

Ezekiel

¹ On the fifth day of the fourth month of the thirtieth year,* I was with the other exiles by the River Kebar. The heavens opened and I saw visions of God. ² (On the fifth day of the month of the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile, ³ a message from Lord was given to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of Babylonia† by the River Kebar. There Lord's power came over him.) ⁴ I looked up and saw a windstorm racing in from the north, a tremendous cloud with fire flashing like lightning and surrounded by brilliant light. The middle of the fire looked like glowing metal ⁵ and within it was the shape of four beings.‡

This was what they looked like: They had a human shape, ⁶ but they each had four faces and four wings. ⁷ They had straight legs, and the soles of their feet looked like the hooves of calves, and shone like polished bronze.

⁸ They had human hands under their wings on each of their four sides. The four of them all had faces and wings, ⁹ and each of their wings touched the wings of the one next to it. As they moved they didn't turn—they all moved straight in one direction.

* **1:1** Ezekiel is not specific regarding what the “thirtieth year” applies to. Some have considered that it refers to his age. † **1:3** “Babylonia”: literally, “land of the Chaldeans.” ‡ **1:5** They are identified as “cherubim” in 10:2.

¹⁰ This what their faces looked like. They had a human face to the front, a lion's face to the right, a bull's face to the left, and lastly an eagle's face. ¹¹ These were their faces.

Their wings were spread out above them. They all had two wings that touched the wings of the one beside it, as well as two wings that covered its body. ¹² Each of them went together in whatever direction the Spirit[§] wished them to go, moving without turning. ¹³ These beings looked like bright burning coals or torches. Blazing fire moved to and fro between the beings, and lightning flashed out from the fire. ¹⁴ The beings raced to and fro as fast as the lightning flashes.

¹⁵ As I was watching these beings, I noticed a wheel on the ground next to each of the beings with their four faces. ¹⁶ The wheels looked like they were made of topaz,* and all four wheels were the same. In the middle of each wheel was what looked like another wheel set crossways. ¹⁷ They could move in any direction without turning as they did so. ¹⁸ The wheel rims were impressively high, and all of the four rims were covered in eyes. ¹⁹ As the beings moved so did the wheels next to them, and when the beings flew up, the wheels did too.

§ 1:12 "Spirit": while the word used here can also mean breath or wind, the fact that this is the agent directing these beings indicates that it is divine.

*** 1:16** "Topaz": a semi-precious stone. The identification of gems in the Bible is uncertain. Other possibilities include beryl, jasper, and chrysolite. (The Septuagint has chrysolite, indicating that the stone was golden-yellow in color.)

²⁰ They would go wherever the Spirit went. The wheels would lift up beside them, because the Spirit of the beings was in the wheels to direct them. ²¹ When the beings moved, the wheels moved; when they stopped, the wheels stopped; and when they flew up from the ground, the wheels flew up beside them, because the Spirit of the beings was in the wheels to direct them.

²² Extending above the heads of the being was something that looked like an amazing expanse[†] that glittered like ice crystal. ²³ Under this expanse the wings of the beings spread out toward one another. Each of them also had two wings that covered its body.

²⁴ When the beings moved, I heard the sound their wings made. It was like the roar of a thundering waterfall, like the voice of the Almighty, like the noise of an army on the march.

Whenever they stopped, they folded their wings. ²⁵ A voice spoke from beyond the expanse over their heads while they were standing still with their wings folded.

²⁶ Above the expanse over their heads I saw what looked like a throne made of lapis lazuli.[‡] Sitting on the throne high above was a being who looked like a man. ²⁷ From what seemed to be his waist upwards, he looked like glowing metal with fire inside and everywhere around. From what seemed to be his waist downwards,

[†] **1:22** "Expanse": The same word is used in Genesis 1:6 to describe the expanse later called the sky. [‡] **1:26** "Lapis lazuli": a semi-precious stone, bright blue in color

I saw what looked like fire. He was surrounded by very bright light.

²⁸ The bright light surrounding him was like a rainbow shining through the clouds on a rainy day. This was what the glory of the Lord looked like. When I saw it, I fell facedown on the ground, and then I heard someone speaking to me.

2

¹ “Stand up, son of man,* because I want to talk to you,” he said to me. ² As he spoke to me, the Spirit entered me and had me stand up. I listened to him speaking to me.

³ “Son of man,” he told me, “I’m sending you to the people of Israel, a disobedient nation† that has rebelled against me. They and their forefathers have continued to rebel against me, even up to today. ⁴ They are pig-headed; they are hard-hearted children. I am sending you to tell them that this is what the Lord God says.

⁵ Whether they listen or not—for they are a rebellious people—they will realize that a prophet has come to them.

⁶ Son of man, don't be afraid of them or what they say. You don't need to be afraid even though you're surrounded by brambles and thorns, even

* **2:1** “Son of man”: this is the way that Ezekiel is usually addressed. In Daniel the term has a meaning relating to the end time, but here it simply refers to Ezekiel's humanity and could also be translated “son of Adam,” since “Adam” means “man.”

† **2:3** The word is used in the plural so could additionally refer to other nations. However, in the context the message applies primarily to the Israelites.

though you live among scorpions. Don't be afraid of what they say or be discouraged by the way they look at you, even though they are a rebellious family. ⁷ Just tell them what I say, whether they listen or not, because they're rebels.

⁸ As for you, son of man, pay attention to what I tell you. Don't be rebellious like those rebellious people. Open your mouth and eat what I'm about to give you."

⁹ I looked up and saw a hand stretched out to me holding a scroll. ¹⁰ He spread it out in front of me, and there written on both the front and back were words of grief, mourning, and tragedy.

3

¹ "Son of man," he told me, "eat what you find placed before you. Eat this scroll, then go and speak to the people of Israel."

² I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat.

³ "Son of man," he said to me, "eat and fill yourself up with this scroll I'm giving you."

So I ate the scroll, and it tasted as sweet as honey.

⁴ Then he told me, "Son of man, now you are to go to the people of Israel and give my message to them. ⁵ I'm not sending you to those whose language is foreign to you, to people that you don't know—but to the people of Israel. ⁶ As I say, I'm not sending you to those whose language is foreign to you, to people that you don't know, whose words you don't understand. On the other

hand, if I had sent you to foreigners, they would have listened to you.

⁷ But the people of Israel won't want to listen to you, because they don't want to listen to me. All the Israelites are strong-minded* and hard-hearted.

⁸ Look! I'm going to make you as tough as them, and as strong-minded as them.† ⁹ I will make your mind like adamant,‡ harder than flint. Don't be afraid of what they say or discouraged by the way they look at you, even though they are a rebellious people.”

¹⁰ “Son of man,” he added, “pay close attention to everything I tell you, and think deeply about it yourself. ¹¹ Go to your people who are in exile. Tell them this is what the Lord God says, whether they listen or not.”

¹² The Spirit lifted me up, and I heard a really loud noise behind me that sounded like an earthquake. (Praise to the Lord's glory where he lives!) ¹³ It was the sound made by the wings of the beings as they brushed against each other and the noise made by the wheels next to them, a really loud noise that sounded like an earthquake.

¹⁴ As I said, the Spirit lifted me up and carried me away. As I went I was feeling upset and angry; however the Lord's power had taken full

* **3:7** “Strong-minded”: literally, “have hard foreheads.” † **3:8** Ezekiel's name means “God strengthens.” ‡ **3:9** “Adamant”: the word used here is often translated “diamond,” but it is not thought that diamonds were known at this time.

control of me. ¹⁵ I arrived at the place where the exiles lived, Tel-abib by the River Kebar. I just sat with them, staying with them there for seven days. I was completely overcome with emotion. ¹⁶ After the seven days had passed, a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁷ “Son of man, I have chosen you as a watchman for the people of Israel. Whenever I give you a message, then you must warn them for me.

¹⁸ For example, if I give a warning to someone who's wicked, saying, ‘You are going to die for sure,’ but you don't warn them, if you don't speak out to warn them to stop their wicked ways so they can go on living, then that wicked person will die in their sins, and I will hold you responsible for their death. ¹⁹ But if you warn them, and they don't stop their wicked ways, they will die in their sins, but you will have saved yourself—you won't die.

²⁰ Again, if someone who lives right stops doing so and sins and disregards my attempts to correct them,[§] then they will die. If you didn't warn them, they will die in their sins, and the good things they did won't be remembered. In addition, I will hold you responsible for their death. ²¹ However, if you warn those who are living right not to sin, and they don't sin, they will live for sure, because they paid attention to your warning, and you will have saved yourself—you won't die.”

§ 3:20 “My attempts to correct them”: literally, “I place stumbling blocks before him.”

²² The Lord's power took control of me there, and he told me, "Get up! Go to the valley, and I will talk to you there."

²³ So I got up and went to the valley, and there I saw the Lord's glory. It was like the glory I had seen by the River Kebar. I fell facedown on the ground.

²⁴ Then the Spirit came into me and made me stand upright. He told me, "Go into your house and shut the door. ²⁵ You will be tied up with ropes, son of man. You will be bound so that won't be able to go out among the people. ²⁶ I'll make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth. You won't be able to speak and complain to them, even though they are a rebellious people.

²⁷ However, when I talk with you, I will open your mouth so you can tell them that this is what the Lord God says. Those who want to listen will listen, and those who want to refuse will refuse, for they are a rebellious people."

4

¹ "Son of man, you are to take a brick, put in front of you, and draw a picture of the city of Jerusalem on it. ² Show that it's under siege: establish a siege perimeter all around it,* build a siege ramp against it, set up the enemy camps beside it, and put battering rams on all sides around it. ³ Put an iron plate between yourself and the city so it's like an iron wall. Face the city

* **4:2** This was to prevent the inhabitants escaping.

and demonstrate that it's under siege, and that you are the one attacking it. This is a symbolic warning to the people of Israel.

⁴ Then lie on your left side and take the Israelites' sins on yourself. You will carry their sins for the number of days you lie on your side. ⁵ I will make you stay there for 390 days, representing the number of years of their sins. You will bear the sins of the Israelites.

⁶ Once you have finished doing this for these days, then you are to lie down again, but this time on your right side, and carry the sins of the people of Judah. I will make you stay there for 40 days, one day for every year. ⁷ Keep your face towards the siege of Jerusalem with your arm bared, and prophesy against it.

⁸ Be ready, because now I'm going to tie you up with ropes so you can't move from side to side until the days of your siege are over.

⁹ Get some wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt, and mix them together in a storage jar. Use them to make bread for yourself. This is what you are to eat for the 390 days that you lie on your side. ¹⁰ You are allowed to eat twenty shekels weight[†] of food each day, and you are to eat it at regular times.

¹¹ Measure out a sixth of a hin[‡] of water to drink, and you are to drink it at regular times.

¹² You are to eat the bread as you would a barley

[†] **4:10** "Twenty shekels weight": around eight ounces, a very small ration to symbolize the lack of food during the siege,

[‡] **4:11** "Sixth of a hin": around a pint and a half.

loaf. You are to bake it over a fire burning dried human excrement as everyone watches.”

¹³ Then the Lord said, “This is the way the Israelites will eat their unclean bread among the nations where I’ll exile them.”

¹⁴ “Please no, Lord God!” I answered. “I have never made myself unclean. I haven’t eaten anything found dead or killed by wild animals from the time I was young until now. I’ve never put unclean meat in my mouth.”

¹⁵ “All right,” he said. “I’ll let you use cow manure instead of human excrement. You can bake your bread over a fire using that.”

¹⁶ Then he went on, “Son of man, watch! I am going to put a stop to Jerusalem’s food supply. Worried sick, they will eat bread rationed by weight. Despairing at what’s happening, they will drink water measured in small amounts.

¹⁷ Running out of food and water, they will be horrified as they look at one another wasting away because of their sins.”

5

¹ “Son of man, go and shave your head and your beard using a sharp sword like a barber’s razor. Then divide up the hair using a set of scales. ² Once the days of the siege have finished, burn up one third of the hair inside the city;* slash at another third with a sword around the city; and scatter another third in the wind. I will let loose a sword behind them to chase them.

* **5:2** Referring to the pictorial representation of Jerusalem that Ezekiel had drawn on the brick.

³ Take just a few hairs and tuck them into the hem of your clothes. ⁴ Take some of these and toss them into the fire to burn them. A fire will spread from there to burn everyone in Israel.

⁵ This is what the Lord God says: This represents Jerusalem. I placed her right in the middle of the nations, surrounded by other countries. ⁶ But she rebelled against my rules, acting more wickedly than the nations, and she defied my regulations more than the countries surrounding her. Her people rejected my rules and refused to follow my regulations.

⁷ Consequently this is what the Lord God says: You have caused more trouble[†] than the nations around you. You refused to follow my rules and keep my regulations. In fact you didn't even live up to the standards of the nations surrounding you.

⁸ So this is what the Lord God says: Watch out, because it's me who is condemning you, Jerusalem! I'm going to carry out my sentence against you while the other nations watch. ⁹ Because of all the disgusting things you've done, I'm going to do to you what I've never done before—and I won't ever do again. ¹⁰ In your city parents will eat their own children, and children will eat their parents. I'm going to punish you and scatter in every directions those who are left.

¹¹ As I live, declares the Lord God, because you have made my sanctuary unclean with all your offensive idols and disgusting practices, I

[†] 5:7 “Caused more trouble”: the word used here means “turbulent.”

will stop treating you well. I won't be kind to you—I won't show you any pity.

¹² A third of your people will die from disease or starvation inside the city; a third will be killed by the sword outside the city walls; and a third I will scatter in the wind in all directions, and let loose a sword behind them to chase them.

¹³ Once my anger is over and I've finished punishing them, then I'll be satisfied. When I've finished punishing them, then they'll know that I, the Lord, meant what I said when I spoke so strongly.

¹⁴ I'm going to ruin you and humiliate you in front of the nations surrounding you, in the sight of every passer-by. ¹⁵ You will be criticized and mocked, you'll be a warning and something horrifying to the surrounding nations when I carry out my sentence against you in my rage and furious anger. I the Lord have spoken.

¹⁶ When I pour down on you deadly arrows of famine and destruction they're intended to kill you. I will make your famine worse by stopping your food supply. ¹⁷ I will send famine and wild animals to attack you. You'll have no children left. Disease and killing will sweep over you, and I will bring armies to attack you. I the Lord have spoken.”

6

¹ A message from the Lord came to me that said, ² “Son of man, face towards of Israel's mountains and prophesy against them.

³ Tell them: Mountains of Israel, listen to the message from the Lord God! This is what the Lord God says to the mountains and the hills, to the gorges and the valleys: I'm going to attack you and destroy your high places. ⁴ Your pagan altars will be torn down, and your incense altars will be smashed to pieces. I will kill your idol worshipers right in front of their idols. ⁵ I will put the dead bodies of you Israelites in front of your idols and scatter your bones around your altars.

⁶ Everywhere you live, the towns will be turned into rubble and the high places torn down. Your altars will be demolished and defiled. Your idols will be smashed and completely destroyed. Your incense altars will be knocked down, and all that you made will be ruined. ⁷ People will be killed all throughout your country. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁸ However, I will let some of you survive and scatter you among the different nations and countries.

⁹ Once they are there as prisoners in the nations, then the survivors will remember me. They will realize how sad they made me by their spiritual adultery as they deserted me with their eyes full of lust as they worshiped idols. They will hate themselves for the evil things they did, for all their disgusting sins. ¹⁰ Then they will know that I am the Lord, and that I was not pretending when I warned them about bringing this disaster upon them.

¹¹ This is what the Lord God says: Hit yourself with your hands, stomp your feet, and shout out ‘Oh no!’ Do this because of all the terrible wickedness of the people of Israel. They are going to die by the sword and famine and disease. ¹² Those living far away will die from of disease, those who are close by will be killed by the sword, and those who are left will die of starvation. This is how I will express my anger towards them.

¹³ Then you will know that I am the Lord—when the idol worshipers lie dead among their idols and altars on the top of every hill and mountain, and under every green tree and large oak. These were the pagan shrines where they offered sweet-smelling incense to all their idols. ¹⁴ I’m going to lift up my hand to punish them. In every place they live I will make their country a wasteland, all the way from the desert in the south to Diblah in the north.* Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

7

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, this is what the Lord God says to the people living in Israel:

The end is here! The end has arrived throughout the country. ³ Now is the end for you! I’m going to direct my anger against you. I’m judging you for your actions and will pay you back for the offensive things you’ve done. ⁴ I won’t have

* **6:14** “In the south... in the north”: supplied for clarity.

any pity for you, or show you any mercy. I'm going to punish you for what you've done, for your disgusting sins. Then you'll know that I am the Lord.

⁵ This is what the Lord God says: Watch out! Disaster after disaster is coming! ⁶ The end is here! The end has come, and it's coming for you! Watch out! This is the end! ⁷ You people living in the land, the consequences of your actions have come full circle.* The time has come, the day is near—shouts of panic on the mountains and not shouts of joy. ⁸ Very shortly I'm going to show you how angry I am with you. I will judge you by what you have done, and punish you for all your disgusting sins. ⁹ I won't have any pity for you or show you any mercy. I'm going to punish you for what you've done, for your disgusting sins. Then you will know that it is I, the Lord, who is attacking you.

¹⁰ Can't you see? The day is here! It has arrived! The consequences of your actions have come full circle—the walking stick has blossomed, pride has come into full bloom. ¹¹ Their way of violence has turned into a rod to punish them for their wickedness. None of them will survive—none of that whole crowd, and none of their wealth or honor.

¹² The time has come; the day is here! Buyers, don't celebrate thinking you'll get a good deal;

* **7:7** "Full circle": the meaning of the word used here is uncertain. It seems to have the root meaning of "twist." It is sometimes translated as "doom," but this is conjecture based on context. Also found in verse 10.

sellers, don't cry thinking you're going to make a loss—because punishment is coming to everyone. ¹³ Sellers won't ever get back the purchase price while they're still alive. I'm not going to change the plan I have revealed that applies to everyone. People who go on sinning won't survive. ¹⁴ Even though the trumpet call to arms has sounded, even though all the preparations have been made, no one is ready to fight, because I am angry with everyone.

¹⁵ Outside the city are armed attacks; inside are disease and starvation. Those in the countryside will be killed by the sword, and those in the city will be destroyed by starvation and disease. ¹⁶ Those who do survive will escape and go to live in the mountains. They will sigh like the doves of the valley, each person thinking about their own sins. ¹⁷ Every hand will go limp, and every knee will go weak. ¹⁸ They will put on clothes made of sackcloth, and they will be totally terrified. They will all be ashamed and shave their heads in mourning. ¹⁹ They will throw away their silver in the streets and treat their gold as if it's something unclean. Their silver and gold won't be able to save them when the day of the Lord's anger comes. Their money won't satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs. In fact this was the problem that caused their sin in the first place. ²⁰ They were so proud of their beautiful jewelry that they used it to make their disgusting images

and decorate their offensive idols.†

So I'm going to turn these idols into unclean things for them. ²¹ I'm going to hand these things over as plunder to foreigners and as loot to the wicked people of the earth, who will make them unclean. ²² I will look away as they make my precious place unclean. Men of violence will enter and make it unclean.‡ ²³ Get the chains ready,§ because the country is full of blood being spilled by violent crimes, and the city itself is full of violence. ²⁴ So I'm going to bring the most evil of all the nations to take over their houses. I will put an end to the pride of the powerful, and their holy places will be made unclean.

²⁵ Absolutely terrified, the people will look for peace, but won't find it. ²⁶ Disaster after disaster will come down on them, and rumor after rumor. They will ask for a vision from a prophet, but there won't be any, and there won't be any instructions from the priests or advice from the elders either. ²⁷ The king will mourn, the prince will be devastated, and no one in the country will know what to do. I will do to them as they have done to others; I will judge them as they have judged others. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

8

¹ On the fifth day of the sixth month of the sixth

† **7:20** It may be that the people took the valuable objects and jewels from the Lord's Temple to decorate their pagan shrines.

‡ **7:22** This applies to the Temple, and on a wider scale, to the whole country. § **7:23** Chains to bind the people as prisoners.

year, I was sitting in my house with the elders of Judah and the power of the Lord God came over me there.

² I looked around and saw a being that looked like a man.* From what seemed to be his waist downwards, he looked like fire. From what seemed to his waist upwards, he looked like brightly glowing metal. ³ He reached out what seemed to be a hand and picked me up by my hair. The Spirit took me up into the sky, and in the vision God was giving me he carried me to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the north gate of the Temple's inner courtyard, where the offensive idol that made God angry had been placed.

⁴ I saw the glory of the God of Israel there, just like I had in the vision I'd seen in the valley.

