [changing what we believe, like] [MET] waves of the sea are [constantly changing as the wind blows and] tosses

them back and forth. We will not allow people who teach [what is false] and who scheme to deceive/influence us. **15** Instead, by loving [others] as we behave as [God's] truth requires (OR, speak in a loving manner what is true), we will become more and more like Christ in every way. He is the one [who controls/guides all his people] [MET], [just like a person's] head [controls/guides his] body. **16** He [enables all those who belong to him to mature spiritually. A person's body grows stronger, as] each part of the body is joined to the others by the ligaments and as each part (functions properly/works as it should). Similarly, believers will become mature [spiritually] by loving each other and by each of them doing the work [that God wants them to do] [MET]. **17** The Lord [Jesus] has authorized me to strongly tell you that you must no longer conduct your lives like unbelievers do. The futile/worthless way in which they think [MET] [controls how they conduct their lives]. **18** They are unable to think clearly [MET] [about what is right and what is wrong]. Because they have decided that they do not want to know about God and because they stubbornly [IDM] refuse to [listen to his message], they do not have the [eternal] life that God [gives us]. **19** The result is that because they have ceased (to care/to be concerned) [about what is right and what is wrong], they have (deliberately committed themselves to doing/wholeheartedly decided to do) the shameful things that their bodies want, and they commit all kinds of immoral acts, and continually are eager to do more of those things. **20** But when you learned [about] Christ, you did not learn [to behave] like that. **21** I am sure that you heard the message about [Christ], and because you are people who have a close relationship with him, you were taught {[others] taught you} the true [way to live] that Jesus [showed us]. **22** [You were taught] {[They taught you]} that you must put aside [MET] your evil nature; [that is, that you must not behave like you formerly did]. Your evil desires deceived you, making you want to do evil things and causing you to think that [doing that was good for you]; and your thinking like that was destroying you [spiritually]. **23** Others taught you that instead, you must let [God's Spirit] change the way you think, **24** and that you must start being [MET] the new persons that God made you to become. That is, your [behavior] must be righteous and truly/genuinely devout. **25** Therefore, quit lying to one another. Instead, because we all belong to just one group [of believers], speak truthfully to each other. **26** If you get angry, do not sin [as a result of] getting angry. Before the end of the day [MTY], stop being angry; **27** [by doing that], you will not allow the devil to make you do evil. **28** Those who have been stealing must not steal any longer. Instead, they should work hard to earn (their living/what they need) ([by] their own efforts/[by] what they do themselves) [MTY], in order that they may have [something] to give to those who are needy. **29** Do not use [MTY] foul language. Instead, say only things that are useful for helping people when they need help, things that will help [spiritually] the people that you talk to. **30** [God has given you his] Spirit (to confirm/to assure you) that some day [God will claim all] you people [whom Christ has] redeemed [MET], [just like people confirm that something belongs to them by] putting their seal on it. So do not cause God's Holy Spirit to be sad ([by the way you talk/by the things that you say]). **31** Do not be resentful at all towards others. Do not become angry in any way. Never shout abusively at others. Never (slander/say bad things about) others. Never act maliciously/be mean in any way. **32** Be kind to one another. Act mercifully toward each other. Forgive each other, just like God forgave you because of [what] Christ [has done].

5 (Imitate/Behave like) God, because he loves you who are [as though you were] [SIM] his children. **2** Do everything in a way that shows that you love [people], just like Christ loved us and willingly died for us. He offered himself [to God as a sacrifice] that was very pleasing to God, [just like Jewish priests offered] sweet-smelling [animal] sacrifices to God [MET]. **3** Do not commit any kind of immoral act [DOU], and do not desire more things than you need. Do not [act in such a way that others could] even (spread rumors/talk) about your acting in such ways, because it is not appropriate/fitting for God's people to do such things. **4** Do not use obscene/shameful language when you talk to people. Do not talk foolishly. Do not use vulgar/indecent language, because it is not appropriate/fitting that God's people should talk like that. Instead, tell people how much you thank [God for all he does for you]. **5** You can be sure of this: No person who is sexually immoral or who acts indecently/shamefully will be among those people whom God rules over [MET] [in heaven]. Neither will those who desire more things than they need. Such people worship their possessions [instead of worshipping God]. **6** Do not let anyone deceive you by suggesting that [God will really] not [punish people who commit such sins], because God certainly will punish [MTY] those who habitually disobey him [by doing such things]. **7** So, do not commit the same kinds of deeds that such people do, **8** because formerly you [did not know God's truth] [MET], [as those who] are in darkness [do not know what is around them]. But now [it is as though] you are in the light [MET] [because you know God's truth] because of your relationship with the Lord [Jesus]. So do those things that those who know God's truth [MET] should do. **9** Keep in mind that [as] light [MET]

causes [good things to grow], those who know God's truth should do those things that are good, righteous, and honest. **10** And as [you do that], try (to find out/to discover) what pleases the Lord. **11** Do not do the worthless deeds that the people (who are in [spiritual] darkness/who do not know God's truth) [MET] do. Instead, let others know that those people's deeds are worthless. **12** It is shameful for God's people to even talk [among themselves about] those evil deeds that evil people do secretly and habitually. **13** But when [God's people rebuke those evil people about their deeds, it will be clear/evident how evil their deeds really are, just like] everything exposed to the light becomes visible {as light [MET] reveals everything [that we cannot see in the darkness]}. **14** [Just like something on which a light shines reflects that light] [MET], [whoever has learned God's truth reveals that truth to others]. That is why [we believers] say this: You who are not aware of your sins, become aware of them [MET]! It is as though you are sound asleep, so wake up! Be like dead people who are becoming alive again! Christ will cause you to know God's truth, just like a light [MET] that shines causes people to know what is in the darkness. **15** So be very careful how you behave. Do not behave as foolish people do. Instead, behave as wise people do. **16** Use your time carefully, because these days [MTY] [people do] extremely evil [deeds]. **17** So do not be foolish. Instead, understand what the Lord [Jesus] wants you to do, [and do it]! **18** Do not become drunk by drinking alcoholic drinks, since people are unable to control their behavior when they are drunk. Instead, let [God's] Spirit control your [behavior] at all times [MTY]. **19** Sing to each other (Psalms/songs [with words from the] Scriptures), sing [other] songs [that the congregation knows], and songs [that God's] Spirit [gives you]. Sing these Psalms and other songs sincerely to [praise] the Lord [Jesus]. **20** At all times thank God, who is our [heavenly] Father, for everything, especially for what the Lord Jesus Christ [MTY] [has done for you]. **21** [Humbly] submit yourselves to each other because you reverence Christ, [who is our example]. **22** Because husbands have authority over [MET] their wives, just as all of us believers form one group [under the authority of] Christ, you women should submit yourselves to [the authority of your] husbands just as you submit yourselves to the Lord [Jesus]. He is the one who saves all his people [from the guilt of their sins]. **24** Just like all believers submit themselves to [the authority of] Christ, the women must submit themselves completely to the [authority of] their husbands. **25** Each of you husbands, love your wife as Christ loved all of [us who would become] believers, with the result that he willingly died for our sake, **26** in order that he might (set us apart for himself/cause us to belong to him). That is, by [revealing his] message [to us], he wanted to [remove the guilt of our sin, just like people remove dirt from something] by washing it [MET]. **27** [Christ did that] in order that he might cause all of us believers to be a glorious group of people that belong to him, people that do not have any moral flaws/imperfections, but instead might be completely pure [DOU] when he gathers us (to his presence/to himself). **28** In the same way, each man should love his wife as he loves his own body. Men who love their wives, [it is as though] they love themselves. **29** This is shown by the fact that no one ever hated his own body. Instead, he feeds his own body and cares for it, just like Christ also cares for all us believers. We have become one group of believers that belongs to him [MET]. **31** [What someone has written in the Scriptures about people who marry is this], [When] a man and [a] woman [marry], they should ([permanently] leave/no longer live with) their fathers and mothers. They should be joined [as husband and] wife, and the two of them shall become [as though they were] one [MET] person. **32** It is very difficult to understand the meaning of these things that God has now revealed to me, but [I am telling you that] those words [also] refer to [the relationship between] Christ and all those who belong to him. **33** However, as for you(pl), each man must love his wife just as he loves himself, and each woman must respect her husband.

6 You children, because you (belong to/have a close relationship with) the Lord [Jesus], obey your parents, because it is right [for you to do] that. **2** God commanded [in the Scriptures], [Greatly] respect your father and mother. That is the first law [that God] commanded in [which he also] promised [something]. [He promised], **3** [If you do] that, you will prosper, and you will live a long time. **4** You parents (OR, You fathers), do not treat your children so severely that they become angry. Instead, bring them up well by instructing them and by disciplining them in [the manner that] the Lord [Jesus wants you to do]. **5** You slaves, obey those who are [your masters]. Obey them very respectfully and sincerely [DOU], just like you obey Christ. **6** Obey them, not only when they are watching [MTY] you, and not only to cause them to think highly/well of you. Instead, obey them as [though you were] [MET] slaves of Christ, [not slaves of your masters]. Do enthusiastically what God wants [you to do]. **7** Serve [your masters] zealously/wholeheartedly, as you would serve the Lord [Jesus], not as you would serve [ordinary] people. **8** [Do this because] you know that [some day] the Lord Jesus will reward each person for whatever good [deeds] that person has done. He will reward people who are slaves and people who are not slaves. **9** You masters, just like your

slaves [should serve you well], you similarly must treat them well. Stop threatening [to beat] them [if they do not do their work well]. Do not forget you and they have the same Lord who is in heaven. [So he is the one who will say to you and your slaves whether he approves of what you and they have done], and [when he judges people], he does not act more favorably [toward some than he acts toward others]. **10** Finally, at all times rely/depend completely on the Lord [Jesus] to strengthen you [spiritually] by his own mighty power. **11** [Just like a soldier] puts on all his (armor/things [to help him fight]) [MET], you should [use every spiritual resource/help that God provides for you], in order that you may successfully resist the devil when he cleverly tries [to oppose you]. **12** You must do this because the fighting that we [believers] do is not only against human beings [SYN]. Instead, we are also fighting against evil spirits who rule and have authority over all that is evil [MET] in the world. And we are fighting against evil spirits who are in heavenly places (OR, everywhere). **(aiōn g165)** **13** Therefore, [just like a soldier] puts on all his (armor/things to help him fight) [MET], [use well all the spiritual resources/helps that God provides for you]. Do that in order that you may be able to resist successfully the devil and all his powerful evil spirits [MTY] every time they (attack you/tempt you to sin or cause something bad to happen to you). [Do it also in order that] when you have done all that you can to resist them [when they attack you], you will still be ready to resist them [when they attack you the next time]. **14** You must be ready to firmly [resist the devil and his evil spirits] [MET], [just like soldiers must be ready to resist the enemy. Prepare for doing that by doing these things]: [To be strong spiritually], hold firmly to [God's] truth, just like soldiers prepare (to stand firm against/to firmly resist) their enemies by fastening their belts around their waists [MET]. Act righteously [in order to protect yourself against demonic attacks, just like soldiers] put on breastplates [to protect their chests against their enemies' attacks] [MET]. **15** Hold fast the good message [that gives us] peace [with God, just like soldiers] put on their boots firmly [MET] (to stand firm [against/] firmly [resist]) [their enemies]. **16** In addition, keep trusting firmly [in the Lord. That will enable you to protect yourselves from anything that Satan], the evil one, [may do to harm you spiritually, just like soldiers] carry shields [to protect themselves against] the arrows that have flaming tips [that their enemies shoot at them] [MET]. **17** And [rely/depend on the fact that God] has saved you, [in order to protect yourselves against demonic attacks, just like soldiers] put on a helmet [to protect] their [heads from attacks by] their [enemies] [MET]. And be ready to use [the weapon that God's] Spirit [has given you], which is the message of God, [in order to fight against] ([demonic powers/Satan]), [just like soldiers] use their swords [to fight against their enemies] [MET]. **18** As you are doing that, keep praying [to God] at all times, and requesting him [to do things for you and others;] and let God's Spirit [direct what you pray]. For this purpose, always be [spiritually] alert/watchful, and (always be persistent in/never quit) praying for all God's people. **19** And [specifically], pray for me. Pray that God will tell me what I should say [MTY] whenever I speak, in order that I may boldly tell others the good message about Christ. People did not know that message before, [but God has now revealed it to me]. **20** I am (a representative [of Christ]/one who speaks on behalf [of Christ]) [as I tell this message to others, and] I am in prison [MTY] [because of that]. Pray that when I tell [others about Christ], I may speak without being afraid, because that is how I ought to speak. **21** In order that you may know about [what is happening] to me and what I am doing, I am sending Tychicus [to you with this letter]. He will tell you everything [that is happening here]. He is a fellow believer whom we all [(inc)] love very much, and he serves the Lord [Jesus] faithfully. **22** That is the reason that I am sending him [to you]; I want you to know (how my companions and I are/what is happening to my companions and me), and I want him to encourage you [SYN]. **23** [I pray that] God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ will cause all of you fellow believers to have [inner] peace, and [enable you to] love [each other] and to continue trusting [in Christ]. **24** I pray that God will continue to act kindly to [you and] to all [others] who love our Lord Jesus Christ and will never quit loving him.

Philippians

1 [I], Paul, and Timothy, [who is with me, are] men who serve Christ Jesus. I [am writing this letter] to all [of you who are] pastors and deacons in Philippi [city] and to the rest of God's people [there who have a close relationship] with Christ Jesus. **2** [We both] (OR, [I]) [pray that] God, [who is] our Father, and Jesus Christ, [who is our] Lord, [will continue to] be kind to you and [will continue to] cause you to have [inner] peace. **3** I thank my God whenever I think about you. **4** Every time [DOU] I pray [for you], I joyfully pray [DOU] for all of you. **5** I [thank God and rejoice] because you have been [working] together with me in order to [make known] the good message about Christ. [You started doing that] when you first [MTY] [believed it, and you have continued doing it] until now. **6** I am completely confident that [God], who has begun to do in you what is good, (OR, that since [God] has begun to do in you what is good, he) will continue to do that until he finishes doing it on the day Christ Jesus [MTY] [returns]. **7** During this time that I have been a prisoner [MTY] and during the times I was previously able to defend the good message about Christ and proved/confirmed [to others] that it is true, all of you have been sharing with me (OR, have helped me) in this work [that God] kindly gave [to me to do. So] indeed it is right that I feel joyful about you all, because you are very dear [IDM] to me. **8** God [can] verify that Christ Jesus causes me to [love and] long for all of you very much, [just like] Christ loves [you]. **9** And what I pray [for you] is that [God will enable] you to truly know and learn how to love [one another] more and more in every situation. **10** [And I pray that he will enable] you to completely understand [how you should believe and act]. I [pray this] in order that you might be [spiritually] pure and faultless (OR, completely faultless [DOU]) on the day that Christ [returns] [MTY], **11** [and in order that] you might conduct your lives [IDM] completely righteously as a result of Jesus Christ [enabling you to do so], in order that [people will] honor God and praise him (OR, [people will] praise God very much [DOU]). **12** My fellow believers, I want you to know that the [troubles] I have experienced [have not prevented me from proclaiming the good message to people. Instead], [these things that I have experienced] have enabled even more people to hear the good message [about Christ]. **13** [Specifically], all the military guards who are stationed [here in Rome] and many other [HYP] [people in this city] [HYP] now know that I am a prisoner [MTY] because I [proclaim the good news] about Christ. **14** Also, most of the believers [here now] proclaim the message from God more courageously and fearlessly [because] they trust the Lord [more firmly to help them. They trust the Lord more] because [they have seen how the Lord has helped me] while I have been a prisoner [MTY] [here]. **15** Some people proclaim [the message about Christ as I do] because they are happy [with my work]. They proclaim [the message about] Christ because they love [me and because] they know that [God] has placed me [here] to defend the message about Christ [CHI]. **17** Others proclaim [the message about] Christ because they envy [me] and oppose [me]. They proclaim the message about Christ because they have wrong motives. They [wrongly] assume [that because they are causing many people to follow them, I will be jealous, and as a result], I will feel more miserable while I am a prisoner [MTY] [here]. **18** But it does not matter whether [people proclaim the message about Christ] because they have wrong motives, or whether [people proclaim the message about Christ] because they have right motives. The important thing in either case is that [the message about] Christ is being proclaimed {people are proclaiming [the message about] Christ}. And because of that I rejoice! Philippians 1:18b-26 Furthermore, I will continue to rejoice, **19** because when I experience troubles, I know that some day God will say that he approves [of what I have done] (OR, that [the Roman authorities] will set me free). [This will happen] as a result of your praying for me, and [as a result] of [God's] Spirit, whom Jesus Christ gave me, helping me. **20** I [know that this will happen] because I very confidently expect [DOU] that I will faithfully honor Christ. I expect that like I always [have done], Christ will be greatly honored {I will continue now also to very boldly honor Christ} by means of all that I do [SYN, MTY], whether by [the way I] live or [by the way I] die. **21** As for me, I live [in order to honor] Christ. But if I die, it will be better [for me than if I continue to live, because then I will be with him]. **22** On the other hand, if I continue to live, that will enable me to continue to serve [Christ] effectively. As a result, I do not know which to choose. **23** That is, I am not sure which of those two I [prefer]. I long to leave [this world] and [go to] be with Christ, because that will be very much better [for me]. **24** Nevertheless, it is more important that I remain alive [than that I go to be with Christ because] you still need [me to help you]. **25** Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain [alive] and that I will [go/come to] be with you all. [As a result], you will believe [in Christ] more firmly, and [as a result of that], you will rejoice. **26** [That is], you will be able to rejoice very greatly because of Christ Jesus [bringing] me [to be with you again]. **27** Most importantly, as fellow [believers in Christ], conduct yourselves just like [you learned you should do when you heard] the message about

Christ. Do that in order that whether I come and see you, or whether [I am away from you and] people tell me about you, [what I hear or see will make me happy]. They will tell me that you are unitedly and cooperatively resisting [those who oppose the message about Christ] (OR, [oppose you]). I [will know] that you are not allowing others to influence you to believe a message that is different from the gospel [about Christ]. **28** And I [will know] that you are not at all frightened by {afraid of} the people who oppose you. This will show/prove to those people that [God] will destroy them, but this will show/prove to you that [God] will save you eternally. It is God who is doing [all] this. **29** Remember that he has not only kindly enabled you to believe in Christ, [he] has also kindly allowed you to suffer for the sake of Christ. **30** [As a result], you are [having to] resist [those who oppose the good message], just like you saw that I [had to] resist [such people there in Philippi], and just like you hear that I [still have to resist such people here] now.

2 Since Christ encourages us, since he loves us and comforts us, since God's Spirit fellowships with [us, and] since [Christ] is very merciful [DOU] to us, **2** make me completely happy [by doing the following things]: Agree with one another, love one another, be closely united with one another, and [live] harmoniously with one another [DOU]. **3** Never try to selfishly make yourselves more important than [others] nor boast [about what you are doing]. Instead, be humble, [and in particular], honor one another more than you honor yourselves. **4** Each one of you should not [only] be concerned about your own affairs. Instead, each of you should also be concerned (that you help/about the needs of) one another. **5** You should think/act just like Christ Jesus [thought/acted]. **6** [Although] he has the same nature as God has, he did not insist on keeping all the privileges of being equal with God. **7** Instead, he [willingly] gave up divine privileges. [Specifically], he became a human being and took the attitude of a servant. When he had become a human being, **8** he humbled himself [even more. Specifically], he obeyed [God] even to the extent of [being willing to] die. [He was even willing to] be nailed to a cross, [to die as though he were a criminal]. **9** As a result, God promoted him [to a] rank [that] is above every [other] rank. **10** [God did that] in order that every being [SYN] in heaven and on earth and under the earth should worship [MTY] Jesus, **11** and in order that every person [SYN] should declare that Jesus Christ is Lord. [As a result of everyone doing that, they will] honor God, [his] Father. **12** My dear friends, as you consider this, since you have always obeyed [God], each of you should very reverentially [DOU] try to do those things [that are proper for people whom God has] saved. [You should do those things] not only when I am with you. [Instead, you should try] even more [to do them] now when I am not with you. **13** [You are able to do these things], since God [himself] causes you to desire to do what he wants you to do, and he also enables you to do what he wants you to do. **14** Do everything [God or your leaders ask you to do]. Never complain about what they want you to do, or argue with them. **15** Behave like that in order that you may be completely faultless [DOU] and may be perfect children of God [DOU] while you live in the midst of people who are wicked and do very wicked things [DOU]. As you live among them, show them clearly [MET] [the way they ought to behave], just like the sun, moon, and stars [show the road clearly to us] [SIM]. **16** Tell them how [to] have eternal life. I [ask that you do that] in order that on the day Christ [returns] I may be able to rejoice [MTY], that I did not labor [DOU] so hard among you in vain. **17** Perhaps [the Roman authorities] will execute me, [and my blood will pour out] [MET] [as the] wine pours out when the priest offers it to God [MET]. [For your part], you believe [in Christ firmly]. As a result, you have given yourselves completely to God in order that you might do what he wills [MET], [just like a priest] offers a sacrifice [completely to God] [MET]. [Because I dedicate myself wholly to God] together with you, even if [they are about to execute me], I will greatly rejoice [DOU], [because I am giving myself wholly to God], and because you all [are giving yourselves wholly to God]. **18** Similarly, you too should rejoice [because you are giving yourselves wholly to God], and you should rejoice because I [am giving myself wholly to God]. **19** My relationship with the Lord Jesus [leads me] to confidently expect that [he will enable me] to send Timothy to you soon, in order that [his telling you the news about me will encourage you. But] I also expect that [his returning to me and] telling me the news about you will encourage me. **20** [Keep in mind that] I have no one [else] like him who genuinely cares for you. **21** All the others [whom I have considered that I might send to you] are concerned [only] about their own matters. They are not concerned about what Jesus Christ [considers important]. **22** But you know that Timothy has proved that he [serves the Lord and others faithfully. You know] that he has served [the Lord closely together] with me in [proclaiming to people] the message about Christ as though he were [SIM] my son and I were his [own] father. **23** So then he is the one I confidently expect to send [to you] as soon as I know what will happen to me. **24** And I am confident that I will soon be released {[the authorities will soon release me]} [so that] the Lord will enable me also to come/go [to you] soon. **25** I have concluded that it is [really] necessary that I send Epaphroditus [back] to you. He is a fellow believer and my

fellow worker, and he [endures difficulties together with me] [MET], [just like] soldiers [endure difficulties together]. You sent him [to me] in order that he might help me when I was needy [EUP]. **26** [But I have concluded that I must send him back to you] because he has been longing to see you all. Furthermore, he has been [very] distressed because [he knows that] you heard that he had become sick. **27** Indeed, he was so sick that he almost died. However, [he did not die]. Instead, God pitied him and he also pitied me, [and as a result he healed him. God pitied me] because he did not want me to be even more sorrowful than I already was. **28** So, I am sending him [back to you] as quickly as possible, in order that you may rejoice [when you see him again] and in order that I may be less sorrowful [than I was]. **29** Welcome him very joyfully [just like believers] in [our] Lord [Jesus should welcome one another. While he was] working for Christ, he was helping me in place of you [because you were far away]. He knew that he might die as a result of helping me, and [truly] he nearly did die. So honor [him, and honor all] those who are like him.

3 [Now there are] other things [that I want to write about]. My fellow believers, continue to rejoice because [you belong to] the Lord. [Though] I will [now] write to you about those same matters [that I mentioned to you before, this is] not tiresome for me, and it will protect you [from those who would harm you spiritually]. **2** Beware of those [people who are dangerous] [MET] [like wild] dogs. They are [dangerous] evildoers [DOU]. Beware of them [since they are like people who] cut [other people's] bodies [MET]. [They will harm you spiritually by insisting that you must let someone circumcise you in order for you to become God's people] [MTY, MET]. **3** [Those people think that they are God's people because someone has circumcised them]. But we, [not they], are [truly God's people] [MET], [whether or not someone has] circumcised [us]. God's Spirit [enables us to] [MTY] worship [God]; we praise Christ Jesus [because he has enabled us to become the people of God]. We do not believe [that God will consider/make us his people as a result of what someone has done to our] bodies [MTY, SYN]. **4** [We do not trust in those rituals to make us acceptable to God], although I could very well do that [if it would be useful for me]. Philippians 3:4b-6 [In fact], [if I could benefit from it for my salvation], I could rely upon what I have done and who I am [MTY, SYN] more than anyone else could! I will tell you why. **5** I [was circumcised] {[Someone] circumcised me} when I was one week old. I am from the people of Israel. I am from the tribe of Benjamin. I am completely Hebrew in every way. [While I was] a member of the Pharisee [sect], I [strictly obeyed] the laws [that God gave Moses]. **6** I was [so] zealous [to make people obey those laws that] I caused the people who believe in Christ to suffer [because I thought they were trying to abolish those laws. Indeed], as far as my obeying those laws is concerned, no [one could] have accused [me by] saying that I had disobeyed any of those laws. **7** Nevertheless, all such things as those, which I used to [consider to] be useful to me, those [very] things I now consider worthless, because I [want to know] Christ (OR, in order that I [may know] Christ). **8** More than that, I consider all things to be worthless, compared to how great it is to know Christ Jesus my Lord. Because I [want to know] him [better] (OR, In order that I [may know] him [better]), I have rejected all things as worthless. I consider them [as useless as] [MET] rubbish, in order that I may have [a close relationship with] Christ [MET], **9** and in order that I may completely belong to him. It was not as a result of [my obeying] the laws [he gave Moses] that God erased the record of my sins. Instead, it is because I have trusted in Christ [that God] has declared that I am no longer guilty for my sins, and he enables me to act righteously. [It is] God [himself who] has erased the record of my sins, and he enables me to act righteously, [only] because I have trusted [in Christ]. **10** I [want] to know Christ [better and better]. Particularly, I [want] to continually experience [his working] powerfully in my life, [just like God worked powerfully when he] caused Christ to become alive after he died. I [also want to be continually willing] to suffer [in order that I may obey God], just like Christ suffered [in order that he might obey God. I also want] to be completely willing to die for [Christ], even as he died for me, **11** [because I expect that, as a result of God's goodness], he will cause me to live again after I have died. **12** I do not claim that I have already become completely like Christ Jesus; that is, I have not already become all that God intends me to be [DOU]. But I earnestly try to become [more and more like Christ], because he chose me [in order that I might become like him]. **13** My fellow believers, I certainly do not consider that I have already become completely like Christ. But I [am like a runner. A runner does not look backward] [MET]. Instead, he leans/stretches forward as he runs straight toward the goal [in order that he might win the race and get the prize. Similarly], I do not think about what I have already done. **14** Instead, I concentrate only on [continuing to become more and more like Christ right up to the end of my life] [MET]. As a result, because of my relationship with Christ Jesus, God will call/summon me to receive a reward from him [in heaven]. **15** So, all of us who are [spiritually] mature should think this [same way]. If any [of you] do not think this same way regarding what I [have written here], God will reveal that to you. **16** What is important is that we must conduct our

lives according to what [God has already revealed to] us. **17** My fellow believers, [all of] you should follow my example, and observe those people who act as I do, [in order that you may imitate them also]. **18** [Keep in mind that] there are many people [who say that they believe in Christ, but] who act [in such a way that shows] that they are opposed to [the teaching about] Christ [dying on] the cross [MTY]. I have told you about those people many times [before], and now I am sad, even crying, as I tell you [about them again]. **19** [God] will severely punish them. The things their bodies desire [MTY] have become [like] gods to them [MET]. They are proud of the things they should be ashamed of. They think only about what unbelievers [MTY] think about. **20** [But remember] that we are citizens of heaven. And we eagerly wait for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [to return] from there. **21** By the power that enables him to put everything under his own control, he will change our weak bodies to become like his glorious body.

4 My fellow believers, I love you, and I long for you. You make me happy [MTY], and I am (proud of/pleased with) you. Dear friends, on the basis [of all that I have told you], continue to believe firmly in the Lord doing what I have just taught you. **2** I urge [you(sg)], Euodia, and I urge [you(sg)], Syntyche, to again have a peaceful relationship with each other, [because you both have a relationship with] the Lord. **3** And, my faithful comrade/partner, I request that you [(sg)] help them [to again have a peaceful relationship with each other], because they have [faithfully proclaimed] the message [about Christ] together with me, [even though many people] have opposed us [(exc)]. They have faithfully proclaimed that message together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names [are] in the book [in which God has written the names of all those people who will] live [forever]. **4** [Because you have a relationship with] the Lord, always rejoice! I'm saying it again, rejoice! **5** [Act in such a way that] everyone can know that you are gentle. The Lord is coming soon. **6** Do not worry about anything. Instead, in every situation, pray [to God], tell him what you need, and ask him [to help you] [DOU]. Also thank [him for what he does for you]. **7** As a result, God will enable you not to worry [about anything] [MTY] (OR, God will protect your minds [in every way]) [PRS]. [That is], he will cause you to have [inner] peace [because you have a relationship with] Christ Jesus. You will not be able to understand [PRS] [how you can be so peaceful in such difficult circumstances!]! **8** My fellow believers, there is one more thing I [want you to do]. Whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is right, whatever is morally pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is admirable, whatever is good, whatever [deserves] praise, those are the things that you should continually think about. **9** Those things that I have taught you and that you have learned from me, those things that you have heard me [say] and that you have seen me [do], those are the things that you yourselves should continually do. As a result [of your doing those things], God, the one who [causes us to] have [inner] peace, will (be with/bless) you. **10** I rejoice greatly [and thank] the Lord because now, after some time, [by sending money to me] you have once again shown that you are concerned about me [EUP]. Indeed, you were concerned about me [all the time], but you had no opportunity [to show that you were concerned about me]. **11** I am saying this not because I [am concerned that I] lack things [that I need]. In fact, I have learned to be content in whatever [situation] I am. **12** [Specifically], I know how [to be content when] I do not have what I need, and I know how [to be content when] I have plenty. I have learned how [to be content] in any and every [situation] [DOU]. [Specifically], I have learned how [to be content when] I have enough to eat, and I have learned how [to be content when] I do not have enough to eat. I have learned how [to be content when] I have plenty [DOU] [of what I need], and I have learned [how to be content when] I lack [things]. **13** I am able (to cope with/to handle) every situation because [Christ] gives me the strength to do that. **14** Nevertheless, you did very well by [helping me] (OR, [giving me money]) [EUP] while I have been suffering hardship. **15** [My friends there at Philippi], you yourselves know that when I first [proclaimed] the message about Christ [to you], and then left there to go to Macedonia [province], you were the only group of believers [LIT] who [sent me] gifts [EUP] in order that I might [proclaim that message] to others just like I did for you. **16** Even [when I was] in Thessalonica [city], you sent [money] [EUP] to me two different times [IDM] in order to [supply] what I needed. **17** I say this, not because I desire that you give me money now. Instead, I desire that [God] will abundantly bless [MET] you as a result of [your helping me]. **18** But I have received a very generous [gift] [EUP] [from you], and [as a result], I have plenty. I have an abundant supply [of what I need because] I have received from Epaphroditus the money [EUP] that you [sent to me]. God considers that your gift is very acceptable, and he is very pleased with it. [Your gift is like] a nice-smelling sacrifice [MET]. **19** [Moreover], God, [whom] I [serve], has an unlimited supply [of everything that we(inc) need]. And as a result, because of your relationship with Christ Jesus, he will completely supply everything that you need. **20** [So], praise God our Father forever and ever! Amen! **(aiōn g165)** **21** Greet [for me/us(exc)] all of God's people [there, that is, all those who have a relationship with]

Christ Jesus. The fellow believers who [serve God together] with me here send their greetings to you (OR, say they are thinking fondly of you). **22** All of God's people [here] send their greetings to you. Especially the [fellow believers who work] in the palace of the emperor send their greetings to you. **23** My desire is [that our] Lord Jesus Christ [will continue to] act kindly toward you all [SYN].

Colossians

1 I, Paul, [am writing this letter to you], and our fellow
believer Timothy [is with me]. I am an apostle who
represents Christ Jesus, because that is what God wanted.
2 [I am sending this letter] to you who are in Colossae [city],
and who are God's people, and our faithful fellow believers
who have a close relationship with Christ. We pray that God
our Father will be acting kindly towards you, and that he will
cause you to have [inner] peace. **3** Very often [HYP] we
thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, while we are
praying for you, **4** because we have heard that you believe
in Christ Jesus, and that you love all God's people. **5** You do
that because you confidently expect to receive that which
God is (reserving/keeping safe) for you in heaven, which you
heard about previously when you heard the true message,
that is, the message [about Christ]. **6** [People] proclaimed it
[PRS] to you, just like [people] have proclaimed it in many
different countries [HYP, IDM]. The true message is changing
more and more people's lives, just like it changed your lives
because you heard it and you truly experienced that God
acts kindly towards us in ways we do not deserve. **7** That is
just what Epaphras taught you [would happen]. We love
Epaphras. He serves Christ together with us and works for
Christ faithfully for your benefit. **8** He told us that you love
[all God's people], just like God's Spirit [has enabled you to]
(OR, spiritually). **9** Because of what we heard about you,
we have also been praying [LIT] very often to God for you
[HYP], ever since we heard this report about you. We pray
that you will truly know all that God wants you to do; that is,
that you will become very wise, and that you will understand
spiritual matters well. **10** We have been praying like that in
order that you will conduct yourselves as the Lord's people
should conduct themselves, in order that you will please
the Lord in every way. Specifically, we have been praying
like that in order that you will be doing every sort of good
deed [IDM] and in order that you will be getting to know
God truly, more and more. **11** And we pray that [God] will
greatly strengthen you [spiritually] with the mighty power
that he has shown [to people], in order that you will always
be steadfast and patient [when you experience difficulties],
while [at the same time] you will be rejoicing. **12** And we
pray that you will be thanking God our Father, because he
has enabled you/us to receive the things that he will give to
his people in heaven [SYN]. **13** God our Father rescued us
[spiritually] so that the evil one no longer rules us [MET,
MTY], and he caused us now to be ruled by his Son, whom
he loves. **14** That is, because of our relationship with his Son
(OR, because of what the one who is also God did), God
has redeemed/bought us; in particular, he has forgiven our
sins. **15** God's Son reveals perfectly what God, his Father, is
like, whom no one can see. God's Son existed before and
ranks above everything that God has created. **16** When God
created everything that is on the earth, he did it by having
his Son do it. He created everything that [people] can see,
and also everything which is in heaven that [people] cannot
see. In particular, his Son created all ranks of important
spirit beings. [And his Son ranks above everything], because
God by the work of had his Son, and because by his Son
all things were created {because [God] had his Son create
everything} in order that everything might praise his Son, **17**
and because it is his Son who existed before anything else
existed, and because God sustains everything by what his
Son [does]. **18** And [God's Son ranks above everything],
because it is his Son who [rules over his people] [MET] [as a
person's] head [controls his physical] body, because his Son
causes his people to live [spiritually]. [God's Son] is the first
one who became alive again, in order that he should become
more important than anything and everyone. **19** [God's Son
reveals perfectly what God his Father is like], because his
Father chose to live completely in him. **20** [God our Father
caused his Son to rule us], because he decided to reconcile
with himself everything that is on earth and that is in heaven
by what his Son did, in order that everything might honor his
Son; that is, God our Father decided to reconcile everything
to himself as a result of his [Son's] blood [flowing when
he died] on the cross. [The chiastic material is rearranged
below so that the directly related propositional clusters are
joined together.] 13 God our Father rescued us [spiritually]
so that we are no longer ruled by the evil one, and God our
Father caused us now to be ruled by his Son (OR, the man
who is also God) whom he loves. 14a That is, by means
of what his Son did, we have been redeemed by God, our
Father. 14b In particular, our sins have been forgiven by
God, our Father. 20 God, our Father, has done this because
he decided to reconcile to himself, by means of his Son,
everything that is on earth and that is in heaven, in order
that his Son might be honored; that is, God, our Father
decided to reconcile everything to himself by means of God's
Son's blood [flowing out when he died] on the cross. 15b
God cannot be seen by anyone, 15a but his Son reveals
perfectly what God—his Father—is like, 19a because it is in
his Son that the Father chose 19b that he himself would
dwell completely. 15c God's Son ranks above everything
15d that has been created, 16 because it was by means of
God's Son that God created everything that is on the earth
and that can be seen by people, and also everything that is
in heaven and that cannot be seen by people. In particular,

all types of important spirit beings were created by means of him, since everything has been created by God by means of God's Son. And his Son ranks above everything, because everything has been created by God, in order that God's Son might be honored by everything, 17 and because it is he who existed before anything else existed, and since everything is sustained by God by means of God's Son. 18 And God's Son ranks above everything because it is he who [rules over all believers, just like a person's] head [controls his physical body, because he causes all believers to live spiritually]. His Son is the first one who rose from among those who have died, in order that he should become more important than everything and everyone. **21** As for you, [although] formerly God [considered you his] enemies (OR, [God considered you] as alienated [from him]) and [although] you were formerly hostile [to God] because you thought evil thoughts and because you did evil deeds, **22** nevertheless, God our Father has now reconciled you [with himself. He did that] as a result of his Son dying physically. He did it in order that you should be completely holy when he brings you into his presence. **23** He wants you to continue [DOU] to believe the message about Christ; specifically, he wants you to continue to be stable/steadfast and to continue to confidently expect to receive that which you heard about when you heard that message. That message has been proclaimed {They have proclaimed that message} to people in very many places [HYP]; and I, Paul, also become someone who tells it to people. **24** At the present time I am rejoicing that I am suffering for your benefit; that is, I am completing what Christ [decided] that I should suffer physically for the benefit of all believers, [who are as dear to him as] his own body. **25** I myself became someone who serves God's people, because I was appointed {[God] appointed me} to be responsible to [help] you [who are non-Jews]. I became one who serves God's people in order that I should make known to you non-Jews the whole message from/about God. **26** [We did not know this message previously; that is, God] concealed it from [the people who lived in all] the previous ages, but he has now revealed it to his people. **(aiōn g165)** **27** That is, God decided to reveal to them this message, which declares that he will greatly bless the non-Jews. Specifically, this message declares that Christ, [by his Spirit], will live in you who are non-Jews, with the result that you confidently expect that you will experience how glorious [God is]. **28** We tell about Christ [to every class of persons]; we warn them, and specifically, we teach everyone very wisely. We do this in order that every person who (has a close relationship with/is united to) Christ may be (all that God wants them to be/perfect) when we present them to Christ. **29** In order that I might [achieve/accomplish this], I am also working very hard, depending on Christ to empowering me very greatly.

2 In particular, I want you to realize that I am (exerting myself very greatly/working very hard) on your behalf, on behalf of those who are in Laodicea [city], and on behalf of all those others who have not seen me personally. **2** I am doing this in order that they and you [SYN] might be strengthened [spiritually] as you are united in loving [one another]. And I am doing this in order that they and you might fully and thoroughly [DOU] understand the message that God has now revealed; that is, in order that they and you might truly know the message from God our Father and about Christ, **3** who alone is able to cause them and you to understand thoroughly [DOU] [this very important message]. **4** I am telling you this in order that no one may deceive you by persuasive arguments; **5** because, even though I am absent from you physically, I am very concerned about you. At the same time, I am rejoicing because I know that you are united [with each other] and that you believe firmly in Christ. **6** In a way that is (consistent/in harmony) with [the message that] you received about Christ Jesus, who is our Lord, conduct yourselves as you should, since you have a close relationship with him. **7** Specifically, continue believing and practicing [MET, DOU] what you were first taught about Christ. Continue to do this more and more; continue to firmly believe all the true teaching, just like [Epaphras] taught it to you. And continue thanking [God, our Father], very much [for all that he has done for you]. **8** Make sure that no one forces you [(pl)] to become his disciples [MET] by his teaching you a religious philosophy/doctrine that is worthless and false. Such a philosophy is false because it teaches what mere human beings think, because it teaches people elementary regulations/rules [that are concerned merely with what is external/physical], and because it teaches what is contrary to [the true teaching about] Christ. **9** It is in Christ's body that God lives completely. **10** And you are spiritually complete because you have a close relationship with Christ, who rules over every other ruler. **11** Specifically, because of your close relationship with Christ, it is as though [MET] you were circumcised {Christ circumcised you} [spiritually]. This does not mean that someone circumcised you physically [MTY], but it means that Christ completely removed your self-directed nature. **12** And specifically, when you were baptized, [it was as though] [MET] you [had died and] were buried with Christ, and [it was as though] [MET] God caused you to live again with Christ as a result of your believing that God acted powerfully; specifically, by your believing that God caused Christ to become alive again. **13** And specifically, you [who are non-Jews], because of your sins,

you were [spiritually] dead [before you trusted in Christ]. You were uncircumcised [spiritually]; that is, your self-directed nature controlled you. Nevertheless, it was you whom God caused to become alive [spiritually because of their close relationship] [MET] with Christ. And specifically, God forgave us all our sins. **14** [It is just] as [though] he canceled ([the charges] against us/the sins [that we had committed]) for which [God] will punish us. And [it was just] as [though] [MET] it was [the charges on] that document/paper that he canceled by nailing them to the cross [when they nailed Christ on the cross]. **15** And specifically, God defeated the [evil] spirit beings that rule, and he demonstrated/showed that publicly; that is, he triumphed over them as a result of what [Christ did]. **16** So disregard anyone who says that God will punish you because you eat [certain foods] and because you drink [certain drinks] or because [you do not celebrate] special [yearly] festivals or celebrate the time when the new moon [appears] or weekly (Sabbaths/Jewish days of rest). **17** [Disregard such people] because those [regulations/rules about food and drink and festivals] are [only] like a shadow [MET] [that is cast by something that is approaching; that is, they merely represent] the real spiritual blessings that Christ [has given to you]. **18** Disregard those who say that God will punish you because [you do not worship God in the way that] they say [that you should]; that is, they insist that you should humiliate yourselves and that you should worship the angels. [Disregard such people] since they base their authority on things that they have never seen, and since they are proud without reason because their self-directed nature [controls] what they think, **19** and since they do not teach the true teaching about Christ [MET]. [Christ is the one who causes all of his people to develop/grow spiritually as God plans that they should develop/grow, just like] [MET] a person's head directs how his body grows, as it is held together by its joints and ligaments. **20** [It is as though] [MET] you died with Christ. So [you no longer have to obey] elementary regulations/rules [that are concerned merely with what is external/physical, just like a dead person no longer has to do anything]. So, do not submit to regulations/rules **21** such as 'Do not handle [certain things]', 'Do not taste [certain things]', 'Do not touch [certain things]', as if you still had to obey such regulations/rules. **22** All those things are intended to cease to exist when we use them. [And do not obey such regulations/rules], because they are what mere human teachers command and teach. **23** [Do not obey such] regulations/rules; they only cause people to do what their self-directed nature wants to do. [Those regulations] seem to be wise because they [urge people to] worship as mere human teachers have decided. [They urge] that [people] should humiliate themselves, and that [people] should treat their bodies harshly. But those regulations/rules do not help [people] at all to not do the sinful things that their self-directed nature wants to do.

3 You now are alive [spiritually], and [it is as though you were given new life] {[God caused you to become alive]} when he caused Christ to become alive again. So be constantly wanting what is associated with heaven [MTY], where Christ is. There God has given him supreme authority and the highest honor. **2** Be constantly wanting the blessings that God has prepared for you in heaven [MTY]. Do not be constantly wanting [to do the evil deeds that people on] earth do [MTY], **3** because you have [ceased to behave as you formerly did. You are like people who have] died. You now live [spiritually] together with Christ in [the presence of] God; and [people] cannot see that [you have a new life]. **4** When Christ, who causes you to live [spiritually], is publicly revealed, then God will also reveal you publicly together with Christ, [and you together with Christ will be] glorious. **5** [Get rid of your evil practices/deeds] [MET, MTY] [as though they were enemies whom] you were killing (OR, [Stop doing evil things] [MET, MTY], just as dead people do not do what is evil). Specifically, do not practice sexual immorality. Do not commit unnatural sexual acts. Do not desire to act like that, and do not desire [to do anything that is] evil. Do not desire to have more things than you need, because, if you do that, you are (worshipping material things instead of worshipping God/making material things to become your god). **6** [Do not behave like that] since God will punish [MTY] those who disobey him, because of their sins. **7** You also formerly did those things when you were disobeying God. **8** Now, however, as for you, do not do any of these evil deeds: Do not get angry in any way [DOU]. Do not act maliciously. Do not (slander/talk evil about) people. Do not talk abusively to people. **9** Do not lie to one another. Do not do those things, because you have (disposed of/stopped obeying) your former evil nature and stopped doing what you did when you had that former [evil] nature, **10** and because you have received a new nature. God is causing your new nature to become more and more like his own nature. He created your new nature in order that [you might get to] know [God] truly. **11** As a result of that, it is not [important whether anyone is a] non-Jew or a Jew, or [whether anyone is] circumcised or not, or [whether anyone is] a foreigner, or even uncivilized, or [whether anyone is] a slave or not a slave. But [what is important is] Christ, who is supremely important in every way. **12** Because God has chosen you to be his people; and because he loves you, be compassionate to one another. Be kind to one another. Be humble. Be meek

(OR, be considerate toward one another), be patient with one another, 13 and tolerate one another's flaws. Forgive one another, if one of you has a grudge/complaint against another. Just like the Lord [Jesus freely/willingly] forgave you, you too [must freely/willingly forgive one another]. 14 And what is more important than all of these is that you love one another, because by doing that you will be perfectly united together. 15 Because God chose you to live peacefully [with one another] in your local congregations, let that peace which Christ gives control your (inner beings/hearts), and be constantly thanking God. 16 And continue to let the message about Christ govern/direct all you think and do, as you very wisely teach and warn one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (OR, songs that God's Spirit [gives you]), while you sincerely and thankfully sing to God. 17 Whatever you say, and whatever you do, do all of this in the manner that those who are representatives [MTY] of the Lord Jesus [should do], while you constantly thank God, our Father, as you ask the Lord Jesus to take your prayers to God. 18 You women, be subject to your husbands, since that is what you should do because you have a close relationship with the Lord [Jesus]. 19 You men, love your wives; and, do not be harsh with them. 20 You children, obey your parents in every circumstance, because the Lord [God] is pleased when you do that. 21 You parents (OR, you fathers), do not correct your children more than you need to, in order that they do not become discouraged. 22 You slaves, obey your earthly masters in every circumstance. Do not obey your masters only when they are watching [MTY] you, like those who [merely] want to impress their masters favorably. Instead, obey your masters sincerely. Do this because you reverence the Lord [Jesus] (OR, [God]). 23 Whatever [work] you do, work wholeheartedly. Work wholeheartedly, like those who are working for the Lord [Jesus]. Do not work like those who are working [merely] for [their] masters, 24 because you know that it is the Lord who will [properly/justly] repay you. That is, you will receive what God has promised. [Remember that] it is Christ who is the real master whom you are serving. 25 But [God] will judge everyone impartially. He will punish you according to what you have done that is wrong.

