

1 Kings

Preview

Translation

Evangelical Heritage Version
Wartburg Bible Series

1 Kings: Preview Translation

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In the EHV logo the circle of light or rainbow radiating from the cross is divided into three parts to symbolize the three *so/as* of the Reformation: by grace alone, by faith alone, and by Scripture alone. This semi-circle, together with the base, forms the Latin letter D, which means 500 and honors the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, the year in which the first edition of the EHV was published.

1 Kings

Introduction

The first book of Kings resumes the account of the history of Israel from the last year of David's life, which was about 970 BC. The first eleven chapters deal with the reign of Solomon and the building of the temple. The rest of the book deals with the conflict between the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel, up to the death of Ahab in about 853 BC.

The book contrasts God's grace with Israel's sinfulness.

We do not know the name of the author of this book, but it may have been Jeremiah or one of his associates. The author of Kings made extensive use of written records. The book was probably composed during the exile to Babylon.

1

Adonijah's Conspiracy

When King David was old and advanced in years, his servants covered him with blankets, but he could not get warm. ²So they said to him, "Let your servants search for a young woman, a virgin, for my lord the king. She will attend to the king and be his nurse. She will lie close to him and keep my lord the king warm."

³So they searched the whole territory of Israel for a beautiful young woman. They found Abishag from Shunem and brought her to the king. ⁴The young woman was very beautiful, and she served as the king's nurse, but the king was not intimate with her.

⁵Adonijah son of Haggith^a was pushing himself forward, saying, "I will become king." He obtained a chariot and charioteers and fifty men to run ahead of him. ⁶His father had never rebuked him by saying, "Why are you acting like this?"

Adonijah also was very handsome and had been born next in line after Absalom. ⁷Joab son of Zeruiah and Abiathar the priest conspired with Adonijah and gave him their support. ⁸But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, along with Shimei, Rei, and David's elite warriors, did not join with Adonijah.

⁹Adonijah sacrificed sheep, cattle, and specially fattened calves at the Stone of Zohemoth, which was near En Rogel Spring. He invited all of his brothers, the king's sons, and all of the king's officials from Judah. ¹⁰But he did not invite the prophet Nathan, Benaiah, the elite warriors, or his brother Solomon.

Nathan and Bathsheba Support Solomon

¹¹Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Haven't you heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king, and our lord David does not know about it? ¹²Now let me give you some advice on how to save your life and the life of your son Solomon: ¹³Go to King David and say to him, 'My lord the king, didn't you swear to me your servant and promise me, "Your son Solomon will be king after me, and he will sit on my throne"? Then why has Adonijah become king?' ¹⁴Then, while you are still there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words."

^a5 Haggith was one of David's wives.

¹⁵So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber. The king was very old, and Abishag from Shunem was taking care of him. ¹⁶Bathsheba knelt and bowed down before the king. The king said, “Why have you come?”

¹⁷She said, “My lord, you swore to your servant by the LORD your God and promised, ‘Your son Solomon will be king after me, and he will sit on my throne.’” ¹⁸But now, look, Adonijah has become king, and you, my lord the king, did not know about it. ¹⁹He has sacrificed cattle, specially fattened calves, and sheep in abundance. He has invited all the king’s sons, as well as Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of the army. But he has not invited your servant Solomon. ²⁰Now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are upon you, waiting for you to tell them who will sit on my lord the king’s throne after him. ²¹If you do not, when my lord the king rests with^a his fathers, then I and my son Solomon will be treated like traitors.”

²²Just then, while she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. ²³The king was told, “The prophet Nathan is here.” Nathan went in and bowed down to the ground before the king.

²⁴Nathan said, “Did you, my lord the king, say, ‘Adonijah will be king after me, and he will sit on my throne’?” ²⁵Today he has gone out and sacrificed a great many cattle, specially fattened calves, and sheep. He has invited all the king’s sons, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest. They are even eating and drinking with him and saying, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’” ²⁶But he has not invited me your servant, Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, or your servant Solomon. ²⁷Has this command about who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him really come from my lord the king, even though you have not made this known to your servants?”

²⁸Then King David responded, “Call Bathsheba for me.” She came in and stood before the king. ²⁹The king swore, “As surely as the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every tight spot, ³⁰just as I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel, that Solomon your son will be king after me and he will sit on my throne in my place, I will indeed make it happen this very day.”

³¹Bathsheba knelt down on the ground and bowed before the king and said, “May my lord King David live forever!”

David Makes Solomon King
(1 Chronicles 29:21-25)^b

³²King David said, “Call in Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada.” So they came in before the king.

³³The king said to them, “Take your lord’s servants with you. Have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon Spring. ³⁴There Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet are to anoint him as king over Israel. Then you are to blow the ram’s horn and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’” ³⁵Then you are to follow him, as he goes in and sits on my throne, and he will be king in my place. I decree that he will be leader over Israel and Judah.”

³⁶Then Benaiah son of Jehoiada responded to the king, “Amen! May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, confirm this! ³⁷Just as the LORD was with my lord the king, so may he also be with Solomon. May he make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David!”

³⁸So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites, and the Pelethites went out. They had Solomon ride on the mule that belonged to King David and brought him down to Gihon Spring. ³⁹Then Zadok the priest took the horn of olive oil from the Tent and anointed Solomon. After that they blew the ram’s horn, and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!”

⁴⁰All the people followed Solomon. The people were playing flutes and rejoicing so greatly that the ground shook from the sound. ⁴¹When Adonijah and all his guests heard it, they stopped eating. Joab heard the sound of the ram’s horn and asked, “Why is the noise from the city so loud?”

^a21 As a euphemism for death, this term has traditionally been translated *sleep with*, but it is translated *rest with* to avoid misunderstanding due to the English connotation of *sleep with*.

^b32 The parallel account in 1 Chronicles 29 seems to refer to a second, more public coronation, not to this event.

⁴²Just then, while he was still speaking, Jonathan, son of Abiathar the priest, came in. Adonijah said, “Come in, for you are a worthy man, and you must be bringing good news.”

⁴³Jonathan responded to Adonijah:

Not at all! Our lord King David has made Solomon king! ⁴⁴The king sent Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites, and the Pelethites with Solomon, and they placed him on the king’s mule. ⁴⁵Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed him as king at Gihon, and they went up from there rejoicing. The city is in an uproar. That is the noise you have been hearing. ⁴⁶Also, Solomon has taken his seat on the throne of the kingdom. ⁴⁷The king’s servants have come to bless our lord King David, saying, “May your God treat the name of Solomon even more favorably than your name, and may his throne be greater than your throne.”

The king bowed in worship on his bed, ⁴⁸and the king spoke the following words: “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who today has provided someone to sit upon my throne and has permitted my eyes to see it.”

⁴⁹Then all of Adonijah’s guests quickly got up, and each one went his own way.

⁵⁰Adonijah was afraid of Solomon, so he went and held on to the horns of the altar.^a ⁵¹Solomon was told, “Adonijah is so afraid of King Solomon that he has grabbed the horns of the altar, and he is saying, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me this day that he will not kill his servant with the sword.’”

⁵²Solomon said, “If he is a worthy man, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground, but if he is caught planning evil, he will die.” ⁵³Then King Solomon had Adonijah brought down from the altar. He came in and bowed down to King Solomon, and Solomon told him, “Go to your house.”

2

David’s Charge to Solomon

The day of David’s death was approaching, so he gave the following commands to his son Solomon:

²I am about to go the way of all the earth. Now, be strong and act like a man! ³Fulfill your duties to the LORD your God. Walk in his ways. Keep his statutes, his commands, his ordinances, and his decrees as they are written in the Law of Moses, so that you may have success in everything you do and everywhere you turn, ⁴in order that the LORD may keep this word that he spoke to me: “If your sons are careful to walk before me faithfully with their whole heart and soul, then you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.”

⁵Furthermore, you know what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me—what he did to two commanders of the army of Israel, to Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether. He killed them, spilling blood in peacetime as if it was happening in war. He spattered that blood on the belt around his waist and on the sandals on his feet, as if it were war. ⁶Deal with him according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace.

⁷Keep faith with^b the sons of Barzillai from Gilead, and let them eat at your table, because they did the same for me when I fled from your brother Absalom.

⁸Watch out for Shimei son of Gera from Bahurim of the tribe of Benjamin, since he is still with you. He cursed me bitterly on the day I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD, “I will not kill you with the sword.” ⁹But now, do not leave him unpunished, for you are a wise man. You will know what you should do to him. Bring his gray hair down to the grave in blood.

^a50 A custom for seeking protection for one’s life, possibly based on Exodus 21:12-14

^b7 Literally *do mercy or faithfulness with*. The Hebrew expression denotes a covenant relationship.

David's Death
(1 Chronicles 29:26-30)

¹⁰David rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. ¹¹David was king over Israel for forty years. He was king in Hebron for seven years, and he was king in Jerusalem for thirty-three years.

Adonijah Schemes Against Solomon

¹²Solomon was seated on the throne of his father David, and his kingship was firmly established.

¹³Adonijah son of Haggith came to Solomon's mother Bathsheba. She said to him, "Do you come in peace?"

"Yes, in peace," he answered. ¹⁴Then he said, "May I have a word with you?"

She said, "Yes. Speak up."

¹⁵He said, "You know that the kingship was mine, and all Israel looked for me to be king. But things changed, and the kingship went to my brother instead, because the LORD gave it to him. ¹⁶But now, I am asking you for one request. Do not turn me away."

She said, "Tell me what it is."

¹⁷He said, "Ask King Solomon (for he will not turn you down) to give me Abishag from Shunem as my wife."

¹⁸Bathsheba said, "Very well, I will speak to the king for you."

¹⁹So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. The king met her and bowed down to her. Then he sat on his throne and also set up a throne for the king's mother, and she sat at his right hand.

²⁰She said, "I am asking you for one small request. Do not turn me down."

The king answered her, "Ask, mother, for I will not turn you down."

²¹She said, "Please give Abishag from Shunem to your brother Adonijah as his wife."

²²King Solomon answered his mother, "Why do you ask for Abishag from Shunem to be given to Adonijah? You might as well ask for the kingship for him. After all, he is my brother, my older brother! Yes, request it for him and for Abiathar the priest and for Joab son of Zeruiah!"

²³Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, "May God punish me severely and double it,^a if Adonijah does not pay with his life for this request that he has made! ²⁴Now, as surely as the LORD lives, who has appointed me and seated me on the throne of my father David and has established my house just as he said he would, Adonijah will die today!" ²⁵Then King Solomon gave an order to Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and he struck down Adonijah and killed him.

Solomon Makes His Kingship Secure

²⁶To Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to your estate in Anathoth because you deserve to die. But I will not kill you today because you carried the Ark of the LORD God before my father David and because you shared in all my father's sufferings." ²⁷So Solomon drove Abiathar out from serving as priest for the LORD, to fulfill the word of the LORD which had been spoken against the house of Eli in Shiloh.

²⁸When the news reached Joab, he fled to the Tent of the LORD and held on to the horns of the altar, for he had supported Adonijah, although he had not supported Absalom. ²⁹When King Solomon was told that Joab had fled to the Tent of the LORD and that he was there by the side of the altar, Solomon sent word to Joab, saying, "What happened to you that caused you to flee to the altar?" Joab

^a23 Literally *may God do all this to me and even more*

said, "Because I was afraid of you, I fled to the LORD." So Solomon sent word to Benaiah son of Jehoiada, "Go! Strike him down!"^a

³⁰Benaiah went to the Tent of the LORD and called to Joab, "The king says, 'Come out!'"

Joab answered, "No. I will die here."

So Benaiah reported back to the king, "This is what Joab said, and this is how I responded."

³¹The king said to him, "Do just as he said. Strike him dead and bury him. Remove from me and from my father's house the blood that Joab shed without cause. ³²The LORD has brought the blood he shed back on his own head, because he struck down two men who were more righteous and better than he was. He killed them with the sword, but my father David did not know about it. The blood of Abner son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah, ³³has come back on Joab's head and on the heads of his descendants forever. But for David and his descendants and his house and his throne, there will be peace forever from the LORD."

³⁴So Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and struck him down and killed him. He buried him at his house in the wilderness. ³⁵Then the king put Benaiah son of Jehoiada in Joab's place over the army. He placed Zadok the priest into Abiathar's position.

³⁶The king summoned Shimei and said to him, "Build a house for yourself in Jerusalem and live there. Do not go out of the city—ever! ³⁷On the day you go out and cross the Kidron Valley, you can be sure that you will die. Your blood will be on your own head."

³⁸Shimei said to the king, "Your decision is good. Your servant will do just as my lord the king has said." So Shimei lived in Jerusalem for some time. ³⁹At the end of three years, two of Shimei's slaves fled to Achish son of Ma'akah, the king of Gath. Shimei was told, "Listen! Your slaves are in Gath."

⁴⁰So Shimei saddled his donkey and went to Achish of Gath to look for his slaves. Then he brought them back from Gath.

⁴¹Solomon was told that Shimei had left Jerusalem and had gone to Gath and returned. ⁴²The king summoned Shimei and said to him, "Did I not swear to you by the LORD and warn you that you could be sure that on the day you dared to go out of Jerusalem you would die? And didn't you answer me, 'Your decision is good. I have heard what you said'? ⁴³Why then did you not keep your oath to the LORD and obey the command I gave you?" ⁴⁴The king also said to Shimei, "In your heart you know all the evil that you did to my father David. Now the LORD has brought your evil back on your own head. ⁴⁵Now may King Solomon be blessed, and may David's throne be firmly established before the LORD forever."

⁴⁶Then the king gave a command to Benaiah son of Jehoiada. He went out and struck down Shimei and killed him. In this way the kingship was firmly established in the hands of Solomon.

3

The Beginning of Solomon's Reign

Solomon had made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt. He married Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the City of David until he had finished building his own house, the LORD's house, and the wall around Jerusalem.

²The people were still offering sacrifices at the high places^a because a house for the Name of the LORD had not yet been built in those days. ³Solomon loved the LORD, so he followed the instructions of his father David, though he was still offering sacrifices and burning incense at the high places.

^a29 In this verse, the words in half-brackets are not present in the Hebrew text but do appear in the Greek text.