⁵ "Son of man," he told me, "now look to the north."

So I looked to the north, and in the entrance to the north of the Altar Gate I saw this idol that angered God.

⁶ "Son of man," he said to me, "can you see what they are doing? Look at the disgusting sins the people of Israel are committing that are driving me far away from my sanctuary? But you're going to see even more disgusting sins than these!"

⁷ He took me to the entrance to the Temple courtyard. As I looked around, I saw a hole in the wall.

* **8:2** "Man": Septuagint reading. Hebrew "fire."

8 “Son of man,” he told me, “pull the wall apart.”

So I pulled the wall apart and found a doorway.

9 He told me, “Go through the wall and see the evil and disgusting things they are doing in here.”

10 So I went through the wall and saw carved images covering the walls, representing all kinds of reptiles and disgusting animals, as well as all the idols worshiped by the people of Israel.

11 Seventy elders of the house of Israel were standing in front of them, including Jaazaniah son of Shaphan. They all were holding censers, producing a sweet-smelling cloud of incense that rose above them.†

12 “Son of man,” he said to me, “can you see what the elders of the people of Israel are doing here in the dark, with each one worshiping in the shrine room of his own idol? This is what they're saying: ‘The Lord can't see what we're doing; besides the Lord has abandoned our country!’ ”

13 The Lord went on to tell me, “You're going to see them doing even more disgusting things than these!”

14 Then he took me to the north entrance of the Lord's Temple. I saw women sitting there, weeping for the god Tammuz.

15 “Son of man,” he said to me, “have you seen this? But you're going to see even more disgusting things than these!”

† **8:11** This indicates that they all were officiating as priests of these pagan gods.

16 He took me to the inner courtyard of the Lord's Temple and right there at the entrance to the Temple, between the porch and the altar, were around twenty-five men. They had their backs to the Temple, and were facing towards the east. They were bowing in worship of the sun rising in the east.

17 "Son of man," he said to me, "have you seen this? The people of Judah aren't content just to do these disgusting things. They also commit violent crimes across the country and keep on making me angry. Look at how they're deliberately insulting me!‡ 18 As a result I will respond in anger. I won't treat them kindly; I won't be merciful to them. Even though they shout loudly for my help, I won't listen to them."

9

1 Then I heard him shout out with a loud voice, "Start the attack, you who are in charge of punishing Jerusalem! Pick up your weapons!"

2 I watched as six men approached from the upper gate that faces north. All of them were carrying battle axes.* There was another man with them. He was dressed in linen and had a scribe's writing kit at his side. They entered and stood next to the bronze altar.

3 The glory of the God of Israel rose from its usual place on the cherubim and went over to the Temple entrance. The Lord called out to the man dressed in linen with the writing kit,

‡ 8:17 Literally, "they put the branch to their nose." * 9:2 "Battle axes": literally, "weapons of shattering."

⁴ “Go through the whole the city of Jerusalem and place a mark on the foreheads of those who sighing and mourning at all the disgusting sins that are done there.”

⁵ Then I heard him tell the others, “Follow him all through the city and start killing people. Don't be kind or merciful to anyone! ⁶ Kill the old men, the young men and girls, the women and children, but do not go anywhere near those who have the mark. Start at my sanctuary.”

So they started by killing the elders who were in front of the Temple.

⁷ Then he told them, “Make the Temple unclean and fill the courtyards with dead bodies. Go ahead and do it!”

So they went and started killing all through the city.

⁸ While they were busy killing people, I was left by myself. I fell facedown to the ground and cried out, “Lord God, when you pour out your anger on Jerusalem, are you going to destroy everyone who's left in Israel?”

⁹ “The sins of the people of Israel and Judah are really terrible,” he replied. “The whole country is full of murderers, and those living in the city are criminals. They're saying, ‘The Lord has given up on our country. He can't see what we're doing.’ ¹⁰ But I certainly won't be kind to them or have mercy on them. I will make sure they suffer the consequences of what they've done.”

¹¹ Then the man in linen with the writing kit returned and reported, “I've done what you told me to do.”

10

¹ I looked up and saw what looked like a throne made of lapis lazuli beyond the expanse, way above the heads of the cherubim.* ² Speaking from there the Lord told the man in linen, “Go in between the wheels underneath the cherubim. Collect as many burning coals as you can. Carry them from among the cherubim and scatter them all over the city.” I watched as he went in.

³ The cherubim were standing on the south side of the Temple when the man went in. A cloud filled the inner court. ⁴ Then the Lord's glory rose up from above the cherubim and moved to the entrance of the Temple. The cloud filled the Temple, and the brightness of the Lord's glory filled the courtyard. ⁵ The noise made by the cherubim's wings could even be heard in the outer courtyard, and sounded like the voice of God Almighty.

⁶ When the Lord ordered the man in linen, “Go and get some fire from in between the wheels, from among the cherubim,” the man went in and stood beside one of the wheels. ⁷ Then one of the cherubim reached out and took some of the fire among them. He handed it to the man in linen, who took it and left. ⁸ (All the cherubim had what looked like human hands under their wings.)

⁹ I saw four wheels next to the cherubim, one wheel beside each cherub. The wheels shone like topaz. ¹⁰ All four wheels looked the same, and had a wheel within a wheel, set crossways. ¹¹ The

* **10:1** See 1:26.

cherubim could go in any direction they faced, moving without turning.

¹² The whole of their bodies, including their backs, hands, and wings, were covered in eyes, as were all four wheels. ¹³ I heard the wheels being referred to as “the chariot wheels.”[†]

¹⁴ Each of them had four faces: the first face was a cherub's face, the second a man's face, the third a lion's face, and the fourth an eagle's face.

¹⁵ Then the cherubim rose up in the air. They were the beings I'd seen beside the River Kebar. ¹⁶ When the cherubim moved, the wheels moved alongside them. Even when they opened their wings to take off, the wheels stayed beside them. ¹⁷ When the cherubim stopped, the wheels stopped too. When they took off, the wheels did too, because the spirit of the living creatures was in them.

¹⁸ Then the glory of the Lord left the entrance to the Temple and stopped above the cherubim.

¹⁹ As I watched, the cherubim lifted their wings and took off, with the wheels alongside them. They stopped at the entrance of the east gate of the Lord's Temple, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

²⁰ These were the beings I had seen beneath the God of Israel by the River Kebar. I knew that they were cherubim. ²¹ Each had four faces and four wings and had what looked like human hands under their wings. ²² Their faces looked like the

[†] **10:13** This second reference to a wheel is normally used to refer to a chariot wheel. In this sense it is applicable, for the structure referred to is essentially the Lord's “chariot.”

faces I had seen by the River Kebar. Each of them moved directly ahead.

11

¹ Then the Spirit picked me up and took me to the eastern entrance of the Lord's Temple. Twenty-five men were gathered there at the entrance. I recognized among them Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people. ² The Lord told me, "Son of man, it's these men who are making evil plans and giving bad advice to the people in this city. ³ They're saying, 'Is this the time for us to be building houses? The city is the cooking pot, and we are the meat inside it.'* ⁴ So prophesy against them. Prophesy, son of man!"

⁵ The Spirit of the Lord came upon me and told me to say: This is what the Lord says: "People of Israel, that's what you're saying! I know what you're thinking inside! ⁶ You murder more and more people in this city. You've filled its streets with the dead!

* **11:3** The meaning of this verse is unclear. Literally it is, "not near to build houses. It (the city) the cooking pot, we the meat." It may be that the first part is a negative reaction to Jeremiah's advice to build houses for an extended exile in Babylon (Jeremiah 29:5). Alternatively, some interpret the phrase to mean that soon it will be time to build houses in Jerusalem again—in other words the crisis will pass. As for the cooking pot analogy, some believe it may suggest that the people (the "meat") are safe in Jerusalem (the "pot"). Others see this as an expression of fear, of becoming like meat being boiled in a pot.

⁷ So this is what the Lord God says: Those you've killed in this city are the meat, and the city is the pot; but I'm going to take you out of it. ⁸ You're afraid of being killed by the sword, so I will bring invaders with swords to attack you, declares the Lord God. ⁹ I'm going to take you out of the city and hand you over to foreigners, and I'm going to carry out my sentence against you. ¹⁰ You will be killed by the sword, and I will punish you right up to the borders of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

¹¹ The city won't be like a pot for you, and you won't be the meat inside it either. I will punish you right up to the borders of Israel. ¹² Then you will know that I am the Lord. For you didn't follow my rules and you didn't keep my laws. Instead you kept the laws of the nations around you."

¹³ While I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. I fell facedown on the ground and shouted loudly, "Lord God, are you going to completely destroy what's left of the people of Israel?"

¹⁴ A message from Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁵ "Son of man, your brothers, including your relatives, your fellow exiles, and all the other Israelites, are those the people of Jerusalem were referring to when they said, 'They are far away from the Lord. This country was given to us and

we are to own it.’[†]

¹⁶ So tell them that this is what the Lord God says: Even though I sent them far away to live among the foreign nations, scattering them among the different countries, I have been taking care of them for a while in the countries where they went.

¹⁷ Tell them that this is what the Lord God says: I'm going to gather you from the other nations and bring you back from the countries where you've been scattered, and I will return the country of Israel to you.

¹⁸ When they come back, they are going to get rid of all its offensive idols and disgusting practices from the country. ¹⁹ I will give them single-minded commitment and a whole new spirit. I will take away their hard-hearted attitude and replace it with one that is loving. ²⁰ This way they can follow my rules, keep my regulations, and do what I say. They will be my people, and I will be their God.

²¹ But for those who still choose to worship offensive idols and engage in disgusting practices, I will let them experience the consequences of their own actions, declares the Lord God.”

²² Then the cherubim opened their wings and took off, with the wheels alongside them, and

[†] **11:15** It seems that the people of Jerusalem were suggesting that not only were the exiles in Babylon far away from the Lord in terms of distance, but also in their relationship with him. They also seem to be suggesting that the exiles had broken their agreement with God because they were no longer permanently occupying and owning the country of Israel.

with the glory of the God of Israel above them.
²³ The glory of the Lord rose from inside the city and went over to the mountain to the east of the city.

²⁴ In the vision given to me by the Spirit of God, the Spirit picked me up and carried me back to Babylonia to where the exiles were. After the vision left me, ²⁵ I explained to the exiles everything the Lord had shown me.

12

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “Son of man, you are living among rebellious people. They have eyes to see but they don't see, and ears to hear but they don't hear, because they are rebellious people.

³ So, son of man, go and pack your bags as if you're going into exile. As people watch, get everything ready during the day so you can leave where you are and go somewhere else. Maybe they will realize what this means, even though they are rebellious people. ⁴ Take your bags out for traveling into exile during the day while they watch. But you yourself are to leave in the evening as they watch, just like someone going into exile.

⁵ While they go on watching, knock down part of the wall of your house and take your belongings out through the hole. ⁶ When it gets dark, as they continue to watch, put your bags on your shoulder and carry them as you leave. Cover your face so that you can't see the country

you're leaving behind, because I'm providing you as a sign to warn the people of Israel.”

⁷ So I did as I was told. I took my bags out to go into exile during the day, and in the evening I knocked down part of the wall of my house with my bare hands. I took my belongings out when it got dark, carrying them on my shoulder while they watched.

⁸ In the morning a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ⁹ “Son of man, haven't those rebellious Israelites asked you, ‘What are you doing?’ ¹⁰ Tell them that this is what the Lord God says: ‘This prophetic sign* concerns the prince who is ruling in Jerusalem and all the people of Israel who are living there.’

¹¹ You are to say to them, ‘I'm a sign to you.’ Just as it was demonstrated here, so it will happen to them—they will go into exile as prisoners. ¹² When it gets dark, their prince will also put his bags on his shoulder and leave. They will knock down the wall to take him away. He will cover his face so he can't see the country he's leaving behind. ¹³ But I will catch him in my net; I will trap him in my snare. I will take him to Babylon in the country of Babylonia. However, won't see it, and he'll die there.

¹⁴ I'm going to scatter all his attendants and all his troops in every direction, and I will chase after them with a drawn sword. ¹⁵ They will

* **12:10** “Prophetic sign”: literally, “burden,” a common way the people referred to a message from the Lord. See for example Jeremiah 23:33.

know that I am the Lord when I scatter them among the different nations and countries.

¹⁶ But I will let a few of them survive war, famine, and disease so that they can tell the nations where they're exiled about all their disgusting sins. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

¹⁷ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁸ "Son of man, tremble as you eat your bread; shake with worry as you drink your water. ¹⁹ Then explain to the people of this country that this is what the Lord God says to those living in Jerusalem and in the country of Israel: They will be worried as eat their bread and they will be in despair as they drink their water, for their land will be stripped bare because of the violent crimes committed by everyone who lives there. ²⁰ The towns will be destroyed, and the countryside turned into a wasteland. Then you will know that I am the Lord."

²¹ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ²² "Son of man, what's this proverb you people have in the land of Israel: 'Time goes by, and no vision comes true'? ²³ So tell them that this is what the Lord God says: 'I will put a stop to this proverb. No one in Israel will quote it anymore.'

Instead tell them: The time is soon coming when every vision will come true. ²⁴ There won't be any more false visions or fake prophecies among the Israelites, ²⁵ because I, the Lord, will say whatever I choose to say, and it will happen immediately. Right now, you rebellious people,

I will say something and make sure it happens, declares the Lord God.”

²⁶ An additional message from the Lord came to me, saying, ²⁷ “Son of man, notice what the people of Israel are saying, ‘The vision that he's describing won't happen for a long time. He's prophesying about a time in the distant future.’

²⁸ So tell them that this is what the Lord God says: Everything I've said is about to happen. There won't be any more delay, declares the Lord God.”

13

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, you are to prophesy against the prophets of Israel who right now are busy prophesying. Tell those who make up their own prophecies: Listen to the word of the Lord! ³ This is what the Lord God says: Disaster is coming to these foolish prophets who follow their own ideas. They haven't seen anything. ⁴ Israel, your prophets are like foxes that live in the ruins. ⁵ They didn't go and help repair the gaps in the wall that defends the people of Israel so that it would stand secure during the battle on the Day of the Lord.

⁶ The visions they see are false, and the prophecies they give are lies. They claim, ‘This is what the Lord says,’ when the Lord didn't send them. Even so they still expect their message to be fulfilled! ⁷ Isn't it a false vision that you people saw? Isn't it a prophecy of lies when

you announce, 'This is what the Lord says,' even though I haven't said anything?

⁸ So this is what the Lord God says: Since you've spoken lies and claimed to see false visions, then watch out, because I'm against you, declares the Lord God. ⁹ I will punish the prophets who see false visions and give prophecies that are lies. They will not belong to the assembly of my people or be listed in the register of Israelites, and they won't be allowed to enter the country of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord God.

¹⁰ They have deceived my people by saying, 'We shall have peace,' when there won't be any peace. It's like they're putting a coat of whitewash on an unstable wall of loose stones that the people have built. ¹¹ So tell those people whitewashing the wall that it's going to collapse. Rain will come pouring down. I will send hailstones crashing down on it. A windstorm will blow hard against it. ¹² Don't you think that when the wall collapses people are going to ask you, 'What happened to the whitewash you painted it with?'

¹³ So this is what the Lord God says: In my furious anger I'm going to send a windstorm, pouring rain, and hailstones to destroy the wall. ¹⁴ I will demolish the wall you whitewashed, knocking it to the ground to reveal its foundations. The city is going to fall, and you're going to be destroyed with it. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

¹⁵ Once the wall and those who whitewashed it have experienced my anger, I will tell you: The wall is no more, and those who whitewashed it are no more, ¹⁶ those 'prophets' of Israel who prophesied to Jerusalem and claimed to have seen a vision of peace for her when there wasn't going to be any peace, declares the Lord God.

¹⁷ Now, son of man, you are to oppose those Israelite women who make up prophecies in their own minds. Prophecy against them ¹⁸ and tell them that this is what the Lord God says: Disaster is coming to the women who sew bracelets of magic charms for their wrists and make veils for all kinds of people to wear as ways to trap and exploit them. Do you think you can trap the lives of my people yet still keep your own? ¹⁹ You have disgraced me among my people for a few handfuls of barley and scraps of bread. By lying to my people who believe in you, you have killed those who shouldn't have died and let others live who shouldn't.

²⁰ So this is what the Lord God says: Watch out! I condemn the magic charms you use to trap people like birds, and I will rip them off your arms. I will set free those you have trapped. ²¹ I will also rip off your veils and rescue my people from your power, so that they will no longer be your victims. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

²² Because you have discouraged good people with your lies, even though I didn't have anything against them, and because you have encouraged the wicked that they shouldn't give

up from their evil ways to save their lives, ²³ from now on you won't claim these false visions or practice magic. I will rescue my people from your power. Then you will know that I am the Lord."

14

¹ Some elders of Israel arrived and sat down with me. ² A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ³ "Son of man, these men are worshiping idols in their minds even though they know this will lead them to sin. Why should I respond to their requests?"

⁴ So tell them that this is what the Lord God says: When the people of Israel worship idols in their minds that will lead them to sin, and then come to consult the prophet, I the Lord will give them an answer appropriate to their many idols. ⁵ Like this I might have the people of Israel decide to recommit themselves to me. Right now, because of their idols, all of them treat me as their enemy.

⁶ So tell the people of Israel that this is what the Lord God says: Repent! Give up worshiping your idols. Stop all your disgusting practices. ⁷ When the people of Israel or foreigners living with them worship idols in their minds that will lead them to sin and then come to consult the prophet, I the Lord will answer them myself. ⁸ I will oppose anyone who does this and make any example of them that others will talk about. I will remove them from among my people. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁹ But if the prophet is deceived into giving a message, it was I the Lord who deceived him to do this. I will still reach out and destroy that prophet from my people Israel. ¹⁰ They will be responsible for the punishment they receive, as will those who believe in these prophets will receive the same punishment. ¹¹ This is so that the people of Israel won't abandon me anymore and won't make themselves unclean with all their sins. Then they will be my people and I will be their God, declares the Lord God."

¹² A message from the Lord came to me again, saying, ¹³ "Son of man, if a people in a country sin against me by being unfaithful to me, then I will act against them by cutting off their food supply, so they experience famine, with no food for people or animals. ¹⁴ Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job, these three men, were present their good lives would only save themselves, declares the Lord God.

¹⁵ I could send wild animals rampaging through the country, so they would leave it uninhabited and desolate, a place no one would travel through for fear of such animals. ¹⁶ As I live, declares the Lord God, even if these three men were present, they couldn't save their own sons or daughters. They would only save themselves, but the land would be left desolate.

¹⁷ I could bring war to that country and say, 'Have a sword cut through it,' so that I destroy both people and animals. ¹⁸ As I live, declares the Lord God, even if these three men were present,

they couldn't save their own sons or daughters. They would only save themselves.

¹⁹ I could send a disease on that country and because of my anger I would kill many, both people and animals. ²⁰ As I live, declares the Lord God, even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were present, they couldn't save their sons or daughters. Their good lives would only save themselves.

²¹ This is what the Lord God says: It will be so much worse when I send my four severe judgments against Jerusalem—war, famine, wild animals, and disease, so that both people and animals are killed!

²² Even so a few of them will survive, some sons and daughters who will be taken captive. They will be brought to you in Babylon,* and when you realize what they did and how they acted, you will understand why I had to bring such a disaster down on Jerusalem—everything I did to it. ²³ Realizing what they did and how they acted will help you to see that I had good reasons to do everything I did to Jerusalem, declares the Lord God.”

15

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “Son of man, is wood from a vine better than the wood from any other tree in the forest? ³ Can you make anything useful from vine wood? Can you use it to make even just a peg to hang up pots and pans?

* **14:22** “In Babylon”: supplied for clarity.

⁴ No, you just throw it on the fire to keep the fire burning. Even then the fire burns both ends, but only chars the middle part. Can you use it for anything? ⁵ Even before you burned it you couldn't make it into anything useful. It's even less useful once the fire has burned and charred it!

⁶ So this is what the Lord God says: In the same way that I have taken the wood of a vine from the forest and thrown it on the fire to be burned, so I'm going to throw away the people of Jerusalem. ⁷ I will turn against them. While they might have escaped this fire, another fire is going to burn them up. When I turn against them, then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁸ I'm going to turn the country into a wasteland, because they were unfaithful to me, declares the Lord God.”

16

¹ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, challenge Jerusalem over her disgusting practices. ³ Tell Jerusalem that this is what the Lord God says to her: You really are a Canaanite, both by your birth and parentage. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite. ⁴ On the day you were born your cord was not cut, and you weren't washed to clean you up, you weren't rubbed with salt, and you weren't wrapped in cloths. ⁵ No one looked on you with love to do anything like this for you; no one showed any kind of care for you. No,

you were thrown away in a field, abandoned and despised from the day you were born.