4 You masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, because you know that you have a master who is in heaven [who will say whether he approves of what you have done]. 2 Pray to God persistently, and as you pray, be alert and be thanking God. 3 Since I am in prison [MTY] because [I declared the message about Christ] that God has now revealed, pray also for me that God will give me opportunities [MTY] to speak, in order that I might declare it. 4 That is, pray for me that [God will enable me to] make his message known publicly. I need to do this because I know that I should declare it. 5 Act wisely towards those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus [MTY]; use every opportunity to do that. 6 In particular, always speak graciously and in a pleasant way [to those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus]. As a result, you will come to know in what manner you should answer each one of them. 7 Tychicus will tell you all that has been happening to me. He is a fellow believer whom I/we [(exc)] love and who helps me faithfully and who serves the Lord [Jesus] together with me. 8 The reason that I am sending Tychicus to you [with this letter] is that he might know how you are and in order that he might strengthen you [spiritually]. (OR, in order that you might know about us [(exc)] and in order that he might comfort you.) 9 I am sending him to you with Onesimus, who is a faithful fellow believer whom I/we [(inc)] love and who is your fellow townsman. They will tell you all about what has been happening here. 10 Aristarchus, who is in prison with me, and Mark, who is Barnabas' cousin, (say that they are thinking fondly about you/send you their greetings). I have instructed you about Mark, so if he comes to you, welcome him. 11 Jesus, who is also called Justus, also (says that he is thinking fondly about you/greets you/sends you his greetings). These three men are the only Jewish [believers] who are working with me in order that people would submit to God as their king, and they have all comforted me. 12 Epaphras, who is your fellow townsman and who serves Christ Jesus, (says that he is thinking fondly about you/greets you/sends you his greetings). Epaphras prays earnestly for you very often, that you might be spiritually mature and that you might know fully all that God wills for you. 13 I can assure you that he prays this because he is deeply concerned for you, for those who live in Laodicea [city], and for those who live in Hierapolis [city]. 14 Luke, the doctor, whom I/we [(exc)] love, and Demas (say that they are thinking fondly about you/send you their greetings). 15 Tell the fellow believers who live in Laodicea [city] and Nympha and the congregation that [meets] in her house that we (are thinking fondly about them/send them our greetings). 16 After [someone] reads this letter [publicly] to you, cause [someone] to also read it to the congregation that is in Laodicea [city]. And as for the [letter that I wrote to the congregation that is in] Laodicea [city], make sure that it is also read among you {you should also read that letter} publicly. 17 Say to Archippus, "Make sure that you complete the task that God appointed you to do, because you have a close relationship with the Lord Jesus." 18 I, Paul, (am thinking fondly about you/send you my greetings). Having taken the pen from my scribe, I am now writing this myself in order that you may know that I

have truly sent this letter. Remember to pray about the fact that I am in prison [MTY]. I pray that our Lord Jesus Christ would continue to act graciously towards you all.

1 Thessalonians

1 [I], Paul, [am writing this letter]. Silas and Timothy [are with me]. [We(exc) are sending this letter] to [you who are] the congregation [of believers] in Thessalonica [city]. We [(inc)] all [worship] (OR, [trust in]) God [our] Father [MET] and [our] Lord Jesus Christ. [We three desire/pray that God, our Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord, will continue to] act kindly toward you and [will continue to] cause you to have [inner] peace. **2** We always thank God for you all [when] we mention you while we pray (OR, [when] we pray [for you]). **3** [We thank God because] we continually remember that you work [for God because] you trust [in him] and you earnestly/energetically help people because you love them. You also endure [it when people cause you to suffer]. You endure it because you confidently expect that our Lord Jesus Christ [will soon return from heaven to rescue you]! **4** My fellow believers whom God loves, we [also thank him because] we know that he chose you [to become his people]. **5** We know that he chose you because [when] we told that message to you, we did not speak only words. The Holy Spirit [helped us to speak] powerfully/effectively, and he strongly assured [us that he was powerfully working in you by means of] the message [about Christ] that we [told to you. You yourselves know that], because you know how we spoke and how we conducted ourselves when we were with you, in order that [we might help] you. **6** We also [know that God chose you] because we have now heard that you have endured your troubles when [people] caused you to suffer very much [because you believed in Christ]. You endured just like the Lord [Jesus Christ] endured, and just like we did [when people caused us to suffer]. At that time you were joyful because the Holy Spirit caused you to be joyful. **7** As a result [of your joyfully enduring your troubles], all the believers who live in Macedonia and Achaia [provinces have heard how firmly you trust God. So they know that they should firmly trust in God] as you do. **8** Other people have heard you tell the message [from] the Lord [Jesus]. Then they also have proclaimed the message to people who live throughout Macedonia and Achaia [provinces]. Not only that, but [people who live] in many far-away places [HYP] have heard that you trust in God. As a result, we do not need to tell people [what God has done in your lives]. **9** People [who live far from you are telling others what happened when we were with you]. They also report that you stopped [worshipping things that] ([you/your ancestors]) [considered to be] gods and now you worship God. [As a result], you serve the God who is all-powerful and who is the real God. **10** They tell us that now you wait expectantly for his Son [to return to earth] from heaven. You firmly believe that God caused him to live again after he died. You believe also that Jesus will rescue [all of] us, [who trust in him], from [God's] punishing us [MTY].

2 My fellow believers, you know that our time with you was very worthwhile/effective [LIT]. **2** Although [people] in Philippi [city] previously mistreated us [(exc)] and insulted us, as you know, our God caused us to be courageous. As a result, we told you the good message [that originates/comes from] God, even though some [people in your city] also strongly (opposed [us/tried to prevent us from telling God's message]). **3** When we exhorted/urged (OR, tried to convince) [you to obey God's message], we did not tell you an untrue message. Instead, we told you a true message. We do not [want to get something for ourselves] by immoral means. We do not try to deceive [you or other people]. **4** On the contrary, we tell God's message because he trusted us to do that, because he examined us and considered us [to be acceptable to tell people] the message about Christ. As we teach people, we do not say what they like to hear. Instead, [we say what] God [wants us to say, because] he examines everything that we think and what we desire. **5** We never (flattered you/said nice things about you insincerely), as you know. We were never greedy, so we never needed to use words to (hide greediness [from you/cause you to think that we were not greedy]). God knows that this is true! **6** We never tried to get people [to honor us], **7** although we could have demanded [that you should honor/respect us], because we are apostles [who represent] (OR, [speak for]) Christ. On the contrary, we were gentle when we were among you, as a mother [gently] takes care of her own children [SIM]. **8** So, because we love you, we were delighted to personally tell you the good message that God [gave us]. But also we were delighted to lovingly do all that we could do to help you [SYN] because (you had become very dear to us/we had begun to love you very much). **9** My fellow believers, you remember that we worked very hard [DOU] [in order to] ([support ourselves/earn money to buy what we needed]) [while we were with you]. We worked [during the] day and [also at] night in order that we would not have to ask any one of you to give us what we needed, [while] we proclaimed to you the good message that God [gave us]. **10** You know that it is true, and God knows that it is true, that we conducted our lives in a very pure, right, and faultless [DOU] manner toward you believers. **11** You know also that [we lovingly behaved/acted toward] each one of you, just like a father [lovingly behaves/acts toward] his own children [SIM]. **12** [Specifically, we] kept strongly exhorting/urging and encouraging you that you conduct your

lives in the way that God's people should, [because] he has invited you to become his people over whom he will rule in a wonderful way [HEN]. **13** We also continually thank God because when you heard the message [that] we told to you, you accepted it as the true message, the good message that God [gave to us]. We did not invent it. [We also thank God] that he is changing your lives because you trust this message [PRS]. **14** My fellow believers, we [know that you sincerely believed the message from God], because the manner in which you acted was just like the manner in which [the congregations] in Judea acted. They also [worship] God, [and they] ([have a close relationship with/are united to]) Christ Jesus. Specifically, you endured it [when] your own countrymen [mistreated you because you believe the message from God], in the same manner that those [Jewish believers in Judea] endured it [when] the Jews [who do not believe in Christ mistreated them]. **15** [Unbelieving Jews are] the ones whom God considers guilty [for] killing the Lord Jesus, as well as [for killing] many prophets. Other unbelieving Jews forced us to leave [many towns]. They really make God angry; and [they are] opposed to [what is best for] all human beings! **16** [Specifically], when we tell [the good message] to non-Jewish people in order that they can be saved {[that God] will save them} [spiritually], these [unbelieving Jews] try to stop/prevent us from doing that. Because they continually sin more and more, they are almost reaching the limit that has been [set by God] [MET]! [God] will soon punish them [MTY], at last, for all their sins! **17** My fellow believers, when for a short time [IDM] [those people forced us to be separated] from you, [we felt like parents] (who had lost all their children/whose children had died) [MET]. [Although] we were far away from you, [we were still] emotionally [concerned about you], and we strongly desired to be present with you. **18** [You can know that] we wanted to return to you. Indeed I, Paul, [tried to return] twice [IDM]. But [we did not return because] each time Satan [prevented us from returning]. **19** [We were strongly desiring to be with you], because truly you [RHQ] [are the ones about whom we are proud and joyful]! It is because we are confident that you [will] ([remain faithful/continue believing in God]) that we [will be] joyful! You are the ones who we confidently expect [will keep strongly trusting in God!] It is because you [will] ([remain faithful/continue believing in God]) that we [will] be proud [of the work that we have done] [MET, RHQ] [when] our Lord Jesus [examines what we all have done, at the time] when he comes back [to earth]! **20** Indeed, it is because of you that [even now we] are pleased and joyful!

3 As a result of that, when I could no longer endure [worrying about you], I decided that [Silas and I] would stay behind alone in Athens [city], **2** and we two sent Timothy [to you. You know that he is] our close associate and also works for God by [proclaiming] the message about Christ. [Silas and I sent him] in order that he would urge you to continue to strongly trust [in Christ]. **3** We wanted none [of you] to consider turning away from Christ as a result of [people] causing you to suffer. You know that [God has] planned that [we who trust in him will suffer like that when people do that to us who trust in him]. **4** Remember that when we were present with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted {that [people] would cause us to suffer}. And because that is what happened, you know that [what we said] was true! **5** [I was] afraid that [Satan], the one who tempts us, had caused you [to stop trusting in Christ. If that had happened], we would have worked uselessly [while we were present with you! So] I sent [Timothy to you] in order to find out whether or not you were [still] trusting [in Christ]. I sent him because I could no longer endure [not knowing (about your spiritual condition/whether or not you were still trusting in Christ]). **6** Now Timothy has just returned to Silas and me from [being with] you, and he has told us the good news that you [still] trust [in Christ] and that you love [him] (OR, [each other]). He told us also that you always happily remember us [and that] you strongly desire that we visit you, just like we strongly desire to visit you. **7** My fellow believers, [even though] we are suffering very much [DOU] because of what people are doing to us here, we have been cheered up because [Timothy told us about] your [still] trusting [in Christ]. **8** Now we feel very encouraged [IDM] that you continue to strongly [trust] in the Lord [Jesus]. **9** (We cannot thank God adequately for [what he has done for] you!/How can we thank God enough for [what he has done for] you?) [RHQ] We greatly rejoice concerning you [when we pray to] our God! **10** We constantly [HYP] and fervently/earnestly ask [God] that [we will be able] to visit you [SYN] and that [we will be able] to help you to trust [in Christ/God] more strongly! **11** We pray to God, our Father, and to our Lord Jesus, that they will (clear the way/make it possible) so that we can return to you. **12** As for you, we pray that the Lord Jesus will help you to love each other and other people more and more, just like we continue loving you more and more. **13** We pray that our Lord Jesus will strengthen your resolve to do what pleases God (OR, strengthen you spiritually). We pray that God our Father will enable you to conduct your lives in a way that is pure and that no one can justly criticize, so that when Jesus comes back to earth accompanied by all those who belong to him, he will be pleased with you.

4 Now, my fellow believers, [I want to write] about some other matters. Because we all have a close relationship

with the Lord Jesus, we(exc) strongly urge you [DOU] to live in a way that pleases God. We taught you to do that, and you know that we lived that way as a result of what the Lord Jesus [told us]. We know that you are conducting your lives that way, but [we strongly urge] that you do that even more. **3** God wants you to live pure lives that will show that you completely belong to him. He wants you to avoid doing any sexually immoral acts (OR, avoid being sexually immoral in any way). **4** [That is, he wants] each one of you to know how to control your own sexual desires [EUP]. He wants you to live pure lives that all people will see as good. **5** You must not lustfully desire [to do] immoral acts as unbelievers [MTY] [do] who do not obey God. **6** [God wants each one of you to control your sexual desires, in order that] no one of you sin against your fellow believer and take advantage of him or her by doing things like that. Remember that we strongly warned you previously [DOU] that the Lord [Jesus] will punish all [people who do] sexually immoral acts. **7** When God chose us [believers], he did not want us to [be people who] behave in a sexually immoral way. On the contrary, [he wants us] to be [people who] behave in a morally pure way. **8** So I warn you that those who disregard [this teaching] of mine [are] not just disregarding me. On the contrary, [they are disregarding] God, [because God commanded it. Remember that] God sent his Spirit, who is holy, [to live] in you! **9** [I want to urge you] again [that you should] love [your] fellow believers [MET]. You do not really need that [anyone] write to you about that, because God has already taught you [how] to love each other, **10** and because you already are [showing that you love] your fellow believers [HYP] [who live] in other places [in your province] of Macedonia. Nevertheless, my fellow believers, we urge you to [love each other] even more. **11** [We urge you] also to eagerly strive/try to mind your own affairs and to not meddle/interfere with the affairs of others. We urge you also to work at your own occupations/jobs [to earn what you need to live]. Remember that we taught you previously to live like that. **12** If you do these things, unbelievers will acknowledge/see that you behave decently/properly, and you will not have to depend on others [to] ([supply/give to you]) [what you need]. **13** My fellow believers, we also want you to understand well [LIT] [what will happen] to our fellow believers [who now] are dead [EUP]. [You must not be/do like] the unbelievers. They [grieve deeply for people who die because] they do not confidently expect [people to live again after they die]. **14** We [believers] know that it is true that Jesus died and that he came back [to life] again. So [we also know well that] when Jesus returns, God [will cause] those [believers] who died [EUP] [to live again] and to come with [Jesus]. **15** [I write this] because the Lord [Jesus] revealed [to me] what I am now telling you. [Some of you may think that] when the Lord [Jesus] comes back, he will consider that we [believers] who are still living will be superior to those [believers] who have died [EUP], because [we will meet Jesus first. That is certainly not true]! **16** It is the Lord [Jesus] himself who will descend from heaven. [When he comes down, he] will command all of [us believers to rise from their graves]. The chief angel will shout [loudly], and [another angel] will blow a trumpet for God. Then (OR, As a result), the first thing that will happen is that the people who [trusted] in Christ before they died will live again. **17** After that, [God] will powerfully take up into the clouds all of us [believers] who are still living [on this earth]. [He will take us] and those [other believers who have died], in order that [we all] might together meet/welcome the Lord [Jesus] in the sky. As a result of that, we [all] will be with him forever. **18** Because [all this is true], encourage/comfort each other by reminding each other of this teaching.

5 My fellow believers, [I want to tell you more] about the time or period [when the Lord Jesus will come back. Really], you do not need me to you about that, **2** because you yourselves know accurately [what will happen! You know] that the Lord [Jesus will return] [MTY] [unexpectedly] (OR, [when some people are unprepared]). [People will not expect him, just like no one knows when] a thief [comes unexpectedly] at night [SIM]. **3** [At a future time] many people will say, "[All is] peaceful and [we are] safe!" Then suddenly the Lord Jesus will come to punish people severely! Just like a pregnant woman who [experiences] birth pains [cannot stop those pains], those people will definitely not [have any way to] escape [their punishment]. **4** [Just like people] in the dark [are unaware of what is happening around them, most people will not be aware of what is about to happen to them] [MET, PRS]. Just like a thief [comes unexpectedly for people who are unaware, that time of punishment will come when people are not expecting it] [SIM]. But you, my fellow believers, are people who are very much aware [LIT] of what is going to happen. As a result, you will be expecting [LIT] those things [MTY] to happen [PRS]. All of us [believers] are people [IDM] [who do what is right, as people usually do in] the daytime [MET] [when their actions can be seen]. We are not [people who do evil things, as some people do when it is] dark [MET]. **6** So we believers must be aware of what is happening. We must be watching carefully, [as people who are awake watch for a thief] [MET]. We must be self-controlled, as people who are (sober/not drunk) are able to control what they do [MET]. People who sleep [MET] [are unaware of what is happening, and unbelievers

are like that]. **7** It is at night when people become drunk [and they do very wrong actions/things, and are unaware of what is happening because they] are asleep. **8** But we believers are people who [should do what is right] [MET], so we must be self-controlled, [as people] in the daytime [are usually not drunk and are able to control what they do] [MET]. [As Roman soldiers protect themselves by] putting on breastplates and helmets [MET], we [believers] must [protect ourselves by continuing to] trust and love [the Lord Jesus] and by continuing to confidently expect that he will save [us from God's punishing us at the time when he will punish other people]. **9** When God chose us, he did not plan for us to [be people whom he will severely] punish [MTY]. On the contrary, [he decided] that he would save us because of [our trusting in what] our Lord Jesus Christ [has done for us]. **10** Jesus died [to atone/pay] for our [sins] in order that we might be able to live together with him, whether we are alive [MET] or whether we are dead [EUP] [when he returns to earth]. **11** Because [you know that this is true], continue to encourage/comfort each other, as indeed you now are doing. **12** My fellow believers, we [three] ask that you recognize/honor [as leaders] those people who work hard for you. [Specifically], respect those who lead you as fellow believers who (have a close relationship with/are united to) the Lord [Jesus]. They warn you [to stop doing what is wrong] (OR, they teach you [to do what is right]). **13** That is, we [ask that you] consider those leaders to be very important and that you love them, because they work [hard to help you]. We also urge you to live peacefully with each other. **14** My fellow believers, we urge that you warn [believers] who will not work [in order to] ([obtain/earn the money to buy]) [things that they need to live. Tell them that they are behaving wrongly]. We urge you that you encourage [believers] who are fearful (OR, discouraged), and that you help all people who are weak [in any way]. We also urge you to be patient with everyone. **15** Make sure that none [of you] does evil things to anyone [who has done] evil to you. On the contrary, you must always try to do good [things] for each other (OR, to fellow believers) and to everyone else. **16** Be joyful (at all times/always), **17** pray continually, **18** and thank [God] (in all [circumstances/] [of what happens]). God wants you [to behave] like that [because of what] Christ Jesus [has done for you] (OR, because you have a close relationship with Christ Jesus). **19** Do not [refuse the urging from God's] Spirit [when he is working] [MTY] [among you. That would be like] throwing water on [a fire] [MET]! **20** [Specifically], do not despise messages that the Holy Spirit reveals to someone, [and reject them automatically]. **21** On the contrary, evaluate all [such messages]. Accept the [messages that are truly from God, and obey them]. **22** Do not obey any kind of evil [message]. **23** [We pray to] God that he will change you to become more and more like his people should be. He is the one who causes [his people] to have [inner] peace. [That is, we pray] that he will help you so that in all that you think, in all that you desire, and in all that you do, you will be without fault. We ask him that he will keep doing that [until] our Lord Jesus Christ comes back [to earth]. **24** [Because God] has invited you [to be his people, you can] certainly trust him to keep on helping you to do that. **25** My fellow believers, pray for me and for Silas and for Timothy. **26** [When you gather together as believers], greet each other affectionately, as fellow believers [should]. **27** Make certain that you read this letter to all the believers who may be absent when you read it at first, [knowing that] the Lord [Jesus wants you to do it]. **28** [I pray that] our Lord Jesus Christ [will continue to act] kindly toward you all.

2 Thessalonians

1 [I], Paul, [am writing this letter]. Silas and Timothy [are with me. We are sending this letter] to [you]. You are the congregation [of God's people] in Thessalonica [city]. You belong to God our Father, and you belong to Jesus Christ our Lord. **2** [We pray that] God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord, [will continue to] act kindly toward you and [will continue to cause you to have inner] peace. **3** [Our] fellow believers, we thank God very frequently [HYP] for you because we believers ought [to thank God for each other, and] specifically it is appropriate/right [that we should thank God for you. We thank him] that you are trusting in [the Lord Jesus] more and more, and that each one of you is loving [each of] the others more and more. **4** As a result, we keep proudly telling about you to [other] congregations who [worship] God. [Specifically, we tell them] that you are being steadfast and that you [continue] believing [in the Lord Jesus], even though you are frequently suffering [DOU] as a result of people causing you trouble. **5** [Your being steadfast] (shows/indicates to) [us] clearly that God will judge [all people] justly. [Specifically, he] will publicly declare that you are worthy [as his people to be in] that place where he will rule [forever, because] you also are suffering as a result of [telling others about letting] God rule your lives. **6** [God will certainly cause trouble for] those people who are troubling you, because he [considers] that it is just that he should punish such people for doing that to you. **7** He also [considers] that it is the right thing to do to reward you who are being troubled, by (giving you relief/causing your suffering to end). He will do that for both you and us when our Lord Jesus will descend from heaven, together with his powerful angels and with blazing fire. **8** [Then he will] punish those people who do not [want to] know him and [those] who refuse to heed the message about our Lord Jesus. **9** [Our Lord Jesus] will forbid them from ever coming near to him and near to the glory which he has [because he is so] powerful (OR, the glory that is manifested by his power). He will cause those people to suffer forever. **(aiōnios g166)** **10** [The Lord Jesus] will do this when he comes [back from heaven] at the time [that God has decided]. As a result, all we who are his people will praise him because of [what he has done for his own] people, and all we believers will marvel at our Lord because of [what he has done. And you will be there, too], because you believed what we testified to you. **11** In order that you might [praise Jesus like this], we are also praying very frequently [HYP] for you. We pray that [you will be able to show] our God that you are worthy [to receive] that which he chose [you to receive]. We pray also that he would powerfully enable you to do good in every way that you desire, and that he would also enable you to do powerfully every [good] thing [that you do because] you believe [in Jesus Christ]. **12** [We pray this because we want] you to praise our Lord Jesus, and we want him to honor you. This will happen because God, whom we [worship/serve], and our Lord Jesus Christ will keep acting kindly [toward you] in ways that you do not deserve.

2 Now [I want to write to you] about the time when our Lord Jesus Christ will return and when [God] will gather us together to [where Jesus] is. My fellow believers, I urge you **2** that you think calmly [about any message] that [claims/says] that the Lord has [already] come again. Do not be shaken or alarmed/worried by any such message. [It does not matter] if [it is a message that someone claims God's Spirit] revealed to him, or if [it is some other message that someone] has spoken, or whether [it is a message that someone claims] that I wrote in a letter. **3** Do not allow anyone to deceive you in any way [with the result that you believe any such message]. 2 Thessalonians 2:3b-5 [The Lord] will not come [MTY] [immediately]. First, [many people] [PRS] will rebel [against God]. The result of their rebelling will be that [they will accept and obey] the man who will sin very greatly [against God]. **4** He will be the [supreme] enemy [of God]. He will [proudly] exalt himself above everything that [people] consider to be some god and above everything that people worship. [As a result of wanting people to worship him], he will [even enter] God's Temple and sit down [there to rule]. He will publicly proclaim that he himself is God! But [God] will [certainly] punish that man forever! **5** (I am sure that you remember that I kept telling you these things while I was still with you [there in Thessalonica]./Do you not remember that I continued telling you these things while I was still with you [there in Thessalonica]?) [RHQ] **6** You also know that there is something (OR, someone) that is preventing this man [from being revealed] {[from revealing himself]}. This man is being (held back/restrained) [now] for him to be revealed {that he reveal himself} at the time that [God has planned] [MTY]. **7** [Although Satan] is already secretly causing [people] to reject [God's] laws, (the one/God) who is preventing [this man from revealing himself] now [will continue to prevent him from doing that] until he/[God] removes him. **8** It is then that [God will allow] this man, who rejects [God's] laws [completely], to be revealed {to reveal himself}. Then the Lord Jesus will destroy him, by simply commanding it [MTY]. Jesus, by his own glorious arrival, will cause him to become [completely] powerless. **9** But [before Jesus destroys him], Satan will make him very powerful. As a result, he [will do all kinds of supernatural] miracles and amazing things

[DOU] that will seem as though [God has enabled him to do them]. **10** And by doing wicked [things], he will completely deceive those who will [certainly] (perish/go to hell). [He will deceive them] because they will have refused to love the true [message]. So they will not be saved {God will not save them}. **(questioned)** **11** So, God, by his power, will enable this man to easily deceive people, so that they will believe what [this man] falsely [claims/says that he is]. **12** The result will be that everyone will be [rightly] condemned {that [God] will [justly] condemn everyone} [to be punished] who did not believe the true [message], but who instead gladly chose [to be doing] what is wicked. **13** [Our] fellow believers, whom our Lord [Jesus] loves, we thank God very frequently for you. It is appropriate/right for us to do that, because God chose you (from the beginning [MTY] [of creation/before the world existed]) in order that he might save [you] as a result of [your] believing the true [message] and as a result of [God's] Spirit setting you apart [for God]. **14** [We thank God that] he chose you as a result of our [proclaiming] the message about Christ [to you], in order that you might (share in/have) some of the glory that our Lord Jesus Christ has. **15** So, [our fellow believers, continue to be firm concerning what you believe]; that is, continue believing the [true] teaching that we gave to you by our speaking to you and by our [writing] a letter [to you]. **16** Our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God, our Father, loves us and encourages us and causes us to confidently expect [to receive] the eternal things that [he has promised to give to us] as a result of [Christ] acting kindly toward us in a way we did not deserve. **(aiōnios g166)** **17** [We strongly pray that] God and Jesus together will encourage you! And we pray that they will cause you to continue doing and saying things that God considers to be good.

3 As for the other matters, [our] fellow believers, pray for us that more and more [people will] hear [PRS] our message [about our] Lord [Jesus]. Pray that they will believe this message, as you [have done]. **2** Pray also for us that we will be rescued {that God will rescue us} from those very perverse/evil people [here] who [cause us to suffer. Pray like that] because [they and many others] refuse to believe [LIT] [this message]. **3** [Remember that our] Lord [Jesus] is trustworthy! [So we are sure that] he will cause you to continue to be steadfast. [We are also sure that] he will protect you from [Satan], the evil one (OR, from evil). **4** [Because of your close relationship with our] Lord [Jesus], we are confident that you are obeying what we have commanded you, and we are confident that you will obey what we are commanding [you in this letter]. **5** [We pray that our] Lord [Jesus] would enable you to continue [knowing] that God loves you. [We pray] also that Christ will cause you to continue [being] steadfast (OR, being steadfast as he [was steadfast]). **6** [Our] fellow believers, we command you, with the authority [MTY] that our Lord Jesus Christ [has given to us], that you stop associating with every fellow believer who is lazy and refuses to work. That is, you must stay away from those who are not [conducting their lives] in the manner that we taught you. **7** [We tell you this] because you yourselves know that you should [behave] like we [behaved]. We (did not just sit [around] without working/were never lazy) [while we were living] among you. **8** Specifically, we did not eat anyone's food if we did not pay [that person] for it. Instead, we worked very hard ([to support ourselves/to earn the money to buy what we needed]). We worked hard [DOU] during the day and during the night, in order that we would not have to depend on any of you [to supply what we needed]. **9** We have always had the right [to depend on you for money, but instead we worked hard in order to make ourselves] examples for you, in order that you should behave like we behave. **10** Remember that when we were [there] with you, we kept commanding you that if any [fellow believer] refuses to work, [you should not give] him food to eat. **11** [We are commanding the same thing] again now, because someone has told us that some of you are lazy and not working at all, just interfering [with what other people are doing]! **12** We command those fellow believers who are not working, and urge [them] by the authority [MTY] of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they settle down and (support themselves by working/work to earn money to buy what they need). **13** Fellow believers! Do not ever get tired of doing what is right! **14** If any [fellow believer refuses to work] and does not obey what I have written in this letter, ([publicly] identify that person/tell the congregation what that person is doing). Then do not associate with him, in order that he may become ashamed. **15** Do not think of him as though he was [your] enemy; instead, warn him as [you would warn your other] fellow believers. **16** [I pray that our] Lord [Jesus] himself, who [gives inner] peace [to his people], will give [inner] peace to you always (and in every situation/whatever happens). 2 Thessalonians 3:16b-18 I [pray that our] Lord [Jesus will continue to] help you all. **17** Now, having taken the pen from my scribe, I, Paul, am sending this greeting to you as I write this myself [SYN]. I do this in all my letters in order that you may know that it is truly I who have sent this letter. This is how I always end my letters. **18** I pray that our Lord Jesus Christ will continue to act kindly to you all.

1 Timothy

1 [I], Paul, [am writing this letter. You know that] I am an apostle. I [represent] Christ Jesus because God and Christ Jesus commanded me to do it. God is the one who saved us, and Jesus is the one for whom we are confidently waiting [to return]. **2** [You], Timothy, [are like] [MET] a true son [to me] because [you] trusted [in Christ after I told you about him]. [I pray/desire that] God, who is our Father, and Christ Jesus, who is our Lord, will [continue to act] kindly and mercifully to you, and [that they will give you inner] peace. **3** [I urge you now], just like I urged you when I was going to Macedonia [province], that you remain there in Ephesus [city]. Stay there so that you may command certain persons [who teach other believers] that they not teach false [doctrines]. **4** And tell people to not continually give their attention to stories [that tell about our ancestors], stories in which there are (genealogies/lists of our ancestors' names) that [seem to be] endless. [You must command your congregation not to think that these stories are valuable], because [whenever people think] that, they [just] start arguing about things uselessly, instead of [teaching] God's plan, which [is concerned with] what we believe (OR, which [we know because] we trust [in Christ]). **5** [Teach them] to have pure desires [MTY] and [so to know that God] approves of what they do, and to sincerely believe [the true teaching]. By doing that, [they will] love [God well]. **6** There are some people who have turned away from these true teachings. As a result, they [just] discuss what is useless. **7** They desire to teach the laws [that God gave to Moses], but they do not understand what they are really saying, or the things about which they (confidently speak/say that they understand well). **8** We know that the laws [that God gave to Moses are] good if people consider correctly [what God intended them for]. **9** We must remember that God did not give Moses those laws in order [to condemn] righteous people. By those laws he [condemns people who act as though there were no] laws and who refuse to obey [anyone. He condemns] those who do not revere God and those who sin habitually. [By them he condemns] those who refuse to perform rituals that are pleasing to God and who show no respect for religion. [He condemns] those who murder their fathers and who murder their mothers and who murder [other] people. **10** [He condemns] those who are sexually immoral and those who are homosexuals. [He condemns] those who kidnap/steal people [in order to make them slaves]. [He condemns] those who lie and those who promise something strongly but do not do what they promised. He condemns every other action that is contrary to our true teaching. **11** This is what we teach people when we tell them the glorious/wonderful message about Christ that our awesome God [has revealed] and that he gave to me to teach. **12** I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord who enabled me to do this work, because he considered that I could be trusted. So he appointed me in order that I [would serve him]. **13** Formerly I said evil things [about him], I caused [his people] to suffer, and I acted very cruelly toward them. But [Christ acted] in a kind way toward me since I (acted ignorantly/did not know that I was doing wrong) because I did not believe [in him]. **14** Our Lord kindly did for me what I did not deserve, so that I now believe [in Christ Jesus] and I love others (OR, him) [because I belong to him]. **15** [Something that all we believers] say is certainly true and is worthy for us to fully accept is that Christ Jesus came into the world in order to save sinful people [so that God would not punish them for their sins]. As for me, I [consider that I have sinned] more than all others. **16** Yet Christ Jesus acted mercifully to me in order that he might demonstrate [to people that he is perfectly patient with them]. He did that by his being patient with me, one who has sinned worse than everyone else. He wanted what he did for me (to be an example/to demonstrate his patience) to people who would [later] believe in him, and as a result would live forever. **(aiōnios g166)** **17** I desire that people will honor and praise the only [true] God forever! Even though no one can see him, he is the King who rules for all time, who will never die! (Amen!/That is true!) **(aiōn g165)** **18** Timothy, you [are like] [MET] a son [to me]. So, (based on/in accordance with) what [someone] previously (prophesied/told what God revealed to them) about you, I am instructing you [to strongly oppose those who teach false doctrines. You should oppose them like] [MET] a soldier (fights strongly against/opposes) [those who attack his countrymen]. **19** Continue to believe [the true teaching] and do only what you know to be right! Remember that some people have (pushed aside/rejected) the true teaching. As a result, they no longer believe [MET] what is true. **20** Among the ones who have done that are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I put in the hands of Satan, in order that [when Satan punishes them] they may learn not to teach wrong teaching.

2 The first (OR, most important) thing that I urge [you to tell your congregation] is that [Christians] should continually ask [God] for [what they need]. They should also pray to God [for all other people], and they should be thanking [God]. **2** Specifically, they should pray for rulers and for all [other people] who (are in important government positions/have authority), in order that [God will help them to rule]. [As God enables the rulers to rule well], we can live very peaceably as we conduct ours lives doing all that God and others consider

to be right and proper. 3 It is good [to pray like that, and] it pleases God, who saves us, when we pray like that. 4 He desires to save everyone. He wants everyone to fully know [and accept] his true [message]. 5 He is the [only] one [true] God! And there is [only] one person who talks to God on behalf of people. That person is Christ Jesus, who [himself] is a man! 6 He gave (his [life/himself]) [as a sacrifice] in order to ransom/redeem all [people], which showed at the proper time [that God desires that all people be saved] {[to save all people]}. 7 As for me, he appointed me to declare [this message] and to be an apostle. I am telling the truth [about God appointing me]. I am not lying! He appointed me to teach the non-Jews that they should believe God's true message. 8 I desire that in every place [where believers worship], the men who pray publicly [MTY] should be men who are not practicing sin. When they pray, they should not be angry [with anyone] and they should not doubt [that God will answer] their prayers (OR, should not quarrel with anyone). 9 [I would like that] the clothing that women wear be (modest and sensible/proper and appropriate) [DOU]. I want them to not fix their hair in fancy/elaborate ways, nor wear gold [jewelry], nor pearls, nor expensive clothing [in order that they may make themselves attractive]. 10 Instead, they should be doing things that women who (claim to/say that they) worship God should do; that is, they should be doing good deeds. 11 Women must learn to [listen] quietly [during the worship services] and to fully subject themselves [to the leaders of the congregation]. 12 I do not permit women to teach [men spiritual truth publicly], and I do not permit them to have authority over men. Instead, [I desire] that women [listen] quietly [during the worship services]. 13 Keep in mind that God made Adam first, and afterwards he made Eve, 14 and that it was not Adam whom [Satan] deceived. As a result of the woman being deceived, she sinned. She did what God had told her not to do. 15 But even though she did that, now women will be saved {God will accept women} as they bear children if they continue to trust [God] and if they continue to love others, and if they continue to live in a way that is [more and more] (acceptable to God/like God wants them to), and if they continue to be modest.

3 Anyone who aspires to be an elder [in the congregation] (OR, a bishop) desires a noble/honorable task. 2 [Since that is a task that others should respect], an overseer must [live] in such a way that [no one] can truly (say that he has done [anything that is] wrong/find fault with him). Specifically, [he must be] faithful to his wife. He must think clearly [about what he does]. He must be able to control his behavior. He must be sensible. He must be dignified/respectable. He must welcome and care for guests. He must be able to teach [God's truth] well. 3 He must not be a drunkard. He must not be ready/quick to fight [those who make him angry]. On the contrary, he must be gentle and he must not be quarrelsome. He must not be greedy for a lot of money. 4 He must lead and care for his own household/family well. For example, he must be a man whom his children obey and completely respect, 5 because if anyone does not know how he should lead well and care for well the people who live in his own house, (he certainly cannot care for God's congregation!/how can he care for God's congregation?) [RHQ] 6 He must not be one who has just recently [trusted in Jesus], because [if you choose a man] like that, he might become conceited/proud [because you chose him so soon]. As a result of his being conceited/proud, God will condemn him like he condemned the devil [because he was conceited/proud]. 7 Moreover, [an elder must live] in such a way that non-Christians speak well of him, because [if he conducts himself like] that, people will not say evil things about him, and the devil will not capture/trap him [MET] [like people capture animals] in a trap. 8 [Those whom you choose to serve as] deacons likewise [must be ones who conduct themselves suitably/appropriately. Specifically], they must be (serious/worthy that people respect them). They must (be sincere/mean what they say). They must not like to drink a lot of alcohol. They must not (be greedy/have a strong desire to get money). 9 They must sincerely believe the message that [God] has now revealed [to us]. 10 [Like you do for the elders], you must examine ([their character/how they conduct their lives]) [before you appoint them to serve]. Then if they are without fault, let them serve as deacons. 11 Their wives (OR, The women who are deacons) likewise [must conduct themselves suitably/appropriately. Specifically, they must be] (serious/worthy that people respect them). They must not speak evil about people. They must not drink a lot of alcohol. They must be faithful in everything that they do. 12 Deacons must be faithful to their wives, and they must lead well and care well for their children and [other] people in their houses. 13 Because if deacons serve well, people will respect them, and they will be able [to speak] very boldly/confidently about what they believe concerning Christ Jesus. 14 Although I hope that I will come and visit you soon, I am writing these things to you [now] 15 in order that if I (am delayed/things prevent me from visiting to you soon), you will know how believers should conduct their lives [and you will be able to teach that to them]. [I am talking about] all those who are members of God's family, all the congregations that belong to the all-powerful God, all those who uphold/support [MET] the true [message]. 16 It is certainly true that [the message that God] has now revealed

is very wonderful! From it, we learn this spiritual truth that we say/sing about [Christ] (OR, We affirm this teaching to be true and very important.) It is what shows us how to live (in a godly manner/in a manner that pleases God). It is what God has now revealed, even though it was not known before. [We] ([affirm/say that it is true]) concerning Jesus Christ that, He is the one who appeared on the earth in a human body. God's Spirit showed/demonstrated that he is/was truly the Messiah (OR, that he always acted righteously); Angels saw him; people preached about him in many nations; People in many parts of the world believed the message about him. God took him up into heaven.

4 [God's] Spirit has clearly told us that in later times some people will stop believing the [teaching] that [all of us] believe. Instead, they will listen to [evil] spirits who deceive [people. They will also believe the false] doctrines/teachings that [they receive from] these evil spirits. **2** The people who teach those false doctrines/teachings are liars! And they do not feel at all guilty [MET] [when they teach such teachings]! **3** [For example], they forbid [believers] to marry [because they say that it makes us unacceptable to God]. They also [command] that people abstain from [eating certain] foods. But God created such foods in order that we can eat them! We who believe [in Christ] know the true [teaching], and we thank [God for the food that he gives us. That is why we] can eat it. **4** [We can eat all kinds of food] because God has created all [food], and it is all good. We should not refuse to eat certain kinds of food if we thank [God for it] when we eat it. **5** It is acceptable [to God] because God [long ago] said [that all things that he made are good], and because we pray that God will bless it. **6** When you teach these things to your fellow believers, you will be showing that you, [whom] Christ Jesus [appointed], serve them well. You will have become strong [spiritually] (by holding fast/by obeying) the true message that [we all] believe. **7** You must completely reject godless, silly/foolish stories [from your ancestors that old people tell]. Keep training yourself so that you have more (godly behavior/behavior that pleases God). **8** [Some people say], "It helps us in some ways if we exercise our bodies." But [I say that] people benefit very much if they live (in a godly way/in a way that pleases God), because [if people live in a godly way, that] will benefit them both while they live now and when they live in the future life [in heaven]. **9** Those are words that are absolutely true, and everybody should believe them! **10** This is the reason why we work so hard [DOU] [for others], because we confidently expect that God, who is all-powerful, [will do the things that he has promised]. He is the one who [wants to] save all people, [so he protects them]. He certainly [protects us] who believe [in Christ]! **11** Command these things and teach these things. **12** [Timothy], by the way you conduct your life, show the believers [in your congregation] how they should conduct their lives. Specifically, speak [good things], conduct yourself [well], love [people], trust [God], and be pure in every way. If you do all that, no one will [have any reason] (to belittle/to treat you disrespectfully) because of your being young. **13** Until I come, be sure that you read [the Scriptures to the congregation] and that you exhort/urge them [to obey the Scriptures], and teach them. **14** Do not forget [to use] the [abilities that God] gave to you as a result of [people/us] (prophesying/telling what God revealed to them) [about you], and as a result of the elders putting their hands on you [to commission/appoint you to do God's work]. **15** Do these things [that I have told] you to do! (Concentrate on them/Do them [sincerely and] wholeheartedly) in order that everyone may see that you are improving [in how you do them]. **16** Be careful that you [conduct] yourself well. By continuing to do that, you will save yourself. And if you continue [to teach the good] doctrine/teaching, the result of your teaching will be that [God] will save the people who listen to you.

5 Do not rebuke/scold older men. Instead, exhort/advise them [respectfully] as you would [exhort/advise] your father. Exhort/advise younger men [gently] as you would exhort/advise your brothers. **2** [Exhort/advise] older women [respectfully] as [you would exhort/advise] your mother. [Exhort/advise] younger women [gently] as [you would exhort/advise] your sisters; but you must act in a completely proper way as you do that. **3** [Make sure that the congregation] takes care of widows who have no one to care for them. **4** If a widow has children or grandchildren, these [children or grandchildren] should learn that they are to take care of their own family first. By doing that they can repay their parents and grandparents for all that they did for them when they were young, because doing that pleases God. **5** The widows who are really alone and have no one [to help them] confidently expect that God [will help them]. So night and day they pray, earnestly asking [DOU] [God that he will help them and others]. **6** But widows who just want to have a lot of pleasure are [spiritually] [MET] dead, although they are [physically] alive. **7** And tell [the congregation] that [the children or grandchildren should do] these things in order that [no one] can (criticize the believers/say that the believers are doing anything that is wrong). **8** If anyone does not take care of those who live in his own house, and especially if he does not take care of his own family, he has (denied/quit believing) what we believe and [we should consider that] he is worse than a person who does not believe [in Christ]. **9** [You have a list of] widows [who

will do work for the congregation and receive money]. Put women's names on the list [only if] they are more than 60 years old, and if they were faithful to their husbands. **10** [Put women's names on that list only] if it is known that they have wholeheartedly done every kind of good deed, if they have helped [children] who were afflicted/suffering, if they have (brought up/cared for) their children [properly/well], if they have welcomed and cared for guests, and if they have humbly served [MTY] other believers. **11** As for younger widows, do not put their names on that list, because they [promise to do work for the congregation, but instead of doing that, they usually] want to marry [again] (OR, marry an unbeliever) when they have a strong desire to get married. **12** If that happens, they may become guilty of not having done what they had promised [to do for the congregation] (OR, promised [Christ that they would do].) **13** In addition, they [generally] become lazy. Specifically, as they [just] go about from house to house, they also begin (to gossip/to talk about people) and to meddle in other people's affairs, saying what they should not say. **14** So I advise that [instead of putting the names of younger widows on the list, they] marry again, that they bear/have children, that they manage their homes [well], and that they do nothing for which an enemy can say bad things about [them]. **15** [I say this] because some [younger widows] have stopped [obeying Christ] in order to obey Satan. **16** If any woman who believes [in Christ] has widows [in her household/family], she should take care of them. The congregation should not be burdened by having {She should not depend on the congregation} to take care of their [needs]. The congregation should take care of the widows who truly [have no one to care for them]. **17** [Each congregation] should pay well the elders who lead [well. They should] greatly honor them, especially those who preach and those who teach. **18** [Long ago Moses] wrote in the Scriptures, "While an ox is threshing [grain], you must not tie its mouth [so that it cannot eat the grain]," and [Jesus said], "[People] should pay those who work [for their benefit]." [So we know that congregations should support their leaders]. **19** When some person accuses an elder [about doing wrong], accept what he says only if there are [at least] two or three persons who (testify/say [that]) [they saw him do that wrong]. **20** But as for any [elder] who repeatedly sins, rebuke him before the whole congregation, in order that the rest [of the elders] will be afraid [to sin]. **21** I solemnly tell you that [as you keep in mind that] God and Christ Jesus and the holy angels know everything that you do, obey these commands [about elders]! [As you consider what others say about an elder doing wrong], do not easily/quickly decide that what they say is true. And treat them all equally. **22** Do not be in a hurry to put your hands on a man ([to set him apart/to appoint him]) [as an elder. Wait until you have examined him to see how he conducts his life], because [God will consider] that you are responsible if [you approve] a person who sins, saying that he should [become an elder]. Keep your life pure in every way. **23** [And Timothy], no longer drink [only] water, but instead, drink a little wine [also], because [that may help to cure] your stomach's frequent illnesses. **24** [I tell you not] ([to set apart/appoint]) [elders hastily, without seeing how they conduct their lives, because] some people [sin secretly], so that it is not known what they have done until after someone examines them (OR, before God judges them). But some people sin openly, so that people know what they have done before anyone examines them. **25** Similarly, although [some people] do good things openly, with the result that people know what they have done, some people [do good things secretly], yet the good things that they have done cannot remain secret either.

6 As for slaves [DOU] [who are believers, teach them that they] should consider that it is right for them to honor their masters in every way. If they do that, people will not speak (against/evil about) God [MTY] and they will not speak (against/evil about) that which [we apostles] teach, [because they will see that the slaves are being respectful of their masters]. **2** [Slaves] who have masters who believe [in Christ] must not be disrespectful to their masters just because their masters are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve [their masters] even better because [their masters] are fellow believers whom [God] loves and who benefit when [the slaves] serve them well. As you teach these things [to your congregation], exhort/urge [people] that they do them. **3** Some people teach things that are different. What they teach (does not agree with/is not like) the correct teaching that our Lord Jesus Christ [taught] (OR, that is about our Lord Jesus Christ). They do not say that we should conduct our lives (in a [godly manner/] a [manner that pleases God]). **4** Such people are very proud and do not understand anything [HYP]. Instead, they abnormally/wrongly desire to [argue about unimportant] matters and about certain words. As a result, [people who listen to them] (envy [others/] to have what others have). They quarrel [with others and with one another]. They say bad things about [others. They] suspect/think that [others] have evil ([motives/reasons for doing what they do]). **5** Their whole way of thinking has become completely wrong [because] they have rejected the true [doctrine/teaching]. As a result, they [mistakenly] think that (by practicing religion/by saying that they believe in God) they will gain a lot of [money]. **6** [Well, we] truly do gain great [benefit] when we conduct our lives (in a [godly

manner/] a [manner that pleases God]) and we are content [with what we have]. **7** We brought nothing into the world [when we were born], and we cannot take anything out [of it when we die], **8** so if we have food and clothing, we should be satisfied with these. **9** But some people strongly desire to be rich. As a result, they [do wrong things to get money, and this will cause them to] be caught/trapped [MET] as animals get caught in traps. They foolishly desire many things, and those desires cause them to get hurt. And God will completely reject [them]! **10** All kinds of bad things will happen to people who [PRS] desire to have a lot of money. Because some people longed for money, they have stopped believing the doctrine/teaching [that all of us believe] and they have caused themselves much grief/sadness. **11** But as for you, who are a man who [serves God], (keep completely away from such love of money/do not be like the people who love money). Decide that you will do what is right, and that you will (be godly/do what pleases God). Decide that you will trust [God], and that you will love [others]. Endure [difficult circumstances]. Always be gentle [with people]. **12** Try earnestly and with all your energy/strength [MET] to live in accordance with what you believe. [Continue to do your tasks well in order that] you will know for sure that you will live eternally. Remember that [God] chose you to [live with him], and that when many elders were listening you said strongly ([what you believe/that you trust in Christ]). **(aiōnios g166)** **13** God, who gives life to all things, knows everything that you do. Christ Jesus also knows everything that you do. He strongly declared what was true when [he was on trial before] Pontius Pilate. **14** I command you that as you keep all that in mind, in every way you (hold fast/obey) to what Christ has commanded us [DOU]. (Hold fast/obey) to those teachings in a way that our Lord Jesus Christ cannot (criticize you about/say that what you did was wrong), until he comes again. **15** [Remember that God] will cause Jesus to come again at the proper time. God is awesome! He is the only Ruler! He rules over all other people who rule! **16** He is the only one who will never die, [and he lives in heaven surrounded by] light [that is so bright that] no one can approach it! He is the one whom no person has ever seen and whom no person is able to see! My desire is that all people will honor him and that he [will rule] powerfully [MTY] forever! (May it be so!/Amen!) **(aiōnios g166)** **17** Tell [the believers] who are rich here in this present world that they should not be proud, and that they should not trust in their many [possessions], because they cannot be certain [how long they will have them]. Teach them that instead of [trusting in their wealth, they should trust] in God. He is the one who generously gives us everything we have in order that we may enjoy it. **(aiōn g165)** **18** Also, tell them that their good deeds must be as plentiful [as their money]. Specifically, they should share very generously with others [what they have]. **19** If they do that, [Jesus will give them a great reward. It will be as though] they are piling up [in heaven] treasure for themselves that will (be a good [basis on which they may rely] for/result in their) receiving a great reward in the future (OR, which will be [as] solid [as] the foundation [MET] [of a house]). By doing this they will experience what real life is like. **20** Timothy, faithfully proclaim/protect the true message (OR, do the work) that [Jesus] has given [to you]. (Avoid/Do not listen to) [people who want to] chatter about things that are not important to God. (Avoid/Do not listen to) [people who claim/say that they have] 'true knowledge' but who say things that oppose/contradict [our true teaching]. **21** ([Keep completely away from/Reject completely]) [such teaching. Remember that] some people who claim [to have this 'knowledge'] have stopped believing what [all of us] believe. ([I desire that/May]) [God continue to act] kindly toward you all.