These words lie between two occurrences of the words *Solomon sent word to*, so the Hebrew copyist's eye may have skipped from the first occurrence of these words to the second.

Solomon Asks for Wisdom
(2 Chronicles 1:2–13)

⁴So the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, because it was the most important high place. Solomon offered one thousand whole burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵The LORD appeared to Solomon in Gibeon in a dream at night.

God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

⁶Solomon said, “You have shown great mercy and faithfulness^b to your servant, my father David, just as he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart toward you. You have shown this great mercy and faithfulness to him and have given him a son who is seated on his throne to this very day. ⁷O LORD my God, now you have made your servant king in the place of my father David, but I am a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And I, your servant, am among your people whom you have chosen, a great people, who cannot be counted or numbered because they are so many. ⁹Now give to your servant a perceptive heart to judge your people, to distinguish between good and evil, for who is able to judge this great people of yours?”

¹⁰In the eyes of the LORD, Solomon’s request was good. ¹¹So God said to him, “Because you have asked for this, and you have not asked for a long life, nor have you asked for riches, nor have you asked for the lives of your enemies, but you have asked for discernment to reach just verdicts, ¹²therefore I will act according to your words. Yes, I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you before you, nor will anyone like you rise up after you. ¹³In addition, I will give you what you have not asked for: such riches and honor that there will not be anyone like you among the other kings throughout all your days. ¹⁴If you walk in my ways by keeping my statutes and commands just as your father David did, then I will give you a long life.”

¹⁵Then Solomon woke up and realized it was a dream. So Solomon went to Jerusalem and stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord.^c He offered whole burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and he made a feast for all his officials.

Solomon Demonstrates God’s Wisdom

¹⁶Later, two prostitutes came and stood before the king.

¹⁷One woman said, “Hear me, my lord! This woman and I live in the same house. While she was living in the house, I gave birth. ¹⁸Three days after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. We were together. There was no one else in the house with us. Only the two of us were there. ¹⁹One night this woman’s son died because she lay on top of him. ²⁰Then she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while I, your servant, was sleeping. She laid him next to her, and her dead son she laid next to me. ²¹When I got up in the morning to nurse my son, there he was—dead! But when I examined him closely in the morning, I saw it was not my son, to whom I had given birth!”

²²But the other woman said, “No! The living child is really my son, and your son is the dead one!”

But the first one kept saying, “No! Your son is really the dead one, and my son is the living one!” They kept arguing like this before the king.

^{a2} A *high place* is a shrine smaller than a temple. High places were often open-air shrines, located near the city gate or on a nearby hill.

^{b6} The Hebrew word *chesed* has connotations of both *mercy* and *faithfulness*, so the translation here includes both concepts. *Chesed* (*mercy*) is used in the Old Testament in much the same way that *charis* (*grace*) is used in the New Testament, as the most common word for God’s saving love.

^{c15} Variant *LORD*

²³The king said, “This woman says, ‘My son is the living one, and your son is the dead one.’ But this other woman says, ‘No, your son is really the dead one, and my son is the living one.’” ²⁴So the king said, “Bring me a sword.” So they brought a sword to the king.

²⁵Then the king said, “Cut the living child in two, and give half to this woman and half to that woman.”

²⁶But the woman to whom the living child belonged spoke up, because her feelings for her son were very strong. She said, “Listen to me, my lord. Give her the living child. Please don’t kill him.”

But the other woman said, “He will be neither mine nor yours. Cut him in two!”

²⁷The king answered, “Give the living child to the first woman, and do not kill him. She is his mother.”

²⁸All Israel heard about the judgment which the king had rendered. They were filled with awe^a in his presence, because they saw that God’s wisdom was in him to administer justice.

4

King Solomon’s Administration

So King Solomon ruled over all Israel. ²These were his officials:

Azariah son^b of Zadok was the priest.

³Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, were the secretaries.

Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the record keeper.^c

⁴Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the army.

Zadok and Abiathar were priests.

⁵Azariah son of Nathan was supervisor over the governors.

Zabud son of Nathan, a priest, was the king’s personal advisor.^d

⁶Ahishar was the palace administrator,

and Adoniram son of Abda was in charge of forced labor.

⁷Solomon had twelve governors, who were over all Israel. They supplied provisions for the king and for his palace. Each of them was assigned one month of the year during which he was responsible for supplying provisions. ⁸These were their names:

Ben Hur^e in the hill country of Ephraim,

⁹Ben Deker in Makaz and in Sha'albim, Beth Shemesh, and Elon Beth Hanan,

¹⁰Ben Heshed in Arubboth (Sokoh and all the land of Hepher were his),

¹¹Ben Abinadab in all the heights of Dor^f (Taphath daughter of Solomon was his wife),

¹²Ba'ana son of Ahilud in Ta'anach and Megiddo, and in all Beth Shan, which is beside Zarethan, below Jezre'el, from Beth Shan to Abel Meholah, up to the other side of Jokmeam,

¹³Ben Geber in Ramoth Gilead (the villages of Jair son of Manasseh in Gilead belonged to him, and the region of Argob in Bashan belonged to him, sixty great cities with walls and bronze bars),

¹⁴Ahinadab son of Iddo in Mahanaim,

¹⁵Ahima'az in Naphtali (he was married to Solomon’s daughter Basemath),

^a28 Or *were amazed*

^b2 Or *grandson*. See 1 Chronicles 6:8–9.

^c3 The *record keeper* served as a spokesman and chief of protocol. Like the *secretary*, he was a cabinet-level official.

^d5 Literally *the friend of the king*

^e8 Names beginning with *ben* (*son of*) are usually not personal names, but patronymics (family names like the English Johnson). The presence of so many names beginning with *ben* in this list is unusual and has led some commentators to conclude that some personal names are missing.

^f11 Or *Naphoth Dor*

¹⁶Ba'ana son of Hushai in Asher and in Be'aloth,

¹⁷Jehoshaphat son of Paruah in Issachar,

¹⁸Shimei son of Ela in Benjamin,

¹⁹Geber son of Uri in the land of Gilead (this included the land of both Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan, but there was only one governor for that land).

The Glory of Solomon's Rule

²⁰Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea. They were eating, drinking, and rejoicing. ²¹Solomon was ruling all the kingdoms from the River^a to the land of the Philistines, up to the border of Egypt. They sent tribute and workers to Solomon all the days of his life. ^b ²²Solomon's provisions for one day were one hundred eighty bushels^c of fine flour and three hundred sixty bushels^d of plain flour, ²³ten stall-fed cattle, twenty pasture-fed cattle, and one hundred sheep, not to mention deer, gazelle, roebucks, and fattened poultry.

²⁴Since Solomon was ruling over everything west of the River, from Tiphseh to Gaza, over all the kingdoms west of the River, he had peace on all sides. ²⁵Judah and Israel lived in safety, with every man sitting under his own vine and fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, throughout Solomon's days. ²⁶Solomon had four thousand^e teams^f of horses for his chariots and twelve thousand charioteers.

²⁷His governors supplied provisions for King Solomon and for all those who gathered at King Solomon's table. Each governor was responsible for one month, so the court lacked nothing. ²⁸They brought the barley and straw for the horses and steeds^g to the location assigned to each one of them.

²⁹God gave Solomon wisdom and very great understanding and breadth of knowledge^h like the sand on the seashore. ³⁰Solomon's wisdom was greater than all the wisdom of the men of the East and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹He was wiser than any man, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, wiser than Heman, Kalkol, or Darda, the sons of Mahol. His name was known in all the surrounding nations. ³²He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered one thousand and five. ³³He spoke about trees, from the cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He also spoke about animals, birds, reptiles and other crawling things, and fish. ³⁴From all the peoples and from all the kings of the earth who heard about Solomon's wisdom, people came to listen to his wisdom.

5

Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple (2 Chronicles 2:1-18)

Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon because he heard that Solomon had been anointed king in his father's place, and because Hiram had been a dear friend of David all his days.ⁱ

²Solomon sent the following message to Hiram:

^a21 That is, the Euphrates

^b21 The chapter division is different in the Hebrew text. English 4:21-34 equals Hebrew 5:1-14. English 5:1-18 equals Hebrew 5:15-32.

^c22 Literally *thirty cors*. The sizes of the *cor* and other ancient measures of volume are uncertain. *Thirty cors* may be about five tons.

^d22 Literally *sixty cors*

^e26 *Four thousand* is the reading of some manuscripts of the Greek Old Testament and the parallel passage in 2 Chronicles 9:25. The Hebrew text reads *forty thousand*. Four thousand chariots correlates well with twelve thousand charioteers, at three riders per chariot.

^fOr *stalls*

^g28 The text has the common word for *horses* followed by a second name for another type of horse. The precise meaning of the second term is uncertain.

^h29 Literally *breadth of heart*

ⁱ1 The chapter division is different in the Hebrew text. English 4:21-34 equals Hebrew 5:1-14. English 5:1-18 equals Hebrew 5:15-32.

³You know that my father David was not able to build a house for the Name of the LORD his God, because of the wars that swirled around him until the LORD put his enemies under the soles of his feet. ⁴But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side. I have no adversary and face no dangerous situations. ⁵Listen to this! I intend to build a house for the Name of the LORD my God, just as the LORD told my father, “Your son, whom I will put on your throne in your place, will build the house for my Name.” ⁶Now give the order to cut cedar logs for me from Lebanon. My servants will work with your servants, and I will reimburse you whatever you specify as the pay for your servants, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut lumber like the Sidonians.

⁷When Hiram heard Solomon’s words, he was very happy and he said:

Blessed be the LORD this day because he has given David a wise son to rule over this great people.

⁸So Hiram sent word to Solomon:

I have heard the message you sent me. I will provide all the cedar and fir logs that you desire. ⁹My servants will bring the logs down from Lebanon to the sea, and I will put them into the sea as rafts and float them to the place that you tell me. Then we will dismantle them there, and you can transport them up from there. In exchange, you will provide all the food I desire for my palace.

¹⁰So Hiram gave Solomon all the cedar and fir that he desired. ¹¹In return, Solomon gave Hiram one hundred twenty thousand bushels^a of wheat as provisions for his palace and one hundred twenty thousand gallons^b of beaten^c olive oil. Solomon gave this amount to Hiram every year. ¹²The LORD gave wisdom to Solomon just as he had promised him, so there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and they made a treaty.

¹³King Solomon drafted a labor force from all over Israel. It numbered thirty thousand men. ¹⁴He sent ten thousand men per month to Lebanon in shifts. They would spend one month in Lebanon. Then for two months they would be at home. Adoniram was in charge of this forced labor. ¹⁵Solomon had seventy thousand men to transport materials and eighty thousand men to quarry stones in the mountains, ¹⁶not counting the officials who were overseeing the work for Solomon. There were thirty-three hundred men supervising the people who were doing the work. ¹⁷The king gave a command, and they quarried large, high-quality stones to serve as a foundation for the temple building, which was made of trimmed stones. ¹⁸Solomon’s builders and Hiram’s builders and the men from Gebal^d cut and prepared the wood and stones to construct the temple building.^e

^a11 Literally *twenty thousand cors*. The values of the ancient measures of volume are uncertain.

^b11 Literally *twenty thousand baths*

^c11 It is assumed that oil from beaten olives is the highest grade olive oil from the first crushing of the olives, which was done by hand, not by a mechanical press.

^d18 A Phoenician city, also called Byblos

^e18 Literally *the house or the building*. The *temple building* is often called *the house* in Kings and Chronicles. The temple building, that is, the sanctuary proper, must be distinguished from the temple complex with its courtyards and side buildings. Both terms, *the house of the LORD* and *the temple*, may refer to the sanctuary itself or to the entire complex, depending on the context.

The Construction of the Temple
(2 Chronicles 3:1–9)^a

In the four hundred eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, during the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month named Ziv,^b which is the second month, Solomon began to build the house for the LORD.

²The house which King Solomon built for the LORD was ninety feet long, thirty feet wide, and forty-five feet high.^c ³The porch^d in front of the temple building^e was thirty feet wide, the same as the width of the building. It extended out fifteen feet from the front of the building.

⁴He made latticed windows^f high on the walls of the building.

⁵He added a structure along the outer walls of the building, all the way around the three sides of the building. It was built against the walls of both the front room^g and the inner room^h of the sanctuary. In this structure he constructed three levels of storage rooms, all the way around the building. ⁶The width of the rooms on the lowest story was seven and a half feet. The rooms of the middle story were nine feet wide, and the rooms of the third story were ten and a half feet wide, because he had built three receding ledges into the outside wall of the temple building all the way around, so that the floor beams of each story would not have to be inserted into the walls of the main building.

⁷While the building was under construction, only stones that had been finished at the quarry were used in the building. No hammer or chisel or any other iron tool was heard in the building while it was under construction. ⁸The entrance into the lowest storyⁱ of the side rooms was on the south side^j of the building. Winding stairs^k went up to the middle floor, and also from the middle floor to the third floor.

⁹So Solomon finished building the house, and he covered^l the house with beams and planks of cedar.

¹⁰He built the floors for the storerooms that were all around the house. Each story was seven and a half

^a1 The parallel accounts of the building of the Temple in 1 Kings 6-7 and 2 Chronicles 3-4 are not close parallels. Because many items are in different order in the two accounts, it is difficult to provide precise cross references for some sections.

^b1 *Ziv* corresponds to April/May.

^c2 *Sixty cubits*, *twenty cubits*, and *thirty cubits* respectively, using a cubit of eighteen inches. Since the numbers of the temple measurements do not seem to have symbolic values, the translation converts them into modern measurements.

^d3 Or *portico*, *entry hall*, or *vestibule*. It is uncertain whether this was an unroofed porch or a roofed, enclosed vestibule or foyer.

^e3 Literally *in front of the temple of the house*. In this section of Kings, the Hebrew word *bayit*, which has the base meaning *house*, sometimes refers to the whole temple building, including both rooms. The word *hekal*, which often means *temple* or *palace*, sometimes refers only to the first room inside the temple building, that is, the front room or main hall, which is also called *the Holy Place*.

^f4 Or *framed windows narrower on the outside than on the inside*. The purpose of these windows, located high on the walls of the temple building, was to let in light. It is uncertain whether they were latticed or had angled side walls which made them narrower on the outer side. In either case the purpose was the same—to restrict the entry of birds. Compare Ezekiel 41:16. Another interpretation is *windows with recessed frames within frames*. See the footnote on 6:31.