⁶ But I passed by and saw you kicking, covered in your own blood. As you were lying there in your blood I told you, 'I want you to live!' I said to you right there, 'I want you to live!' ⁷ I help you to grow like a plant in the field. You grew up into a beautiful young woman. Your breasts developed and your body hair grew, and you were completely naked.

⁸ When I passed by again, I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for lovemaking. So I spread my robe over you* and covered up your naked body. I committed myself to you and made a solemn agreement with you, and made you mine, declares the Lord God. ⁹ Then I washed you with water, cleaned off your blood, and anointed you with oil. ¹⁰ I put a beautifully embroidered dress on you and gave you fine leather sandals. I clothed you in fine linen and covered you with silk. ¹¹ I gave you jewelry—I put bracelets on your wrists and a necklace around your neck. ¹² I put a ring in your nose and earrings on your ears, and placed a beautiful crown on your head.

¹³ You wore gold and silver jewelry, and your clothes were made of the finest linen, expensive fabric, and embroidered cloth. You ate bread made with the best flour, and honey and olive oil. You grew even more beautiful and became a queen. ¹⁴ You were famous around the world

* **16:8** A symbolic declaration of an intent to marry.

because of your beauty, for I used my majestic power to make you so wonderful, declares the Lord God.

¹⁵ You were so proud of your beauty that you were unfaithful to me. You thought that because you were so famous you could prostitute yourself and sleep with anyone who passed by. They took your beautiful body for themselves. ¹⁶ You made yourself colorful pagan shrines out of the clothes I'd given you, and there you acted as a prostitute. Things like this have never happened before, and they should never happen in the future!

¹⁷ You also used the beautiful gold and silver jewelry I gave you to make male idols and you prostituted yourself with them. ¹⁸ You used your embroidered clothes to dress them, and you placed before them my olive oil and incense. ¹⁹ You presented the food I had given you as an offering for them to accept —bread made from the best flour, olive oil, and honey that I had provided for you to eat. That's exactly what you did, declares the Lord God.

²⁰ You sacrificed your sons and daughters—the children you had for me—offering them as food for idols to eat. Wasn't your prostitution evil enough? ²¹ You slaughtered my children, sacrificing them to idols.

²² While you were busy with all your disgusting practices and your prostitution, you forgot about the time when you were young, completely naked and lying there kicking in your own blood.

²³ Disaster is coming! Disaster is coming on you, declares the Lord God. As well as all the

other evil things you did, ²⁴ you built yourself a pagan shrine, a high place of idol worship[†] on every public square in the city. ²⁵ You made yourselves high places of idol worship at the top of every street; you degraded yourself, offering your beautiful body to anyone who passed by, opening your legs for them, becoming more and more promiscuous. ²⁶ You gave yourself as a prostitute to your Egyptian neighbors with their large sexual organs, making me angry as you became even more promiscuous.

²⁷ So I acted to reduce my blessings to you.‡ I let your enemies the Philistines do what they wanted to you. Even they were embarrassed at your immorality. ²⁸ Because you weren't satisfied you prostituted yourself with the Assyrians. But even then you weren't satisfied. ²⁹ So you took your promiscuous behavior to Babylonia, the country of merchants, but even then you weren't satisfied!

³⁰ You're really sick-minded to do all this, acting like a prostitute with no shame, declares the Lord God. ³¹ Actually you weren't even a normal prostitute when you built yourselves pagan shrines at the top of every street and high places of idol worship on every public square—because you refused to be paid for your services!

[†] **16:24** “High place of idol worship”: it seems that when constructed in towns these were high platforms where ritual sexual intercourse took place. The Septuagint translates this as “brothel house.” [‡] **16:27** Literally, “your portion.” This could refer to Israel's territory, or to its material possessions, including food.

³² You're a wife that loves adultery! You sleep with strangers instead of your husband!
³³ Normally all prostitutes are paid, but you were the one giving gifts to all your lovers. You even bribed them to come from all around and have sex with you. ³⁴ So you're the opposite of other prostitutes. No one comes to you asking for sex, and you pay the prostitute's fee instead of receiving it. You're the exact opposite!

³⁵ So, you prostitute, listen to the message from the Lord! ³⁶ This is what the Lord God says: Because you were so crazy with desire you stripped yourself naked and committed adultery with your lovers and with all your disgusting idols, and because you killed your children as sacrifices to those idols, ³⁷ I'm going to bring together all the lovers you went to bed with, whether you loved them or hated them, and I will have them gather from everywhere around and I will strip you as they watch so they will see you totally naked. ³⁸ I will impose on you the punishment for women who commit adultery and those who murder; you will be punished in passionate anger.

³⁹ Then I will hand you over to your lovers, and they will demolish your pagan shrines and destroy your high places of idol worship.

They will strip you of your clothes, remove your beautiful jewelry, and leave you stark naked. ⁴⁰ They will come with a mob to attack you. They will stone you and chop you into pieces with their swords. ⁴¹ They will burn down

your houses and punish you while many women watch.

I will stop your prostitution, and you won't ever pay your lovers again. ⁴² Then I will finish being jealous and furious with you. I will calm down and won't be angry any more.

⁴³ Since you didn't remember how I looked after you[§] when you were young, but made me angry with all the things that you did, I will make sure you experience the results of what you've done, declares the Lord God. For this immorality was in addition to all the other disgusting things you did, wasn't it?

⁴⁴ Everyone who likes to use proverbs will quote this one about you:

'Like mother, like daughter.'

⁴⁵ You are the daughter of your mother who detested her husband and children. You are just like her! You are the sister of your sisters, just like them who detested their husbands and children. In fact your mother was a Hittite and your father was an Amorite. ⁴⁶ Your older sister was Samaria, who lived north of you with her daughters. Your younger sister was Sodom, who lived south of you with her daughters. ⁴⁷ You didn't just follow their ways and do the same disgusting things they did, you very quickly became even worse than them.

⁴⁸ As I live, declares the Lord God, your sister Sodom and her daughters didn't ever do what you and your daughters have done. ⁴⁹ The sins

§ 16:43 "How I looked after you": supplied for clarity.

of your sister Sodom were these: She and her daughters were proud, greedy, and lazy. They didn't help the poor and those in need. ⁵⁰ They became arrogant and did disgusting things in my presence. So I got rid of them when I saw this.

⁵¹ Samaria didn't sin half as badly as you did. You have done far more disgusting things than they did. In fact, all the revolting things you've done make your sisters look good! ⁵² Now you're going to have to put up with your shame, since by your disgraceful sins you made them seem far better. Compared to you they look good! Now you too have to put up with your shame and disgrace because you've made your sisters look as if they were good.

⁵³ Even so I'm going to bring Sodom and her daughters back from exile,* and Samaria and her daughters too. I will bring you back together with them. ⁵⁴ In this way you will have to put up with your disgrace and be ashamed of all the bad things you did that made them feel better about themselves.

⁵⁵ Your sisters, Sodom with her daughters and Samaria with her daughters, will be restored to what they were before. You and your daughters will also be restored to what you were before. ⁵⁶ Didn't you mock your sister Sodom when you were feeling proud, ⁵⁷ before you were shown to be so wicked yourselves? Of course

* **16:53** This must be understood figuratively since actual Sodom was destroyed, not exiled.

now you are mocked by the Edomites[†] and the surrounding nations, as well as by the Philistines. Everyone around you looks down on you. ⁵⁸ You will have to experience the consequences of your immorality and your disgusting practices, declares the Lord.

⁵⁹ This is what the Lord God says: I'm going to punish you according to your sins, because you treated the promise you made with contempt by breaking the agreement. ⁶⁰ But I won't forget the agreement I made with you when you were young, and I will make an everlasting agreement with you. ⁶¹ Then you will remember the way you are meant to live and be ashamed when you meet your older and younger sisters when they return to you. I will give them to you as daughters, even though this was not part of our original agreement.

⁶² This is how I will endorse my agreement with you, and you will know that I am the Lord, ⁶³ so that you will remember and be ashamed, and won't ever defend your disgraceful behavior when I forgive you for everything you've done, declares the Lord God."

17

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² "Son of man, present this riddle—share it as a

[†] **16:57** "Edom": following the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and some Hebrew manuscripts. The Hebrew has "Aram." The two words vary by only one letter and are easily confused. See footnote to 2 Samuel 8:12 for example.

parable with the people of Israel. ³ Tell them that this is what the Lord God says:

There was a great eagle that had large wings, long feathers, and multi-colored plumage. It came to Lebanon and took off the top of the cedar. ⁴ He broke off its highest branch and took it to a country of merchants, and planted it in a city of traders. ⁵ He took some of the seed of the land and planted it in good soil beside a large river where he could grow it like a willow. ⁶ The seed sprouted and grew into a low, spreading vine, with its branches facing toward him, and its roots went down into the ground beneath. So the vine developed, growing leaves and branches.

⁷ But there was another great eagle that had large wings and many feathers. This vine sent out its roots toward him. It stretched out its branches to him from where it had been planted, wanting him to water it. ⁸ Yet it had been planted in good soil beside a large river so it could grow strong, produce fruit, and become a superb vine.

⁹ So you tell them this is what the Lord God says: ‘Will it grow well? Won't it be uprooted and its fruit ripped off so that it withers? All its leaves will dry up. You wouldn't need strong arms or lots of people to pull it up by its roots. ¹⁰ Even if it's transplanted, is it going to survive? Won't it wither up completely when the east wind blows? In fact, it will wither right where it was planted.’”

¹¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹² “Tell these rebellious people: ‘Don't you know what this riddle means?’”

Explain to them, ‘Look, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, made its king and officials his prisoners, and took them back with him to Babylon. ¹³ He made an agreement with one of the royal family and made him take an oath that he would be a loyal subject as king.* Then he took into exile the country's leaders, ¹⁴ so that the kingdom would be kept in subjection and wouldn't be strong enough to rebel—it would only survive by keeping its agreement with him.

¹⁵ However, this king did rebel against Babylon, and sent ambassadors to Egypt to ask for help by supplying horses and many soldiers. Will he do well? Would someone who acts like this succeed? Could he break an agreement and not be punished?’

¹⁶ As I live, declares the Lord God, ‘he is going to die in Babylon, in the country of the king who put him on the throne, whose oath he disregarded and whose agreement he broke. ¹⁷ Pharaoh with his powerful army of many soldiers won't help him in battle, when attack ramps are piled up and siege walls built and many people end up being killed. ¹⁸ He disregarded his oath by breaking the agreement. Because he shook hands as a sign of the promise he made, yet rebelled in this way, he won't go unpunished!’

¹⁹ So this is what the Lord God says: As I live, I will punish him for disregarding my oath† and

* **17:13** “As king”: supplied for clarity. † **17:19** “My oath”: clearly the oath was made in the name of the Lord.

for breaking my agreement. ²⁰ I will throw my net over him and catch him; I will trap in my snare. I will take him to Babylon and sentence him to punishment there for his treason towards me. ²¹ All his best soldiers will be killed in battle, and those who do survive will be scattered in all directions. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken.

²² This is what the Lord God says: I'm going to break off a branch from the high top of the cedar, and I will plant it on the top of a high mountain. ²³ I will plant it on Israel's high mountain so that it can grow branches, produce fruit and become a magnificent cedar. All kinds of birds will live in it, nesting in the shade of its branches. ²⁴ All the trees in the countryside will know that I am the Lord. I can bring down the tall and have the low tree grow tall. I can make the green tree dry up, and make the withered tree become green again. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it."

18

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² "What's this proverb you people are quoting about the country of Israel:

'The fathers ate the unripe grapes, but their children got the sour taste'?"*

³ As I live, declares the Lord God, you won't quote this proverb in Israel any more. ⁴ Can't you see that everyone belongs to me? Whether

* **18:2** In other words, "it's not our fault this is happening to us; it's due to our forefathers' sins, not ours." See also Jeremiah 31:29.

parents or children, they are all mine. It's the person who sins who will die.

⁵ Take the example of a man who is a good person, doing what is fair and right.

⁶ He doesn't go to the pagan shrines in the mountains to eat a religious meal, or worship Israel's idols. He doesn't have sex with someone else's wife or with a woman during her period.

⁷ He doesn't exploit anyone. He gives back what a debtor has given him as security. He doesn't rob others. He feeds the hungry and clothes the naked. ⁸ He doesn't lend with interest or make a profit from loans. He refuses to do wrong and makes sure he's truly fair in his decisions between people. ⁹ He follows my rules and keeps my regulations faithfully. Such a man lives by what's right and he will certainly live, declares the Lord God.

¹⁰ What if that man has a son who is a violent criminal, who kills and does do such evil things just listed ¹¹ even though the father doesn't act like that at all. The son goes to the pagan shrines in the mountains to eat a religious meal. He has sex with someone else's wife. ¹² He exploits the poor and those in need. He robs others, and he doesn't give back what a debtor has given him as security. He worships idols. He commits disgusting sins. ¹³ He lends with interest and makes a profit from loans. Is someone like this going to live? No, he won't! Because he has done all these offensive things, he will die for certain, and he will be responsible for his own death.

14 Now what if this man has a son who sees all the sins his father has committed. He sees them but doesn't do the same. 15 He doesn't go to the pagan shrines in the mountains to eat a religious meal, or worship Israel's idols. He doesn't have sex with someone else's wife. 16 He doesn't exploit anyone. He doesn't demand security for a loan. He doesn't rob others. He feeds the hungry and clothes the naked. 17 He refuses to do wrong and does not charge interest or make a profit on loans. He keeps my regulations and follows my laws. A man like that won't die because of his father's sins, he will certainly live! 18 But his father will die for his own sins, because he exploited others, robbed his relatives, and did wrong to his own people. 19 You ask, 'Why shouldn't the son pay for his father's sins?' If the son has done what is fair and right, keeping all my laws, then he'll live, he won't be punished.†

20 It's the person who sins who will die. A son won't pay for his father's sins, and a father won't pay for his son's sins. The good consequences of living right will come to those who are good; the evil consequences of wickedness will come to those who are evil.

21 However, if someone who is wicked stops sinning and keeps my laws, doing what is fair and right, they will certainly live—they won't die. 22 None of their sins will be held against them. Because they are now doing what's right, they will live. 23 Do I like it when wicked people die? declares the Lord God. Of course not—I

† 18:19 "He won't be punished": supplied for clarity.

would be delighted if they stopped sinning and lived!

²⁴ But if someone who is living according to what's right stops and does wrong, doing the same offensive things as the wicked, will that person live? Of course not! In fact, all the good things they did previously will be forgotten. That person will die because of their betrayal of me and the sins they've committed.

²⁵ Even so you say, 'What the Lord does isn't right.'

People of Israel, listen to me! Is it what I'm doing that isn't right? Isn't it what you're doing that isn't right?

²⁶ If someone who lives according to what's right stops doing right and does wrong, they will die. They will die because of wrong things they've done.

²⁷ But if someone wicked stops doing wrong and does what is fair and right, they will save their life. ²⁸ Because they thought about it and gave up their wicked ways, they will certainly live—they won't die.

²⁹ But the people of Israel say, 'The Lord's way isn't right.'

Are my ways unfair, people of Israel? Isn't it your ways that aren't fair?

³⁰ Consequently I'm going to judge you, people of Israel! I will judge each of you depending on what you've done, declares the Lord God. Repent and stop rebelling so that your sins won't bring you down. ³¹ Get rid of all your rebellious sins!

Change your way of thinking and have a new spirit. Why do you want to die, people of Israel?

³² I don't like it when anybody dies, declares the Lord God. So repent so you can live!"

19

¹ Sing this funeral song for the princes of Israel ² with these words: "What was your mother? She was a lioness among the lions! She lay down in her place among the young lions and reared her cubs. ³ She raised one of her cubs, and he grew up to be young lion. Once he had learned how to tear up his prey, he started eating people. ⁴ But when the nations heard about him, he was caught in their trap. They used hooks to drag him away to Egypt.*

⁵ When she realized that the hope she had been waiting for was gone, she made another of her cubs into a young lion. ⁶ He went around with the other lions, and became strong. Once he had learned how to tear up his prey, he started eating people. ⁷ He tore down their fortresses† and destroyed their towns. All the people living in the country were appalled when they heard him roaring. ⁸ Then the people of the countries all around attacked him. They threw their net over him; he was caught in their trap. ⁹ They used hooks to put him in a cage and took him to the king of Babylon. They led him away and

* **19:4** Referring to Jehoahaz, also called Shallum. † **19:7** Following the reading in the Targums and Theodotion's Greek translation. The Hebrew text reads "widows."

imprisoned him so his roar wasn't heard any more in Israel's mountains.‡

¹⁰ Your mother was like a vine planted in your vineyard at the waterside. It produced a lot of fruit and had many branches because it had plenty of water. ¹¹ Its branches were strong like rulers' scepters. It grew high above the tree canopy. People could see how tall and full of leaves it was. ¹² But it was uprooted in anger and thrown down on the ground. The east wind blew and dried up its fruit. Its strong branches were stripped of leaves and they withered. Then they were burned up in the fire. ¹³ Now the vine has been replanted in the desert, in a dry and waterless land. ¹⁴ A fire blazed out from its main trunk and burned up its fruit. None of its branches that were once like a ruler's scepter are strong any more." This is a funeral song and is to be used for mourning.

20

¹ On the tenth day of the fifth month of the seventh year, some of the elders of Israel came to ask advice from the Lord, and they sat down with me.

² Then a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ³ "Son of man, tell these elders of Israel that this is what the Lord God says: Have you come to ask my advice? As I live, I'm not going to answer you, declares the Lord God.

⁴ Are you going to condemn them—will you do that, son of man? Remind them about the

‡ **19:9** Referring to Jehoiachin.

disgusting things their forefathers did,⁵ and then tell them that this is what the Lord God says: At the time I chose Israel, I held up my hand and made a solemn promise to Jacob's descendants and revealed myself to them when they were in Egypt. I held up my hand and told them, 'I am the Lord your God.'

⁶ I promised them on that day to lead them out of Egypt and take them to a country that I had chosen for them, a land flowing with milk and honey—better than any other country. ⁷ I told them: 'All of you have to get rid of your disgusting pagan images. Don't make yourselves unclean by worshipping the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.'

⁸ But they rebelled against me and wouldn't do what I told them. None of them got rid of their disgusting pagan images, and they didn't give up worshipping the idols of Egypt. So I warned them that I would punish them in my anger there in Egypt. ⁹ But I did act* so I would not be misrepresented, so that I wouldn't lose respect in the eyes of the other nations living near them who had seen me reveal myself to Israel by leading them out of Egypt.

¹⁰ So I led them out of Egypt and took them into the wilderness. ¹¹ There I gave them my laws and explained to them my regulations so that those who kept them would live. ¹² I also gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, so

* **20:9** "Act": by leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

that they would acknowledge that I am the Lord who makes them holy.

¹³ But the people of Israel rebelled against me in the desert, refusing to observe my laws and rejecting my regulations, even though they would have given them life. They violated my Sabbaths. So I warned them that I would punish them and wipe them out there in the desert.

¹⁴ But I still acted for them so I would not be misrepresented, so that I wouldn't lose respect in the eyes of the other nations who had seen me lead Israel out of Egypt.

¹⁵ So I held up my hand and vowed to them in the desert that I wouldn't take them into the land that I had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey—better than any other country—¹⁶ because they repeatedly rejected my regulations, refused to observe my laws, and violated my Sabbaths, and because they chose to continue worshiping idols. ¹⁷ Even so I was sorry for them and I didn't destroy them; I didn't wipe them out in the desert.

¹⁸ I told their children in the desert: 'Don't do what your fathers told you to do. Don't follow their practices. Don't make yourselves unclean by worshiping their idols. ¹⁹ I am the Lord your God. Do what I tell you to do. Follow my regulations and make sure to practice them.

²⁰ Keep my Sabbaths holy so they may be a sign between me and you, so that you may acknowledge that I am the Lord your God.'

²¹ But their children also rebelled against me. They didn't follow my laws and didn't keep my

regulations, even though they would have given them life. They violated my Sabbaths. So I warned them that I would punish them in my anger there in the desert. ²² But I held back and did what I did so I would not be misrepresented, so that I wouldn't lose respect in the eyes of the other nations who had seen me lead Israel out of Egypt.

²³ However, I held up my hand and vowed to them in the desert that I was going to scatter them among the various countries of different nations. ²⁴ For they didn't keep my regulations, instead they rejected my laws and violated my Sabbaths, always looking to worship their fathers' idols.