2 Timothy

1 [I], Paul, [am writing this letter. I am] an apostle whom Christ Jesus chose so that I would do what God wanted. He chose me [to tell people that God] has promised [that they will] live [eternally] as a result of their having a close relationship with Christ Jesus. **2** [I am writing to you], Timothy, whom I love [as if you were] my own son. [I pray that] God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord will [continue to act] kindly to you, be merciful to you, and [cause you to have] inner peace, **3** I thank God [for all that he has done for you]. I serve him, and my ancestors [served him, too. I serve him] in a manner that I know to be right. [I thank him] while repeatedly I [pray for you] at night and during the day. **4** [While I am thanking God for you], I very much want to see you because I remember how you cried [MTY] [when we separated. I want to see you] in order that I may be (filled with joy/very happy). **5** [I thank God because] I remember that you sincerely believe [in Christ Jesus]. First, your grandmother, Lois, and your mother, Eunice, [believed in him and], I am (convinced/very sure) that you also believe in him. **6** Because [I am sure that you believe in him], I remind you to do fervently/wholeheartedly [MET] what God has (assigned for/appointed) you to do and what he has enabled you to do. [God] ([assigned for/appointed]) you to do it as a result of my putting my hands [on you to show/indicate that he had chosen you to do his work]. **7** Remember that God has put [his Spirit] within us. [His Spirit does not cause us to be] afraid. Instead, [he causes us to be] powerful [to work for God], and he helps us to love [others] and [to] control what we say and do. **8** So never be ashamed/reluctant to tell others the message about our Lord. And do not [be ashamed] of me, [even though I am] a prisoner [because I preach about] him. Instead, [be willing to] suffer as I do as you proclaim the message about Christ. [Endure what you will suffer] by letting God empower [you to endure it]. **9** [God] saved us and chose us to conduct our lives in a pure way. It was not our doing good deeds/actions [that caused him to do this for us—something] that we did not deserve. Instead, before (time began/he created the world) he purposed/planned to [be kind to us] as a result of what Christ Jesus [would do for us]. **(aiōnios g166)** **10** Now, as a result of our Savior Christ Jesus having come, it has been revealed {he has shown} [that he acts kindly toward us. Specifically, Christ Jesus] has declared that we [will not remain dead after we] die! He has also revealed that, as a result of [our hearing and accepting] the message [about Christ, we] will live [forever in bodies that will] not decay! **11** I was chosen {Christ chose me} to go as an apostle to many places and proclaim that message to people. **12** So, even though I suffer [here in this prison], I am not ashamed [of being here] (OR, I am very confident), because I know [Christ Jesus], the one whom I have trusted, and I am convinced/sure that he is able to keep safe the good message that he has entrusted to me (OR, the things that I have entrusted [to him]), and that he will reward me at the time [MTY] [when he comes again]. **13** Be sure that you tell others the same correct message that you heard from me. [And as you tell it], keep trusting [in Christ Jesus] and keep loving [others] as Christ Jesus [enables you to do]. **14** Do not let anyone persuade you to change the [good message that] God has entrusted/given to you. Allow the Holy Spirit who lives in us to [direct what you say]. **15** You know that [almost] all [the believers] in Asia [province] have (turned away from/abandoned) me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. **16** [But I pray that] the Lord will be kind to the family of Onesiphorus for the following reasons: Often he cheered me up and, [even though] I was a prisoner [MTY], he was not ashamed (of me/[to admit he was] my [friend]). **17** On the contrary, when he came here to Rome, he diligently searched for me until he found me. **18** [I pray that] the Lord will be kind to him on that day [MTY] [when he, the Lord, will judge people]. And how much Onesiphorus served [me] in Ephesus [city], you know very well.

2 You [are like a] son to me. So I urge also that you [let God] empower you [spiritually] as a result of Christ Jesus acting kindly toward you. **2** [As you do that], remembering that [the message] that you heard from me is the same message that other people have affirmed/declared to you, you must entrust/give that message to people whom you can trust, people who will be competent/able/qualified to teach others. **3** Endure as I do what we suffer for Christ Jesus, like a good soldier [endures what he suffers]. **4** [You know that] soldiers, in order to please their captain, do not (become involved in civilian affairs/spend time doing other kinds of work) [MET]. [So, like soldiers, do not let other matters (distract you as you serve/hinder you from serving]) [Christ Jesus]! **5** [Similarly, you know that] athletes who do not obey the rules of the contest will not be given {not win} the prize [MET]. [So, like athletes, do all that Christ Jesus has commanded so that God will reward you]! **6** [You also know that] a hard-working farmer should be the first to receive some of the harvest [MET]. [So, like farmers, work hard for Christ Jesus and expect that God will reward you]! **7** Think about what I have just written, because, [if you do], the Lord will enable you to understand everything [that you need to understand]. **8** [Endure everything by] remembering how Jesus Christ [endured it when he suffered]. Remember

that he came back to life {God raised him from the dead} and [God affirmed/declared him to be king as] his ancestor [King] David was. Those are things that I tell to people when I tell them the message [about Christ]. **9** I am suffering [here in prison] because [some people oppose] the good message [that I tell]. They have even put me in chains as if I were a criminal. Nevertheless, the message from God is not chained {nothing is preventing [MET] [others from proclaiming] the message from God}. **10** Therefore I [willingly] endure all [that I am suffering] for the sake of those [whom God has] chosen. [I do this] in order that Christ Jesus will save them, too, and that they will be forever with [him in the] glorious [place where he is]. **(aiōnios g166)** **11** [Endure everything as you remember] that these words [that we all say/sing] (OR, [that we teach people]) [are trustworthy]: Since we have stopped behaving as we did in the past, as though we died when he died, we shall also live with him. **12** Since we are also patiently enduring what we suffer, we shall also rule with him. But if we say that we do not know him, he also will say that he does not know us. **13** If we (are unfaithful/stop doing what he tells us to do), he will treat us just like he promised to do, because he (can never be untrue to himself/always does what he says that he will do). **14** [Those whom you appointed to teach others] God's truth, keep reminding them about these things that [I have told you]. Tell them strongly that, since God knows what they are doing (OR, that God [will judge them for everything that is wrong that they do, and therefore]) they must not quarrel (about words/about matters that are not important), [because, when teachers quarrel, it helps] no one, [and because, when they quarrel, they spiritually] destroy those who hear them (OR, they cause those who hear [them to] quit (being committed [to Christ]/believing [in Christ]).) **15** (Do your best/Try hard) to be the kind of person that God will approve of. [Be like a] good worker as you teach the true message accurately. If a worker works well, he will not need to be ashamed of (OR, will be pleased about) [what he does]. **16** (Stay away from/Do not talk with) [those who talk foolishly and] ([godlessly/say things that displease God]), because [those who talk foolishly] will become even more (ungodly/displeasing to God), **17** and [because] their message will [harm people] [SIM] [like] gangrene/cancer does. [You know] Hymenaeus and Philetus. They are [two] such people [who talk in this manner]. **18** [Specifically], they teach a wrong message; [that is], they say [wrongly that God will not cause dead people to live again because] he has already given us [spiritual] life. [They claim that our spiritual life is the only new life that we will receive. By saying that], they cause some people **19** not to continue to believe [in Christ]. However, [the congregations of] God are strong [MET]. [They are like] a strong foundation on which is written: "The Lord knows the people who really belong to him," and "Every person who calls Jesus [MTY] 'Lord' must stop doing wicked things". **20** In a wealthy person's house there are not only utensils made of gold and of silver, but also utensils made of wood and of clay. The gold and silver [utensils are used] at special [occasions/events], and the others are used at ordinary [occasions. Similarly, in a congregation there are those who] ([are ready/desire]) [to do great things for the Lord Jesus, and there are those like the teachers of false doctrines/teachings who are not]. **21** Therefore, those who rid themselves of [what is evil in their lives] will be able to [work well for the Lord. They will be like] utensils [MET] used at special [occasions], set apart for and especially useful to the owner [of the big house. They will be like fine utensils] that have been prepared {are ready} to do any kind of good work. **22** [Because of that], you [(sg)] must avoid doing the wrong actions that [many] young people desire to do. Instead, you must earnestly do right actions, believe [the true teaching], love [God and others, and you must continually be at] peace with those who ask the Lord [to help them and who are] pure in every way (OR, who serve [Jesus] faithfully). **23** Do not talk [with anyone who] foolishly [wants] to argue about matters that are not important. [Do not talk with them], because you know that [when people talk about foolish things], they begin to quarrel. **24** But those who serve the Lord must not quarrel. Instead, they should be kind to all people, they should be able to teach [God's truth well], and they should be patient [with people]. **25** [That is, they should] gently instruct/teach people who oppose [the true message. They should do that] in order that perhaps God will cause others to completely change what they think, so that they may acknowledge/believe the true [message]. **26** In that way they may get free from [what is like] [MET] a trap [set by] the devil. The devil has deceived them in order that [they might do] what he wants [them to do].

3 [You need to] realize that during the last days [MTY] [before Christ returns, evil people will make] it difficult [for believers to behave as they should]. **2** This is because [such evil] people will be habitually loving themselves and loving money. They will habitually boast [about themselves], they will be proud, and will often say bad things [about others. They] will disobey [their] parents. They will not be thankful, nor will they respect [anything that is good]. **3** They will not [even] love their own family, nor agree with [anybody] (OR, [they never forgive anyone]). They will tell lies about people. They will not control what they say and do, nor allow anyone to control them. They will not love [anything that is] good. **4** They will (betray others/hand others over to their

enemies) and act foolishly. They will be overly/very proud of themselves, and they will love to please themselves instead of loving God. **5** [And, although they will] pretend that they worship God, they will not let [God's Spirit] work powerfully [in their lives]. Do not associate with such people (OR, Do not let such people join [your congregation]), **6** because some such [people, even now], subtly/deceivingly persuade foolish women to let them come into their houses, and then they deceive those women [so that they control what those women think. These women] have been burdened with sins {have sinned very much} and they have been led to do {they do} the many [evil] things that they strongly desire to do. **7** [Even though] they are always [wanting to] learn new things, they are never able to recognize what is true. **8** Just like Jannes and Jambres [long ago] very much opposed Moses, so also some [people] now oppose the true [message. Those] people think only what is evil. God rejects them [because they do not] believe [what is true]. **9** Nevertheless, they will not continue to succeed, because most [HYP] people will understand clearly that such people are foolish, just like people also realized [clearly that Jannes and Jambres were foolish]. **10** But as for yourself, you have fully known what I have taught. You have known [and imitated] the way in which I conducted my life, [and] what I have been trying to do. [You have] trusted [God as] I have. You have been patient as I have been. [You have] loved people [as] I have, and [you have] endured [as you suffered like] I have [suffered]. **11** [You know how I endured many times when people] harmed me. [They] caused me to suffer at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra [cities]. [But although they caused me to suffer], I endured it; and every time [they] did those things to me, the Lord rescued me. **12** (Indeed/You know that), for us [(inc)] who want to live (in a [godly manner/] a [manner that pleases God]), we will always be persecuted {there will always be people who will cause us to suffer} because we [have a close relationship with] Christ Jesus. **13** Evil people (OR, And those) who deceive other people will (get worse/teach things that are more and more wrong). [Specifically, they will] deceive other people, and [those who hear them will] deceive others. **14** But you, in contrast, must continue [to believe] what you have learned and (been assured of/firmly believe). [I know that you are confident/sure that it is true because] you know that you have learned it from all [of us who taught you] ([God's truth/what is right]). **15** From [the time when you were] a child you have known the holy writings/Scriptures. [You now know that] they enabled you to become wise so that God saved you because of your believing in Christ Jesus. **16** God (inspired/put into men's minds) everything [that is written] in the Scriptures {they [wrote] in the holy writings}, and those writings are all useful to teach [us what is true], to cause us to know [when we are] wrong and then (to correct us/to show us what we have done that is wrong), and to train/teach us to do what is right. **17** What [is written] {they wrote} is useful to help us who [serve] God to be ready/prepared to do all that we should do. By means of it, we are equipped {God gives us what we need} in order to do every [kind of] good deeds.

4 Christ Jesus [is going to come back and] judge those who are living [when he comes] and those who will have died. He will judge them [concerning what rewards they deserve, and] he will rule everyone. So, [knowing that] he and God are watching [everything that we do], I solemnly/earnestly command you **2** that you proclaim the [true] message to people. Always be ready/prepared [to proclaim it], whether people want to hear it or not. [Some people are saying things that are not correct]; (refute their teaching/show why their teaching is wrong). Rebuke them when they are doing wrong. Tell them what they ought to do. Be very patient while you teach them. **3** [Do these things] because there will be a time when people will not listen to good teaching. Instead, they will bring in many teachers for themselves who will tell them just what they want to hear [IDM]. [The reason that they will bring in such teachers is] that they want to do the evil things that they desire. **4** That is, they will not listen to [MTY] what is true, but will listen instead to [strange] stories from our ancestors. **5** [Furthermore, I command that] you always control what you think and do. [Be willing] to endure hardships/suffering. Your work should be telling people the message [about Christ Jesus]. As you serve [the Lord], do everything that [God has told] you to do. **6** [Timothy, I say these things to] you because as for me, [it is as though] [MET] [they are now about to kill me. It is as though my blood will] be poured out {they will kill me} [as a sacrifice on the altar]; that is, [I know] that it is the time for me to die [EUP]. **7** [And as to telling people the] good [message and defending it], I have (exerted myself thoroughly/done it with all my energy) [MET], [like a boxer does. As to doing] the work that God gave me to do, I have completed it, [like a runner who finishes] [MET] the race. [As to] what we believe, I (have been loyal to it/continue to believe it). **8** [So, like people award] a prize [MET] [to the winner of a race], the Lord, who judges rightly, will give me a reward [because I have lived] righteously. He will give me that reward when [MTY] [he judges people]. And not only [will he reward] me, but he will also reward all those who very much want him to come back. **9** (Do your best/Try hard) to come to me soon. **10** [I say that] because Demas has left me. He wanted very much [the good things that he might

enjoy] [MTY] in this world [right now], and so he went to Thessalonica [city]. Crescens [went to serve the Lord] in Galatia [province], and Titus went to Dalmatia [district]. **(aiōn g165)** **11** Luke is the only one who is still with me [of those who were helping me. And when you come], bring Mark with you, because he is useful to help me in my work. **12** Tychicus [cannot help me because] I sent him to Ephesus [city]. **13** And when you come, bring the coat that I left with Carpus in Troas [city]. Also, bring the books, but (most of all/especially) [I want] (the parchments/the animal skins) [on which important things are written]. **14** Alexander, the man who makes things from metal, did many evil/harmful things to me. The Lord will punish him for what he did. **15** So you, too, must beware of him. [He will try to destroy your work if he can], because he very much opposes the message that we [proclaim]. **16** When I first defended myself [in court here], no one came along [to help defend] me. Instead, they all left me. [I pray] that it will not be counted against {[God] will forgive} them [LIT] [for leaving me]. **17** Nevertheless, the Lord was with me and strengthened me. He enabled me to fully preach the message, and all the non-Jewish people [in the court] (OR, people from many nations) heard it. And I was rescued [by the Lord] {[the Lord] rescued me} [from great danger, as if I were taken] [MET] out of a lion's (OR, wild animal's) mouth. **18** [Therefore, I am sure that] the Lord will rescue me from everything that is truly evil and will bring me safely to heaven, where he rules. Praise him forever! (Amen!/May it be so!) **(aiōn g165)** **19** Greet [for me] Priscilla and [her husband] Aquila and the family of Onesiphorus. **20** Erastus stayed in Corinth [city]. Trophimus, I left in Miletus [city] because he was sick. **21** (Do your best/Try hard) to come to me before (the stormy season/winter). Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and many other fellow believers [in this city] (send their greetings to/say that they are thinking affectionately about) you. **22** [I pray that] the Lord will [help you in] your spirit, [Timothy, and] that [he] will act kindly toward all of you [believers who are there].

Titus

1 I, Paul, [am writing this letter to you, Titus]. [God appointed me to be] his servant and [to be] an apostle [who represents] Jesus Christ. [God appointed me in order that I might teach] those whom God has chosen [to be his people] to [correctly] believe [in him]. He wants me to teach them the true [teachings about God], in order that they will learn to behave (in a [godly manner/] a [manner that pleases God]). **2** [As a result of my doing these things, his people] confidently expect that God will cause them to live forever. God, who never lies, promised before he created the world that [his people] would live forever. **(aiōnios g166)** **3** Then at the time that he [chose], he revealed [to us his] message. [Specifically], God our Savior gave this message to me, and he trusted me to proclaim it to people. **4** Titus, [I am writing this letter] to [you because you are like] a true son [MET] [to me because I led/helped you to] believe the same [teachings about Christ that I do]. ([I pray that/May]) [God our Father and Christ Jesus our Savior will continue to] act kindly toward you and cause you to have [inner] peace. **5** When I [asked you] to stay on Crete [island], I wanted you to do these things: [Teach the believers what they need to know so that they] can understand correctly the [spiritual] matters about which some are teaching wrongly. Appoint elders [in the congregation] in each town in the manner in which I told you to do. **6** [When you appoint men as elders], you must choose men whom no one can [justly] accuse of [habitually] doing what is wrong (OR, whom everyone speaks well of). Specifically, appoint men who have been faithful to their wives. Appoint men whose children faithfully obey [them. Do not appoint men whose children habitually] do all the things that their bodies urge them to do, or who refuse to obey their parents. **7** Leaders [of the congregation] must be [men] who, as everyone knows, habitually do what is good (OR, [whom] no one can [justly] accuse of doing what is wrong), because it is on God's behalf that they will direct/serve [the congregation. Specifically, they must] not be arrogant/proud. They must not easily become angry. They must not [be men who] drink much alcohol. They must not [be men who] ([act] violently/fight) [when they are angry. They must] not [be men who are] (greedy for/strongly desire to get) money. **8** Instead, they must be ones who welcome and take care of guests. They must (be devoted to/like to do) what is good. They must do [what God considers] to be right. They must be (holy/completely dedicated to God). They must be men who do what their minds tell them is right to do [and not what their emotions/desires urge them to do]. **9** They must firmly believe in the message [about Jesus Christ] exactly as [I/we(inc)] taught it, in order that they might be able to teach [the believers] what is correct and to urge [them to follow it well. If they firmly accept our message], they will be able to convince those who oppose [what is correct that they are wrong]. **10** [I say this] because there are many [people who oppose the correct teachings]. They refuse to obey people who have authority over them, they talk ([on and on/without stopping]), saying what helps no one, and they deceive people. The Jewish [believers] [MTY] [who insist we must obey all the Jewish rituals are] especially [doing this]. **11** [You and the leaders whom you appoint] should prevent such people from teaching [the believers]. They are causing whole families to stop believing in the correct teachings [MET] by means of their teaching [people wrong ideas/teachings. They are teaching people only] in order that people will give them money, [which is very] shameful [for them to do]. **12** A man from Crete [island] whom [they consider] a prophet said, "[My fellow] Cretan people are always lying [to one another! They are like dangerous] wild animals [MET]! They are lazy and always eat too much food [SYN]!" **13** The words that this man said [about the Cretan people] are [still] true, [especially about their being liars]. So, rigorously convince/show [those Cretan believers] that those [false teachings] are wrong. Tell them to [firmly] believe in the correct teachings. **14** [Teach them that] they should no [longer] listen to the stories that the Jews (made up/invented). [Especially] they should refuse to obey those who reject our true teachings, because those people are teaching things that only come from human beings, [not from God]. **15** [Believers should reject] what they teach about food, [because] no [food that we eat] can make us unacceptable to God if we are pure [in our] ([inner beings/hearts]). But if people are evil and they do not trust [in Christ Jesus], there is no [ritual] that can make them acceptable to God. Such people's way of thinking has been ruined {Such people have ruined their way of thinking}, and they do not even feel guilty [when they do what is evil]. **16** Even though they claim/say that they know God, by what they do they [show that they] do not know (God/his true teaching). They do not obey [God], and they are unable to do anything that he considers to be good. [So God considers them to be absolutely] disgusting!

2 But as for you [(sg)], teach [the believers] what agrees with the correct teachings. **2** [Specifically, tell] the older men that they should control themselves (in all situations/whatever happens), [that they should behave in such a manner] that all people will respect them, and that they should control what they say and do. And tell them that they should firmly believe in the correct teachings, that they should sincerely love others, and that they should always be steadfast. **3**

Similarly, [tell] the older women that they should behave (in a reverent manner that shows that they are devoted to God/in a manner that honors God); [specifically, they should] not (slander others/talk evil about others), and they should not (be drinking much/[habitually] drinking) [alcohol]. Tell them that they should teach [the younger women] what is good, **4** in order that they may love their husbands and their children. **5** Older women should teach younger women to control what they say and do and to be pure in every way, to be good workers at home and submissive to their own husbands. [The younger women should behave like this] in order that no one will speak against the message about God. **6** As for the younger men, similarly, urge them to control themselves [in all that they say and do]. **7** You yourself must continually do what is good in order that others will see how they should behave. Teach [the believers] sincerely and seriously; **8** teach what is correct and what no one can [justly] criticize. [Do this] in order that [when the believers] conduct their lives [in a proper manner], anyone who opposes ([us/our message]) will be disappointed because there will be nothing bad that they can [justly] say about us. **9** As for slaves, [specifically, urge them] to be submissive to their masters in everything. They should please [their masters; specifically, they should not] ([contradict/refuse to obey]) [their masters]. **10** They should not steal [things that belong to their masters]. Instead, they should always be completely honest/reliable and thus [show their masters that their masters can] completely trust them. They should behave like this in order that [as a result of all the slaves conducting themselves well, people] will realize that the teachings about God our Savior are very desirable. **11** [The believers should behave in a good manner], since God did for us what we did not deserve, [sending Jesus Christ to earth] in order that he might save all people [PRS]. **12** God teaches/tells us [PRS] how to stop doing what he dislikes, and to stop desiring the things that (ungodly people/people who habitually do things that do not please God) desire [MTY]. He wants us to control our behavior and to do what is right and to do what pleases him while we live in this present age/time. **(aiōn g165)** **13** [Do not forget that] we are waiting expectantly for that which will make us very happy [indeed] [MTY]! We are expectantly waiting for our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, to come gloriously! **14** He is the one who [willingly] gave himself ([to die/as a sacrifice]) on our behalf to set us free from all sinful behavior! He wants (us to get rid of all our evil behavior/to make our lives pure) [MET]. He wants us, who are his very own people, to be [people who] are eager to do what is good. **15** Teach [the believers] these things! Urge [them to do them]! Correct [those who do not obey them! As you do this, you have my] full authority; so do not allow anyone to disregard you!

3 Remind [the believers] that they should submit to all those who rule them or have authority over them, and that they should obey them. They should be ready to do anything that is helpful. **2** They should never say bad things about anyone, they should not quarrel with people, they should be patient [when others] ([irritate them/do things that they do not like]), [and they should] always treat all people as important. **3** [Remind your congregations about these things] because formerly we [believers] ourselves were also foolish, just like [all people who do not believe in Christ are now. We] did not obey ([God]/God's message). [We let] others deceive us. We (spent all our time doing/continually did) what is evil and could not stop ourselves from doing all the things that our bodies liked [DOU]. We were (envying others/desiring to have what others have). We were causing people to hate us and we were hating one another. **4** Even though we were behaving sinfully like this, God our Savior [acted] kindly and lovingly to us [PRS], [and saved us]! He did this, not because we did things that are right, but just because he [wanted to be] merciful to us! He washed [us inwardly and gave] us a new way of living as a result of the Holy Spirit changing us inwardly. **6** [Because we trusted in] Jesus Christ our Savior, God put the Holy Spirit within us [in order to] wonderfully [change us]. **7** He wanted to erase the record of our sins even though we did not deserve that, and he wanted us to receive all that [God desires] to give us. [These are the things that we] confidently expect to receive when we live [with him] eternally. **(aiōnios g166)** **8** These words that [I] have written are trustworthy. So, I want you to confidently teach the things [that I have written about in this letter] to those who have trusted in God, in order that they will be constantly devoted/attempting to do deeds that are good and helpful for others. Titus 3:8b-11 These [teachings] are beneficial and profitable for [all] people, **9** but there are people who foolishly dispute/argue [with you, wanting you to believe] senseless ([myths/stories that came from your ancestors]), stories in which there are (genealogies/lists of your ancestors' names). They argue and quarrel [with you], ([insisting/telling you]) [that you must obey] the [Jewish] laws. (Stay [completely] away from/Do not talk with) them, because [arguing about such things] is not profitable [for anyone. It is completely] worthless! **10** Those people, [by teaching things that are false], are causing others (to turn away from/to quit believing) the true teachings. You must warn them [that God will judge them if they continue doing that. If they do not stop], warn them one more time. [If they still do not stop], then no [longer] have anything o do with

them. **11** You will know [clearly] that such persons have [deliberately] (turned away [from/quit believing and obeying]) [the true teachings]. They know that they are doing what is sinful, [but they deliberately keep on doing it]. **12** I [expect to] send either Artemas or Tychicus to you. [As soon as one of them arrives], (make every effort/try hard) to come to me [quickly] at Nicopolis [city], because it is there that I have decided to [go and] stay during the stormy/winter [season]. **13** As for Zenas (the lawyer/the expert in the law) and Apollos, [when they are ready to leave Crete Island], help them as much as you can in order that they may have everything [LIT] that [they need as they travel]. **14** Moreover, our [fellow believers] also should learn (to devote themselves to [doing/] constantly [do]) good deeds [for people] who need help in order that they, our fellow believers, will live very useful [LIT] lives. **15** [As I finish this letter], everyone who is with me (says that they are thinking affectionately about you/wants me to send greetings to you). Tell those who are [there] who love us and believe [as we do] that we (are thinking affectionately about/greet) them. I pray/desire that our Lord Jesus Christ will continue to act kindly toward all of you.

Philemon

1 [I], Paul, am a prisoner [who serves] Christ Jesus. [I am here] with Timothy, our fellow believer. [I am writing this letter] to [you], Philemon, our dear [friend] and fellow worker. **2** [I am also writing] to [your wife], Apphia, and to Archippus, [who is like] [MET] our fellow soldier [because he serves Christ steadfastly together with us]. I am also [writing this] to the congregation [that meets/gathers] in your [(sg)] house. **3** [I pray that] God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ [will continue to] act kindly toward you all and [will continue to] cause you to have [inner] peace. **4** I always thank my God when I pray for you [(sg)], because I hear [people say that] you love all God's people [CHI] **5** and that you continue to trust in the Lord Jesus. **6** I pray that as a result of your knowing all the good things [that God/Christ has done for] us, you may (be effective/influence many others) as you tell others what you believe, in order that [they may honor] Christ. **7** I have rejoiced greatly and have been greatly encouraged because you, my dear friend, have acted lovingly toward God's people by encouraging them [SYN]. **8** So [I have a request/favor to ask of you]. I am completely confident [that I have authority] to command you [to do] what you ought to do, because [I am an apostle of] Christ. **9** But because [I know that you] love [God's people], I request this instead of [commanding you to do it]. It is I, Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner [because I serve] Christ Jesus, [who am requesting it]. **10** I request that you [do something] for someone [who has become like] my own son [because I told him about Christ] [MET] while [I have been] a prisoner [MTY] [here. His name is] Onesimus. **11** Although [his name, as you know, means 'useful'], formerly he was useless to you. But now he is useful both to you and to me! **12** Although (he is [as dear to me as/I love him as much as I love]) [MET] my own self [MTY], I am sending him back to you. **13** I would like to have kept him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf, while I am a prisoner [MTY] [because of my preaching] the message [about Christ]. **14** Nevertheless, because [I had not yet asked you and] you had not yet permitted me [to keep him here with me], I decided not to [keep him here. I decided that I should] not do anything without your permitting it. [I decided that you should help me only if you] really want to help me. **15** Perhaps the reason that [God permitted] Onesimus to be separated from {to leave} you for a little while was that [he would believe in Christ, and as a result] you would have him (back/with you) forever! **(aiōnios g166)** **16** [You will no longer have him only] as a slave. Instead, [you will have him] as [someone who is] more than a slave. [You will have him] as a fellow believer! He is especially dear to me, but he certainly will be more dear to you [than he is to me] (OR, I love him very much, but you will certainly love him more than I do), [because now he] not only belongs to you but he also belongs to the Lord. **17** So, if you consider me to be your partner [in God's work], receive him as you would receive me. **18** If he has wronged you in any manner or if he owes you anything, (charge that to me/tell me so that I can pay you). **19** I, Paul, am now writing this in my own handwriting: I will repay you what he owes you, although I might mention to you that you owe me even more than Onesimus may owe you, because it was the result of my telling you about Christ that God saved you. **20** (Yes/I say it again), my dear friend, because you and I both have a relationship with the Lord, I want you to do this for me. Encourage me [SYN] [by receiving Onesimus kindly, just like you encourage others who believe] in Christ. **21** I have written [this letter] to you, confident that you will do what I am requesting you to [do]. [In fact], I know that you will do even more than what I am requesting [you to do]. **22** Also, keep a guest room ready for me [to stay in], because I confidently expect that as a result of your prayers [for me, I] will be released [from prison and will come] to you all. **23** Epaphras, who is [suffering] with me in prison because of [his serving] Christ Jesus, (sends his greetings to you/wants you to know that he is thinking fondly about you). **24** Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, who are my [other] fellow workers, also (send their greetings to you/want you to know that they are thinking fondly about you). **25** [I pray that] the Lord Jesus Christ [will] ([continue to] work kindly in all your lives/kindly keep accomplishing what he desires within you).

Hebrews

1 Long ago God communicated frequently to our ancestors
in various ways by what the prophets [said and wrote].
2 But now when this final age [is beginning], God has
communicated to us [just once] by means of what (his
Son/the man who was also God) [said and did. God]
appointed him in order that he would possess everything
[that truly belongs to God. God also appointed] him in order
that he would create the universe. **(aiōn g165)** **3** He manifests
God's glory. He exactly represents [what God is like]. He
(sustains everything by means of his powerful words. When
he had [enabled people to be] freed from the [guilt of] their
sins [MET], he sat down in heaven [EUP] [to rule] at the
place of greatest honor [MTY] with God [MTY]. **4** By doing
that, he [showed that he] was very much greater than the
angels, to the extent that his relationship [MTY] [to God, as
his Son], is more excellent than the relationship the angels
[have to God]. **5** [We know that] because [in the Scriptures]
no one [RHQ] ever reported that God said to any angel [what
he said to his Son], You [(sg)] are my Son! Today I have
declared to all that I am your Father [DOU]! And he said in
another Scripture passage, I will be his Father, and he will
be my Son [DOU]. **6** And [we know his Son is greater than
the angels because in] another [Scripture passage someone
wrote this about God's esteemed Son], when God was about
to send him into the world: All God's angels must worship
him. **7** [And in the Scriptures it is written that] someone said
this about the angels: [God] makes the [angels] who serve
him [to be changeable like] [MET] winds and flames of fire. **8**
But on the other hand, [in the Scriptures it is written that
God said] this to his Son: You [(sg)] who are [also] God
will rule forever [MTY], and you will reign righteously over
your kingdom [MTY]. **(aiōn g165)** **9** You have loved [people's]
righteous [deeds] and you have hated [people's] lawless
[deeds]. So I, your God, have caused you to be more joyful
[MTY] than anyone else. **10** And [we also know that his Son
is superior to angels because in the Scriptures the Psalmist
wrote that] someone said to God's Son, Lord, it was you
who created the earth in the beginning. You also made [the
rest of] the universe (OR, the [things in] the sky) [MTY]. **11**
Everything in the universe will disappear, but you will keep
on living [forever]. They will wear out as clothing [wears out].
12 You will dispose of them as one rolls up an [old] coat
[before getting rid of it]. [Then], you will exchange [everything
that is in the universe for what is new], as someone puts
on a new garment [in exchange for an old garment] [SIM].
But you [are not like what you created]; You stay the same,
and you live forever [LIT]! **13** [We also know that his Son is
superior to angels because no one ever stated] [RHQ] [in
the Scriptures] that God said to any angel [what he said
to his Son], Sit [in the place of honor] next to me and rule
with me [MTY] while I put all of your enemies completely
under your control [MET]! **14** The angels are [only] spirits
who serve [God] [RHQ]. [God] sends them [to earth] in order
to help those he has saved (OR, those whom he will save).

2 So, [since that is true], we must pay very careful attention
to what we have heard [about God's Son], in order that
we do not drift away from it, [as a boat drifts off its course
when people do not guide it] [MET]. **2** [God's laws that] were
given by angels were valid, and God justly punished all who
rejected them and all who disobeyed [DOU] them. **3** So, we
will certainly not escape [God punishing us] if we ignore
such a great [message about how God] [MTY] saves us!
[RHQ] This [new message] was first spoken by the Lord
[Jesus] {The Lord [Jesus] first spoke this [message]}. Then it
was confirmed to us by those who heard [what the Lord told
them] {those who heard [what the Lord told them] confirmed
it to us}. **4** God also confirmed to us [that this message was
true] by [enabling believers to do] many things that showed
God's power, to do other miraculous things [DOU], and [to
do other things] by the gifts that the Holy Spirit distributed to
them according to what [God] desired. **5** God has determined
that the angels will not rule over everything. [Instead, he has
determined that Christ] will rule in the new world that [God]
will [create]. [That is the new world] about which I am writing.
6 Someone spoke to [God about this] somewhere [in the
Scriptures], saying, (No one is worthy enough for you to
think about him!/Who is [worthy enough] for you to think
about him?) [RHQ] (No human is [worthy enough] for you to
care for him!/Is any human [worthy enough] for you to care
for him?) [RHQ] **7** [So it is surprising that] you have caused
people to be for a little while inferior in rank to angels. You
have greatly honored [DOU] them [MET], as [kings are
honored with] a crown. **8** You have put everything under
people's control [MET]. God has determined that people will
rule over absolutely everything [LIT]. But now, at this present
time, we perceive that people do not yet have authority over
everything. **9** But we do know about Jesus, [who truly has
authority over everything]! Hebrews 2:9b-13 Jesus, for a
little while, became inferior [in rank] to angels in order to die
on behalf of [MET] everyone. He became inferior when he
suffered [and] died, as God kindly [planned]. But now he has
been greatly [honored] [DOU] [by being] crowned [as kings
are]. **10** It was fitting that [God] make [Jesus] (perfect/all that
God intended him to be). God was enabling many people
who would belong to him [MET] to share his glory. God [is
the one who] created all things, and [he is the one] for whom

all things [exist]. [He perfected Jesus] by causing him to suffer [and die]. [Jesus] is the one whom [God] uses to save people. **11** [Jesus] is the one who (makes people holy/sets people apart for God), and they all belong to God's family. [As a result, Christ] gladly [LIT] proclaims them to be [like] his own brothers [and sisters]. **12** [The Psalmist wrote what Christ said to God about us becoming] his brothers, in these words: I will proclaim to my brothers how awesome you are (OR, what you ([are like/have done])) [MTY]. I will sing praise to you in the presence of the congregation! **13** And a prophet wrote [in] another [Scripture passage what Christ said about God], I will trust him. And in another [Scripture passage, Christ said about those who are like his] children, I and the ones that God has given me are here. **14** So, since those [whom God calls his] children are all human beings [MTY], Jesus also became a human being [just like them]. The devil has the power to cause people [to be afraid] to die, but Christ became human in order that by his dying he might make the devil powerless. **15** [Jesus did that] to free all of us who are like slaves [MET] all the time we live, because we are [forced to] be afraid to die. **16** Because [Jesus became a human being], it is not angels whom he wants to help. No, it is we who trust God as Abraham did whom he wants to help. **17** So, [since he came to help humans, not angels], he had to be made exactly like [us whom he calls] his own brothers [and sisters]. He wants to be a Supreme Priest who [acts] mercifully [to all people] and who faithfully does what God wants, so that people who had sinned would be declared no longer guilty. **18** [Specifically], he is able to help those/us who are tempted [to sin]. He can do that because he suffered, and he was also tempted [to sin like we are tempted to sin].

3 My fellow believers, [God] has set you apart and has chosen you, just like he chose me. So consider Jesus. [He is God's] messenger to us. He is also the Supreme Priest whom we say we believe in. **2** He faithfully [served God], who appointed him, just like Moses faithfully [served] God's people [MTY]. **3** Just like every house is made by someone {as someone makes every house}, Jesus made everything, and he is God/Divine. So God has considered that Jesus is worthy [that people honor] him more than they honor Moses, just like the one who builds a house deserves that people honor him more than they should honor the house [he built]. **5** Moses very faithfully [served God as he] ([helped/cared for]) [MET] God's people, just like a servant [faithfully serves his master]. The result was that Moses testified about what Jesus would say later. **6** But Christ [faithfully serves God as he] ([helps/cares for]) his own people [MTY, MET], just like a [son helps/cares for his own family]. And we are God's people [MTY] if we continue to confidently [believe in Christ] and if we continue to confidently wait for [what God will do for us]. **7** The Holy Spirit [caused the Psalmist to write these words in the Scriptures to the Israelites]: Now, when you [(pl)] hear God speaking to you [MTY], **8** do not stubbornly ([disobey/refuse to] obey [him]) [IDM], [as your Jewish ancestors stubbornly disobeyed him] when they rebelled against [him] in the desert. [At that time, God said to your ancestors], "They tried to determine how many [things that displeased me they could do] in the desert [without me punishing them]. **9** Your ancestors repeatedly tested [whether I would be patient with them, even though] for 40 years they saw all the amazing things I did. **10** So, I became disgusted with those people who saw those things, and I said [about them], 'They are constantly disloyal to me, and they do not understand how I [wanted them] to conduct their lives.' **11** As a result, because I was angry with them, I solemnly declared, 'They will not enter [the land of Canaan] where I would let them rest [MTY]!'" **12** So, my fellow believers, be careful that none of you is so evil that you stop trusting [in Christ]. That would cause you to reject God who is all-powerful. **13** Instead, each of you must encourage each other every day, while [you still have] the opportunity [IDM], in order that none of you may stubbornly [reject God] by [letting others] deceive you (OR, as you deceive yourselves), [with the result that] you [(sg)] sin [PRS]. **14** [We must encourage one another], because we [(inc)] benefit from [all] Christ [has done] only if we firmly keep trusting [in him] from the time when we first confidently [trusted in him] until [the time when] we die [EUP]. **15** [We can do this] by paying attention to [what the Psalmist wrote in that Scripture passage in which] God said, Now, when you hear me speaking [to you(pl)] [MTY], do not stubbornly disobey me as [your ancestors stubbornly disobeyed me] when they rebelled [against me]. **16** ([You must keep trusting in God] because you must remember who it was who rebelled against God although they heard him speaking to them./Do you remember who it was who rebelled against God although they heard [him speaking to them]?) [RHQ] It was people who had certainly experienced [LIT] God's power. It was all those people whom Moses led miraculously out of Egypt. [RHQ] **17** And ([you must remember] who it was that God was disgusted with for 40 years./do you [remember] who it was that God was disgusted with for 40years?) [RHQ] It was those same people who had sinned like that, and who as a result died in the desert! [RHQ] **18** And ([you must remember] about whom God solemnly declared, "They will not enter the land where I would let them rest."/do you [remember] about whom [God] solemnly declared, "They will not enter the land where I [would let them] rest"?) [RHQ] It was those Israelites who

disobeyed God. 19 So, from that example we [(inc)] realize that it was because they did not keep trusting [in God] that they were unable to enter [the land where they would rest].

4 [The Israelites did not enter the place where they would rest]. But [God] has still promised us that we can enter the place of resting [in heaven eternally]. So we must beware [of the possibility] that [God] may consider that some of you have failed to enter the [place of] resting [eternally as the Israelites did not enter the place where they would rest]. 2 We have heard the message [about Christ], just like [the Israelites] heard [what God promised]. But [just like] the message did not benefit [most of] those who heard it because they did not believe it as [Joshua and Caleb did, it] will not [benefit us eternally if we do not keep believing it]. 3 We who have believed [in Christ] are able to enter the place of resting [eternally. We know there is a place where we will rest eternally] because God said, Because I was angry with them, I solemnly declared, "They will not enter [the land where] I would let them rest." [God said that] even though he ceased his work [of creating things] after he created the world. 4 What someone wrote somewhere [in the Scriptures] about the seventh day [after he had spent six days creating the world], supports that: Then, on the seventh day, God rested from his work [of creating everything]. 5 But note again what God said about the Israelites [in the] passage that I quoted previously: They will not enter [the land where] I would let them rest. 6 Some people experience entering that [place of resting eternally. But] those [Israelites] who first had the good message preached to them {first heard the good message} [about what God promised them] did not enter [that place of resting], because they refused to believe [God]. 7 [But God] appointed another time [when we may enter that place of resting]. That time is now! [We know that is true because] much later than when [the Israelites rebelled against God in the desert], he caused [King] David to write what I have already quoted, Now, when you understand what God is saying [to you], do not stubbornly disobey him. 8 If Joshua had led the Israelites to enter the place of resting, God would not have spoken later about another [time when we could rest] [MET]. [So we know God was speaking about another time when some people would enter that place of resting eternally]. 9 So, just like [God rested on] the seventh day [after he finished making everything], there remains a time when God's people will rest eternally. 10 Specifically, whoever enters God's place of resting has ceased doing things [to gain God's favor], just like God ceased doing his work [of creating everything]. 11 God severely punished the [Israelites because they disbelieved his message]. So we must strive to experience entering that [place of] resting [eternally], in order that he will not severely punish any of us for not believing [his message]. 12 [Beware of being insincere about doing this], because the message God [has given us] very powerfully penetrates our thinking more than a two-edged sword [penetrates flesh] [MET]. It penetrates [deeply] into our souls and spirits, as [a sharp sword can penetrate] into our joints and marrow. That [is, by his message God] [PRS] discerns all that we think about, and he discerns all that we desire [to do] [MTY] (OR, [His message] exposes [to us] all our thoughts and all our desires). 13 God knows everything about everyone. Everything is completely exposed [DOU] to him, [and he is] the one [SYN] who will say whether he approves of what we have done. 14 We have a great Supreme Priest who ascended through the heavens [when he returned to God's presence]. He is Jesus, (God's Son/the man who is also God). So let us firmly profess [what we believe about him]. 15 Our Supreme Priest can indeed [LIT] compassionately deal with us who tend to sin easily, because he also was tempted [to sin] in every way that we are [tempted to sin], and yet he did not sin. 16 So, let us come boldly to [Christ] [MTY], who rules [MET] [from heaven] and does for us what we do not deserve, in order that we might experience [his acting] mercifully [toward us], and in order that we might experience his helping us in a kind way whenever we need [help].

5 Every [Jewish] Supreme Priest was chosen by [God] {[God] chose every [Jewish] Supreme Priest} from among [ordinary] men. They were appointed {[He] appointed them} in order that they would come before him on behalf of the people. [Specifically, God appointed them] in order that they would bring gifts [to him on behalf of the people], and in order to sacrifice [animals to him] for people who sinned. 2 The Supreme Priests could deal gently with those who ignorantly sinned, since the Supreme Priests themselves tended to sin easily. 3 As a result, they had to offer something to God for their own sins, just like [they had to offer something to God] for [other] people who sinned. 4 Furthermore, [it is an honor to be a Supreme Priest] so no one honors himself [by appointing himself to become a Supreme Priest]. Instead, God chose each man [to become a Supreme Priest], as he chose Aaron [to be the first Supreme Priest]. 5 Similarly, Christ also did not honor himself by appointing himself to become a Supreme Priest. Instead, God [appointed him by] saying to [him what he never said to any other priest, what the] Psalmist wrote in the Scriptures, You [(sg)] are my Son! Today I have declared that I am your Father! 6 And he also said [to Christ what the Psalmist wrote] in another Scripture passage, You are a priest eternally just like

Melchizedek was a priest. **(aiōn g165)** **7** When Christ lived on the earth [MTY], he prayed [DOU] to God and tearfully cried out loudly to him. [Specifically], he asked [God], who was able to help him, that he would not [fear the sufferings just before] he died. As a result, God listened to him, because Christ reverently submitted [to what God wanted him to do]. **8** Although Christ is [God's own Son], he learned to obey [God] by suffering [before he died]. **9** By becoming (all [that] God intended him to be/perfect), [he has now] become fully qualified [to be our Supreme Priest. As a result, he is the one who saves] eternally all who obey him. **(aiōnios g166)** **10** Furthermore, God has designated him to be [our] Supreme Priest in the way that Melchizedek was a Supreme Priest. **11** Although there is much to say [to you(pl)] about [how Christ resembles Melchizedek], this is hard [for me] to explain [to you] because you now understand things so slowly. **12** [You became Christians long ago. So] by now you should be teaching [spiritual truths to others]. But you still need someone to teach you again the truths that God has revealed. [I am talking about] the truths that we teach people [when they] first [believe in Christ]. You need [those elementary truths] like babies need milk [MET]. You are not [ready for advanced teaching, which is like] the solid food [which mature people need] [MET]. **13** Remember that those [who are still learning these elementary truths] [MET] have not become familiar with [what God] says concerning becoming/being righteous. They are [just like] [MET] babies [who need] milk! **14** But [the more advanced spiritual truth] is for people who are [spiritually] mature, just like [MET] solid food is for [people who are physically] mature. They can tell the difference between what is good and what is evil, because they have trained themselves [to keep doing that].