^g5 Or *main room* or *nave*. The Hebrew word *hekal*, usually translated *temple*, here refers only to the first room in the temple building. This room is also called *the Holy Place*.

^h5 Hebrew *debir*. This room is also called *the Holy of Holies* or *the Most Holy Place*.

ⁱ8 *The lowest story* is the reading of the Greek Old Testament and the Targum. The Hebrew text reads *the middle story*, but the rest of the verse makes it clear that the entry was on the ground floor. Ezekiel 41:7 also states that the stairs went up from the lowest story to the top story through the middle story.

^j8 In this description, in Hebrew the *south side* is called the *right side*, and the *north side* is called the *left side*.

^k8 Or *ladders*. The precise meaning is uncertain.

^l9 Or *roofed*

feet high. Each story was supported by cedar timbers which rested on the receding ledges constructed along the walls of the building.^a

¹¹The word of the LORD came to Solomon. He said, ¹²“In regard to this house which you are building, if you walk according to my statutes and carry out my ordinances and keep all my commands by walking according to them, you will be the one through whom I will fulfill my promise which I spoke to your father David. ¹³I will dwell among the descendants of Israel, and I will not forsake my people Israel.”

¹⁴So Solomon finished building the house. ¹⁵He paneled the inside walls of the building with cedar boards, from the floor of the building to the rafters^b of the ceiling. He covered the inside walls with wood. He also covered the floor of the building with boards of fir wood.

¹⁶Thirty feet from the back wall of the building he built a wall of cedar boards from the floor to the ceiling. He built this wall inside the building to create an inner sanctuary, the Most Holy Place.

¹⁷The front part of the building became a main room sixty feet long.¹⁸Gourds^c and open flowers were carved into the cedar on the inside of the building. Everything was covered with cedar. No stone was visible.

¹⁹He prepared the inner room of the sanctuary inside the building as a place to set the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD. ²⁰The inner sanctuary was thirty feet long, thirty feet wide, and thirty feet high, and he overlaid it with pure gold.

He also overlaid the cedar altar with gold. ²¹So Solomon covered the inside of the building with pure gold. He stretched gold chains across the front of the inner sanctuary, and he overlaid the sanctuary with gold. ²²He overlaid the whole building with gold, until the whole building had been covered. He also overlaid the whole altar, which was in front of the inner sanctuary, with gold.

The Cherubim (2 Chronicles 3:10–13)

²³For the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim^d of olive wood. Each one was fifteen feet tall. ²⁴Seven and a half feet was the length of one wing of a cherub, and seven and a half feet was the length of the other wing of a cherub. The distance from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other was fifteen feet.^e ²⁵The other cherub also was fifteen feet wide. Both of the cherubim were the same size and looked the same. ²⁶One cherub was fifteen feet tall, and so was the other cherub. ²⁷He set the cherubim inside the inner sanctuary of the house. The wings of the cherubim were stretched out, so that the outer wing of the first one touched the wall, and the outer wing of the other cherub touched the opposite wall, and their wings touched one another in the middle of the room. ²⁸He overlaid the cherubim with gold.

²⁹He decorated the walls on all sides of both rooms of the building with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. ³⁰He overlaid the floor of the building with gold in both the inner and outer rooms.

The Doors (2 Chronicles 4:9, 22)

³¹For the entrance to the inner sanctuary, he made olive wood doors with five-sided frames.^f ³²He carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers on them and overlaid them with gold. He shaped sheets of hammered gold to cover the cherubim and the palm trees.

³³He did the same for the entrance to the front room. It had door posts of olive wood that were four-sided³⁴ and two doors of fir wood. The door on one side was made with two folding leaves, and the door

^a10 Literally *they grasped the house with cedar timbers*

^b15 The reading *rafters* (*qoroth*) is the reading of the Greek Old Testament. The Hebrew text reads *walls* (*qiroth*).

^c18 Or *knobs* or *buds*

^d23 *Cherubim* are the angels who are the LORD's honor guard. They are described in Ezekiel 1.

^e24 The EHV retains the repetitious style of the text, which may be for rhetorical emphasis.

^f31 Or *with five recessed frames*, that is, the doorframe had five recessed sills, like doorways within a doorway. If the doorposts were *five-sided*, each doorpost may have been a pentagon, or each doorway may have had a peaked upper side.

on the other side was made with two folding leaves.³⁵ He carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers on them, and he overlaid them with gold leaf, shaped to the carvings.

The Courtyard
(2 Chronicles 4:9)

³⁶He built the inner courtyard with three courses of cut stone and one course of cedar beams.

³⁷The foundation of the LORD's house was laid in the fourth year, in the month named Ziv.^a ³⁸In the eleventh year, in the month named Bul,^b which is the eighth month, all the parts of the house were finished according to all its specifications. Solomon had spent seven years building it.

7

The Five Buildings of Solomon's Palace Complex

It took Solomon thirteen years to finish building his whole palace complex.

The House of the Forest of Lebanon

²He built the House of the Forest of Lebanon. It was one hundred fifty feet long. It was seventy-five feet wide and forty-five feet high. It had four rows^c of cedar pillars, with cedar beams on top of the pillars. ³It was roofed with cedar above the forty-five beams that rested on the pillars, fifteen beams in each row.^d

⁴There were three rows^e of windows with recessed frames on each side of the building. ⁵All the doors and posts were made with square beams.^f They were arranged in groups of three.

The Hall of Pillars

⁶He built a pillared entry hall.^g It was seventy-five feet wide and forty-five feet deep. There was another porch in front of the pillars, and more pillars and a canopy in front of them.

The Hall of Justice

⁷He made another hall, named the Hall of Justice. The throne from which he judged cases was located there. The hall was covered with cedar from floor to ceiling.^h

Palaces for Solomon and Pharaoh's Daughter

⁸His house in which he lived was made the same way. It was on the other side of a courtyard behind the Hall of Pillars.ⁱ Solomon also made another house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married.

⁹All of these were made of high-quality stone, precisely cut to the exact measure, trimmed with saws on both sides. Such stones were used from the foundation to the edge of the roof, from the outside of the complex to the great courtyard on the inside. ¹⁰The foundation was made of high-quality stones, huge stones, twelve or fifteen feet long. ¹¹Above this were high-quality stones, precisely cut, with layers of cedar wood in between. ¹²The great courtyard all the way around had three courses of cut stone and then a course of cedar beams, like the inner courtyard of the House of the LORD and the porch of that building.

^a37 April/May

^b38 October/November

^c2 Verses 2-6 are very difficult, and the translation is uncertain. In verse 2, the Hebrew text reads *four rows of pillars*. Some Greek texts read *three rows of pillars*.

^d3 Another interpretation of the Hebrew includes chambers on an upper level of the building: *It was covered with cedar above the chambers that were on the forty-five pillars, fifteen in each row*.

^e4 Or *groups*

^f5 Or *with rectangular frames* or *with four recessed frames*. See the footnote at 6:31.

^g6 Or *colonnade*

^h7 *Ceiling* is the reading of the Latin and Syriac. The Hebrew reads *from floor to floor*.

ⁱ8 The meaning of this sentence is uncertain.

The Chief Craftsman
(2 Chronicles 2:13–14)

¹³King Solomon sent for Hiram^a from Tyre. ¹⁴He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, but his father was a craftsman in bronze from Tyre. Hiram too was filled with wisdom, understanding, and skill for all kinds of work in bronze. He came to King Solomon and performed the work for him.

The Large Bronze Pillars
(2 Chronicles 3:15–17)

¹⁵He cast two bronze pillars, each twenty-seven feet tall. Their circumference was eighteen feet.

¹⁶He made two capitals of cast bronze to set on top of the pillars. The height of one capital was seven and a half feet, and the height of the other capital was seven and a half feet. ¹⁷The capitals that sat on top of the pillars were decorated with a latticework of interwoven chains. There were seven rows of decoration on one capital and seven rows on the other capital. ¹⁸This is how he made the pillars: He made two rows of pomegranates to go above the latticework on the capitals that were on top of the pillars.^b He did this for each pillar. ¹⁹The capitals that were on top of the pillars for the porch were shaped like lilies, six feet tall. ²⁰On top of each pillar, above the bulge, beside the latticework, there were two hundred pomegranates arranged in rows all the way around.^c

²¹He set up the pillars on the porch of the temple building. He set up one pillar on the south and named it Jakin,^d and he set up the other pillar on the north and named it Boaz.^e ²²The tops of the pillars were shaped like lilies. In this way the work for the pillars was finished.

The Sea
(2 Chronicles 4:2–5)

²³He made the sea of cast metal. It was round, fifteen feet from rim to rim. It was seven and a half feet high. Its circumference was forty-five feet. ²⁴Under its rim all the way around there were round, gourd-shaped ornaments, one every two inches, all the way around the sea.^f The ornaments were in two rows, cast as one piece with the sea. ²⁵The sea stood on twelve cattle, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east. The sea was set on them. All their hindquarters faced toward the center of the sea. ²⁶The sea was three inches^g thick. Its rim was shaped like the rim of a cup, like a lily blossom. It held twelve thousand gallons.^h

The Carts

²⁷He made ten bronze carts. Each cart was six feet long and six feet wide and four and a half feet tall. ²⁸This is how the carts were constructed: They had side panels between supporting frames. ²⁹The panels between the frames were decorated with lions, cattle, and cherubim. On the frames, both above and below the lions and cattle, there were wreaths hanging down.ⁱ ³⁰Each cart had four bronze wheels with bronze axles, and at each of the four corners of the cart there were supports for the basin, with wreaths beside each of them. ³¹The opening on top of the cart within a crowning structure was a foot and

^a13 Called *Huram* in Chronicles. He is not to be confused with Hiram king of Tyre.

^b18 *Pillars* is the reading of the Syriac and many Hebrew manuscripts. Most Hebrew manuscripts read *pomegranates*.

^c20 The meaning of this sentence is uncertain.

^d21 *Jakin* means *he establishes*.

^e21 *Boaz* means *in him is strength*.

^f24 The meaning of this sentence is uncertain. The parallel in 2 Chronicles 4:3 says the ornaments were cattle.

^g26 A *handbreadth*

^h26 Literally *two thousand baths*. The reading in 2 Chronicles 4:5 is *three thousand baths*. The two texts may have been using different standards for the size of a bath or rounding off.

ⁱ29 A very different interpretation of this phrase is this: *On top of the framed sides there was a platform/pedestal/mounting stand*. The mounting stand would be the structure that supported the basin that was inserted into the stand. The translation of the description of the carts is uncertain.

a half deep. The opening was round. It had a supporting pedestal a little more than two feet tall.^a Around the opening there were engravings, and the panel that surrounded the opening was square, not round.

³²The four wheels were underneath the side panels, and the axles for the wheels were inserted through the cart. The height of each wheel was twenty-seven inches. ³³The wheels were made like a chariot wheel. Their axles, rims, spokes, and hubs were all of cast metal. ³⁴There were supports at each of the four corners of each cart. The supports were part of the cart itself. ³⁵In the top of the cart there was a round opening nine inches deep.^b On top of the cart the supports and its panels were one piece with it. ³⁶On the panels between the supports he engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees wherever there was room, with wreaths all around. ³⁷That is how he made the carts. All of them were cast with the same mold, so they had the same size and shape.

The Basins (2 Chronicles 4:6)

³⁸He made ten bronze basins. Each basin contained two hundred forty gallons.^c Each basin was six feet in diameter, and there was one basin for every one of the ten carts. ³⁹He placed five carts on the south side of the temple and five on the north side of the temple. He set the sea on the south side of the temple near the southeast corner.

⁴⁰Hiram made the basins, the shovels, and the sprinkling bowls.

Summary (2 Chronicles 4:11–5:1)

So Hiram completed all the work that he had been assigned by King Solomon for the House of the LORD: ⁴¹the two pillars, the two globe-shaped capitals on top of the pillars, the two latticeworks that covered the two globe-shaped capitals that were on top of the pillars, ⁴²the four hundred pomegranates for the two latticeworks (two rows of pomegranates for each latticework to cover the globe-shaped capitals that were on top of the pillars), ⁴³the ten carts, the ten basins on the carts, ⁴⁴the one sea, the twelve cattle under the sea, ⁴⁵the pots, the shovels, and the sprinkling bowls. All these items, which Hiram made for King Solomon for the house of the LORD, were burnished bronze. ⁴⁶The king had them cast in clay molds in the ground, in the plain of the Jordan, between Succoth and Zarethan. ⁴⁷Solomon did not weigh all the vessels, because there were so many of them. The weight of the bronze was never determined.

The Furnishings for the House

⁴⁸Solomon made all the furnishings that were in the House of the LORD: the gold altar and the table for the Bread of the Presence, which was also gold. ⁴⁹The lampstands were placed in front of the inner room of the sanctuary, five on the south side, and five on the north. They also were made of pure gold,^d as were the flowers, the lamps, and the gold tongs, ⁵⁰the basins, the snuffers, the sprinkling bowls, the small dishes, the fire pans of pure gold, and the gold hinges,^e both those for the doors of the inner sanctuary, that is, the Most Holy Place, and also those for the doors of the front room. ⁵¹In this way all the work that King Solomon did for the House of the LORD was finished. Solomon brought the things which David his father had dedicated, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and put them in the treasuries of the House of the LORD.

^a31 The meaning of this sentence is uncertain, and the interpretations in different translations vary.

^b35 The meaning of this sentence is uncertain.

^c38 Hebrew *forty baths*

^d49 Literally *closed gold*. Most translators think this means *pure gold* or *solid gold*, but it may mean *gold plate*.

^e50 The precise identification of some of these items is uncertain.

Solomon Brings the Ark Into the Temple
(2 Chronicles 5:2–14)

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the heads of tribes, and the leading fathers of the people of Israel to appear before him in Jerusalem, in order to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from the City of David, that is, from Zion.² All the men of Israel assembled before King Solomon in the month of Ethanim,^a during the festival.^b It was the seventh month.³ Then all the elders of Israel came, and the priests lifted up the ark.⁴ They brought up the Ark of the LORD, the Tent of Meeting, and all the holy vessels which were in the tent. The priests and the Levites brought them up.