²⁵ I also let them follow the regulations they wanted that weren't good; laws that wouldn't help them live. ²⁶ I let them make themselves unclean by their offerings to idols, including their firstborn sons. I allowed this to happen so that they would be so appalled that they would acknowledge that I am the Lord.

²⁷ So, son of man, tell the people of Israel that this is what the Lord God says: You're acting in exactly the same way your forefathers insulted me by being unfaithful to me. ²⁸ After I led them into the land that I had promised to give them, on any high hill or under any leafy tree they saw there they offered their pagan sacrifices and presented offerings to idols that made me angry, burning their sweet-smelling incense and pouring out their drink offerings. ²⁹ So I asked

them: 'What's this high place you're going to?' (Even today it's still called Bamah.)†

³⁰ Therefore tell the people of Israel that this is what the Lord God says: Are you going to make yourselves unclean like your forefathers, turning yourselves into prostitutes, acting the way they did with the same disgusting practices? ³¹ When you present your offerings to idols and sacrifice your children in the fire, you continue to make yourselves unclean with all your idols right up until now. So should I give you advice when you ask me, people of Israel? As I live, declares the Lord God, I'm not going to answer you!

³² When you say to yourselves, 'Let's be like the other nations, like people in other countries who worship idols made of wood and stone,' what you're thinking is never going to happen.

³³ As I live, declares the Lord God, I will rule you with all my strength and power, and in my anger. ³⁴ With all my strength and power, and in my anger, I will lead you out from among the nations and gather you from the countries where you were scattered. ³⁵ I will bring you before me for judgment face to face in the desert of the nations.

³⁶ In the same way I judged your forefathers in the Egyptian desert after I'd led them out of Egypt, so I will judge you, declares the Lord God. ³⁷ I will decide about you as you pass under the

† **20:29** "Bamah" means high place, a pagan shrine on a hill or mountain.

rod[‡] and see if you kept our solemn agreement.
³⁸ I will get rid of those of you who rebel against me, those who sin against me. I will lead them out of the country where they're currently living, but they won't enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

³⁹ This is what the Lord God says to you, you people of Israel: All of you, go ahead and worship your idols. But after that if you don't listen to me you won't continue to disgrace me with your pagan offerings and idols.

⁴⁰ For there on my holy mountain, Israel's high mountain, declares the Lord God, every single person in the whole country of Israel will worship me. That's where I'll accept them and will ask for your offerings and your best gifts, together with all your holy sacrifices.

⁴¹ When I bring you back from the nations and gather you from countries where you were scattered, I will accept you as a suitable offering to me. I will reveal my holiness through you so the nations can see. ⁴² Then you will acknowledge that I am the Lord when I bring you back to the country of Israel, the land that I promised to give your forefathers.

⁴³ That's where you will remember your bad ways and everything you've done to make yourselves unclean, and you will hate yourselves for the evil things you did. ⁴⁴ Then you people of Israel will acknowledge that I am the Lord,

[‡] **20:37** "Pass under the rod": the method by which shepherds counted and divided their flocks.

because I have treated you well because of who I am, and not because of your evil ways and terrible things you've done, declares the Lord God.”

⁴⁵ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ⁴⁶ “Son of man, face towards the south and preach against it. Prophecy against the forest of the Negev. ⁴⁷ Tell the forest of the Negev: Listen to the word of the Lord! This is what the Lord God says: I am going to set you on fire, and it will burn up all your trees, both those that are living and those that are dead. The blaze won't be put out, and everything from the north to the south will be burned. ⁴⁸ Then everyone will recognize that it was me, the Lord, who started the fire, and it won't be put out.”

⁴⁹ But then I said, “Oh no, Lord God! People already say, ‘He's just telling stories!’ ”

21

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, face towards Jerusalem and condemn their places of worship. Prophecy against the people living in Israel ³ and tell them that this is what the Lord says: Watch out, because I'm going to attack you! I'm going to take out my sword and destroy you, both the good and the bad. ⁴ Because I'm going to destroy both the good and the bad, I will attack everyone from the north to the south. ⁵ Then the whole world will know that I, the Lord, have taken out my sword, and won't put it back again.

⁶ You, son of man, you are to groan. Groan as if you're broken up inside, showing terrible sadness while they watch you. ⁷ When they ask, 'What are you groaning for?' you are to tell them, 'Because of the news that's coming. All of you will lose your courage and you'll be paralyzed with fear. All of you will be weak with worry—you won't be able to stand up!' Watch out, because it's coming! It's going to happen! declares the Lord God."

⁸ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ⁹ "Son of man, prophesy! Tell them this is what the Lord says: There's a sword, a sword that's being sharpened and polished. ¹⁰ It's sharpened for killing and polished so it will flash like lightning! (Are we to be happy, saying, 'The scepter of my son despises every other *stick*'?) * ¹¹ The sword is being polished right now, ready to be used. It's sharp and polished, ready to be handed over to the killer. ¹² Weep and wail, son of man, and slap your thigh in grief, for the sword is going to be used to attack my people, to attack all the leaders of Israel! They will be thrown away, killed by the sword along with my people. ¹³ They will be tested. What if the scepter

* **21:10** The Hebrew of this verse is unclear and capable of several interpretations. It appears to be a reference to Genesis 49:10 that is being quoted to suggest that any threat of enemy invasion is not possible because of God's previous assurances. This appears to be confirmed by another allusion to Genesis 49:10 in verse 27 of this chapter. The mention of a "stick" is a dismissive reference to the scepters or rods of power of other nations.

that despises others doesn't continue? declares the Lord God.

¹⁴ So son of man, prophesy and clap your hands.[†] The sword will attack twice, and then a third time.[‡] It is a sword of death, killing many people by coming at them from every direction.

¹⁵ I have placed a sword at all the gates of their city so that they may lose their courage, and many may fall. Oh no! It's made to flash like lightning and used to kill. ¹⁶ Slash right and left, whichever way you're facing. ¹⁷ I will also clap my hands, and then my anger will be over. I, the Lord, have spoken.”

¹⁸ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁹ “Son of man, mark the two roads that the king of Babylon's army could take, beginning from the same country. Make a signpost where the road forks, leading to two different cities. ²⁰ Have one sign point down the road for an attack on the Ammonite city of Rabbah, and another to attack Judah and the fortified city of Jerusalem.

²¹ The king of Babylon is standing at the fork in the road where the two roads meet looking for a prophetic sign: he casts lots using arrows, he asks advice from idols, and he examines the liver of sacrificial animals.

²² He holds the sign for Jerusalem in his right hand. This is where he is going to set up

[†] **21:14** “Clap your hands”: not applause, but a sign of horror or of anger. It may even be symbolic of the three attacks mentioned in the verse. [‡] **21:14** These three attacks may well refer to the three invasions of Nebuchadnezzar.

battering rams, to give the command to attack, to shout the war-cry. There he will order the battering rams to smash the gates, set up an attack ramp, and build a siege wall. ²³ To those who have sworn to be loyal to Nebuchadnezzar this will look like a false sign, but it will reveal their guilt and they will be taken prisoner.

²⁴ So this is what the Lord God says: Because you have revealed your guilt and demonstrated your rebellion, showing your sins in everything you've done, now that you've made all this clear, you will be taken prisoner.

²⁵ As for you, you unclean, wicked prince of Israel, the time has come to complete your punishment. ²⁶ This is what the Lord God says: Take off your turban, and your crown. Things won't continue as they were. Give power to the common people and bring down the powerful! ²⁷ I'm going to destroy everything, make it all a ruin! It won't be restored until its owner arrives, the one I've given the authority to judge.

²⁸ Prophecy, son of man, and announce that this is what the Lord God says about the Ammonites and their insults: A sword! A sword is ready for killing, polished to destroy, to flash like lightning, ²⁹ even as your prophets give you false visions and prophecies that are lies. This sword will cut the necks of the wicked, killing them—those whose day has come for their punishment to be completed. ³⁰ Sword, go back to where you came from! I'm going to judge you right where you were created, in your homeland. ³¹ I will deal with you in my anger; I will breathe my fire

of anger on you; I will hand you over to cruel men who are experts in destruction. ³² You will be burned up like firewood. Your blood will be shed where you live. You will be forgotten, for I, the Lord, have spoken.”

22

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “So, son of man, are you ready to judge them? Are you ready to judge the people of this city that have caused so much bloodshed? Make them face all the disgusting things they’ve done,
³ and tell them that this is what the Lord God says: You are a city who has caused your own doom by murdering people within your walls, and by making idols to worship that made you unclean. ⁴ You are guilty of murder, and you have made yourself unclean by the idols you’ve made. You have shortened your lives—your time is up! That’s why other people taunt you—everyone mocks you. ⁵ People far and near will laugh at you, you corrupt city full of confusion!

⁶ Look at how all of your leaders in Israel use their power to murder. ⁷ You despise your parents. You exploit the foreigners who live with you, and you mistreat orphans and widows.

⁸ You detest my holy things and violate my Sabbaths. ⁹ Living among you are people who falsely accuse others in order to put them to death. You also have those who eat religious meals at pagan shrines in the mountains, and commit immoral acts within the city.

¹⁰ Some of those living in the city have sex with their father's wives or with women during their period. ¹¹ You're home to evil men. One does disgusting things with someone else's wife. Another seduces his daughter-in-law, while another rapes his sister, the daughter of his own father.

¹² Your people take money to murder others. You charge interest and make a profit on loans, and use extortion to get money from your neighbors. You have forgotten all about me, declares the Lord God.

¹³ So watch out! I clap my hands in condemnation at your dishonest profiteering and at all your murders. ¹⁴ Are you going to be so brave, and will you be strong enough to defend yourselves when it comes time for me to deal with you? I, the Lord, have spoken, and I'm going to act. ¹⁵ I'm going to scatter you among the nations and the different countries. I will put a stop to your unclean acts. ¹⁶ For when everyone else sees how you've made yourselves unclean, then you will acknowledge that I am the Lord."

¹⁷ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁸ "Son of man, the people of Israel have ended up like the impurities left over from refining metal. They're all like copper, tin, iron, and lead in the furnace—they are just the impurities left from refining silver.

¹⁹ So this is what the Lord God says: Because all of you have ended up like impurities, watch as I collect you together in Jerusalem. ²⁰ In the same way a refiner collects silver, copper, iron,

lead, and tin and puts them in the blast furnace to melt them with fire, I'm going to collect you in my burning anger, and keep you there until I melt you.

²¹ I'm going to collect you all together and blast you with the fire of my anger, and you'll be melted there in the city. ²² Just as silver is melted in a furnace, so you'll be melted in the city. Then you will realize that I, the Lord, have made you experience my anger.”

²³ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ²⁴ “Son of man, tell the city of Jerusalem, at the time of punishment, you are a country that has not been made clean, a place where no rain has fallen,

²⁵ Her leaders* conspire together and it's like watching a roaring lion ripping up its prey. They destroy the people, grab everything that's valuable, and make many more widows in the city.

²⁶ Her priests pervert my law and make my holy things unclean. They don't distinguish between what is holy and what is ordinary, and they don't separate the clean from the unclean. They forget about my Sabbaths, and they lead people to treat me with no respect.

²⁷ Her city officials are like wolves ripping up their prey, killing people, destroying lives so they can profit through fraud.

²⁸ Her prophets cover up what they do, using false visions as whitewash and prophecies that

* **22:25** “Leaders”: the Hebrew reads “prophets.”

are lies, saying, 'This is what the Lord God says,' when the Lord hasn't said anything.

²⁹ The people of this country are extortioners and robbers. They mistreat the poor and those in need and exploit the foreigners, treating them totally unfairly.

³⁰ I tried to find one of them repair the wall and defend the gap so when I came I wouldn't destroy it—but I couldn't find anyone. ³¹ So I have let them experience my hostility, burning them up with the fire of my anger. I have made sure they suffer the consequences of what they've done, declares the Lord God."

23

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² "Son of man, there were once two women. They were daughters of the same mother. ³ They became prostitutes in Egypt. In fact, they were prostitutes from the time they were young. They allowed their virgin breasts to be fondled and their nipples squeezed. ⁴ The older girl was called Oholah, and her sister Oholibah.* I married them both and they had sons and daughters. Oholah represents Samaria, and Oholibah represents Jerusalem.

⁵ Oholah prostituted herself while she was still married to me. She wanted to have sex with her lovers, the Assyrians. ⁶ They were soldiers

* **23:4** "Oholah" means "her tent," and is thought to refer to the pagan shrines set up in the northern kingdom. "Oholibah" means "my tent is in her," which would apply to the Lord's Tent of Meeting in Judah.

dressed in blue, leaders and commanders, all of them handsome young men in the cavalry. ⁷ She gave away herself sexually to all the important men of Assyria. She made herself unclean by her worship of all the idols of those men she wanted to have sex with.

⁸ She didn't stop her prostitution that she started in Egypt—men sleeping with her when she was young, squeezing her virgin breasts and using her to satisfy their sexual appetite. ⁹ So I handed her over to her lovers, the Assyrians she wanted to have sex with. ¹⁰ They stripped her naked, took away her sons and daughters, and killed her with the sword. She became infamous among women, and they punished her.

¹¹ Oholibah saw what happened to her sister, but she became even worse than her in her wanting sex and practicing prostitution. ¹² She also wanted to have sex with the Assyrians: their leaders and commanders, their splendidly-dressed soldiers—all of them handsome young men in the cavalry. ¹³ I saw that she had also made herself unclean—both sisters were doing the same thing.

¹⁴ However, Oholibah's prostitution was even worse. She saw pictures of Babylonian soldiers wearing bright red uniforms painted on the wall. ¹⁵ They were wearing belts on their waists and large turbans on their heads. They all looked like Babylonian officers in Chaldea, the country where they were born. ¹⁶ When she saw the paintings of them, she wanted to have sex with them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea.

¹⁷ The Babylonians came to her and her love bed, and made her unclean with their sexual desire. However, after she had been dishonored by them, she rejected them in disgust.

¹⁸ When Oholibah so blatantly prostituted herself, exposing herself naked, I turned away from her in disgust, just as I had done to her sister.

¹⁹ But she practiced even more prostitution, remembering how she'd been a prostitute in Egypt when she was young. ²⁰ She wanted to have sex with her lovers who had genitals like donkeys and who ejaculated like stallions.

²¹ You went back to the indecent acts when you were young, when the Egyptians squeezed your nipples and fondled your young breasts.

²² So Oholibah, this is what the Lord God says: I'm going to encourage your lovers to attack you, those you rejected in disgust. I will bring them to attack you from every direction: ²³ the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, the men of Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians along with them—all handsome young men, leaders and commanders, chariot captains and important officers, all riding horses.

²⁴ They will attack you from the north,[†] invading with a great army, chariots, and wagons. They will come with their shields and helmets and surround you. I will hand you over to them for punishment, and they will judge and punish you following their own laws. ²⁵ I feel so strongly about what you've done that I will oppose you,

[†] **23:24** "From the north": Septuagint reading.

and they will treat you very badly. They will cut off your noses and ears, and they will kill those of you who are left. They will take away your sons and daughters as prisoners, and those of you who are left will be destroyed by fire.

²⁶ They will tear off your clothes and take your beautiful jewelry. ²⁷ I'm going to put a stop to your immorality and prostitution, which started in Egypt. You won't think longingly about those times, and you'll forget all about Egypt.

²⁸ For this is what the Lord God says: Believe it when I say that I'm going to hand you over to the people you hate, the ones you rejected in disgust. ²⁹ They will treat you with hatred. They will take away everything you've worked for, leaving you stark naked with nothing, so that so that the indecent acts of your prostitution will be exposed. Your immorality and prostitution ³⁰ is why all this has happened to you, because you acted as a prostitute with the nations and made yourself unclean by worshiping their idols. ³¹ Because you did what your sister did, I will give you her cup to drink.‡

³² This is what the Lord God says: You will drink from your sister's cup—a large, deep cup. You will be laughed at and insulted. You'll have to endure much of this. ³³ It will make you drunk and full of grief because it's a cup of that brings horror and destruction, the cup your sister Samaria drank from. ³⁴ You will drink it all down, smash it to pieces on the ground,

‡ **23:31** Being handed a cup to drink was symbolic of experiencing punishment.

and tear at your breasts. This is what I have spoken, declares the Lord God. ³⁵ In summary this is what the Lord God says: Because you have forgotten about me and have ignored me, you will have to experience the consequences of your immorality and prostitution.”

³⁶ Then the Lord said to me: “Son of man, are you going to condemn Oholah and Oholibah? Expose the disgusting things they've done! ³⁷ For they have committed adultery, and they are guilty of murder. They have committed adultery with their idols, and have even offered their children, whom they had for me, as sacrifices to their idols.

³⁸ They also did this to me: On the very same day they both made my sanctuary unclean and violated my Sabbaths. ³⁹ On very day that they killed their children for their idols, they went my sanctuary and made it unclean. Look at what they did right inside my Temple!

⁴⁰ They[§] even kept on sending messengers for men to come from far away. When the men arrived, you would get yourselves ready for them by bathing, doing your eye makeup, and putting in your jewelry. ⁴¹ You sat on an expensive couch, with my incense and my oil on a table placed in front of it. ⁴² The room was full of the noise of people partying. Drunk men were brought in from the desert along with some common people and they put bracelets on your wrists and beautiful crowns on your head.

§ 23:40 Referring back to the two sisters.

⁴³ Then I said about the old worn-out woman, 'Now they can have her as a prostitute because that's what she is!'

⁴⁴ So they had sex with her like a prostitute. They had sex with Oholah and Oholibah, those immoral women. ⁴⁵ But men who believe in what's right will judge them and impose the punishment for committing commit adultery and murder, because they are adulterers and murderers.

⁴⁶ This is what the Lord God says: Have a mob attack them! Make them terrified and rob them. ⁴⁷ The mob will stone them and kill them with their swords, slaughtering their sons and daughters and burning down their houses. ⁴⁸ This is how I will put an end to immorality in the country, and all the women will be warned not to do what you have done. ⁴⁹ They will punish you for your immorality, and you will have to experience the consequences of your idol worship. Then you will know that I am the Lord God."

24

¹ On the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year, a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² "Son of man, write down today's date, because this is the day that the king of Babylon started his siege of Jerusalem. ³ Then repeat the following parable to these rebellious people. Tell them that this is what the Lord God says:

Get a pot and set it on the fire. Pour in some water. ⁴ Fill it with some good cuts of meat from the thigh and the shoulder. Put in the best bones.

⁵ Choose the best animal from the flock. Pile up the fuel underneath it. Get it boiling and cook the bones in it.

⁶ So this is what the Lord God says: Disaster is coming to the city of that has shed so much blood! It is symbolized by the rusted pot, whose rust can't be cleaned off. Take out the meat bit by bit as it comes—don't choose which piece. ⁷ For the blood she shed is still inside the city. She shed it openly on bare rock—she didn't even spill it on the ground and cover it up with dirt. ⁸ In my anger and to punish, I have spilled her blood openly on bare rock, so it wouldn't be covered up.

⁹ So this is what the Lord God says: Disaster is coming to the city of that has shed so much blood. I will also pile up a large heap of firewood. ¹⁰ Put on plenty of wood and light the fire. Make sure the meat is well cooked and add spices. Burn the bones. ¹¹ Then put the empty pot back on the burning coals until it's hot and the copper metal glows. This will melt the dirt inside it and get rid of the rust. ¹² So far it's been impossible to clean it—even fire couldn't burn out all its rust. ¹³ Because of your immorality you had made yourself unclean and I tried to clean you, but you refused to let me clean away your filth. So now you won't be pure again until I've finished being angry with you. ¹⁴ I, the Lord, have spoken. The time is soon coming when I will do what I say. I won't change my mind or show pity, I won't stop. I will judge you by your attitude and actions, declares the Lord God.”

¹⁵ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
¹⁶ “Son of man, look, I’m about to take away the one you love the most. She will die. But you must not mourn or weep. Don’t cry any tears.
¹⁷ Mourn in silence. Don’t have any rituals for the dead. Dress normally—have your turban on and put your sandals on your feet. Don’t veil your face and don’t eat the bread used by mourners.”

¹⁸ I talked to the people in the morning, and my wife died in the evening. The next morning I did as I’d been told.

¹⁹ The people asked me, “What are you doing? Aren’t you going to explain to us what this means?”

²⁰ So I told them, “A message from the Lord came to me, saying: ²¹ Tell the people of Israel that this is what the Lord God says: I am about to make my sanctuary unclean, this place you’re so proud of that you think gives you power, the place you love so much, the place that makes you happy. Your sons and daughters that you left behind will be killed by the sword.

²² Then you’ll do what I did. You won’t veil your face or eat the bread used by mourners.