6 So, we [(inc)] must not keep [discussing] the elementary principles about Christ. Instead, we must proceed [to the teaching that will make us spiritually] mature [MTY]. We must not [be people who always need someone to teach them] the elementary truths [about Christ that are like] [MET] a foundation. [I am referring to the teaching that people who do sinful] things must turn away from their sinful behavior, things that [those who are spiritually] [MET] dead do. [I am referring to the teaching] that people must believe in God. **2** [I am referring to the teaching about what] various [Jewish and Christian] rituals for purifying people [signify. I am referring to the teaching about how elders enable people to receive spiritual gifts by] laying hands [on them] [MTY]. [I am referring to the teaching that God will] ([cause] those who have died to live again/raise people from the dead). And [I am referring to the teaching that God] will judge [some people and punish them] eternally. **(aiōnios g166)** **3** [Instead of continuing to discuss these elementary truths], we [(inc)] (OR, I) will [go on to give people mature teaching], if God allows it. **4** [I will explain why it is important to do that. Some] people have at one time fully understood [the message about Christ] [MET]. They have experienced [a relationship with Jesus Christ] that God [EUP/MTY] gave [to them]. They have received the Holy Spirit the same as [others have]. **5** They have experienced that God's message is good. And by what they have experienced [now], they know how [God will work] powerfully in the future. If those people reject [the message about Christ], it will not be possible for anyone to persuade them to turn away from their sinful behavior again! **(aiōn g165)** **6** What those [believers who later renounce the message about Christ do is as though] [MET] they themselves are nailing the Son of God to a cross again! They are causing others to publicly despise Christ. **7** Think about this: It is land on which rain has frequently fallen [PRS] and on which plants grow [PRS] that is useful for the people who prepare the land that God has blessed. [Similarly, it is those believers who have received many good things from God and who do good deeds/things that please God, whom God will bless] [MET]. **8** But [what will happen to believers who do deeds/things that do not please God will be like what happens to land] on which [only] thorns and thistles grow [MET]. [Such land] is worthless. It has almost become land that God will curse, and eventually he will burn [its vegetation] [MTY]. **9** Although I am writing [to you] like this as a [warning], I am certain concerning you whom I love that [you are doing] better than that. Specifically, I am sure that [you are doing] the things that are appropriate [for those whom God] has saved. **10** Since God always acts justly [LIT], he will not overlook all you have done [for him. He will also not overlook] [MTY] [your showing that you love] him by the way you helped your fellow believers and [by the way you still] help them. [Instead, God will reward you for doing good deeds]. **11** I very much want each of you to diligently continue to fully expect to receive [what God has provided for you], until you finally [receive everything that you have confidently expected to receive]. **12** I do not want you to be lazy. [Instead, I want] you to imitate those who, because they patiently continued to trust in [God], are receiving what he promised them. **13** When God promised to [do things for] Abraham, he said that he would punish himself [if he did not do that], because there was no one of greater importance to ask to punish him [if he did not do it]. **14** He said [to Abraham], "I will certainly bless you [(sg)], and I will certainly increase [the number of] your [descendants] [SYN]." **15** As a result, after Abraham patiently waited [for God to do what he promised], he received what [God] promised him. **16** [Keep

in mind that when people promise something], they ask a more important person to punish them if they do not do what they promise. Furthermore, when people ask God to punish them [if they do not tell the truth], that causes people who are disputing to stop disputing. **17** So, when God wanted to demonstrate very clearly (to us/to those people) who would receive what he had promised that he would not change what he had purposed [to do], he solemnly guaranteed that he would declare himself guilty if he did not do what he promised. **18** He did that to strongly encourage us as a result of our [knowing] that [God has done] two things that cannot change. [Namely, he promised to bless us, and he solemnly declared that he would declare himself guilty if he did not bless us]. We [know] that God, who did those things, cannot lie. We have fled [to him] in order that we might continue confidently to expect to receive what he promised us. **19** [Our confidently expecting] [SYN] [to receive what he has promised is like] an anchor [MET] that very firmly [DOU] [holds us fast. The one we confidently expect to help us] [SYN] [is Jesus, who] goes into [God's very presence, just like the Supreme Priests went] behind the curtain into the innermost [part of the tent in the barren area] [MET]. **20** Jesus went [into God's presence] ahead of us [(inc)] to [help] us when he became a Supreme Priest eternally in the way that Melchizedek was a Supreme Priest. **(aiōn g165)**

7 [Now I will say more about] this [man] Melchizedek. He was the king of Salem [city and was] a priest of God, the one who is greater [than anyone else]. He met Abraham who was returning [home] after [he and his men] had defeated the [armies of four] kings [SYN]. Melchizedek [asked God to] bless Abraham. **2** Then Abraham gave to him one tenth of all [the spoils he] took after winning [the battle. Melchizedek's name] means firstly 'king [who rules] righteously', and since Salem means 'peace', he was the 'king [who rules] peacefully'. **3** [In the Scriptures there is] no [record of who his] father [was], nor [is there any record of who his] mother [was], nor [is there any record of who his] ancestors [were]. There is no [record of when he was] born, nor [is there any record of when he] died. [For these reasons], [it is as though] he continues to be a priest forever, and for this reason he is like God's Son. **4** You can realize how great this [man Melchizedek was] from the fact that Abraham, [our famous] ancestor, gave him (a tithe/one tenth) of the spoils [from the battle]. **5** According to the laws [God gave Moses], the descendants of [Abraham's great-grandson] Levi, who were priests, should take tithes from [God's] people who were their relatives, even though those people also were Abraham's descendants. **6** But this man [Melchizedek], who was not among the descendants [of Levi], took tithes from Abraham. He also [asked God to] bless Abraham, the man to whom [God] promised [many descendants]. **7** We know for certain that it is the more [important people] who [ask God to] bless the less important people. [And Melchizedek blessed Abraham. So we conclude that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham]. **8** In the case of [the priests who are descendants of Levi], men who some day will die receive tithes. But in the case of [Melchizedek it is as if God] testifies that he was still living, [since there is no record in Scriptures about his death]. **9** And it was as though Levi himself, and [all the priests descended from him]—who received tithes [from the people]—paid tithes [to Melchizedek]. And when Abraham paid tithes, it [was as though Levi and all the priests descended from him acknowledged that the work Melchizedek did as a priest was greater than the work Levi did], **10** since [the sperm from which all those priests were eventually born] was still in Abraham's body [EUP] when Melchizedek met Abraham. **11** [God] gave his laws to his people at the same time he gave regulations about the priests. So, if what the priests who were descended from Levi did could have provided a way for God to completely [forgive] people [for disobeying those laws], certainly no other priest like Melchizedek would have been necessary. [RHQ] Instead, priests who were descended from Aaron, [Levi's descendant, would have been adequate]. **12** [But we know they were not adequate, because a new type of priest like Melchizedek has come]. And since [God] has appointed a new type of priest, he also had to change the regulations [concerning how priests were appointed] {[he appointed priests]}. **13** [Jesus], the one about whom I am saying these things, is a descendant of someone else, [not a descendant of Levi]. None of the men from whom Jesus descended ever served as priests [MTY]. **14** [We know that] since it is obvious that it is from [the tribe of] Judah that our Lord was descended. Moses never said that any of Judah's descendants would [become] priests. **15** Furthermore, [we know that the priests who were descended from Levi were inadequate, since] it is even more obvious that another priest has appeared who is like Melchizedek. **16** Jesus became a priest, but not because [he fulfilled] what [God's] law required [about being a descendant of Levi]. Instead, he has the kind of power that [came from a] life that nothing can destroy (OR, [enabled him to] live [again after he was] killed). **17** [We know this] since [God] confirmed it in [the Scripture passage in which he said to his Son], You [(sg)] are a priest eternally just like Melchizedek was a priest. **(aiōn g165)** **18** On the one hand, God canceled what he commanded previously [concerning the priests] because it failed in every way to enable anyone [to become all that God

intended]. 19 Remember that no one was able to become all that God intended [by obeying] the laws [that God gave Moses]. On the other hand, [God caused that we could] confidently expect better things [than we could expect by obeying God's laws]. [He did that by his establishing Christ as priest]. Now by means of [Christ sacrificing himself for us] we can come near to God. 20 Furthermore, [when God appointed Christ, it was when God] solemnly declared [that Christ would be a priest] [LIT]. When [God appointed former] priests, it was not by his solemnly declaring [that they would be priests]. 21 However, when he [appointed Christ to be a priest], it was by these words that [the Psalmist wrote in Scripture]: The Lord has solemnly declared [to the Messiah], —and he will not change his mind— "You will be a priest forever!" (aiōn g165) 22 Because of that, Jesus guarantees that [the new] covenant will be better [than the old one]. 23 And formerly, the priests could not keep serving [as priests], because they all died [PRS]. So there were many priests [to take the place of the ones who died]. 24 But because [Jesus] lives eternally, he will continue to be a Supreme Priest forever. (aiōn g165) 25 So, he can completely and eternally save those who come to God by [trusting in what Jesus has done for them], since he lives forever to plead [with God] to help them. 26 Jesus is the kind of Supreme Priest that we need. He was holy; he did no wrong; he was completely innocent. [God] has now taken him up to the highest heaven separated from [living among] sinners. 27 [The other] Supreme Priests need to sacrifice [animals] day by day [as well as year by year]. They do this, firstly, [to atone] for their own sins, and then [to atone for other] people [who have sinned]. [But because Jesus never sinned], he does not need to atone for his own sin. The only thing [he needed to do to save people] was to sacrifice himself once! 28 [We need a Supreme Priest like] him, because in the laws [that God gave Moses] [PRS] the ones who would be appointed to be priests would be men who tended [to sin easily]. But [God] solemnly [declared] [PRS] after [he had given] his laws [to Moses] that [he would appoint] (his Son/the man who is also God) [to be a Supreme Priest. Now] ([his Son/the man who is also God]) has forever become all that God intends him to be. (aiōn g165)

8 The main point of [all] that [I] have written is that we have a Supreme Priest like that. He has sat down to rule [MTY] with God [EUP] at the place of greatest honor in heaven. 2 He ministers in the Most Holy Place, that is, in the true place [of worship in heaven]. That is a place that [Moses'] tent [represented]. The Lord set up the true place of worship. No human [set it up]. 3 Every Supreme Priest was appointed {[God] appointed every Supreme Priest} to offer [to God] gifts and sacrifices [for people who sinned]. So, since [Christ became a Supreme Priest], he also had to offer something. 4 Since there are already [Jewish] priests who offer gifts as God's laws [require], if Christ were [now living] on the earth, he would not be a Supreme Priest. 5 The [Jewish] priests perform rituals which are only a model [DOU] of [what Christ would do in heaven] [MTY]. What [God] told Moses when Moses was about to set up the tent [for worshipping him supports the idea that those rituals were only a model. God said], "Be sure that you [(sg)] make everything according to the model that I showed you on [Sinai] Mountain!" 6 But now as it is, [Christ] ministers in a more excellent way [than the Jewish priests do]. Likewise, the [new] covenant that he established [between God and people] is better [than the old one. When the new covenant was established] {[God established the new covenant]}, he promised us better things [than the laws that God gave Moses did]. 7 If that first covenant had been perfectly adequate [LIT], God would not have thought that he needed another [covenant/agreement to replace it]. But [it was not adequate, so he needed a new one]. 8 Because God declared [that the Israelites] were guilty [of not obeying the first covenant, he wanted a new covenant. This is what] ([a prophet/Jeremiah]) [wrote about that]: The Lord says, "Listen! There will soon be a time when I will make a new covenant with the people [MTY] of Israel and the people [MTY] of Judah. 9 That covenant will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I led them out of Egypt [MET] [like a father leads a child] by the hand. They did not continue to [obey] my covenant, so I rejected them," says the Lord. 10 "This is the covenant that I will make with the Israelites [MTY], after [the first covenant has ended] [MTY]," says the Lord: "I will enable them to understand my laws [MTY], and I will enable them to obey them (OR, truly know them) [MTY] sincerely. I will be their God, and they will be my people [DOU]. 11 [As a result], no one will [need to] teach a fellow citizen or tell his fellow kinsmen, '[You need to] know the Lord,' because all [my people] will know me: [My people] of every status [will know me]. 12 I will mercifully [forgive them for] the wicked things they have done. I will no longer [consider] that [they are guilty for] [DOU] [their] sins." 13 Since God spoke about a new [covenant], he considered that the first [covenant] was no longer in use, and that it would soon disappear, just like [anything that] gets old [will disappear] [MET, DOU].

9 [To continue]: In the first [covenant, God] regulated how people [should perform] rituals, and [he told them to make] [MTY] a sanctuary. 2 [That sanctuary] was a tent that [the Israelites] set up. In its outer room there was the lampstand and the table [on which they put] the bread that

[the priests] presented [to God. That room] was called 'the holy place'. 3 Behind the curtain inside [the holy place] there was [another] room. That was called 'the very holy place'. 4 It had an altar, [made from] gold, [for burning] incense. [It also had the chest which they called] the chest of the covenant. All its sides were covered with gold. In it was the golden pot which contained [pieces of the food they called] manna. [That was the food with which God miraculously fed the people before they entered the promised land]. In the chest there was also Aaron's walking stick that budded [to prove that he was God's true priest]. In the chest were also the stone tablets [on which God had written] the Ten Commandments. 5 On top of [the chest] were [figures of] winged creatures [that symbolized God's] glory. Their [wings] overshadowed the chest's lid where [the high priest sprinkled the blood] (to [atone for/to forgive]) [those who had sinned. I] do not [need] to write about these things in detail now. 6 After all those things were prepared {After they had prepared all those things like that} [in the two rooms of the tent], the [Jewish] priests habitually went into the outer [room of the] tent to perform their rituals. 7 But into the inner room, only the Supreme Priest [went], once a year. He always took [LIT] the blood [of animals that they had slaughtered]. He offered them [to God] for his own [sins] and for the sins that other people had committed. They included sins that they did not realize [were sinful]. 8 By those things the Holy Spirit indicated that [just like God] did not reveal the way [for ordinary people] to enter into the inner room while the outer room still existed [MET], [similarly he did not reveal the way for ordinary people to enter the presence of God while the Jewish system of offering sacrifices was in effect]. 9 [The things that the priests did inside the outer room] [MTY] symbolized [what was true] during the time [when the first covenant was in effect]. According to [the first covenant] (OR, [In that outer room]), [priests] offered gifts and other sacrifices to God. But [by offering them], the people who brought them were unable to make themselves feel that they were no longer guilty for having sinned. 10 [They brought those gifts and made those sacrifices] according to [regulations concerning] things to eat and drink, and [according to rules that required people to] wash various things. [God] declared that those regulations about our bodies were to be in effect until [he put into effect the new covenant]; that was a better system. 11 But when Christ came as our Supreme Priest, [he brought] the good things that are now available. When he appeared, [he went into God's presence in heaven. That is like a] [MET] very great and perfect tent not made by humans {which no human made} [SYN]; that is, it is not part of the world [God] created. It was better [than the tent Moses set up here on earth]. 12 [When a Supreme Priest goes into the inner room in the tent each year, he takes] goats' blood and calves' blood [to offer as a sacrifice]. But Christ did not [do that. It was as though] he went into that very holy place only once, taking his own blood with him. By doing that, he eternally redeemed us. **(aiōnios g166)** 13 The priests sprinkle on people goats' blood and bulls' blood and [the water that has been filtered through] the ashes of a [red] heifer that has been [completely burned. By performing that ritual, they can ritually] cleanse the bodies of those who are [ceremonially] unclean. Furthermore, performing those rituals enabled people to have fellowship with God again. 14 [So, because we know what] Christ [accomplished when] his blood flowed [when he died for us] [PRS, MTY], we will be very certain that we are not guilty [of having] done those things [that those who are spiritually] dead do. [As a result], we can serve God, who is all-powerful. [The priests always offer to God animals] with no defects. Similarly, when Christ offered himself [as a sacrifice] to God, he was sinless [MET]. He did that as a result of [God's] eternal Spirit [helping him]. **(aiōnios g166)** 15 [By] dying [for us], [Christ] ([redeemed/] free from the penalty for their sins) even those who disobeyed the [conditions of] (OR, [during the time of]) the first covenant. So, [because] no [one could be made perfect by obeying the old covenant], now Christ establishes [between God and people] a new covenant. He does that in order that those whom God has chosen may eternally have [the blessings that God] has promised them. **(aiōnios g166)** 16 A covenant [is like a will. In the case of a will], [in order to put its provisions into effect], someone must prove that the one who made it has died. 17 A will goes into effect [only when the one who makes the will] has died. It is not in effect when the one who made it is still alive. 18 And so [God] put the first covenant into effect only [LIT] by means of [animals'] blood that was shed [when they were slaughtered]. 19 After Moses had declared to all the Israelites everything that God commanded in the laws [that God gave him], he took calves' and goats' blood [mixed] with water. He [dipped into it] scarlet wool [that he tied around] a sprig of hyssop. Then he sprinkled [with some of the blood] the scroll itself containing God's laws. Then he sprinkled [more of that blood on all the] people, 20 saying to them, "This is the blood [which brings into effect] the covenant that God commanded that you [obey]." 21 Likewise, he sprinkled with that blood the tent and every object that they used in performing rituals. 22 It was by [sprinkling] blood that they [ritually] cleansed almost everything. That was what [was stated in] God's laws. If blood is not shed [when people offer a sacrifice, God] cannot forgive [the person who is making the sacrifice]. 23 So, by rituals like that, it

was necessary for [the priests] to cleanse the things that symbolized what Christ does [MTY] in heaven. But God has to [consecrate] the [people who will enter] [MTY] heaven [by means of] better sacrifices than those. **24** Christ did not enter a sanctuary that humans made. That one only represented the true [sanctuary]. Instead, he entered heaven itself, in order to now be in God's presence [to plead with] God for us. **25** The [Jewish] Supreme Priest enters the very holy place once every year, taking blood that is not his own, [to offer it as a sacrifice]. But when Christ entered heaven, it was not in order to offer himself repeatedly like that. **26** [If that were so], he would have needed to suffer [and shed his blood] repeatedly since [the time when God] created the world. But instead, in this final age, [Christ] has appeared once in order that by sacrificing himself he could cause [that people] no longer will be [punished for their] sins. **(aiōn g165)** **27** All people must die once, and after that [God] will judge them [for their sins]. **28** Likewise, when Christ [died], [God] offered him once to be a sacrifice, to punish him instead of the many [people who had] sinned. He will come [to earth] a second time, not [in order to sacrifice himself again for those who] have sinned, but in order to [complete] his saving those who expectantly wait for him.

10 Just like a shadow vaguely represents the thing that it is a shadow of, the laws that God [gave Moses] only poorly represent [MET] the good things that were to come later. Those laws were not all the good things themselves that God has promised. So, by offering the same kinds of sacrifices every year, people [PRS] who approach God can never become (perfect/all that God intends them to be). **2** If God had removed the guilt for having sinned of those who brought the sacrifices, they would not feel that they were still guilty. So they would certainly have stopped offering those sacrifices! [RHQ] **3** But rather, the fact that they offer those sacrifices each year reminds them that they are still guilty for their sins. **4** The principle is that blood of animals such as bulls or goats can never remove the guilt of those who have sinned. **5** So, as [Christ] was coming into the world, he spoke [to his Father about offering himself as a sacrifice for people's sin. The Psalmist wrote this that Christ said]: It is not sacrifices and offerings that you [(sg)] have wanted, but you have prepared for me a body [to serve you]. **6** Animals that are completely burned up as sacrifices have not pleased you, and [other sacrifices that atone] for those who have sinned have not pleased you. **7** Then [because of this], I said, "My God, (listen!/here I am!) I have come [here] in order to do what you want me [to do], [just like] has been written {as they have written} about me in the Scriptures." **8** First, [Christ] said, "It is not sacrifices and offerings and animals that [the priests] have completely burned up and other [offerings to atone for] those who have sinned that you have really wanted. They have not pleased you." [Christ said that even though] those things were offered {they offered all those things} according to the laws [God gave Moses]! **9** Then, [concerning his offering himself as a sacrifice to atone for people's sin], he said, "Listen! I have come [here] to do what you want me [to do]!" In that way Christ got rid of the first [way of atoning for sin], in order to establish the second [way of atoning for] sin. **10** Because of Jesus Christ [doing what God] wanted him to do, we have been dedicated to {[he] has set us apart for} God by his offering his own body only once [as a sacrifice, a sacrifice that will not need to be repeated]. **11** As every [Jewish] priest stands daily [in front of the altar], he performs rituals and offers the same kind of sacrifices that could never remove [the guilt from anyone who] sinned [MTY]. **12** But [Christ] offered a sacrifice that [will be adequate] forever, and he offered it only one time! Then he sat down [to rule] with God at the place of highest honor [MTY]. **13** From now on, he is waiting for [God] to completely subdue [all] Christ's enemies [MTY]. **14** By offering himself once, he has provided that those whom [God] has set apart will be eternally made (perfect/all that God intends them to be). **15** The Holy Spirit also confirms to us [that this is true]. First the Lord says: **16** When the time [MTY] [when the first covenant that God made] with my people has ended, I will make a new covenant with them [MTY]. I will do like this for them: I will cause them to understand my laws and I will cause them to obey them (OR, enable them to know them sincerely). **17** Then [the Lord said]: [I will forgive them for] their [DOU] sins, and I will [consider] that they are no longer [guilty for] having sinned. **18** When [God] has forgiven someone's sins, that person does not [need to make] any more offerings [to atone for his sin]! **19** So, my fellow believers, because we [trust in what Jesus accomplished when] his own blood [flowed for us], we can confidently go into [God's very presence] that was [symbolized] by the very holy place [in the tent] [MTY]. **20** Jesus enabled us to go into [God's presence] by making a new and effective way. [Specifically], he [offered] his body [as a sacrifice] for us [in order that nothing would stop us] from entering [God's presence, just like] [MET] the curtain [of the very holy place prevented people from entering God's presence]. **21** Christ is a great priest [who rules over us, who are] God's people [MTY]. **22** [Just like the priests] were sprinkled {[as Moses] sprinkled [the priests]} [with blood] [MET] to symbolize that they were no longer guilty for having sinned, we also no longer are [guilty for having done] evil. [Just like the priests ceremonially] washed their bodies with

pure water [to prepare themselves to serve God], we are allowing [God] to continually make us pure. So, we [(inc)] must approach [God] sincerely by confidently trusting [in him]. **23** We must unwaveringly keep holding tight [to what we believe. Since God] faithfully [does all] he promised [to do], we must confidently expect [him to keep doing that]. **24** [Since God] faithfully [does all that] he promised [to do], let us consider how each of us can motivate other believers, in order that [believers] will love each other, and in order that each one will do good things. **25** We must not stop assembling ourselves [to worship the Lord], as some people have done. Instead, each one of us must encourage/exhort other believers. [Let us do that] even more since we know that the day [that the Lord will return] [MTY] is near. **26** [We(inc) must do those things], because if we deliberately and habitually sin after we have known the true [message about Christ], no other sacrifice will remove our guilt for having sinned in that way. **27** Instead, we must fearfully expect that [God will] judge and angrily [punish] his enemies in a furious fire [MET]. **28** Everyone who rejected the laws [that God gave] Moses was mercilessly killed when [at least] two or three people testified that they had done that. **29** [That was severe punishment]. But [Christ] is (God's Son/the man who is also God). His blood, by means of which [he put into effect] the new covenant, is sacred. Because of [Christ's] [MTY] blood [flowing for us when he died], [God] freed us from our guilt. So, you can be sure [RHQ] that anyone who shows contempt for [those truths] and who insults the Spirit of God, the one who acts with kindness toward us in a way we do not deserve, deserves to be punished even worse than [those Israelis were punished] [MET]! **30** [We can be sure of that] (OR, [need to think about that carefully]) since we know that God said, "I myself will get revenge on those who sinned, and I will punish them as they deserve [DOU]." [Moses wrote], "The Lord will judge his people." **31** It will be a terrible thing if God who is all-powerful [MTY] seizes and punishes you [IDM]! **32** Recall previous times when you [first] understood [MET] [the message about Christ]. You endured a hard struggle, but you [continued to trust him] when you suffered [because you believed in Christ]. **33** At times you were publicly insulted {people publicly insulted you} and you suffered {people persecuted you}. But you showed great concern for those who were treated like that. **34** You not only were kind to those who were in prison [because they believed in Christ], but you also accepted it joyfully when [unbelievers] took away your possessions. You accepted it because you yourselves knew very well that you have eternal possessions [in heaven] that are much better [than those that they took from you]! **35** So, do not become discouraged [when they cause you to suffer] {[you are persecuted]}, because [if you continue to trust in God], he will greatly reward you. **36** You must patiently continue [to trust in him] in order that, because of your doing what God wants you to do, he will give you what he has promised. **37** [You must do that] since [a prophet wrote] in the Scriptures [that God said about the Messiah], In just a short time the one [I promised] would come will surely come; he will not delay coming. **38** But those whom I have summoned, who [act] righteously, must continually live trusting in me, because if they, in a cowardly manner, cease [to trust in me], I (will not be pleased/will be angry) with them. **39** But we are not ones who in a cowardly manner stop [trusting in God], with the result that God will severely punish us. Instead, we are ones who trust in him, with the result that [God] will save us [SYN] eternally.

11 It is because people trust [God] that they are sure that they will receive the things that they confidently expect [God to give them]. They are also certain [that they will see those things], though no one sees them yet. **2** It was because our ancestors trusted in God that they pleased him. **3** It is because we trust in God that we understand that he formed the universe by commanding [it to exist]. The result is that the things that we see were not made from things that already existed. **(aiōn g165)** **4** It was because [Adam's son] Abel trusted God that he sacrificed something better to God than what [his older brother] Cain offered to God. Because Abel did that, when God spoke well about what Abel sacrificed, God declared that Abel was righteous. And although Abel is dead, we still learn from him [about trusting God]. **5** It was because Enoch believed [God that God] took him [up to heaven]. The result was that he did not die. No one found him, because he was taken up {[God] had removed him} from the earth [to heaven]. Before [God] took him away, [he] testified that Enoch pleased him well. **6** It is possible for people to please God only if they trust God, because anyone who wants to come to God must first believe that God exists and that he rewards those who seek [to know] him. **7** It was because Noah trusted [God] that after he was warned by God {after [God] warned him} about [a flood that] had not yet happened, Noah [showed that he] revered God by building a huge ship to save his family. By doing that, he [showed all the people who did not believe him] [MTY] [that they deserved to be condemned] {[that God would] condemn them}. He was someone whom God declared to be righteous because of his trusting in God. **8** It was because Abraham trusted God that when he was told to go {when [God] told him to go}, he obeyed [God], he left [his own country], and went to a place that God would give him. Abraham left his own country, even though he did not

know where he would be going. **9** It was because Abraham trusted God that he lived as though he was a foreigner in the land that [God] had promised to him. Abraham lived in tents, and his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob did also. God promised to give to Isaac and Jacob the same things that he promised to give Abraham. **10** Abraham was waiting to live in a city [in heaven] that would exist forever [MET]. It was a city that God is building [DOU]. **11** It was because Abraham trusted God that God gave Abraham strength so that he [was] able to produce a son. Even though his wife Sarah was past the age [when women bear children], [God] promised [that he would give her a son], and Abraham considered that God would do what he promised to do. **12** So, although Abraham was also too old to have children, so many people descended from that one man that they were as numerous as the stars in the sky and are as countless as the grains of sand along the seashore, [just like God promised him]. **13** It was while they still trusted in God that all those people died. Even though they had not yet received the things that God had promised to give them, [it was as though] they saw those things in a distance. They were glad [to know] about what God promised. It was as though they admitted that they were not from this earth, but that they were only here temporarily. **14** As for those people who talk like that, they clearly show that they long for [a place that will become] their true native land. **15** If they had been thinking about [that place being] the place from which they had come, they would have taken the opportunity to return there. **16** But, instead, they desired a better [place in which to live]; that is, they desired [a home] in heaven. So God has prepared a city for them to live [with him], and he is pleased [LIT] for them to say that he is their God. **17** It was because Abraham trusted [God] that he [was ready to] kill his son Isaac as a sacrifice when [God] tested him. This same man to whom [God] promised [to give] ([a son/many descendants]) was going to sacrifice [that same son], the only son [whom his own wife had borne]! **18** It was to Abraham that God said, "It is [only] from Isaac that I will consider your family to descend." **19** Abraham considered that [to fulfill that promise], God could make [Isaac] live again [even if] he had died [after Abraham sacrificed him]! The result was that when Abraham did receive Isaac back [after God told him not to harm Isaac], it was as though he received him back even after he died. **20** It was because Isaac trusted God that he [prayed that after he died, God would] bless [his] sons Jacob and Esau. **21** It was because Jacob trusted God that, as he was dying, he [prayed that God would] bless each of the sons of [his own son Joseph]. He worshipped God as he leaned upon his walking stick [before he died]. **22** It was because Joseph trusted God that, when he was about to die [in Egypt], he anticipated the time when the Israelis would leave Egypt; and he instructed [that] his people [should carry] his bones [with them when they] ([left Egypt/returned to Canaan]). **23** It was because Moses' father and mother trusted God that they hid [their son] for three months shortly after he was born, because they saw that he was so beautiful. They were not afraid of [disobeying] what the king of Egypt had commanded, [namely, that all the Jewish male babies must be killed]. **24** The daughter of the [king, whom they called] Pharaoh, [raised] Moses, but when he had grown up, it was because he trusted God that he refused to [accept the privileges that would have been his if people] considered that he was (the son of the king's daughter/the king's own grandson). **25** He decided that it was better for others to mistreat him for a time along with the Israeli people, than to temporarily enjoy living sinfully [in the King's palace]. **26** This is because he decided that if he suffered for the Messiah, it would be worth far more [in God's sight] than his owning all the treasures of Egypt [that he would receive as Pharaoh's heir. He decided that] because he looked forward to the time when [God would give him] an [eternal] reward. **27** It was because he trusted God that he left Egypt. He was not afraid that the king would be angry [because of his doing that]. He (kept going/did not turn back) because [it was as though] he kept seeing [God], whom no one can see. **28** It was because Moses believed [that God would save his own people] that he instituted the [festival called] Passover. He did that [by commanding that the people should kill lambs and] sprinkle their blood [on their] doorposts. They did that in order that [the angel who] causes people to die would not kill [EUP] the oldest male Israelites [when he killed the oldest sons in each Egyptian family]. **29** It was because they trusted God that [when] the [Israelite] people walked through [where] the Red Sea [had been, it was] as [though they walked] on dry land! But, when the [army of] Egypt also attempted to [cross that same water], they drowned, because [the sea came back and flooded them]! **30** It was because the [Israeli] people trusted God that the walls around Jericho [city] collapsed, after the Israelis marched around the walls for seven days. **31** Rahab [had been] a prostitute, but because she trusted God, she did not perish with those [inside Jericho] who disobeyed [God. Joshua sent some spies] into the city [in order] to find ways to destroy it, but God saved her because she welcomed those spies [peaceably]. **32** I do not know what more I should say [RHQ] [about others who trusted in God]. It would take too much time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the [other] prophets. **33** It was because they trusted God that some of

them [did great things for him]. Some conquered lands ruled by powerful men. Some ruled [Israel] and justly [punished those men and nations who rebelled against God]. Some obtained [from God] the things that he promised to give them [MTY]. **34** Some forced lions to keep their mouths shut. Some escaped from being destroyed by fire. Some of those people escaped from [being killed with] a sword [MTY]. Some of those [people who trusted God] were made strong {became mighty} again after they had once been weak. Some became powerful when they fought wars. Some caused armies [that came from foreign lands] to run away from them. **35** Some women [who trusted God] received [their relatives] back again when [God] ([made them live again after they had died/raised them from the dead]). But [others who trusted God] were tortured until they died. They were tortured because they refused to agree when [their captors said, "We will] release you [if you deny that you believe in God." They refused to do that], because they wanted to live with God forever, which is better than [continuing to live on earth] after having almost died. **36** Other [people who trusted God] were mocked; [some had their backs] cut [open by being struck] with leaded whips. Some were chained and put in prison. **37** [Some of] those believers were stoned to death {People [killed some of those believers by] throwing stones at them}. Others were cut completely in two. Others were killed with swords. Others of these people who trusted God wandered around the land [wearing garments made only of] skins from sheep and goats. They did not have any money. They were continually oppressed and tormented {People continuously oppressed them and tormented them}. **38** [The people on earth who caused those who trusted in God to suffer were so bad that] they did not deserve [to live with people who trusted God. Some who trusted God] wandered in deserts and on mountains. Some lived in caves and in other [large] holes in the ground. **39** Although all these people were commended [by God] {[God] commended all these people} because they trusted him, God did not give them all that he promised them [while they were alive]. **40** God knew ahead of time that what he would give us and them [later] would be better than giving [them immediately what he promised]. What God intends is that only when they and we are together will we have all that God intends us to have.

12 We [know about] many people like that [who showed they trusted in God]. They are like a crowd of spectators [who are cheering for us inside a stadium] [MET]. Knowing that, we must put away all the things that hinder us, [as a runner puts aside everything that would hinder him because they are heavy] [MET]. Especially we must put away sinful actions that [hinder us, as a runner] sets aside clothes he does not need, clothes that would entangle him [MET]. Let us [wholeheartedly strive to achieve what God has planned for us, as someone] in a race wholeheartedly runs the course that is before him [MET]. **2** And let us [keep our minds on] Jesus, [as a runner] keeps his eyes on [the goal] [MET]. Jesus is the one we should imitate in the way he perfectly trusted [God. When he died on] the cross he endured it as he suffered greatly [MTY], instead of [thinking about the things he would] rejoice about [later]. He disregarded being disgraced by [dying that way]. He is now sitting at the place of highest honor [MTY] at the throne [where God rules]. **3** [Jesus] patiently endured it when sinful people acted so hostilely against him. Try to act the way he did, so that you do not give up [trusting] God or become discouraged. **4** While you have struggled against [being tempted to] sin, you have not yet bled [and died because of resisting evil, as Jesus did]. **5** Do not forget [RHQ] these words [that Solomon spoke to his son, that are the same as God] would exhort you as his children: My child, pay attention [LIT] when the Lord is disciplining you, and do not be discouraged when the Lord punishes you [DOU], **6** because it is everyone whom he loves whom the Lord disciplines, and he punishes everyone whom he accepts as his child. **7** It is in order that God may discipline you that he requires you to endure the disagreeable things [that happen to you]. [When God disciplines you] he is treating you as a father treats his children. All fathers [RHQ] discipline their children [LIT]. **8** So, if you have not experienced God disciplining you just like he disciplines all his other children, you are [not true children of God] [MET]. [You are like] illegitimate children; [no father disciplines them]. **9** Furthermore, our natural fathers disciplined us [when we were young], and we respected them for doing that. So we should certainly more readily accept God our spiritual Father disciplining us, with the result that we live eternally [RHQ]! **10** Our natural fathers disciplined us for a short time in a way that they considered right, [but it wasn't always right], but God always disciplines us [in a right way], to help us. He does it so that we may be holy as he is. **11** During the time that God is disciplining us, that does not seem to be something about which we should rejoice. Instead, it is something that pains us. But later it causes those who have learned from it to be peaceful and to [live] righteously. **12** So, [instead of acting as though you were spiritually exhausted], renew yourselves [MET] spiritually. **13** Go straight forward [in your Christian life] [MET], in order that believers who are uncertain about their faith [will imitate you] and not ([leave God's way/] useless [to God]) [MET]. Instead, they will be spiritually restored [MET]

as an injured and useless limb is restored. **14** Try to live peacefully with all people. Seek to be holy, since no one will see the Lord if he is not holy. **15** Beware that none of you stops [trusting in] God, [who has done kind things for us that we did not deserve] (OR, Beware that you have never [experienced] God kindly [saving you]). Be on guard lest any of you [act in an evil way towards others], because your doing that will [grow like] [MET] a root [grows into a big plant], and the result [of your] doing that will be that many believers will sin and become unacceptable to God. **16** Do not let anyone be immoral, or be irreligious as Esau was. He exchanged the rights he had as a firstborn son for only one meal. **17** You know that after he did that, he wanted to receive [what his father would promise to give him if] he blessed him. But [his father] was unable [to change what he had already done]. And Esau found no way to change things, even though he sought tearfully to do that. **18** In coming [to God] you have not [experienced things like what the Israeli people experienced] at [Sinai] Mountain. [They] approached [a mountain that God told them they] should not touch. [They approached] a blazing fire, and it was gloomy and dark [DOU], and there was a hurricane/cyclone. **19** They heard a trumpet sounding and they heard [God] speak. The result was that those who heard it pleaded for God not to speak to them like that again. **20** When [God] commanded them saying, "If [a person or] even an animal touches this mountain, [you] must [kill him/it by] throwing stones at him/it," they were terrified. **21** Truly, because Moses was terrified after seeing what happened [on the mountain], he said, "I am trembling because I am very afraid!" **22** Instead, [it is as though] you have come to [the presence of God in heaven] [MET]. [That is like what your ancestors did when they came to worship] God on Zion Hill, in Jerusalem, in the city of God who is all-powerful. You have come (OR, you are coming) to where there are countless angels, who are rejoicing as they have gathered together. **23** You have joined all the believers [who have privileges like] firstborn sons, whose names [God] has written down in heaven. You have come to God, who will judge everyone. You have come to where the spirits of God's people are, people who lived righteously [before they died], and who now have been made perfect [in heaven]. **24** You have come to Jesus, who arranged a new covenant [between us and God]. You have accepted [what he accomplished when] his blood flowed [when he died on the cross. His doing that made it possible for God to forgive us]. That is better than the blood of Abel, [who just] wanted revenge because his brother Cain murdered him. **25** Beware that you do not refuse to listen to [God] who is speaking to you. The Israeli people did not escape [God punishing them] when [Moses] (OR, [God]) warned them here on earth. So we shall surely not escape [God punishing us] if we reject him when he warns us from heaven! [RHQ] **26** The earth shook [PRS] then when he spoke [MTY] [at Sinai Mountain]. But now he has promised, "I will shake the earth again, one more time, but I will shake heaven too." **27** The words "again, one more time" indicate that things [on earth] will be shaken {that [he] will shake things [on earth]}, meaning that he will set aside all that [he] has created, in order that the things [in heaven] that cannot be shaken {that nothing can shake} may remain forever. **28** So, let us thank God that we are becoming members of a kingdom that nothing can shake. Let us worship/serve God in a way that pleases him by being greatly in awe [DOU] before him. **29** Remember that the God we [worship/serve] is like a fire that burns up everything [that is impure] [MET]!

13 Continue to love your fellow believers. **2** Do not forget to be hospitable to needy travelers [LIT]. You need to know that by being hospitable, some people have entertained angels without knowing it. **3** Remember [to help] those who are in prison [because they are Christians], as though you were in prison with them. Remember those who are being mistreated {whom people are mistreating} [because they are believers. As you do that], consider that you you could suffer as they do. **4** You must (respect/keep sacred) the marriage relationship in every way, and you must keep sexual relations [EUP] pure, because God will surely condemn those who act immorally and those who act adulterously. **5** Live without constantly coveting money, and be content with the things you possess, remembering what [Moses] wrote [that God] has said [about supplying what you need], I will never leave you, I will never stop providing for you [DOU]. **6** So we can say confidently [as the Psalmist said], Since the Lord is the one who helps me, I will not be afraid! People can do nothing to me [that will deprive me of God's blessings] [RHQ]. **7** Your spiritual leaders used to tell you the message from God [before they died]. Remember how they conducted their lives. By considering (how they died/what resulted from how they lived), imitate how they believed [in Christ/God]. **8** Jesus Christ [is] the same now as he was previously, and he will be the same forever. **(aiōn g165)** **9** [So], do not let yourselves be diverted {let anything divert you} so that you believe various teachings [that are contrary to God's truth]. It is good that God acts kindly toward us so that we may be strengthened spiritually. [Obeying rules about] various foods, rules that have not benefited those who obeyed them, will not benefit us. **10** We have [Jesus] [MTY]. All those who continue to observe the Jewish rituals [MTY] of sacrifice have no right to obtain the benefits of his sacrifice [MET]. **11** After the high

priest brings into the most holy place the blood of animals [that they have sacrificed to atone] for sins, the bodies of those animals are burned {they burn the bodies of those animals} outside the camp. **12** Similarly, Jesus suffered [and died] outside the gate [of Jerusalem] in order that he might make [us], his people, holy by [offering] his own blood [as a sacrifice to atone for our sins]. **13** So, we must abandon [performing Jewish] sacrifices and rituals [MET] [in order to be saved], and let us go to Jesus [to be saved]. As we do that, we must [be willing to] let others reproach us just like people reproached Jesus. **14** Here on earth, we believers do not have a city [such as Jerusalem where we must] continually [offer sacrifices] [MET]. Instead, we are waiting for a future [heavenly] city [that will last forever]. **15** With [the help of] Jesus, we must continually praise God. That will be something we can sacrifice [to him] [MET] [instead of our sacrificing animals only at specific times]. Specifically, we must say openly [MTY] [that we have trusted] in Christ [MTY]. **16** Be continually [LIT] doing good deeds [for others], and be continually sharing [with others the things you have], because doing things like that will [also] be [as though you are offering] sacrifices that will please God. **17** Obey your [spiritual] leaders; do what they tell you, since they are the ones who are looking out for your spiritual welfare [SYN]. [Some day] they will have to stand before God so that he can say if he approves of what they have done. Obey them in order that they can do the work of guarding you joyfully, and not have to do it sadly, because if you cause them to do it sadly, that will certainly not help you at all (OR, they will not be able to help you at all). **18** Pray for me. I am certain that I have not done anything that displeases God. I have tried to act honorably [toward you] in every way. **19** I urge you earnestly to pray that [God] will quickly remove the things that hinder my coming to you. **20** Jesus [provides for us], [protects us, and guides us as] a great shepherd does for his sheep [MET]. And God, who gives us [inner] peace, brought our Lord Jesus back to life. By doing that, God ratified his eternal covenant with us by the blood [that flowed from Jesus when he died on the] cross. **(aiōnios g166)** **21** So I pray that God will equip you with everything good [that you need in order] that you may do the things that he desires. May he accomplish in our lives whatever he considers pleasing as a result of Jesus Christ [equipping us]. May Jesus Christ be praised forever. (Amen!/May it be so!) **(aiōn g165)** **22** My fellow believers, I appeal to you that you patiently consider [what] I have written in this short letter, to exhort you. **23** I want you to know that our fellow believer Timothy has been released {[the authorities] have released our fellow believer Timothy} [from prison]. If he comes here soon, he will accompany me when I go to see you. **24** Tell all your [spiritual] leaders and all the [other] fellow believers [in your city] that (I am thinking fondly about them/I am sending them my greetings). The believers [in this area who have come] from Italy [want you to know they] are (thinking about you/sending you their greetings). **25** [I pray that] you will continue to experience God's acting kindly toward you all.

James

1 [I], James, am a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
[I am writing this letter] to [all] the Jewish people [who trust in Christ] (OR, to all God's people) who are scattered throughout the world. [I send my] greetings to [you all]. **2** My fellow believers, rejoice greatly, [even] when you experience various kinds of difficulties/troubles. **3** [God sometimes allows you to experience difficulties in order to] test whether or not you will continue to trust [him. Whenever that happens, you need to] realize more and more that [if you continue to trust him], you will be able to bravely/patiently endure difficulties. **4** Keep on enduring difficulties [bravely/patiently by trusting God more and more firmly] [PRS], in order that you may become all that he intends you to be [DOU] (OR, [spiritually] mature and complete), not lacking (any [good quality/anything you need to conduct your lives as God wants you to]). **5** If anyone of you does not know how to act wisely [in order to endure difficulties/trials well], he should ask God [to show him what he should do, because] God wholeheartedly/gladly helps all people [who ask] and does not scold [anyone for asking. Those who ask], God will give them wisdom to know [what they should do]. **6** But [when you] ask [God], you should firmly trust him. You should not doubt [that he wants to help you always], because people who keep doubting God are [unstable/changeable] [SIM] like a wave of the sea that is blown back and forth by the wind {that goes back and forth when the wind blows} [DOU, SIM]. **7** Indeed, people [who doubt] should not think that the Lord [God] will do anything [that they request him to do], **8** [because they are] people who cannot decide [whether they will commit themselves to God, and they are] unstable/undecided in everything that they do. **9** Believers who are poor should be happy [that God] considers them very valuable (OR, has exalted them [spiritually]) [MTY]. **10** And [believers] who are rich should be happy [that] they have humbled themselves [in order to trust in Jesus Christ] (OR, but rich people [can only] take pride [in the fact that God] will humble them [when he judges everyone] [IRO]), because they [and their riches] [MTY] will pass away, just like wild flowers [wither] [SIM]. **11** When the sun rises, the scorching hot wind dries plants, and their flowers fall and are no longer beautiful. Similarly, rich people will die [MET] while they are busy working, [leaving behind their riches]. **12** [God] is pleased with people who bravely/patiently endure difficulties. And when, [by bravely enduring difficulties], they have proved [that they truly trust him], he will give them [eternal] life. That is the reward [MET] that he has promised to give to those who love him. **13** If people are tempted to do something that is evil, they should not think that it is God who is tempting them, because [God is totally/completely good]. He never tempts anyone [to do what is evil], nor can he ever be tempted to [do anything] evil. **14** But people strongly desire to do evil [PRS] things, [and as a result] they are tempted by those desires {those desires stimulate them} to do something evil [PRS, DOU]. **15** Then, [because] they have desired [MET] to do evil [PRS] things, they begin to [MET] do [PRS] them. And when they have become ones who [habitually] do what is evil [MET], [if they do not turn away from their sinful behavior], they will be separated from God forever. **16** My fellow believers whom I love, stop deceiving yourselves, [thinking that God does evil things]. **17** [The truth is that God], our heavenly Father [MTY], does only good [DOU] things [for us, in order to help us become] all that he intends us to be. He is not like all the things [in the sky] that he created to give light, [because they] change; [that is, they do not shine the same all the time]. But God never changes. [He is always good]. **18** [And because] he wanted [to help us], he gave us [spiritual] life as a result of our [trusting in his] true message. So now we have become the first ones of [all the people] [MET] that he created [to] ([be totally dedicated to/completely belong to]) [him]. **19** My fellow believers whom I love, you know (OR, I want you to now) that every one of you should be eager to pay attention to [God's true message]. Don't speak [without thinking], nor get angry easily, **20** because when any one [of you gets] angry, you will not be doing the righteous things that God [wants] you [to do]. **21** So stop doing all kinds of evil [DOU] things, and humbly obey (OR, submit to) the message that [God] put in your (inner beings/hearts), [because] he is able to save you [SYN] [if you accept his message]. **22** Do [what God commands in] his message. Do not only listen [to it, because people who only listen to it and do not obey it] are wrong when they think [that God will save them]. **23** Some people hear God's message but do not do [what it says] [MET]. They are like someone who looks at his face in a mirror [SIM]. **24** Although he looks at himself, he goes away [from the mirror] and immediately forgets what he looks like. **25** But other people look closely at [God's] message, which is perfect and which sets people free [to voluntarily do what God wants them to do]. And if they continue [to examine God's message] and do not just hear it and then forget it, but do [what God tells them to do], God will bless them because of what they do. **26** Some people think that they worship God in the right way, but they habitually say evil things [MTY]. Those people are wrong in thinking [SYN] [that they worship God rightly]. The fact is [that they] worship God (in vain/uselessly). **27** [One of the things that God has

told us to do] is to take care of orphans and widows who suffer hardship. [Those who do that and] who do not think or act immorally like those who do not obey God [MTY] truly [DOU] worship God, [who is our] Father, and God approves of them.

2 My fellow believers, [because] you trust our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who is glorious/wonderful, stop honoring some people more than others. **2** [For example], suppose that a person who wears gold rings and fine clothes enters your meeting place. Then suppose that a poor person who wears shabby/ragged clothes also comes in. **3** And [suppose] that you (show special attention to/treat better) the one who is dressed in fine clothes by saying, "Sit here in this good seat!" and you say to the poor one, "Stand there or sit on the floor [MTY]!" **4** Then you have obviously [RHQ] caused divisions in the congregation (OR, you are clearly treating one better than the others, and you are using evil [motives/reasons] to ([evaluate people/decide whether people are important or not])). **5** Listen [to me], my fellow believers whom I love: God has chosen [RHQ] poor people whom [unbelievers consider to] possess nothing of value, [so that he might bless them] greatly [because] they trust [in him], and in order that they will enter the place where [he] will rule [MET] [forever]. That is what he has promised to those who love him. **6** But you dishonor the poor people. Think about it! (It is rich people, [not poor people], who are causing you to suffer!/Isn't it rich people, [not poor people], who are oppressing you?) [RHQ] (It is [the rich people] who forcibly take you to court [to accuse you in front of judges]!/Is it not [the rich people] who forcibly take you to court [to accuse you in front of judges]?) [RHQ] **7** (And they are the ones who say evil things about Jesus Christ, the one who is worthy [of praise], to whom you belong!/Are they not the ones who say evil things about Jesus Christ, the one who is worthy [of praise], to whom you belong?) [RHQ] **8** In the Scriptures [God has commanded] each of you to love other people like you love yourself. That commandment was [also given] by [Jesus our] King [MTY]. If you [are loving others], you are doing what is right. **9** But if you honor some people more than others, you are (doing wrong/sinning). And because you [do not do what God commanded us to do], he condemns you [PRS] because you disobey his laws. **10** Do not forget that those who disobey only one of God's laws, even if they obey all [his other] laws, [God considers them] to be [as guilty as anyone who has disobeyed] all [of] God's [laws]. **11** For example, [God] said, "Do not commit adultery," but he also said, "Do not murder anyone." [So] if you [(sg)] do not commit adultery but you [(sg)] murder someone, you [(sg)] have become a person who disobeys [God's] laws. **12** Continually speak and act [toward others] as people should who will be judged {whom [God] will judge} by the law that frees us [from being punished] {[God punishing us]} [for our sins]. **13** [Speak and act like that], because when [God] judges us, he will not act mercifully toward those who do not act mercifully toward others. But when we [are] merciful [to others, we can rejoice], because [our being] merciful [shows] that [we are acting like people whom God] has mercifully saved from being judged (OR, [we can rejoice] because [God] will judge us mercifully). **14** My fellow believers, [there are some people who say], "I believe [in the Lord Jesus Christ]," but they do not do good things [for other people]. (Their saying that will certainly not do them any good!/What good will their saying that do for them?) [RHQ] [God] will certainly not save [people like that who say that they believe, but do not do good things]! [RHQ] **15** [To illustrate], suppose that fellow believers, either men or women, don't have enough clothing or food for each day. **16** And suppose that one of you says to them, "May [God] bless you and supply the clothing and food that you need!" but you [(sg)] do not give them the things that they need. (That would be no help [to them]!/What help is that [to them]?) [RHQ] **17** Similarly, [those who do] not do good things [to help others, what they have said about] their believing [in Christ] is [as useless] [MET] [as] a dead person [is useless]. They do not [really believe in Christ]. **18** But someone may say [to me], "[God saves] some people only [because] they trust [in him], and [he saves] others [because] they do good deeds [to people]." [I would answer that person], "[You(sg) cannot] prove to me that people truly trust [in God if] they do not do good things [for others]. But by doing good things [for others] I will prove to you that I truly trust [in God"] **19** [Think about it]! You believe that there is only one God, and you are right [to believe that]. But the demons also believe that, but they tremble [with fear because they know that God is going to punish them]. **20** Also, you foolish person, I will [RHQ] prove to you [(sg)] that [if someone says], "I trust [in God]," but he does not do good things, [what that person says] will not benefit him. **21** (It was certainly [because of] what our [revered] ancestor Abraham did, when he [prepared to] sacrifice his son Isaac, that he was considered [by God] {that [God] considered him} to be a righteous, [obedient] person./Was it not [because of] what our [revered] ancestor Abraham did, when he [prepared to] sacrifice his son Isaac, that he was considered [by God] {that [God] considered him} to be a righteous, [obedient] person?) [RHQ] **22** You [(sg)] can realize that he was not only trusting [in God], but he was also doing [what God told him to do], and [you(sg) can realize] that he was able to trust [in God more] completely

because of having done [what God told him to do]. **23** And [so it happened as it is written in the] Scriptures: "Because Abraham truly trusted in God, he was considered [by God] to be {[God] considered that he was} righteous." And [God also] said [about Abraham], "He is my friend." **24** [From the example of Abraham], you can realize that it is because people do good things that [God] considers them to be righteous, and not only because they trust [in him]. **25** Similarly, it was certainly [RHQ] [because of] what Rahab did, that [God] considered her to be a righteous, [obedient] person. Rahab was [previously] a prostitute, but she cared for the Israelite men who came [to] ([spy out the land/see what that area was like]) and she [helped them to escape by] sending them home on a different road [from the one that they came on]. **26** Remember that when our spirits [permanently leave our] bodies, [our bodies] are dead [and useless]. Similarly [SIM], [if someone says], "I trust [in God]," but does not do [things to help others, what that person says about trusting in God] is useless.