⁵King Solomon, along with the whole congregation of Israel who had gathered with him in front of the ark, was sacrificing sheep and cattle, too many to be counted.

⁶The priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD to its place in the inner sanctuary of the house, to the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim,⁷ for the cherubim were spreading their wings over the place for the ark, so that the cherubim covered the ark and its poles with their wings.

⁸The poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen from outside. They are there to this day.

⁹There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets, which Moses had placed there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁰When the priests came out from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the House of the LORD.¹¹ The priests were not able to take their positions to minister in the presence of the cloud, because the Glory of the LORD had filled the House of the LORD.

King Solomon's Prayer
(2 Chronicles 6:1–42)

¹²Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he dwells in thick darkness.¹³ I have truly built a majestic house for you, a place for you to dwell forever."

¹⁴Then the king turned and blessed the whole congregation of Israel, while the whole congregation of Israel was standing there.¹⁵ Then Solomon said:

Blessed is the LORD, the God of Israel. What he said with his mouth to my father David, he has fulfilled with his hand.

The LORD said,¹⁶ "From the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I did not choose a city from all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house for my Name to be there, nor did I choose any man to be a leader over my people Israel; but now I have chosen Jerusalem for my Name to be there,^c and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel."

¹⁷It was on my father David's heart to build a house for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

¹⁸However, the LORD said to my father David, "It was on your heart to build a house for my Name. That was a good thing to desire.¹⁹ But you will not build the house. Your son, who will come from your own body, will build the house for my Name."

²⁰So the LORD kept his word which he had spoken, and I arose in the place of my father David. I am seated on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD said. I have built this house for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel.²¹ I have established a place there for the Ark, which contains the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

^a2 September/October

^b2 That is, the Festival of Shelters (traditionally Tabernacles)

^c16 The words in half-brackets do not appear in the Hebrew text, but they are present in the Greek Old Testament and in 2 Chronicles 6:5-6. The additional words fall between two occurrences of *that my Name may be there*.

²²Then Solomon stood in front of the altar in the presence of the whole congregation of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven.^a ²³He said:

O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in the heavens above or on the earth below. You keep the covenant of mercy and faithfulness with your servants who walk before you with all their heart. ²⁴You have kept the word which you spoke to your servant, my father David. What you have said with your mouth you have fulfilled with your hand, as it is today.

²⁵Now, LORD God of Israel, guard for your servant, my father David, the promise you made to him when you said, “You will never fail to have a man sitting on the throne of Israel in my presence, if your sons guard their ways by walking in my law just as you have walked before me.”

²⁶Now, O God of Israel, let the words which you spoke to your servant, my father David, be confirmed.

²⁷But will God really dwell on the earth? In truth, the heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this house, which I have built! ²⁸But turn your face toward the prayer of your servant and toward his plea for mercy. O LORD my God, listen to the cry and the prayer which your servant offers before you today.

²⁹Let your eyes be open toward this house night and day, toward this place where you said, “My Name will be there,” to hear the prayer which your servant offers toward this place.

³⁰When you hear the plea for mercy of your servant and of your people Israel, which they pray toward this place, then hear in your dwelling place in heaven—hear and forgive.

The Petitions

³¹When a man sins against his neighbor, and his neighbor places him under an oath, and the oath is presented before your altar in this house, ³²then hear from heaven and take action. Provide justice for your servants by declaring the wicked person guilty and bringing his ways down on his own head, and by declaring the righteous person innocent and dealing with him according to his righteousness.

³³When your people Israel are defeated by their enemies because they sinned against you, and when they return to you and praise your Name and pray and seek your favor in this house, ³⁴then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land which you gave to their fathers.

³⁵When the heavens are shut up, and there is no rain because they sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place, and they praise your Name and turn from their sin because you have humbled them, ³⁶then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Yes, teach them the good way in which they are to walk, and provide rain for the land which you gave to your people as an inheritance.

³⁷When there is famine in the land, when there is plague, when there is blight or mildew or locusts or grasshoppers, when their enemies are in the land besieging their gates, in every disease, in every sickness, ³⁸hear every prayer and every plea for mercy which any individual presents or which your whole people Israel presents. When each one knows the affliction of his own heart, when he spreads out his hands toward this house, ³⁹hear in heaven, your dwelling place, and forgive. Then act and give to each person according to all his ways, because you know his heart (yes, you alone know the heart of every human being), ⁴⁰so that they may fear you all the days they live on the soil which you gave to our fathers.

^a22 At this point the parallel account in 2 Chronicles 6:12-13 has the additional words marked by half-brackets: *and spread out his hands.* *[Solomon had made a bronze platform and had placed it in the middle of the courtyard. It was seven and a half feet by seven and a half feet square, and four and a half feet tall. He stood on it. Then he knelt in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands,* toward heaven. These words fall between two occurrences of *spread out his hands*.

⁴¹Also for the foreigner, who is not one of your people Israel, but who comes from a distant land because of your Name ⁴²(for they will hear about your great Name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm, and they will come and pray toward this house), ⁴³for that foreigner, hear in heaven, which is your dwelling place, and do everything for which that foreigner cries out to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your Name and fear you, just as your people Israel do, and because they know that your Name is proclaimed in this house which I have built.

⁴⁴When your people go out for battle against their enemy on whatever way you send them, and when they pray to the LORD facing toward the city which you have chosen and toward the house which I have built for your Name, ⁴⁵then from heaven hear their prayer and their plea for mercy, and provide justice for them.

⁴⁶When they sin against you (for there is no one who does not sin) and you become angry with them, and you give them up to their enemies, and their captors exile them to an enemy land, whether distant or near, ⁴⁷when they are in the land where they were exiled and they turn their hearts back, and they repent and pray to you in the land of their exile and say, “We have sinned and become guilty and done evil,” ⁴⁸when they return to you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies where they were exiled, and they pray in the direction of their land, which you gave to their fathers, toward the city which you chose and toward the house which I have built for your Name, ⁴⁹then hear their prayers and their plea for mercy from heaven, your dwelling place, and provide justice for them. ⁵⁰Pardon your people who have sinned against you and all their rebellious deeds that they have committed against you. Have compassion by causing their enemies to show them compassion. ⁵¹For they are your people and your possession, which you brought out of Egypt, from the midst of the iron-smelting furnace.

⁵²Let your eyes be open to the plea for mercy from your servant and to the plea for mercy from your people Israel. Hear them whenever they cry out to you. ⁵³For you singled them out for yourself as your possession from all the peoples of the earth, just as you said through Moses your servant when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD God.

The Dedication of the Temple

(2 Chronicles 7:1–10)

⁵⁴When Solomon finished offering all these prayers and pleas for mercy to the LORD, he got up from the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven.

⁵⁵Then he stood and blessed the whole congregation of Israel with a loud voice:

⁵⁶Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel, just as he said he would. Not one word has failed^a from all his good words which he spoke through Moses his servant. ⁵⁷May the LORD our God be with us, just as he was with our fathers. May he never leave us or abandon us. ⁵⁸May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to listen to his commands, regulations, and ordinances, which he commanded to our fathers. ⁵⁹May these words which I have prayed before the LORD be near the LORD our God day and night so that he provides justice for his servant and for his people Israel forever, ⁶⁰so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God. There is no other. ⁶¹May your hearts be fully committed to the LORD our God, in order to walk in his regulations and to keep his commands, just as is the case today.

⁶²Then the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD. ⁶³Solomon sacrificed fellowship offerings to the LORD: twenty-two thousand cattle and one hundred twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the House of the LORD.

^a56 Literally *fallen*

⁶⁴On that day the king consecrated the center of the courtyard which was in front of the House of the LORD, so that he could offer whole burnt offerings and grain offerings and the fat of the fellowship offerings there, because the bronze altar which was before the LORD was too small to hold the whole burnt offerings and grain offerings and the fat of the fellowship offerings.

⁶⁵At that time Solomon kept the festival, and all Israel kept the festival with him. They were a great congregation that had come from throughout the land, from Lebo Hamath to the Stream of Egypt before the LORD our God. ^a The festival lasted seven days, and then seven days more, fourteen days in all.

⁶⁶On the eighth day he sent them home, and they blessed the king. Then they went home, and their hearts were glad because of all the good which the LORD had done for his servant David and for his people Israel.

9

God Renews His Promises to Solomon (2 Chronicles 7:12–22)

When Solomon had finished building the house for the LORD and the house for the king, and he had done all that he desired, ²the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, just as he had appeared to him in Gibeon. ³The LORD said to him:

I have heard your prayer and the plea for mercy that you offered before me. I have consecrated this house, which you built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time.

⁴As for you, if you walk before me in purity of heart and with integrity as your father David did, so that you carry out everything that I command you, and you keep all my statutes and my ordinances, ⁵then I will maintain your royal throne over Israel forever, just as I said to your father David, “You will not fail to have a man upon the throne of Israel.”

⁶But if any of you^b or your sons turn away from me and do not keep my commands and statutes, which I set before you, but you serve other gods and bow down to them, ⁷then I will cut off Israel from the face of the ground which I gave them. I will take my presence away from the house which I consecrated for my Name. Israel will become proverbial as an object of ridicule for all peoples.

⁸Though this house is now exalted,^c all who pass by it will be appalled and will hiss^d and say, “Why did the LORD do this to this land and to this house?”

⁹They will reply, “Because they abandoned the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and they embraced other gods and worshipped and served them. That is why the LORD brought all this evil on them.”

Solomon Completes His Projects (2 Chronicles 8:1–18)

¹⁰At the end of twenty years, when Solomon had completed these two buildings, the house of the LORD and the house of the king, ¹¹King Solomon gave Hiram twenty towns in the land of Galilee, because Hiram king of Tyre had been supplying Solomon with cedar and fir wood and with as much gold as he desired. ¹²So Hiram left Tyre to see the towns which Solomon had given him, but he was not pleased.

^a65 The Greek Old Testament has the additional words between the half-brackets: *before the LORD our God in the house which he built, eating and drinking and rejoicing before the LORD our God.* These words fall between two occurrences of *before the LORD our God*.

^b6 *You* and *your* in this verse are plural.

^c8 The ancient versions read *this house will become ruins*.

^d8 Literally *whistle*, a derisive gesture

¹³He said, “What kind of towns are these towns which you have given me, my brother?” He called them the Land of Kabul,^a a name they have to this day. ¹⁴Hiram had sent the king one hundred twenty talents^b of gold.

¹⁵This is the account of the forced labor, which King Solomon raised to build the house for the LORD, his own house, the Millo,^c and the walls of Jerusalem, as well as Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer.

¹⁶(Pharaoh king of Egypt had come up and captured Gezer. He burned it and killed the Canaanites who were living in the city. Then he gave it as a wedding present to his daughter, Solomon’s wife.) ¹⁷So Solomon built Gezer, lower Beth Horon, ¹⁸Baalath, Tadmor^d in the wilderness, ¹⁹all of Solomon’s towns for storehouses, the towns for his chariots, the towns for charioteers,^e and everything Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land he ruled.

²⁰All the people who remained from the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not part of the people of Israel— ²¹their descendants who remained in the land, whom the Israelites were not able to destroy completely—were drafted for forced labor by Solomon. They are serving right up to this day. ²²But Solomon did not press the people of Israel into service. Rather, they were his warriors, his government officials, his staff, his military officers, the commanders of his chariots, and his charioteers. ²³These were the officials who were overseeing Solomon’s work. Five hundred fifty officials were overseeing the people doing the work.

²⁴Pharaoh’s daughter moved up from the City of David to the house Solomon built for her. Then he built the Millo.

²⁵Three times a year Solomon offered whole burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the altar which he had built before the LORD, and he burned incense before the LORD. In this way he completed the temple.

²⁶King Solomon built a fleet at Ezion Geber, which is near Elat on the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom. ²⁷Then, along with that fleet, Hiram sent his servants, men who worked on ships and who knew the sea, to serve with the servants of Solomon. ²⁸They went to Ophir, and they obtained four hundred twenty talents^f of gold there and brought it to King Solomon.

10

The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon (2 Chronicles 9:1–12)

The Queen of Sheba heard about Solomon’s fame, which was connected with the fame of the LORD, so she came to test him with hard questions. ²She came to Jerusalem with a very great entourage^g—with camels carrying spices and a large quantity of gold and precious stones. She came to Solomon and told him everything that was on her heart.

³Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her.

⁴The Queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon, the house which he built, ⁵and the food on his table. When she saw the council meeting of his officials, the careful attention of his ministers,^h as well

^a13 *Kabul* means *worthless* or *good-for-nothing*.

^b14 About nine thousand pounds

^c15 The word *Millo* appears to be derived from the Hebrew word for *fill*. *Millo* probably refers to the stone rampart that supported the palace area.

^d18 Some Hebrew manuscripts, the ancient versions, and 2 Chronicles 8:4 support the reading *Tadmor*. The main Hebrew text reads *Tamor*.

^e19 The word is sometimes translated *horsemen*, but it does not seem that cavalry was being used at this time.

^f28 More than thirty thousand pounds. The parallel text in 2 Chronicles 8:18 reads *four hundred fifty talents*.

^g2 Or *a very impressive display of wealth*

^h5 Literally *the sitting of his servants and the standing of his ministers*

as their attire, his cupbearers, and the whole burnt offerings which he offered at the House of the LORD,^a it took her breath away.

⁶She said to the king, “The report I heard in my own country about your accomplishments^b and your wisdom is true. ⁷I did not believe the report until I came and saw it with my own eyes. The truth is, not even half of it was told to me! Your wisdom and wealth surpass the report which I heard. ⁸Blessed are your men, blessed are your servants, who stand before you continually hearing your wisdom! ⁹May the LORD your God be blessed, who was pleased to put you on the throne of Israel. Because the LORD loves Israel forever, he made you king to administer justice and righteousness.”

¹⁰Then she gave the king one hundred twenty talents^c of gold and a great quantity of spices and many precious stones. There was never again anything comparable to the huge amount of spices and incense which the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

¹¹In addition, Hiram’s fleet brought gold from Ophir and a great quantity of almug^d wood and also precious stones. ¹²The king made the almug wood into steps^e for the LORD’s house and for the house of the king, as well as lyres and harps for his singers. So much fine almug wood has never been brought or seen to this present day.