²³ You will keep your turbans on your heads and your sandals on your feet. You won’t mourn or weep, but you will die inside because of your sins, and you will groan to one another.

²⁴ In this way Ezekiel will be a sign for you; you will do everything that he did. When this happens, then you will know that I am the Lord God.

²⁵ You, son of man, should know that when I destroy their fortress that is their pride and joy, the place they looked to for comfort and happiness —and their sons and daughters too—
²⁶ when that happens someone who managed to get away will come and give you the news. ²⁷ On that day you will be able to speak; you won't be mute any longer. This is how you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the Lord.”

25

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “Son of man, face towards the Ammonites and prophesy against them. ³ Tell the Ammonites to listen to the message from the Lord God, for this is what the Lord God says: Because you said, ‘Oh good!’ when my sanctuary was made unclean, when the country of Israel was turned into a wasteland, and when the people of Judah were taken into exile, ⁴ this is why I will make you subject to the people of the East. They will make camp and set up their tents right where you live. They will eat your fruit and drink your milk. ⁵ I will make Rabbah a camel pasture, and Ammon a sheep-pen. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁶ For this is what the Lord God says: Because you clapped your hands and stamped your feet in a celebration of hate over what happened to Israel, ⁷ this is why I will reach out and attack you, and hand you over to be looted by other nations. I will wipe you out so completely that

you will no longer exist as a nation. I will destroy you, and then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁸ This is what the Lord God says: Because the people of Moab and Seir said, 'Look, the people of Judah are just like everybody else,' ⁹ that's why I will open Moab's border to attack, including Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim, the country's famous cities. ¹⁰ I will hand Moab over to the people of the East for them to rule so that will no longer exist as a nation just like the Ammonites. ¹¹ This is how I'm going to punish the Moabites, and they will know that I am the Lord.

¹² This is what the Lord God says: Because Edom committed serious sins by taking vicious revenge on the people of Judah, ¹³ this is why the Lord God says: I will reach out to attack Edom and destroy all its people and animals. I will turn it into a wasteland. All the way from Teman in the north to Dedan in the south they will die by the sword. ¹⁴ I will take revenge on the Edomites through my people Israel. They will deal with the Edomites so that they experience my anger. Then they will know what my vengeance is like, declares the Lord God.

¹⁵ This is what the Lord God says: Because the Philistines in their hatred repeatedly took revenge on Judah, trying to destroy the people, ¹⁶ this is why the Lord God says: Watch out! I'm going to reach out to attack the Philistines, and I will wipe out the Kerethites* and destroy

* **25:16** "Kerethites": one of the major warrior tribes of the Philistines.

those who are left along the coast. ¹⁷ My revenge against them will be severe as I punish them in my anger. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when they experience my anger.”

26

¹ On the first day of the month* of the eleventh year, a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, because Tyre said about Jerusalem, ‘Oh good! The trade gateway to the nations has been broken—it’s swung wide open for me. Now that Jerusalem has been destroyed, I will be rich!’ ³ this is why the Lord God says: Watch out, Tyre! I’m condemning you, and I will have many nations come and attack you, just like the sea that sends its waves crashing against the shore. ⁴ They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down her towers. I will scrape off the soil that’s on her and turn her into a bare rock. ⁵ Out there in the sea she will be just a place for fishermen to spread their nets. I have spoken, declares the Lord God. Other nations will come and loot her, ⁶ and the people living in her villages on the mainland will die by the sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

⁷ For this is what the Lord God says: Watch as I bring Nebuchadnezzar, king of kings, to attack Tyre from the north. He will come with horses, chariots, cavalry, and a huge army. ⁸ He will kill the people living in your villages of the mainland with the sword. He will construct siege works to

* **26:1** It appears a number is missing from the text.

attack you. He will build a ramp against your walls, and his soldiers will hold their shields above them as they advance on you. ⁹ He will have his battering rams smash your walls and use his tools to demolish your towers. ¹⁰ He will have so many horses you will be covered by the dust they throw up.

When he comes in through your gates it will sound like an army charging into a defeated city. Your walls will shake from all the noise made by the cavalry, wagons, and chariots. ¹¹ His horses will race through your city streets. He will kill all your people with the sword. Your massive pillars will come tumbling to the ground. ¹² They will steal your wealth and loot your goods. They will knock down your walls, demolish the houses you love so much, and dump the debris and rubble into the sea.

¹³ This is how I'm going to put a stop to your singing. The music of your harps won't be heard any longer. ¹⁴ I will turn you into a bare rock, and you will be just a place for fishermen to spread their nets. Tyre won't ever be rebuilt. I, the Lord, have spoken, declares the Lord God.

¹⁵ This is what the Lord God says to the inhabitants of Tyre: Aren't the people of the coastlands going to shake in terror when they hear your city collapse, when the wounded groan at the killing inside your city?

¹⁶ All the rulers of the coastlands will come down from their thrones, remove their royal robes, and take off their embroidered clothes. Instead they will be clothed with terror and sit on

the ground, trembling the whole time, shocked at what's happened to you. ¹⁷ Then they will sing a funeral song for you, saying,

'You've been destroyed so completely, famous city! You once ruled the sea—you and your people terrified everyone else! ¹⁸ Now the people of the coastlands tremble at your defeat, while those in the islands of the sea are horrified at your downfall.'

¹⁹ For this is what the Lord God says: I will turn you into a ruin just like other uninhabited cities. I will have the sea rise up to cover you with deep water. ²⁰ I will bring you down with those who are headed to the grave to join people from long ago. I will make you live under the earth like the ruins of the past together with those who have gone down into the grave, so that no one will live in you and you won't have any place in the land of the living. ²¹ I will turn you into something horrific, and you won't exist any longer. People will look for you, but won't ever find you, declares the Lord God."

27

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² "Son of man, sing a funeral song for Tyre. ³ Tell Tyre, the city that stands at the gateway to the sea, supplying goods to many overseas nations, that this is what the Lord God says:

Tyre, you say to yourself, 'I'm so beautiful!'
⁴ Your borders extend far across the sea. Your builders put you together perfectly like a beautiful ship. ⁵ They built you with pine timber

from Mount Hermon.* They used a cedar from Lebanon to make your mast. ⁶ They made your oars with oaks from Bashan. They had wood from the island of Cyprus brought to make your deck and inlaid it with ivory. ⁷ They made your sail with the best linen from Egypt—this was your flag that everyone recognized. They used cloth dyed blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah to make your awnings.

⁸ Men from Sidon and Arvad did the rowing in your ship. You had your own skilled sailors from Tyre. ⁹ Expert craftsmen from Gebal were onboard to repair any leaks. All the other ships at sea came to trade with you and their sailors bartered for your goods. ¹⁰ Men from Persia, Lydia, and Put were soldiers in your army. They lived among you, hanging up their shields and helmets with you, making you famous. ¹¹ Men of Arvad and Helech defended all your city walls, while those from Gammad protected your towers. They hung their shields all around your walls. They made you so successful. ¹² Tarshish traded with you because you had so much of everything. They paid for your goods with silver, iron, tin, and lead. ¹³ Greece,† Tubal, and Meshech traded with you. They bought your goods, paying with slaves and objects made of bronze. ¹⁴ People from Beth-togarmah traded horses, war horses, and mules for your goods. ¹⁵ People from Dedan traded

* **27:5** “Hermon,” literally, “Senir,” another name for this mountain. † **27:13** “Greece”: literally, “Javan.”

with you. You had marketplaces in many coastal areas where the people bartered with you using ivory tusks and ebony wood. ¹⁶ The Arameans traded with you because you had so much merchandise. They provided turquoise, purple cloth, embroidery, fine linen, coral, and red jasper[‡] in exchange for your goods. ¹⁷ Judah and the country of Israel traded with you, paying you with wheat from Minnith, pastries[§] and honey, olive oil and balm in return for your goods. ¹⁸ Because you had many different products, in fact so much of everything, Damascus traded with you using wine from Helbon, wool from Zahar. ¹⁹ Vedan and Javan from Izal bought your goods using wrought iron, cassia, and sweet calamus. ²⁰ Dedan traded with you, providing riding blankets. ²¹ Arabia and all the leaders of Kedar traded with you, supplying lambs, rams, and goats. ²² The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded with you, exchanging gold, the very best spices, and precious stones for your goods. ²³ Haran, Canneh, and Eden traded with you, as did Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad. ²⁴ In your marketplaces they traded with you, providing the finest blue clothing, embroidery, carpets made with different colored threads, and strong ropes of twisted strands.

²⁵ Trade ships from Tarshish transported your goods. You were like a ship sailing the sea, filled

[‡] **27:16** “Red jasper”: one possible candidate for a red precious stone. Rubies were apparently not known at this time. [§] **27:17** “Pastries”: the word is only ever used here and its meaning is uncertain.

with heavy cargo. ²⁶ Your rowers took you a long way out on the water, but the east wind broke you apart in there in the open ocean. ²⁷ You've lost everything! You wealth, your goods, your cargo, your crew of sailors, officers, and repairmen, your traders and all the soldiers you had, along with everyone else on board, fall into the depths of the sea on the day of your shipwreck. ²⁸ The land around shakes when your sailors scream. ²⁹ All the rowers abandon their ships. The sailors and all the ships' officers stand on the shore. ³⁰ They shout out for you and burst out crying. They mourn for you by throwing dust on their heads and rolling in ashes. ³¹ They shave their heads for you and clothe themselves in sackcloth. They weep for you, crying out in agony and heartfelt mourning ³² As they weep and wail over you, they sing a funeral song for you: 'Who could compare to Tyre, now destroyed out in the sea? ³³ You made many people happy when they received your goods from far across the sea. You made the kings of the earth rich with all your valuable goods and products. ³⁴ Now you have been shipwrecked by the sea, sunk in deep water, and your cargo and your people have gone down with you. ³⁵ Everyone living on the coastlands is shocked at what happened to you. Their kings are horrified; their faces twisted with fear. ³⁶ The traders of the nations hiss at you in derision; disaster has brought you down and you're finished forever."

28

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “Son of man, tell the ruler of Tyre this is what the Lord God says: You are so proud of yourself, saying, ‘I’m a god! I sit on my throne like a god in the middle of the sea.’ But you’re only a man. You’re not a god, even though you think you are one. ³ You even think you’re wiser than Daniel and there’s no secret that’s hidden from you! ⁴ Yes, you have used your wisdom and cleverness to make yourself rich, collecting plenty of gold and silver for your treasury. ⁵ You became wealthy through your superb trading skills, but your wealth only made you proud.

⁶ So this is what the Lord God says: Because you think that you’re a god, ⁷ watch as I bring foreigners to attack you. They are more cruel than any other nation. They will use their swords to destroy you and your wonderful wisdom; they will humble your proud glory. ⁸ They will drag you down into the grave. You will die horribly out there in the sea. ⁹ Are you still going to claim, ‘I’m a god,’ to those who are killing you? You’ll just be another human victim, not a god, in the eyes of your attackers. ¹⁰ You will be killed like some vile person* by these foreigners. I myself have spoken, declares the Lord God.”

¹¹ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹² “Son of man, sing a funeral song for the king of Tyre and tell him this is what the

* **28:10** “Killed like some vile person”: literally “die the death of the uncircumcised.”

Lord God says: Once you were complete and perfect,[†] full of wisdom and flawless in beauty. ¹³ You were there in Eden, God's garden. You wore all kinds of precious stones: carnelian, topaz, and amethyst; beryl, onyx, and jasper; lapis lazuli, turquoise, and emerald.[‡] They were placed in gold mountings and settings using skilled craftsmanship, and were made on the day when you were created. ¹⁴ I gave you the position of guardian cherub, and I anointed you. You lived on God's holy mountain and you walked among the stones of fire. ¹⁵ You were innocent in everything you did from the day you were created until you were found to be doing evil. ¹⁶ You were so busy with all your trading schemes that they destroyed you inside, leading you to sin and filling you with violence. So I sent you away in disgrace from God's mountain, and I removed you from your position as guardian cherub from your place among the stones of fire. ¹⁷ You became proud because of your beauty, you ruined your wisdom because you thought you were so wonderful. So I threw you down to the ground and I made sure kings saw what happened to you. ¹⁸ By

[†] **28:12** "Complete and perfect": the phrase is literally, "seal of measurement," seal as in God's "seal of approval," and measurement as something measured to an agreed standard. The word translated "standard" here is translated "measured" as a verb in Isaiah 40:13, for example; while in Ezekiel 43:10 it is translated as a "plan" that is measured. [‡] **28:13** The identification of precious stones mentioned in Scripture is uncertain.

all your sins and your dishonest trading you have made your sanctuaries unclean. So I had fire come from inside you, and it burned you up. I turned you into ashes on the ground as everybody there watched. ¹⁹ All who know you among the nations are horrified at what happened to you. Disaster has brought you down and you're finished forever.”

²⁰ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ²¹ “Son of man, face towards Sidon and prophesy against her. ²² Tell them this is what the Lord God says: Watch out, Sidon, for I'm condemning you, and I will be vindicated by what happens to you. People will know that I am the Lord when I punish her and show my holy character through her experience. ²³ I'm going to send a disease to plague her, and have people killed in her streets. Those who are killed will fall inside the city as the enemy attacks with swords from every side. Then they will know that I am the Lord. ²⁴ The people of Israel will no longer have to put up with these people who are thorns in their side, painful brambles and sharp thorns who treat Israel with contempt. Then they will know that I am the Lord God.

²⁵ This is what the Lord God says: When I bring back the people of Israel from the nations where they've been scattered. I will show my holy character through them as everyone watches.

Then they will live in their own country, which I gave to my servant Jacob. ²⁶ They will live there in safety, building houses and planting vineyards. They will live there in safety when

I punish all those around them who treat them with contempt. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God.”

29

¹ On the twelfth day of the tenth month of the tenth year, a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, face towards Pharaoh king of Egypt and prophesy against him and the whole of Egypt. ³ Tell him that this is what the Lord God says:

Watch out, because I'm condemning you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, you great monster lying in your rivers, who says, ‘The Nile belongs to me; I made it myself.’ ⁴ I'm going to put hooks in your jaws and make the fish in your river stick to your scales. I will pull you up out of your river, and all the fish will stick to your scales. ⁵ I will throw you and the fish away, leaving you in the desert. Your body will fall on the ground and be left in the open. It won't be collected or taken to be buried. I'll leave you as food for wild animals and birds of prey. ⁶ Then everyone in Egypt will know that I am the Lord. When you had to deal with the people of Israel you were like a flimsy walking stick made from a reed. ⁷ When Israel grabbed hold of you, you split apart, damaging their shoulder. When they leaned on you, you broke, putting their backs out. ⁸ So this is what the Lord God says: I will attack you with a sword and kill both people and animals. ⁹ Egypt will become an empty wasteland. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

Because you said, 'The Nile belongs to me; I made it,' ¹⁰ that's why I'm condemning you and your river. I will ruin Egypt, making it into an empty wasteland all the way from Migdol in the north to Syene in the south, and up to the border with Cush.* ¹¹ No one, human or animal, will travel that way or live there for forty years.

¹² I will make Egypt more of a wasteland than any other country, and its towns will lie in ruins for forty years among all the other ruined towns. I will scatter the Egyptians among the different nations and countries.

¹³ However, this is what the Lord God says: After forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the different countries where they were scattered. ¹⁴ I will bring Egypt out of captivity and take them back to the land of Pathros, where they originally came from. Their kingdom will be insignificant.

¹⁵ Egypt will be the lowest of kingdoms and won't ever be more important than other nations again. I will bring Egypt down so that it won't ever be able to rule over the nations again. ¹⁶ The people of Israel won't ever trust in Egypt again; instead they will be reminded them of their sin when they turned to the Egyptians for help. Then they will know that I am the Lord God."

¹⁷ On the first day of the first month of the twenty-seventh year, a message from the Lord

* **29:10** "Cush": This country is often translated as Ethiopia but here it refers to the country immediately bordering Egypt to the south, sometimes referred to as Nubia, and today as Sudan.

came to me, saying, ¹⁸ “Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army work really hard in the siege against Tyre. The soldiers had their hair worn off their heads, and their shoulders rubbed raw. However, he and his army didn't gain any benefit from Tyre for all the work they did in attacking it.

¹⁹ So this is what the Lord God says: I'm going to give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon who will seize everything valuable. He will loot the country, robbing it to pay his army. ²⁰ I'm rewarding him for all his work by giving him Egypt because the work they did was for me, declares the Lord God.

²¹ At that time I will give power back† to the people of Israel and I will help you speak to them. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

30

¹ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, prophesy and announce that this is what the Lord God says: Weep! This is a terrible day! ³ The day is soon coming—the Day of the Lord is near. It will be a gloomy, cloudy day, a time of judgment for the nations. ⁴ A sword will come to attack Egypt, and there will be anguish in Cush* when people are killed in Egypt, when it's robbed of its wealth and the

† **29:21** “Give power back”: literally, “cause a horn to sprout.”

* **30:4** Cush was the country immediately south of Egypt, and at times under Egyptian control. This is the reason why there would be concern at what had happened in Egypt. Today it would include the territory of Sudan.

country ruined. ⁵ Cush, Put, and Lud, and many other peoples, as well as Arabia, Kub, and the people of the promised land,[†] they all, like Egypt, will be killed by the sword. ⁶ This is what the Lord says: Egypt's allies will fall, and the country will lose its prestigious position. From Migdol in the north to Syene in the south, they will be killed by the sword, declares the Lord God. ⁷ Egypt will become more of a wasteland than any other country, and its towns will be left in ruins. ⁸ Then they will acknowledge that I am the Lord when I set fire to Egypt and all its allies are crushed.

⁹ At that time I will send messengers in ships to shock Cush out of its sense of security. They will tremble in fear when disasters hit Egypt. Watch out! It's definitely coming! ¹⁰ This is what the Lord God says: I will use Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to take away Egypt's wealth. ¹¹ He and his army from the cruelest nation in the world will be brought to destroy the country. They will use their swords to attack Egypt, and they will fill the land with dead bodies. ¹² I will dry up the rivers and sell the land to wicked people. Using these foreigners I will ruin the land and everything in it. I the Lord have spoken.

¹³ This is what the Lord God says: I'm going to destroy the idols and get rid of the images in Memphis. There won't be a prince in Egypt any longer, and I will make everyone in the country terrified. ¹⁴ I will destroy Pathros, set Zoan on fire, and punish Thebes. ¹⁵ I will pour out my

[†] **30:5** "Promised land": literally, "land of the covenant."

wrath on Pelusium, Egypt's fortress town, and wipe out the army at Thebes. ¹⁶ I will set fire to Egypt, Pelusium will suffer, Thebes will be ripped apart, and Memphis will face trouble every day. ¹⁷ The young soldiers of Heliopolis and Bubastis[‡] will fall by the sword, and the people from those towns will be taken captive. ¹⁸ It will be a dark day in Tahpanhes when I break Egypt's power and bring to an end their proud strength. It will be under a cloud as the people go into captivity. ¹⁹ This is how I'm going to punish Egypt, and they will acknowledge that I am the Lord.”

²⁰ On the seventh day of the first month of the eleventh year, a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ²¹ “Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. You can see that it hasn't been bandaged up to heal it, or put it in a splint to provide enough strength to hold a sword.

²² So this is what the Lord God says: Watch out, because I'm condemning Pharaoh king of Egypt! I will break his arms, both the one that's still good and the one already broken, and I will make him drop his sword. ²³ I will scatter the Egyptians among the different nations and countries.

²⁴ I will make the arms of the king of Babylon strong, and put my sword in his hand, but I will break Pharaoh's arms, and he will moan in pain like someone who's about to die. ²⁵ I will make

[‡] **30:17** “Heliopolis and Bubastis”: literally, “On and Pi-beseth.”

the arms of Babylon's king strong, but Pharaoh's arms will drop to his sides, weak and useless.

Then they will acknowledge that I am the Lord, when I put my sword in the hand of the king of Babylon and he uses it to attack Egypt. ²⁶ When I scatter the Egyptians among the different nations and countries, they will acknowledge that I am the Lord.”

31

¹ On the first day of the third month of the eleventh year,* a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt and all his many people:

Who is as great as you? ³ Look at Assyria. It was like a cedar in Lebanon, with its beautiful branches providing shade in the forest. It was so high that its top reached the clouds. ⁴ Deep springs of water made it grow tall and sent streams all around it to water all the other trees. ⁵ It became really tall, higher than any other tree in the forest. Its branches grew thick and long because it was so well-watered. ⁶ All kinds of birds nested in its branches, while underneath it different wild animals had their young, and all the powerful nations lived in its shade. ⁷ It was beautiful and majestic with its long branches, because its roots reached down to the plentiful water. ⁸ The cedars in God's garden were no match for it. No pine tree had such great branches, nor did any plane tree. No tree

* **31:1** Dating from the beginning of King Jehoiachin's exile.

in God's garden was as beautiful. ⁹ I made it beautiful with its many branches. All the trees of Eden in God's garden envied it.

