

## Second Kings

<sup>1</sup> Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. <sup>2</sup> Then Ahaziah fell down through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and was injured. So he sent for messengers and said to them, "Go, ask Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I will recover from this injury." <sup>3</sup> But the angel of Yahweh said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and ask them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?' <sup>4</sup> Therefore Yahweh says, "You will not come down from the bed to where you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die."'" Then Elijah left.

<sup>5</sup> When the messengers returned to Ahaziah, he said to them, "Why have you returned?" <sup>6</sup> They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.''"'" <sup>7</sup> Ahaziah said to his messengers, "What sort of man was he, the one who came up to meet you and said these words to you?" <sup>8</sup> They answered him, "He wore a garment made of hair and had a leather belt wrapped around his

waist.” So the king replied, “That is Elijah the Tishbite.”

<sup>9</sup> Then the king sent a captain with fifty soldiers to Elijah. The captain went up to Elijah where he was sitting on the top of a hill. The captain spoke to him, “You, man of God, the king has said, ‘Come down.’” <sup>10</sup> Elijah answered and said to the captain, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. <sup>11</sup> Again King Ahaziah sent to Elijah another captain with fifty soldiers. This captain also said to Elijah, “You, man of God, the king says, ‘Come down quickly.’” <sup>12</sup> Elijah answered and said to them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” Again the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. <sup>13</sup> Yet again the king sent a third group of fifty warriors. This captain went up, fell on his knees before Elijah, and implored him and said to him, “You, man of God, I ask you, let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.” <sup>14</sup> Indeed, fire came down from heaven and consumed the first two captains with their men, but now let my life be precious in your sight.” <sup>15</sup> The angel of Yahweh said to Elijah, “Go down with him. Do not be afraid of him.” So Elijah arose and went down with him to the king. <sup>16</sup> Later Elijah said to Ahaziah, “This is what Yahweh says, ‘You have sent messengers to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron. Is it

because there is no God in Israel from whom you can ask for information? So now, you will not come down from the bed where you have gone up; you will certainly die.'"

<sup>17</sup> So King Ahaziah died according to the word of Yahweh that Elijah had spoken. Joram began to reign in his place, in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. <sup>18</sup> As for the other matters concerning Ahaziah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

## 2

<sup>1</sup> So it came about, when Yahweh was going to take up Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah left with Elisha from Gilgal. <sup>2</sup> Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, because Yahweh has sent me to Bethel." Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. <sup>3</sup> The sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that Yahweh will take away your master from you today?" Elisha replied, "Yes, I know it, but do not talk about it." <sup>4</sup> Elijah said to him, "Elisha, wait here, please, for Yahweh has sent me to Jericho." Then Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho. <sup>5</sup> Then the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that Yahweh will take away your master from you today?" Elisha answered, "Yes, I know it, but

do not talk about it.” <sup>6</sup> Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, please, for Yahweh has sent me to the Jordan.” Elisha replied, “As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you.” So the two went on. <sup>7</sup> Later, fifty of the sons of the prophets stood opposite them at a distance while the two stood by the Jordan. <sup>8</sup> Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the water with it. The river divided on both sides so that the two of them walked over on dry ground. <sup>9</sup> It came about, after they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask me what I should do for you before I am taken from you.” Elisha replied, “Please let a double portion of your spirit come on me.” <sup>10</sup> Elijah answered, “You have asked for a difficult thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, this will happen for you, but if not, it will not happen.” <sup>11</sup> As they still went on and talked, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared, which separated the two men from each other, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. <sup>12</sup> Elisha saw it and cried out, “My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!”

He saw Elijah no more, and he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. <sup>13</sup> He picked up Elijah's cloak that had fallen off him, and went back to stand by the bank of the Jordan. <sup>14</sup> He struck the water with Elijah's cloak that had fallen and said, “Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?” When he had struck the waters, they divided on both sides and Elisha crossed over.

<sup>15</sup> When the sons of the prophets who were

from Jericho saw him across from them, they said, "The spirit of Elijah does rest on Elisha!" So they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. <sup>16</sup> They said to him, "See now, among your servants there are fifty strong men. Let them go, we ask, and look for your master, in case the Spirit of Yahweh has taken him up and thrown him onto some mountain or into some valley." Elisha answered, "No, do not send them." <sup>17</sup> But when they urged Elisha until he was ashamed, he said, "Send them." Then they sent fifty men, and they looked for three days, but did not find him. <sup>18</sup> They came back to Elisha, while he stayed at Jericho, and he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"

<sup>19</sup> The men of the city said to Elisha, "See, we beg of you, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my master can see, but the water is bad and the land is not fruitful." <sup>20</sup> Elisha replied, "Bring me a new bowl and put salt in it," so they brought it to him. <sup>21</sup> Elisha went out to the spring of water and threw salt in it; then he said, "Yahweh says this, 'I have healed these waters. From this time on, there will be no more death or unfruitful land.'" <sup>22</sup> So the waters were healed to this day, by the word which Elisha spoke.

<sup>23</sup> Then Elisha went up from there to Bethel. As he was going up the road, young boys came out of the city and mocked him; they said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!" <sup>24</sup> Elisha looked behind him and saw them; he called on Yahweh to curse them. Then two female bears came out of the woods and injured

forty-two of the boys. <sup>25</sup> Then Elisha went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

### 3

<sup>1</sup> Now in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Joram son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twelve years. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, but not like his father and his mother; for he removed the sacred stone pillar of Baal that his father had made. <sup>3</sup> Nevertheless he held on to the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin; he did not turn away from them.

<sup>4</sup> Now Mesha king of Moab bred sheep. He had to give to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. <sup>5</sup> But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. <sup>6</sup> So King Joram left Samaria at that time to mobilize all Israel for war. <sup>7</sup> He sent a message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me against Moab to battle?" Jehoshaphat replied, "I will go. I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." <sup>8</sup> Then he said, "By which way should we attack?" Jehoshaphat answered, "By way of the wilderness of Edom." <sup>9</sup> So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. They wandered around for seven days, and then there was no water for the army or for the animals that followed them. <sup>10</sup> So the king of Israel said, "What is this? Has Yahweh called

three kings to give them into the hand of Moab?"  
<sup>11</sup> But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of Yahweh, that we may consult Yahweh by him?" One of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah."  
<sup>12</sup> Jehoshaphat said, "The word of Yahweh is with him." So the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom went down to him.

<sup>13</sup> Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and mother." So the king of Israel said to him, "No, because Yahweh has called these three kings together to give them into the hand of Moab." <sup>14</sup> Elisha replied, "As Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, surely were it not for the fact that I honor the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you, or even look at you. <sup>15</sup> But now bring me a musician." Then it came to pass when the harpist played, the hand of Yahweh came upon Elisha. <sup>16</sup> He said, "Yahweh says this, 'Make this dry river valley full of trenches.' <sup>17</sup> For Yahweh says this, 'You will not see wind, neither will you see rain, but this river valley will be filled with water, and you will drink, you and your livestock and all your animals.' <sup>18</sup> This is an easy thing in the sight of Yahweh. He will also give you victory over the Moabites. <sup>19</sup> You will attack every fortified city and every good city, cut down every good tree, stop up all springs of water, and ruin every good piece of land with rocks." <sup>20</sup> So

in the morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, there came water from the direction of Edom; the country was filled with water.

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the Moabites heard that the kings had come to fight against them, they gathered themselves together, all who were able to put on armor, and they stood at the border. <sup>22</sup> They awakened early in the morning and the sun reflected on the water. When the Moabites saw the water opposite them, it looked as red as blood. <sup>23</sup> They exclaimed, "This is blood! The kings have certainly been destroyed, and they have killed each other! So now, Moab, let us go plunder them!" <sup>24</sup> When they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites surprised them and attacked the Moabites, who fled before them. The army of Israel drove the Moabites across the land, killing them. <sup>25</sup> They destroyed the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a rock until it was covered up. They stopped up every spring of water and chopped down all the good trees. Only Kir Hareseth was left with its rocks in place. But the soldiers armed with slings surrounded and attacked it. <sup>26</sup> When King Mesha of Moab saw that the battle was lost, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. <sup>27</sup> Then he took his oldest son, who should have reigned after him, and offered him as a burnt offering upon the wall. So there was great anger against Israel, and the Israelite army left King Mesha and returned to their own land.



## 4

<sup>1</sup> Now the wife of one of the sons of the prophets came crying to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared Yahweh. Now the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves." <sup>2</sup> So Elisha said to her, "What can I do for you? Tell me what do you have in the house?" She said, "Your servant has nothing in the house, except a pot of oil." <sup>3</sup> Then Elisha said, "Go out to borrow jars from your neighbors, empty jars. Borrow as many as possible. <sup>4</sup> Then you must go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour oil into all those jars; set aside the jars that are full." <sup>5</sup> So she left Elisha and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her, and she filled them with oil. <sup>6</sup> When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another jar." But he said to her, "There are no more jars." Then the oil stopped flowing. <sup>7</sup> Then she came and told the man of God. He said, "Go, sell the oil; pay your debt, and live with your sons on the rest."

<sup>8</sup> One day Elisha walked to Shunem where an important woman lived; she urged him to eat food with her. So as often as Elisha passed by, he would stop there to eat. <sup>9</sup> The woman said to her husband, "See, now I realize that this is a holy man of God who is always passing by. <sup>10</sup> Let us make a little room on the roof for Elisha, and let us put in it a bed, a table, a seat, and a lamp. Then when he comes to us, he will stay there." <sup>11</sup> So when the day came again that Elisha

stopped there, he stayed in the room and rested there. <sup>12</sup> Elisha said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." When he had called her, she stood before him. <sup>13</sup> Elisha said to him, "Say to her, 'You have gone to all this trouble to care for us. What can be done for you? Can we speak for you to the king or to the army commander?'" She answered, "I live among my own people." <sup>14</sup> So Elisha said, "What can we do for her, then?" Gehazi answered, "Indeed, she has no son, and her husband is old." <sup>15</sup> So Elisha answered, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the door. <sup>16</sup> Elisha said, "At this time of year, in one year's time, you will be holding a son." She said, "No, my master and man of God, do not lie to your servant."