¹³King Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked for, besides what he had given to her from his royal resources. Then she and her servants returned to her country.

Solomon’s Wealth and Glory
(2 Chronicles 1:14–17; 9:13–28)

¹⁴The weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents,^f ¹⁵not counting what he collected from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the land.

¹⁶King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold. He put seven and a half pounds^g of gold into each large shield. ¹⁷He also made three hundred small shields of hammered gold. He put almost four pounds^h of gold into each small shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸The king made a large ivory throne and overlaid it with fine gold.ⁱ ¹⁹There were six steps to the throne. The throne had a rounded back and armrests on either side of the seat. Two lions were standing beside the armrests. ²⁰Twelve lions were standing on the steps, one on each end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any kingdom.

²¹All of Solomon’s drinking vessels were gold, and all of the utensils in the House of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold.^j No silver was used, because it was considered of little value in Solomon’s

^a5 Or *the passageway by which he went up to the House of the LORD*. *Passageway* is the main reading in the parallel text in 2 Chronicles 9:4. *Whole burnt offerings* is the reading of 1 Kings 10:5. The context seems to favor reference to something impressive about the palace.

^b6 Or *words*

^c10 About nine thousand pounds

^d11 Perhaps a type of sandalwood. The parallels in 2 Chronicles 2:8 and in 9:10–11 reverse the consonants and read *algum wood*.

^e12 Or *supports*

^f14 Almost fifty thousand pounds

^g16 The Hebrew text gives only a number (six hundred), without a unit of measure. If the unit is bekas, then the amount in the text is a good approximation. If the measure is shekels, the weight would be about fifteen pounds.

^h17 Literally *three minas*

ⁱ18 Or *gold from Uphaz*. The precise significance of this phrase is uncertain.

^j21 Literally *closed gold*. This may mean *pure gold* or *solid gold*, or *gold plate*.

days,²² because Solomon's merchant fleet^a was at sea with Hiram's fleet, and once every three years the fleet returned, carrying gold and silver, ivory, monkeys, and peacocks.^b

²³King Solomon was greater than all the kings of the earth in wealth and wisdom. ²⁴The whole world sought an audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom which God put in his heart. ²⁵They each brought gifts: articles of gold and silver, clothing, scents,^c spices, horses and mules, year after year.

²⁶Solomon accumulated chariots and charioteers until he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand charioteers. He stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁷The king made silver as plentiful as stone in Jerusalem and cedar wood as abundant as sycamore trees in the Shephelah.^d ²⁸Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue.^e The king's dealers bought them from Kue for the market price. ²⁹A chariot could be imported from Egypt for six hundred silver shekels and a horse for one hundred fifty. In this same way they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

11

Solomon's Sin and God's Judgment

King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter, including Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites. ²They came from the nations about which the LORD had said to the people of Israel, "You must not enter into marriage with them, and they must not enter marriage with you, or they will turn your hearts after other gods." Solomon clung to them in love. ³He had seven hundred wives who held the rank of princess and three hundred concubines. So they turned his heart away.

⁴When Solomon became old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, so that his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD as the heart of his father David had been. ⁵Then Solomon followed Ashtarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom, the detestable god of the Ammonites. ⁶So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD. He did not devote himself to the LORD as his father David had done. ⁷Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the detestable god of Moab, on the hill east of Jerusalem and for Molek,^f the detestable god of the Ammonites. ⁸He did the same for all his foreign wives, who were burning incense and making sacrifices to their gods.

⁹So the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. ¹⁰The LORD had given him the command not to follow other gods, but Solomon did not keep the LORD's command.

¹¹So the LORD said to Solomon, "Because this is your attitude, and because you did not keep my covenant and my statutes which I commanded you, I will surely rip the kingdom out of your hands and give it to your servant. ¹²However, I will not do it during your lifetime because of your father David. I will rip it from your son's hand. ¹³But I will not rip away the whole kingdom. One tribe I will give to your son for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."

God Raises Foreign Enemies to Oppose Solomon

¹⁴Then the LORD raised up Hadad the Edomite, from the royal line of Edom, as an adversary for Solomon. ¹⁵Earlier, while David was at war with Edom, when Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the dead, he struck down every male in Edom. ¹⁶For six months Joab and all Israel stayed there until he exterminated every male in Edom. ¹⁷But while Hadad was a young boy, he had fled with some Edomites from among his father's servants to go to Egypt. ¹⁸So they set out from Midian and went to

^a22 Literally *fleet of Tarshish*

^b22 Or *apes* or *baboons*

^c25 Or *tools and weapons*

^d27 That is, *the western foothills*

^e28 Probably Cilicia, on the southeast coast of Turkey

^f7 The Hebrew text switches from *Milcom* in verse 5 to *Molek* in verse 7.

Paran. They took some men with them from Paran and went to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt. He gave Hadad a house and decreed an allowance of food for him and gave him land.

¹⁹Hadad found great favor in the eyes of Pharaoh, so Pharaoh gave him the sister of his own wife, the sister of Queen Tahpenes, as his wife. ²⁰The sister of Tahpenes bore him a son named Genubath. Tahpenes weaned him in the house of Pharaoh, so Genubath was in the house of Pharaoh with Pharaoh's own sons.

²¹Later Hadad heard that David rested with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was dead. So Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Send me back to my own country."

²²Pharaoh said to him, "What are you lacking here with me, so that you want to go back to your own country?"

He said, "Nothing, but please let me go."

²³God also raised up another adversary for Solomon, Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his master, Hadadezer king of Zobah. ²⁴After David had destroyed Zobah's army, Rezon gathered men around himself and was the commander of a band of raiders. They went to Damascus and lived there and ruled Damascus. ²⁵He was Israel's adversary during all the days of Solomon, in addition to all the difficulties which Hadad caused. He was hostile to Israel, and he ruled over Aram.

God Chooses Jeroboam to Be King of Israel

(2 Chronicles 10:1–11:4)

²⁶Jeroboam son of Nebat was an Ephraimite from Zeredah. His mother's name was Zeruah. She was a widow. Jeroboam was Solomon's official, but he rebelled against the king. ²⁷This is the account of how he rebelled against the king.

When Solomon was rebuilding the Millo and repairing the gap in the wall in the city of his father David, ²⁸Jeroboam showed that he was a very capable man. When Solomon saw that the young man was a capable worker, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.^a ²⁹At that time, when Jeroboam left Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh met him on the road.^b Ahijah was wearing a new cloak. The two of them were alone in the field. ³⁰Ahijah took the new cloak he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces.

³¹He told Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces for yourself, because this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says."

The LORD's Message to Jeroboam

Look, I am tearing the kingdom out of Solomon's hand, and I will give you ten tribes.

³²But one tribe will remain with him for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel. ³³This is because they have abandoned me and worshipped Ashtarte the goddess of the Sidonians, and Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites. They have not walked in my ways by doing what is upright in my eyes and keeping my commands and judgments as his father David did.

³⁴I will not take the whole kingdom from his hand because I appointed him leader for all the days of his life for the sake of my servant David, whom I chose and who kept my commands and statutes. ³⁵However, I will take the kingdom from his son's hand, and I will give ten tribes to you. ³⁶To his son I will give one tribe in order that there may be a lamp for my servant David before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name.

³⁷But I will take you, and you will be king over all that your soul desires. You will be king over Israel. ³⁸If you listen to all that I command you, and if you walk in my ways and do what is

^a28 That is, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh

^b29 The Greek Old Testament has the additional words marked by the half-brackets: *Ahijah from Shiloh found him on the road, and caused him to turn aside out of the road*. The additional words are found between two occurrences of the word *road*.

right in my eyes, keeping my decrees and my statutes, just as my servant David did, then I will be with you, and I will build an enduring house for you, just as I built for David. I will give Israel to you. ³⁹Now I will humble the seed of David because of this, but not forever.

⁴⁰As a result Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam fled to Shishak king of Egypt. He stayed in Egypt until Solomon died.

The Death of King Solomon
(2 Chronicles 9:29–31)

⁴¹As for the rest of Solomon's acts, everything he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon? ⁴²Solomon was king over all Israel in Jerusalem for forty years.

⁴³Solomon rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David, his father. His son Rehoboam ruled as king in his place.

12

Israel Rebels Against Rehoboam
(2 Chronicles 10:1–11:4)

Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had gone there to make him king.

²When Jeroboam son of Nebat was still in Egypt where he had fled from King Solomon, he heard about this, and he returned from Egypt.^a ³So the people sent for him.

Then Jeroboam and the entire assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, ⁴“Your father made our yoke heavy. Now lighten your father's harsh service and the heavy yoke he laid on us, and we will serve you.”

⁵Rehoboam said to them, “Leave me for three days and then return to me.” So the people left.

⁶Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was alive. He asked, “What answer do you advise me to give to these people?”

⁷They said to him, “If today you become a servant to this people—if you serve them and answer them with kind words—then they will be your servants for all time.”^b

⁸But he rejected the advice which the old men offered him. Instead, he consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. ⁹He said to them, “What answer do you advise that we should give to these people who said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father laid on us’?”

¹⁰The young men who had grown up with him said, “This is what you should say to this people who said to you, ‘Your father laid a heavy yoke on us. Now lighten our yoke.’ Tell them this: ‘My little finger^c is thicker than my father's waist.’” ¹¹My father imposed a heavy yoke on you. I will make your yoke heavier. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions.”^e

¹²So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, because the king had said, “Come back to me on the third day.”

¹³The king answered the people harshly, because he had rejected the advice which the old men had offered. ¹⁴He spoke to them as the young men advised him: “My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions.”

^a2 Some Greek manuscripts read *he returned from Egypt*, and add the words *and he came straight to his own city in the land of Zererah in the hill country of Ephraim*. Some Greek manuscripts do not have verse 2. The parallel in 2 Chronicles 10:2 supports the reading *he returned from Egypt*. The Hebrew text in 1 Kings 12:2 reads *he remained in Egypt*.

^b7 Literally *all the days*

^c10 Literally *my little one*

^d10 Or *thighs*

^e11 Possibly a name for a particularly painful kind of scourge, both here and in verse 14

¹⁵The king did not listen to the people, because this turn of events was from the LORD, in order to fulfill his word, which the LORD had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat through Ahijah from Shiloh.

¹⁶All Israel saw that the king had not listened to them. So the people answered the king:

What share do we have in David?

No portion in the son of Jesse!

To your tents, Israel!

Now look after your own house, David!

So Israel went to their tents.^a

¹⁷Rehoboam continued to rule over the people of Israel who were living in the cities of Judah.

¹⁸King Rehoboam sent out Adoram,^b who was in charge of forced labor, but all Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam, however, was able to get in his chariot to flee to Jerusalem.

¹⁹So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David until this day.

Jeroboam Becomes King of Israel

²⁰When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they summoned him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. No tribe was left which followed the house of David, except the tribe of Judah alone.

(2 Chronicles 11:1–4)

²¹When Rehoboam returned to Jerusalem, he assembled the whole house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, one hundred eighty thousand specially chosen soldiers, to fight against the house of Israel and to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon.

²²But the word of God came to Shemaiah, the man of God: ²³“Say the following to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people.

²⁴This is what the LORD says. Do not attack and do not fight against your brothers, the people of Israel. Go home, every one of you, for this turn of events is from me.”

So they listened to the word of the LORD, and they returned home, just as the LORD said. ²⁵But Jeroboam fortified Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and he lived there. From there he also went out and fortified Peniel.^c

The Sin of Jeroboam Son of Nebat

²⁶But Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingship will go back to the house of David. ²⁷If this people goes up to offer sacrifices at the House of the LORD in Jerusalem, then the hearts of the people will return to their master, Rehoboam king of Judah. Then they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.”

²⁸After the king sought advice, he made two golden calves and said to the people, “Going up to Jerusalem is too much trouble for you. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!” ²⁹He set up one in Bethel and the other one in Dan.

³⁰This sin took hold, and the people traveled as far as Dan to worship. ³¹Jeroboam also made shrines^d on the high places,^e and he appointed priests from all kinds of people, even though they were not Levites. ³²Jeroboam instituted a festival in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the festival^f that is held in Judah. He offered sacrifices on the altar. He did this in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves he had made. He appointed priests in Bethel for the high places he had made. ³³He instituted

^a16 *Go to their tents* is a common idiom for *go home*. It does not imply that they all lived in tents.

^b18 Also called *Adoniram* or *Hadoram*

^c25 Also called *Peniel*

^d31 Literally *houses*

^e31 A *high place* is a shrine smaller than a temple. High places were often open-air shrines, located near the city gate or on a nearby hill.

^f32 That is, the Festival of Shelters (traditionally Tabernacles)

sacrifices on the altar which he had made in Bethel, on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, a month which he chose on his own. He instituted a festival for the people of Israel. He went up to the altar to send offerings up in smoke.

13

The Prophet From Judah Testifies Against Jeroboam

At that moment, by the word of the LORD, a man of God came from Judah to Bethel while Jeroboam was standing in front of the altar to send offerings up in smoke. ²He cried out against the altar by the word of LORD, “Altar! Altar! This is what the LORD says. Listen! A son will be born to the house of David. Josiah will be his name. On you he will slaughter the priests of the high places, who are burning offerings on you, and human bones will be burned on you.”

³On that day he gave them a sign: “This is the sign which the LORD announces: This very altar will be torn apart, and the ashes on it will be poured out.”

⁴When King Jeroboam heard this message that the man of God had proclaimed against the altar at Bethel, he pointed at him from the altar and cried, “Seize him!” But the hand that the king pointed at the man withered, and he could not pull it back. ⁵Then the altar was torn apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar in fulfillment of the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

⁶Then the king responded to the man of God, “Intercede before the LORD your God and pray on my behalf that my hand may be restored for me.” So the man of God interceded before the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored for him, so that it was like it had been before.

⁷Then the king said to the man of God, “Come to the palace with me and eat something, and I will give you a gift.”

⁸But the man of God said to the king, “Even if you gave me half your wealth, I would not go with you, and I would not eat bread or drink water in this place. ⁹For this is what I was commanded by the word of the LORD: Do not eat bread and do not drink water, and do not return by the way you came.”