¹⁰ So this is what the Lord God says: Since it became so tall, reaching up into the clouds, it grew proud because of its height. ¹¹ So I handed it over to the leader of a foreign nation who will punish it for its wickedness. I have thrown it out.

¹² Foreigners from the cruelest of all the nations chopped it down and left it lying there. Its branches lie fallen and broken in the mountains and valleys of the countryside. Everybody in earth came out of its shadow and abandoned it. ¹³ Birds came to live on its fallen trunk, and wild animals hid among its fallen branches.

¹⁴ This was in order that no other trees growing by the water would grow up so high and have their tops reach the clouds. This was so that no other trees, however much water they had, would be as tall as them, For they all will die and go down into earth, just like human beings who go down into the grave.

¹⁵ This is what the Lord God says: On the day it was brought down to Sheol,[†] I had the deep waters mourn for it; I stopped its rivers flowing; I held back all its waters. I covered Lebanon in darkness, and all the trees in the forest withered. ¹⁶ I made the nations tremble when they heard it fall, when I threw it down into Sheol with those who die.

Then all the trees of Eden, the finest and best in Lebanon, all the trees that had plenty of water,

[†] **31:15** "Sheol," the place of the dead.

were happy that this tree joined them in the earth below. ¹⁷ They also went down with it into Sheol, to those who had been killed by the sword. They had been part of its army living in its shade among the nations.

¹⁸ Who is as great and glorious as you among the trees of Eden? But you too will be brought down to the earth below to be with the trees of Eden. You will lie there with the heathen,[‡] with those killed by the sword. This is what will happen to Pharaoh and all his many people, declares the Lord God.”

32

¹ On the first day of the twelfth month of the twelfth year, a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, sing a funeral song for Pharaoh king of Egypt and tell him:

You think you're like a lion among the nations but in reality you're like a sea monster. You roll around in your rivers, stirring up the waters with your feet, making the water muddy. ³ This is what the Lord God says: In the presence of many nations I'm going to spread my net over you, and they will pull you up in my net. ⁴ I will drop you on the land; I will throw you down on the bare earth. I will make all the birds of prey come and land you; I will have all the wild animals eat you until they're satisfied. ⁵ I will dump your flesh on the mountains and fill the valleys with your remains. ⁶ I will fill the land with your flowing blood, pouring it out on the

[‡] **31:18** “Heathen”: literally, “uncircumcised.”

mountains, filling the valleys. ⁷ When I put out the light of your life, I will cover the heavens and darken their stars. I will use a cloud to cover the sun, and the moon will stop shining. ⁸ I will darken all the bright lights in the heavens above you, and I will make your land go dark, declares the Lord God. ⁹ When I destroy you I will make many people frightened, even in countries you don't know anything about. ¹⁰ Many will be shocked at what I do to you, and their kings will be horrified at what has happened to you, trembling when I wave my sword in front of them. On the day that you fall all of them will shake in fear for their lives.

¹¹ For this is what the Lord God says: The sword of the king of Babylon will attack you! ¹² I will allow your army to be defeated, your soldiers killed by the swords of the powerful enemy army from the cruelest of all nations. They will ruin the glories of Egypt and destroy all your people. ¹³ I will slaughter all your livestock living beside the wide rivers. Nobody will be there to stir rivers up with their feet; no livestock hooves will make them muddy. ¹⁴ I will allow their waters to settle and I will make her rivers flow smoothly like oil, declares the Lord God. ¹⁵ When I turn Egypt into a wasteland, completely emptying it out, when I kill everyone who lives there, then they will acknowledge that I am the Lord. ¹⁶ This is the funeral song that foreign women will sing. They will sing it in mourning over Egypt and all its many people, declares the Lord God.”

¹⁷ On the fifteenth day of the twelfth month of the twelfth year, a message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁸ “Son of man, weep for all the many Egyptians. Send them along with the people of powerful nations down into the depths of the earth with those who go down into the grave. ¹⁹ Do you think you're more beautiful than anyone else? Go down and take your place in the grave with the heathen! ²⁰ They will lie among those killed by the sword. A sword is ready to kill all the many people of Egypt. ²¹ Powerful chiefs will speak from Sheol about Egypt and its allies: ‘They have come down here and lie with the heathen, with those killed by the sword.’

²² Assyria is there with all its people—it's surrounded by graves. All of them died violent deaths, killed by the sword. ²³ Its graves are set in the deepest parts of the place of the dead, and the graves of all its people surround Assyria's grave. All of them died violent deaths, killed by the sword, these people who once terrorized others when they were alive.

²⁴ Elam is there with all its people around its grave. All of them died violent deaths, killed by the sword. They went down into the grave, these heathen people who once terrorized others when they were alive. They are disgraced, along with all others who go down into the grave. ²⁵ A resting place is made ready among those who have been killed for Elam and all its many people—their graves surround Elam's grave. They are all heathen and were killed by

the sword, though they once terrorized others when they were alive. They are disgraced, along with all others who go down into the grave. They are laid to rest among those who have been killed.

²⁶ Meshech and Tubal are there with all their many people, surrounded by all their graves. They are all heathen and were killed by the sword, though they once terrorized others when they were alive. ²⁷ But they're not laid to rest with the fallen warriors of long ago who went down into Sheol with their weapons of war. Their swords were placed underneath their heads and their shields over their bones, although these powerful warriors once terrorized others when they were alive. ²⁸ However, you will also be cut down and laid to rest with the heathen, with those killed by the sword.

²⁹ Edom is there with all its kings and princes. Once they were powerful, but now they too are laid to rest with those killed by the sword. They lie with the heathen, with those who go down into the grave. ³⁰ All the leaders from the north, and all the people of Sidon are there too. They also are disgraced, going down with those who were killed, in spite of their formidable power. They are heathen, lying there with those killed by the sword, and have the disgrace of those who go down into the grave.

³¹ Pharaoh will see them and be pleased that he and all his many people are not the only ones killed by the sword, declares the Lord God.

³² For I will terrorize those who are alive so that

Pharaoh and all his many people will be laid to rest with the heathen, with those killed by the sword, declares the Lord God.”

33

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “Son of man, tell your people: If I brought an army to attack a country, the people there would choose one of them to be their watchman.
³ When he saw the army advancing to attack the country, he would blow the trumpet to warn everyone.

⁴ So if you hear the trumpet but don't pay attention to the warning, and you're killed in the attack, you will be responsible for your own death. ⁵ Since you heard the trumpet but didn't pay attention to the warning, then you will be responsible for your own death. If you had paid attention the warning, you could have saved your life.

⁶ But if the watchman saw the attack coming and didn't blow the trumpet to warn everyone, and someone is killed, then that person will die in their sins, but I will hold the watchman responsible for their death.

⁷ Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman for the people of Israel. Listen to what I tell you and warn them for me. ⁸ If I tell the wicked ‘You're wicked; you're going to die’; but you don't warn them to change what they're doing, then they'll die in their sins and I will hold you responsible for their deaths. ⁹ But if you warn the wicked to change what they're

doing, and they don't, they will die in their sins, but you will save your own life.

¹⁰ Son of man, tell the people of Israel that this is what they've been saying, 'We recognize our sins and wrongs, and they weigh on us, wearing us out. How can we go on living?'

¹¹ Tell them: As I live, declares the Lord God, it brings me no pleasure when wicked people die. I wish they would stop sinning and live! Stop! Stop sinning! Why should you die, people of Israel?

¹² So, son of man, tell your people: All the good things a good person has done won't save them when they sin; while the bad things a bad person has done won't be a problem for them if they stop sinning. But good people won't live if they start sinning.

¹³ If I tell a good person that they will live and then they rely on their goodness and start sinning, then none of the good things they did will be remembered; he will die because of the sins.

¹⁴ But if I tell a bad person, 'You're going to die' and they stop sinning and do what is good and right, ¹⁵ if they return security given for a loan, pay back what they've stolen, and follow my laws about how to live, not doing wrong—then they will live; they won't die. ¹⁶ None of their sins will be remembered; they have done what is good and right and so they will live.

¹⁷ However, your people are complaining, 'What the Lord does isn't right.' But it's what they're doing that isn't right. ¹⁸ If a good person

stops doing good and sins, they will die because of it. ¹⁹ On the other hand, if a bad person turns from their sins and they do what is good and right, they will live as a result.

²⁰ So how can you say, 'What the Lord does isn't right'? Well, I'm going to judge each of you depending on what you've done, people of Israel."

²¹ On the fifth day of the tenth month of the twelfth year of our exile, a refugee who'd escaped from Jerusalem arrived and told me, "The city has been captured!"

²² The previous evening before the messenger arrived the Lord had touched me so I could speak again. This was before the man came to see me in the morning. I wasn't mute any longer—I could speak again.

²³ A message from the Lord came to me, saying, ²⁴ "Son of man, people living among the ruins in Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one man, but the country was given to him to own. There's plenty of us, so the country should belong to us.'

²⁵ So tell them that this is what the Lord God says: You eat meat with the blood still in it. You go and worship your idols. You commit murder. Do you really think the country should belong to you? ²⁶ You rely on your swords to get your way. You have done some disgusting things. You're all having sex with each other's wives. Should the country belong to you?

²⁷ Tell them that this is what the Lord God says: As I live, in the people living among the ruins will be killed by the sword. Those living

in the countryside will be eaten by wild animals. Those living in the fortresses and caves will die from disease. ²⁸ I will turn the country into a wasteland, and power you are so proud of will be ended. The mountains of Israel will become wild places that no one will want to travel through. ²⁹ Then the people will acknowledge that I am the Lord, when I have turned the country into a wasteland because of all the disgusting things they have done.

³⁰ Son of man, your people are talking about you out in the streets and in the doorways of their houses. They encourage one another, saying, 'Come on! Let's go and hear a message from the Lord!'

³¹ So my people come and visit you like they usually do. They sit and listen to the message you share, but they don't do anything about it. Even though they talk about love, all they're thinking about is how to cheat others. ³² In fact, to them you're just someone who sings love songs with a lovely voice and who is a fine musician. They listen to the message you share, but they don't do anything about it. ³³ So when what you say does happen (and it will), then they will realize that they did have a prophet among them."

34

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds who lead Israel. Prophesy and tell them that this is what the Lord God says: Disaster is coming to the shepherds of Israel, who only look

after themselves, and not the sheep! Shouldn't shepherds make sure their flock is fed? ³ You eat the cream, you use the wool for clothes, and you slaughter the fattened sheep, but you don't feed the flock.

⁴ You haven't taken care of the weak, healed the sick, bandaged the injured, brought home the strays, or looked for the lost. On the contrary, you ruled them using violence and cruelty. ⁵ They were scattered because they didn't have a shepherd. When they scattered they were preyed on by all the wild animals for food. ⁶ My sheep strayed, going to all the mountains and high hills. They were scattered everywhere, and there was no one to go and look for them.

⁷ So, you shepherds, listen to what the Lord has to say: ⁸ As I live, declares the Lord God, because my sheep didn't have a shepherd and were preyed on by all the wild animals for food, and because my shepherds didn't look after my sheep but instead only fed themselves, ⁹ so, you shepherds, you listen to what the Lord has to say!

¹⁰ This is what the Lord God says: Watch out, because I'm condemning the shepherds, and I will take my sheep back and stop them looking after the sheep so they won't be able to feed themselves anymore. I will take away my sheep from them, and I won't let them eat the sheep anymore.

¹¹ For this is what the Lord God says: Watch as I myself will go looking for my sheep, searching to find them. ¹² Just like a shepherd goes looking

for his lost sheep when he is with the flock, so I will look for my sheep.

I will rescue them from everywhere they were scattered on a dark and dismal day. ¹³ I will take them out from among the other nations. I will gather them from the different countries, and bring them back to their own country. Like a shepherd I will have them feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and everywhere that people live in the country. ¹⁴ I will provide them with good pasture and places to graze in the high mountains of Israel. They will also be able to rest there in the good pasture and in the places to graze in mountains of Israel.

¹⁵ I myself will look after my sheep and give them a place to rest, declares the Lord God. ¹⁶ I will go looking for the lost, bring home the strays, bandage the injured, and strengthen the weak. However, I will destroy those who are fat and strong. Because I do what's right, I will be sure to take care of them.

¹⁷ My flock, this is what the Lord God says to you: Watch, because I will judge between one sheep and the next, between the rams and the goats. ¹⁸ Aren't you satisfied with feeding in good pasture? Do you have to trample down the rest of the pasture with your feet? Aren't you satisfied to drink the clear water? Do you have to muddy the rest of it with your feet? ¹⁹ Why does my flock have to feed on what your feet have trampled down, and drink the water that your feet have muddied?

²⁰ That's why the Lord God says to them: Watch, because I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the skinny sheep. ²¹ Since you push others around with your sides and your shoulders, and use your horns to attack all the weak ones until you have chased them away, ²² I will rescue my flock, and they will no longer be your victims. I will judge between one sheep and the next. ²³ I will put one shepherd in charge of them, my servant David, and he will take care of them. He will take care of them and be their shepherd. ²⁴ I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David will be their leader. I the Lord have spoken.

²⁵ I will make an agreement of peace with them, and get rid of the wild animals from the country, so that they can live safely in the wilderness and sleep securely in the forest. ²⁶ I will bless them and everywhere around my hill. I will send rain at the right time. They will be showers of blessing. ²⁷ The trees in the orchards will produce their fruit; the earth will grow its crops; and my flock will be live in safety in their country. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I break their yokes of slavery, and set them free from those who made them slaves.

²⁸ They won't be the victims of other nations anymore, and wild animals won't eat them. They will live in safety, and no one will terrorize them.

²⁹ I will make their fields produce remarkable harvests, and they won't suffer famine in their country again or be mocked by others. ³⁰ Then they will know that I am with them as the Lord

their God, and that the people of Israel belong to me, declares the Lord God.

³¹ You are my sheep, the sheep that I feed. You are my people, and I am your God, declares the Lord God.”

35

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “Son of man, face towards Mount Seir and prophesy against it ³ Announce that this is what the Lord God says: Watch out, because I'm condemning you, Mount Seir. I'm going to attack you and turn you into a wasteland. ⁴ I will ruin your towns; you will be completely devastated. Then you will acknowledge that I am the Lord.

⁵ Because of your lasting hatred for the Israelites you let them be attacked with swords as they went through terrible disasters when the time of their punishment was coming to an end. ⁶ So as I live, declares the Lord God, I will let you be violently attacked and chased down. Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will come after you.

⁷ I will turn Mount Seir into a ruined wasteland. I will wipe out anyone who leaves or who tries to return. ⁸ I will fill its mountains with the dead. Those killed by the sword will fall in your hills, valleys, and all your ravines. ⁹ I will ruin you forever. Your towns will not be inhabited again. Then you will acknowledge that I am the Lord.

¹⁰ Because you said, ‘These two nations and their lands belong to us,* and we will take them over, even though the Lord was there with them,’
¹¹ then as I live, declares the Lord God, I will deal with you in the same way that you showed anger and jealousy to them in your hatred of them. They will realize that I’m punishing you because of the way you treated them.

¹² You will also realize that I, the Lord, heard all the nasty things you said about the mountainous land of Israel when you announced, ‘The mountains have been left empty; they’re ours to take!’

¹³ You made a lot of boasts attacking me—you had much to say against me. I heard it for myself!

¹⁴ This is what the Lord God says: I will destroy you as everyone else in the world celebrates.

¹⁵ Just as you celebrated when Israel was destroyed, I will do the same to you. Mount Seir, you will become a wasteland, and so will the rest of Edom. Then they will acknowledge that I am the Lord.”

36

¹ “And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say: Mountains of Israel, listen to this message from the Lord. ² This is what the Lord God says: The enemy said about you, ‘Aha! These old high places now belong to us,’ ³ so you must prophesy and announce that this is what the Lord God says: They have turned

* **35:10** Perhaps a reference back to how Jacob deceived Esau in obtaining his birthright. The Edomites were descended from Esau.

you into a wasteland, attacking you from every direction, so that you became the property of other nations and people gossiped about you and slandered you. ⁴ So now, mountains of Israel, listen to the message from the Lord God.

This is what the Lord God says to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, to the deserted ruins and abandoned towns, that the other nations around you have looted and mocked. ⁵ Yes, this is what the Lord God says: I have spoken passionately against these other nations, and against all the Edomites, who took over my country and made it theirs, happily celebrating as they looted the land and treated me with complete contempt.

⁶ So prophesy concerning the country of Israel and tell the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys, that this is what the Lord God says: Just watch, for I have spoken passionately about this because you have had to put up with this mockery from other nations.

⁷ This is what the Lord God says: I hold up my hand and swear that the other nations around you will suffer their own shame. ⁸ But you, mountains of Israel, will grow trees that will produce fruit for my people Israel, for soon they'll be coming home.

⁹ Look, I am for you and I will help you. Your land will be ploughed, and crops will be sown. ¹⁰ You will support the people of Israel as they return and grow in number. People will live in the towns again and rebuild the ruins.

¹¹ The number of your people will grow— they

will have many children. The animals too will have many young. I will make sure that you're inhabited just as you used to be, and I will make you more prosperous than you were before. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

¹² I will have my people Israel walk on your mountains. You will be theirs; you will belong to them, and you will no longer rob your nation of their children.*

¹³ This is what the Lord God says: Because people say to you, 'You eat people, and rob your nation of their children,' ¹⁴ from now on you won't eat people or rob your nation of their children, declares the Lord God. ¹⁵ I'm going to stop these nations insulting you, and you won't have to put up with their taunts any more, or make the nation fall, declares the Lord God."

¹⁶ Another message from Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁷ "Son of man, when the people of Israel were living in their country, they made it unclean by the way they behaved, by what they did. The way they were behaving in my presence was like the ceremonial uncleanness of a woman's period. ¹⁸ So I became angry with them because of murders they committed in the country, and because they made it unclean by worshipping idols. ¹⁹ I scattered them among the different nations and countries. I judged them according to the way they had behaved and what they did. ²⁰ But wherever they went among

* **36:12** "Rob your nation of their children": this strange phrase is thought by some to refer to the times when the Israelites practiced child sacrifice.

the nations, they ruined my reputation, because people said about them, 'These are the Lord's people, but they had to leave his country.' ²¹ So I had to take care of my reputation for holiness which the people of Israel had ruined among the nations where they'd gone.

²² Tell the people of Israel that this is what the Lord God says: I'm not doing this for you, people of Israel, but for my reputation for holiness, which you ruined among the nations where you went. ²³ I will reveal the holy nature and importance of my reputation, which has been ruined among the nations, the reputation you have ruined among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when I reveal my holiness through you as they watch.

²⁴ For I will bring you back from among the nations, gathering you from all the different countries, and I will lead you back into your own country. ²⁵ I will also pour pure water over you, and you will be clean. I will wash you clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new mind and I will put a new spirit inside you. I will take away your stubborn mind and I will give you a loving mind. ²⁷ I will put my Spirit inside you so you will follow my laws and remember to do what I tell you.

²⁸ Then you will live in the country I gave to your forefathers. You will be my people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ I will save you from everything that makes you unclean. I will make sure you have plenty of grain. I won't send you

any famines. ³⁰ I will also make sure you have good harvests from your orchards and fields, so that you won't be mocked by other nations anymore because of famine.

³¹ Then you will remember your evil ways and terrible things you've done, and you'll hate yourselves for your sins and disgusting actions.

³² You need to realize that I'm not doing this for your sake, declares the Lord God. You should be ashamed and embarrassed for what you've done, people of Israel!

³³ This is what the Lord God says: On the day I make you clean from all your sins, I will have you live in your towns again and make sure the ruins are rebuilt. ³⁴ The land that was deserted will be cultivated again instead of looking abandoned to everyone passing by.

³⁵ Then they will say, 'This deserted land is now like the garden of Eden. The towns that were demolished, abandoned, and destroyed have been restored and strengthened, and people are living in them.'

³⁶ Then those nations around you that are left will acknowledge that I, the Lord, have rebuilt what was demolished, and that I have replanted what was destroyed. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will carry it out.

³⁷ This is what the Lord God says: I will once again answer the prayers of the people of Israel. This is what I will do for them: I will have them increase in number like a flock. ³⁸ Just like all the many flocks that are brought to Jerusalem to be sacrificed during the religious festivals, so the

towns that were once demolished will be full of flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

37

¹ The Lord picked me up and carried me away by his Spirit. He set me down in the middle of a valley that was full of bones. ² He led me around them, and in all directions I saw many, many bones on the valley floor. They were really dry.