<sup>17</sup> But the woman conceived and gave birth to a son at the same time in the following year, as Elisha had said to her. <sup>18</sup> When the child had grown, he went out one day to his father, who was with harvesters. <sup>19</sup> He said to his father, "My head, my head." His father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." <sup>20</sup> When the servant had picked him up and brought the boy to his mother, the child sat on her knees until noon and then died. <sup>21</sup> So the woman got up and laid the boy on the bed of the man of God, shut the door, and went out. <sup>22</sup> She called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys so that I may hurry to the man of God and then come back." <sup>23</sup> Her husband said, "Why do you want to go to him today? It is not a new moon nor a Sabbath." She replied, "It

will be all right.” <sup>24</sup> Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, “Drive on quickly; do not slow down for me unless I say so.” <sup>25</sup> So she went and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

So when the man of God saw her in the distance, he said to Gehazi his servant, “Look, here comes the Shunammite woman. <sup>26</sup> Please run to meet her and say to her, ‘Is everything alright with you and with your husband and child?’” She answered, “It is alright.” <sup>27</sup> When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she caught hold of his feet. Gehazi came near to thrust her away but the man of God said, “Leave her alone, for she is very upset, and Yahweh has hidden the problem from me, and has told me nothing.” <sup>28</sup> Then she said, “Did I ask you for a son, my master? Did I not say, ‘Do not deceive me?’” <sup>29</sup> Then Elisha said to Gehazi, “Dress for travel and take my staff in your hand. Go to her home. If you meet any man, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer him. Lay my staff on the child’s face.” <sup>30</sup> But the mother of the child said, “As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you.” So Elisha arose and followed her. <sup>31</sup> Gehazi hurried on ahead of them and laid the staff on the child’s face, but the child did not speak or hear. So then Gehazi returned to meet Elisha and told him saying, “The child has not awakened.”

<sup>32</sup> When Elisha arrived at the house, the child was dead and was still on the bed. <sup>33</sup> So Elisha went in and shut the door on the child and himself and prayed to Yahweh. <sup>34</sup> He went up and lay on the child; he put his mouth on his

mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. He stretched himself out on the boy, and the boy's body grew warm. <sup>35</sup> Then Elisha got up and walked around the room and again went up and stretched himself out on the boy. The child sneezed seven times and then opened his eyes! <sup>36</sup> So Elisha called Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite!" So he called her, and when she came into the room, Elisha said, "Pick up your son." <sup>37</sup> Then she lay facedown on the ground at his feet and bowed to the ground, and then picked up her son and went out.

<sup>38</sup> Then Elisha came again to Gilgal. There was famine in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him. He said to his servant, "Put the large pot on the fire and cook stew for the sons of the prophets." <sup>39</sup> One of them went out into a field to gather vegetables. He found a wild vine and gathered enough wild gourds to fill the fold of his robe. They cut them up and put them into the stew, but did not know what kind they were. <sup>40</sup> So they poured out the stew for the men to eat. Later, as they were eating, they cried out and said, "Man of God, there is death in the pot!" So they could not eat it anymore. <sup>41</sup> But Elisha said, "Bring some flour." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour it out for the people, so that they may eat." Then there was no longer anything hurtful in the pot.

<sup>42</sup> A man came from Baal Shalishah to the man of God and brought twenty loaves of barley bread in his sack from the new harvest, and fresh ears of grain. He said, "Give this to the people so

they can eat.” <sup>43</sup> His servant said, “What, should I set this before a hundred men?” But Elisha said, “Give this to the people, so they can eat, because Yahweh says, ‘They will eat and will have some left.’” <sup>44</sup> So his servant set it before them; they ate, and left some remaining, just as the word of Yahweh promised.

## 5

<sup>1</sup> Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great and honorable man in his master's view, because by him Yahweh had given victory to Aram. He was also a strong, courageous man, but he was a leper. <sup>2</sup> The Arameans had gone out raiding in bands and had taken a little girl from the land of Israel. She served Naaman's wife. <sup>3</sup> The girl said to her mistress, “I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would heal my master of his leprosy.” <sup>4</sup> So Naaman went in and told the king what the little girl from the land of Israel had said. <sup>5</sup> So the king of Aram said, “Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” Naaman left and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of clothes. <sup>6</sup> He also took the letter to the king of Israel that said, “Now when this letter is brought to you, you will see that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, so that you may cure him of his leprosy.” <sup>7</sup> When the king of Israel had read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man

wants me to cure a man of his leprosy? It seems he is seeking to start an argument with me.”

<sup>8</sup> So when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent word to the king saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come now to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.”

<sup>9</sup> So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house.

<sup>10</sup> Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and dip yourself into the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored; you will be clean.”

<sup>11</sup> But Naaman was angry and went away and said, “Look, I thought he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of Yahweh his God, and wave his hand over the place and heal my leprosy.

<sup>12</sup> Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not bathe in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage.

<sup>13</sup> Then Naaman's servants came near and spoke to him, “My father, if the prophet had commanded you do some difficult thing, would you not have done it? How much rather then, when he says to you to simply, ‘Dip yourself and be clean?’” <sup>14</sup> Then he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, obeying the instructions of the man of God. His flesh was restored again like the flesh of a little child, and he was healed.

<sup>15</sup> Naaman returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him. He said, “Look, now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. So therefore, please take a gift from your servant.” <sup>16</sup> But

Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." Naaman urged Elisha to take a gift, but he refused. <sup>17</sup> So Naaman said, "If not, then I ask you to let there be given to your servant two mule loads of earth, for from now on, your servant will offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice to any god but Yahweh. <sup>18</sup> In this one thing may Yahweh pardon your servant, that is, when my king goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, may Yahweh pardon your servant in this matter." <sup>19</sup> Elisha said to him, "Go in peace." So Naaman left.

<sup>20</sup> He had traveled only a short distance, when Gehazi the servant of Elisha the man of God said to himself, "Look, my master has spared this Naaman the Aramean by not receiving from his hands gifts that he brought. As Yahweh lives, I will run after him and receive something from him." <sup>21</sup> So Gehazi followed after Naaman. When Naaman saw someone running after him, he jumped down from his chariot to meet him and said, "Is everything alright?" <sup>22</sup> Gehazi said, "Everything is alright. My master has sent me, saying, 'See, now there have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.'" <sup>23</sup> Naaman replied, "I am very happy to give you two talents." Naaman urged Gehazi and tied two talents of silver in two bags, with two

changes of clothes, and laid them on two of his servants, who carried the bags of silver before Gehazi. <sup>24</sup> When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the bags of silver from their hands and hid them in the house; he sent the men away, and they left. <sup>25</sup> When Gehazi went in and stood before his master, Elisha said to him, "Where have you come from, Gehazi?" He answered, "Your servant went nowhere." <sup>26</sup> Elisha said to Gehazi, "Was not my spirit with you when the man turned his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to accept money and clothes, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, and male servants and female servants? <sup>27</sup> So the leprosy of Naaman will be on you and your descendants forever." So Gehazi went out from his presence, a leper as white as snow.

## 6

<sup>1</sup> The sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "The place where we live with you is too small for us all. <sup>2</sup> Please let us go to the Jordan, and let every man cut down a tree there, and let us build us a place there where we may live." Elisha answered, "You may go ahead." <sup>3</sup> One of them said, "Please go with your servants." Elisha answered, "I will go." <sup>4</sup> So he went with them, and when they came to the Jordan, they began to cut down trees. <sup>5</sup> But as one was chopping, the ax head fell into the water; he cried out and said, "Oh no, my master, it was borrowed!" <sup>6</sup> So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" The man showed Elisha the place. He then cut off a stick,



threw it in the water, and made the iron float. <sup>7</sup> Elisha said, "Pick it up." So the man reached out his hand and grabbed it.

<sup>8</sup> Now the king of Aram was waging war against Israel. He consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place." <sup>9</sup> So the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Be careful not to pass that place, for the Arameans are going down there." <sup>10</sup> The king of Israel sent a message to the place about which the man of God had spoken and warned him. More than once or twice, when the king went there, he was on his guard. <sup>11</sup> The king of Aram was enraged about these warnings, and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not tell me who among us is for the king of Israel?" <sup>12</sup> So one of his servants said, "No, my master, king, for Elisha the prophet in Israel tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your own bedroom!" <sup>13</sup> The king replied, "Go and see where Elisha is so I may send men and capture him." It was told him, "See, he is in Dothan."

<sup>14</sup> So the king sent to Dothan horses, chariots, and a large army. They came by night and surrounded the city. <sup>15</sup> When the servant of the man of God had risen early and gone outside, behold, a large army with horses and chariots surrounded the city. His servant said to him, "Oh, my master! What will we do?" <sup>16</sup> Elisha answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." <sup>17</sup> Elisha prayed and said, "Yahweh, I beg that

you will open his eyes that he may see.” Then Yahweh opened the servant's eyes, and he saw. Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha! <sup>18</sup> When the Arameans came down to him, Elisha prayed to Yahweh and said, “Strike these people blind, I ask you.” So Yahweh made them blind, just as Elisha had asked. <sup>19</sup> Then Elisha told the Arameans, “This is not the way, neither is this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you are looking for.” Then he led them to Samaria.

<sup>20</sup> It came about that when they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, “Yahweh, open the eyes of these men that they may see.” Yahweh opened their eyes and they saw, and behold, they were in the middle of the city of Samaria. <sup>21</sup> The king of Israel said to Elisha, when he saw them, “My father, should I kill them? Should I kill them?” <sup>22</sup> Elisha answered, “You must not kill them. Would you kill those whom you had taken captive with your sword and bow? Put bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.” <sup>23</sup> So the king prepared much food for them, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went back to their master. Those bands of Aramean soldiers did not return for a long time into the land of Israel.

<sup>24</sup> Later after this Ben Hadad king of Aram gathered all his army and attacked Samaria and besieged it. <sup>25</sup> So there was a great famine in Samaria. Behold, they besieged it until a

donkey's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver. <sup>26</sup> As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, saying, "Help, my master, king." <sup>27</sup> He said, "If Yahweh does not help you, how can I help you? Is there anything coming from the threshing floor or winepress?" <sup>28</sup> The king continued, "What is troubling you?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son so that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'" <sup>29</sup> So we boiled my son and ate him, and I said to her on the next day, "Give your son that we may eat him, but she has hidden her son." <sup>30</sup> So when the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes (now he was passing by on the wall), and the people looked and saw that he had sackcloth underneath, against his skin. <sup>31</sup> Then he said, "May God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on him today."

<sup>32</sup> But Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king sent a man from before him, but when the messenger came to Elisha, he said to the elders, "See how this son of a murderer has sent to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold the door shut against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" <sup>33</sup> While he was still talking with them, behold, the messenger came down to him. The king had said, "Behold, this trouble comes from Yahweh. Why should I wait for Yahweh any longer?"

## 7

<sup>1</sup> Elisha said, "Hear the word of Yahweh. This is what Yahweh says: 'Tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour will be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.'" <sup>2</sup> Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, "See, even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven, can this thing happen?" Elisha replied, "See, you will watch it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it."

<sup>3</sup> Now there were four men with leprosy right outside the city gate. They said one to another, "Why should we sit here until we die? <sup>4</sup> If we say that we should go into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we will die there. But if we still sit here, we will still die. Now then, come, let us go to the army of the Arameans. If they keep us alive, we will live, and if they kill us, we will only die." <sup>5</sup> So they rose up at twilight to go into the Aramean camp; when they arrived at the outermost part of the camp, there was no one there. <sup>6</sup> For the Lord had made the Aramean army hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses—the noise of another large army, and they said to each other, "The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to come against us." <sup>7</sup> So the soldiers arose and fled in the twilight; they left their tents, their horses, their donkeys, and the camp as it was, and fled for their lives. <sup>8</sup> When the men with leprosy came to the outermost part of the camp,

they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried away silver and gold and clothes, and went and hid them. They came back and entered into another tent and carried plunder away from there also, and went and hid it.