3 My fellow believers, not many of you should [desire to] become teachers [of God's truth, because] you know [that God] will judge us [(exc)], who teach others, more severely [than he will judge other people]. **2** It is true that we all in many ways do things that are wrong [MET]. But those who always [LIT] control what they say will be all that God intends/wants them to be. They will be able to control all their actions [MTY]. **3** [To illustrate], if we put [a small metal] bit into the mouth of a horse in order to cause the horse to obey us, we can cause the horse to turn [and go where we want it to] [MET]. **4** Think also about ships. [Although] a ship may be very large and [although] it can be moved by strong winds {strong winds can move it}, by [turning] a very small (rudder/steering paddle) people can direct the ship wherever they want [it to go]. **5** Similarly, [although] our tongues are very small, [if we do not control them], we can [harm] many people by what we proudly say [MTY]. Think [also] about how [just] a small [flame of] fire can cause a large forest (OR, a large area of brushwood) to burn. **6** [Just like a fire damages a forest] [MET], when we say things that are evil, [we harm many people]. What we say [MTY] reveals that we are very evil. What we say contaminates/defiles everything that we think and do [PRS, MET]. [Just like a flame of fire easily] causes [the whole surrounding area] [MET] to burn, what we say [MTY] can cause [others] to want to do evil. It is the devil himself [MTY] who causes us to say evil things. **(Geenna g1067)** **7** Indeed, although people are able to tame/control all kinds of wild animals, birds, reptiles and creatures that live in the water, and people have actually tamed/controlled them, **8** no person ([on his own/by himself]) is able to control what he says [MTY]. And when people say evil things, [it shows that] they are unstable/uncontrolled and wicked [MTY]. [As] the poison [of a snake kills people] [MTY], [we harm others] [MET] by what we say. **9** We use our tongue to praise God, who is our Lord and Father, but we also use our same tongue to ask God to say evil things to people. [That is very wrong]! God made people like himself, [so we should speak as respectfully to others as we speak to God]. **10** We praise [God], but with our same mouth we also ask for evil [things to happen to others]. My fellow believers, this should not be! **11** Surely bitter water and good water do not come out of the same spring! [RHQ] **12** My fellow believers, a fig tree cannot [RHQ] produce olives. Nor can [RHQ] a grapevine produce figs. Neither can a salty spring produce good [water]. [Similarly, we should say only good things, and we should not say evil things] [MET]. **13** If any of you thinks [RHQ] that [you are] wise and know a lot, you should always act in a good way to show people that your good actions are the result of your [being truly] wise. Being wise [helps us to act] gently [toward others]. **14** But if you are very [MET] jealous/unhappy when you see that someone else is succeeding, and always want to have what you want, regardless of what others want, you should not say [that you are wise, for by boasting like that], you are saying that ([God's message/what God says about you]) is not true. **15** Those who have such [attitudes are] not wise [MTY] in the way that God [wants them to be]. Instead, they are only thinking and acting like ([ungodly people/people who do not please God]). They think and act according to their own [evil] desires. They do what the demons [want them to do] (OR, they think and act as demons [do]). **16** [Keep in mind that] people who have such attitudes (are unruly/do not submit to authority) and [do] all kinds of evil things. **17** But [when people] are wise [PRS] in the way that God [MTY] [wants them to be], they are pure in every way, which God considers to be very important. They also act peaceably towards [others], they (are considerate of/think about the rights and feelings of) others, they are willing to yield to [the wishes of] others, they act compassionately [toward others], and they do all kinds of good things [for others] [MET]. [How they treat others does] not depend on (others' status/whether others are important or not), and they are sincere [in all they do]. **18** Those who [act] peaceably [toward others] cause [others to also] act peaceably, with the result that they all live together [acting toward each other] in a righteous way [MET].

4 Now I will tell you why you are fighting among yourselves and quarreling with each other [RHQ]. It is [RHQ] because each of you wants to do evil things [PRS]. You keep on

wanting to do things that are not [what God wants you to do]. 2 There are things that you [very much] desire to have, but you do not get [those things, so] you [want to] kill [HYP] [those who hinder you from getting them]. You desire what [other people have], but you are unable to get [what you desire, so] you quarrel and fight [with one another] [HYP]. You do not have [what you desire] because you do not ask [God for it]. 3 [And even when] you do ask [him], he does not give you [what you ask for] because you are asking for the wrong reason. [You are asking for things] in order that you may use them just to (enjoy yourselves/make yourselves happy). 4 [Like] a woman who is unfaithful to her husband, you [are being unfaithful to God and not obeying him any more] [MET]. Those who are behaving as evil people do [MTY] (OR, Those who love [the evil pleasures of] this world) are hostile toward God. Perhaps you do not realize that [RHQ]. So those who decide to act as evil people do [MTY] become enemies of God. 5 (Surely you remember that [God told us in] the Scriptures that he eagerly desires that his Spirit, who lives in us, will help us to love [God] only!/Do you think that it is for no reason that [God told us in] the Scriptures that he strongly desires that his Spirit, who lives in us, will help us to love [God] only?) [RHQ] God has a reason for desiring that. 6 [It is because] he is kind [to us and he] wants very much to help us. That is why (someone said/[King Solomon] wrote) [in the Scriptures], "God opposes those who are proud, but he helps those who are humble." 7 So submit yourselves to God. (Resist the devil/Refuse to do what the devil wants), and [as a result] he will run away from you. 8 Come near [spiritually] to God, and [as a result] he will come near to you. You who are sinners, stop doing what is wrong, and do only what is good [SYN, MET]. You who cannot decide [whether you will] ([commit yourselves to God/obey God completely]), stop thinking wrong thoughts, and think only pure thoughts [MTY]. 9 Be sorrowful and weep/mourn [DOU] [because of the wrong things that you have done]. Do not laugh [DOU], ([enjoying only what you selfishly/enjoying only what you yourselves]) [desire]. Instead, be sad [because you have done what is wrong]. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and [as a result] he will honor you. 11 My fellow believers, stop saying evil things about one another, [because] those who say something evil about a fellow believer and [are therefore] condemning [one who is like] a brother [to them] are really speaking against the law [that God gave us to obey]. [In this law, God commanded] [MTY] [us to love others], and those who say evil things about fellow believers, [it is as though] they are saying that we do not have to do what [God] commanded. If you [(sg)] say that you do not have to do what God commanded, you [(sg)] are not obeying God's law. Instead, you [(sg)] are claiming that you [have the authority] to condemn [others]. 12 [But in fact], there is only one who [has the authority to] tell [people] what is right to do and to condemn [them, and that is God]. He alone is able to save [people] or to destroy people. [So], (you [(sg)] certainly have no right to decide how God should punish other people./who are you to decide how God should punish other people?) [RHQ] 13 [Some of you] are [arrogantly] saying, "Today or tomorrow we will go to a certain city. We will spend a year there and we will buy and sell things and earn a lot of money." Now, you listen to me! 14 [You should not talk like that, because] you do not know what will happen tomorrow, and you do not know [how long] you will live! Your life [is short] [MET], [like] a mist that appears for a short time and then disappears. 15 Instead of [what you are saying], you should say, "If the Lord wills/desires, we will live and do this or that." 16 But what you are doing is boasting about all the things that you arrogantly [plan to do]. Your boasting like that is evil. 17 So if anyone knows the right thing that he should do, [but] he does not do it, he is sinning.

5 Now [I have something to say to] the rich people [who do not believe in Christ and who] ([oppress you/cause you to suffer]). Listen [to me], you rich people! You should weep and wail [loudly] [DOU] because you will experience terrible troubles [PRS]! 2 Your wealth [of various kinds] is [worthless] [MET], [as though it were] rotted. Your fine clothes are [worthless] [MET], [as though] termites had ruined them. 3 Your gold and silver are [worthless] [MET], [as though they were] corroded. [When God judges you], this worthless wealth [MTY] of yours will be evidence [PRS] that you are guilty [of being greedy], and as rust and fire [destroy] [MET, SYN] things, [God] will severely punish you [SIM]. You have ([in vain/uselessly]) (stored up/accumulated) [wealth] at a time when [God] is about to [judge you] [MTY]. 4 Think [about what you have done]. You have not paid wages to the workmen who have harvested your fields for you, [with the result that] [PRS] those reapers are crying out [to God for him to help them]. [And God], the all-powerful Lord, has heard their loud cries. 5 You have lived luxuriously, just to have pleasure [here] on earth. [Just like cattle fatten themselves, not realizing that] they will be slaughtered [MET], you have [lived just for pleasure] [MTY], [not realizing that God will severely punish you]. 6 You have [arranged for others/judges to] condemn innocent people. You have [arranged for others to kill] some people. [And even though] those people had not done anything wrong, they were not [able to] defend themselves against you. [My fellow believers, that is what I say to the rich people] ([who oppress you/cause you to

suffer]). **7** So, my fellow believers, [although rich people cause you to suffer], be patient until the Lord [Jesus Christ] comes [back]. Remember that when farmers [plant a field], they wait for their valuable crops to grow. They must wait patiently for the rain [that comes] at the planting season and for more rain [that comes] just before the harvest season. They wait [for] the crops [to grow and mature before they can harvest them]. **8** [Similarly], you also should [wait] patiently and trust the Lord [Jesus] firmly, because he is coming [back] soon [and will judge all people fairly]. **9** My fellow believers, do not complain about each other, in order that you will not be condemned [and punished by the Lord Jesus] {in order that [the Lord Jesus] will not condemn you}. It is he who will judge us, and he is ready to appear. **10** My fellow believers, as an example [of how to be patient], (consider/think about) the prophets whom the Lord [God sent long ago] to speak his messages [MTY]. [Although people caused] the prophets to suffer a lot, they endured it patiently. **11** And we know that [God] (approves of/is pleased with) those who endure [suffering for him]. You have also heard about Job. You know that [although he suffered much], the Lord [God] finally caused things to turn out well [for Job because] he endured [that suffering] (OR, because he continued [to trust God]). [And from that we know] that the Lord is very compassionate and kind. **12** Also, my fellow believers, [I want to say] something important [about how you talk]. [If you say that you will do something], do not say, "If I do not do it, may [God in] heaven [MTY] punish me." Do not even say, "If I do not do it, may [someone here on] earth [MTY] punish me." Do not say anything like that. Instead, if you say "Yes," then [do what you said that you would do]. If you say "No," then do not [do it]. Otherwise, [God] will condemn you. **13** Whoever among you is experiencing trouble [RHQ] should pray [that God would help him. Whoever] is cheerful/happy [RHQ] should sing songs of praise [to God]. **14** Whoever among you is sick [RHQ] should call the leaders of the congregation [to come to pray for him]. They should put [olive] oil on him and, with the Lord's authority [MTY] (OR, calling on the Lord [to heal him]), pray. **15** And if they truly trust [in the Lord] when they pray [PRS], the sick person will be healed. The Lord will heal him. And if that person has sinned ([in a way that caused him to be/and because of that he became]) [sick, if he] ([confesses what he did/says that he did what is wrong]), he will be forgiven {[the Lord] will forgive him}. **16** So, [because the Lord is able to heal the sick and to forgive sins], tell each other the sinful things that you have done, and pray for each other in order that you may be healed {that [God] may heal you} [physically and spiritually]. If righteous people [pray and] ask fervently [for God to do something, God] will certainly do it in a powerful way. **17** [Although the prophet] Elijah was (an ordinary person/just a human being) like us, he earnestly prayed that it would not rain. [As a result], it did not rain for three and a half years. **18** Then he prayed again, [asking God to send rain], and [as a result God] [MTY] sent rain, and plants [grew and] produced crops [again]. **19** My fellow believers, if anyone of you stops obeying the true message [from God], someone from among you should persuade that person to once again do [what God has told us to do]. [If he stops doing what is wrong], **20** the one [who persuaded him] should realize that [because] he has enabled the person who was sinning to stop doing what is wrong, [God] will save that person from ([spiritual] death/being separated from him forever), and will forgive [his] many sins.

1 Peter

1 I, Peter, who [have been appointed by] Jesus Christ {one whom Jesus Christ [has appointed]} to be an apostle, [am writing this letter] to you believers whom God has chosen to belong to him. [You are living] in [the Roman provinces of] Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. [Just like the Jews who lived in Israel long ago were] scattered [to other countries far from their homes] [MET], you now live [far from] heaven, which is [your true home]. **2** God our Father previously chose you, and his Spirit has set you apart in order that you would obey Jesus Christ. He did that in order that [just like Moses] sprinkled [the Israelites with blood when God established the old covenant] [MET], [Jesus would establish his new covenant with you] with the blood [that flowed from his body when he died]. May God act very kindly to you, and may he give you much [inner] peace. **3** Praise God, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Because he has been very merciful to [us, he has given us new life] [MET]. Because he has caused Jesus Christ to become alive again after he died, he has enabled us to live very confidently; that is, to fully expect to receive the things [that God/he has promised to give us]. **4** He has enabled us to expect to receive an absolutely imperishable/indestructible [TRI] inheritance that has been {that [God] has} preserved in heaven for us. **5** God, by his mighty power, is guarding you as you trust in Jesus. [He is keeping you safe so] that he may, at the end of the time in which we now live (OR, when Jesus returns), completely deliver you [from Satan's power]. **6** You rejoice because of what will happen then, but now you are grieving for a short time while [God is allowing] you to be tested {[various things to] test you [MET]}, [as precious metals are tested] {[someone tests precious metals]} [to see if they are pure]. [These trials that you are experiencing are necessary] **7** to prove that you really do trust in Jesus. His proving that will be more valuable than gold, [which does not last forever even] though it is purified [by being put] {someone tries to make it pure by [putting it]} [in a hot] fire. As a result of your passing the test [and proving that you really do trust in Jesus], God will honor you very highly [TRI] when Jesus Christ comes again. **8** You love [Jesus], although you have not seen him. Although you do not see him now, you rejoice very much [DOU] **9** because you are experiencing the result of your believing in him; that is, [God] is saving you [SYN] [from the guilt of your sins]. **10** As for those who [long ago] spoke messages that God had revealed to them about how God would act kindly toward you in ways which you did not deserve, they (investigated very carefully/tried very hard to learn) [DOU] about how God would save you. **11** They wanted to know whom the Spirit of Christ that was in them was referring to, and what time he was talking about, when he told beforehand that the Messiah would suffer [and die], and that glorious/wonderful things would happen [to him and to us] afterwards. **12** It was revealed to {[God] told} them that it was not for their own sake that he was revealing these things to them, but that it was for your sake. It was these things that were proclaimed to you by those who told you the message [about Christ {that those who told you the message about Christ proclaimed to you}]. They proclaimed these things to you because the Holy Spirit whom [God] sent from heaven [enabled them to do that]. And even angels would like to know more about these [truths about how God saves us]. **13** Therefore, [prepare your minds] [MET] [as people] fasten their belts around their waists [to prepare to work]. [What I mean is that] you should (discipline your minds/control what you think about), and by doing that conduct your lives fully and confidently expecting to receive the good things that [God will] kindly [do for you] when Jesus Christ returns [from heaven]. **14** [And because you should obey your heavenly Father] [SIM], as children [ought to] obey their fathers [here on earth], do not do the evil things that you used to desire to do when you did not know [God's truth]. **15** Instead, just like God, the one who chose you [to belong to him], is (holy/separate from evil), you also must be (holy/separate from evil) in everything that you do, **16** because it is {[someone/Moses] has} written [in the Scriptures that God said], "You must be (holy/separate from evil) because I am (holy/separate from evil)." **17** God is the one who (impartially/without favoritism) judges what each person does. Since you call him 'Father', live (reverently/with great respect for him) during the time that you are living here on earth. [While you are living here, you are] like exiles/foreigners [MET] [because you are away from heaven, which is your true home]. **18** [Live reverently] because you know that it was not with things that will not last forever, things like gold and silver, that [God] bought you to free you from your useless life-style that you learned from your ancestors. **19** Instead, [it was] with the precious blood of Christ [that flowed from his body when he died that God bought you. Christ's death was a perfect sacrifice for us] [MET], [like] the lambs that [the Jewish priests sacrificed were] perfect, without any blemishes/defects/flaws or spots [DOU]. **20** Christ was chosen [by God] {[God] chose Christ} before the world was created {[he] created the world}. But it was not until now, when the time [in which we are living will soon] end, that he was revealed for your sake. **21** Because of what Christ has done, you are trusting in God, who caused Christ to become alive again after he died, and

greatly honored him. As a result, God is the one in whom you are trusting and confidently expecting [that he will do great things for you]. **22** Because you have been made pure by obeying the truth, with the result that you sincerely love your fellow believers, continue to love each other earnestly and sincerely/wholeheartedly. **23** [I ask you to do this, because you now have] a new life [MET]. It was not [by means of] something that will perish that you received this new life. Instead, it was [by means of] something that will last forever; that is, by believing the life-giving and enduring message of God. **(aiōn g165)** **24** [We know that this is true] because, [as the prophet Isaiah wrote], All people [will die] [SIM], like grass [dies]. And all the greatness/honor that people have [will not last forever], like the flowers [SIM] [that grow up] in the grass [do not last long]. The grass withers and the flowers die, **25** but God's message endures/lasts forever. This message [that endures/lasts] is the message [about Christ] that was proclaimed to you. **(aiōn g165)**

2 Therefore, do not act maliciously in any way or deceive others. Do not (be a hypocrite/try to make others think that you have qualities that you do not really have), and do not (envy/be jealous of) others. Do not ever slander anyone. **2** Just like newborn babies [long for their mothers'] pure milk [MET], you should long for [God's] spiritual [truth], so that by learning it you may become [spiritually] mature. [You need to] do this until the day when God [will] free you completely [from all the evil in this world]. **3** [Also, you need to do this] because you have experienced that the Lord [acts in] a good way toward you. **4** You have come to the Lord Jesus. He is [like an important] stone [MET] [put in the foundation of a building], [but he is] alive, [not lifeless like a stone]. He was rejected by [many] people {[Many] people rejected him}, but God chose him and [considers him] to be very precious. **5** [And like men] build houses with stones [MET], [God] is causing you to be joined together into a group in which [God's] Spirit [lives], in order that you, because of what Jesus Christ did for us, might, like priests who offer sacrifices, [do things] that are pleasing to God. **6** [What Isaiah wrote] in the Scriptures [shows us that this is true]. [He wrote these words that God said]: Note this well: I am placing in Jerusalem [MTY] [one who is like] [MET] an extremely valuable [DOU] (stone/cornerstone, the most important stone in the structure of a building), and those who believe in him will never be disappointed. **7** Therefore, [God will] honor you who believe in [Jesus]. But those who [refuse to] believe in him [are like the builders] that this Scripture [talks about]: The stone that the builders rejected has become (the cornerstone/the most important stone in the foundation of the building). **8** And [it is also written] {[Isaiah wrote]} in the Scriptures: [He will be like] a stone that causes people to stumble, like a rock that people trip over. [Just as people are injured when] they stumble over a rock, people who disobey the message [about Jesus are injured spiritually], and that is what [God] determined would happen to them. **9** But you are people whom God has chosen [to belong to him]. You are [a group that represents God like] priests do, and you rule with God [MET] like kings. You are (a holy group of people/a group of people who are separate from evil). You are people who belong to God. This is in order that you might proclaim the virtues of [God. He has] called you from [your former ways], [when you were ignorant of his truth], into the marvelous [understanding that he gives us] [MET]. [That is, he has called you] out of [spiritual] darkness into [spiritual] light. **10** [What the prophet Hosea wrote is true of you] Formerly, you were not a people [who had a relationship with God], But now you are God's people. At one time [God] had not acted mercifully toward you, But now he has acted mercifully toward you. **11** You people whom I love, I urge you to consider that you are like foreigners [MET, DOU] [whose real home is in heaven]. As a result, avoid doing the things that your self-directed nature desires, because those desires (fight against/always oppose) your souls. **12** Keep conducting your lives in a good way among those who do not know God. [If you do that], although they may accuse you, saying that you are people who do evil things, they will see your good behavior, and at the time when God comes [to judge people], they will (give honor to him/say that what he does is right). **13** For the sake of the Lord [Jesus], submit yourselves to every human authority. That includes submitting yourselves to the king, who is the most important authority, **14** and to governors, who are sent by the king {whom the king sends} to punish those who do what is wrong and to commend/honor those who do what is right. **15** What God wants is that by your doing [only] what is good you will cause foolish people who do not know [God] to be unable to say things ([to condemn you/to show you why you should be punished]). **16** Conduct your lives as though you were free [from having to obey authorities], but do not think "Because I am free from having to obey authorities, I can do evil things." Instead, act as servants of God [should]. **17** Act respectfully toward everyone. Love all your fellow believers. Revere God, and honor the king. **18** You slaves [who are believers], submit yourselves to your masters and completely respect them. Submit yourselves not only to those who [act in a] good and kind [DOU] way towards you, but also submit yourselves to those who [act in a] harsh way [towards you]. **19** You should do that because God is pleased with those who, knowing that he is aware of what is happening to them, endure the pain that they suffer

[because of being treated unjustly by their masters] {[their masters have treated them unjustly]}. **20** God will certainly not [RHQ] be pleased with you if you do something that is wrong and as a result you are beaten {someone beats you}! But if, instead of doing something that is wrong, you do what is good, and as a result of that, you suffer for doing something that is good, and you endure that suffering, God will (commend/be pleased with) you. **21** One of the reasons why God chose you is that you would [suffer]. When Christ suffered for you, he became an example for you, in order that you would (imitate what/do like) he did. **22** [Remember how Christ conducted himself]: He never sinned, And he never said [MTY] anything to deceive people. **23** When people insulted him, he did not insult them in return. When people caused him to suffer, he did not threaten (to get revenge/to cause them to suffer). Instead, he decided to let God, who always judges justly, prove that he (was innocent/had done nothing that is wrong) (OR, he left his case in the hands of God, who always judges justly). **24** He himself endured physically the punishment for our sins when he died on the cross, in order that we would stop sinning (OR, no longer respond to sinful desires) and start living righteous lives. It is because he was wounded {they wounded him} that your [souls have been saved] [MET] [from being sinful, as people's bodies] are healed [from being sick]. **25** Truly you were like sheep that had gone astray [SIM], but now you have returned to [Jesus], who cares for your souls [as] a shepherd [cares for his sheep] [MET].

3 You women [believers], just like [slaves should submit themselves to their masters], submit yourselves to your husbands. Do that in order that if any of them do not believe the message [about Christ], they may become believers without [it being necessary for] you to say anything to them [about their relationship to God]. **2** [They will believe in Christ] when they see that you respect them and that your way of life is pure. **3** Do not be [trying to make] yourselves beautiful by decorating the outside [of your bodies], such as (by the way you comb your hair/by your hair [style]) or by wearing gold jewelry and fine clothes. **4** Instead, make your (inner beings/hearts) [beautiful] with qualities/attitudes that will not fade away. Specifically, have a humble and quiet/calm attitude, which is something that God considers to be very valuable. **5** (The devout women/The women who habitually worshipped God) who lived long ago and who trusted in God made themselves beautiful [by having attitudes] like that, and by being submissive to their husbands. **6** Sarah, for example, obeyed [her husband] Abraham and called him 'my master'. You will be [as though you are] [MET] her daughters if you do what is right and are not afraid [of what your husbands or anyone else may do to you because you are believers]. **7** You men [who are believers], just like your wives should respect you, you should conduct your lives in an appropriate way with them. Treat them respectfully, realizing that they are [usually] weaker than you are, and realizing that (they share with you/both of you have) the gift [that God has kindly given to you, which is eternal] life. Do this so that nothing will hinder you from praying (OR, hinder [God] ([from answering/from doing what you ask for]) when you pray). **8** To end [this part of my letter], [I say to] all of you, agree with each other [in what you think]. Be sympathetic [toward each other]. Love [each other as] members of the same family [should]. Act compassionately [toward each other]. Be humble. **9** [When people do] evil things to you or insult you, do not (retaliate/repay them by) doing evil things to them or insulting them. Instead, [ask God to] bless them, because that is what you have been chosen [by God] {what [God] called you} to do, in order that you may receive a blessing [from him]. **10** [Consider what the Psalmist wrote about the proper way of conducting our lives], As for those who want (to enjoy life/to live happily) and experience good [things happening to them every] day, they must not say [MTY] something that is evil or say [MTY] something that deceives others. **11** They must continually turn away from [doing] anything that is evil, and must do things that are good [instead]. They must deeply desire to enable [people to act] peacefully toward each other; they must zealously [urge people to act in a] peaceful way, **12** because the Lord sees [MTY] what righteous people do [and he appreciates/likes what they do]. He listens to righteous people when they pray, [and he answers them]. But he is [MTY] opposed to those who do evil things. **13** If you (are eager/try very hard) to do good things, [most people] will not harm you. [RHQ] **14** But even if you suffer because of [doing] what is right, [God] will bless you. [Do as Isaiah wrote]: "Do not be afraid of people who (threaten you/say things to cause you to be afraid of what they might do to you), and do not worry about [DOU] what they [might do to you]." **15** Instead, acknowledge that Christ is the one who is in complete control [of your lives]. Always be ready to answer everyone who demands that you tell them about what you confidently expect [God to do for you]. **16** But answer them humbly and respectfully, and make sure that you (do/have done) nothing wrong, in order that those who say evil things about you may be ashamed when they see the good way in which you are conducting yourselves because of your relationship with Christ. **17** [It may be that God wants you] to suffer. But it is better to do good things, [even if you suffer for doing them], than to do evil things and suffer [for doing that]. **18** [I say that] because

Christ died once for the sake of people who have sinned. He was a righteous person who died for unrighteous people. He died in order that (he might bring us to/we might begin an intimate relationship with) God. [During the time that he had] an ordinary body, he was killed {people killed him}, but [God's] Spirit caused him to become alive again. **19** The Spirit also helped him as he went to proclaim [God's victory to the evil] spirits whom God had imprisoned [in the heavens] (OR, to the spirits of those who [had died, and who] were in the place where the spirits of dead people are). **20** Long ago, during the time that Noah was building a big boat, [those evil spirits] disobeyed God when he waited patiently [PRS] [to see if people would turn from their evil behavior]. Only a few people were saved {[God] saved only a few people} [in that boat]. Specifically, [God] brought only eight persons safely through the waters [of the flood], [while all the others drowned in it]. **21** That water, [by means of which eight people were saved when God punished the other people] [MET], represents [the water in which we are] baptized [to show that God has] saved us [from being punished]. The water in which we are baptized does not remove dirt from our bodies. Instead, [it shows that] we are requesting [God to assure us] that he has removed our guilt [for having sinned]. And because Jesus Christ became alive again after he died, [we know that God accepted his sacrifice for us and because of that he was able to remove our guilt]. **22** Christ has gone into heaven and is ruling [MTY] in the place of highest honor (next to God/at God's side), after [God] caused all the evil and powerful spirit beings [DOU] to be made subject to him.

4 Therefore, because Christ suffered physically, you also must think the way that he did [when he was willing to suffer], because those who suffer [because of belonging to Jesus] have stopped sinning [the way they used to sin]. **2** As a result, during their remaining time here on earth, they do not do the things that sinful people desire to do, but instead they do the things that God wants them to do. **3** [I say that to you] because [SAR] you have already spent too much of your time [here on earth] doing what the people who do not know God like to do. In the past you committed all kinds of sexually immoral acts [DOU], you got drunk and then participated in (orgies/wild parties) and carousing/revelry, and you [worshipped] idols, which is very displeasing to God. **4** [Because you used to do those things], [your friends] are surprised that you do not join them any more when they participate in that kind of wild behavior [that] ([is rushing to/will quickly]) [destroy them like] [MET] a flood. As a result, they say evil things about you. **5** But [God] is ready to judge the people who are living [now] and the people who have died, and he is the one who will decide whether he approves of what each of them has done. **6** That is the reason why the message [about Christ] was preached {[people] preached the message [about Christ]} to believers who have now died. [That message was preached to them] in order that even though [sinful] people might judge them [and say that they are guilty], God's Spirit would [enable them to] live [eternally]. **7** It is almost the time when everything on this earth will come to an end. Therefore, keep thinking sensibly/reasonably and control what you think [DOU], so that you can pray [clearly]. **8** Most important of all, love each other earnestly/wholeheartedly, because if we love others [PRS], we will just ignore many of the sinful things that [they do to us]. **9** Provide food and a place to sleep for those [who come to your community], [and do it] without complaining. **10** Believers should all use the spiritual gifts that God has given them to serve others. They should manage/use well the various gifts that God has kindly given them. **11** Those who speak [to the congregation] should do that as though they are speaking the [very] words of God. Those who do kind things to others should do it with the strength that God gives them, in order that God may be honored by all this {that all this may honor God} as Jesus Christ [enables us to do it. I pray that we will] praise [God] (OR, [Jesus]) and allow him [to rule over us] forever. (May it be so!/Amen!) **(aiōn g165)** **12** You whom I love, do not be surprised about the painful things that you are suffering [because you belong to Christ]. [Those] things are [testing you as metals are tested by people putting them] in a fire. Do not think that something strange is happening to you. **13** Instead, rejoice that you are suffering the same kinds of things that Christ endured. Rejoice when [you suffer], in order that you may also be very glad [DOU] when Christ returns and reveals how glorious/wonderful he is. **14** If you are insulted {If [people] insult you} because you believe in Christ [MTY], [God is] pleased with you, because it shows that the Spirit of God, the Spirit who [reveals how] great [God is], lives within you. **15** If you suffer, do not let that suffering be the result of your being a murderer or a thief or as a result of doing some other evil thing, or as a result of interfering in someone else's affairs. **16** But if you suffer because of being a Christian, do not be ashamed about it. Instead, praise God that you are suffering because of belonging to Christ [MTY]. **17** I say that, because it is now time for God to begin judging people, and first he will judge those who belong [MTY] to him. Since he will judge us believers first, think about the terrible things that will happen to [RHQ] those who do not obey the good message that comes from him! **18** [That will be as it] is written in the Scriptures, [Many] righteous people [will have to suffer] many [difficult trials

before going to heaven]. So ungodly and sinful people will surely have to suffer [much severe punishment from God]! **19** Therefore, those who suffer because of its being God's will that they suffer [because of being Christians] should commit themselves to God, the one who created them and the one who always does what he promises to do. And they should continue to do what is right.

5 [Now I will say this to those among] you who are elders in the congregations: I also am an elder. I am one [of those] who saw Christ when he suffered, and I am also one who will share some of the glory/greatness that Christ has in heaven. **2** [I appeal to you elders] to take care of the people who are in your [congregations] [MET] as shepherds [take care of their] flocks of sheep. Do this, not because you must do it, but instead do it willingly, as God desires. Do not be greedy to get a lot [of money for doing it], but instead do it enthusiastically/wholeheartedly. **3** Do not act like domineering [bosses over] the people [MET] whom God has assigned/entrusted to you, but instead be examples to them by the way in which you conduct your lives. **4** [If you do that], when Jesus, who is [like] our chief shepherd [MET], appears, he will give each of you a [glorious/wonderful reward] [MET]. [That reward will be like] the wreaths [that are given to victorious athletes], but your reward will never wither [like wreaths do]. **5** [Now I will say this to] you young men [and women]: [Just like married men and women are] ([to be subject/to submit themselves]) [to their spouses], you must (be subject/submit yourselves) (to the older men/to the leaders) [of the congregation]. And all of you [believers] should act [MET] humbly toward each other, because this proverb is true: God opposes people who are proud, but he acts kindly toward those who are humble. **6** Therefore, realizing that God has great power [MTY] [to punish proud people], humble yourselves, in order that he may honor you at the time that [he has determined]. **7** Because he takes care of you, let him take care of all the things that you are worried/concerned about. **8** Always be fully alert, because the devil, who is your enemy, is going/sneaking around, looking for people [to destroy]. [He is] like [SIM] a lion who roars as it prowls around, seeking someone to [kill and] devour. **9** You must resist him by continuing to firmly trust in [Christ and his message], remembering that your fellow believers all over the world are experiencing similar sufferings [that the devil is bringing to them]. **10** God is the one who kindly helps us in every [situation], and [he is the one] who chose us to share his eternal glory/greatness [in heaven] because of our relationship with Christ. [And] after you have suffered for a while [because of things that people do to harm you], he will remove your spiritual defects/imperfections, he will strengthen you [spiritually] [DOU], and he will support you [emotionally]. **(aiōnios g166)** **11** [I pray/desire that] he will [rule] powerfully forever. (May it be so!/Amen!) **(aiōn g165)** **12** Silas has written this letter [for me as I have] ([dictated it to him/told him what to write]). I consider/know that he is a faithful fellow believer. I have written this short letter to you to encourage you, and I want to assure you that [what I have written] is a true message about the things that God kindly does for [us, things that we do not deserve]. Continue to firmly believe this message. **13** In [this city that is sometimes referred to as] 'Babylon' [MET], the believers [SYN], whom [God] has chosen [to belong to him] just like he chose you, (send you [(pl)] their greetings/say that they are thinking affectionately about you). Mark, who is [MET] [like] a son to me, also ([sends you his greetings/says that he is thinking affectionately about you]). **14** Greet each other with a kiss [on the cheek] to [show that] you love [each other]. [I pray that God will give inner] peace to all of you who have a relationship with Christ.

2 Peter

1 I, Simon Peter, [am writing this letter to you. I] serve Jesus Christ, and am an apostle [appointed by] him. [I am sending this letter to you] whom God has caused to believe [in Christ] just like he [caused us(exc) apostles to believe in Christ]. You and we have (equally been given the/both been given the same) privilege of believing in Jesus Christ. He [is] God, he is righteous, he is the one whom we [worship], and he is our Savior. **2** [I pray that God] will continue to act very kindly towards you, and give you (a deep/very much) [inner] peace, because you [truly] know God and Jesus, who is our Lord. **3** [God] [PRS] has given us everything [that we need] in order that we might receive [eternal] life and in order that we might [live] (in a godly way/in a way that pleases him). He gives us that by the power that he has because he is God, and he has also given it to us as a result of our knowing him. He is the wonderful and perfect one who chose us [to be his people]. **4** Being [glorious and perfect], he has promised us [that he will do] very great and (priceless/very precious) things [for us]. [He has also promised] you that by [believing what he has promised] you will be able to act [righteously], just like God acts [righteously], and that you will be free from being morally depraved/corrupted, and that you will not be [like] those who do not believe in Christ and are morally depraved because of their desire to do things that are evil. **5** Because God has done all that, by trying very hard, make sure that you not only believe [in Christ], but that you are also living morally good lives. And make sure that you are not only living morally good lives, but that you also know [what God desires] (OR, behave wisely). **6** And make sure that you not only know [what God desires] (OR, behave wisely), but that you also control what you say and do. And make sure that you not only control what you say and do, but that you are also steadfast/patient. And make sure that you are not only (steadfast/patient when you suffer), but that you are also godly. **7** And make sure that you not only (are godly/live in a way that pleases God), but that you also have a concern for your fellow believers, as brothers and sisters [ought to have] for each other. And make sure that you not only have a concern for your fellow believers, but that you also love [others]. **8** If you do these [things], and if [you do them] more and more, that demonstrates that knowing our Lord Jesus Christ (is very effective/produces good results) [LIT] in your lives. **9** If these [qualities] are not present in people, it means they are not aware [that these things are important, just like a blind person is not aware of what is around him]. They [think only about earthly matters, just like] [MET] a shortsighted person [sees clearly only things that are near]. It seems that they have forgotten that God has forgiven them for their former sinful lives. **10** Instead of [acting like those people], try to confirm/prove by the way you conduct your lives that you are among those whom [God] has chosen [DOU] to be his people. If you do that, you will certainly never become separated from God, **11** and [God] will very wholeheartedly welcome you into the place where our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will rule [his people] forever. **(aiōnios g166)** **12** I intend to keep on reminding you very frequently [HYP] about these [matters], even though you [already] know them and are firmly convinced that they are true. **13** I consider it right that I should help you [to continually think about these matters] by reminding you [about them] as long as I am alive [EUP], **14** because I know that I shall die [EUP] soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ clearly has revealed to me. **15** Moreover, I will (make every effort/try hard) [by writing these things down] to enable you to remember them at all times after I have died [EUP]. **16** We [apostles] told you that our Lord Jesus Christ [acts] powerfully and that he is coming back [some day]. We were not basing [what we told you] on stories that we had cleverly (invented/made up). Instead, we told you what we ourselves saw with our own eyes, that [the] Lord Jesus is supremely great. **17** God, our Father, greatly honored him when God's great glory/brightness surrounded him, and God [MTY] said, "This is my Son, whom I love very much; I am very pleased with him." **18** We [(exc)] ourselves heard [God] [MTY] [say] that from heaven, when we were with [Christ] on that holy/sacred mountain. **19** We also have [the Scriptures] that the prophets [wrote about Christ long ago], which are completely reliable/trustworthy. You should (pay attention to/think carefully about) [what they wrote], because [what they wrote enables you to know whether what is taught to you is true or whether it is false] [SIM], like a lamp that is shining in a dark place [enables people to see where they are going] [SIM]. [You should] ([pay attention to/think carefully about]) [what they wrote] until [our Lord Jesus Christ comes back and enables] you [SYN] [to know God fully, which will be like when] [MET] (a day dawns/daylight comes) and the morning star rises [and we can see it clearly]. **20** It is important that you realize that no one can interpret/explain by himself [the meaning of] what the prophets wrote [in the Scriptures] without [the help of God's Spirit] (OR, no [part of the] Scriptures originated with the prophet himself), **21** because no human beings decided [to make those prophecies]. On the contrary, those who spoke [messages from God] did that because it was the Holy Spirit who caused them to do [it, and therefore the Spirit must help us to interpret/understand their meaning].

2 Just like there were false prophets among the [Israeli] people [long ago], so there will also be teachers who teach false [things] among you. They will enter [your congregations] without you realizing [what/who they are], and they will [spiritually] injure some people by what they teach. Specifically, these teachers will even deny [that] the Lord [Jesus died to] pay [for the guilt of our sins]. As a result, they will soon destroy themselves [spiritually, and God will also punish them]. **2** And many [people] will behave in an extremely immoral manner, imitating the extremely immoral way [these teachers who teach false things] behave. As a result, [unbelievers] will (discredit the true message/say the true message is false). **3** Because [the teachers of false teaching] want a lot of things that other people have, [they think that] by telling you stories that they themselves have (made up/invented), they will get money from you. [God decided] long ago [that he would] punish them, and he has not fallen asleep [LIT]! [He will certainly destroy them]! **4** God destroyed [LIT] the angels who sinned. He threw them into the worst place in hell and imprisoned them [there] in darkness in order to keep them there until he judges [and punishes them]. **(Tartaroō g5020)** **5** He also got rid of [LIT] [the people who lived in] [MTY] the world long ago. He saved [only] eight of them, including Noah, who was a righteous preacher. God saved them when he destroyed in a flood [all] (the ungodly people/the people whose lives were not pleasing to him) [who were living then]. **6** He also condemned Sodom and Gomorrah [cities]; that is, he destroyed them by burning them completely to ashes. [By doing that] he gave a warning to those who afterwards would live in (an ungodly way/a way that is displeasing to him). **7** But he rescued [Abraham's nephew], Lot, who was a righteous [man. Lot] was (greatly distressed/very sad) because the people [in Sodom] were doing very immoral things. **8** That righteous [man's] soul (was tormented/suffered great agony) day after day because he saw and heard those wicked people behave in a very lawless/wicked [manner when he was] living among them. **9** And since the Lord God [rescued Lot, you can be sure that] he knows how to rescue (other godly people/people whose lives please him) from their sufferings, and [he is able] to preserve (ungodly [people/people whose lives do not please him]), [whom he has started to] punish even now, until the time when he will [finish judging them and punish] them. **10** [He will punish especially severely] those [ungodly teachers who teach false things] who do the things that their self-directed nature desires, things that (defile them/cause them to be completely impure). Those [teachers of false teachings] despise [all beings who] rule [over them]. 2 Peter 2:10d-16 Because [those teachers of false doctrines are] extremely arrogant/proud [DOU], they (are not afraid to insult/boldly speak evil about) glorious beings [in heaven] (OR, glorious/wonderful beings [who rule over people]). **11** In contrast, angels do not insult [those teachers] when those teachers accuse the angels [of blasphemy] while the Lord God is watching, even though the angels are much more powerful [DOU] [than the teachers of false doctrines]. **12** Because those [teachers of false doctrines are] like animals that cannot think [as humans do] [DOU], they say evil things about [spiritual] things which they know nothing about. [As a result], God will destroy them like [people] destroy [animals], [animals] that are born only in order to be hunted and killed {in order that [people] should hunt and kill them}. **13** God will punish [those teachers] in return for the unrighteous actions/things that they have done. They even like (to carouse/to drink and revel noisily) in the daytime [as well as at night]. And as they indulge/enjoy themselves just like they want to while they are feasting with you, they cause you to become impure, [as] [MET] stains and blotches [DOU] [ruin a clean garment]. **14** They [want to commit] [MTY] adultery [with every woman] whom they look at. They never stop seeking opportunities to sin. They entice/persuade those who are [spiritually] unstable [to join them in doing the sinful things that they do]. [Because of] their ever-increasing (greed/desire to have more and more things), they are doomed [to eternal punishment]. **15** They have (rejected good moral standards/quit doing what everyone knows is right). They have imitated [what the prophet] Balaam, the son of Bosor, [did long ago]. He, [acting very] unrighteously, wanted [the enemies of the Jews] to pay him if he [asked God] ([to curse/to do bad thing to]) [the Jews]. **16** But God rebuked him for having done that which was wrong [and for] behaving very foolishly. And even though donkeys do not speak, [God used] a donkey to hinder Balaam [by enabling it to] speak to him with a human voice. **17** These [teachers who each false things mislead/deceive people by promising what they cannot do], as [MET] dried-up springs [mislead/deceive people by causing them to expect to get water from them]. They [mislead/deceive people] [MET] just like clouds that are blown along by strong winds [mislead/deceive people by causing them to expect rain, but no rain falls. Therefore], God has reserved the darkness of hell [for those teachers of false doctrines]. **(questioned)** **18** By boasting proudly as they make speeches that are worthless, they entice people who have recently [become believers and] have stopped doing the things that wicked people do. Urged on by their self-directed nature, they entice them [into sin] by encouraging them to [do] evil things. **19** [The false teachers] tell people that they are free [to do whatever they want to do, even

though] they themselves are [like] slaves [MET] [because their own self-directed nature forces them to do] sinful things. [Think about these well-known words: "Whenever a person is controlled by something] {[something controls a person]}, [it is as though] that person has become a slave of what controls him." **20** Those [who teach false truths] learned about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As a result, they stopped doing those things that (defile [people/cause people to become impure]) [spiritually]. Since they have begun to do [those evil things again], with the result that they are unable to stop doing them, they are in a worse condition than [they were in before they knew Jesus Christ]. **21** [Because God will severely punish them], it would have been better for them if they had never known what it means to live in a righteous way. It is too bad that although they knew [how to live in a righteous way], they stopped doing the things that God commanded people to do, the things that [were] taught to them ([by us apostles/by Christ]) {that ([we apostles/Christ]) taught to them}. **22** [The way they are behaving again] is just like (the proverbs/what people often say): [They are like] dogs that return to [eat] their vomit, and [they are like] pigs that have been washed and then roll [again] in the mud.