³ Then he asked me, “Son of man, can these bones come back to life?”

“Lord God, only you know the answer,” I replied.

⁴ He told me, “Prophecy to these bones and tell them, Dry bones, listen to this message from the Lord! ⁵ This is what the Lord God says to these bones: I will breathe into you, and you will come back to life. ⁶ I will give you tendons and have flesh grow over you and cover you with skin. I will breathe into you so that you will come back to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.”

⁷ So I prophesied just as I had been ordered. When I started prophesying, suddenly I heard a rattling noise. The bones joined together, bone attached to bone. ⁸ As I watched, I saw tendons and flesh grow on them, and skin covered them; but the bodies didn't breathe.

⁹ Then he told me, “Prophecy to the breath! Prophecy, son of man, and tell the breath that this is what the Lord God says: Breath, come from the four winds, and breathe into these bodies, so that they can come back to life!”

¹⁰ So I prophesied just as he had ordered me, and the breath went into the bodies, and they came back to life and stood up, a huge army!

¹¹ He told me, “Son of man, these bones represent all the people of Israel. Listen to what the people are saying, ‘Our bones have dried up, and our hope has been crushed. We have been wiped out!’

¹² So prophesy and tell them that this is what the Lord God says: My people, I'm going to open your graves and lift you out of them, and I will take you back to the country of Israel. ¹³ Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and lift you out of them, my people.

¹⁴ I will put my Spirit in you and you will live again, and I will take you back to your own country. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will carry it out, declares the Lord.”

¹⁵ Another message from the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁶ “Son of man, get one piece of wood and write on it: ‘This belongs to Judah and the Israelite tribes allied to them.’ Then get another piece of wood and write on it: ‘This belongs to Joseph. This is Ephraim's piece of wood, and to the Israelite tribes allied to them.’ ¹⁷ Then join the two pieces of wood into one, so that you hold them as one in your hand.

¹⁸ When your people come and ask you, ‘Are you going to explain what this is all about?’

¹⁹ tell them that this is what the Lord God says: I'm going to take Joseph's piece of wood, which Ephraim is holding, along with the Israelite

tribes allied with them, and I'll join them with Judah's piece of wood. I will make them into a single piece of wood, and they will be as one in my hand.

²⁰ When you're holding the pieces of wood you've written on, and while everyone is watching, ²¹ tell them that this is what the Lord God says: I'm going to bring the Israelites back from the nations where they've gone. I will gather them from everywhere and take them back to their own country. ²² I will make them one nation in the country, living in the mountains of Israel, and one king will rule them all. They won't be two nations any longer; never again will they be divided into two kingdoms.

²³ They won't make themselves unclean anymore with their idols or disgusting images, or with any of their rebellious sins. I will save them from all their sins when they abandoned me,* and I will make them clean. They will be my people, and I will be their God. ²⁴ My servant David will be their king. They will be united under one ruler. They will follow my laws, and they will observe and practice my regulations.

²⁵ They will live in the country I gave to my servant Jacob where your forefathers lived. They will live there with their children and grandchildren forever, and my servant David will be their prince forever. ²⁶ I will make an

* **37:23** "Sins when they abandoned me": some Hebrew manuscripts and the Septuagint. Hebrew text: "the places they lived where they sinned."

agreement of peace with them. This will be an everlasting agreement. I will make them secure and increase their numbers, and I will keep my sanctuary there with them forever. ²⁷ My Tabernacle will be with them. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ²⁸ The nations will acknowledge that I am the Lord who blesses Israel, when my sanctuary is with them forever.”

38

¹ A message from the Lord came to me, saying,
² “Son of man, face towards Gog of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophesy against him ³ and declare that this is what the Lord God says: Watch out, I am condemning you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ⁴ I will send you in a different direction, put hooks in your jaws, and drag you out with your whole army, including your horses, your horsemen in uniform, and a host of men with large and small shields and bucklers, all waving their swords. ⁵ Soldiers from Persia, Cush, and Put will join them, all equipped with shields and helmets, ⁶ together with Gomer and all its armies, as well as Beth-togarmah from the distant places of the north with all its armies—and many other nations that join with you.

⁷ Get ready! Make sure you and your whole army with you is prepared. You're the one in charge of them. ⁸ A long time later you will be called to battle. In the final years you will invade a country that has recovered from war. Its people will have been gathered from many

nations to the mountains of Israel, which had been abandoned for a long time. They had been brought back from the nations, and were all living in safety. ⁹ You and your whole army, and the armies of many nations with you, will advance like an incoming storm, like a cloud that covers the land.

¹⁰ This is what the Lord God says: On that day you will start thinking about things in your mind, and you will come up with an evil plan.

¹¹ You tell yourself, 'I'm going to attack a country of undefended villages, a peaceful people who don't suspect an attack. They all live in towns without defensive walls or barred gates. ¹² I'll be able to loot them—I'll rob them of their possessions. I'll attack those places that were once ruined but now are inhabited again. I'll attack a people brought back from the other nations, who now own livestock and possessions, living in the center* of the country.'

¹³ Sheba and Dedan and the traders from Tarshish with all its strong leaders† will ask, 'Are you going to loot the place? Have you gathered your armies to rob them, to carry away silver and gold, to take cattle and possessions—to grab a great deal of plunder?'

¹⁴ So prophesy, son of man, and tell Gog that this is what the Lord God says: On the day

* **38:12** The word used for center is "navel," and is similar to Mount Tabor. It is in the same general area as "Armageddon," the location for the end-time battle referred to in Revelation 16:16.

† **38:13** "Strong leaders": literally, "young lions," alternatively the word could be translated "villages."

you attack aren't you going to notice that my people Israel are unsuspecting? ¹⁵ You'll advance from your place in the distant north, you and your many allies, everyone riding horses, a huge number of men, a massive army. ¹⁶ You will attack my people Israel like a cloud that covers the land. Gog, in the last days I will send you to attack my land, so that the nations may acknowledge me as holy when I reveal myself to them by what I do through you.

¹⁷ This is what the Lord God says: Aren't you the one of whom I spoke about long ago through my servants, the prophets of Israel? During that time didn't they prophesy for years that I would have you come and attack them? ¹⁸ Now on that day, the day when Gog comes to attack the country of Israel, I will become very angry, declares the Lord God.

¹⁹ In my passionate, furious anger I announce that at that time a violent earthquake will hit of the country of Israel. ²⁰ Everything that lives on the earth will tremble at my presence—the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the wild animals, every creature that runs upon the ground, and every human being. The mountains will be torn down, the cliffs will collapse, and every wall will be knocked to the ground.

²¹ I will call for an attack on Gog from all my mountains, declares the Lord God. Everyone will attack his brother with sword. ²² I will punish him with disease and bloodshed. I will send rainstorms, hailstones, fire, and sulfur down on him and his army, and on the armies of his many

allies. ²³ I will demonstrate my true power and holiness, revealing myself to many nations. Then they will acknowledge that I am the Lord.”

39

¹ “Son of man, prophesy against Gog and announce that this is what the Lord God says: Watch out, because I'm condemning you Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ² I will send you in a different direction, drag you along, bring you from the distant places of the north, and send you to attack the mountains of Israel. ³ Then I will knock the bow out of your left hand and make you drop the arrows from your right hand.

⁴ You will be killed on the mountains of Israel, you and your whole army and armies of your allies. I will provide you as food to all kinds of flesh-eating birds and animals. ⁵ You will fall and die out in the open, for I have spoken, declares the Lord God.

⁶ I will set Magog on fire, as well as the coastlands where people think it's safe to live, and then they will acknowledge that I am the Lord. ⁷ In this way I will make my reputation for holiness known among my people Israel and won't allow it to be ruined anymore. Then the nations will acknowledge that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. ⁸ Yes, it's coming! It will definitely happen, declares the Lord God. This is the day that I have spoken about.

⁹ Then those living in the towns of Israel will go out to light fires and burn the weapons—the

large and small shields, the bows and arrows, the clubs and spears. They will use the weapons to make fires for seven years. ¹⁰ They won't need to go and gather firewood from the countryside or cut it from the forests, because they'll use the weapons to make fires. They will loot and plunder those who looted and plundered them, declares the Lord God.

¹¹ At that time I will give Gog a place to be buried in Israel, the Travelers' Valley, east of the Sea. People won't be able to travel through because all his army will be buried there. So it will be called the Valley of Gog's Army. ¹² It will take the people of Israel seven months to bury them in order to make the country clean. ¹³ Everyone in the country will be involved in burying them, and this will give them a good reputation when I reveal my glory, declares the Lord God.

¹⁴ Men will be chosen to go repeatedly through the country to make it clean it by burying the bodies of the invaders that are still left lying the ground. They will start doing this at the end of the seven months. ¹⁵ As they search the country, if they find a human bone they will place a marker next to it so that those in charge of burials can have it buried in the Valley of Gog's Army. ¹⁶ Even the town there will be named Hamonah.* In this way they will make the country clean.

¹⁷ Son of man, this is what the Lord God says:

* **39:16** "Hamonah," referring to the "army."

Call out to every kind of flesh-eating bird and wild animal: Come from everywhere around and gather for the sacrifice I'm going to prepare for you, a great sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel where you'll have flesh to eat and blood to drink. ¹⁸ You will eat the flesh of the powerful and drink the blood of the world's leaders just as if they were rams, lambs, goats, and bulls—all the fattened animals that come from Bashan. ¹⁹ You will eat fat until you are totally full and drink blood until you are drunk at the sacrifice I'm going to prepare. ²⁰ You will eat at my table until you're full, consuming horses and riders, powerful men and all kinds of warriors, declares the Lord God.

²¹ I will reveal my glory to the other nations, and all of them will see the punishment I hand out to them. ²² From that time on the people of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God. ²³ The nations will realize that the people of Israel were taken prisoner because of their sins, because they were unfaithful to me. So I gave up on them and handed them over to their enemies, so that they were all[†] killed by the sword. ²⁴ I dealt with them because of their uncleanness and sins, and I gave up on them.

²⁵ So this is what the Lord God says: Now I will bring back the descendants of Jacob from exile and I will show mercy to all the people of Israel, and I will demonstrate my reputation for holiness. ²⁶ They will forget their shameful

[†] **39:23** "All": an example of hyperbole, since clearly they were not all killed.

actions and all the ways they were unfaithful to me once they live in safety in their country, with no one to threaten them. ²⁷ When I bring them home from the nations, gathering them from the countries of their enemies, I will reveal my holiness among as many nations watch. ²⁸ Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, when I bring them home to their own country again, not leaving any of them behind. ²⁹ I won't give up on them anymore, for I will fill the people of Israel with my Spirit, declares the Lord God."

40

¹ At the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month of the twenty-fifth year of our exile, (fourteenth years after Jerusalem had been captured), was the exact day that the Lord's power came over me and he took me there to the city. ² God took me to the country of Israel in vision and set me down on a very high mountain. On the south side of the mountain there were buildings that seemed to be a city. ³ When he took me there I saw a man who looked like shining bronze. He was holding a linen cord and a measuring rod as he stood in the entrance way.

⁴ "Son of man," he told me, "watch with your eyes, listen with your ears. Concentrate on everything I'm about to show you, because that's the reason you were brought here. You are to explain to the people of Israel what you've been shown, everything you see."

⁵ I could see a wall that surrounded the Temple. The measuring rod the man was holding was six

long cubits in length (a long cubit is a cubit plus a handbreadth). He measured the wall as six cubits thick and six cubits high.

⁶ Then he went up the steps of the east-facing gate. He measured the gate's threshold as six cubits deep. ⁷ Beyond that were alcoves that measured six cubits by six cubits, with five cubits between the alcoves. The threshold of the inside entrance facing the porch measured six cubits. ⁸ Then he measured the entrance porch. ⁹ It was eight cubits deep, and its posts* were two cubits thick. The entrance porch faced the Temple.

¹⁰ There were three alcoves on each side of the east gate entrance that all measured the same. The posts on each side also measured the same. ¹¹ He measured the width of the entrance gateway as ten cubits. It was thirteen cubits long.

¹² A wall one cubit high was in front of alcove, and the alcoves measured six cubits by six cubits. ¹³ Then he measured the entrance gateway from the roof of one alcove to the roof of the one opposite. It was twenty-five cubits from one doorway to the opposite doorway.

¹⁴ Then he measured the distance between the posts as sixty cubits. The gateway led all the way around to the courtyard. ¹⁵ It was fifty cubits from the gateway entrance to the far side of the inside porch.

* **40:9** "Posts" this is thought to refer to the side of a door, otherwise known as the "door jamb." Sometimes this word is translated as "pillars," but in verse 49 it clearly refers to "columns" (or pillars) beside the posts.

¹⁶ The alcoves and their pillars had narrow windows on all of the inside of the gateway. The porches also had windows on all of the inside. All the posts were decorated with palm tree designs.

¹⁷ He took me into the outer courtyard. I saw rooms and a pavement had been constructed around the courtyard. There were thirty rooms facing the pavement. ¹⁸ This was termed the lower pavement and it extended along the sides of the gateways and was the same length as them.

¹⁹ He measured the distance from the front of the lower gateway to the far side of the inner courtyard as one hundred cubits, both to the east side and the north.

²⁰ He also measured the length and width of the gateway of the outer courtyard that faced north. ²¹ Its three alcoves on both sides, its posts, and its porch all measured the same as the first gateway and was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. ²² Its windows, porch, and palm tree decorations were the same as those of the east-facing gate. It had seven steps leading up to it, with its porch facing them.

²³ There was an entrance to the inner courtyard facing the north gate, just like the east gate. He measured the distance from the entrance to the gate as a hundred cubits.

²⁴ He took me to the south side, and I saw a gateway that faced south. He measured its posts and its porch, and they measured the same as those previously. ²⁵ Both the gateway and its porch had windows all around it that were like

the other windows. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. ²⁶ It had seven steps leading up to it, and its porch faced them. It had one post on each side with palm tree designs on them.

²⁷ The inner courtyard also had an entrance facing south, and he measured the distance from the entrance to the south gate as a hundred cubits.

²⁸ He took me into the inner courtyard through the south gate, and he measured the south gate. It measured the same as those previously.

²⁹ Its alcoves, posts, and porch had the same measurements as those previously. The gateway and its porch had windows all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

³⁰ (The other surrounding porches measured twenty-five cubits long and five cubits deep.)

³¹ Its porch faced the outer courtyard, and its pillars were decorated with palm tree designs. It had eight steps leading up to it.

³² He took me to the inner courtyard on the east side. He measured the gateway and it measured the same as those previously. ³³ Its alcoves, posts, and porch measured the same as those previously. The gateway and its porch had windows all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide.

³⁴ Its porch faced the outer courtyard, and its posts were decorated with palm tree designs. It had eight steps leading up to it.

³⁵ He took me to the north gate and measured it. It measured the same as those previously,

³⁶ including its alcoves, posts, and porch. The gateway and its porch had windows all around. It was fifty cubits long and twenty-five cubits wide. ³⁷ Its porch faced the outer courtyard, and its posts were decorated with palm tree designs on all sides. It had eight steps leading up to it.

³⁸ A room with a doorway stood beside by the porch of the inner gateways. This was where the burnt offering was washed. ³⁹ Inside the gateway porch were two tables on both sides, where the sacrificial animals were slaughtered for burnt offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings.

⁴⁰ Outside, on the way up to the entrance of the north gateway, were two tables on one side of the gate's porch and two tables on the other side. ⁴¹ So there were four tables on the inside the of gateway and another four outside, making a total of eight tables. This is where the sacrifices were slaughtered.

⁴² There were also four tables of cut stone for the burnt offering. They each measured one and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and a cubit high. The tools used to slaughter the burnt offerings and the other sacrifices were placed on these tables.

⁴³ Hooks measuring the width of a hand were attached to the walls inside the room. The meat of the offering was to be placed on the tables.

⁴⁴ Outside the inner gate but inside the inner courtyard were two rooms. One was beside the north gate and faced south; the other beside the south gate and faced north.

⁴⁵ The man told me: “The room that faces south is for the priests in charge of the Temple, ⁴⁶ and the room that faces north is for the priests in charge of the altar. These priests are the descendants of Zadok and are the only Levites who are allowed to come near to the Lord and minister before him.”

⁴⁷ He measured the square courtyard: a hundred cubits long and a hundred cubits wide. The altar stood in the courtyard in front of the Temple.

⁴⁸ He took me to the Temple porch and measured the pillars of the porch as five cubits on each side. The gateway was fourteen cubits wide and its sides measured three cubits. ⁴⁹ The porch was twenty cubits wide and twelve cubits deep, and had ten steps leading up to it. There were columns by the posts, one on both sides.

41

¹ He took me to the Temple and measured the posts as cubits wide on both sides. ² The entrance was ten cubits wide, and the sides of the entrance were five cubits long on both sides. He measured the outer sanctuary as forty cubits long and twenty cubits wide.

³ He went into the inner sanctuary and measured the entrance posts as two cubits wide. The entrance was six cubits wide, and the walls on both sides were seven cubits wide. ⁴ He measured the room beside the inner sanctuary as twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide. He told me, “This is the Most Holy Place.”

⁵ He measured Temple wall as six cubits thick, and each side room around the Temple was four cubits wide. ⁶ There were three levels of side rooms above one another, each having thirty rooms.

The wall of the Temple had external supports for the side rooms, so that they would not be fixed into the wall of the Temple itself. ⁷ The side rooms around the Temple became wider at each higher level, because as the structure around the Temple went up the Temple wall grew narrower. A stairway provided access from the bottom story to the top, going through the middle level.

⁸ I saw that the Temple was on a raised platform that surrounded it. This was the foundation for the side rooms. Its height was the complete length of a measuring rod, six long cubits. ⁹ The thickness of the outer wall of the side rooms was five cubits, and there was open space between the side rooms of the Temple ¹⁰ and the outer chambers that measured twenty cubits wide all round the Temple. ¹¹ The doors of the side rooms opened into this area, with one entrance to the north and another one to the south. The open space was five cubits wide on each side.

¹² Another building faced the Temple courtyard on the west side. It measured seventy cubits wide and ninety cubits long, with walls all the way round that were five cubits thick.

¹³ He measured the Temple as one hundred cubits long. The Temple courtyard and the building including its walls were also one hundred

cubits long. ¹⁴ The Temple courtyard on the east side, (including the front of the Temple), was one hundred cubits wide.

¹⁵ He measured the length of the building that faced the Temple courtyard towards the rear of the Temple, including its open halls on each side. It was one hundred cubits long. The outer sanctuary, the inner sanctuary, and the porches facing the courtyard, ¹⁶ as well as the thresholds and the narrow windows and the surrounding open halls with their three levels up to and including the threshold, were covered with wood on every side. This extended from the ground up to and including the windows.

¹⁷ On the outside of all the walls by the entrance to the inner sanctuary, spaced at regular intervals around the inner and outer sanctuary, ¹⁸ were carved designs of cherubim and palm trees. Every cherub had two faces: ¹⁹ a man's face looked in the direction of a palm tree on one side, and the face of a young lion looked in the direction of the palm tree on the other side. These carvings extended the whole way round the Temple. ²⁰ Designs of cherubim and palm trees were carved on the Temple wall from the floor up to the space above the doorway.

²¹ The Temple's doorframe was rectangular, as was the doorframe of the sanctuary.

²² An altar made of wood stood there, three cubits high and two cubits by long. All of it—its corners, base, and sides—were made of wood. The man told me, “This is the table that stands before the Lord.”

²³ The Temple and the sanctuary both had hinged double doors. ²⁴ Each door had two panels that opened. There were two panels for one door, and two panels for the other door. ²⁵ There were carvings of cherubim and palm trees on the Temple doors like those on the walls, and there was a wooden roof that covered the outside part of the porch at the front. ²⁶ There were narrow windows and palm tree designs on the walls of the porch. The side rooms of the Temple also had roofs.

42

¹ The man took me out through the north gate to the outer courtyard into the rooms on the far side of the Temple courtyard by the northern external wall. ² The building with the north-facing door was a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide. ³ It had three floors of open halls on both sides, one facing the twenty-cubit area of the inner courtyard and one facing the pavement of the outer courtyard.

⁴ In front of the rooms was an inside walkway ten cubits wide and a hundred cubits long. Their doors opened to the north.