<sup>9</sup> Then they said each other, “We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping quiet about it. If we wait until daybreak, punishment will overtake us. Now then, come, let us go and tell the king’s household.” <sup>10</sup> So they went and called the gatekeepers of the city. They told them, saying, “We went to the camp of the Arameans, but there was no one there, not the sound of anyone, but there were the horses tied, and the donkeys tied, and the tents as they were.” <sup>11</sup> Then the gatekeepers shouted out the news, and then it was told inside the king’s household. <sup>12</sup> Then the king arose at night and said to his servants, “I will tell you now what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are hungry, so they have gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the fields. They are saying, ‘When they come out of the city, we will take them alive, and get into the city.’” <sup>13</sup> One of the king’s servants answered and said, “I beg you, let some men take five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city. They are like all the rest of the population of Israel who are left—most are now dead; let us send them and see.” <sup>14</sup> So they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent them after the army of the Arameans, saying, “Go and see.” <sup>15</sup> They went after them to the Jordan, and all the road was full of clothes

and equipment that the Arameans had cast away in their hurry. So the messengers returned and told the king.

<sup>16</sup> The people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, just as the word of Yahweh had said. <sup>17</sup> The king had ordered the captain on whose hand he had leaned to be in charge of the gate, and the people trampled him down in the gateway. He died as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king had come down to him. <sup>18</sup> So it happened as the man of God had said to the king, saying, "About this time in the gate of Samaria, two measures of barley will be available for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel." <sup>19</sup> That captain had answered the man of God and said, "See, even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven, can this thing happen?" Elisha had said, "See, you will watch it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it." <sup>20</sup> That is what exactly what happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.

## 8

<sup>1</sup> Now Elisha had spoken to the woman whose son he had restored to life. He said to her, "Arise, and go with your household, and stay wherever you can in another land, because Yahweh has called for a famine which will come on this land for seven years." <sup>2</sup> So the woman arose and she obeyed the word of the man of God. She went

with her household and lived in the land of the Philistines seven years. <sup>3</sup> It came about at the end of seven years that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, and she went to the king to beg him for her house and for her land. <sup>4</sup> Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Please tell me all the great things that Elisha has done." <sup>5</sup> Then as he was telling the king how Elisha had restored to life the child who was dead, the very woman whose son he had restored to life came to beg the king for her house and land. Gehazi said, "My master, king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." <sup>6</sup> When the king asked the woman about her son, she explained it to him. So the king ordered a certain officer for her, saying, "Give back to her all that was hers and all the harvests of her fields since the day that she left the land until now."

<sup>7</sup> Elisha came to Damascus where Ben Hadad the king of Aram was sick. The king was told, "The man of God has come here." <sup>8</sup> The king said to Hazael, "Take a gift in your hand and go meet the man of God, and consult with Yahweh through him, saying, 'Will I recover from this sickness?'" <sup>9</sup> So Hazael went to meet him and took a gift with him of every kind of good thing of Damascus, carried by forty camels. So Hazael came and stood before Elisha and said, "Your son Ben Hadad king of Aram has sent me to you, saying, 'Will I recover from this sickness?'" <sup>10</sup> Elisha said to him, "Go, say to Ben Hadad, 'You will surely recover,' but Yahweh has shown me

that he will surely die.” <sup>11</sup> Then Elisha stared at Hazael until he was ashamed, and the man of God wept. <sup>12</sup> Hazael asked, “Why do you weep, my master?” He answered, “Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel. You will set their strongholds on fire, and you will kill their young men with the sword, dash in pieces their little ones, and rip open their pregnant women.” <sup>13</sup> Hazael replied, “Who is your servant, that he should do this great thing? He is only a dog.” Elisha answered, “Yahweh has shown me that you will be king over Aram.” <sup>14</sup> Then Hazael left Elisha and came to his master, who said to him, “What did Elisha say to you?” He answered, “He told me that you would certainly recover.” <sup>15</sup> Then the next day Hazael took the blanket and dipped it in water, and spread it on Ben Hadad's face so that he died. Then Hazael became king in his place.

<sup>16</sup> In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoram began to reign. He was the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. He began to reign when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah. <sup>17</sup> Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for eight years in Jerusalem. <sup>18</sup> Jehoram walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab was doing; for he had Ahab's daughter as his wife, and he did what was evil in Yahweh's sight. <sup>19</sup> However, because of his servant David, Yahweh did not want to destroy Judah, since he had told him that he would always give him descendants.

<sup>20</sup> In Jehoram's days, Edom revolted from



under the hand of Judah, and they set a king over themselves. <sup>21</sup> Then Jehoram crossed over to Zair with all his chariots. When the Edomites surrounded Jehoram, his chariot commanders rose up and attacked them during the night; but Jehoram's army ran away and went back to their homes. <sup>22</sup> So Edom has been in rebellion against the rule of Judah to this present day. Libnah also revolted at the same time. <sup>23</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jehoram, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>24</sup> Jehoram rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of David. Then Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

<sup>25</sup> In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. <sup>26</sup> Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned for one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah; she was the daughter of Omri, king of Israel. <sup>27</sup> Ahaziah walked in the ways of the house of Ahab; he did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as the house of Ahab was doing, for Ahaziah was a son-in-law to the house of Ahab. <sup>28</sup> Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab, to fight against Hazael, king of Aram, at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram. <sup>29</sup> King Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Arameans had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to Jezreel to see Joram son of Ahab,

because Joram had been wounded.

## 9

<sup>1</sup> Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, "Dress for travel, then take this little bottle of oil in your hand and go to Ramoth Gilead. <sup>2</sup> When you arrive, look for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi, and go in and make him arise up from among his companions, and conduct him to an inner chamber. <sup>3</sup> Then take the bottle of oil and pour it on his head and say, 'Yahweh says this: "I have anointed you king over Israel."' Then open the door, and run off; do not delay." <sup>4</sup> So the young man, the young prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. <sup>5</sup> When he arrived, behold, the captains of the army were sitting. So the young prophet said, "I have come on an errand to you, captain." Jehu replied, "To which of us?" The young prophet answered, "To you, captain." <sup>6</sup> So Jehu arose and went into the house, and the prophet poured the oil on his head and said to Jehu, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: 'I have anointed you king over the people of Yahweh, over Israel. <sup>7</sup> You must kill the family of Ahab your master, so that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of Yahweh, who were murdered by the hand of Jezebel. <sup>8</sup> For the whole family of Ahab will perish, and I will cut off from Ahab every male child, whether he is a slave or a free person. <sup>9</sup> I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the house of

Baasha son of Ahijah. <sup>10</sup> The dogs will eat Jezebel in Jezreel, and there will be no one to bury her." Then the prophet opened the door and ran off.

<sup>11</sup> Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and one said to him, "Is everything alright? Why did this mad fellow come to you?" Jehu answered them, "You know the man and the kinds of things he says." <sup>12</sup> They said, "That is a lie. Tell us." Jehu answered, "He said this and that to me, and he also said, 'This is what Yahweh says: I have anointed you as king over Israel.'" <sup>13</sup> Then each of them quickly took off his outer garment and put it under Jehu at the top of the steps. They blew the trumpet and said, "Jehu is king."

<sup>14</sup> In this way Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. Now Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Aram, <sup>15</sup> but King Joram had gone back to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds that the Arameans had given him, when he had fought against Hazael king of Aram.

Jehu said to the servants of Joram, "If this is your opinion, then let no one escape and go out of the city, in order to go tell this news in Jezreel."

<sup>16</sup> So Jehu rode in a chariot to Jezreel; for Joram was resting there. Now Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram.

<sup>17</sup> The watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came at a distance; he said, "I see a group of men coming." Joram said, "Take a horseman, and send him out to meet them; tell him to say,

'Are you coming in peace?'" <sup>18</sup> So a man was sent on horseback to meet him; he said, "The king says this: 'Are coming in peace?'" So Jehu said, "What have you to do with peace? Turn and ride behind me." Then the watchman told the king, "The messenger has met them, but he is not coming back." <sup>19</sup> Then he sent out a second man on horseback, who came to them and said, "The king says this: 'Are you coming in peace?'" Jehu answered, "What have you to do with peace? Turn and ride behind me." <sup>20</sup> Again the watchman reported, "He has met them, but he is not coming back. For the way that the chariot is being driven is the way that Jehu son of Nimshi drives; he is driving wildly."

<sup>21</sup> So Joram said, "Get my chariot ready." They prepared his chariot, and Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah rode out, each in his chariot, to meet Jehu. They found him at the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. <sup>22</sup> When Joram saw Jehu, he said, "Are you coming in peace, Jehu?" He answered, "What peace is there, when the idolatrous acts of prostitution and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel are so many?" <sup>23</sup> So Joram turned his chariot and fled and said to Ahaziah, "There is treachery, Ahaziah." <sup>24</sup> Then Jehu drew his bow with his full strength and shot Joram between his shoulders; the arrow went through his heart, and he sank down in his chariot. <sup>25</sup> Then Jehu said to Bidkar his captain, "Pick him up and throw him in the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. Think about how when you and I rode together after Ahab his

father, Yahweh placed this prophecy against him: <sup>26</sup> 'Yesterday I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons—declares Yahweh—and I will surely make you pay for it on this field—declares Yahweh. Now then, pick him up and throw him on this field, according to the word of Yahweh.'

<sup>27</sup> When Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled up the road to Beth Haggan. But Jehu followed him, and said, "Kill him also in the chariot," and they shot him at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. Ahaziah fled to Megiddo and died there. <sup>28</sup> His servants carried his body in a chariot to Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the city of David.

<sup>29</sup> Now it was in the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab that Ahaziah had begun to reign over Judah.

<sup>30</sup> When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her eyes, arranged her hair, and looked out the window. <sup>31</sup> As Jehu was entering the gate, she said to him, "Are you coming in peace, you Zimri, your master's murderer?" <sup>32</sup> Jehu looked up at the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" Then two or three eunuchs looked out. <sup>33</sup> So Jehu said, "Throw her down." So they threw Jezebel down, and some of her blood splattered on the wall and the horses, and Jehu trampled her underfoot. <sup>34</sup> When Jehu entered the palace, he ate and drank. Then he said, "See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." <sup>35</sup> They went to bury her, but they

found no more of her than the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands. <sup>36</sup> So they came back and told Jehu. He said, "This is the word of Yahweh which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'In the land at Jezreel the dogs will eat the flesh of Jezebel, <sup>37</sup> and the body of Jezebel will be like dung on the surface of the fields in the land at Jezreel, so that no one will be able to say, "This is Jezebel."'"