¹⁰So he left by a different road. He did not go back the same way he had come to Bethel.

The Prophets’ Sins

¹¹Another prophet, an old man, was living in Bethel. His sons^a came and told him everything that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. They also reported to their father the words he had spoken to the king.

¹²Then their father said to them, “Which road did he take?” So his sons showed him the road^b which the man of God from Judah had taken.

¹³He told his sons, “Saddle my donkey.” So they saddled his donkey, and he got on it. ¹⁴He went after the man of God and found him sitting under a terebinth tree.

He said to him, “Are you the man of God who came from Judah?”

He answered, “I am.”

¹⁵The old prophet said to him, “Come with me to my house and have something to eat.”

¹⁶But he said, “No, I cannot return with you, or go with you, or eat bread and drink water with you in this place. ¹⁷For I was told by the word of the LORD, ‘Do not eat bread and do not drink water there, and do not return by the same road you came on.’”

¹⁸But the old prophet said to him, “I also am a prophet, just like you, and an angel told me by the word of the LORD, ‘Bring him back with you to your house so that he may eat bread and drink water.’” But he was lying to him. ¹⁹Then the man of God returned with him and ate bread in his house and drank water.

^a11 *Sons* is the reading of the Greek Old Testament. The Hebrew text reads *his son* in this verse.

^b12 The translation *showed him the road* follows the Greek Old Testament. The Hebrew reads *his sons had seen the road*.

²⁰While they were sitting at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought the man of God back. ²¹He cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah, saying, “This is what the LORD says. Because you have rebelled against the mouth of the LORD and have not obeyed the command which the LORD your God gave you, ²²but instead you came back and ate bread and drank water in the place about which he had told you, ‘Do not eat bread or drink water there,’ your corpse will not enter the tomb of your fathers.”

²³Then after he ate and drank, the old prophet saddled the donkey for the prophet whom he had brought back. ²⁴As the man of God went on his way, a lion attacked him and killed him. His corpse was left lying on the road, and his donkey remained standing next to it. The lion was also standing next to the corpse. ²⁵Then some men who were passing by saw the corpse lying on the road, and the lion was standing next to the corpse. They came and told the story in the city where the old prophet lived.

²⁶When the prophet who had brought the man of God back from his journey heard this, he said, “This is the man of God who rebelled against the mouth of the LORD. Now the LORD has given him to the lion. It mauled him and killed him according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke to him.”

²⁷He said to his sons, “Saddle my donkey.” So they saddled it. ²⁸Then he went and found the corpse of the man of God lying on the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside the corpse. The lion had not eaten the corpse nor had it mauled the donkey.

²⁹The old prophet picked up the corpse of the man of God, placed it on the donkey, and brought it back to his own city to mourn and to bury it. ³⁰He laid the corpse in his own tomb, and they mourned over him, “Oh, my brother!”

³¹After he had buried him, the old prophet said to his sons, “When I die and you bury me, lay my bones to rest beside the bones of the man of God, in the same tomb where he is buried. ³²For the message which he proclaimed by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel and against all the shrines of the high places in the cities of Samaria will certainly come true.”

³³Even after this, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but he continued to appoint all kinds of people as priests for the high places. He ordained anyone who wanted to be a priest for the high places.

³⁴This was the sin of the house of Jeroboam, which erased and exterminated it from the face of the earth.

14

God's Judgment on Jeroboam

At that time, Jeroboam's son Abijah became very sick. ²So Jeroboam told his wife, “Go and disguise yourself so that you will not be recognized as Jeroboam's wife. Then go to Shiloh. That is where the prophet Ahijah is. He is the one who told me that I would become king over this people.

³Take with you ten loaves of bread, some baked goods, and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy.”

⁴So Jeroboam's wife did as she was told. She went to Shiloh and came to Ahijah's house. Now Ahijah was no longer able to see due to old age. His eyes stared straight ahead.^a

⁵The LORD had told Ahijah, “Be ready! Jeroboam's wife is coming to inquire from you about her son because he is seriously ill. When she comes, you will say this and this to her. But when she comes, she will be disguised.”

⁶When Ahijah heard her footsteps as she came to the door, he said, “Come in, wife of Jeroboam! Why are you disguised? I am a messenger with bad news for you. ⁷Go and tell Jeroboam that this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says.”

The LORD's Message for Jeroboam

I raised you up from among the people, and I appointed you leader over my people Israel.

⁸I tore the kingdom from the house of David and gave it to you. But you have not been like my

^a4 Literally *his eyes stood*. Or *his eyes had cataracts and he could not see*.

servant David, who kept my commands and followed me with all his heart by doing only what was right in my eyes.⁹ You have done more evil than all those who came before you, and you have made for yourself other gods and images of cast metal, provoking me to anger. You threw me behind your back.

¹⁰Therefore, listen to this! I myself will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam. I will exterminate everyone in Israel connected to Jeroboam, all those who urinate against the wall,^a both bound and free.^b I will burn up the house of Jeroboam as completely as manure is burned.

¹¹The dogs will eat those who belong to Jeroboam who die in the city, and the birds of the air will eat those who die in the country, because the LORD has spoken.

¹²As for you, go home. As soon as your feet enter the city, the boy will die. ¹³All Israel will mourn for him, and they will bury him. Indeed, from those who belong to Jeroboam he alone will be buried in a tomb, because in the house of Jeroboam some good is found in him before the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁴Then the LORD will raise up for himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam. This is the day. Indeed, it begins right now.^c

¹⁵The LORD will strike Israel until it sways like a reed swaying in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and he will scatter them beyond the River,^d because they made their Asherah poles, provoking the LORD to anger.

¹⁶Yes, he will give Israel up because of the sins which Jeroboam himself committed and which he caused Israel to commit.

¹⁷So Jeroboam's wife got up, set out, and traveled to Tirzah. When she crossed the threshold of the house, the boy died. ¹⁸They buried him, and all Israel mourned for him according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke through his servant, the prophet Ahijah.

¹⁹As for the rest of Jeroboam's acts, the wars he fought and the way he ruled, you can find them written in the annals^e of the kings of Israel. ²⁰Jeroboam was king for twenty-two years. He rested with his fathers. Then his son Nadab became king in his place.

Rehoboam's Reign
(2 Chronicles 12:1–16)

²¹Meanwhile, Rehoboam son of Solomon was king in Judah. He was forty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put his Name there. The name of Rehoboam's mother was Na'amah the Ammonite.

²²Judah did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and they provoked him to anger more than all their fathers had done with the sins that they committed. ²³They built for themselves high places, sacred memorial stones, and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every leafy tree. ²⁴There were even male cult prostitutes in the land. They practiced all the abominations of the nations which the LORD had driven out before the people of Israel.

²⁵In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem. ²⁶He took the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's palace. He took everything, including all the gold shields that Solomon had made. ²⁷So King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them, and he entrusted them to the captains of the guard who were keeping watch at the entrance of the king's palace. ²⁸Whenever the king went to the House of the LORD, the guards would carry the shields. Then the guards would return them to the armory.

²⁹As for the rest of Rehoboam's acts and everything he did, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Judah? ³⁰There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. ³¹Rehoboam rested

^a10 This seems to be a crude term used only when making threats of a violent death.

^b10 It is uncertain which categories of people these terms refer to.

^c14 Literally *this is the day and what also now*. The meaning of the Hebrew for this sentence is uncertain.

^d15 That is, the Euphrates

^e19 Or *chronicles*

with his fathers, and he was buried with his fathers in the City of David. The name of his mother was Na'amah the Ammonite. Then his son Abijam became king in his place.

15

Abijam (Abijah) Son of Rehoboam, King of Judah
(2 Chronicles 13:1–14:1)

In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam^a became king over Judah. ²He ruled for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Ma'akah, granddaughter of Abishalom.^b ³He walked in all the sins which his father had practiced before him, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD as the heart of his grandfather David had been. ⁴But for the sake of David, the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem by raising up his son after him and by making Jerusalem strong. ⁵He did this because David had done what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and he did not turn from all that the LORD commanded all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

⁶There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. ⁷As for the rest of Abijam's acts and everything he did, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Judah? There was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. ⁸Abijam rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then his son Asa became king in his place.

Asa Son of Abijam, King of Judah
(2 Chronicles 14:2–3; 15:16–16:6)^c

⁹In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa king of Judah became king. ¹⁰He ruled for forty-one years in Jerusalem. His grandmother's^d name was Ma'akah granddaughter of Abishalom. ¹¹Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD as his father David had done. ¹²He drove the male shrine prostitutes out of the land, and he removed all the filthy idols which his fathers had made. ¹³In addition, he also removed his grandmother Ma'akah from being queen mother because she had made an obscene image of Asherah. Asa cut down her obscene image and burned it in the Kidron Valley. ¹⁴But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless, Asa's heart was fully committed to the LORD all his days. ¹⁵He brought silver and gold and vessels and utensils into the House of the LORD as dedicated offerings for himself and his father.

¹⁶There was war between Asa and Ba'asha king of Israel throughout all their days. ¹⁷Ba'asha king of Israel attacked Judah, and he fortified Ramah in order to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah. ¹⁸So Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasuries of the House of the LORD and the treasuries of the king's palace, and he gave them to his officials. Then King Asa sent them to Ben Hadad son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion king of Aram, who was living in Damascus. ¹⁹He said, "There should be a treaty between you and me as there was between my father and your father. Look, I am sending you a gift of silver and gold. Come, break your treaty with Ba'asha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me."

²⁰Ben Hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his army against the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Beth Ma'akah, and all of Kinneret, as well as all the land of Naphtali.

²¹When Ba'asha heard about this, he stopped fortifying Ramah, and he stayed in Tirzah. ²²Then King Asa summoned all Judah—no one was exempt—and they carried away the stones of Ramah and the timber with which Ba'asha had been building, and King Asa used them to fortify Geba in Benjamin and Mizpah.

^a1 He is called *Abijah* in 2 Chronicles 13.

^b2 *Abishalom* is a variant spelling of *Absalom*. Literally, the Hebrew reads *daughter of Abishalom*. Data in 2 Chronicles 13:2 implies that Ma'akah was Absalom's granddaughter rather than his daughter.

^c9 The Chronicles account of Asa's reign, which is much longer than the account in Kings, includes all of chapters 14–16 of 2 Chronicles. The references in parentheses list the closest parallels.

^d10 Literally *mother's*. But see verses 2 and 13 as well as 2 Chronicles 11:20 and 13:2.

(2 Chronicles 16:11–17:1)

²³As for all the rest of Asa's acts and all his mighty deeds and everything else he did and the cities he built, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Judah? But in his old age his feet became diseased. ²⁴Asa rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then his son Jehoshaphat became king in his place.

Nadab Son of Jeroboam, King of Israel

²⁵Nadab son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah. He ruled over Israel for two years. ²⁶He did evil in the eyes of the LORD. He walked in the ways of his father and in the sin which he had caused Israel to commit. ²⁷Ba'asha son of Ahijah from the house of Issachar conspired against him and struck him down in Gibbethon, which belongs to the Philistines. (Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.) ²⁸Ba'asha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and became king in his place.

Ba'asha Son of Ahijah, King of Israel

²⁹When Ba'asha became king, he struck down the whole house of Jeroboam, until it was exterminated according to the word of the LORD, which he had spoken through his servant Ahijah from Shiloh. From Jeroboam's house he did not spare anyone who breathed, ³⁰because of the sins which Jeroboam committed and which he caused Israel to commit when he provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger.

³¹As for the rest of Nadab's acts and everything he did, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Israel? ³²There was war between Asa and Ba'asha king of Israel all their days. ³³In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Ba'asha son of Ahijah became king over all Israel in Tirzah and reigned for twenty-four years. ³⁴He did evil in the eyes of the LORD by walking in the way of Jeroboam and in the sins that Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit.

16

God's Judgment on Ba'asha

Then this word of the LORD came to Jehu son of Hanani against Ba'asha: ²"I raised you up from the dust and appointed you leader over my people Israel, but you have walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and you have caused my people Israel to sin, provoking me to anger with their sin. ³Look! I am about to burn up Ba'asha and his house. I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat. ⁴The dogs will eat those who belong to Ba'asha who die in the city, and the birds of the air will eat those who die in the country."

⁵As for the rest of Ba'asha's acts and everything he did and his mighty deeds, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Israel? ⁶Ba'asha rested with his fathers, and he was buried in Tirzah. Then his son Elah became king in his place.

Elah Son of Ba'asha, King of Israel

⁷The word of the LORD had come against Ba'asha and his house through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani, because of all the evil which he had done in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands by becoming like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he had struck down Jeroboam.

⁸In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah son of Ba'asha became king over Israel in Tirzah for two years. ⁹But his officer Zimri, the commander of half his chariots, conspired against him while Elah was in Tirzah getting drunk at the house of Arza, the palace administrator of Tirzah. ¹⁰Zimri came in and struck him down and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and he became king in his place.

¹¹When Zimri became king, as soon as he was seated on the throne, he struck down the entire house of Ba'asha. He did not leave for him anyone who urinates against the wall,^a neither relatives nor friends. ¹²So Zimri exterminated the entire house of Ba'asha according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke to Ba'asha through the prophet Jehu. ¹³He did this because of all the sins which Ba'asha and his son Elah committed and which they caused Israel to commit. They provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their useless idols. ¹⁴As for the rest of Elah's acts and everything he did, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Israel?

Zimri King of Israel

¹⁵In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned as king in Tirzah for seven days. The army was laying siege to Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. ¹⁶The army which was laying siege heard the report that Zimri had conspired against the king and had already struck him down. So in the camp on that day all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel. ¹⁷Then Omri and all Israel went up from Gibbethon and laid siege to Tirzah. ¹⁸When Zimri saw that the city had fallen, he went into the fortified part of the palace, and he burned it down on himself. So he died ¹⁹because of the sin he committed by doing evil in the eyes of the LORD by walking in the ways of Jeroboam and in the sin which he had caused Israel to commit. ²⁰As for the rest of Zimri's acts and the conspiracy he led, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Israel?