3 This letter that I am now writing to you whom I love, is the second [letter] that I have written to you. [In both] these letters I have reminded you [about the things you already know, in order that I may] stimulate/cause you to think sincerely [about those things]. **2** [I want you] to remember the words that were spoken by the holy prophets {that the holy prophets spoke} long ago, and also to remember what our Lord and Savior commanded, things that we, your apostles, told you about. **3** It is important for you to understand that in the time [immediately] before Christ comes back, there will be people who will ridicule [the idea of his coming back. Those people will do whatever] evil things they wish to do. **4** They will say, "[Although it was] promised [that Christ] will come back, ([nothing has happened that would indicate] that he is coming back./[what happened to the promise] that he is coming back?) [RHQ] We say that because ever since the [Christian] leaders [who lived] long ago died [EUP], everything [has remained the same]. Things are as [they always have been] since God created [the world!]" **5** [They will say that because] they (deliberately overlook [the fact/have decided to ignore what they know]) that God, by commanding [long ago that it should be so], caused the heavens to exist, and he caused the earth to appear out of water and to be separate from the water. **6** And God, by [commanding that it should be so], later destroyed the world [that existed] at that time, by causing the earth to be flooded with water {water to flood the earth}. **7** Furthermore, [God], commanded that the heavens and the earth [that exist] now remain until the time when [he] will judge (ungodly people/people whose lives are not pleasing to him). And at that time [he] will destroy the heavens and the earth by burning them. **8** Dear friends, I want you to understand well that the Lord [God is willing to wait a long time to judge the people in the world! How much time passes before] the Lord God [judges the people in the world does not matter to him! He considers] that one day [passes no more quickly than] 1,000 years, and [he also considers] that 1,000 years [pass as quickly as] one day passes [to us]! **9** [Therefore, you should not think that because Christ has not yet come back to judge people], the Lord God is (delaying/slow to do) what he promised. Some people think that this is so, [and they say that Christ will never come back]. But [you should understand that the reason why Christ has not yet come back to judge people is that] God is being patient with you, because he does not want anyone to be lost [eternally]. Instead, he wants everyone to turn away from their sinful behavior. **10** Although [God is being patient, at] the time [MTY] [that he has chosen], the Lord [Jesus Christ] will [certainly] come back [to judge people]. He will come back [unexpectedly], like a thief [SIM] [comes unexpectedly]. At that time there will be a great roaring sound. The heavens will cease to exist. (The elements/The parts [of which the universe consists]) will be destroyed by fire, and the earth [that God made] and everything on it [that people have made] will disappear (OR, will be burned up). **11** Because God will certainly destroy all these things like [I just said], you certainly know how you should behave. [RHQ] You should behave (in a [godly manner/] a [manner that pleases God]) **12** while you [eagerly/expectantly] wait for [Christ] to return on the day that God [has chosen] [MTY], and you should try to make that day come soon. Because of what [God] [PRS] [will do on that day], the heavens will be destroyed. (The elements/The parts of which the universe consist) will melt and burn up. **13** Although [all those events/things will happen, we rejoice because] we are waiting for the new heavens and new earth that [God] has promised. The [only people who will be] in the new heavens and on this new earth will be [people who are] [PRS] righteous. **14** Therefore, dear friends, because you are waiting for these things [to happen], do all that you can [live] (in a [godly manner/] a [manner that pleases God]), [in order that Christ] will see that you [are] completely pure [DOU] [and that you are living] peacefully [with each other]. **15** And think about this: Our Lord [Jesus Christ is] patient [because he wants] people to be saved. Our dear (brother/fellow believer) Paul also wrote wise words to you [about these same matters], because

God enabled him to understand [these] ([events/things that will happen]). **16** In the [letters] that Paul wrote there are certain things that are difficult for people to understand. People [who are spiritually] ignorant and (unstable/do not believe firmly in Christ) interpret these things wrongly, as they also (interpret/explain the meaning of) the other parts of the Scriptures wrongly. The result is that they will destroy themselves [spiritually], and [God] will punish them. **17** Therefore, dear friends, [since you already know about those who teach what is false], (guard against them/beware). Do not let those wicked people deceive you by telling you things that are wrong, with the result that you yourselves begin to doubt [what you now firmly believe]. **18** [Instead, live in such a manner that you] experience more and more our Savior Jesus Christ being kind [to you], and that you get to know him [better and better]. 2 Peter 3:18b [I pray/desire that Jesus Christ] will be honored both now and forever! **(aiōn g165)**

1 John

1 [I, John, am writing to you about] the one who existed before [there was anything else]. He is the one whom we [apostles] listened to [as he taught us!] We saw him! We ourselves looked at him and touched him! [He is the one who taught us] the message that [enables people to have eternal] life (OR, live [spiritually]). **2** Because he came here [to the earth] and we have seen him, we proclaim to you clearly that the one whom we have seen is the [one who] has always lived. He was [previously] with his Father in heaven, but he came to live among us. **(aiōnios g166)** **3** We proclaim to you the [message about Jesus], the one whom we saw and heard, in order that you may have a close relationship with us. The ones whom we have a close relationship with are God our Father and his Son Jesus Christ. **4** I am writing to you about these things so that [you (will be convinced/believe]) [that they are true, and as a] result we may be completely joyful. **5** The message that we heard from Christ and proclaim to you is this: God is [pure in every way. He never sins. He is like] [MET] a [brilliant] light that has no darkness at all. **6** If we claim to have a close relationship with [God], but [we conduct our lives in an impure manner, that is like] living [MET] in [evil] darkness. We are lying. We are not conducting our lives according to [God's] true message. **7** But living [in a pure manner], as God is [living in a pure manner] [MET] [in every way, is like living] in God's light. If we do that, we have a close relationship with each other. Not only that, but [God] (acquits us/removes [the guilt]) [of] all our sins because [he accepts] what his Son Jesus did for us [when his] blood [flowed from his body when he died. So we should conduct our lives] ([in a manner according to what God says is pure]). **8** Those who say they never behave sinfully are deceiving themselves, and refusing [to accept as] true [what God says about them]. **9** But God will do what he says that he will do, and what he does is [always] right. So, if we confess to him that we [have behaved] sinfully, he will forgive [us for] our sins and (will free us from/remove) [the guilt of] all our sins. [Because of that], [we should confess to him that we have behaved sinfully]. **10** [Because God says that everyone has sinned], those who say/claim that they have never behaved sinfully talk [as though] God lies! They reject what God says [about us]!

2 You who are very dear to me, I am writing this to you [to say], "Do not sin!" But if any of you [believers] sins, [God can forgive you because] we have Jesus Christ, who is the righteous one, who speaks to the Father on our behalf [and asks him to forgive us]. **2** [Remember that Jesus Christ] voluntarily sacrificed [his own life for us, so that as a result God forgives] our sins. [Yes, God is able to forgive] our sins, but not only ours! [He is] also [able to forgive] the sins of people everywhere! **3** [I will tell you] how we can be sure that we (know/have a close relationship with) [God]. [If we] obey what he commands [us to do, that shows us that we have a close relationship with him. So we must always obey what he commands us to do]. **4** Those who say, "We (know/have a close relationship with) God," and do not obey what [God] commands [us to do], are liars. They are not conducting their lives according to [God's] true message. **5** But those who obey what [God] commands them to do are the people who love God in the manner in which he wants us to. [I will tell you] how we can be sure that we have a close relationship with God: **6** If we say that we are living as God wants us to, we should [conduct our lives] as Christ [did]. **7** Dear friends, I am not writing a new [additional] command to you. Instead, I am writing to you a command which was given to you when you first [MTY] [believed in Christ]. That command is [part of] the message that you have [always] heard. **8** Nevertheless, [I can say that] the command I am writing to you is a new command. [It is new because] what Christ [did] was new, and what you [are doing] is new, because [you have been ceasing to conduct your lives in a morally impure manner] and [are now truly conducting your lives in a pure manner. That is like] [MET] no longer [living in] darkness. Instead, [it is like] living where a brilliant light is already shining. **9** Those who claim that they are [pure in every way, like people] [MET] living in the light, but hate any of their fellow believers, are still [behaving in an impure manner, like] [MET] [people who are continually living] in darkness. **10** But those who love their fellow believers [are continuing to conduct their lives like people] who are living in the light. They are people who please [God] [LIT]. [So you should love your fellow believers]. **11** But those who hate any of their fellow believers are still [conducting their lives in an impure way, like] [MET] [people who are living] in darkness. They do not know that they will eventually destroy themselves [eternally]. They have become [spiritually] blind [PRS, MET], [unaware of spiritual truth]. **12** I am writing [this] to you [whom I love as though] [MET] [you were my] little children, to you who are [spiritually mature people who are like] [MET] fathers, and to you [spiritually vigorous/strong people who are like] [MET] young men. Remember that your sins have been forgiven {[God] has forgiven your sins} on account of what Christ [MTY] [has done]. You now know [Christ, the one] who always existed. You have defeated the evil one, [Satan]. **14** [I will say it again]: I have written [this] to you because you have come to know the Father, because you now know [Christ, the one] who always existed,

because you are [spiritually] strong, because you continue to [obey] God's word, and because you have defeated the evil one, [Satan]. **15** Do not desire [to conduct you lives in the evil manner in which] godless [people in] the world [MTY] conduct their [lives], and do not love anything that [the evil people] in the world [MTY] [consider to be good]. Those who desire [to conduct their lives in the evil manner in which other people of] the world [MTY] conduct their [lives] do not [really] love [God], their Father, [at all]. **16** Keep in mind that all [the evil human desires] in the world [are actions/things such as these]: [People] desire to do [what] their self-directed nature [strongly desires]. [People] desire [to possess] whatever (appeals to their senses/they see or hear about). [People] boast about the material things that they possess. [Such evil ways of living] do not originate/come from the Father! Instead they originate/come from [the (godless people in] the world/people in the world who conduct their lives in a manner that displeases God) [MTY]! **17** The [godless people in] the world [MTY], along with what they desire, will disappear, but those who do what God wants [them to do] will live forever! You know that it is now the final period of this age when there are liars who deny that Jesus is God's Chosen One. But you have the power of God's Spirit and you know what is true and what is false. So continue to live according to the true message that you heard when you began to believe in Christ, in order that you may continue to live united both to God's Son and to the Father. **(aiōn g165)** **18** [You who are very dear to me], it is [now] (the final part [MTY] [of this age/] final [period of time before Jesus returns]). Just like you heard [from us apostles] that a person who opposes Christ will come/appear, even now there are many people who oppose Christ. That is why we know that it is the final part [of this age] (OR, [before Jesus returns]) [MTY]. **19** The [people who oppose Christ] refused to remain in our congregations, but they never [really] (belonged with us/were fellow believers). If they had (belonged with us/been fellow believers), they would have remained with us. But because [they left, everyone] can clearly know that none of them (belongs with us/is a fellow believer). **20** But as for you, you have been given the power of [God's Spirit, which comes from Christ] (OR, [God]), the Holy One. [As a result], you all know [how to] ([distinguish false teaching from/recognize what is false teaching and what is]) [the true message]. **21** I am writing [this letter] to you, not because you do not know [what is God's] true message, but because you do know [what it is]. You also know that no false message originates/comes from [God, who is the source of all] truth. **22** The [worst] liars are the ones who deny that Jesus is (the Messiah/the one whom God chose to rescue us). They are [the ones that we told you about], the ones who oppose Christ. They refuse to acknowledge/admit that [God is] the Father and that [Jesus is his] Son (OR, the one who is also God). **23** Those who refuse to acknowledge/admit that [Jesus is God's] Son do not have a relationship with the Father. But those who acknowledge/admit that [Jesus is God's] Son [not only have a relationship with God's Son, but they] have a relationship with the Father also. **24** [So], as for you, you must continue to conduct your lives according to [the true message] that you heard when you began [MTY] [to believe in Christ]. If you continue to [do that], you will continue to have a close relationship with both [God's] Son and the Father. **25** And what God told us is that [he will cause us] to live forever! **(aiōnios g166)** **26** I have written this to you [to] ([warn you] about/tell you to beware of) those [who want to] deceive you [concerning the truth about Christ]. **27** As for you, God's Spirit, whom you received from Christ, remains in you. So you do not need anyone to teach you [anything else that they claim/say is the truth]. God's Spirit is teaching you all [of God's truth that you need to know]. God's Spirit is truthful and never says anything that is false. So continue to conduct your lives in the way that [he has] taught you. **28** Now, [while some people are trying to persuade you to accept their false teaching, I urge] you, who are all very dear to me, to continue to [have a close relationship with] Christ. [We need to do that] in order that we may be confident [that he will accept us] when he comes back again. If we do that, we will not be ashamed [when we stand] before [him] when he comes. **29** Since you know that [Christ] always does what is right, you know that all those who continue doing what is right are the ones who have become children of God.

3 [Think about] how much our [heavenly] Father loves us! He allows us to (say that we are/be called) his children! [And it is indeed true that] we are [his children. But people in] the world [MTY] [who are unbelievers] have not understood [who] God [is]. So they do not understand [who we are], that we [belong to God]. **2** Dear friends, even though (at present/now) we are God's children, [he] has not yet (made clear/revealed) [to us] what we will be like [in the future]. However, we know that when [Christ] comes back again, we will be like him, because we will see what he is [really] like. **3** [So], all those who confidently expect [to see Christ as he actually is/what Christ is like when he returns] must keep themselves pure in every way, just like Christ, who is pure in every way. **4** But everyone who continues sinning is refusing to obey [God's] laws, because that is what sin is, refusing to obey [God's] laws. **5** You know that Christ came in order to completely remove [the guilt of] our sins. You know also that he never sinned. **6** Those who continue [doing what] Christ

wants them to, do not continue sinning repeatedly. But those who repeatedly sin have not understood [who Christ is], nor have they had a close relationship with him. **7** [So I urge you,] who are all very dear to me, do not let anyone deceive you [by telling you that it is all right to sin]. If you continue doing what is right, you are righteous, just like Christ is righteous. **8** [But] if anyone continues sinning, he is like the devil, because the devil has always been sinning. [And] the reason why God's Son became a human being was to destroy what the devil has done. **9** People do not continue sinning repeatedly if they have become children of God. Instead, [they] continue [to conduct their lives according to the character/nature that God produced in them] [MET]. They cannot continually sin because God has caused them to become his children. **10** Those who are God's children are clearly different from those who are (the devil's/Satan's) children. [The way that we can know who are Satan's children is this]: Those who do not do what is right are not God's children. [Specifically], those who do not love their fellow believers are not [God's children Instead, they are Satan's children]. **11** The message that you heard when you first [MTY] [believed in Christ] is that we should love each other. **12** [We should] not [hate others] as did [Adam's son], Cain, who belonged to [Satan], the evil one. [Because Cain hated his younger brother], he murdered him. (I will tell you about why he murdered his brother./Do you know why he murdered his brother [RHQ]?) It was because Cain habitually conducted his life in an evil way, and [he hated his younger brother] because his [younger] brother [conducted his life] righteously. **13** You should not be amazed/surprised, my fellow believers, when [unbelievers] [MTY] hate you. **14** We know that we have been changed from [being spiritually] dead [MET] to [being spiritually] alive. We know this because we love our fellow believers. [Those who] do not love [their fellow believers] are still [spiritually] [MET] dead. **15** Those who hate [any of] their fellow believers, [God considers] [MET] them [to be] murderers. And you know that no murderer has eternal life. **(aiōnios g166)** **16** The way that we now know [how to truly] love [our fellow believers is by remembering] that Christ (voluntarily died/gave his life) for us. So, [when our fellow believers need something, we should be willing to help them. We should even be willing to] die for them. **17** Many [of us] have the things that are necessary for us to live in this world. If we become aware that any of our fellow believers do not have what they need and [if we] refuse to ([provide for them/give to them what they need]), it is clear that we do not love God [as we claim/say that we do]. **18** [I say to] all of you whom I love dearly, let us not merely say [MTY] that [we love our fellow believers!] Let us genuinely/really love them by doing things [to help them]! **19** When we [truly love our fellow believers], we can be sure that we are [conducting our lives according to] the true message. [As a result], we will not feel guilty/ashamed [when we talk] [MTY] to God. **20** [We can pray confidently], because [although] we might feel guilty/ashamed [about our sins], God is (greater/more worthy to be trusted) than what we feel. He knows everything [about us]. **21** Dear friends, when we do not feel guilty [because of our sins], we can pray to God confidently. **22** And, when we confidently pray to him and request [something from him], we receive it because we do what he commands [us to do], and because we do what pleases him. **23** [I will tell you] what he commands [us to do]: [We must] believe that Jesus Christ is (his Son/the one who is also God). [We must] also love each other, just like he commanded [us to do]. **24** Those who do what God commands are ones who have a close relationship with God, and God has a close relationship with them. [I will tell you how] we can be sure that God has a close relationship with us: It is because [we have] his Spirit, whom he gave to us, that we can be sure that God has a close relationship with us.

4 Dear friends, many people [who have a false message] are teaching it to people [MTY]. So do not trust every [message that someone claims/says that God's] Spirit [MTY] [gave to him]. Instead, (test/think carefully about) the teachings that [you hear] in order to know whether they are from God or not. **2** [I will tell] you how to recognize [teachings that come from] the Spirit of God: Those who affirm/say that Jesus Christ came [from God] to become a human [like us] are [teaching a message] that is from God. **3** But those who do not affirm/say [that about] Jesus are not [teaching a message] from God. [They are teachers who] oppose Christ. You have heard that people like that are coming [to be among us]. Even now they are already here! **4** As for you who are very dear to me, you belong to God, and you have refused [the false messages] that those people [teach], because [God], who enables you [to do what he wants], is (greater/more powerful) than ([Satan/the devil]), who enables (godless people/people who conduct their lives in a way that displeases God) [MTY]. **5** As for [those who are teaching what is false], they are (godless people/people whose lives are displeasing to God) [MTY]. Because of that, they teach what (godless people/people whose lives are displeasing to God) [MTY] want to hear. That is why the (godless people/people whose lives displease God) [MTY] listen to them. **6** As for us [(exc)], [because] we belong to God, whoever (knows/has a close relationship with) God listens to us. [But] those who do not belong to God do not listen to us. That is how we can know whether [the things

that people are teaching] [MTY] are true or whether they are false, and deceiving [people]. 7 Dear friends, we must love each other, because God [enables us] to love [each other], and because those who love [their fellow believers] have become God's children and (know/have a close relationship with) him. 8 God's [nature] is to love [all people]. So those who do not love [their fellow believers] do not (know/have a relationship with) God. 9 I will tell you how God has shown us [that he] loves us: He sent (his only Son/the only one who was also God) [to live] on the earth to enable us to live [eternally] as a result of [our trusting in what] he [accomplished for us by dying for us]. 10 [And God] has shown [us what it means to] love [another person]: [It does] not [mean] that we loved God, but [it means] that God loved us and sent (his Son/the one who was also God) to sacrifice [his life] in order that [our sins might be forgiven] {[he might forgive] our sins}. 11 Dear friends, since God loves us like that, we certainly ought to love each other! 12 No one has ever seen God. [Nevertheless], if we love each other, [it is evident that] God lives within us and that we love others just like he [intends/wants us to do]. 13 [I will tell you] how we can be sure that we have a close relationship with God and that God is within us: He has put his Spirit within us. 14 We [apostles] have seen (God's Son/the one who is also God), and [we tell people] that the Father sent him to save [the people in] the world [MTY] [from being punished for their sins]. 15 [So] those who affirm/say that Jesus is the (Son of/one who is also) God, God is within them, and they have a close relationship with God. 16 We have experienced how God loves us and we believe that he loves us. [As a result, we love others. Because] God's [nature] is to love people, those who continue to love [others] have a close relationship with God, and God has a close relationship with them. 17 We [should] love others completely. And if we do that, when the time comes for [him to] judge us, we will be confident [that he will not condemn us] (OR, [that we have a close relationship with him]). [We will be confident of that] because of our [conducting our lives] in this world as Christ did. 18 We will not be afraid [of God] if we [truly] love [him], because those who love [God] completely cannot possibly be afraid [of him]. [We would be] afraid only [if we thought that he would] punish us. So those who are afraid [of God certainly] are not loving [God] completely. 19 We love [God and our fellow believers] because God loved us first. 20 [So] those who say "I love God" but hate a fellow believer are lying. Those who do not love one of their fellow believers, whom they have seen, certainly cannot be loving God, whom they have not seen. 21 Keep in mind that this is what God has commanded us: If we love him, we must also love our fellow believers.

5 All those who believe that Jesus is the (Messiah/person God sent [to rescue us]) are ones who [have truly] become children of God. And everyone who loves [a man who is] someone's father will [be expected to] love that man's children as well. [Similarly, those who love God, who has caused them to become his children] [MET], [should love their fellow believers, whom God has also caused to become his children]. 2 The way we can be sure that we [truly] love God's children is this: We are loving them when we love God and do what he commands [us to do]. 3 [I say this] because our obeying what God commands [us to do] is [the same as] loving him. And it is not burdensome/difficult for [us to do] what God commands [us to do]. 4 All of us whom God has caused to become his children have been able to successfully resist (doing what/conducting our lives like) the people [MTY] [who] oppose God do. It is [only] by our trusting [in Christ] that we are able to (resist doing what/conducting our lives like) people in the world who are opposed to God [MTY] do. 5 ([I will tell you] who are the ones who are able to resist doing what the people who are opposed to God do./Do you know who are the ones who are able to resist conducting their lives like the people who are opposed to God [MTY] do? [RHQ]) It is those who believe that Jesus is (God's Son/the man who is also God). 6 [Think about] Jesus Christ. He is the one who came [to earth from God]. [God showed that he had truly sent Jesus when Jesus was baptized] in water [MTY] and [when Jesus'] blood [flowed from his body when he died]. [God showed this] not only [when Jesus was baptized] [MTY], but also when Jesus' blood flowed [from his body when he died]. And [God's] Spirit declares [truthfully that Jesus Christ came from God]. The Spirit always [speaks what] is true. 7 There are three [ways] by which we know [that Christ came from God]. 8 [Those three ways are: What God's] Spirit [tells us, what God said when Jesus was baptized] [MTY] [in/with] water, and [Jesus'] blood [that flowed from his body when he died on the cross]. These three things all tell us the same thing, [that Jesus came from God]. 9 We [usually] believe what [other] people say. But what God says is more [reliable/trustworthy than what people say]. So [we must believe] what God has said is true [about] (his Son/the one who is also God). 10 Those who trust in the Son of God know within their (inner beings/hearts) that [what God] says [about his Son is true. But] those who refuse to believe that [what] God says is true are saying that God is a liar, because they refuse to believe what God has said about (his Son/the one who is also God). 11 This is what [God] says [to

us]: “I have given you eternal life!” We will live forever if we have a close relationship with his Son. **(aiōnios g166)** **12** Those who have [a close relationship with God’s] Son (OR, who have accepted what God’s Son [has done for them]) have [already] begun to live [forever]. [But] those who do not have a relationship with (God’s Son/the one who is also God) (OR, who have not accepted what God’s Son has done for them) have not begun [to] live [forever]. **13** I have written this [letter] to you who believe that Jesus is [MTY] (God’s Son/the one who is also God) in order that you may know that you have eternal life. **(aiōnios g166)** **14** Because we have a close relationship with him, we are very confident that he hears us when we ask him [to do anything] that is in accordance with (his will/what he desires). **15** [And] since we know that he hears whenever we ask [him for something], we [also] know that [it is as though] he has [already] done what we requested him [to do]. **16** Those who see one of their fellow believers sinning in a way that does not result in being eternally separated from God should ask [God to help that fellow believer]; and [as a result God] will help that fellow believer and enable him or her to live [eternally. But some people] sin [in a manner that causes them] to be separated from God eternally. I am not saying that [you should] ask [God to help] people who sin like that. **17** Everyone who does what is wrong is sinning, but there are some sins that do not cause a person to be separated from God. **18** We know that if a person has new life from God [MET], that person does not continue sinning. Instead, the (Son of/one who is also) God protects him so that [Satan], the evil one, does not harm him [spiritually]. **19** We know that we belong to God, and [we know] that the evil one controls all [the evil people in] [MTY] the world. **20** We also know that (God’s Son/the one who is also God) has come [to us], and [we know] that he has enabled us to know God, the one who is really/truly God. So now we have a close relationship with [God because] we belong to Jesus Christ, the one who is the (Son of/man who is also) God. Jesus Christ is truly God, and [he is the one who enables us to have] eternal life. **(aiōnios g166)** **21** [I say to] you who are very dear to me, guard/keep yourselves from [worshipping] gods [that have no real power]!

2 John

1 [You all know me as] the [chief] Elder. [I am writing this letter] to all of you [MET] in your congregation. [God has] chosen [you], and I love you truly! Not only do I myself love you, but all those who know [and accept the] true message [that Jesus taught] also love you! **2** All of us [believe God's] true message. It is in our ([inner beings/hearts]) and we will continue [to believe it] forever! **(aiōn g165)** **3** God the Father and Jesus Christ, who is (his Son/the man who is also God), will continue [to act] kindly and mercifully [toward us because they] love [us. They will enable us to have inner] peace, [because we believe] their true message. **4** I am very happy because I learned about some of you [SYN] who are conducting your lives in a manner that is (consistent/in accordance) with [God's] true message. You are doing that just like our Father [God] commanded us [to do]. **5** And now, dear congregation [MET], [there is something that] I am requesting you [to do]. I am writing this not to command that you do something new, but [that you continue to do] what God commanded when we first began [MTY] [to believe his true message. What he commanded] is that we love each other. **6** And [we really/truly] are loving [God] when we are conducting our lives in accordance with whatever he commands [us to do]. What he commands us to do is to continue [to love one another]. That is exactly what you heard when you first began [MTY] [to believe God's true message]. **7** Many people who deceive [others have left your congregation and] have now gone out among other people who are [in your area] [MTY]. They are the ones who (do not acknowledge/refuse to say) that Jesus Christ became human. They are the very ones who deceive [people] and oppose [what we teach about] Christ. **8** [So] be sure that [you do not let those teachers deceive you]! If you let them deceive you, you will lose [the reward] which we, [together with you], have been working for, and you will not receive the complete reward [of being eternally united to God]! **9** Those who change what Christ taught and do not continue [to believe] what he taught do not have [a relationship with] God. [But] those who continue to believe [what Christ] taught have [a close relationship with] both [God, our] Father, and with (his Son/the one who is also God). **10** So when anyone comes to you who teaches something different from [what Christ] taught, do not welcome him into your homes! Do not [encourage him by] (wishing him well/greeting him as a fellow believer) [in any way]! **11** [I say that] because if you treat people like that as you would treat a fellow believer, [God will punish you] along with them for the evil that they do. **12** [Even though] I have much [more that I want] to tell you, I have decided not [to say it] in a letter [MTY]. Instead, I expect to be with you [soon] and talk directly with you. Then we can be completely joyful [together]. **13** Your fellow believers here [MET], ones whom [God] has also chosen, (send their greetings to you/say that they are thinking affectionately about you).

3 John

1 [You(sg) know me as] the [chief] Elder. [I am writing this letter to you], my dear friend Gaius, whom I truly love. **2** Dear friend, I ask [God that things may go] well for you in every way, [specifically], that you will be physically healthy just like you are spiritually healthy [MTY]. **3** I am very happy because some fellow believers have come [here] and told me that you conduct your life in a manner [that is consistent with God's] true message. **4** I am very happy when I hear that (people whom I helped to believe in Christ/my [spiritual] children) are conducting their lives like you are! **5** Dear friend, you are [serving Jesus] loyally/faithfully whenever you do things to help fellow believers, [even those whom you] do not know, who are traveling [around doing God's work]. **6** [Some of] them have reported before the congregation [here how] you have showed that you love them. You should continue to help such people in their travels in a way that is pleasing to God. **7** When those fellow believers went out [to tell people about Jesus] [MTY], the people who do not believe in Christ did not give them anything [to help them]. **8** So we [who believe in Christ] ought to give food and money to such people to help [them as they teach others God's] true message. **9** I wrote [a letter] to the congregation [telling them to help those fellow believers]. However, Diotrephes does not (acknowledge my authority/[pay any attention to what] I wrote), because he (desires to be in charge/wants to be the leader) of [the congregation]. **10** So, when I arrive [there], I will [publicly] tell what he does: He tells others evil nonsense about us [in order to] harm [us by what he] says, and he is not content with only doing that. He himself refuses to receive the fellow believers who are traveling around doing God's work, and he also stops those who want to receive them by expelling them from the congregation. **11** Dear friend, do not imitate a bad [example like that]. Instead, [keep imitating] good [examples. Remember that] people who do good deeds ([truly] belong to God/are [spiritual children] of God), [but] those who do [what is] evil do not (know/have fellowship with) God. **12** All [the believers who know Demetrius] say that he [is a good person]. The fact [that he conducts his life in a way that is consistent/in accordance with God's] true [message] shows [that he is a good person], and we also say the same thing [about him]. You know that what we say [about him] is true. [So it will be good if you welcome him and help him. He is the one who will be bringing this letter to you]. **13** [When I began] to write this letter, I had much more [that I intended] to tell you. But [now] I do not want to say [it] in a letter [MTY]. **14** Instead, I expect to [come and] see you soon. Then we will talk directly with one another. [I pray that God will enable] you [to experience inner] peace. Our friends [here] (send you their greetings/say that they are thinking affectionately about you) [MTY]. Tell our friends [there] that we (send our greetings to/are thinking fondly about) them.

Jude

1 [I am] Jude. I [serve] Jesus Christ [like] a voluntary slave [MET]. I am a [younger] brother of James, [the leader of all the congregations. I am writing] to you whom [God] has chosen [to belong to him. You are] loved by God [our] Father and protected by Jesus Christ (OR, whom [God] has protected [to present] to Jesus Christ). **2** [I pray that] you will continue to [experience] very much [God acting] mercifully toward you, [causing you to have inner] peace, and loving [you]. **3** You whom I love, I (was very eager/very much wanted) to write to you about that which we all (share/have in common), which is how ([God/Jesus Christ]) [has] saved [us]. But now I realize that it is necessary [for me] to write to you in order to exhort you to defend the [truth about Christ] that we believe. [Jesus and his apostles] gave that truth once and for all to us who belong to God, [and we must not let it be changed] {[anyone revise/change it]}. **4** Some people falsely [teach that because] God kindly does for us what we do not deserve, it (does not matter/is all right) if we continue to sin. [Those people show by the way that they conduct their lives] that they do not want to admit/accept that Jesus Christ [is] our only Master and Lord. [It was written] long ago {[Someone] long ago wrote} that [God] would condemn (such ungodly people/people like that whose lives are displeasing to him). But some [of those] people have entered [MET] [like crawling snakes] into your congregations [and oppose the truth about Christ, so you must resist/oppose them]. **5** Although you previously knew all these things, [there are certain things about] which I desire to remind you. [Do not forget that although] the Lord rescued [his people] from Egypt, he later destroyed most of those same people, ones who did not believe [in him]. **6** And there were [many] angels to [whom God assigned/gave positions of authority in heaven]. But many did not continue to rule with authority [in those positions]. Instead, they abandoned the place that [God] gave them to live [in heaven]. So God has put those angels in chains forever in the darkness [in hell. They will stay there] until the great day when [God] will judge [and punish] them. **(aïdios g126, questioned)** **7** Similarly, the people who lived [MTY] in Sodom and Gomorrah [cities] and the nearby cities committed sexual immorality. They sought all kinds of sexual relations that differ [from what God permits. So God destroyed their cities. What happened to those people and those angels] shows that [God will] punish [people, such as the ones who teach false doctrine], in the eternal fire [of hell]. **(aiōnios g166, questioned)** **8** Similarly, these [ungodly people in your midst] also defile their own bodies [by living immorally], because [they claim/say that God revealed] in visions [that they should act that way]. They refuse to [allow] anyone to have authority over them, and they (revile/speak evil about) [God's] glorious/wonderful [angels]. **9** When (the devil/Satan) argued with the chief angel, Michael, about [who would take away] the body of [the prophet] Moses [to bury it], Michael did not [do as these teachers of false doctrine do. Even though Michael has much more authority than they do], he did not disrespectfully (revile/say evil things to) Satan and accuse/condemn him. Instead, he [only] said, "[I desire that] the Lord [God] will rebuke you!" **10** But the [ones in your midst] who teach false doctrine (revile/speak evil against) the [spiritual] beings that they do not understand. They also [do the evil things that they desire], things that they know about (naturally/without needing to think), things that they just do without considering [the consequences/results], like animals. So they destroy themselves. [But they will also be punished by God] {[God will also] punish them}. **11** [God will do] terrible things to those who teach false doctrine! They conduct their lives [wickedly] like Cain, [who murdered his brother because he was] ([jealous/angry because God accepted his brother's sacrifice and did not accept his]). These false teachers (devote themselves to [MET] [doing] wrong things [like] Balaam, who [tried to induce God's people to sin in order to get the money that was offered to him]. They will perish like Korah, who rebelled [against the authority that God gave to Moses]. **12** Those teachers of false doctrine are [as dangerous to you as] [MET] (hidden rocks on a reef/rocks underneath the surface of the ocean) [are to a boat]. When you gather together [to eat the meals that] help you believers to love each other more and have a closer relationship with each other, they [join you and] carouse shamelessly, caring [only] for themselves [and not for others. Because they do not do anything to help others] [MET], they are [as useless as] clouds that are blown along by the wind {that the wind blows along} but that do not [produce/give] any rain. [They are as disappointing as] [MET] trees that do not produce fruit in the autumn [as we expect them to]. They are not only [spiritually] [MET] dead themselves, [but they are] not [able to cause others to be] alive [spiritually, just like] [MET] trees that have been {that [someone] has} uprooted and [as a result] are unable to produce any fruit. **13** They are [restless] [MET], [like] the pounding waves of the ocean. [Just like] waves [produce foul-smelling] foam on the shore, [those teachers of false doctrine do] shameful [MTY] [deeds. We cannot depend/rely on them to show us how to conduct our lives] [MET], [just like we cannot depend/rely on] (meteors/falling stars) [to show us the way when we travel]. [God] has reserved intense darkness for them forever [in

hell]. **(aiōn g165, questioned)** **14** Enoch, the sixth [person in the line of people who descended] from Adam, prophesied this about those [teachers of false doctrine]: "Listen carefully to this: The Lord will certainly come with a countless number of his holy [angels] in order **15** to judge everyone, and to punish all wicked and (ungodly people/people whose lives are displeasing to God) for all the (ungodly things/things that displease God) that they did in (an ungodly way/a way that displeases God), and for all the harsh things that ungodly sinful people have spoken against him." **16** Those [teachers] of [false doctrine] grumble [about] the [things that God does]. They complain [about what happens to them]. They do the sinful things that their [bodies] desire. They talk boastfully. They (flatter/say nice things to) people, only in order to get [those people to give them the] things that they want. **17** But you people whom I love need to remember the things that were predicted by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ {that the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ said would happen}. **18** They told you, "In the final period of time [in which we are now living] there will be people who will laugh at [the truths that God has revealed]. They will do the (ungodly things/things that are displeasing to God) that their [bodies] desire." **19** [That describes] the teachers of false doctrine [well, because] they are the ones who cause divisions among believers. They do what their own minds tell them to do. The Spirit [of God] does not live within them. **20** But you people whom I love, (hold/continue to trust) firmly to the very sacred truths that you believe. Pray by [letting] the Holy Spirit enable/empower you. **21** Keep conducting your lives in [a way that is appropriate for those whom] God loves. Keep constantly expecting that our Lord Jesus Christ will [act] mercifully toward you. Keep expecting that until [the time when we begin] living eternally [with him]. **(aiōnios g166)** **22** Mercifully [help] those who are not certain [what teaching they should believe]. **23** [Rescue] others from [the influence of those who teach what is false] [MET], [as you would rescue things by] snatching [them from] a fire. Pity those [whom the teachers of false doctrine have completely convinced], but beware that [you yourselves are not influenced by them] {that they do not influence you}. Detest [doing or even thinking about the sins that those people commit, just like you would detest] [MET] touching not only filthy things but the clothes that were stained by those things {that those things stained}. **24** God is able to keep you from ceasing to trust in him (OR, from sinning), and he is able to bring you into his glorious presence. [As you stand before him], there will be nothing [for which] you [will] be condemned {[he can] condemn you}, and you will be rejoicing greatly. **25** He is the only true God. He has saved us as a result of what Jesus Christ our Lord [did for us]. God was glorious and great and mighty and he [ruled] with great authority before time began. [He is still like that], and [he will remain like that] forever! (Amen!/That is true!) **(aiōn g165)**

Revelation

1 [This book tells the message] that God revealed to Jesus Christ. God revealed it to him in order that he might reveal to his servants the [things/events] that must happen soon. Jesus communicated [this message] to [me], his servant John, by sending his angel to me. **2** [As I write it, I], John, am truthfully reporting everything that I saw [and heard], the message from God that Jesus Christ [truthfully reported to me]. **3** [God is] pleased with those who read [this book to the congregations], and he will be pleased with those who listen carefully to it and obey what [he has commanded in this prophetic message that I] am writing. [So read this message to the congregations, listen carefully to it, and obey it], because [these things that Jesus has revealed] will happen soon. **4** [I], John, am [writing this] to [you believers in] the seven congregations [that are located] in Asia [province]. [I pray that God the Father, God's Spirit, and Jesus Christ] be kind to (OR, bless) you and cause you to have [inner] peace. [God the Father is] the one who exists, who has always existed, and who will always exist. The Spirit [of God, who] is in front of God's throne, has [all kinds of power] (OR, The Spirit of God [is symbolized] by seven spirits who are in front of God's throne). **5** Jesus Christ is the one who has faithfully told [people about God]. He is the first one (whom God has raised from the dead/who became alive again after being dead), in order [to show that God will raise us who trust in Jesus]. Jesus is the one who rules the kings of the earth. He is the one who loves us. He is the one who has erased the record our sins. He did that by shedding his blood [when he died on the cross]. **6** He is [the one who] has caused us to become people whose lives God rules, and he has made us to be priests [who serve] God his Father. [As a result of this, we acknowledge that] Jesus Christ is eternally divine and eternally powerful. (Amen!/That is true!) **(aiōn g165)** **7** Listen carefully! Christ will surely come in the midst of the clouds [in order that he may judge the rebellious people of earth], and everyone [SYN] will see him [come]. Even those who [are responsible for] piercing [and killing] him [MTY] [will see him come. People from] all people-groups on earth will mourn because he [will punish them]. (Amen!/May it be so.) **8** The Lord God declares, "I am the one who created [everything], and I am the [one who will cause everything to] end [MET]." He is the one who exists, who has always existed, and who will always exist. He is the Almighty One. **9** I, John, your fellow believer, am suffering as you [are] because of our letting Jesus rule [our lives]. We are steadfastly enduring [trials] because of our relationship with him. I was punished by being sent/exiled to Patmos island because [of my proclaiming] God's message and telling [people about] Jesus. **10** [God's] Spirit took control of me on one of the days [that we believers met to worship] the Lord. **11** [At that time], I heard behind me someone [speaking to me as loudly and as clearly] [SIM] as a trumpet. He was saying [to me], "Write on a scroll what you see, and send it to seven congregations. Send it to [the congregations] in Ephesus [city], in Smyrna [city], in Pergamum [city], in Thyatira [city], in Sardis [city], in Philadelphia [city], and in Laodicea [city]." **12** [In this vision] I turned in order that I might see who had spoken to me [SYN]. When I turned, **13** I saw seven golden lampstands. In the midst of the lampstands there was [someone] who looked like he came from heaven. He wore a robe that reached to his feet, and he wore a gold band around his chest. **14** The hair on his head was white like white wool [or] like snow. His eyes were [shining brightly] [SIM], like a flame of fire. **15** His feet [looked] like brass that glows [as it is being] purified {as [people] purify it} in a furnace. [When he spoke], his voice [sounded] like the sound [made by] a huge waterfall (OR, a great/wide river of rushing water). **16** In his right hand he held seven stars. A sword that had two sharp edges extended from his mouth. His face [shone as bright] as the sun shines [at midday] [MTY]. **17** When I saw him, I fell down at his feet [and was unable to move or speak] [SIM], as though [I were] dead. But he put his right hand on me and said to me, "Don't be afraid! I am the one who created [all things] and the [one who will cause all things to] end. **18** I am the living one. Although I died, I am alive again and will live forever! I have [the power to cause people] to die, and I have authority over the place where all the dead people [are]. **(aiōn g165, Hadēs g86)** **19** So write the [vision] that you are seeing. Write about the [conditions] that exist now, and the [events] that are about to happen next. **20** The meaning of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands [that you saw is this]: The seven stars [in my hand represent the leaders, who are like] angels, [who watch over] the seven congregations, and the [seven] lampstands [represent] the seven congregations."

2 [He also said to me], "Write [this message] to the leader [MET] of the congregation in Ephesus [city: 'I] am saying these things [to you: I am] the one who firmly holds the seven stars in my right hand. [I am] the one who walks among the seven golden lampstands. **2** I know what you do: You labor [for me] intensely, and you continue [to serve me] steadfastly. [I know] that you cannot tolerate people [who teach what is] evil [MTY], and that you investigated people who falsely claimed that they are apostles, and you found that they were lying. **3** [I know] also that you continue [to

serve me] steadfastly. [Even when people] ([caused you to suffer/persecuted you]), you continued to serve [me] because [you believe] in me, and you have not become too tired [to keep on serving me]. **4** Nevertheless, I have [this complaint] against you: You no longer love [each other and me] as you did when you first [MTY] [trusted in me]. **5** [So, I tell you to] remember how you used to love [me and each other, and] to [realize] that you no longer love as you did. [I tell] you to turn away from your sin [of not loving me and each other], and start loving [each other and me again] as you did at first. If you do not turn away from your sinful behavior, I will come [to judge] you and cause your group to cease to be a Christian congregation [MET]. **6** But you have the following good quality: Those Nicolaitans [teach you believers that you can worship idols and that you may act immorally]. However, you hate such teaching, just like I also hate it. **7** Everyone who wants to understand my message [MTY] must listen carefully to the message that [God's] Spirit speaks to the congregations. To everyone who overcomes [Satan], I will give the right to eat [fruit] [MTY] from the tree [that gives] eternal life, the tree that is in God's garden.'" **8** "Write [this message] to the leader [MET] of the congregation in Smyrna [city: 'I am] saying these things [to you. I am] the one who caused [everything to have a beginning] and [who will cause all things to] end. I am the one who died and became alive [again]. **9** I know that you suffer [because of what unbelievers do to you], and that you lack [material possessions]. But [I also know that] you are [spiritually] [MET] rich. [I know] that people (slander/say evil things about) you. They say that they are Jews, but I do not [consider that they are Jews. I consider that] they [belong to] the group that Satan [controls]! **10** Do not be afraid of any of the things that you are about to suffer. The truth is that the devil is about to [put] some of you in prison, to tempt you [to deny that you believe in me]. For a short period of time you will suffer [because of what people will do to you] [MTY]. Continue to trust in me, [even if] they kill you [because you trust in me]. As a result, I will [reward you with] eternal life, [just like] [MET] [people reward a victorious athlete by putting] a wreath [on his head]. **11** Everyone who wants to understand [MTY] must listen carefully to the message that [God's] Spirit speaks to the congregations. [After] those who conquer [Satan die], they will live with God. They will never suffer again, even though many others will suffer as though they died a second time.'" **12** "Write [this message] to the leader [MET] of the congregation in Pergamum [city: 'I am] saying these things [to you. I am] the one who has the sharp two-edged sword. **13** I know where you live: It is where Satan controls [MTY] [people]. [I know] that you firmly believe in me [MTY]. You did not deny that you believe/trust in me, not even in the time when Antipas, (my faithful witness/who faithfully told people about me), [was alive]. He was killed {People killed him} in your city, a city where [people] habitually obey Satan. **14** Nevertheless, I have this [complaint] against you: You permit some of your [members] to teach things like Balaam [taught long ago. He] taught Balak to persuade the Israeli people to sin. [Specifically], he taught them to eat food that had been offered to idols, and to practice sexual immorality. **15** In that way, you are also permitting some of [your members] to practice what the Nicolaitans teach, [which is like what Balaam taught]. **16** So you must stop doing [this]. If [you do] not stop doing [it], I will come to you suddenly. Using the words that I will say I will fight against those [who believe this false teaching] [MTY], and I will ([condemn them/say that they must be punished]). **17** Everyone who wants to understand [MTY] must listen carefully to the message that [God's] Spirit speaks to the congregations. To everyone who conquers [Satan], I will give [blessings that will be like] the [food called] manna [that is in a jar] that is {that someone has} hidden. I will also give them a white stone on which [I will] engrave a new name, a name that no one but the ones who receive it will know.'" **18** "Write [this message] to the leader [MET] of the congregation in Thyatira [city: 'I], (the Son of God/the one who is also God), am saying these things [to you: I am] the one whose eyes [shine] [SIM] like a flame of fire, and whose feet [shine] [MET] like fine brass. **19** I know that you love [me and each other], and that you trust [in me]. I know that you serve [others] and that you steadfastly endure [a lot of difficulties/trials. I know] that you are doing these things more now than [you have done them] in the past. **20** Nevertheless, I have this [complaint] about you: You tolerate that woman [among your members who is like] [MET] [that wicked queen] Jezebel [who lived long ago]. She says that she (is a prophetess/proclaims messages that come directly from God), but through what she teaches she is deceiving my servants. She is urging them to commit sexual immorality and to eat food that they have offered to idols. **21** Although I gave her time to stop [her sexual immorality and pagan practices], she did not want to stop [doing them]. **22** [As a result], I will cause her to become very ill [MTY]. I will also cause those [who act immorally as she does] [MET] to suffer greatly, if they do not stop [doing] what she does. **23** Some [have become like] her children by doing [what she teaches] [MET]; I will certainly get rid of them. As a result, all the congregations will recognize that I am the one who finds out what everyone thinks and desires [MTY]. I will reward each of you according to what you have done. **24** But I have something good to say about the rest [of

you believers] in Thyatira. [It is good] that you do not accept that [false] teaching. [It is good that you reject] what those [teachers] call their 'secret [practices', practices that] Satan [inspired] (OR, what those teachers [facetiously] call the secret, profound [practices that] Satan [inspires]). I will not burden you with any commands [other than that which you already have been told]. **25** Just keep [believing firmly in me, and obey me] until I return. **26** As for those who conquer [Satan] and who (OR, [because] they) keep on doing what I command until they die, I will give them authority, just like I myself received it from my Father. [They will exercise that authority] over the nations [that rebel against God]. **27** They will rule them [severely as if they were striking them] [HYP] with an iron rod. They [will destroy those who do evil things] just like [people] shatter clay pots [MET]. **28** I will also enable [everyone who conquers Satan to shine gloriously like] the morning star [does] [MTY, MET]. **29** Everyone who wants to understand [MTY] must listen carefully to the message that [God's] Spirit speaks to the congregations.'"

3 "Write [this message] to the leader [MET] of the congregation in Sardis [city]: 'I am saying these things [to you. I am] the one who can give [to people] all the power of God's Spirit (OR, in whom is the Spirit of God who has all kinds of power; OR, [who has God's Spirit, who is symbolized as] seven spirits), and [I am the one] who has the seven stars. I know everything that you have done. You [(pl)] appear to be alive [spiritually], but [you are so weak spiritually it is as though] you are dead [MET]. **2** [Become aware of your spiritual need as though you were] awaking [from sleep] [MET], and strengthen [yourself spiritually, because you are so useless that you are like someone who is] about to die [MET]. [You must do this] because I know that my God considers that nothing that you do is satisfactory. **3** So then, keep remembering [God's message, what] you accepted when you heard it. Obey it continually, and turn away from your sinful behavior. If [you do not become aware of your spiritual need and turn away from your] [MET] [sinful behavior], I will come to you [when you are not expecting me], as a thief [comes] [SIM]. You will never know at what time I will come to [judge] you. **4** Nevertheless, [there] in Sardis you have a few members who [have not been doing what is wrong. It is as though they] have not soiled their garments [MET]. As a result, because they are worthy [to live with me], they will live with me [and will be pure in every way] [MET], [like people who are dressed] in [pure] white [clothing]. **5** Everyone who conquers [Satan] I will dress in these same white garments [MET] (OR, will be [pure in every way as though they are] dressed in these white garments), and I will never erase their names from the book [that contains the names of the people who have eternal] life. Instead, as my Father and his angels are listening, I will acknowledge that they [MTY] [belong to me]. **6** Everyone who wants to understand [MTY] must listen carefully to the message that [God's] Spirit speaks to the congregations.'" **7** "Write [this message] to the leader [MET] of the congregation in Philadelphia [city]: 'I am saying these things [to you. I am] God's Holy One, the True One. [Just like King] David had authority [MTY] [to allow people to enter the ancient city of Jerusalem, so I have the authority to allow people to enter] my kingdom. [I am] the one who opens [doors] so that no one can close them, and who closes doors so that no one can open them. **8** I know everything you have done. Be aware that I have opened a door before you, a door that no one can close. [I know that although] there are not [many believers] (OR, much [spiritual] strength) [MTY] [in your congregation], you have obeyed what I say, and you have not denied [that you believe in] me [MTY]. **9** [I am aware that] some of your people meet together with those who [follow/worship] Satan. They claim to be Jews, but I know that they are not true Jews. They are lying. I will cause them to come to you and to bow down [humbly] at your feet and to acknowledge that I love you. **10** Because you have paid attention to the message to endure patiently [when you suffered], I will keep you [safe from those who will try to harm you spiritually] during the period/time that is about to come. At that time [God will cause rebellious people] on the earth to suffer, in order that I can determine [whether they will turn away from their sins or not]. **11** I am coming soon. [So] continue believe firmly the [message] that you have received, in order that no one may cause you to lose the reward [that God has reserved for] you. **12** I will make everyone who conquers [Satan secure]. They will stand in the temple of my God, [they will stand firm like] [MET] pillars, and they will remain there forever. I will mark them with the name of my God, [showing that they belong to him. I will also mark them] with the name of the city of my God, [showing that they will live there. That city is] the New Jerusalem, the city that my God will cause to descend down from heaven. [I will also mark them] with my new name, [showing that they belong to me]. **13** Everyone who wants to understand [MTY] must listen carefully to the message that [God's] Spirit speaks to the congregations.'" **14** "Write [this message] to the leader [MET] of the congregation in Laodicea [city: 'I] am saying these things [to you. I am] the one who (guarantees [everything that God's promises/] that [he] will do [all that he has promised]) [MET]. I am the one who testifies [about God] reliably and accurately. I am the one who God used to create [everything]. **15** I know everything that you have

done: You [neither deny that you trust in me nor love/obey me zealously/wholeheartedly. You are like water that is] neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot! **16** Because you are neither enthusiastic about me nor concerned about your lack of spiritual growth [MET], I am about to [reject] you [MET], [as if] I were spitting [lukewarm water] out of my mouth. **17** You are saying, "[Because we have all that we need spiritually], we are [like] rich [people who] have acquired a lot of wealth. We lack nothing!" But you do not realize that you are [lacking in so many ways spiritually that you are like] [MET] people who are very wretched and pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. **18** I advise you [to obtain from me all that you need spiritually, as though you were] buying from me gold that has been refined by fire {that fire has refined}, in order that you may be [truly] rich [MET] [spiritually. Let me make you righteous, as though you were] [MET] buying from me white garments in order that you might wear clothes instead of being naked and ashamed. [Let me help you to perceive spiritual things, as though] [MET] you were buying from me eye salve to put in your eyes in order that you might see. **19** [Since] I rebuke and correct all those whom I affectionately love, earnestly stop your sinful behavior. **20** Be aware that [I invite each one of you to respond to me] as though [MET] I [was] standing [waiting] at [your] door and knocking. I will come to all those who hear my voice and respond to me, and I [will fellowship] with them [as friends do when they] eat together [MET]. **21** I will permit everyone who conquers [Satan] to sit [and rule] with me on my throne, just like I conquered [Satan] and now sit [and rule] beside my Father on his throne. **22** Everyone who wants to understand [MTY] must listen carefully to the message that [God's] Spirit speaks to the congregations.'"