## 10

<sup>1</sup> Now Ahab had seventy descendants in Samaria. Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, including the elders and the guardians of Ahab's descendants, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Your master's descendants are with you, and you also have chariots and horses and a fortified city and armor. So then, as soon as this letter comes to you, <sup>3</sup> select the best and most deserving of your master's descendants and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's royal line." <sup>4</sup> But they were terrified and said among themselves, "See, the two kings could not stand before Jehu. So how can we stand?" <sup>5</sup> Then the man who was in charge of the palace, and the man who was over the city, and the elders also, and they who raised the children, sent word back to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants. We will do everything that you command us. We will not make any man king. Do what is good in your eyes." <sup>6</sup> Then Jehu wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, "If you are on my side, and if you will

listen to my voice, you must take the heads of the men of your master's descendants, and come to me to Jezreel by tomorrow this time." Now the king's descendants, seventy in number, were with the important men of the city, who were bringing them up. <sup>7</sup> So when the letter came to them, they took the king's sons and killed them, seventy persons, put their heads in baskets, and sent them to Jehu in Jezreel. <sup>8</sup> A messenger came to Jehu, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." So he said, "Put them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning." <sup>9</sup> In the morning Jehu went out and stood, and said to all the people, "You are innocent. See, I plotted against my master and killed him, but who killed all these?" <sup>10</sup> Now you should certainly realize that no part of Yahweh's word, the word that he spoke concerning the family of Ahab, will fall to the ground, for Yahweh has done what he spoke about through his servant Elijah." <sup>11</sup> So Jehu killed all who remained in the family of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his important men, his close friends, and his priests, until none of them remained.

<sup>12</sup> Then Jehu arose and left; he went to Samaria. As he was arriving at Beth Eked of the shepherd, <sup>13</sup> he met brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah. Jehu said to them, "Who are you?" They answered, "We are brothers of Ahaziah, and we are going down to greet the children of the king and the children of Queen Jezebel." <sup>14</sup> Jehu said to his own men, "Take them alive." So they took

them alive and killed them at the well of Beth Eked, all forty-two men. He did not leave any of them alive.

<sup>15</sup> When Jehu had left there, he met Jehonadab son of Recab coming to meet him. Jehu greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart with me, as my heart is with yours?" Jehonadab answered, "It is." Jehu said, "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave Jehu his hand, and Jehu took Jehonadab up with him into the chariot. <sup>16</sup> Jehu said, "Come with me and see my zeal for Yahweh." So he had Jonadab ride along with him in his chariot. <sup>17</sup> When he came to Samaria, Jehu killed all who remained from Ahab's descendants in Samaria, until he had destroyed Ahab's royal line, just as was told them before by the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken to Elijah.

<sup>18</sup> Then Jehu gathered all the people together and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much. <sup>19</sup> Now therefore call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers, and all his priests. Let no one be left out, for I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal. Whoever does not come will not live." But Jehu did this deceitfully, with the intent to kill the worshipers of Baal. <sup>20</sup> Jehu said, "Set a time to have an assembly for Baal." So they announced it. <sup>21</sup> Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. They came into the temple of Baal, and it was filled from one end to another. <sup>22</sup> Jehu said to the man who kept the priest's wardrobe, "Bring out



robes for all the worshipers of Baal.” So the man brought out robes to them. <sup>23</sup> So Jehu went with Jehonadab son of Recab into the house of Baal, and he said to the worshipers of Baal, “Search and make sure that there is no one here with you from the servants of Yahweh, but the worshipers of Baal alone.” <sup>24</sup> Then they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had chosen eighty men who were standing outside, and he told them, “If any of the men whom I bring into your hands escapes, whoever lets that man escape, his life will be taken for the life of the one who escaped.”

<sup>25</sup> So then as soon as Jehu finished offering the burnt offering, he said to the guard and to the captains, “Go in and kill them. Let no one come out.” So they killed them with the edge of the sword, and the guard and the captains threw them out and went into the inner room of the house of Baal. <sup>26</sup> They dragged out the stone pillars that were in the house of Baal, and they burned them. <sup>27</sup> Then they broke down the pillar of Baal, and destroyed the house of Baal and made it a latrine, which it is to this day. <sup>28</sup> That is how Jehu destroyed Baal worship from Israel.

<sup>29</sup> But Jehu did not leave the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he made Israel sin—that is, the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan. <sup>30</sup> So Yahweh said to Jehu, “Because you have done well in executing what was right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your

descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.” <sup>31</sup> But Jehu took no care to walk in the law of Yahweh, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, by which he made Israel sin.

<sup>32</sup> In those days Yahweh began to cut off regions from Israel, and Hazael defeated the Israelites at the borders of Israel, <sup>33</sup> from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the Valley of the Arnon, through Gilead to Bashan. <sup>34</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jehu, and all that he did, and all his power, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? <sup>35</sup> Jehu slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Jehoahaz his son became king in his place. <sup>36</sup> The time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

## 11

<sup>1</sup> Now when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and killed all the royal children. <sup>2</sup> But Jehosheba, a daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and hid him away from among the king's sons who were killed, along with his nurse; she put them into a bedroom. They hid him from Athaliah so that he was not killed. <sup>3</sup> He remained with her six years, hidden in the house of Yahweh, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

<sup>4</sup> In the seventh year, Jehoiada sent messages and brought the commanders of hundreds of the Carites and of the guard, and brought them to himself, into the temple of Yahweh. He made a covenant with them, and he made them swear an oath in the house of Yahweh. He showed them the king's son. <sup>5</sup> He commanded them, saying, "This is what you must do. A third of you who come on the Sabbath will keep watch over the king's house, <sup>6</sup> and a third will be at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guardhouse." <sup>7</sup> The two other groups who are not serving on the Sabbath, you must keep the watch over the house of Yahweh for the king. <sup>8</sup> You must surround the king, every man with his weapons in his hand. Whoever enters within your ranks, let him be killed. You must stay with the king when he goes out, and when he comes in.

<sup>9</sup> So the commanders of hundreds obeyed everything Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each one took his men, those who were to come in to serve on the Sabbath, and those who were to stop serving on that Sabbath; and they came to Jehoiada the priest. <sup>10</sup> Then Jehoiada the priest gave the commanders of hundreds the spears and shields that belonged to King David and that were in the house of Yahweh. <sup>11</sup> So the guards stood, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side, near the altar and the temple, surrounding the king. <sup>12</sup> Then Jehoiada brought out the king's son Joash, put the crown on him, and gave him

the covenant decrees. Then they made him king and anointed him. They clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"

<sup>13</sup> When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people in the house of Yahweh. <sup>14</sup> She looked, and, behold, the king was standing by the pillar, as the custom was, and the captains and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and shouted, "Treason! Treason!" <sup>15</sup> Then Jehoiada the priest ordered the commanders of hundreds who were over the army, saying, "Bring her out between the ranks. Anyone who follows her, kill him with the sword." For the priest had said, "Do not let her be killed in the house of Yahweh." <sup>16</sup> So they seized her as she reached the place where the horses enter the palace grounds, and there she was killed.

<sup>17</sup> Then Jehoiada made a covenant between Yahweh and the king and people, that they should be Yahweh's people, and also between the king and the people. <sup>18</sup> So all the people of the land went to the house of Baal and tore it down. They smashed Baal's altars and his idol figures to pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of those altars. Then Jehoida the priest appointed guards over the temple of Yahweh. <sup>19</sup> Jehoida took with him the commanders of hundreds, the Carites, the guard, and all the people of the land, and together they brought down the king from the house of Yahweh and

they went into the king's house, entering by way of the gate of the guards. Joash took his place on the royal throne. <sup>20</sup> So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword at the king's house.

<sup>21</sup> Joash was seven years old when he began to reign.

## 12

<sup>1</sup> In the seventh year of Jehu, the reign of Joash began; he reigned for forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah, of Beersheba.

<sup>2</sup> Joash did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh all the time, because Jehoiada the priest was instructing him. <sup>3</sup> But the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

<sup>4</sup> Joash said to the priests, "All the money that is brought in as sacred offerings into the house of Yahweh, that money for which each person is assessed—whether it is the money collected in the census, or the money received from personal vows, or the money brought in by people motivated by Yahweh in their hearts to give— <sup>5</sup> the priests should receive the money from one of their treasurers and repair whatever damage is found in the temple." <sup>6</sup> But by the twenty-third year of King Joash, the priests had not repaired anything in the temple. <sup>7</sup> Then King Joash called for Jehoiada the priest and for the other priests; he said to them, "Why have you not repaired anything in the temple? Now

take no more money from your taxpayers, but take what has been collected for repairs of the temple and give it to those who can make the repairs.” <sup>8</sup> So the priests consented to take no more money from the people and not repair the temple themselves.

<sup>9</sup> Instead, Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of Yahweh. The priests who were guarding the temple entrance put into it all the money that was brought to the house of Yahweh. <sup>10</sup> Whenever they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's scribe and the high priest would come and put the money in bags and then count it, the money found in the temple of Yahweh. <sup>11</sup> They gave the money that was weighed out into the hands of men who took care of the temple of Yahweh. They paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the temple of Yahweh, <sup>12</sup> and to the masons and the stonecutters, for buying timber and cutting stone to repair the temple of Yahweh, and for all that was needed to be paid to repair it. <sup>13</sup> But the money that was brought into the house of Yahweh did not pay to make for it any silver cups, lamp trimmers, basins, trumpets, or any gold or silver furnishing. <sup>14</sup> They gave this money to those who did the work of repairing the house of Yahweh. <sup>15</sup> In addition, they did not require the money paid for repairs to be accounted for by the men who received it and

paid it to the workmen, because these men were honest. <sup>16</sup> But the money for the guilt offerings and the money for the sin offerings was not brought into the temple of Yahweh, because it belonged to the priests.

<sup>17</sup> Then Hazael king of Aram attacked and fought against Gath, and took it. Hazael then turned to attack Jerusalem. <sup>18</sup> Joash king of Judah took all the things that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had set apart, and what he had set apart, and all the gold that was found in the storerooms of the houses of Yahweh and of the king and he sent them to Hazael king of Aram. Then Hazael went away from Jerusalem.

<sup>19</sup> As for the other matters concerning Joash, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>20</sup> His servants arose and plotted together; they attacked Joash in Beth Millo, on the way that goes down to Silla. <sup>21</sup> Jozabad \* son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad son of Shomer, his servants, attacked him, and he died. They buried Joash with his ancestors in the city of David, and Amaziah, his son, became king in his place.

## 13

<sup>1</sup> In the twenty-third year of Joash son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned seventeen years. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in

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\* **12:21** Some ancient copies have Jozacar .

the sight of Yahweh and followed the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin; and Jehoahaz did not turn away from them. <sup>3</sup> The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and he gave them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Aram and into the hand of Ben Hadad son of Hazael. <sup>4</sup> So Jehoahaz implored Yahweh, and Yahweh listened to him because he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram was oppressing them. <sup>5</sup> So Yahweh gave Israel a rescuer, and they escaped from the hand of the Arameans, and the people of Israel began to live in their homes as they had before. <sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who caused Israel to sin, and they continued in them; and the Asherah pole remained in Samaria. <sup>7</sup> The Arameans left Jehoahaz with only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen, for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the chaff at threshing time. <sup>8</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jehoahaz, and all that he did and his power, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? <sup>9</sup> So Jehoahaz slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. Jehoash his son became king in his place.