Omri King of Israel

²¹Then the people of Israel were divided. Half of the people supported making Tibni son of Ginath king. Half supported Omri. ²²But the people who were for Omri were stronger than the people who were for Tibni son of Ginath, so Tibni died, and Omri became king.

²³In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel for twelve years. He ruled for six years in Tirzah. ²⁴Then he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents^b of silver. He built up the hill, and he named the city he built after Shemer, the owner of the hill of Samaria.^c

²⁵Omri did evil in the eyes of the LORD. He committed more evil than all those who had gone before him. ²⁶He walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and in the sin which he caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with his useless idols. ²⁷As for the rest of Omri's acts, the things he did, and the mighty deeds he accomplished, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Israel? ²⁸Omri rested with his fathers, and he was buried in Samaria. Then his son Ahab became king in his place.

Ahab Son of Omri, King of Israel

²⁹Ahab son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah. Ahab son of Omri ruled over Israel in Samaria for twenty-two years. ³⁰Ahab son of Omri committed more evil in the eyes of the LORD than all those who had gone before him. ³¹He considered it a trivial thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat. He married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. He served Baal and bowed down to him. ³²He erected an altar to Baal in the house of Baal which he built in Samaria. ³³Ahab made an Asherah pole and did even more to provoke the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who had gone before him.

³⁴In the days of Ahab, Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, he laid its foundations, and at the cost of his youngest son Segub, he set up its gates. This fulfilled the word of the LORD which he had spoken through Joshua son of Nun.

^a11 This seems to be a crude term used only when making threats of a violent death.

^b24 One hundred fifty pounds

^c24 The Hebrew for *Samaria* (*Shomron*) is derived from the name of Shemer.

Elijah Stops the Rain

Elijah from Tishbe, one of the settlers in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As surely as the LORD lives, the God of Israel before whom I stand, there will be no dew or rain during the coming years, except at my word.”

²Then the word of the LORD came to him: ³“Leave this place and turn east. Hide yourself by the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. ⁴You will drink from the stream, and I will command the ravens to provide for you there.”

⁵So Elijah went and did just as the LORD had said. He lived in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. ⁶The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and in the evening, and he drank from the stream.

Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath

⁷After some time the stream dried up because there had been no rain in the land. ⁸Then the word of the LORD came to him: ⁹“Get up! Go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there. I have commanded a woman there, a widow, to provide for you.”

¹⁰So he got up and went to Zarephath. He came to the city gate, and there he saw a widow gathering sticks. He called to her and said, “Please give me a little water in a jar, so that I can have something to drink.”

¹¹When she went to get it, he called to her, “Please bring me a piece of bread.”

¹²She said, “As surely as the LORD your God lives, I have no food except a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a pitcher. See, I am gathering a couple of sticks so that I can go and prepare it for myself and my son, so that we can eat it and then die.”

¹³Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid. Go and do just as you said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from the flour and bring it out to me. Then go and make another for you and your son.

¹⁴For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says. The jar of flour will not run out and the pitcher of oil will not become empty until the day the LORD sends rain to water the surface of the ground.”

¹⁵So she went and did exactly as Elijah said. He and she, as well as her household, were able to eat for many days. ¹⁶The jar of flour did not run out, and the pitcher of oil did not become empty, just as the LORD had said through Elijah.

The Widow's Son Dies

¹⁷After these events, the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. The illness became worse until he stopped breathing.

¹⁸Then she said to Elijah, “What is the issue between us, man of God? Have you come to remind me of my sins and to kill my son?”

¹⁹He said to her, “Bring your son to me.” Then he took him and carried him to the upstairs room where he was living, and he laid him on his bed. ²⁰Then he cried out to the LORD, “O LORD, my God, have you sent tragedy on this woman with whom I am staying by killing her son?”

²¹Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times, and he cried out to the LORD, “O LORD, my God, let this boy’s soul^a return to his body!” ²²The LORD listened to Elijah’s voice, and the boy’s soul returned to his body, and he came to life. ²³Then Elijah took the boy and brought him down to the house from his upstairs room, and he gave him to his mother.

Elijah said, “See, your son is alive!”

²⁴The woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is true.”

^a21 Or *life*, both here and in verse 22

Elijah Confronts the Prophets of Baal and Asherah

After a long time, the word of the LORD came to Elijah. (It was during the third year.) He said, “Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain to water the surface of the ground.”² So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab.

Now the drought was severe in Samaria.³ Ahab had summoned his servant Obadiah, the palace administrator. Obadiah was devoted to serving^a the LORD.⁴ When Jezebel was exterminating the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and kept them hidden in two caves, fifty in each cave, and he provided food and water for them.

⁵Ahab said to Obadiah, “Go through the land to all the springs and all the streams. Maybe we will find enough grass so that we can keep the horses and mules alive, and we will not have to slaughter the cattle.”⁶ In order to cover the whole land, they divided it between the two of them. Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

⁷While Obadiah was on the way, Elijah suddenly met him. Obadiah recognized him and fell on his face and said, “Is that you, my lord Elijah?”

⁸Elijah answered him, “Yes, it is. Go and tell your master, ‘Elijah is here.’”

⁹But Obadiah said, “How have I sinned that you would hand your servant over to Ahab for him to kill me?”¹⁰ As surely as the LORD your God lives, there is no country or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to look for you. When they said, ‘He is not here,’ then he made that kingdom and nation swear that they could not find you.¹¹ But now you are telling me, ‘Go, tell your master that Elijah is here.’¹² As soon as I leave you, the Spirit of the LORD will carry you to some place I do not know. When I go to tell Ahab and he then does not find you, he will kill me, even though your servant has been devoted to the LORD since my youth.

¹³“Has my lord not been told what I did when Jezebel was killing the prophets of the LORD? I kept one hundred of the prophets of the LORD hidden in two caves, fifty in each, and I provided food and water for them.¹⁴ But now you are saying, ‘Go and tell your master that Elijah is here.’”

¹⁵But Elijah said to him, “As surely as the LORD of Armies lives, before whom I stand, I will present myself to him today.”¹⁶ So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and he informed him. Then Ahab came to meet Elijah.

¹⁷When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is that you, the one who brings trouble on Israel?”

¹⁸Elijah said, “It is not I who have brought trouble on Israel, but rather you and your father’s house, because you abandoned the LORD’s commandments and followed the Baals.¹⁹ But now gather all Israel before me on Mount Carmel, along with the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”²⁰ So Ahab sent word to all the people of Israel, and he assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel.

²¹Then Elijah said to all the people, “How long will you stagger around on two crutches? If the LORD is God, follow him. If Baal is God, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a single word.

²²Then Elijah said to the people, “I am the only one left of the LORD’s prophets, but the prophets of Baal total four hundred fifty men.²³ Provide two bulls for us. Let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it up and place it on the firewood, but they are not to light the fire. I will prepare the other bull and place it on the firewood, but I will not light the fire.²⁴ Then you will call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers with fire, he is God.”

All the people said, “This proposal is good.”

²⁵Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose for yourselves one bull, and you go first because there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god. But do not light the fire.”

^a3 Literally *greatly feared*

²⁶So they took the bull which had been given to them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, “Baal! Answer us!” But there was not a sound. No one answered. So they staggered^a around the altar which they had made.

²⁷When noon came, Elijah mocked them: “Shout louder! He is a god, isn’t he? He may be deep in thought or busy or on a journey. Perhaps he is asleep and will wake up!”²⁸So they cried out with a loud voice, and according to their practice they cut themselves with daggers and spears until their blood flowed. ²⁹After noon, they kept up a prophetic frenzy until the time of the evening sacrifice, but there was no sound. No one answered. There was no response.

³⁰Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come here to me.” So they came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which had been torn down. ³¹Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come and had proclaimed, “Your name shall be Israel.” ³²He built the stones into an altar in the name of the LORD. Around it he made a trench big enough to hold about twenty-five pounds^b of seed. ³³He arranged the wood, cut up the bull, and placed it on the wood.

Then he said, “Fill four jars with water and pour it on the sacrifice and on the wood.” ³⁴Then he said, “Do it again.” So they did it again. Then he said, “Do it a third time.” So they did it a third time. ³⁵The water flowed all around the altar. It even filled the trench.

³⁶When the time of the evening sacrifice had arrived, Elijah the prophet stood up and said, “O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and that I have done all these things by your word. ³⁷Answer me, LORD! Answer me so that this people will know that you, O LORD, are God and that you are turning their hearts back to you.”

³⁸Fire from the LORD fell on the sacrifice and on the wood, the stones, and the dirt. It even licked up the water in the trench. ³⁹When all the people saw this, they fell on their knees and said, “The LORD, he is God! The LORD, he is God!”

⁴⁰Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let a single one of them escape!” So they seized them, and Elijah brought them down to the Kishon River and slaughtered them there.

⁴¹Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink, for I hear the sound of a heavy rainstorm.” ⁴²So Ahab went to eat and drink, but Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. He bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees. ⁴³He said to his servant, “Go up and look toward the sea.”

So his servant went up and looked, and he said, “There is nothing.”

But seven times Elijah told him, “Go again.”

⁴⁴On the seventh time the servant said, “There is a cloud as small as a man’s hand rising from the sea.”

Then Elijah said to him, “Go up and tell Ahab, ‘Hitch up your chariot and go down so that the rain does not stop you.’”

⁴⁵Meanwhile, the skies got dark with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab got into his chariot and went to Jezre’el. ⁴⁶But the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he hiked up his garments around his waist and ran ahead of Ahab until he came to Jezre’el.

19

Elijah Flees to the Wilderness

Then Ahab told Jezebel everything that Elijah had done, including the fact that he had killed all their prophets with the sword. ²So Jezebel sent a messenger to say to Elijah, “May the gods punish me severely and even double it, if by this time tomorrow I have not made your life like one of theirs.”

^a26 An insulting description of their dancing

^b32 Hebrew *two seahs*

³Elijah was afraid,^a and he ran for his life. He went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and he left his servant there. ⁴But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. There he sat down under a broom tree, where he prayed that he would die. He said, "I've had enough, LORD. Take my life, for I am no better than my fathers." ⁵Then he lay down and went to sleep under the broom tree.

Suddenly an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat."

⁶Then he looked around, and near his head there was a loaf of bread baking on coals and a jar of water, so he ate and drank, and then he lay down again.

⁷Then the angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, because the journey is too much for you."

⁸So he got up and ate and drank. Then, with the strength gained from that food, he walked for forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹He came to a cave and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD suddenly came to him, saying, "Why are you here, Elijah?"

¹⁰He said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of Armies, but the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant. They have torn down your altars and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking to take my life."

¹¹Then the LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is passing by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains and shattered rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind.

After the wind came an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.

¹²After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire.

After the fire there was a soft, whispering voice.

¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak, and he went out and stood at the entrance to the cave. Then a voice came to him and said, "Why are you here, Elijah?"

¹⁴He said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of Armies, but the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant. They have torn down your altars and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking to take my life."

¹⁵Then the LORD said to him, "Go back the way you came and go to the Wilderness of Damascus. When you get there, you are to anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶You will also anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel and Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah as prophet in your place.

¹⁷Whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill, and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. ¹⁸But I have preserved in Israel seven thousand whose knees have not bent to Baal and whose lips have not kissed him."

Elijah Calls Elisha

¹⁹So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. Elisha was doing the plowing with twelve teams of oxen in front of him, and he himself was driving the twelfth team. Elijah crossed over to him and threw his cloak over him. ²⁰Then Elisha left the oxen and ran after Elijah. He said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother good-bye! Then I will follow you."

Then Elijah said, "Go back! For what have I done to you?"

²¹So Elisha turned back from following him. Then he took the team of oxen and slaughtered them. Using the equipment from the oxen as fuel, he cooked the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he got up, followed Elijah, and served him.

^{a3} The translation follows the ancient versions and a minority of Hebrew manuscripts. The main Hebrew text reads *Elijah saw*.

Ben Hadad Lays Siege to Samaria

Then Ben Hadad king of Aram, along with thirty-two kings, mobilized his whole army with their horses and chariots. He went up and laid siege to Samaria and fought against it. ²He sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel in the city, ³who said to him, “This is what Ben Hadad says. Your silver and your gold are mine. The best of your wives and your children are mine.”

⁴The king of Israel answered, “Just as you have said, my lord the king, I and all that I own are yours.”

⁵The messengers came a second time and said, “This is what Ben Hadad says. I did indeed send word to you, saying, ‘You must give me your silver and your gold and your wives and your children.’

⁶So at this time tomorrow, I will send my servants to you, and they will search your palace and the houses of your officials, and they will gather up everything that you value and take it away.”

⁷The king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land. “See how this man is looking for trouble. When he sent for my wives and my children, my silver and my gold, I did not refuse him.”

⁸All the elders and all the people said to him, “Do not listen and do not agree to this!”

⁹So he told Ben Hadad’s messengers, “Say this to your lord the king. Everything which you demanded of your servant the first time, I will do, but this thing I cannot do.” So the messengers brought his message back to the king.

¹⁰Then Ben Hadad sent word to him: “May the gods punish me severely and even double it, if the dust left from Samaria will be enough to give a handful to each of those who follow me.”

¹¹The king of Israel answered, “Tell him that someone who is putting his armor on should not boast like someone who is taking it off.”

¹²When he heard this message, Ben Hadad and his kings were in their tents drinking. He said to his servants, “Get ready!” and they took up positions against the city.

¹³But then, at that time, a prophet came to Ahab king of Israel and said, “This is what the LORD says. Do you see all of this huge horde?^a Look, I am giving it into your hands today. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

¹⁴Then Ahab said, “Through whom will this happen?”

The prophet answered, “This is what the LORD says. It will be through the young officers from the provinces.”

He said, “Who will start the battle?”

He said, “You will.”

¹⁵So Ahab inspected the young officers from the provinces and found that there were two hundred thirty-two. After inspecting them he inspected the whole army. The Israelites numbered seven thousand men. ¹⁶They marched out at noon while Ben Hadad was getting drunk in his tent, along with the thirty-two kings who were supporting him. ¹⁷So the young officers from the provinces marched out first. Ben Hadad sent out scouts, who told him, “Men are marching out of Samaria!”