4 After these things I, [John], saw [in the vision that] there was a door open in heaven. The one whose voice was like [SIM] a [loud] trumpet, the one [who had spoken to me] previously, said [to me], "Come up here! I will show you events that must happen later." **2** Immediately I experienced that [God's] Spirit [was specially controlling me]. There was a throne there in heaven, and on the throne someone was sitting [and ruling]. **3** He [shone] like [SIM] a [brilliant crystalline] jasper [jewel] and like a [brilliant red] carnelian [jewel]. Around the throne was a rainbow that [shone like a brilliant green] emerald [jewel]. **4** Around the throne there were 24 other thrones. On these thrones 24 elders were [sitting]. They were wearing [pure] white garments and had golden crowns on their heads. **5** From the throne there came lightning and rumblings and thundering. Seven torches of fire were burning in front of the throne. Those [represent] the Spirit of God, who has all kinds of [power] (OR, who is [also] symbolized as seven spirits). **6** In front of the throne [there was what looked] like an ocean [made of] glass. It was [clear], like crystal. On each of the four sides of the throne there was a living [creature]. Each one was covered with eyes in front and behind. **7** The first living [creature] was like a lion. The second living [creature] was like an ox. The third living [creature] had a face like a man's face. The fourth living creature was like an eagle that was flying. **8** Each of the four living [creatures] had six wings. They were covered with eyes, all around [their bodies] and under [their wings]. Day and night they continually [LIT] sing: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty One. He is the one who has always existed, who exists now, and who will always exist. **9** The living [creatures praise], honor [DOU], and thank the one who sits on the throne, the one who lives forever. **(aiōn g165)** **10** Whenever they do that, the 24 elders (prostrate themselves/kneel down) before the one who sits on the throne, and they worship him, the one who lives forever. They lay their crowns in front of the throne and sing: **(aiōn g165)** **11** Our(exc) Lord and God, you are worthy that all beings praise you, you are worthy that all beings honor you, and you are worthy that all beings acknowledge that you are the powerful one, because you alone created all things. Moreover, because you planned that they should exist, you created them, and so they exist.

5 I saw that there was a scroll in the right hand of the one who was sitting on the throne. The scroll was written on its outside as well as on its inside, and it was sealed {Someone had written on the outside as well as on the inside of the scroll and sealed it} with seven seals. **2** I saw a strong angel who was announcing in a loud voice, "(The person who is worthy to break the seals of the scroll and then to open it should come to do it!/Who is worthy to break the seals of the scroll and then to open it?)" [RHQ] **3** But no created being in heaven nor any created being on the earth nor any created being under the earth was able to open the scroll and see what was written on it. **4** I cried loudly because there was no one worthy to do that. **5** But one of the elders said to me, "Do not cry any longer! Look, the one who is called the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the Messiah who is the descendant of King David, has overcome Satan! As a result, he is worthy to break the seven seals on the scroll and open it!" **6** Then I saw Jesus, the one who is like a [MET] sacrificial lamb, standing there. He stood near the throne, in the midst of the four living creatures and the elders. It appeared that he had been killed {that people had killed him}, but he was alive again. He had seven horns [on his head], and he had seven eyes that symbolize the Spirit of God who has all kinds of power (OR, who is also symbolized

as seven spirits). [He] sends [God's] Spirit out into all the earth. 7 He came and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who sits on the throne. 8 When he took the scroll, the four living [creatures] and the 24 elders (prostrated themselves/knelt down) before [Jesus], the [one who is like a] lamb, [to worship him]. They each had a harp, and they had golden bowls full of incense that [represents] the prayers of God's people. 9 The living [creatures] and the elders sang a new song. They sang: You are worthy to receive the scroll and to open its seals, because you were killed, and because you redeemed/bought people for God from every tribe, language [MTY], people-group, and nation with the blood that flowed from your body when you died. 10 You have caused them to become a people over whom our God rules, and to become priests who serve him, and they will rule on [MTY] the earth. 11 As I [continued to] look, I heard the voices of many angels around the throne and around the living [creatures] and the elders. There were millions of them, a [crowd so large that no one could count them]. 12 They were singing in a loud voice: "The one who is like a lamb was killed {whom his enemies killed} but he became alive again. He is worthy that all created beings acknowledge that he is infinitely powerful, infinitely rich, infinitely wise, and infinitely strong! He is worthy of being honored and praised by all created beings!" 13 I also heard every creature that is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the ocean, every creature in all those places, saying (OR, singing): "We must forever praise and honor the one who sits on the throne and the one who is like a lamb, May they reign with complete power forever!" **(aiōn g165)** 14 The four living [creatures] said, "(Amen!/May it be so!)" Then the elders prostrated themselves and worshipped [God and Jesus].

6 I saw that [Jesus, the one who is like a] lamb, opened the first of the seven seals [of the scroll]. Then I heard one of the four living [creatures] say in a voice [as loud] as [SIM] thunder, "Come!" 2 Then I saw a white horse [come out]. The one who sat on it had a bow [and arrows]. [God] gave him a crown [to show that he was the king]. Then the one who conquers [people] went out to continue to conquer [people]. 3 When the [one who was like a] lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living [creature] say, "Come!" 4 Then a red horse came out. The one sitting on it was allowed {[God] allowed the one sitting on it} to cause [people] to no longer [live] peacefully, but instead to be killing each other. [For this purpose] he was given {[God's agent] gave to him} a large sword. 5 When [the one who is like a] lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living [creature] say, "Come!" This time, I saw a black horse [come out]. The one who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 I heard a voice [that sounded] like [it was coming from] among the four living [creatures]. It was saying ([to the horseman/to the man who was sitting on the black horse]), "A quart of wheat [will cost so much that] a man must work a whole day to earn enough money to buy it, and three quarts of barley will sell for the same price. But do not cut off [the supply of] olive oil or the wine [MTY]!" 7 When the [one who is like a] lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living [creature] say, "Come!" 8 This time I saw a pale horse [come out]. The one who sat on it is named '[The one who causes] death [PRS]', and [the one that is named 'The place where dead people go'] accompanied him. [God] gave them authority over one quarter of the people on earth to incite them to kill each other with weapons [SYN], and also authority to kill them (by [causing them to] starve, by [their causing them to become] sick from epidemics, and by [their causing them to be attacked by] wild animals. **(Hadēs g86)** 9 When the [one who is like a] lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under (OR, at the base of) the altar [in heaven] the souls of [God's servants] who had been killed {whom [people had] killed} because of [their believing] God's message, and because they told others [the message about Jesus]. 10 They spoke loudly [to God] saying, "Sovereign/Almighty Lord, you are holy and faithful. How long [will it be] before you judge [and punish] the people on earth who murdered [us(exc)]?" 11 [God] gave to each of them a long white robe, and [he] told them to rest a little longer until [people] killed all the believers who served [the Lord] with them. They were believers whom [God wanted to die in just the same way] that these others had been killed. 12 I saw that when [the one who is like a] lamb opened the sixth seal, the earth shook violently. The sun became as black as cloth made (of [black] wool/of pitch). The whole moon became [red] [SIM] like blood. 13 The stars fell to the earth [in great numbers], just [SIM] like immature figs fall when a fig tree is shaken by a strong wind {when a strong wind shakes a fig tree}. 14 The sky split open and [rolled up on either side] just [SIM] like an [old] scroll rolls up [when it is split in two]. Every mountain and island moved out of its place. 15 [As a result, all the rebellious people] of the earth, [including] kings, high-ranking people, generals, the rich people, the powerful people, along with everyone [else], both slave and free, hid themselves in caves and between the mountain rocks. 16 They shouted to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us [(exc)] and hide us [(exc)] in order that the one who sits upon the throne will not be able to see us [(exc)] [MTY], and [in order that] the [one who is like a] lamb will not be able to punish [MTY] us [(exc)]. 17 This is the terrible day on which they will punish

[MTY] us [(exc)], and [when that happens], no one will be able to survive! [RHQ]"

7 After this I saw four angels. One was standing at the north, one at the east, one at the south, and one at the west. They were restraining the winds that blew from all directions [MTY] to keep them from blowing [destructively] on the earth or on the ocean or even on any tree. **2** I saw another angel come up from the east. He was carrying God's seal. [With this] seal God, who is all-powerful, marks [his own people to protect them]. The angel called out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom [he] had given [power] to harm the earth and the ocean. He said **3** [to them], "Do not harm the earth or the ocean or the trees until we [(exc)] have marked the servants of our [(inc)] God on their foreheads." **4** [Then the angel and his fellow angels marked all God's servants]. I heard the number of people who were marked {whom [the angels] marked} [because of their being God's servants. The number was] 144,000. They were from all the tribes of Israel. [They symbolized the complete number of people whom God would protect]. **5** [The angels] marked 12,000 people from the tribe of Judah, 12,000 from the tribe of Reuben, 12,000 from the tribe of Gad, **6** 12,000 from the tribe of Asher, 12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali, 12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh, **7** 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon, 12,000 from the tribe of Levi, 12.000 from the tribe of Issachar, **8** 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun, 12,000 from the tribe of Joseph, and 12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin. **9** After these things I saw a huge crowd. There were so [many people] that no one would be able to count them. [They were] from every nation, every tribe, every people-group, and every language [MTY]. They were standing before the throne and before [Jesus, the one who is like a] lamb. They were wearing white robes and held palm branches [to wave them in order to celebrate]. **10** They shouted loudly, "[O] our [(exc)] God, you who sit on the throne, and [Jesus, you who are like a] lamb, [you two] have delivered [us(exc) from Satan's power]!" **11** All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living [creatures]. They all bowed down before the throne with their faces [to the ground] and worshipped God. **12** They said, "May it be so! [We(exc)] praise, thank, and honor [you], our [(exc)] God, forever! [We(exc) acknowledge] that you are completely wise, the powerful one, who is forever able to accomplish everything he wants to. (May everyone acknowlege that it is so!/Amen!)" **(aiōn g165)** **13** Then one of the elders asked me, "These [people] who are wearing white robes, [do you know] who they are, and where they come from?" **14** I answered him, "Sir, [I do not know. Surely] you know [who they are]!" He said to me, "These are the people (whom [others] have caused to suffer greatly/who [have been persecuted]). [Because they believed that Jesus, the one who is like a sacrificial] lamb, [atoned for our sin when] his blood [flowed from his body when he died, it is as though] [MET] they have washed their robes and have made them [clean and] white. **15** Because of this, they are in front of God's throne, and they serve him day and night in his [heavenly temple. God], the one who sits on the throne, will shelter/protect them [MTY]. **16** [As a result], they will never again be hungry. They will never again be thirsty. The sun will never again (beat on/burn) them, nor will any heat [scorch them]. **17** This is because the [one who is like a] lamb who is at the throne will [take care of them, just like] a shepherd [takes care of his sheep] [MET]. He will guide them [to the source of eternal life, just like a shepherd leads his sheep] to springs of water, [which enable the sheep] to live [MET]. God will [cause them to no longer be sad. It will be as if he were] wiping away all tears from their eyes [MTY]."

8 When [Jesus], the [one who is like a] lamb, opened the seventh seal, there was no sound at all in heaven for (a very short time/about half an hour). **2** I saw the seven angels who stand in front of God. A trumpet was given {([God/An angel]) gave a trumpet} to each one of them. **3** Another angel, who had a golden container for burning incense, came and stood at the altar. [He was given] {[An angel] gave to him} a large quantity of incense, in order that he might offer it, with the prayers of all God's people, upon the golden altar that is in front of [God's] throne. [Then he burned this incense on the altar]. **4** From the [pot in] the angel's hand, the smoke of the incense, along with the prayers of God's people, went up to God. **5** [In response], the angel took the golden incense burner and filled it with [coals of] fire from the altar. He threw [the contents of] the [MTY] incense burner onto the earth. Thunder sounded and rumbled, lightning was flashing, and the earth shook. **6** The seven angels, [each] of which had [one of] the seven trumpets, prepared to blow them. **7** When the first angel blew his trumpet, hail and fire mixed with blood poured down onto the earth. [As a result], a third of [everything on the surface of] the land was burned up {[the fire] burned up a third of [everything on the surface of] the land}. A third of the trees were also burned up {It also burned up a third of the trees}, and [a third of] all the green grass was burned up. **8** When the second angel blew his trumpet, something that was like a huge burning mountain fell into the ocean. [As a result], a third of the ocean became [red like] [MTY] blood, **9** a third of the living creatures in the ocean died, and a third of the ships [in the ocean] were destroyed. **10** When the third angel blew his trumpet, a huge star, which was burning like a torch, fell from the sky into a

third of the rivers and into [a third of] the springs. 11 The name of the star is Bitterness. [As a result], the water in a third [of the rivers and springs] became bitter, and many people died from [drinking] the water because it had become bitter. 12 When the fourth angel blew his trumpet, [God] struck the sun, the moon, and the stars, so that they lost a third of their light. The [sun] also did not shine during a third of the day, and [the moon and stars did not shine during a third] of the night. 13 As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying high in the sky, shouting in a loud voice, "Terrible things will happen to [rebellious] people who live on the earth! Terrible things will happen when the three remaining angels blow their trumpets! And they are about to blow them!"

9 The fifth angel blew his trumpet. Then I saw [an evil angel. He was like] a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. He was given {[Someone] gave him} the key to the shaft [that descended] ([to] the underworld/[to] the deep dark pit). **(Abyssos g12)** 2 When he opened that shaft, smoke arose from it like smoke from a huge burning furnace. The smoke prevented [anyone from seeing] the sky and the light of the sun. **(Abyssos g12)** 3 Locusts came out of the smoke onto the earth. [They were given] {[God] gave them} power [to sting people], like scorpions [sting people]. 4 [God] told the locusts that they should not harm grass, nor any plants, nor any tree. [God said that they should harm only] those people who did not have a mark on the forehead [to show that they belonged to God]. 5 [God] did not allow the locusts to kill those people. Instead, [he] allowed them to continue torturing people for five months. When they tortured people, the pain those people felt was like the pain a scorpion causes when it stings someone. 6 During the time [when the locusts torture rebellious people, the pain will be so bad that] people will want to find a way to die, but they will not be able to [PRS]. 7 The locusts looked like horses that are ready for battle. They had on their heads what looked like golden crowns. Their faces were like the faces of people. 8 They had [long] hair like the [long] hair of women. Their teeth were [strong], like lions' teeth. 9 They wore metal breastplates. [When they were flying], their wings made a noise like the roar when many horses [pull chariots as they are] rushing into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions have. With their tails they stung [people] for five months. 11 The king who ruled over them was the angel of the underworld. His name in the Hebrew language is Abaddon. In the Greek language it is Apollyon. [Both of] those names [mean 'Destroyer']. **(Abyssos g12)** 12 That was the end of the first terrible event. [Be aware that] two tragic events are still to come. 13 The sixth angel blew his trumpet. Then I heard a voice from the four corners of the golden altar that is in God's presence. 14 It was saying to the sixth angel, the one who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels whom [I] have bound at the great river Euphrates!" 15 The four angels were released, those who had been {[He] released the four angels, whom [God] had} kept ready for that [exact] hour of that day, of that month, of that year. They were released {[He] released them} in order that they might enable [their soldiers to] kill a third of the [rebellious] people. 16 The number of the soldiers riding on horses who did that was 200 million. I heard [someone say] how many there were. 17 In the vision I saw what the horses and the [beings] that rode them looked like. They [wore] breastplates that were [red] like fire, [dusky blue] like smoke, and [yellow] like sulfur. The heads of the horses were like the heads of lions. From their mouths came fire, smoke, and [fumes of burning] sulfur. 18 Those three things—the fire, the smoke, and the [burning] sulfur from [the horses'] mouths—killed a third of the [rebellious] people. 19 The horses had power with their mouths and with their tails. Their tails have heads like snakes by which they harm people. 20 The rest of the [rebellious] people, those who were not killed by these plagues of [fire and smoke and burning sulfur], did not turn from their sinful behavior. [They did not stop worshipping] the idols that they had made with their own hands. They did not stop worshipping demons and idols [that were made] of gold, of silver, of bronze, of stone, and of wood, [even though they are idols] that can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 They did not stop murdering people, or practicing sorcery, or acting in sexually immoral ways, or stealing [things].

10 [In the vision] I saw another mighty angel that was coming down out of heaven. A cloud [surrounded him]. There was a rainbow over his head. His face [shone] [SIM] like the sun. His legs looked like pillars of fire. 2 He had in his hand a small scroll that was open. He set his right foot on the ocean and his left foot on the land. 3 He shouted something with a loud voice, a voice like the roar of a lion. When he shouted this, it thundered seven [times], speaking [words that I could understand]. 4 When it thundered [like that], I was about to write [the words that I] heard, but a voice from heaven said to me, "Keep secret what the thunder said! Do not write it down!" 5 Then the angel whom I had seen standing on the ocean and the land raised his right hand toward heaven, 6 and he asked the one who lives forever, the one who created heaven and everything that is in it, [who created] the earth and everything that is in it, and [who created] the ocean and everything that is in it, to affirm that what he said was true. [He said that he] would surely no longer delay [what he had planned to do]. **(aiōn g165)** 7 He said that when the time [came] for the seventh angel to blow his trumpet, [he] would complete what God had

secretly planned, just like he announced [long ago] to his servants, the prophets. 8 The one whose voice I had heard from heaven spoke to me again. He said, "Go and take the open scroll from the hand of the angel who is standing on the ocean and on the land." 9 So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take it and eat it. In your mouth it will [taste] sweet like honey, but it will make your stomach bitter." 10 I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. In my mouth it [tasted] sweet like honey, but when I had eaten it, [it] made my stomach turn sour. 11 The one whose [voice spoke from heaven said to me], "You must (prophesy again/proclaim again what I will reveal to you) about many people-[groups], many nations, [speakers of] many languages [MTY], and many kings."

11 [An angel gave] to me a reed similar to a measuring stick. He said [to me], "[Christ says this: 'Go] to the temple [where people worship] God, measure it and the altar [in it], and count the people who worship there. 2 But do not measure the courtyard outside [of the temple] [DOU], because [it] has been given {[God] has given it} to [the] non-Jewish [people. As a result], they will trample [Jerusalem city] for 42 months. 3 I will appoint my two (witnesses/men who will tell others about me). They will proclaim what I reveal to them for 1,260 days. They will wear [rough] clothes made from goat's hair [to show that they are sad about people's sin].'" 4 Those [witnesses are the ones] that are represented by the two olive trees and the two lampstands that are in the presence of the Lord [who rules] the earth [SYM]. 5 If enemies try to harm those [witnesses], fire will come from the mouths of the witnesses and destroy them. If people want to harm them, [the two witnesses] will certainly kill them similarly. 6 Those [witnesses] will have authority to keep rain from falling during the time that they are proclaiming what God reveals to them. They also will have authority to cause water [everywhere] to become [red like] [MET] blood, and [authority] to cause all kinds of plagues to occur. They will do this as often as they want to. 7 When they have finished proclaiming [to people the message from God], the beast that comes up (from the underworld/from the deep dark pit) will attack them, overcome them, and kill them. **(Abyssos g12)** 8 The dead bodies of the [two] witnesses will lie in the street of the great city where their Lord was crucified, the city that is symbolically named Sodom or Egypt [because its people are very evil, like the people who lived in Sodom and Egypt]. 9 Individuals of many people-[groups], tribes, language [groups] [MTY], and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days. But these individuals will not allow [anyone] to bury their bodies. 10 When the [rebellious] people who live on the earth [see that the witnesses are dead], they will rejoice and celebrate. They will send gifts to each other, because these two prophets had [caused plagues to occur which] tormented the [rebellious] people on the earth. 11 But after three and a half days, God will cause those two witnesses to breathe again and live. They will stand up, and those who see them will be terrified. 12 The [two witnesses] will hear a loud voice which came from heaven saying to them: "Come up here!" Then they will go up to heaven in a cloud. Their enemies will see them [as they ascend]. 13 At that same time there will be a terrible earthquake, which will cause a tenth of [the buildings in] [MTY] the city will collapse, and 7,000 people will die. The rest of the people will be afraid and [acknowledge] that the God [who rules in] heaven is awesome. 14 That will be the second terrible event. [Be aware that] the third tragic event will happen soon. 15 Then the seventh angel blew [his trumpet]. Angels in heaven shouted loudly, "Our Lord [God] and the Messiah [whom he has appointed] can now govern [everyone in] [MTY] the world, and they will continue to rule people forever!" **(aiōn g165)** 16 The 24 elders who sit on their thrones in God's presence (prostrated themselves/bowed down low) and worshipped him. 17 They said: Lord God, you are the Almighty One! You are the one who exists now! You are the one who has always existed! We thank you that you have defeated by your power everyone who has rebelled against you, and you now rule over everyone in the world. 18 The unbelieving people of [MTY] the nations were raging at you. As a result you have become very angry with them. You have decided that this is the appropriate time for you to judge all the dead people. You have also decided that it is the time for you to reward all your servants, both the prophets and the rest of your people who reverence you [MTY], whether they were considered socially significant/important or socially insignificant/unimportant. It is time for you to reward all of them! You have also decided it is the time for you to destroy the people who are destroying others on the earth. 19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened {was open} and [I] saw in the temple the sacred box/chest that contains God's commandments. Lightning was flashing, it was thundering and rumbling, the earth shook, and large hailstones [fell from the sky].

12 Then something very unusual appeared in the sky. It was a woman, whose [appearance and] clothing were [MET] as bright as the sun. The moon was under her feet. On her head was a crown [that was made] of twelve stars. 2 She was pregnant. Then, as she was about to give birth, she cried out because she was suffering pain. 3 Something else very unusual appeared in the sky. It was a huge red dragon. It had seven heads and ten horns. On each of its

heads was a royal crown. 4 The dragon's tail dragged a third of the stars from the sky and threw them to the earth. The dragon set himself in front of the woman who was about to give birth, in order that he might eat her child as soon as it was born. 5 The woman gave birth to a son, who [is destined] to rule all the nations with [complete authority as if he was using] [MET] an iron rod [MET]. [God] snatched away her child and took him to [rule from] his throne. 6 The woman fled to a desert. She has a place there that God has prepared for her, in order that [the angels] may take care of her for 1,260 days. 7 [In the vision I saw that] there was a battle in heaven. Michael and the angels that he [commanded] fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back [against Michael and his angels]. 8 But the dragon did not win the battle, so [God] did not allow the dragon and his angels to stay in heaven any longer. 9 The huge dragon was thrown {[Michael and his angels] threw the huge dragon} out [of heaven]. The dragon is the ancient serpent, [the one] who is called the Devil and Satan. He is the one who deceives [people all over] the earth. He was thrown down to the earth, along with all his angels. 10 Then I heard [someone] in heaven shout loudly, saying, Now our God has saved his people by his power, and he rules everyone! Now the Messiah, the one who is the supreme ruler whom God appointed, has authority to rule all people, because our God has thrown out of heaven the one who accuses our fellow believers! The dragon is the one who accuses them day and night before our God, saying that they have sinned and that God ought to punish them. 11 Our fellow believers overcame the dragon because they never stopped trusting (OR, never stopped telling people about) Jesus, and because they trusted in what Jesus, the one who is like a lamb, accomplished when his blood flowed when he died. Even though those believers wanted to live, they were willing to let people kill them for speaking the truth about him. 12 So, all you angels living [MTY] in heaven, rejoice! But terrible things will happen to you ungodly people who [MTY] live on the earth and on the ocean, because the devil has come down to you! He is very angry because he knows that he has only a short time during which he can harm people. 13 When the dragon realized that he had been thrown {that [the angels] had thrown him} down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to a son. 14 But the woman was given two wings like the wings of a very large eagle, in order that she might fly to a desolate place. That is a place [that God] has prepared for her. There she was taken care of {[God's angels] took care of her} for three and a half years. The serpent, [that is, the dragon], was not able to reach her there. 15 The serpent spewed water like a river from his mouth in the direction of the woman, in order that the water might sweep her away. 16 But the ground helped the woman [by] opening up and swallowing the river that the dragon spewed out from his mouth! 17 Then the dragon was very angry with the woman, so he went away to fight against [the people who are like] the rest of her descendants. They are the people who obey God's commandments and who tell other people about Jesus (OR, hold fast to what Jesus taught them).

13 The dragon stood on the ocean shore. I saw a beast that was coming up out of the ocean. It had ten horns and seven heads. On each [of] its horns there was a royal crown. On [each] of its heads there was a name that insulted [God]. 2 The beast that I saw was like a leopard. But its feet were like the feet of a bear, and its mouth was like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave the beast [power]. From his own throne he also gave it authority [to rule people] [DOU]. 3 One of the heads of the beast had been wounded {[The Lord] had wounded one of the heads of the beast}, causing the beast to almost die. But its wound was healed. [As a result, nearly] all [the people of] the earth [HYP, MTY] marveled at the beast and became his disciples. 4 They worshipped the dragon, because he had given to the beast authority [to rule people]. They also worshipped the beast, saying, "No one is [as powerful] as the beast!/ [RHQ] (No one would dare to fight against it!/Who would dare to fight against it?)" [RHQ] 5 The beast was allowed {[God] allowed the beast} to speak [MTY] in a boastful way and to insult [God]. [It was also] allowed {[God] also allowed it} to rule [over people] for 42 months. 6 It [MTY] insulted God, insulted the place where he lives, and insulted everyone who lives with him in heaven. 7 [It was] allowed {[God] allowed it} to fight against God's people and to conquer them. [It was] allowed {[God] allowed it} to have authority [to rule] over every tribe, over every people-[group], over [speakers of] every language [MTY], and over every nation. 8 Most of [HYP] the [people] living on earth worshipped it. They were people whose names were not written in a book by the [one who is like a] lamb, the one who had been killed. Since the beginning of the world [he wrote in it the names of the people who] will have [eternal] life. 9 Everyone who wants to understand [MTY] must listen carefully to [this message from God]: 10 If [God has determined] that some people will be captured by their [enemies], they will be captured. If [God has determined that] some people will be killed with a sword, they will be killed with a sword. So God's people [must be] steadfast, and remain faithful [to him]. 11 I saw another beast, which was coming up from the earth. It had two small horns [on its head] like a sheep has. But it spoke

[things to deceive people], like the dragon does. 12 While the first beast watched, it used all the [same] authority [to rule people that the first beast had]. It forced the people who live on the earth [MTY, DOU] to worship the first beast, that is, the one who was healed of the wound that had caused it to almost die. 13 The second beast performed awesome miracles, even causing fire from the sky to fall to earth while people watched. 14 He performed miracles (on behalf of/with the authority of) the [first] beast. By doing that he deceived the [unbelieving] people on the earth so that they [believed that they should worship the first beast. But this happened only because God] allowed [it to happen]. The second beast told the people living on earth to make an image of the [first] beast, the one that [people] had almost killed with a sword and that then came back to life again. 15 The image of the [first] beast was allowed to breathe, in order that it might speak and in order that [it might command that] whoever refused to worship its image should be killed {that [people] should kill whoever refused to worship its image}. 16 [The second beast] required also that [the first beast's name] be marked {[its agents] mark [the first beast's name]} on the right hand or on the forehead of everyone, those of little [social importance] and of great [social importance], the rich and the poor, free [people] and slaves. [Everyone]! 17 They did this in order that people could not buy [anything] or sell [anything] if they did not have the mark, which represents the name of the beast or the number of its name, [on their foreheads]. 18 You must [think] wisely to understand [the meaning of the mark]. Anyone who thinks wisely should calculate from the number of the beast what the man's name is. That number is 666.

14 But then I saw the [one who is like a] lamb standing on Zion Hill [in Jerusalem]. With him were 144,000 [people]. His name and his Father's name had been written {[He] had written his name and his Father's name} on their foreheads. 2 I heard a sound from heaven, which was as [loud] [SIM] as the sound of a huge waterfall (OR, a great/wide [river of rushing] water) and which was [also as loud as] [SIM] mighty thunder. The sound that I heard was like [the sound that] people make when they are playing their harps. 3 The 144,000 people were singing a new song [while they stood] in front of the throne, in front of the four living [creatures], and in front of the elders. Only the 144,000 [people], the ones who have been {whom [the one who is like a lamb] has} redeemed/bought from among the people on the earth, could learn that song. No one else could learn the song [that they sang]. 4 Those 144,000 are the people who are [spiritually] pure, [like] virgins [are morally pure]. They have not (defiled themselves/made themselves impure) [MET] [by worshipping any false god]. They are the ones who accompany Jesus, the [one who is like a] lamb, wherever he goes. They [represent all those whom he has] redeemed/bought for God from among the people [of earth, in order that he might offer] them to God and to [himself]. 5 [Those people] never lie when they speak [MTY], and they never act immorally. 6 I saw another angel that was flying between the sky and heaven. He was bringing [God's] eternal good message [to earth], in order that he might proclaim it to people who live on the earth. He will proclaim it to every nation, [to every] tribe, [to speakers of every] language [MTY], and [to every] people-[group]. **(aiōnios g166)** 7 He said in a loud voice, "Revere God and honor him, because it is now time for him to judge [people]! Worship [God, because he is] the one who created the heaven, the earth, the ocean, and the springs of water." 8 A second angel came after him saying, "The very evil [cities] (OR, [city]) [represented by] Babylon are completely destroyed! [God] has punished [their people because] they [have persuaded people of] all the nations [to forsake God, just like a prostitute] [MET] persuades [men] to drink [strong] wine and [as a result] commit sexual immorality." 9 A third angel came next, saying in a loud voice, "If people worship the beast and its image and [allow] its mark to be put {its [agent to] put its mark} on their foreheads or on their hands, 10 God will be angry with them and punish them very severely [MET]. They will be tormented {[God] will torment them} in burning sulfur in the presence of his holy angels and in the presence of the [one who is like a] lamb. 11 The smoke [from the fire] that torments them will rise forever. [They will] be tormented {[God will] torment them} continually, day and night. [That is what will happen to] the people who worship the beast and its image and who allow its name to be marked on them {allow [its agent] to mark them with its name}." **(aiōn g165)** 12 So God's people, those who obey what God commands and who trust in Jesus, must faithfully continue [obeying and trusting him]. 13 I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write [this: God will] now [abundantly] bless the people who have a close relationship with the Lord [Jesus] for the rest of [their lives]." [God's] Spirit says, "Yes, [after they die], they will no longer have to work hard. Instead, they will rest, and [the record of the good deeds] [MTY] that they have done will go with them (OR, [God] will [reward them] for the good deeds that they have done)." 14 Then I was surprised to see a white cloud, and on the cloud [someone] was sitting who looked like the one who came from heaven. He [was wearing] a golden crown on his head. In his hand [he held] a sharp sickle. 15 Another angel came out of the temple [in heaven]. In a loud voice, [speaking figuratively about gathering people

for God to judge them], he said to the one who was sitting on the cloud, "The time has come to reap [the grain on the earth], so with your sickle [reap] the [grain], because the grain on the earth is ripe." **16** The one who was sitting on the cloud forcefully gathered together [all the people] on earth, [as] [MET] [a farmer] reaps grain with his sickle. **17** Another angel came out of the sanctuary in heaven. He also held a sharp sickle. **18** From the altar came another angel. He is the one who takes care of the fire [of the altar. Also speaking figuratively about gathering the wicked people for God to judge and punish them], he said in a loud voice to the angel who held the sharp sickle, "With your sharp sickle cut off the clusters of grapes in the vineyards on the earth! Then gather the clusters of grapes together, because its grapes are ripe!" **19** So, [just like a man would] cut off with his sickle the clusters of grapes in his vineyard [MET], an angel forcefully [gathered the wicked people] on the earth. Then he threw them into the huge place where God will angrily punish them. **20** [The wicked people] were trampled on {[God's agent] trod on [the wicked people]} [in] the winepress outside the city. The blood that came out from the winepress flowed [in a stream so deep that it reached] to the bridles of the horses, [and extended] (180 miles/300 kilometers).

15 Something else very unusual [appeared] in the sky. I saw seven angels, whose duty it was to [punish] (OR, inflict hardship upon) [rebellious people] with seven different plagues (OR, in seven different ways). God is so angry [with rebellious people that] this is the last [time that he will punish them with the purpose of giving them an opportunity to turn away from their sinful behavior]. **2** I saw what looked like an ocean [that was made of] glass and mixed with fire. And I saw the people who overcame the beast [by not worshipping it] or its image, or [allowing its agent to mark them with] the number that corresponds to the beast's name [PRS]. They were standing by the ocean [that looked like it was made] of glass. They had harps [for praising] God. **3** They were singing a song [like] God's servant Moses [sang long ago]. They sang [like this to praise Jesus, the one who is like] a lamb: Lord God Almighty, whatever you do is powerful and marvelous! You always act righteously and truthfully. You are king forever! **4** O Lord, you alone are holy! People of [MTY] all nations will come and worship you, because you show everyone that you have judged everyone righteously. So, everyone will fear you and honor you! [RHQ]. **5** After this, [in the vision] I saw in heaven the temple [that (corresponds to/was represented by]) the tent [that the Israelites pitched in the desert. That was the tent that contained] the [Ten Commandments. The temple door] was opened {was open}. **6** The seven angels [who had the bowls containing] the seven plagues came out of the temple. The angels were dressed in clean, white linen [garments], and they wore gold bands around their chests. **7** One of the four living [creatures] gave [each of] the seven angels a golden bowl, filled with [wine/liquid. That wine/liquid symbolized] that God, who lives forever, would severely punish [rebellious people]. **(aiōn g165)** **8** The temple was filled with smoke [that symbolized] the presence of the glorious and all-powerful God. No one was able to enter the temple until the seven angels finished [pouring out] the seven plagues.

16 [In the vision] I heard [someone] in the temple speak in a loud voice to the angels [who had the seven bowls]. He said, "Go [from here] and pour out on the earth [the wine/liquid in] [MTY] the seven bowls. [This will show that] God is angry with [rebellious people and will punish them]." **2** So the first angel went and poured out on the earth [the wine/liquid that was in] [MTY] his bowl. [As a result], horrible and painful sores broke out on God's enemies who had allowed the beast's [agents] to mark them and who worshipped the image of the beast. **3** The second angel poured out on the ocean [the wine/liquid that was in] [MTY] his bowl. [As a result], the [water in the ocean stank like the blood] of a person who has died. [And] [MTY] every living creature that was in the ocean died. **4** The third angel poured out on the rivers and water springs [the wine/liquid] [MTY] [that was in] his bowl. [As a result, the water in the rivers and springs] turned into blood. **5** I heard the angel [who has authority over] the waters say [to God], "[O God], you exist and have always existed. You are the holy one. You judge people justly. **6** [The rebellious people] murdered your holy people and prophets. So you are just in punishing them by giving them blood to drink. This is what they deserve!" **7** Then I heard [an angel] respond [from] the altar [PRS], "Yes, Lord God, you who are almighty, you punish [people] rightly and justly!" **8** Then the fourth angel poured out on the sun [the wine/liquid that was in] [MTY] his bowl. [He] enabled the sun to scorch [people] with fiery [heat]. **9** Because people were severely burned by the intense heat {the intense heat severely burned people}, they said evil things about God [MTY], [because] he had the power [to strike people with] plagues like those. But they refused to stop their evil behavior and refused to honor him. **10** When the fifth angel poured out on the throne of the beast [the wine/liquid that was in] [MTY] his bowl, it became dark in the kingdom that the beast [ruled. As a result, the beast and the people whom it ruled] were biting their tongues because [they were suffering intense] pain. **11** They insulted God [who rules in] heaven, because their sores were so painful. But they refused to stop doing the [evil] things that they

were doing. 12 The sixth angel poured out on the huge river Euphrates [the wine/liquid that was in] [MTY] his bowl. [As a result, the] water [in the river] was dried up so that the rulers from the eastern [MTY] [countries could cross it with their armies] [SYN]. 13 I saw evil spirits that looked like frogs. One came out of the mouth of the dragon, one from the mouth of the beast, and one from the mouth of the false prophet. 14 Those spirits were demons who were [able to] perform miracles. They went out to the rulers of the whole world, in order to gather their [armies] [SYN] together to the battle that [they will fight] on the wonderful day when Almighty God [punishes his enemies] [MTY]. 15 The evil spirits will gather the rulers at a place that is called in the Hebrew [language] Armageddon. [I heard the Lord Jesus say], "[You must] listen carefully to [me]: I am coming unexpectedly [SIM], like a thief. [So], I will be happy with those who stay alert and [keep on living righteously so that they will not be ashamed], just like [MET] a person keeps his clothes [on] so that he will not be ashamed [like a person who is] naked." 17 The seventh angel poured out into the air [the wine/liquid that was in] [MTY] his bowl. [As a result, someone] said with a loud voice from the throne in the temple, "[The time for God to finish punishing rebellious people] is [about to be] start." 18 [When the angel emptied his bowl], lightning flashed, there were rumblings and thunder, and the earth shook. It shook more violently than it has ever shaken since people first [lived] on earth. 19 And [as a result], the very evil city [that is symbolized by Babylon] split into three parts. [God also] destroyed cities in [other] nations. God did not forget that [the people of] [MTY] the very evil [city symbolized by] Babylon [had sinned very much]. So he [caused the people with whom] he was furiously angry [MET] [to drink] a cup of very [poisonous wine/liquid that represented his punishment]. 20 Also [as a result of the earthquake], every island disappeared, and the mountains became flat land. 21 Also [as a result of the angel's emptying his bowl], huge hailstones, each weighing about 100 pounds, fell from the sky onto the people. Then people insulted God because [he had caused] the destructive hail to fall on them in that terrible plague.

17 One of the seven angels, who had [one of] the seven bowls, came to me. He said to me, "Come [with me], and I will show you how [God] will punish the very evil [city that is represented by] [SYM] a prostitute, a city in which there are many canals [of] water. 2 [It is as though] the rulers of earth have acted immorally [and idolatrously] with the people of that city [MET], and they [have persuaded people] who live on the earth to act immorally [and idolatrously] with them [MET], [just like a prostitute persuades men to drink] the [strong] wine [she gives them, resulting in their] becoming drunk [and] then committing sexual immorality. with her." 3 Then, as [God's] Spirit [controlled me], the angel carried me away to a desolate area. There I saw a woman who was sitting on a red beast. The beast had names [written] all over itself. They were names that (insulted/spoke evil against) [God]. The beast had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman [that I saw] was wearing purple and red [clothes]; and gold, precious stones, and pearls were fastened to her [clothes and her body]. She held in her hand a golden cup. The cup was full of [a liquid that represents] [SYM] the detestable/disgusting, idolatrous things and filthy immoral things that she [does]. 5 This name, that has a hidden/secret [meaning], was written on her forehead: "[This woman is] Babylon, the very evil [city! She acts like] the mother of the prostitutes on the earth. She teaches them to [act] immorally and to worship idols." 6 I saw that the woman had become drunk as a result of drinking the blood of God's people, those who had told others about Jesus. When I saw her, I was very bewildered/perplexed. 7 The angel said to me, "Do not be bewildered [RHQ]! I will explain to you the hidden/secret meaning of the woman and of the beast on which she rides, the beast that has the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast that you saw [lived] previously. Eventually God will destroy him, but now he is dead. He is [about to] come up (from the underworld/from the deep dark pit). [When] the beast who had previously lived, and who then had died, reappears, the people who live on the earth will be amazed. [They are people whose] names were not in the book in which are written the names of people [who will] have eternal life. [The angels have been writing those names in a list] (from the beginning of the world/from the time when the world began). **(Abyssos g12)** 9 Those who [think] wisely [can understand] this: The seven heads [of the beast] on which the woman sits [symbolize] the seven hills [of the city that the woman represents]. They also [symbolize] seven rulers. 10 Five [of those rulers] have died. One is [still alive]. The seventh [ruler] has not yet come. When he comes, he must remain on earth for [only] a short [time]. 11 The beast that [lived] before and then was not [alive] will be the eighth [ruler]. He will be [evil like] the seven [rulers were, but God] will surely destroy him. 12 The ten horns that you saw [represent] ten rulers who have not yet begun to rule. They, together with the beast, will be authorized to rule [people for only a short time, as if it were] [MET] for one hour. 13 Those [rulers] will all agree to do the same thing. [As a result] they will give to the beast their power [to rule people] as well as their authority [to rule people] [DOU]. 14 The rulers and the beast will fight against [Jesus], the [one who is like a]

lamb. He will defeat them, because he is Lord [who rules over all other] lords and the King [who rules over all other] kings. Those [people] who are with [and helping him] are the ones whom [God] has chosen, and who keep [serving him] faithfully." **15** Then the angel said to me, "The waters that you saw in the city where the prostitute sits represent people-[groups], multitudes [of people], nations, and [speakers of many languages] [MTY]. **16** The ten horns that you saw [represent rulers] [SYM]. They and the beast will hate [the people in the city] [MTY] that the prostitute [represents]. As a result, they will [take away everything that is in the city, as if] they were [MET] leaving it naked. They will [destroy it as if] [MET] devouring flesh/meat, and they will burn it with fire. **17** They will do that because God has caused them to decide to do what he wants them to do. As a result, they will let the beast have their power to rule until what God has said is fulfilled {until [they] fulfill what God has said} [MTY]. **18** The prostitute that you saw [represents] the very evil city [whose leaders] [MTY] rule over the kings of the earth."

18 After this, [in the vision] I saw another angel, who had great authority, coming down from heaven. The earth became bright [because] he was shining so intensely/brightly. **2** He shouted with a very loud voice, "[God is about to] completely destroy [DOU] all the very [evil] cities (OR, the very evil [city]) [that] Babylon [represents]. As a result, all [kinds of] evil spirits [DOU] will live there, and all [kinds of] foul and detestable [DOU] birds will live there. **3** [God will destroy those cities] because [their rulers have persuaded] the people of [MTY] all nations to act very immorally [and idolatrously with the people of] [MET] [those cities, just like] a prostitute persuades men to drink [strong] wine and then commit fornication with her. The rulers of the earth have also acted immorally [and idolatrously] with the people of [MTY] those cities. The merchants of the earth have become rich [because the people of those cities] strongly desired [and bought from the merchants] many (luxuries/expensive things)." **4** I heard [Jesus] speak from heaven. He said, "My people, flee from [those cities], in order that you do not sin as the people [of those cities do. If you sin as they do], I will punish you as I will punish them. **5** [It is as though] their sins have been piled {have piled} up to heaven, and God remembers them [DOU], [so now he will punish them] [MTY]." **6** [To the angels whom God assigned to punish those cities, Jesus said], "Pay back/Punish the people of those cities to the same extent that they harmed [other people]. Cause them to suffer twice as much [as they caused other people to suffer] [DOU, MET]. **7** To the same extent that they have boasted about themselves and done the things that they wanted to do, to that extent torment them and cause them to grieve. [Do that because] in their minds they think, 'We rule as queens! We are not widows, and we will never mourn [as widows do]'! **8** So in one day terrible calamities/troubles will come upon them. [The people in those cities] will die, others will mourn for them, people will be hungry [because there will be no food], and [their cities] will be burned up. The Lord God is able to punish those cities [like that], because he is very powerful." **9** "The kings of the earth who have acted immorally [with people of those cities] and have lived with the people of those cities, doing just what they wanted to do, will weep and mourn [DOU] for them when they see the smoke of the fire that is burning those cities. **10** They will stand far away [from those cities], because they will be afraid [that they will suffer just like the people of those cities] are suffering. They will say, 'Terrible things will happen to the awesome and mighty cities [represented by] Babylon! [God] will punish them suddenly and swiftly [MTY]!' **11** The merchants of the earth will weep and will mourn [DOU] [for those cities], because no one will ever again buy the things that they have [to sell to the people in those cities]. **12** [They sell ornaments made] of gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls. They sell [expensive cloth made of] fine linen and silk, [expensive cloth that is dyed] purple and crimson. They sell all kinds of [rare] wood, all kinds of items [made of] ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron, and marble. They sell cinnamon, spice, perfume, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine flour, and grain. They sell cattle, sheep, horses, and chariots. They even sell human beings [SYN, DOU] to become slaves. **14** [The merchants will say], 'The good things you people longed to have are gone! All your luxurious and splendid [DOU] [possessions have vanished!]! They will be gone forever/You will never have them again [LIT]!' **15** The merchants [who sold] these things and who had become rich by [supplying them] for those [cities] will stand far away, because they will be afraid [that they will suffer just like] the people [of those cities] are suffering. They will weep and mourn [DOU], **16** and they will say, 'Terrible things [DOU] have happened to the awesome/great [MET] cities! [They were like queens] who dressed themselves in [clothes made of] [MTY] fine linen [cloth] and expensive cloth dyed purple and crimson, and who were adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. **17** But suddenly and swiftly [MTY] [God] has destroyed these expensive things.' Every ship captain, all people who travel by ship, all (sailors/those who work on ships), and all others who earn their living [by traveling on] the ocean will stand far away [from those cities]. **18** When they see the smoke of the fire that is burning those cities, they will shout, 'No [other] cities have ever been so awesome!' [RHQ] **19** They will throw dust on their heads [to show that they are sad],

and they will shout, weep, and mourn [DOU]. They will say, 'Terrible things have happened to the awesome/great cities, the cities that made all people who own ships [that sail] on the ocean become rich by [carrying] their costly (things for them to sell/merchandise)! [God] has suddenly and swiftly destroyed [MTY] those cities!'" **20** Then someone spoke from heaven saying, "All you who live in heaven, rejoice over what has happened to [the cities represented by] Babylon! You who are God's people, including you apostles, you (prophets/who speak messages that come directly from God), rejoice, because God has justly punished the people of those cities because they acted in an evil way toward you!" **21** Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large stone for grinding grain, and threw it into the ocean. Then he said, "O you people in [APO] the awesome/great cities [represented by] Babylon, your cities will be destroyed so that they will disappear just like that stone disappeared in the ocean! Your cities will be gone forever [LIT]! **22** In your cities there will never again be [anyone] playing harps, singing, playing flutes, and blowing trumpets. There will no longer be any (skilled workers/craftsmen) making things. There will never again be people grinding [grain at] [MTY] the mills. **23** No lamplight will ever again shine. There will never again be the [happy] voices of a bridegroom and his bride. [God will destroy your cities] because your merchants were the most [deceitful] men in the world. You persuaded them to deceive [people of] [MTY] all nations. **24** You are also [responsible for killing] [MTY] [the] prophets and [others] of God's people. Indeed, you are the ones who are guilty for the deaths of all those who have been {whom [others] have} killed on the earth!"