<sup>10</sup> In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, the reign of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz began over Israel in Samaria; he reigned sixteen years. <sup>11</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not leave behind any of the sins



of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he had made Israel to sin, but he walked in them. <sup>12</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jehoash, and all that he did, and his might by which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? <sup>13</sup> Jehoash slept with his ancestors, and Jeroboam sat on his throne. Jehoash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

<sup>14</sup> Now Elisha became sick with an illness by which he later died, so Jehoash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over him. He said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen are taking you away!" <sup>15</sup> Elisha said to him, "Pick up a bow and some arrows," so Joash picked up a bow and some arrows. <sup>16</sup> Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow," so he put his hand on it. Then Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. <sup>17</sup> Elisha said, "Open the window eastward," so he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot!", and he shot. Elisha said, "This is Yahweh's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram, for you will attack the Arameans in Aphek until you have consumed them." <sup>18</sup> Then Elisha said, "Take the arrows," so Joash took them. He said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them," and he struck the ground three times, then stopped. <sup>19</sup> But the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have hit the ground five or six times. Then you would have attacked Aram until you annihilated it, but now you will attack Aram only three times."

<sup>20</sup> Then Elisha died, and they buried him. Now groups of Moabites invaded the land at the beginning of the year. <sup>21</sup> As they were burying a certain man, they saw a group of Moabites, so they threw the body into Elisha's grave. As soon as the man touched Elisha's bones, he revived and stood up on his feet.

<sup>22</sup> Hazael king of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. <sup>23</sup> But Yahweh was gracious to Israel, and had compassion on them and concern for them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So Yahweh did not destroy them, and he still has not driven them away from his presence. <sup>24</sup> Hazael king of Aram died, and Ben Hadad his son became king in his place. <sup>25</sup> Jehoash son of Jehoahaz took back from Ben Hadad son of Hazael the cities that had been taken from Jehoahaz his father by war. Jehoash attacked him three times, and he recovered those cities of Israel.

## 14

<sup>1</sup> In the second year of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, began to reign. <sup>2</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan, of Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, yet not like David his father. He did everything that Joash, his father, had done. <sup>4</sup> But the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. <sup>5</sup> It came about

that as soon as his rule was well established, he killed the servants who had murdered his father, the king. <sup>6</sup> Yet he did not put the sons of the murderers to death; instead, he acted according to what was written in the Book of the Law Moses, as Yahweh had commanded, saying, "The fathers must not be put to death for their children, neither must the children be put to death for their parents. Instead, every person must be put to death for his own sin." <sup>7</sup> He killed ten thousand soldiers of Edom in the Valley of Salt; he also took Sela in war and called it Joktheel, which is what it is called to this day.

<sup>8</sup> Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us meet each other face to face in battle." <sup>9</sup> But Jehoash the king of Israel sent messengers back to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "A thistle that was in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife,' but a wild beast in Lebanon walked by and trampled down the thistle. <sup>10</sup> You have indeed attacked Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Take pride in your victory, but stay at home, for why should you cause yourself trouble and fall, both you and Judah with you?"

<sup>11</sup> But Amaziah would not listen. So Jehoash king of Israel attacked and he and Amaziah king of Judah met each other face to face at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. <sup>12</sup> Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled home. <sup>13</sup> Jehoash king of Israel, captured Amaziah, king

of Judah son of Jehoash son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh. He came to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, four hundred cubits in distance.

<sup>14</sup> He took all the gold and silver, all the objects that were found in the house of Yahweh, and the valuable things in the king's palace, with hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

<sup>15</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jehoash, all that he did, his power, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

<sup>16</sup> Then Jehoash slept with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and Jeroboam, his son, became king in his place.

<sup>17</sup> Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. <sup>18</sup> As for the other matters concerning Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

<sup>19</sup> They made a conspiracy against Amaziah in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. He fled to Lachish, but they sent men after him to Lachish and killed him there. <sup>20</sup> They brought him back on horses, and he was buried with his ancestors in the city of David. <sup>21</sup> All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah.

<sup>22</sup> It was Azariah who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah, after King Amaziah slept with his ancestors.

<sup>23</sup> In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash king

of Israel began to reign in Samaria; he reigned forty-one years. <sup>24</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not depart from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. <sup>25</sup> He restored the border of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, following the commands of the word of Yahweh, the God of Israel, which he had spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath Hopher. <sup>26</sup> For Yahweh saw the suffering of Israel, that it was very bitter for everyone, both slave and free, and that there was no rescuer for Israel. <sup>27</sup> So Yahweh said that he would not blot out the name of Israel under heaven; instead, he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

<sup>28</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jeroboam, all that he did, his power, how he waged war and recovered Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? <sup>29</sup> Jeroboam slept with his ancestors, with the kings of Israel, and Zechariah his son became king in his place.

## 15

<sup>1</sup> In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah began to reign. <sup>2</sup> Azariah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jekoliah, and she was from Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as

his father Amaziah had done. <sup>4</sup> However, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. <sup>5</sup> Yahweh afflicted the king so that he was a leper to the day of his death and lived in a separate house. Jotham, the king's son, was over the household and ruled the people of the land. <sup>6</sup> As for the other matters concerning Azariah, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>7</sup> So Azariah slept with his ancestors; they buried him with his ancestors in the city of David. Jotham, his son, became king in his place.

<sup>8</sup> In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria for six months. <sup>9</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as his fathers had done. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. <sup>10</sup> Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against Zechariah, attacked him in Ibleam, and killed him. Then he became king in his place. <sup>11</sup> As for the other matters concerning Zechariah, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel. <sup>12</sup> This was the word of Yahweh that he spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." That is what happened.

<sup>13</sup> Shallum son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, and he reigned only one month in Samaria. <sup>14</sup> Menahem son of Gadi went up from Tirzah to Samaria. There he attacked Shallum son of

Jabesh, in Samaria. He killed him and became king in his place. <sup>15</sup> As for the other matters concerning Shallum and the conspiracy that he formed, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel. <sup>16</sup> Then Menahem attacked Tiphseh and all who were there, and the borders around Tirzah, because they did not open up the city to him. So he attacked it, and he ripped open all the pregnant women in that village. \* <sup>17</sup> In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi began to reign over Israel; he reigned ten years in Samaria. <sup>18</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. For his whole life, he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. <sup>19</sup> Then Pul the king of Assyria came against the land, and Menahem gave Pul one thousand talents of silver, so that Pul's support might be with him to strengthen the kingdom of Israel in his hand. <sup>20</sup> Menahem exacted this money from Israel by requiring each of the wealthy men to pay fifty shekels of silver to him to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back and did not stay there in the land. <sup>21</sup> As for the other matters concerning Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? <sup>22</sup> So Menahem slept with his ancestors, and Pekahiah his son became king in his place.

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\* **15:16** Instead of Tiphseh , one ancient version and some modern versions read, Tappuah .

<sup>23</sup> In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned two years. <sup>24</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not leave behind the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he had caused Israel to sin. <sup>25</sup> Pekahiah had an officer named Pekah son of Remaliah, who conspired against him. Along with fifty men of Gilead, Pekah killed Pekahiah as well as Argob and Arieh in Samaria, in the citadel of the king's palace. Pekah killed Pekahiah and became king in his place. <sup>26</sup> As for the other matters concerning Pekahiah, all that he did, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.

<sup>27</sup> In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twenty years. <sup>28</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin.

<sup>29</sup> In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel Beth Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali. He carried away the people to Assyria. <sup>30</sup> So Hoshea son of Elah formed a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah. He attacked him and killed him. Then he became king in his place, in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah. <sup>31</sup> As for the other matters concerning Pekah, all that he did, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.



<sup>32</sup> In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham son of Azariah, king of Judah began to reign. <sup>33</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah; she was the daughter of Zadok. <sup>34</sup> Jotham did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh. He followed the example of all his father Azariah had done. <sup>35</sup> However, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. Jotham built the upper gate of the house of Yahweh. <sup>36</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>37</sup> In those days Yahweh began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Aram, and Pekah son of Remaliah. <sup>38</sup> Jotham slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David, his ancestor. Then Ahaz, his son, became king in his place.

## 16

<sup>1</sup> In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of Jotham king of Judah, began to reign. <sup>2</sup> Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in the eyes of Yahweh his God, as David his ancestor had done. <sup>3</sup> Instead, he walked in the way of the kings of Israel; indeed, he made his son pass through the fire, following the detestable practices of the nations, which

Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> He offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places, on the hilltops, and under every green tree.

<sup>5</sup> Then Rezin, king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to attack. They besieged Ahaz, but they could not conquer him. <sup>6</sup> At that time, Rezin king of Aram recovered Elath for Aram and drove the men of Judah out of Elath. Then the Arameans came to Elath where they have lived to this day.

<sup>7</sup> So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who have attacked me." <sup>8</sup> So Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of Yahweh and among the treasures of the king's palace and he sent it as a gift to the king of Assyria. <sup>9</sup> Then the king of Assyria listened to him, and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, conquered it and carried off its people as prisoners to Kir. He also killed Rezin the king of Aram.

<sup>10</sup> King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria. At Damascus he saw an altar. He sent to Uriah the priest a model of the altar and its pattern and the design for all the workmanship needed. <sup>11</sup> So Uriah the priest built an altar to be just like the plans that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. He finished it before King Ahaz arrived back from Damascus.

<sup>12</sup> When the king came from Damascus he saw

the altar; the king approached the altar and made offerings on it. <sup>13</sup> He made his burnt offering and his grain offering, poured out his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his fellowship offerings on the altar. <sup>14</sup> The bronze altar that was before Yahweh—he brought it from the front of the temple, from between his altar and the temple of Yahweh and put it on the north side of his altar. <sup>15</sup> Then King Ahaz commanded Uriah the priest, saying, “On the large altar burn the morning burnt offering and the evening grain offering, and the king's burnt offering and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their grain offering and their drink offerings. Sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice. But the bronze altar will be for me to consult for guidance.” <sup>16</sup> Uriah the priest did just what King Ahaz commanded.

<sup>17</sup> Then King Ahaz removed the panels and the basins from the portable stands; he also took down the sea from off the bronze oxen that were under it and put it on a stone pavement. <sup>18</sup> He removed the covered walkway for the Sabbath that they had built at the temple, along with the king's entry outside the temple of Yahweh, because of the king of Assyria. <sup>19</sup> As for the other matters concerning Ahaz and what he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>20</sup> Ahaz slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David. Hezekiah his son became king in his place.