¹⁸Ben Hadad said, “If they have come out for peace, take them alive! Even if they have come out for war, take them alive!” ¹⁹But when the young officers from the provinces and the army that was with them marched out, ²⁰each of them killed his opponent. Then the Arameans fled, and Israel pursued them. Ben Hadad king of Aram fled on a horse with his charioteers.^b

^a13 The biblical accounts regularly use the Hebrew term *hamon* to refer to hostile, heathen armies. This term refers to a noisy, disorderly crowd. In reference to an army, *horde* is an appropriate rendering. See, for example, the barbarian hordes of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 39.

^b20 An interesting translation issue is at what point of history we can translate the Hebrew word *parosh* as *horsemen* or *cavalry* rather than *charioteers*. At about the time of this text, Assyrian reliefs begin to picture

²¹The king of Israel marched out and attacked the horses and chariots. He inflicted a great defeat on Aram.

Ben Hadad Attacks Aphek

²²Afterward the prophet approached the king of Israel and said to him, “Strengthen your position and consider carefully what you should do, because next spring the king of Aram will attack you.”

²³The king of Aram’s officials said to him, “Their gods are gods of the hills. That is why they defeated us. But if we fight them on the plain, we will certainly defeat them.” ²⁴Now do this. Remove the kings from their positions as field commanders, and replace them with military officers. ²⁵Then raise an army like the army you lost—horse for horse and chariot for chariot. Then if we fight them on the plain, we will certainly defeat them.” The king listened to them and did what they recommended.

²⁶When spring came, Ben Hadad mobilized the army of Aram and went up to Aphek to wage war against Israel. ²⁷The Israelites also were mobilized and given provisions, and they went out to confront the Arameans. The Israelites camped across from them, like two small flocks of goats, while the Arameans filled the land.

²⁸Then the man of God approached and said to the king of Israel, “This is what the LORD says. Because the Arameans said, ‘The LORD is a god of the hills, but not a god of the valleys,’ I will give all of this huge horde into your hands. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

²⁹So they camped opposite each other for seven days. On the seventh day the battle was joined by both armies. The Israelites struck down the Arameans—one hundred thousand foot soldiers in one day.

³⁰The survivors fled to the city of Aphek, and the wall fell on twenty-seven thousand of the survivors. Ben Hadad also fled and went into the city, to an inner room.

Ahab Spares Ben Hadad

³¹Then his officials said to him, “Look, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful. So let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads and go out to the king of Israel. Maybe he will spare your life.”

³²So they wrapped sackcloth around their waists and put ropes on their heads, and they went to the king of Israel and said, “Your servant, Ben Hadad, says, ‘Please spare my life.’”

Ahab said, “Is he still alive? He is my brother.”^a

³³The men took this as a good omen, so they quickly latched on to what he said and responded, “Ben Hadad is your brother.”

Then Ahab said, “Go get him.” So Ben Hadad came out to him, and Ahab brought him up into his chariot.

³⁴Ben Hadad said to him, “I will return the cities that my father took from your father, and you may put your own trading centers in Damascus, just as my father put them in Samaria.”

Then Ahab said, “Under these terms, I release you.” So he made a treaty^b with Ben Hadad and let him go.

God’s Judgment on Ahab

³⁵Then by the word of the LORD one of the sons of the prophets^c said to his neighbor, “Strike me, please.” But the man refused to strike him. ³⁶So he said to him, “Because you did not listen to the voice of the LORD, when you leave me, a lion will kill you.” When he left him, a lion found him and killed him.

riders shooting bows from horseback, but it seems clear that this battle was fought by chariots not cavalry, though some survivors may have fled on horseback.

^a32 Used between two kings, the term *brother* implies equality.

^b34 Or *covenant*

^c35 *The sons of the prophets* were assistants to the prophets.

³⁷Then he found another man and said, “Strike me, please.” The man struck him and wounded him.
³⁸The prophet went and stood before the king at the road and disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes.

³⁹When the king was passing by, the prophet shouted to the king, “Your servant went out in the middle of the battle. Then someone brought a man to me and said, ‘Guard this man. If you can’t account for him, then it will be your life for his life, or you will have to pay a talent of silver.’”⁴⁰But while your servant was busy doing this and that, all of a sudden the man was gone!”

Then the king of Israel said to him, “That is your sentence. You have pronounced it on yourself.”

⁴¹Then he quickly removed the bandage from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized that he was one of the prophets.

⁴²He said to the king, “This is what the LORD says. Because you set a man free, whom I had devoted to destruction, it will be your life for his life and your people for his people.”⁴³The king of Israel headed for his palace sullen and angry, and he arrived in Samaria.

21

Naboth's Vineyard

Some time passed after these events.

Naboth from Jezre'el had a vineyard in Jezre'el, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.²Ahab said to Naboth, “Give me your vineyard so I can use it as a vegetable garden, because it is beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard in exchange. Or if you prefer, I will give you the purchase price in silver.”

³But Naboth said to Ahab, “May I be cursed by the LORD, if I were to give you the inheritance from my fathers.”

⁴Ahab went to his house sullen and angry because of what Naboth from Jezre'el had said to him, for he had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” Ahab lay down on his bed and turned his face away and would not eat anything.

⁵Then his wife Jezebel came to him and said, “Why is your spirit so sullen, and why don’t you eat?”

⁶Then he told her, “I said to Naboth from Jezre'el, ‘Sell your vineyard to me, or if you prefer, I will give you a vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’”

⁷Then his wife Jezebel said to him, “Are you now acting like the king over Israel? Get up! Eat something, and cheer up. I will give you the vineyard of Naboth from Jezre'el.”

⁸Then Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab’s name and sealed them with his seal. She sent the letters to the elders and nobles who were living in the city with Naboth.⁹She wrote in the letters, “Proclaim a fast and then seat Naboth at the head of the people.”¹⁰Seat two wicked, worthless men opposite him and have them testify, ‘You cursed God and the king!’ Then take him out and stone him to death.”

¹¹The men of the city—the elders and the nobles who lived there—did exactly as Jezebel had commanded them, exactly as she had written in the letters she had sent them.¹²They proclaimed a fast and then seated Naboth at the head of the people.¹³They brought two wicked, worthless men and seated them opposite him. The wicked men testified against Naboth before the people, “Naboth cursed God and the king!” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death.¹⁴Then they sent word to Jezebel, “Naboth has been stoned to death.”

¹⁵When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Go and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth from Jezre'el, which he refused to sell to you, because Naboth is no longer alive but dead.”¹⁶When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he went and took possession of the vineyard of Naboth from Jezre'el.

The LORD Condemns Ahab

¹⁷Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah from Tishbe:

¹⁸Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. Right now he is in Naboth's vineyard because he has gone down to take possession of it.

¹⁹You are to tell him: This is what the LORD says. Have you committed murder and seized this man's property?

Then you will say to him: This is what the LORD says. In the place where dogs licked Naboth's blood, dogs will lick your blood also.

²⁰Then Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, my enemy?"

Elijah said, "I have found you, because you sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, who says, ²¹'I am bringing disaster against you, and I will burn you up. I will cut off from Ahab in Israel all those who urinate against the wall,^a both bound and free.'^b ²²I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the house of Ba'asha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and caused Israel to sin.'

²³"Concerning Jezebel the LORD says, 'Dogs will eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezre'el.'^c ²⁴The dead who belong to Ahab in the city the dogs will eat, and the dead in the country the birds of the air will eat."

²⁵There had never been anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, incited by his wife Jezebel. ²⁶He committed obscene acts by following filthy idols, like everything that the Amorites had done, for which the LORD drove them out before the people of Israel. ²⁷But when Ahab heard these words, he cried out and tore his clothes. He put on sackcloth and fasted. He slept in sackcloth and went around in a subdued manner.

²⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah from Tishbe, saying, ²⁹"Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring this disaster during his days, but during the days of his son I will bring disaster upon his house."

22

Jehoshaphat Visits Ahab (2 Chronicles 18:1–27)

Three years went by without any warfare between Aram and Israel. ²In the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to visit the king of Israel.

³The king of Israel said to his officials, "Don't you know that Ramoth Gilead belongs to us? But we have done nothing to take it from the king of Aram." ⁴Then he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you come with me to wage war at Ramoth Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "I am like you. My people are like your people. My horses are like your horses."

⁵But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "First seek the word of the LORD."

⁶So the king of Israel assembled the prophets, four hundred men, and he said to them, "Should I go up to make war at Ramoth Gilead or should I refrain?"

They said, "Go up, for the Lord^c will give it into the hand of the king."

⁷But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no longer a prophet of the LORD here who can inquire of the LORD for us?"

⁸Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is one man who could inquire of the LORD for us, but I hate him because he does not prophesy anything good about me, but only bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah."

Jehoshaphat said, "The king should not talk like that."

^a21 This seems to be a crude term used only when making threats of a violent death.

^b21 It is uncertain to which specific groups of people these terms refer.

^c6 Variant *LORD*

⁹So the king of Israel summoned one of his court officials and said, “Quickly bring Micaiah son of Imlah here.”

¹⁰Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were seated, each on his own throne, arrayed in their robes. They were sitting by the threshing floor at the entrance to the gate of Samaria. All the prophets were prophesying before them.

¹¹Zedekiah son of Kena'anah had made iron horns for himself, and he said, “This is what the LORD says. With these you will gore Aram to death.” ¹²All the prophets were prophesying in this same way: “Go up to Ramoth Gilead and triumph, for the LORD will give it into the hand of the king.”

A Lying Spirit

¹³The messenger who was sent to summon Micaiah said to him, “Pay attention to the words of the prophets. With one mouth they are promising good things to the king. Let your words be like the words of one of them and say something good.”

¹⁴But Micaiah said, “As surely as the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that is what I will say.”

¹⁵Then he came to the king, and the king asked him, “Micaiah, should we go up to make war on Ramoth Gilead, or should we refrain?”

He answered him, “Go up and triumph, for the LORD will give them into the hand of the king.”

¹⁶Then the king said to him, “How many times must I make you swear that you will tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?”

¹⁷Then Micaiah said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains like sheep that have no shepherd, and the LORD said, ‘They have no masters. Each one should return to his home in peace.’”

¹⁸Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Didn’t I tell you that he does not prophesy anything good about me, but only bad?”

The LORD’s Proclamation Against Ahab

¹⁹Then Micaiah said:

Now hear this word from the LORD.

I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and the whole army of heaven was standing around him, on his right and on his left.

²⁰Then the LORD said, “Who will entice Ahab so that he goes up and falls at Ramoth Gilead?”

One spirit said this. Another one said that. ²¹Finally a spirit came and stood before the LORD and said, “I will entice him.”

The LORD said to him, “How?”

²²He said, “I will go and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.”

Then the LORD said, “You will entice him successfully. Go and do it.”

²³Now look! The LORD has put a lying spirit into the mouths of all these prophets of yours, for the LORD has decreed disaster for you.

²⁴Then Zedekiah son of Kena'anah came up and struck Micaiah on his cheek and said, “Where is this pathway on which the spirit of the LORD has traveled from me to speak to you?”

²⁵Micaiah said, “Listen to me. You will see it on the day you go into the inner room to hide.”

²⁶Then the king of Israel said, “Seize Micaiah and take him back to Amon, the administrator of the city, and to Joash son of the king. ²⁷Then say, ‘This is what the king says. Put this man in prison and feed him nothing more than bread and water until I come back safely.’”

²⁸Then Micaiah said, “If you ever come back safely, then the LORD has not spoken through me.” Then he said, “Hear this, you people, all of you!”

Ahab Dies in Battle
(2 Chronicles 18:28–34)

²⁹Then the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead.

³⁰The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself when I go into the battle, but you wear your robes.” So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle.

³¹The king of Aram had ordered his thirty-two chariot commanders, “Do not fight with anyone small or great, but only against the king of Israel.”

³²When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “That is the king of Israel!” They turned to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat cried for help.

³³When the chariot commanders realized that he was not the king of Israel, they stopped pursuing him. ³⁴But a man shot an arrow at random and struck the king of Israel in the seam between two parts of his armor.

So Ahab said to his chariot driver, “Turn around and take me out of the battle, because I have been wounded.”

³⁵The battle went on all that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot facing Aram. He died in the evening, and the blood from his wound ran down onto the floor of the chariot. ³⁶Then, as the sun was going down, a cry went up through the army: “Every man to his own city and every man to his own land!”

³⁷So the king died, and they brought him to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria. ³⁸They washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria, and dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes bathed there, in fulfillment of the word which the LORD had spoken.

³⁹As for the rest of Ahab’s acts and everything he did, and the ivory house he built, and all the cities he built, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Israel? ⁴⁰Ahab rested with his fathers. Then his son Ahaziah became king in his place.

Jehoshaphat Son of Asa, King of Judah
(2 Chronicles 20:31–21:3)

⁴¹Jehoshaphat son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.

⁴²Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. The name of his mother was Azubel daughter of Shilhi.

⁴³Jehoshaphat walked in all the ways of his father Asa. He did not turn from them. He did what is right in the eyes of the LORD. But the high places were not removed. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. ⁴⁴Jehoshaphat was at peace with the king of Israel.^a

⁴⁵As for the rest of Jehoshaphat’s acts, the mighty deeds which he did, and the wars he fought, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Judah?

⁴⁶He removed from the land the rest of the male shrine prostitutes who remained from the days of his father Asa. ⁴⁷There was no king in Edom, but rather a governor represented the king.

⁴⁸Jehoshaphat constructed trading ships to go to Ophir for gold, but they never set out, because the ships were wrecked at Ezion Geber.^b ⁴⁹Then Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “Let my servants go with your servants in ships,” but Jehoshaphat was not willing.

⁵⁰Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David. Then his son Jehoram became king in his place.

^a44–53 Because of a different division of verse 43, the Hebrew and English verse numbers do not match from verse 44 to verse 53.

^b48 The twin port of Elat/Ezion Geber was the home port of this fleet, so the fleet never left home.

Ahaziah Son of Ahab, King of Israel

⁵¹Ahaziah son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. He ruled over Israel for two years. ⁵²He did evil in the eyes of the LORD and walked in the ways of his father and in the ways of his mother and in the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. ⁵³He served Baal and bowed down to him, and he provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger in all the same ways that his father did.