19 After these things I heard [what sounded] like a huge crowd in heaven. They were shouting things like, "(Hallelujah!/Praise our God!)" "He has saved us!" "He is glorious and mighty!" **2** "Praise him because he judges truly and justly!" "He has punished the very evil cities that are like a prostitute, because their people persuaded the other people of earth [MTY] to act immorally and idolatrously like they do." "Praise him because he has punished them for murdering his servants [MTY]!" **3** [The crowd] shouted a second time saying: (Hallelujah!/Praise God!) The smoke of the fire that is burning the cities will rise forever! **(aiōn g165)** **4** The 24 elders and the four living [creatures] (prostrated themselves/knelt down) and worshipped God, who sits on the throne. Then they said, "[It] is true! (Hallelujah!/Praise God!)" **5** Someone spoke from the throne and said, "All you who are our God's servants, praise him! All you who reverence him, [whether you are socially] significant or insignificant, praise him! [Everyone]!" **6** I heard something like the noise of a huge crowd [of people], like the sound of a huge waterfall (OR, a great/wide river of rushing water), and like the sound of loud thunder. They were shouting: (Hallelujah!/Praise God!) Because the Lord God, the Almighty One, reigns! **7** We should rejoice, we should be extremely glad, and we should honor him, because it is now time for Jesus, the one who is like a lamb, to be united permanently with his people, which will be like a man [MET] marrying his bride, and because those who belong to him have prepared themselves to be united with him. **8** God has permitted them to be completely pure, like a bride who [MET] dresses in fine linen that is bright and clean. Fine [bright and clean] linen represents the righteous acts of God's people. **9** Then the angel said to me, "Write [this: God will abundantly] bless the people who are {whom [he] has} invited to the feast [that celebrates Jesus, the one who is like a] lamb, [permanently uniting with his people, like someone] [MET] [marrying a wife]." He also said [to me]: "These words that God [declares] are true!" **10** I [immediately] (prostrated myself/knelt down) at his feet in order to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not [worship me]! I am [just] your [(sg)] fellow servant and the fellow servant of your [(sg)] fellow believers who tell people about Jesus. God is the one whom you should worship, because it is the Spirit of God who gives people the power to tell others about Jesus (OR, [those who tell others about] Jesus are [truly] declaring [the words that the Spirit of God has given them])!" **11** [In the vision] I saw heaven opened {open}, and I was surprised to see a white horse. [Jesus], the one who was riding on the horse, is called 'Trustworthy and Genuine/True'. He judges [all people according to] what is right, and fights righteously [against his enemies]. **12** His eyes [shone like] [MET] a flame of fire. There were many royal crowns on his head. A name had been written [on him]. Only he knows [the meaning of that name]. **13** The robe he was wearing was drenched with blood. His name is [also] "(The one who expresses what God is like/The Word of God)." **14** The armies of heaven were following him. [They were also] riding on white horses. They were wearing clothes [made of] clean white linen. **15** [The words] that Jesus speaks [are like] [MTY] a sharp sword with which he will strike [the rebellious people of] the nations. He himself will rule them [powerfully, as though he had] [MET] an iron rod. He will crush [his enemies just like] [MET] [a person crushes grapes in a] winepress. [He will do this for] God Almighty, who is extremely angry [with them because of their sins]. **16** On his cloak close to his thigh a name had been written {[he] had written a name}, which is "King who [rules over all other] kings and Lord who [rules over all other] lords." **17** I saw an angel who was standing in [the light of]

[MTY] the sun. He called loudly to all the [flesh-eating] birds flying high in the sky, "Come and gather for the wonderful feast that God [is providing for you]! 18 [Come] and eat the flesh of all [God's enemies who are dead—] the flesh of kings, army commanders, [people who fought] powerfully, horses and the [soldiers] who rode them, [and the flesh of all other kinds of people], whether [they were] free or slaves, [socially] insignificant or significant. [All kinds]!" 19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of earth with their armies gathered together to fight against the Rider on the horse, and against his army. 20 The beast and the false prophet were captured {[He] captured the beast and the false prophet}. The false prophet is the one who had performed miracles in the beast's presence. By doing that he had deceived the people who had accepted the beast's mark [on their foreheads] and who worshipped its image. The beast and the false prophet were thrown {[He] threw the beast and the one who falsely said that he spoke messages that came directly from God} alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. **(Limnē Pyr g3041 g4442)** 21 The rider on the horse killed the rest [of their armies] just by [speaking words], [which were like] [MTY] a sword that extended from his mouth. All those birds gorged themselves on the flesh of [the people whom he had killed].

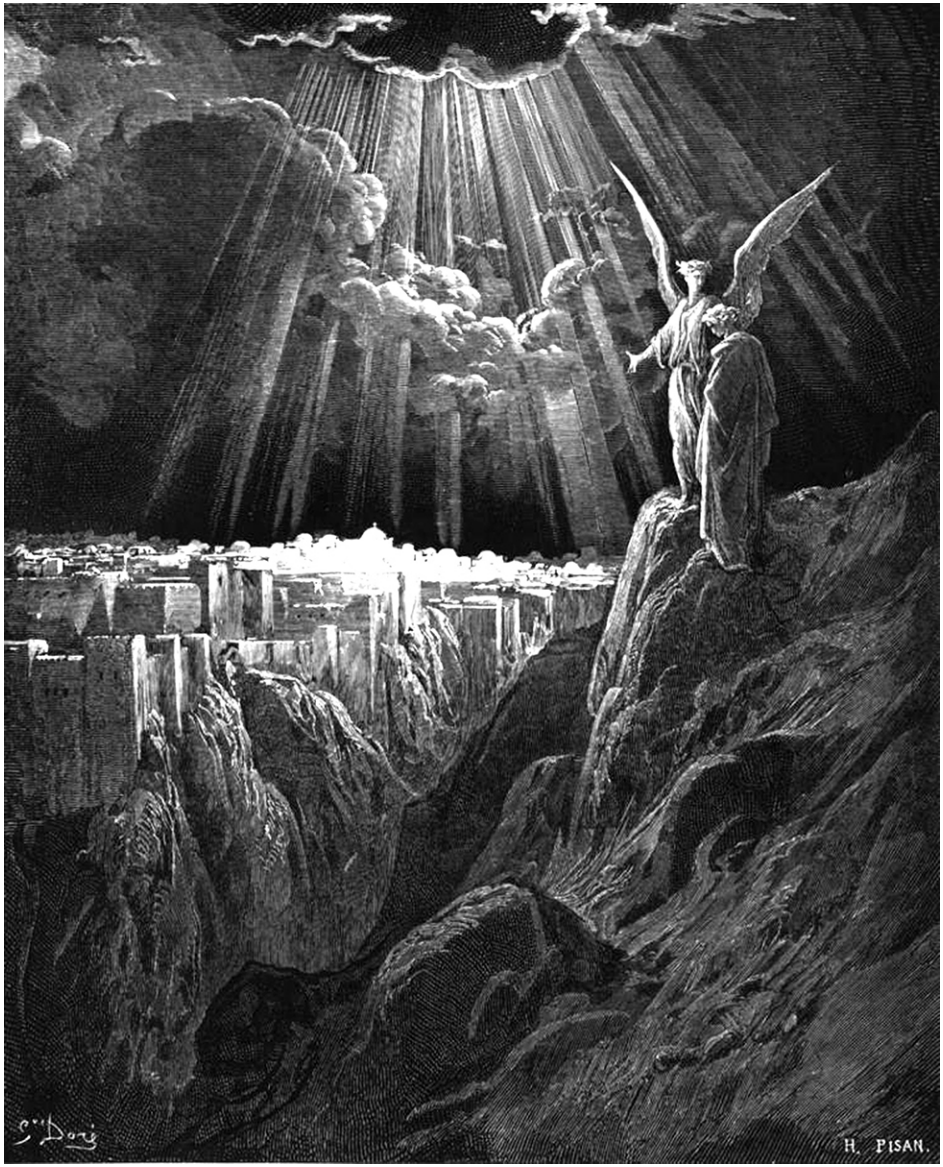
20 I saw an angel coming down from heaven. He had the key to the deep dark pit, and he was carrying a large chain in his hand. **(Abyssos g12)** 2 He seized the dragon. That dragon is the ancient serpent, the devil, that is, Satan. The angel bound him with the chain. That chain could not be loosed {[No one could loose] that chain} for 1,000 years. 3 The angel threw him into the deep dark pit. He shut [the door of the pit], locked it, and sealed it [to prevent anyone from opening it]. He did that in order that Satan might no longer deceive [the people of the] nations [MTY], until those 1,000 years are ended. After that [time], Satan must be released {[God/God's angel] must release Satan} for a short time [in order that he can do what God has planned]. **(Abyssos g12)** 4 I saw thrones on which people were sitting. [They were given] {[God] gave those people} [authority] to judge [other people]. I also saw the souls [of people] whose heads had been {whose heads [others] had} cut off because of [their telling people about] Jesus and declaring God's message. They were people who refused to worship the beast or its image, and who did not allow [the beast's agents] to put the beast's mark on them, either on their foreheads or on their hands. They became alive again, and they ruled with Christ [during those] 1,000 years. 5 They were the ones who lived again the first time [that God caused dead people] to live again. The rest of [the believers who] had died did not live again until after those 1,000 years. 6 ([God] will be pleased with/[How] happy will be) those who live again that first time. God will [consider] them holy. They will not die [PRS] a second time. Instead, they will be priests [who serve] God and Christ, and they will rule with [Christ] during those 1,000 years. 7 When the 1,000 years are ended, Satan will be released {[God's angel] will release Satan} from [the deep pit] in which he was imprisoned. 8 He will go out to deceive [rebellious] people in nations [IDM] all over the earth. [These are the nations that the prophet Ezekiel called] Gog and Magog. Satan will gather them to fight against [God's people]. There will be [so many of them fighting against God's people that no one will be able to count them] [SIM], just like [no one can count the grains of] sand on the ocean shore. 9 They will march over the whole earth and surround the camp of God's people [in Jerusalem], the city that [God] loves. Then [God will send] fire down from heaven, and it will burn them up. 10 The devil, who had deceived those people, will be thrown {[God's angel] will throw the devil, who had deceived those people} into the lake of burning sulfur. [This is the same lake] into which both the beast and the false prophet had been [thrown] {[he] had [thrown] both the beast and the false prophet}. [As a result], they will continually suffer severely forever. **(aiōn g165, Limnē Pyr g3041 g4442)** 11 Then I saw a huge white throne on which [God] was sitting. He [was so awesome that] the earth and the sky disappeared from his presence completely; they were completely destroyed {[God] completely destroyed them}. 12 I saw that the people who had died [but now lived again] were standing in front of the throne. [They included people of] every social status! The books [in which God records what people do] were opened {[God/God's angel] opened the books [in which God records what people do]}. Another book was opened {[He] opened another book}, which is [called the Book] of Life, [in which God has written the names of people who have eternal life]. [God] judged the people who had died [and now lived again] according to what they had done, just like [he] had recorded it in the books. 13 [The people whose bodies were buried in the] sea [became alive again in order to stand before God's throne]. Everyone who had been buried on the land (OR, Every person who was waiting in the place where dead people stay) [became alive again, in order to stand before the throne]. [God] judged each one of them according to what each one had done. **(Hadēs g86)** 14 All the unbelievers [PRS, MTY] —those who had been in the place where they waited after they died— [were thrown into the burning lake]. The burning lake is [the place in which people] die the second time. **(Hadēs g86, Limnē Pyr g3041 g4442)** 15 The people whose [names] [MTY] are not in the book, the one [where God] has written [the names of people who] have

[eternal] life, [were also thrown] {([God/God's angel]) threw them also} [into the lake] of fire. **(Limnē Pyr g3041 g4442)**

21 Then [in the vision] I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and the oceans no longer existed. **2** I saw [God's] holy city, which is the new [city of] Jerusalem. It was coming down out of heaven from God. [The city] had been prepared [and decorated] {[God] had prepared [and decorated the city]} as [SIM] a bride is decorated {decorates herself} [beautifully in order to marry] her husband. **3** I heard a loud voice that spoke from the throne [of God]. It said, "Listen to this! Now God will live with people. He will live [right in the midst of] them [DOU]! They will be his people. God himself will be with them, and he will be their God. **4** [As a result], he will [cause them to no longer be sad. It will be as though he will] [MTY] wipe every tear from their eyes. [None of them] will ever again die or mourn or cry [DOU] or suffer pain, because the former things [that make us sad] will have disappeared." **5** Then [God], who sits on the throne, said, "Listen to this! I am [now] making everything new!" He said [to me]: "Write these things [that I have told you], because you can trust [that I will certainly cause them to happen]." **6** He said to me, "I have finished [doing all the things I needed to do]. I am the one who began all things [MET] and the one who will cause all things to end [MET]. To everyone who is [spiritually] thirsty [MET], I will (freely give/give as a free gift) water from the spring [that causes people] to live [forever]. **7** I will give this to every person who is victorious over [the evil powers] (OR, [over Satan]). I will be their God, and they will be my children. **8** But those who are cowardly, those who do not believe [in me], those [who do] detestable things, those who are murderers, those who sin sexually, those who commit sorcery, those who worship idols, and every liar, will [all suffer] in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur. [Anyone who suffers in that lake] will be dying the second time." **(Limnē Pyr g3041 g4442)** **9** One of the seven angels who had one of the seven bowls that had been full of [the wine/liquid causing] [MTY] the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come [with me] and I will show you [the people who have permanently united with Christ, the one who is like a] lamb! They will be [like] [MET] a bride [for him]." **10** Then, while [God's] Spirit [controlled me], the angel took/carried me to the top of a very high mountain. He showed me [God's] holy city, [the New] Jerusalem. It was coming down out of heaven from God. **11** It was shining with his glory. The city was shining like a very precious jasper stone [shines, and] it was clear like crystal. **12** [Around the city] was a very high wall. The wall had twelve gates. An angel was at each gate. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel were written {[God] had written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel} over the gates. [Each gate had the name of one tribe]. **13** Three gates were on the east [side], three gates were on the north [side], three gates were on the south [side], and three gates were on the west [side]. **14** The wall of the city had twelve foundation [stones]. On each foundation [stone was] the name of one of the twelve apostles of [Jesus, the one who is like a] lamb. **15** The angel who was speaking to me carried a golden measuring rod, in order to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. **16** The city was square [in shape]; it was as long as it was wide. After the angel measured the city with his rod, [he reported that it was] (1,500 miles/2,400 kilometers) long, and that its height was the same as [its length and width]. **17** He measured its wall [and reported that it was] ([216 ft./70 meters]) [thick] (OR, [high]). The angel used the measure that people [normally use]. **18** The [city] wall was made of [something like the green stone that we call] jasper. The city [itself] was [made of something like] pure gold [that looked] like clear glass. **19** The foundations of the wall of the city were beautifully made with [wonderful stones that are like] precious stones [on earth]. The first foundation [stone was a crystalline stone like] jasper, the second [foundation stone was a blue stone like] sapphire, the third [foundation stone was a green stone like] agate, the fourth [foundation stone was a green stone like] emerald, **20** the fifth [foundation stone was a brown and white layered stone like] sardonyx, the sixth [foundation stone was a red stone like] carnelian, the seventh [foundation stone was a yellow stone like] chrysolite, the eighth [foundation stone was a green stone like] beryl, the ninth [foundation stone was a yellow stone like] topaz, the tenth [foundation stone was a green stone like] chrysoprase, the eleventh [foundation stone was a blue stone like] hyacinth, and the twelfth [foundation stone was a purple stone like] amethyst. **21** The twelve gates [of the city] were [something like huge] pearls. Each gate was like [it was] a single pearl. The [ground of] the main plaza of the city (OR, The streets of the city) [appeared to be] pure gold [that looked] like clear glass. **22** There was no temple in the city. The Lord God Almighty [himself], and the [one who is like a] lamb, are [there, so there was no need for] [MET] a temple. **23** The city will not need the sun or the moon to light the city, because the glory of God will illuminate the city, and [Jesus, the one who is like a] lamb, will also be its light. **24** The people of [MTY] the nations will live with the light of the city [shining upon them]. And the kings of the earth will bring their wealth into the city [to honor God and the one who is like a lamb]. **25** The gates of the city will not be shut {No one will shut the gates of the city} [at the end of each day as they usually are shut], because there will be no

night there. 26 The [people of the] world will also bring their wealth into the city to honor [God and the one who is like a lamb]. 27 No one who is morally impure, no one who does things [that God considers] detestable, and no one who tells lies, will ever enter that city. Only those people whose names are written in the book of the [one who is like a] lamb {whose [names] the [one who is like a] lamb has written in his book}, [the names] of people who have [eternal] life, will be there.

22 The angel showed me the river of water [that causes people who drink from it] to live [forever]. The water was sparkling and clear like crystal. The river was flowing out from the throne where God and the [one who is like a] lamb [were sitting]. 2 It flowed down through the middle of the [main] street of the city. On each side of the river were trees [bearing fruit that causes people who eat it] to live forever. [The trees] bear twelve [crops] (OR, twelve [kinds]) of fruit; [they] produce one crop each month. The [people of the] nations [MTY] [use] the leaves of these trees [as medicine] in order that they may feel stronger 3 There will never be [anyone or anything there that God] will be [under God's] curse. The throne of God and the [one who is like a] lamb will be in the city. And God's servants will worship him there. 4 They will see him face-to-face, and his name will be [written] {[he] will [write] his name} on their foreheads. 5 There will never again be night. [God's servants] will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will shine his light upon them. And they will rule forever. (aiōn g165) 6 The angel said to me: "These words that [God has revealed to you] are true, and he will certainly do what he has promised to do. The Lord God who ([inspires] the prophets/tells the prophets what to say) sent his angel to show the people who serve him the events that must happen soon." 7 [Jesus says to all his people], "Listen [to] this! I am coming soon; [God will abundantly] bless everyone who obeys what [has been commanded] in this book." 8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw [in a vision] these things [that I have written down]. When I had heard and seen [them], I immediately knelt down at the feet of the angel who was showing them to me, in order to worship him. 9 But he said to me, "Do not [worship me] I am [just] your fellow servant! I am also the fellow servant of your fellow believers who are (the prophets/the ones who tell messages that come directly from God), and I am a fellow servant of those who obey what has been commanded in this book. [Instead], worship God!" 10 He also said to me, "Do not keep secret the message about what [God] has foretold in this book, because it is almost time [MTY] for him to [what he has promised to do in this message]. 11 [Since that time is near, if] those who act in an evil manner [want to] continue to act that way [IRO], [that is up to them. God will soon] ([pay them back/punish them]) [for that. If] those who are vile [want to] continue to be vile [IRO], [that is up to them. God will soon] ([pay them back/punish them]) [for that]. Those who are [acting] righteously should continue to act righteously. And those who are holy should continue to be holy." 12 [Jesus says this to everyone]: "Listen! I am coming soon! And I will pay back everyone according to what each one has done, by [punishing or] rewarding them. 13 I [am] the one who began all things [MET] and the one who will cause all things to end [MET]. I existed before [all things existed] and I will exist at the end [of all things] [DOU]. 14 [God] is very pleased with the people who wash their robes, [making themselves spiritually clean] [MET], because they will be able to [eat the fruit of] [MTY] the tree [that enables people] to live [forever], and because they will [be able] to enter the gates into the [holy] city. 15 [People who are unholy] will not be allowed to enter the city. They include people who practice sorcery, people who sin sexually, murderers, idol worshipers, and everyone who enjoys telling lies and are continual liars. [They can never enter that city]." 16 "I, Jesus, sent my angel in order that he might tell you who are in the congregations [that all] these things [that have been said are true]. I am the descendant of [King] David [whom the prophets promised would come] [MET]. I am the [one who is like] the bright morning star [MET], the one [that Moses promised would come]." 17 [God's] Spirit and [his people, who are like] [MET] the bride [of Christ], say [to each one who desires to believe], "Come!" Whoever hears [this] should also say [to each one who desires to believe], "Come!" [Spiritually thirsty people should come] [MET]! Everyone who desires the water [that enables people to] live [forever] should take it as a free gift! 18 "I, [Jesus, solemnly] warn everyone who hears what [I] have foretold in this book: If anyone adds anything to this message, God will cause him to experience the plagues that are {that [I] have} described in this book. 19 If anyone omits any of the message about what [I] have foretold in this book, God will take away that person's right [to eat fruit from] [MTY] the tree [that enables people] to live [forever]. He [will also take away] that person's right [to enter] God's city. [Both these things] are described {[I] have described [both these things]} in this book." 20 [Jesus], who says that [all] the things written here are true, says, "Certainly I am coming soon!" [I, John, reply], "(May it be so!/Amen!) Lord Jesus, come!" 21 [I pray that our] Lord Jesus [will continue to] act kindly to all [of you who are God's people]. (Amen!/May it be so!)



The New Jerusalem

"I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice out of heaven saying, 'Behold, God's dwelling is with people, and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.'"

Revelation 21:2-3

Reader's Guide

AionianBible.org/Readers-Guide

The Aionian Bible republishes public domain and Creative Common Bible texts that are 100% free to copy and print. The original translation is unaltered and notes are added to help your study. The notes show the location of eleven special Greek and Hebrew Aionian Glossary words to help us better understand God's love for individuals and for all mankind, and the nature of afterlife destinies.

Who has the authority to interpret the Bible and examine the underlying Hebrew and Greek words? That is a good question! We read in 1 John 2:27, *"As for you, the anointing which you received from him remains in you, and you do not need for anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, you remain in him."* Every Christian is qualified to interpret the Bible! Now that does not mean we will all agree. Each of us is still growing in our understanding of the truth. However, it does mean that there is no infallible human or tradition to answer all our questions. Instead the Holy Spirit helps each of us to know the truth and grow closer to God and each other.

The Bible is a library with 66 books in the Protestant Canon. The best way to learn God's word is to read entire books. Read the book of Genesis. Read the book of John. Read the entire Bible library. Topical studies and cross-referencing can be good. However, the safest way to understand context and meaning is to read whole Bible books. Chapter and verse numbers were added for convenience in the 16th century, but unfortunately they can cause the Bible to seem like an encyclopedia. The Aionian Bible is formatted with simple verse numbering, minimal notes, and no cross-referencing in order to encourage the reading of Bible books.

Bible reading must also begin with prayer. Any Christian is qualified to interpret the Bible with God's help. However, this freedom is also a responsibility because without the Holy Spirit we cannot interpret accurately. We read in 1 Corinthians 2:13-14, *"And we speak of these things, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things. Now the natural person does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."* So we cannot understand in our natural self, but we can with God's help through prayer.

The Holy Spirit is the best writer and he uses literary devices such as introductions, conclusions, paragraphs, and metaphors. He also writes various genres including historical narrative, prose, and poetry. So Bible study must spiritually discern and understand literature. Pray, read, observe, interpret, and apply. Finally, *"Do your best to present yourself approved by God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, properly handling the word of truth."* 2 Timothy 2:15. *"God has granted to us his precious and exceedingly great promises; that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yes, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence; and in moral excellence, knowledge; and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control patience; and in patience godliness; and in godliness brotherly affection; and in brotherly affection, love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,"* 2 Peter 1:4-8.

Glossary

AionianBible.org/Glossary

The Aionian Bible un-translates and instead transliterates eleven special words to help us better understand the extent of God's love for individuals and all mankind, and the nature of afterlife destinies. The original translation is unaltered and a note is added to 64 Old Testament and 200 New Testament verses. Compare the meanings below to the Strong's Concordance and Glossary definitions.

Abyssos g12

Greek: proper noun, place
Usage: 9 times in 3 books, 6 chapters, and 9 verses
Meaning:

Temporary prison for special fallen angels such as Apollyon, the Beast, and Satan.

aïdios g126

Greek: adjective
Usage: 2 times in Romans 1:20 and Jude 6
Meaning:

Lasting, enduring forever, eternal.

aiōn g165

Greek: noun
Usage: 127 times in 22 books, 75 chapters, and 102 verses
Meaning:

A lifetime or time period with a beginning and end, an era, an age, the completion of which is beyond human perception, but known only to God the creator of the aiōns, Hebrews 1:2. Never meaning simple endless or infinite chronological time in Greek usage. Read Dr. Heleen Keizer and Ramelli and Konstan for proofs.

aiōnios g166

Greek: adjective
Usage: 71 times in 19 books, 44 chapters, and 69 verses
Meaning:

From start to finish, pertaining to the age, lifetime, entirety, complete, or even consummate. Never meaning simple endless or infinite chronological time in Koine Greek usage. Read Dr. Heleen Keizer and Ramelli and Konstan for proofs.

eleēsē g1653

Greek: verb, aorist tense, active voice, subjunctive mood, 3rd person singular
Usage: 1 time in this conjugation, Romans 11:32
Meaning:

To have pity on, to show mercy. Typically, the subjunctive mood indicates possiblity, not certainty. However, a subjunctive in a purpose clause is a resulting action as certain as the causal action. The subjunctive in a purpose clause functions as an indicative, not an optative. Thus, the grand conclusion of grace theology in Romans 11:32 must be clarified. God's mercy on all is not a possibility, but a certainty. See ntgreek.org.

Geenna g1067
Greek: proper noun, place
Usage: 12 times in 4 books, 7 chapters, and 12 verses
Meaning:
Valley of Hinnom, Jerusalem's trash dump, a place of ruin, destruction, and judgment in this life, or the next, though not eternal to Jesus' audience.

Hadēs g86
Greek: proper noun, place
Usage: 11 times in 5 books, 9 chapters, and 11 verses
Meaning:
Synonomous with Sheol, though in New Testament usage Hades is the temporal place of punishment for deceased unbelieving mankind, distinct from Paradise for deceased believers.

Limnē Pyr g3041 g4442
Greek: proper noun, place
Usage: Phrase 5 times in the New Testament
Meaning:
Lake of Fire, final punishment for those not named in the Book of Life, prepared for the Devil and his angels, Matthew 25:41.

Sheol h7585
Hebrew: proper noun, place
Usage: 66 times in 17 books, 50 chapters, and 64 verses
Meaning:
The grave or temporal afterlife world of both the righteous and unrighteous, believing and unbelieving, until the general resurrection.

Tartaroō g5020
Greek: proper noun, place
Usage: 1 time in 2 Peter 2:4
Meaning:
Temporary prison for particular fallen angels awaiting final judgment.

Glossary +

AionianBible.org/Bibles/English---Trans-Trans/Noted

Glossary references are below. Strong's Hebrew and Greek number notes are added to 64 Old Testament and 200 New Testament verses. Questioned verse translations do not contain Aionian Glossary words and may wrongly imply *eternal* or *Hell*. * The note placement is skipped or adjusted for verses with non-standard numbering.

Abyssos

Luke 8:31
Romans 10:7
Revelation 9:1
Revelation 9:2
Revelation 9:11
Revelation 11:7
Revelation 17:8
Revelation 20:1
Revelation 20:3

aïdios

Romans 1:20
Jude 1:6

aiōn

Matthew 12:32
Matthew 13:22
Matthew 13:39
Matthew 13:40
Matthew 13:49
Matthew 21:19
Matthew 24:3
Matthew 28:20
Mark 3:29
Mark 4:19
Mark 10:30
Mark 11:14
Luke 1:33
Luke 1:55
Luke 1:70
Luke 16:8
Luke 18:30
Luke 20:34
Luke 20:35
John 4:14
John 6:51
John 6:58
John 8:35
John 8:51
John 8:52
John 9:32
John 10:28
John 11:26
John 12:34
John 13:8
John 14:16
Acts 3:21
Acts 15:18
Romans 1:25
Romans 9:5
Romans 11:36
Romans 12:2
Romans 16:27
1 Corinthians 1:20
1 Corinthians 2:6
1 Corinthians 2:7
1 Corinthians 2:8
1 Corinthians 3:18
1 Corinthians 8:13
1 Corinthians 10:11
2 Corinthians 4:4
2 Corinthians 9:9
2 Corinthians 11:31
Galatians 1:4
Galatians 1:5
Ephesians 1:21
Ephesians 2:2
Ephesians 2:7
Ephesians 3:9
Ephesians 3:11
Ephesians 3:21
Ephesians 6:12
Philippians 4:20
Colossians 1:26
1 Timothy 1:17
1 Timothy 6:17
2 Timothy 4:10
2 Timothy 4:18
Titus 2:12
Hebrews 1:2
Hebrews 1:8
Hebrews 5:6
Hebrews 6:5
Hebrews 6:20
Hebrews 7:17
Hebrews 7:21
Hebrews 7:24
Hebrews 7:28
Hebrews 9:26
Hebrews 11:3
Hebrews 13:8
Hebrews 13:21
1 Peter 1:23
1 Peter 1:25
1 Peter 4:11
1 Peter 5:11
2 Peter 3:18
1 John 2:17
2 John 1:2
Jude 1:13
Jude 1:25
Revelation 1:6
Revelation 1:18
Revelation 4:9
Revelation 4:10
Revelation 5:13
Revelation 7:12
Revelation 10:6
Revelation 11:15
Revelation 14:11
Revelation 15:7
Revelation 19:3
Revelation 20:10
Revelation 22:5

aiōnios

Matthew 18:8
Matthew 19:16
Matthew 19:29
Matthew 25:41
Matthew 25:46
Mark 3:29
Mark 10:17
Mark 10:30
Luke 10:25
Luke 16:9
Luke 18:18
Luke 18:30
John 3:15
John 3:16
John 3:36
John 4:14
John 4:36
John 5:24
John 5:39
John 6:27
John 6:40
John 6:47
John 6:54
John 6:68
John 10:28
John 12:25
John 12:50
John 17:2

John 17:3
Acts 13:46
Acts 13:48
Romans 2:7
Romans 5:21
Romans 6:22
Romans 6:23
Romans 16:25
Romans 16:26
2 Corinthians 4:17
2 Corinthians 4:18
2 Corinthians 5:1
Galatians 6:8
2 Thessalonians 1:9
2 Thessalonians 2:16
1 Timothy 1:16
1 Timothy 6:12
1 Timothy 6:16
2 Timothy 1:9
2 Timothy 2:10
Titus 1:2
Titus 3:7
Philemon 1:15
Hebrews 5:9
Hebrews 6:2
Hebrews 9:12
Hebrews 9:14
Hebrews 9:15
Hebrews 13:20
1 Peter 5:10
2 Peter 1:11
1 John 1:2
1 John 2:25
1 John 3:15
1 John 5:11
1 John 5:13
1 John 5:20
Jude 1:7
Jude 1:21
Revelation 14:6

eleēsē

Romans 11:32

Geenna

Matthew 5:22
Matthew 5:29
Matthew 5:30
Matthew 10:28
Matthew 18:9
Matthew 23:15
Matthew 23:33
Mark 9:43
Mark 9:45
Mark 9:47
Luke 12:5
James 3:6

Hadēs

Matthew 11:23
Matthew 16:18
Luke 10:15
Luke 16:23
Acts 2:27
Acts 2:31
1 Corinthians 15:55
Revelation 1:18
Revelation 6:8
Revelation 20:13
Revelation 20:14

Limnē Pyr

Revelation 19:20
Revelation 20:10
Revelation 20:14
Revelation 20:15
Revelation 21:8

Sheol

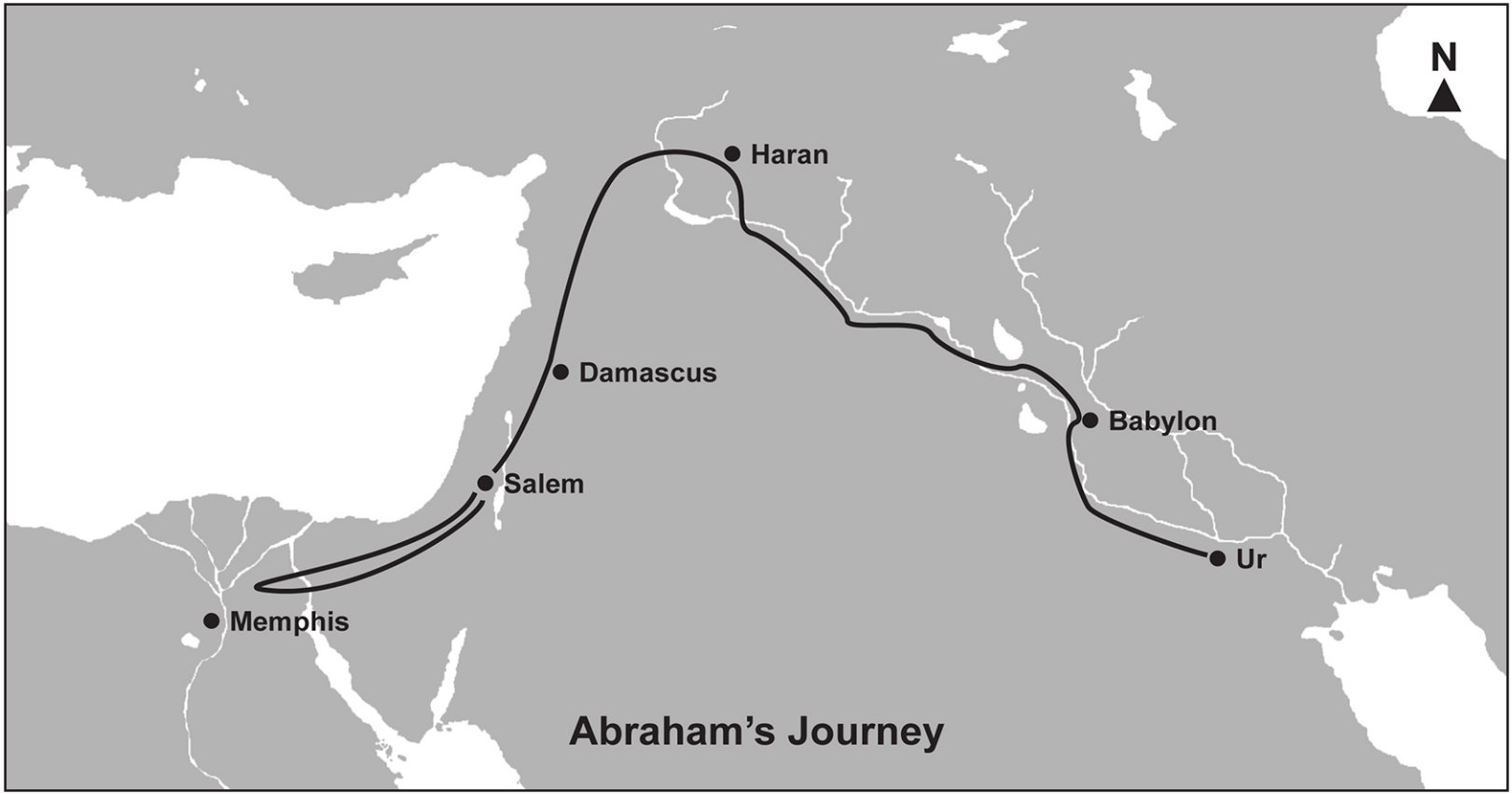
Genesis 37:35
Genesis 42:38
Genesis 44:29
Genesis 44:31
Numbers 16:30
Numbers 16:33
Deuteronomy 32:22
1 Samuel 2:6
2 Samuel 22:6
1 Kings 2:6
1 Kings 2:9
Job 7:9
Job 11:8
Job 14:13
Job 17:13
Job 17:16
Job 21:13
Job 24:19
Job 26:6
Psalms 6:5
Psalms 9:17
Psalms 16:10
Psalms 18:5
Psalms 30:3
Psalms 31:17
Psalms 49:14
Psalms 49:15
Psalms 55:15
Psalms 86:13
Psalms 88:3
Psalms 89:48
Psalms 116:3
Psalms 139:8
Psalms 141:7
Proverbs 1:12
Proverbs 5:5
Proverbs 7:27
Proverbs 9:18
Proverbs 15:11
Proverbs 15:24
Proverbs 23:14
Proverbs 27:20
Proverbs 30:16
Ecclesiastes 9:10
Song of Solomon 8:6
Isaiah 5:14
Isaiah 7:11
Isaiah 14:9
Isaiah 14:11
Isaiah 14:15
Isaiah 28:15
Isaiah 28:18
Isaiah 38:10
Isaiah 38:18
Isaiah 57:9
Ezekiel 31:15
Ezekiel 31:16
Ezekiel 31:17
Ezekiel 32:21
Ezekiel 32:27
Hosea 13:14
Amos 9:2
Jonah 2:2
Habakkuk 2:5

Tartaroō

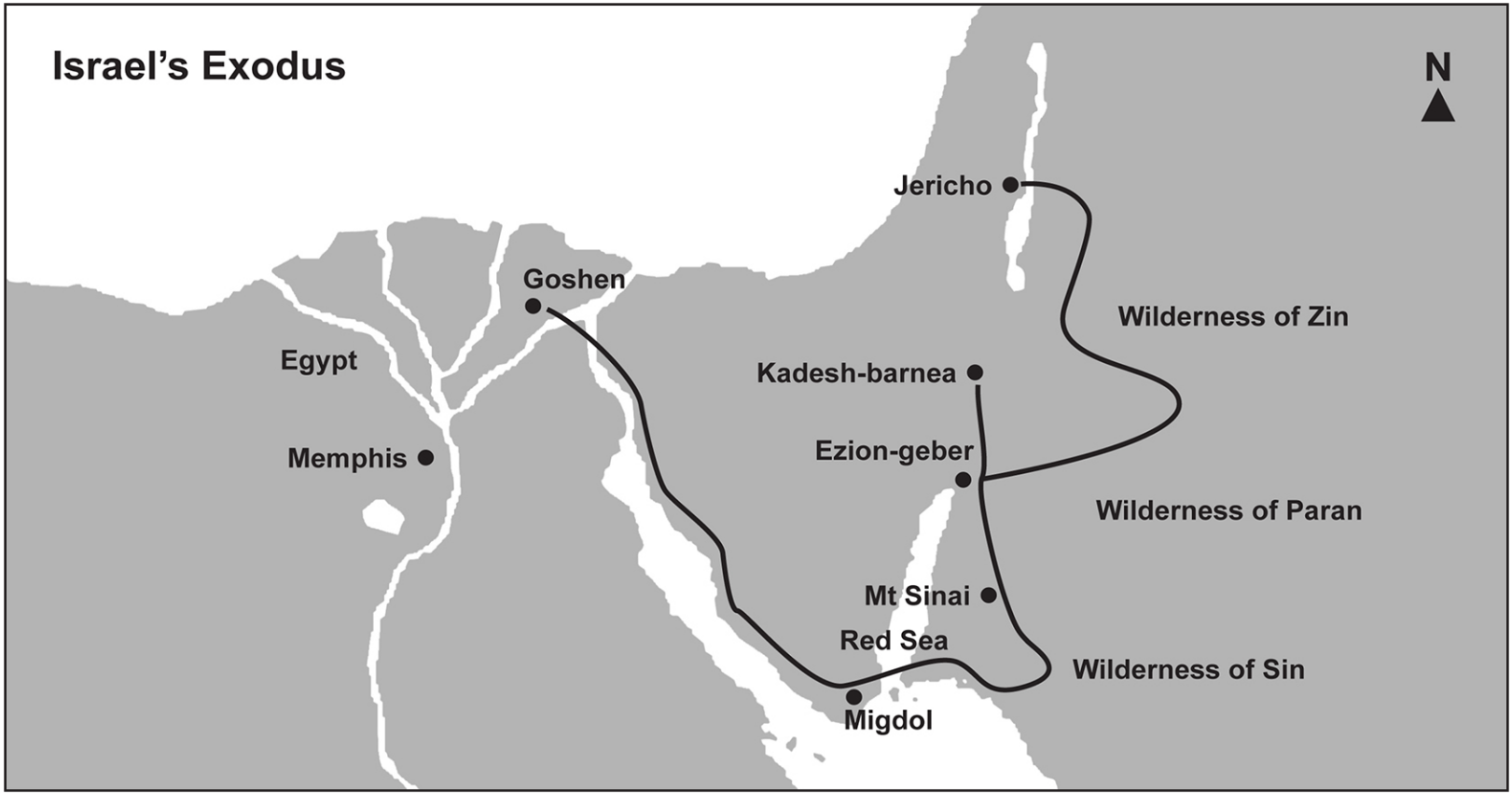
2 Peter 2:4

Questioned

Job 31:12
Proverbs 2:18
Isaiah 8:22
Daniel 12:2
Matthew 3:11
Matthew 7:13
Matthew 7:19
Matthew 8:12
Matthew 11:21
Matthew 13:42
Matthew 13:50
Matthew 15:14
Matthew 18:14
Luke 3:16
John 7:49
Acts 8:20
1 Corinthians 3:15
1 Corinthians 15:18
2 Corinthians 2:16
2 Thessalonians 2:10
2 Peter 2:17



"By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out to the place which he was to receive for an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he went"
Hebrews 11:8



"When Pharaoh had let the people go, God didn't lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, 'Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and they return to Egypt'" Exodus 13:17

"For the Son of Man also came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many"
Mark 10:45

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the Good News of God"
Romans 1:1

Creation 4004 B.C.

Adam and Eve created	4004
Tubal-cain forges metal	3300
Enoch walks with God	3017
Methuselah dies at age 969	2349
God floods the Earth	2349
Tower of Babel thwarted	2247
Abraham sojourns to Canaan	1922
Jacob moves to Egypt	1706
Moses leads Exodus from Egypt	1491
Gideon judges Israel	1245
Ruth embraces the God of Israel	1168
David installed as King	1055
King Solomon builds the Temple	1018
Elijah defeats Baal's prophets	896
Jonah preaches to Nineveh	800
Assyrians conquer Israelites	721
King Josiah reforms Judah	630
Babylonians capture Judah	605
Persians conquer Babylonians	539
Cyrus frees Jews, rebuilds Temple	537
Nehemiah rebuilds the wall	454
Malachi prophecies the Messiah	416
Greeks conquer Persians	331
Seleucids conquer Greeks	312
Hebrew Bible translated to Greek	250
Maccabees defeat Seleucids	165
Romans subject Judea	63
Herod the Great rules Judea	37

(The Annals of the World, James Uusher)

Jesus Christ born 4 B.C.

New Heavens and Earth

	Christ returns for his people
1956	Jim Elliot martyrd in Ecuador
1830	John Williams reaches Polynesia
1731	Zinzendorf leads Moravian mission
1614	Japanese kill 40,000 Christians
1572	Jesuits reach Mexico
1517	Martin Luther leads Reformation
1455	Gutenberg prints first Bible
1323	Franciscans reach Sumatra
1276	Ramon Llull trains missionaries
1100	Crusades tarnish the church
1054	The Great Schism
997	Adalbert marytyrd in Prussia
864	Bulgarian Prince Boris converts
716	Boniface reaches Germany
635	Alopen reaches China
569	Longinus reaches Alodia / Sudan
432	Saint Patrick reaches Ireland
397	Carthage ratifies Bible Canon
341	Ulfilas reaches Goth / Romania
325	Niceae proclaims God is Trinity
250	Denis reaches Paris, France
197	Tertullian writes Christian literature
70	Titus destroys the Jewish Temple
61	Paul imprisoned in Rome, Italy
52	Thomas reaches Malabar, India
39	Peter reaches Gentile Cornelius
33	Holy Spirit empowers the Church

(Wikipedia, Timeline of Christian missions)

Resurrected 33 A.D.

What are we?			Genesis 1:26 - 2:3		Mankind is created in God's image, male and female He created us				
How are we sinful?			Romans 5:12-19		Sin entered the world through Adam and then death through sin				
Where are we?			**When are we?**						
			Innocence		Fallen				Glory
			Eternity Past	Creation 4004 B.C.	Fall to sin No Law	Moses' Law 1500 B.C.	Christ 33 A.D.	Church Age Kingdom Age	New Heavens and Earth
Who are we?	God	Father	John 10:30 God's perfect fellowship	Genesis 1:31 God's perfect fellowship with Adam in The Garden of Eden	1 Timothy 6:16 Living in unapproachable light				Acts 3:21 Philippians 2:11 Revelation 20:3 God's perfectly restored fellowship with all Mankind praising Christ as Lord in the Holy City
		Son			John 8:58 Pre-incarnate		John 1:14 Incarnate	Luke 23:43 Paradise	
		Holy Spirit			Psalm 139:7 Everywhere		John 14:17 Living in believers		
	Mankind	Living	Genesis 1:1 No Creation No people		Ephesians 2:1-5 Serving the Savior or Satan on Earth				
		Deceased believing			Luke 16:22 Blessed in Paradise				
		Deceased unbelieving			Luke 16:23, Revelation 20:5,13 Punished in Hades until the final judgment				
	Angels	Holy			Hebrews 1:14 Serving mankind at God's command				
		Imprisoned		Genesis 1:31 No Fall No unholy Angels	2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6 Imprisoned in Tartarus				Matthew 25:41 Revelation 20:10 Lake of Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels
		Fugitive			1 Peter 5:8, Revelation 12:10 Rebelling against Christ Accusing mankind			Revelation 20:13 Thalaasa	
		First Beast						Revelation 19:20 Lake of Fire	
		False Prophet							
		Satan						Revelation 20:2 Abyss	
Why are we?			Romans 11:25-36, Ephesian 2:7		For God has bound all over to disobedience in order to show mercy to all				

Destiny

AionianBible.org/Destiny

The Aionian Bible shows the location of eleven special Greek and Hebrew Aionian Glossary words to help us better understand God's love for individuals and for all mankind, and the nature of after-life destinies. The underlying Hebrew and Greek words typically translated as *Hell* show us that there are not just two after-life destinies, Heaven or Hell. Instead, there are a number of different locations, each with different purposes, different durations, and different inhabitants. Locations include 1) Old Testament *Sheol* and New Testament *Hadēs*, 2) *Geenna*, 3) *Tartaroō*, 4) *Abyssos*, 5) *Limnē Pyr*, 6) *Paradise*, 7) *The New Heaven*, and 8) *The New Earth*. So there is reason to review our conclusions about the destinies of redeemed mankind and fallen angels.

The key observation is that fallen angels will be present at the final judgment, 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6. Traditionally, we understand the separation of the Sheep and the Goats at the final judgment to divide believing from unbelieving mankind, Matthew 25:31-46 and Revelation 20:11-15. However, the presence of fallen angels alternatively suggests that Jesus is separating redeemed mankind from the fallen angels. We do know that Jesus is the helper of mankind and not the helper of the Devil, Hebrews 2. We also know that Jesus has atoned for the sins of all mankind, both believer and unbeliever alike, 1 John 2:1-2. Deceased believers are rewarded in Paradise, Luke 23:43, while unbelievers are punished in Hades as the story of Lazarus makes plain, Luke 16:19-31. Yet less commonly known, the punishment of this selfish man and all unbelievers is before the final judgment, is temporal, and is punctuated when Hades is evacuated, Revelation 20:13. So is there hope beyond Hades for unbelieving mankind? Jesus promised, *"the gates of Hades will not prevail,"* Matthew 16:18. Paul asks, *"Hades where is your victory?"* 1 Corinthians 15:55. John wrote, *"Hades gives up,"* Revelation 20:13.

Jesus comforts us saying, *"Do not be afraid,"* because he holds the keys to *unlock* death and Hades, Revelation 1:18. Yet too often our *Good News* sounds like a warning to *"be afraid"* because Jesus holds the keys to *lock* Hades! Wow, we have it backwards! Hades will be evacuated! And to guarrantee hope, once emptied, Hades is thrown into the Lake of Fire, never needed again, Revelation 20:14.

Finally, we read that anyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life is thrown into the Lake of Fire, the second death, with no exit ever mentioned or promised, Revelation 21:1-8. So are those evacuated from Hades then, *"out of the frying pan, into the fire?"* Certainly, the Lake of Fire is the destiny of the Goats. But, do not be afraid. Instead, read the Bible's explicit mention of the purpose of the Lake of Fire and the identity of the Goats, *"Then he will say also to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the consummate fire which is prepared for... the devil and his angels,'"* Matthew 25:41. Bad news for the Devil. Good news for all mankind!

Faith is not a pen to write your own name in the Book of Life. Instead, faith is the glasses to see that the love of Christ for all mankind has already written our names in Heaven. Jesus said, *"You did not choose me, but I chose you," John 15:16*. Though unbelievers will suffer regrettable punishment in Hades, redeemed mankind will never enter the Lake of Fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And as God promised, all mankind will worship Christ together forever, Philippians 2:9-11.

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"
Matthew 28:19