## 17

<sup>1</sup> In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, the reign of Hoshea son of Elah began. He ruled in Samaria over Israel for nine years. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, yet not as the kings of Israel who were before him. <sup>3</sup> Shalmaneser king of Assyria attacked him, and Hoshea became his servant and brought him tribute. <sup>4</sup> Then the king of Assyria realized that Hoshea had been plotting against him, for Hoshea had sent messengers to So king of Egypt; also, he offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. So the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison. <sup>5</sup> Then the king of Assyria attacked throughout all the land, and attacked Samaria and besieged it for three years. <sup>6</sup> In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria. He put them in Halah, at the Habor River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

<sup>7</sup> This captivity happened because the people of Israel had sinned against Yahweh their God, who had brought them up from the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. The people had been worshipping other gods <sup>8</sup> and walking in the practices of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel, and in the practices of the kings of Israel that they had done. <sup>9</sup> The people of Israel did secretly—against Yahweh their God—things that were not right. They built for themselves high places in all their cities, from the watchtower

to the fortress. <sup>10</sup> They also set up stone pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. <sup>11</sup> There they burned incense in all the high places, as the nations had done, those whom Yahweh had carried away before them. The Israelites performed wicked things to provoke Yahweh to anger; <sup>12</sup> they worshiped idols, about which Yahweh had said to them, "You will not do this thing." <sup>13</sup> Yet Yahweh had testified to Israel and to Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, and be careful to keep all the law I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets." <sup>14</sup> But they would not listen; instead they were very stubborn like their fathers who did not trust in Yahweh their God. <sup>15</sup> They rejected his statutes and the covenant that he had made with their ancestors, and the covenant decrees that he had given to them. They followed useless practices and they themselves became useless. They followed the pagan nations who were around them, those that Yahweh had commanded them not to imitate. <sup>16</sup> They ignored all the commandments of Yahweh their God. They made cast metal figures of two calves to worship. They made an Asherah pole, and they worshiped all the stars of the heavens and Baal. <sup>17</sup> They made their sons and daughters pass through the fire, they used divination and enchantments, they sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and they provoked him to

anger. <sup>18</sup> Therefore Yahweh was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. There was no one left but the tribe of Judah alone.

<sup>19</sup> Even Judah did not keep the commandments of Yahweh their God, and they followed the practices that Israel had done. <sup>20</sup> So Yahweh rejected all the descendants of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hand of those who would take the possession as spoil, until he had cast them out of his sight. <sup>21</sup> He tore Israel from the royal line of David, and they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king. Jeroboam drove Israel away from following Yahweh and made them commit a great sin. <sup>22</sup> The people of Israel followed all the sins of Jeroboam and they did not depart from them, <sup>23</sup> so Yahweh removed Israel from his sight, as he had said through all his servants the prophets that he would. So Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria, and it is this way to this present day.

<sup>24</sup> The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon and from Kuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria in place of the people of Israel. They took over Samaria and lived in its cities. <sup>25</sup> It happened at the beginning of their residence there that they did not honor Yahweh. So Yahweh sent lions among them which killed some of them. <sup>26</sup> So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations that you have carried away and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the practices required by the god of

the land. So he has sent lions among them, and, see, the lions are killing people there because they do not know the practices required by the god of the land.”

<sup>27</sup> Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, “Take one of the priests there whom you brought from there, and let him go and live there, and let him teach them the practices required by the god of the land.” <sup>28</sup> So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel; he taught them how they should honor Yahweh. <sup>29</sup> Every ethnic group made gods of their own, and put them in the high places that the Samaritans had made—every ethnic group in the cities where they lived. <sup>30</sup> The people of Babylon made Succoth Benoth; the people of Kuthah made Nergal; the people of Hamath made Ashima; <sup>31</sup> the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak. The Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelek and Anammelek, the gods of the Sepharvites. <sup>32</sup> They also honored Yahweh, and appointed from among themselves priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the temples at the high places. <sup>33</sup> They honored Yahweh and also worshiped their own gods, in the customs of the nations from among whom they had been taken away.

<sup>34</sup> To this day they persist in their old customs. They neither honor Yahweh, nor do they follow the statutes, decrees, the law, or the commandments that Yahweh gave to the people of Jacob—whom he named Israel— <sup>35</sup> and with whom

Yahweh had made a covenant and commanded them, "You will not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor worship them, nor sacrifice to them. <sup>36</sup> But Yahweh, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and a raised arm, is the one you must honor; it is to him that you will prostrate yourselves, and it is to him that you will sacrifice. <sup>37</sup> The statutes and the decrees, the law and the commandments that he wrote for you, you will keep them forever. So you must not fear other gods, <sup>38</sup> and the covenant that I have made with you, you will not forget; neither will you honor other gods. <sup>39</sup> But Yahweh your God is who you will honor. He will rescue you from the might of your enemies." <sup>40</sup> They would not listen, because they continued to do what they had done in the past. <sup>41</sup> So these nations feared Yahweh and they also worshiped their carved figures, and their children did the same—as did their children's children. They continue to do what their ancestors did, up to this day.

## 18

<sup>1</sup> Now in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah began to reign. <sup>2</sup> He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah; she was the daughter of Zechariah. <sup>3</sup> He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, following the example of all that David, his ancestor, had done. <sup>4</sup> He removed the high



places, destroyed the stone pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, because in those days the people of Israel were burning incense to it; it was called "Nehushtan." <sup>5</sup> Hezekiah trusted in Yahweh, the God of Israel, so that after him there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among the kings who were before him. <sup>6</sup> For he held on to Yahweh. He did not stop following him but kept his commandments, which Yahweh commanded Moses. <sup>7</sup> So Yahweh was with Hezekiah, and wherever he went he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. <sup>8</sup> He attacked the Philistines to Gaza and the borders around, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city.

<sup>9</sup> In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. <sup>10</sup> At the end of three years they took it, in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel; in this way Samaria was captured. <sup>11</sup> So the king of Assyria carried Israel away to Assyria and put them in Halah, and at the Habor River in Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. <sup>12</sup> He did this because they did not obey the voice of Yahweh their God, but they violated the terms of his covenant, all that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded. They refused to listen to it or do it.

<sup>13</sup> Then in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked

all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. <sup>14</sup> So Hezekiah king of Judah sent word to the king of Assyria, who was at Lachish, saying, "I have offended you. Withdraw from me. Whatever you put on me I will bear." The king of Assyria required Hezekiah king of Judah to pay three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. <sup>15</sup> So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Yahweh and in the treasuries of the king's palace. <sup>16</sup> Then Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of Yahweh and from the pillars that he had overlaid; he gave the gold to the king of Assyria. <sup>17</sup> But the king of Assyria mobilized his great army, sending Tartan and Rabsaris and the chief commander from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They traveled up the roads and arrived outside Jerusalem. They approached the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway of the launderers' field, and stood by it. <sup>18</sup> When they had called to King Hezekiah, Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, went out to meet them.

<sup>19</sup> So the chief commander said to them to tell Hezekiah what the great king, the king of Assyria, said: "What is the source of your confidence? <sup>20</sup> You speak only useless words, saying there are allies and strength for war. In whom are you trusting, that you should rebel against me? <sup>21</sup> Look, you trust in the walking stick of this bruised reed of Egypt, but if a man leans on it, it will stick into his hand and pierce

it. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt is to anyone who trusts in him. <sup>22</sup> But if you say to me, 'We are trusting in Yahweh our God,' is not he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem'? <sup>23</sup> Now therefore, I want to make you a good offer from my master the king of Assyria. I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able to find riders for them. <sup>24</sup> How could you resist even one captain of the least of my master's servants? You have put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen! <sup>25</sup> Have I traveled up here without Yahweh to fight against this place and destroy it? Yahweh said to me, 'Attack this land and destroy it.'"

<sup>26</sup> Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah said to the chief commander, "Please speak to your servants in the Aramaic language, for we understand it. Do not speak with us in the language of Judah in the ears of the people who are on the wall." <sup>27</sup> But the chief commander said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words? Has he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall, who will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?" <sup>28</sup> Then the chief commander stood and shouted in a loud voice in the Jews' language, saying, "Listen to the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. <sup>29</sup> The king says, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to rescue you from my power. <sup>30</sup> Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in Yahweh,

saying, "Yahweh will surely rescue us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." <sup>31</sup> Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: 'Make peace with me and come out to me. Then every one of you will eat from his own vine and from his own fig tree, and drink from the water in his own cistern. <sup>32</sup> You will do this until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, so that you may live and not die.' Do not listen to Hezekiah when he tries to persuade you, saying, 'Yahweh will rescue us.' <sup>33</sup> Has any of the gods of the peoples rescued them out of the hand of the king of Assyria? <sup>34</sup> Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they rescued Samaria out of my hand? <sup>35</sup> Among all the gods of the lands, is there any god who has rescued his land from my power? How could Yahweh save Jerusalem from my might?"

<sup>36</sup> But the people remained silent and did not respond, for the king had commanded, "Do not answer him." <sup>37</sup> Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the household; Shebna the scribe; and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and reported to him the words of the chief commander.

## 19

<sup>1</sup> It came about that when King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes, covered

himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Yahweh. <sup>2</sup> He sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, all covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet. <sup>3</sup> They said to him, "Hezekiah says, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and disgrace, for the children have come to the time of birth, but there is no strength for them to be born.' <sup>4</sup> It may be that Yahweh your God will hear all the words of the chief commander, whom the king of Assyria his master has sent to defy the living God, and will rebuke the words which Yahweh your God has heard. Now lift up your prayer for the remnant that is still here.'" <sup>5</sup> So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, <sup>6</sup> and Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master: 'Yahweh says, "Do not be afraid of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have insulted me. <sup>7</sup> Look, I will put a spirit in him, and he will hear a certain report and go back to his own land. I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"'" <sup>8</sup> Then the chief commander returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had gone away from Lachish. <sup>9</sup> Then Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah king of Cush and Egypt had mobilized to fight against him, so he sent messengers again to Hezekiah with a message: <sup>10</sup> "Say to Hezekiah king of Judah, 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem will not be given over into the hand of the king of Assyria.'" <sup>11</sup> See,

you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them completely. So will you be rescued? <sup>12</sup> Have the gods of the nations rescued them, the nations that my fathers destroyed: Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Tel Assar? <sup>13</sup> Where are the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the cities of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah?"

<sup>14</sup> Hezekiah received this letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the house of Yahweh and spread it before him. <sup>15</sup> Then Hezekiah prayed before Yahweh and said, "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, you who sit above the cherubim, you are God alone over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth. <sup>16</sup> Turn your ear, Yahweh, and listen. Open your eyes, Yahweh, and see, and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. <sup>17</sup> Truly, Yahweh, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands. <sup>18</sup> They have put their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, just wood and stone. So the Assyrians have destroyed them. <sup>19</sup> Now then, Yahweh our God, save us, I implore you, from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, Yahweh, are God alone."

<sup>20</sup> Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah, saying, "Yahweh, the God of Israel says, 'Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard you. <sup>21</sup> This is the word that Yahweh has spoken about him:

“The virgin daughter of Zion  
despises you and laughs you to scorn.  
The daughter of Jerusalem  
shakes her head at you.

22 Whom have you defied and insulted?  
Against whom have you exalted your voice  
and lifted up your eyes in pride?  
Against the Holy One of Israel!

23 By your messengers  
you have defied the Lord,  
and have said,  
‘With the multitude of my chariots  
I have gone up to the heights of the mountains,  
to the highest elevations of Lebanon.  
I will cut down the tall cedars  
and the choice cypress trees there.  
I will enter into its farthest parts,  
its most fruitful forest.

24 I have dug wells  
and have drunk foreign waters.  
I dried up all the rivers of Egypt  
under the soles of my feet.’

25 Have you not heard how I  
determined it long ago,  
and worked it out in ancient times?  
Now I am bringing it to pass.  
You are here to reduce impregnable cities  
into heaps of ruins.

26 Their inhabitants, of little strength,  
are shattered and ashamed.  
They are plants in the field,  
green grass,  
the grass on the roof or in the field,

- burned before it has grown up.
- 27 But I know your sitting down,  
your going out, your coming in,  
and your raging against me.
- 28 Because of your raging against me,  
and because your arrogance has reached my  
ears,  
I will put my hook in your nose,  
and my bit in your mouth;  
I will turn you back  
the way you came.”
- 29 This will be the sign for you:  
This year you will eat what grows wild,  
and in the second year what grows from  
that.  
But in the third year you must plant and harvest,  
plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
- 30 The remnant of the house of Judah that  
survives  
will again take root and bear fruit.
- 31 For from Jerusalem a remnant will come out,  
from Mount Zion survivors will come. The  
zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.
- 32 Therefore Yahweh says this about the  
king of Assyria:  
“He will not come into this city  
nor shoot an arrow here.  
Neither will he come before it with shield  
or build up a siege ramp against it.
- 33 The way by which he came  
will be the same way he will leave;  
he will not enter this city—  
this is Yahweh's declaration.”
- 34 For I will defend this city and rescue it,



for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.'"

<sup>35</sup> It came about that night that the angel of Yahweh went out and attacked the camp of the Assyrians, putting to death 185,000 soldiers. When the men arose early in the morning, dead bodies lay everywhere. <sup>36</sup> So Sennacherib king of Assyria left Israel and went home and stayed in Nineveh. <sup>37</sup> Later, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisrok his god, his sons Adrammelek and Sharezer killed him with the sword. Then they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son became king in his place.

## 20

<sup>1</sup> In those days Hezekiah was sick to the point of dying. So Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet came to him, and said to him, "Yahweh says, 'Set your house in order; for you will die, and not live.'" <sup>2</sup> Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to Yahweh, saying, <sup>3</sup> "Please, Yahweh, call to mind how I have faithfully walked before you with my whole heart, and how I have done what was good in your sight." Then Hezekiah wept loudly. <sup>4</sup> Before Isaiah had gone out into the middle courtyard, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, <sup>5</sup> "Turn back, and say to Hezekiah, the leader of my people, 'This is what Yahweh, the God of David your ancestor, says: "I have heard your prayer, and I have seen your tears. I am about to heal you on the third day, and you will go up to the house of Yahweh. <sup>6</sup> I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will rescue you

and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.”” 7 So Isaiah said, “Take a lump of figs.” They did so and put it on his boil, and he recovered.

8 Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “What will be the sign that Yahweh will heal me, and that I should go up to the temple of Yahweh on the third day?”

9 Isaiah replied, “This will be the sign for you from Yahweh, that Yahweh will do the thing that he has spoken. Shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?” 10 Hezekiah

answered, “It is an easy thing for the shadow to go forward ten steps. No, let the shadow go backward ten steps.” 11 So Isaiah the prophet cried out to Yahweh, and he brought the shadow ten steps backward, from where it had moved on the stairway of Ahaz.

12 At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13 Hezekiah listened to those letters, and then showed the messengers all the palace and his valuable things, the silver, the gold, the spices and precious oil, and the storehouse of his weapons, and all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house, nor in all his kingdom, that Hezekiah did not show them. 14 Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, “What did these men say to you? Where did they come from?” Hezekiah said, “They came from the distant country of Babylon.” 15 Isaiah asked, “What have

they seen in your house?” Hezekiah answered, “They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them.”

<sup>16</sup> So Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Listen to the word of Yahweh: <sup>17</sup> ‘Look, the days are about to come when everything in your palace, the things that your ancestors stored away until this present day, will be carried to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says Yahweh. <sup>18</sup> The sons born from you, whom you yourself have fathered—they will take them away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’” <sup>19</sup> Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of Yahweh that you have spoken is good.” For he thought, “Will there not be peace and stability in my days?” <sup>20</sup> As for the other matters concerning Hezekiah, and all his power, and how he constructed the pool and the conduit, and how he brought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>21</sup> Hezekiah slept with his ancestors, and Manasseh his son became king in his place.

## 21

<sup>1</sup> Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. <sup>2</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like the disgusting things of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel. <sup>3</sup> For he rebuilt the high places that Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he built

altars for Baal, made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and he bowed down to all the stars of heaven and worshiped them.

<sup>4</sup> Manasseh built altars in the house of Yahweh, although Yahweh had commanded, "It is in Jerusalem that my name will be forever."

<sup>5</sup> He built altars for all the stars of heaven in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh.

<sup>6</sup> He caused his son to pass through the fire, he performed sorcery and divination and consulted with those who talked with the dead and with those who talked with spirits. He did much evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking him to anger.

<sup>7</sup> The carved figure of Asherah that he had made, he placed it in the house of Yahweh. It was about this house that Yahweh had spoken to David and Solomon his son; he had said: "It is in this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, that I will put my name forever.

<sup>8</sup> I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land that I gave to their ancestors, if they will only be careful to obey all that I have commanded them, and to follow all the law that my servant Moses commanded them."

<sup>9</sup> But the people did not listen, and Manasseh led them to do evil even more than the nations that Yahweh had destroyed before the people of Israel.

<sup>10</sup> So Yahweh spoke by his servants the prophets, saying, <sup>11</sup> "Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these disgusting things, and has acted wickedly more than all that the Amorites who were before him did, and has also made Judah sin with his idols, <sup>12</sup> therefore Yahweh, the

God of Israel, says this: Look, I am about to bring such evil on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle. <sup>13</sup> I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria, and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem clean, as a man wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. <sup>14</sup> I will throw off the remnant of my inheritance and give them into the hand of their enemies. They will become victims and plunder for all their enemies, <sup>15</sup> because they have done what is evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their ancestors came out of Egypt, to this day.”

<sup>16</sup> Moreover, Manasseh shed much innocent blood, until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another with death. This was in addition to the sin by which he made Judah to sin, when they did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. <sup>17</sup> As for the other matters concerning Manasseh, all that he did, and the sin that he committed, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>18</sup> Manasseh slept with his ancestors and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. Amon his son became king in his place.

<sup>19</sup> Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth; she was the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. <sup>20</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as Manasseh his father had done. <sup>21</sup> Amon followed in all the way that his father had walked in and worshiped the

idols that his father worshiped, and bowed down to them. <sup>22</sup> He abandoned Yahweh, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of Yahweh. <sup>23</sup> The servants of Amon conspired against him and put the king to death in his own house. <sup>24</sup> But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and they made Josiah his son king in his place. <sup>25</sup> As for the other matters concerning Amon that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>26</sup> The people buried him in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and Josiah his son became king in his place.

## 22

<sup>1</sup> Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah (she was the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath). <sup>2</sup> He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh. He walked in all the way of David his ancestor, and he did not turn away either to the right or to the left.

<sup>3</sup> It came about that in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of Yahweh, saying, <sup>4</sup> "Go up to Hilkiyah the high priest and tell him to count the money that has been brought into the house of Yahweh, which the temple guards have gathered from the people. <sup>5</sup> Let it be given into the hand of the workmen who are in charge of the house of Yahweh, and let them give it to the workmen who are in the house of Yahweh, for them to make repairs to damage

in the temple. <sup>6</sup> Let them give money to the carpenters, the builders, and the masons, and also to buy timber and cut stone to repair the temple.” <sup>7</sup> But no accounting was required for the money that was given to them, because they handled it faithfully.

<sup>8</sup> Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the book of the law in the house of Yahweh.” So Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. <sup>9</sup> Shaphan went and took the book to the king, and also reported to him, saying, “Your servants have spent the money that was found in the temple and they have given it into the hand of the workmen who supervise the care for the house of Yahweh.” <sup>10</sup> Then Shaphan the scribe said to the king, “Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book.” Then Shaphan read it to the king. <sup>11</sup> It came about that when the king had heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes. <sup>12</sup> The king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Akbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah, his own servant, saying, <sup>13</sup> “Go and consult with Yahweh for me, and for the people and for all Judah, because of the words of this book that has been found. For great is the anger of Yahweh that has been kindled against us because our ancestors have not listened to the words of this book so as to obey all that was written concerning us.”

<sup>14</sup> So Hilkiyah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah

son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (she lived in Jerusalem in the second quarter), and they spoke with her. <sup>15</sup> She said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'Tell the man who sent you to me, <sup>16</sup> "This is what Yahweh says: 'See, I will bring disaster to this place and to its inhabitants, according to everything written in the book that the king of Judah has read. <sup>17</sup> Because they have forsaken me and have burned incense to other gods, so that they might provoke me to anger with all the deeds they have committed—therefore my anger has been kindled against this place, and it will not be extinguished.'" <sup>18</sup> But to the king of Judah, who sent you to ask Yahweh's will, this is what you will say to him: "Yahweh, the God of Israel says this: 'About the words that you heard, <sup>19</sup> because your heart was tender, and because you have humbled yourself before Yahweh, when you heard what I said against this place and its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have listened to you—this is Yahweh's declaration. <sup>20</sup> See, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.'"" So the men took this message back to the king.

## 23

<sup>1</sup> So the king sent messengers who gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.



<sup>2</sup> Then the king went up to the house of Yahweh, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, prophets, and all the people, from small to great. He then read in their hearing all the words of the book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of Yahweh. <sup>3</sup> The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before Yahweh, to walk after Yahweh and to keep his commandments, his regulations, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book. So all the people agreed to stand by the covenant.

<sup>4</sup> The king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests under him, and the gatekeepers to bring out of the temple of Yahweh all the vessels that were made for Baal and Asherah, and for all the stars of heaven. He burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields in the Kidron Valley and carried their ashes to Bethel. <sup>5</sup> He got rid of the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had chosen to burn incense at the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places around Jerusalem—those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and the moon, to the planets, and to all the stars of heaven. <sup>6</sup> He brought out the Asherah pole from the temple of Yahweh, outside Jerusalem to the Kidron Valley and burned it there. He beat it to dust and threw that dust onto the graves of the common people. <sup>7</sup> He cleared out the rooms of the cultic prostitutes who were in the temple of Yahweh, where the women wove garments for Asherah. <sup>8</sup> Josiah

brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba. He destroyed the high places at the gates that were at the entrance to the gate of Joshua (the city governor), on the left side of the city gate. <sup>9</sup> Although the priests of those high places were not allowed to serve at the altar of Yahweh in Jerusalem, they ate unleavened bread among their brothers. <sup>10</sup> Josiah defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, so that no one might cause his son or his daughter to pass through the fire as a sacrifice to Molech. <sup>11</sup> He took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun. They had been in an area at the entrance to the temple of Yahweh, near the room of Nathan-Melek, the chamberlain. Josiah burned the chariots of the sun. <sup>12</sup> Josiah the king destroyed the altars that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the temple of Yahweh. Josiah smashed them into pieces and threw them into the Kidron Valley. <sup>13</sup> The king ruined the high places east of Jerusalem, south of the mount of corruption that Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth, the detestable idol of the Sidonians; for Chemosh, the detestable idol of Moab; and for Molech, the detestable idol of the people of Ammon. <sup>14</sup> He broke the stone pillars into pieces and cut down the Asherah poles and he filled those places with the bones of human beings.

<sup>15</sup> Josiah also completely destroyed the altar that was at Bethel and the high place that Jeroboam son of Nebat (the one who made Israel to sin) had constructed. He also burned that altar and the high place and beat it to dust. He also burned the Asherah pole. <sup>16</sup> As Josiah looked over the area, he noticed the graves that were on the hillside. He sent men to take the bones from the graves; then he burned them on the altar, which defiled it. This was according to the word of Yahweh which the man of God had spoken, the man who spoke of these things beforehand. <sup>17</sup> Then he said, "What monument is that I see?" The men of the city told him, "That is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and spoke about these things that you have just done against the altar of Bethel." <sup>18</sup> So Josiah said, "Let it alone. No one should move his bones." So they let his bones alone, along with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria. <sup>19</sup> Then Josiah removed all the houses on the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made, and that provoked Yahweh to anger. He did to them exactly what had been done at Bethel. <sup>20</sup> He slaughtered all the priests of the high places on the altars and he burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

<sup>21</sup> Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to Yahweh your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." <sup>22</sup> Such a Passover celebration had never been held from the days of the judges who ruled Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel or Judah.

<sup>23</sup> But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover of Yahweh was celebrated in Jerusalem.

<sup>24</sup> Josiah also banished those who talked with the dead or with spirits. He also banished the fetishes, the idols, and all the disgusting things that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, so as to confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest had found in the house of Yahweh.

<sup>25</sup> Before Josiah, there had been no king like him, who turned to Yahweh with all his heart, all his soul, and all his might, who followed all the law of Moses. Nor did any king like Josiah arise after him.

<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, Yahweh did not turn away from the burning of his fierce anger, which burned against Judah because of all that Manasseh had done to provoke him to anger. <sup>27</sup> So Yahweh said, "I will also remove Judah out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will throw away this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, 'My name will be there.'"

<sup>28</sup> As for the other matters concerning Josiah, everything that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>29</sup> In his days, Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, went to fight against the king of Assyria at the Euphrates River. King Josiah went to meet Necho in battle, and Necho killed him at Megiddo. <sup>30</sup> Josiah's servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own grave. Then the people of the

land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.

<sup>31</sup> Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

<sup>32</sup> Jehoahaz did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like everything that his ancestors had done. <sup>33</sup> Pharaoh Necho put him in chains at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so that he might not reign in Jerusalem. Then Necho fined Judah one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. <sup>34</sup> Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim son of Josiah king in the place of Josiah his father, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away to Egypt, and Jehoahaz died there. <sup>35</sup> Jehoiakim paid the silver and gold to Pharaoh. In order to meet the demand of Pharaoh, Jehoiakim taxed the land and he forced each man among the people of the land to pay him the silver and gold according to their assessments.

<sup>36</sup> Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah; she was the daughter of Pedaiiah of Rumah.

<sup>37</sup> Jehoiakim did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, just as his ancestors had done.

## 24

<sup>1</sup> In Jehoiakim's days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked Judah; Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Then Jehoiakim

turned back and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>2</sup> Yahweh sent against Jehoiakim bands of Chaldeans, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites; he sent them against Judah to destroy it. This was in conformity with the word of Yahweh that had been spoken through his servants the prophets. <sup>3</sup> It was certainly at the mouth of Yahweh that this came on Judah, to remove them out of his sight, because of the sins of Manasseh, all that he did, \* <sup>4</sup> and also because of the innocent blood that he shed, for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. Yahweh was not willing to pardon that. <sup>5</sup> As for the other matters concerning Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? <sup>6</sup> Jehoiakim slept with his ancestors, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his place. <sup>7</sup> The king of Egypt did not attack any more out of his land, because the king of Babylon had conquered all the lands that had been controlled by the king of Egypt, from the brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

<sup>8</sup> Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign; he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta; she was the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did all that his father had done.

<sup>10</sup> At that time the army of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked Jerusalem and besieged the city. <sup>11</sup> Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon

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\* **24:3** Some versions read, It was certainly because of the wrath of Yahweh .

came to the city while his soldiers were besieging it, <sup>12</sup> and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers. The king of Babylon captured him in the eighth year of his own reign. <sup>13</sup> Nebuchadnezzar took out from there all the valuable things in the house of Yahweh, and those in the king's palace. He cut into pieces all the golden objects that Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of Yahweh, as Yahweh had said would happen. <sup>14</sup> He took into exile all Jerusalem, all the leaders, and all the fighting men, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. No one was left except the poorest people in the land. <sup>15</sup> Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin into exile at Babylon, as well as the king's mother, wives, officers, and the chief men of the land. He took them into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. <sup>16</sup> All the fighting men, seven thousand in number, and one thousand craftsmen and blacksmiths, all of them fit for fighting—the king of Babylon brought these men into exile at Babylon. <sup>17</sup> The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's father's brother, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

<sup>18</sup> Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. <sup>19</sup> He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did all that Jehoiakim had done. <sup>20</sup> Through Yahweh's anger, all these events happened in

Jerusalem and Judah, until he drove them out of his presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

## 25

<sup>1</sup> It happened that in the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah, in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem. He camped opposite it, and they built a siege wall around it. <sup>2</sup> So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah's reign. <sup>3</sup> On the ninth day of the fourth month of that year, the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. <sup>4</sup> Then the city was broken into, and all the fighting men fled at night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, although the Chaldeans were all around the city. The king went in the direction of the Arabah. <sup>5</sup> But the army of Chaldeans pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of the Jordan River valley near Jericho. All his army was scattered away from him. <sup>6</sup> They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where they passed sentence on him. <sup>7</sup> As for Zedekiah's sons, they slaughtered them before his eyes. Then he put out his eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and brought him to Babylon.

<sup>8</sup> Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar king of



Babylon, Nebuzaradan, a servant of the king of Babylon and commander of his bodyguards, came to Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> He burned the house of Yahweh, the king's palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem; also every important building in the city he burned. <sup>10</sup> As for all the walls around Jerusalem, all the army of the Babylonians who were under the commander of the bodyguard destroyed them. <sup>11</sup> As for the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the remainder of the population—Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, took them away into exile. <sup>12</sup> But the commander of the bodyguard did leave some of the poorest of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

<sup>13</sup> As for the bronze pillars that were in the house of Yahweh, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of Yahweh, the Chaldeans broke them into pieces and carried the bronze back to Babylon. <sup>14</sup> The pots, shovels, lamp trimmers, spoons, and all the utensils of bronze with which the priests had served in the temple—the Chaldeans took them all away. <sup>15</sup> The pots for removing ashes and the bowls that were made of gold, and those made of silver—the captain of the king's guard took them away as well. <sup>16</sup> The two pillars, the sea, and the stands that Solomon had made for the house of Yahweh contained more bronze than could be weighed. <sup>17</sup> The height of the first pillar was eighteen cubits, and a capital of bronze was on top of it. The capital was three cubits high, with

latticework and pomegranates all around on the capital, all made of bronze. The other pillar and its latticework were the same as the first.

<sup>18</sup> The commander of the bodyguard took Seraiah the chief priest, together with Zephaniah, the second priest, and the three gatekeepers.

<sup>19</sup> From the city he took prisoner an officer who was in charge of soldiers, and five men of those who advised the king, who were still in the city. He also took prisoner the king's army officer responsible for drafting men into the army, along with sixty important men from the land who were in the city. <sup>20</sup> Then Nebuzaradan,

the commander of the bodyguard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

<sup>21</sup> The king of Babylon put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. In this way, Judah went out of its land into exile.

<sup>22</sup> As for the people who remained in the land of Judah, those whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, he put Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, in charge of them. <sup>23</sup> Now when

all the commanders of the soldiers, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they went to Gedaliah at Mizpah. These men were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maakathite—they and their men.

<sup>24</sup> Gedaliah made an oath to them and to their men, and said to them, "Do not be afraid of the Chaldean officials. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you."

<sup>25</sup> But it happened that in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, from the royal family, came with ten men and attacked Gedaliah. Gedaliah died, along with the men of Judah and the Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah. <sup>26</sup> Then all the people, from the least to the greatest, and the commanders of the soldiers, arose and went to Egypt, because they were afraid of the Babylonians.

<sup>27</sup> It happened later in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Awel-Marduk king of Babylon released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. This happened in the year that Awel-Marduk began to reign. <sup>28</sup> He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat more honorable than that of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. <sup>29</sup> Awel-Marduk removed Jehoiachin's prison clothes, and Jehoiachin ate regularly at the king's table for the rest of his life. <sup>30</sup> A regular food allowance was given to him every day for the rest of his life.

## **Unlocked Literal Bible**

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Contributor: 'Alrick G. Headley, M.Div., Th.M.', 'Adam W. Nagelvoort, M.Div. Academic Ministries, Columbia International University', 'Dave Statezni, BA Orig langs., M.Div. Fuller Theological Seminary', 'Bram van den Heuvel, M.A.', 'C. Harry Harriss, M.Div.', 'David Trombold, M. Div.', 'Elizabeth Oakes, BA in Religious Studies, Linguistics', 'George "Drew" Curley, M.Div., PhD, Professor of Biblical Languages', 'Hendrik "Henry" de Vries, 'Henry Whitney, BA Linguistics', 'Jesse Griffin, BA Biblical Studies, MA Biblical Languages', 'James N. Pohlig, M.Div., MA in Linguistics, D. Litt. in Biblical Languages', 'Larry T Brooks, M.Div., Assemblies of God Theological Seminary', 'Larry Sallee, D.Min.', 'Paul M Fahnestock, M.Div. Reformed Theological Seminary, D. Min. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary', 'Perry Oakes, PhD in Old Testament, MA in Linguistics', 'Peter Smircich, BA Philosophy', 'Susan Quigley, MA in Linguistics', 'Thomas Warren, M.Div., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, D.Min, Reformed Theological Seminary', 'Timothy Neu, Ph.D. Biblical Studies', 'Ward Pyles, M.Div., Western Baptist Theological Seminary', David Trombold, Dean Ropp, Gene Mullen, James Vigen, Leonard Smith, Nicholas Alsop, Michael Francis

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