⁵ The upper rooms were smaller because of the space taken up by the open halls on the lower and middle levels of the building. ⁶ Since they didn't have pillars like the courtyards, the upper rooms were set farther back than the lower and middle levels. ⁷ An external wall ran in front of the rooms for fifty cubits long parallel to the outer courtyard. ⁸ The rooms on the outer

courtyard extended for fifty cubits, but those that faced the Temple were a hundred cubits long. ⁹ Below these rooms was an entrance on the east side coming from the outer courtyard.

¹⁰ Along the wall on the south* side of the outer courtyard were rooms next to the courtyard and opposite the building. ¹¹ There was a walkway in front of them, just like the rooms on the north side. These rooms had the same length and width, the same doors, floor plan, and exits. ¹² Similarly there was an entrance under the rooms on the south side of the building, coming from the east side.

¹³ The man told me, "The north and south rooms that face the Temple courtyard are holy rooms where the priests who go before the Lord will eat the most holy offerings. They will place the most holy offerings there because the place is holy, and include the grain offerings, the sin offerings, and the guilt offerings. ¹⁴ Once the priests have entered these rooms, they are not to go to the outer courtyard before leaving their priestly clothes, because these are holy. They must change into other clothes before go where the ordinary people are."

¹⁵ After the man finished measuring inside of the Temple area, he took me out through the east gate, and he measured the surrounding area as well. ¹⁶ Using the measuring rod he measured the east side. It was five hundred cubits long.

¹⁷ He measured the north side. It was five hundred cubits long.

* **42:10** "South": Septuagint reading.

18 He measured the south side. It was five hundred cubits long.

19 And he came around and measured the west side. It was five hundred cubits long.

20 So he measured all four sides. There was a wall surrounding it, five hundred cubits long and five hundred cubits wide, separating the holy from the common.

43

1 The man took me back to the east gate.

2 There I saw the glory of Israel's God coming from the east. His voice sounded like a thundering waterfall, and the earth blazed bright with his glory.

3 The vision I saw was just like the vision I'd seen when he* came to destroy the city of Jerusalem and like the visions I'd seen beside the River Kebar. I fell facedown on the ground. 4 The glory of the Lord entered the Temple through the east gate. 5 Then the Spirit picked me up and took me into the inner courtyard, and the glory of the Lord filled the Temple.

6 I heard someone speaking to me from inside the Temple while the man standing beside me.

7 He told me, "Son of man, this is where I have my throne. It's my home† where I will live among the Israelites forever. The people of Israel and their kings won't ever again disgrace me and my

* 43:3 "He": in the Hebrew it reads "I" which is either scribal error or reflects the concept that the prophet carried out what he only predicted. † 43:7 "My home": literally, "the place for the soles of my feet."

holiness by their acts of prostitution and by their honoring their dead kings in their pagan high places. ⁸ When they built their homes right next to mine—their threshold beside my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall separating us—they disgraced me and my holiness by the disgusting sins they committed. That's why I destroyed them in my anger. ⁹ Now if they get rid of their prostitution and their pagan honoring of their dead kings, and I will live with them forever.

¹⁰ Son of man, tell the people of Israel about the Temple and they'll be ashamed of their sins. Have them carefully consider its plan, ¹¹ and if they're ashamed of everything they've done, then explain to them the Temple's design, its layout, exits, and entrances—the complete plan—as well as all its regulations, specifications, and laws. Write them down as they watch, so that they can remember its complete plan and follow all its regulations.

¹² This is the Temple law: the whole area around the Temple on the mountain top is very holy. Pay attention: this is the Temple law.

¹³ These are the measurements of the altar in cubits (a cubit and the width of a hand): The gutter is to be one cubit deep and one cubit wide, with a rim one hand span wide along its edge. The back of the altar ¹⁴ measured from the gutter on the ground to the lower ledge is to be two cubits. The ledge will measure one cubit wide. The distance from the smaller ledge to the larger

ledge is to be four cubits, and the ledge one cubit wide.

¹⁵ The altar hearth is to be four cubits high, with four horns pointing upwards from it. ¹⁶ The altar hearth shall be square, its four sides each measuring twelve cubits. ¹⁷ The ledge is also to be square, measuring fourteen cubits by fourteen cubits, with a half-cubit rim and a one-cubit gutter all around it. The altar steps are to face the east.”

¹⁸ Then he told me: “Son of man, this is what the Lord God says: These are the regulations regarding the altar once it's built, so that it can be used to sacrifice burnt offerings and to sprinkle blood on it: ¹⁹ You shall give a young bull as a sin offering to the Leviticus priests from the family of Zadok, who come and minister before me, declares the Lord God. ²⁰ Take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and all the way round the rim. This is how you shall purify the altar and set it right. ²¹ Then remove the bull for the sin offering and burn it in the designated place of the Temple area outside the sanctuary.

²² On the second day you are to bring as male goat without defects as a sin offering, and the altar shall be purified as it was purified with the bull. ²³ After you've finished the purifying process, you are to present a young bull and a ram, both free from defects. ²⁴ You are to offer them to the Lord. The priests shall sprinkle salt on them and sacrifice them to the Lord as a burnt offering.

²⁵ For seven days you are to supply a male goat daily for a sin offering. You are also to supply a young bull and a ram, they are both to have no defects. ²⁶ For seven days the priests are to set the altar right and purify it. This is how they will dedicate it. ²⁷ Once these days are over, then from the eighth day the priests are to present the burnt offerings and peace offerings of your people on the altar. Then I will accept all of you, declares the Lord God.”

44

¹ The man took me back to the outside gate of the sanctuary that faced to the east, but it was shut. ² The Lord told me, “This gate will stay shut. It is not to be opened. No one is allowed to come in through it, because the Lord, the God of Israel, has passed through it. So it will stay shut. ³ The prince himself is permitted to come and sit inside the gateway to eat in the presence of the Lord. He is to come in through the gateway's porch and leave the same way.”

⁴ The man took me to the front of the Temple through the north gate. As I looked, I saw the glory of the Lord filling his Temple, and I fell with my face to the ground.

⁵ The Lord told me, “Son of man, concentrate! Keep your eyes open! Listen carefully to everything I tell you about all the regulations and laws of the Lord's Temple. Pay close attention

to the Temple entrance and all the exits of the sanctuary.*

⁶ Tell those rebels, the people of Israel, that this is what the Lord God says: I've had more than enough of all your disgusting sins, people of Israel! ⁷ As well as all your other offensive practices, you invited unconverted, pagan foreigners† to come into my sanctuary. You made my Temple unclean even while you offered food to me, the fat and the blood. You broke my agreement. ⁸ In addition you have not taken care of my sanctuary as you were required to, but instead you employed others to look after my sanctuary for you.

⁹ This is what the Lord God says: No unconverted, pagan foreigners are allowed to enter my sanctuary—not even a foreigner who lives with the Israelites.

¹⁰ The Levites who abandoned me when Israel turned from worshiping me and went off to follow their idols will experience the consequences of their sins. ¹¹ However, they will serve in my sanctuary, supervising the Temple gates and working in the Temple. They will slaughter the burnt offerings and sacrifices brought by the people and be there to serve them.

¹² But because they served the people in front of their idols and encouraged the people of Israel to sin, I held up my hand to promise on oath that they would experience the consequences of

* **44:5** Presumably to determine who is allowed access. † **44:7** "Unconverted, pagan foreigners": literally, "uncircumcised in heart and flesh."

their sin, declares the Lord God. ¹³ They are not allowed to come near me to serve me as priests, and they are not to touch anything I regard as holy or most holy. They will have to experience the shame of the disgusting sins they committed. ¹⁴ However, I will put them in charge of all Temple work and everything that needs to be done there.‡

¹⁵ It is the Levitical priests, descended from Zadok and who took care of my sanctuary when the Israelites abandoned me, are the ones to come near to me and minister before me. They will stand in my presence to offer me fat and blood, declares the Lord God. ¹⁶ Only they are allowed to enter my sanctuary and approach my table to minister before me. They will do what I say.

¹⁷ When they come in through the entrances of the inner courtyard, they shall wear linen garments. They must not wear any woolen clothes when they serve at the entrances of the inner courtyard or inside the Temple. ¹⁸ They shall wear linen turbans on their heads and linen underwear. They are not to wear anything that makes them sweat.

¹⁹ When they go to the outer court where the people are, they must take off their priestly clothes they wore when they were serving, and leave them in the holy rooms. They are to put on other clothes so that they don't carry holiness to the people with their clothing.

‡ **44:14** In other words the larger body of Levites were to do the menial work required in the Temple.

²⁰ They are not permitted to shave their heads or let their hair grow long; they must have a proper haircut. ²¹ No priest shall drink wine before he enters the inner courtyard. ²² They are not to marry a woman who is a widow or divorced; they can only marry a virgin of Israelite descent, or a widow of a priest. ²³ They are to teach my people the difference between what is holy and what is common, and explain to them how to distinguish between what is clean and what is unclean.

²⁴ They are to serve as judges in legal cases, and base their decisions on my laws. They are to follow my instructions and regulations regarding all my regular religious festivals, and they are to keep my Sabbaths holy.

²⁵ A priest must not make himself unclean by going near a dead body. However, if it's his father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or a sister that's not married, then he may do so. ²⁶ Afterwards, once he is purified, he must wait for seven days. ²⁷ Then when he enters the sanctuary, going into the inner courtyard and ministering there in the sanctuary, he has to present his sin offering, declares the Lord God.

²⁸ Regarding their share of the land, I will take care of them. You are not to give them any property in Israel, because I will provide for them.

²⁹ They are to eat the grain offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings. Everything brought by the people of Israel and dedicated to the Lord will be theirs. ³⁰ The best of all the firstfruits and

all your offerings are for the priests. You shall give the first loaf you bake to the priest, so that your home may be blessed. ³¹ The priests are not permitted to eat any bird or animal found dead or killed by wild beasts.”

45

¹ When you allocate the land ownership by lot, you are to make a provision for the Lord, a holy allocation of the land that measures 25,000 cubits long and 20,000* cubits wide. This whole area is holy.

² Inside this there is the section for the sanctuary that measures 500 cubits square, with an open area around it 50 cubits wide.

³ From this holy allocation, measure out a section that is 25,000 cubits by 10,000 cubits. This will contain the sanctuary, the Most Holy Place. ⁴ This area is a holy allocation of the land which will be used by the priests who serve in the sanctuary, who come before the Lord to minister. It will be where they can live, and a holy place for the sanctuary.

⁵ The other section measuring 25,000 cubits by 10,000 cubits will be assigned the Levites who work in the Temple where they can live.†

⁶ Allocate to the city an area 5,000 cubits wide and 25,000 cubits long beside the sanctuary section. It is for the all the people of Israel.

* **45:1** “20,000.” Septuagint reading. The Hebrew is “10,000,” but since this allocation is divided into two sections of 10,000 cubits each, the Septuagint is likely correct. † **45:5** “Where they can live”: literally, “property for twenty rooms.”

⁷ The prince will be assigned the territory on both sides of the area that includes the holy section and that of the city. It will extend to the western border of the country from the west side and to the eastern border from the east side, in the same way as the allocation to the tribes. ⁸ This territory will be his to own in the country of Israel. My princes won't exploit my people anymore, and will make sure the people of Israel occupy the country according to their tribal allocations.

⁹ This is what the Lord God says: You've done enough damage, princes of Israel! Stop using violence and mistreating people! Do what is good and right. Stop evicting people and stealing their property, declares the Lord God.

¹⁰ You must use correct methods of measurement—whether it's weights on scales, or ephah for measuring solids, and a bath for measuring liquids. ¹¹ The ephah and the bath shall be the same quantity of volume. The bath will be equivalent to a tenth of a homer, and the ephah will also be equivalent to a tenth of a homer. The homer is to be the fundamental measurement. ¹² Twenty gerahs make one shekel. Sixty[‡] shekels make one mina.

¹³ These are the taxes[§] you are to contribute: one sixth of an ephah from every homer of wheat or barley. ¹⁴ In the case of olive oil, one

[‡] **45:12** "Sixty": given as 20 plus 25 plus 15. No reason for this is clear. [§] **45:13** The taxes are to be paid to the prince for the operating costs of the Temple.

tenth of a bath from every cor. (The measurement is based on baths, and a cor consists of ten baths or one homer, since ten baths equal one homer.) ¹⁵ In addition one sheep is to be supplied from every flock of two hundred from the green pastures of Israel. These are to provide for the grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings, to set the people right, declares the Lord God.

¹⁶ Everyone in the country has to make these contributions to the prince in Israel. ¹⁷ The prince's role is to provide the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings for the religious festivals, New Moons, and Sabbaths—in fact for all the regular religious festivals of the people of Israel. He is to provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings to set the people of Israel right.

¹⁸ This is what the Lord God says: On the first day of the first month you are to sacrifice a young bull that has no defects to purify the sanctuary.

¹⁹ The priest shall take some of the blood from the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the Temple, on the four corners of the upper ledge of the altar, and on the gateposts of the inner courtyard. ²⁰ You are also to do this on the seventh day of the month on behalf of anyone who does wrong unintentionally or in ignorance. By doing this you purify the Temple.

²¹ You are to keep the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. This is a religious festival that lasts seven days, during which time bread made without yeast is to be eaten. ²² On

that day the prince will provide a bull as a sin offering for himself and for everyone on the country. ²³ Every day for the seven days of the festival, he will provide seven bulls and seven rams without defects as a burnt offering to the Lord, together with a male goat for a sin offering. ²⁴ He will also provide an ephah of grain and a hin of olive oil as an offering to accompany each bull and each ram. ²⁵ For the seven days of the festival* that begins on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, he is to provide the same number of sin offerings, burnt offerings, grain offerings, and olive oil.

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¹ This is what the Lord God says: "The east gate of the inner court is to be kept shut during the six working days, but it shall be opened on the Sabbath and on the day of the New Moon ² The prince must come through the gateway porch from outside and he will stand by the gatepost, and the priests will sacrifice his burnt offerings and peace offerings. He is to bow in respect at the gate's threshold of the gate and leave, but the gate is not to be shut until evening. ³ The people of Israel will also bow before the Lord at the gateway entrance on Sabbaths and New Moons.

⁴ The burnt offering that the prince is to offer to the Lord on the Sabbath day shall be six male lambs and a ram, all without defects. ⁵ The

* **45:25** The Festival of Shelters.

grain offering to accompany the ram shall be one ephah, and the grain offering with the lambs shall be as much as he chooses, together with a hin of olive oil for every ephah of grain. ⁶ On the day of the New Moon he is to offer a young bull, six lambs, and a ram. They are all to be without defects. ⁷ He is also to provide a grain offering of an ephah with the bull, an ephah with the ram, and as much as he chooses with the lambs, together with a hin of olive oil for every ephah of grain. ⁸ When the prince enters, he is to come in through the gateway porch, and leave the same way.

⁹ When the people of Israel gather before the Lord at the regular religious festivals, anyone who enters through the north gate to worship has to leave through the south gate, and anyone who enters through the south gate leave through the north gate. No one is allowed to go back through the same gate through which they entered. Everyone must leave by the opposite gate.

¹⁰ The prince is to enter when the people do; and leave when they leave. ¹¹ At the religious festivals and regular meetings, the grain offering will be an ephah with a bull, an ephah with a ram, and as much as people choose with the lambs, together with a hin of olive oil for every ephah of grain.

¹² When the prince decides to make a freewill offering to the Lord, whether it's a burnt offering or a peace offering, the east gate is to be opened for him. He shall offer his burnt offering or peace offering in the same way he does on the

Sabbath. When he leaves, the gate must be closed after him.

¹³ Every morning a year-old lamb without defects is to be sacrificed as a daily burnt offering to the Lord. ¹⁴ Every morning a grain offering of a sixth of an ephah with a third of a hin of olive oil to moisten the best flour is to be provided as a grain offering to the Lord. This regulation is to be followed forever. ¹⁵ Make sure the lamb, the grain offering, and the olive oil is presented every morning as a regular burnt offering.

¹⁶ This is what the Lord God says: If the prince gives a gift of property to any of his sons to own, it will belong to his descendants. They will be able to inherit the property. ¹⁷ However, if he gives a gift of his property to one of his servants, that servant will only own it until the Jubilee Year. Then ownership will return to the prince. His property that he passes on through inheritance belongs only to his sons—it is theirs.

¹⁸ The prince is not to take people's land, driving them off their property. He is to give land to his sons from his own property, so that none of my people shall be evicted from their property.”

¹⁹ The man took me through the entrance beside the gate into the north-facing holy rooms that belonged to the priests. He showed me a place at the far western end ²⁰ and told me, “This is where the priests cook guilt offerings and sin offerings, and where they bake the grain offering. This is so that they don't take them

to the outer courtyard and carry holiness to the people.”

²¹ He took me into the outer courtyard and led me to each of its four corners. I saw a separate courtyard in each corner. ²² There were separate walled courtyards in the four corners of the outer courtyard. They each measured forty cubits by thirty cubits—they were all the same size. ²³ Each of the four courts had a stone ledge with ovens built into the base of the walls on every side.

²⁴ He told me, “These are the kitchens where those who serve in the Temple will cook the people's sacrificial offerings.”

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¹ The man took me back to the Temple entrance. I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the Temple and flowing east (because the Temple faced east). The water was coming from under the south side of the Temple and ran south of the altar.

² Then he took me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate that faced east. I saw water was trickling out from the south side of the gate.

³ The man walked east holding a measuring line He measured a thousand cubits and led me through the water which came up to my ankles.

⁴ He measured another thousand cubits and led me through water which came up to my knees.

He measured another thousand cubits and led me through water that came up to my waist.

⁵ He measured another thousand cubits, but this was a river I couldn't cross. The water had risen so high you could swim in it. It was a river that couldn't be crossed on foot.

⁶ "Son of man, have you observed all this?" he asked. Then he took me back to the riverbank.

⁷ When I got there, I saw a large number of trees on both sides of the river. ⁸ He told me, "This water flows out into the land to the east and into the Arabah.* When it arrives at the Dead Sea, it turns the saltwater fresh. ⁹ There will be many animals and fish wherever the river flows. Because the river turns the saltwater fresh wherever it flows, everything will be able to live there.

¹⁰ Fishermen will stand on the shore of the Dead Sea. They will be able to spread their nets from En-ge-di to En-eglaim and catch many kinds of fish. There will be plenty of fish just like the Mediterranean Sea. ¹¹ However, the marshes and swampy areas won't become fresh; they will remain salty.

¹² All types of fruit trees will grow on both sides of the river. Their leaves won't wither, and they won't fail to produce fruit. They will produce fruit every month, because the river flowing from the sanctuary comes to water them. Their fruit will be eaten as food and their leaves will be used for healing."

¹³ This is what the Lord God says: "These are the boundaries you are to use when allocating ownership of the land to the twelve tribes of

* **47:8** The Arabah is the Jordan Valley and its southern extension that includes the Dead Sea.

Israel (Joseph is to receive two allocations.)

¹⁴ You are to allocate the land to them equally. I held up my hand and made a solemn promise to give it to your forefathers, so this land will come to you to own and to pass on as an inheritance.

¹⁵ These shall be the country's boundaries:

On the northern side it runs from the Mediterranean Sea along the Hethlon road and through Lebo-hamath to Zedad; ¹⁶ then on to Berothah, and Sibraim on the border between Damascus and Hamath, and all the way to Hazer-hatticon, on the border of Hauran. ¹⁷ So the border is from the Mediterranean Sea to Hazar-enan, along the northern border with Damascus, with the border of Hamath to the north. This is the northern boundary.

¹⁸ The eastern boundary runs from Hauran and Damascus, down along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel, to the Dead Sea and on to Tamar. This is the eastern boundary.

¹⁹ The southern boundary runs from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, then along the Wadi of Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. This is the southern boundary.

²⁰ The Mediterranean Sea is the western boundary all the way up to a location opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the western boundary.

²¹ You are to allocate this land for you to own according to the tribes of Israel. ²² You are to allocate land to own and to pass on as an inheritance for yourselves, and for the foreigners who live among you who have children. You shall treat them in the same way as Israelites born in the

country. They are to be given a land allocation to own among the Israelite tribes in the same way as you. ²³ Foreigners are to be allocated land to own among the tribe where they live, declares the Lord God.”

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¹ This is a list of the allocations according to the names of the tribes. At the northern frontier, Dan's allocation borders the Hethlon road to Lebo-hamath and to Hazar-enan on the border of Damascus with Hamath to the north, and extends from the eastern boundary of the country to that on the west.

² Asher's allocation borders that of Dan from east to west.

³ Naphtali's allocation borders that of Asher from east to west.

⁴ Manasseh's allocation borders that of Naphtali from east to west.

⁵ Ephraim's allocation borders that of Manasseh from east to west.

⁶ Reuben's allocation borders that of east to west.

⁷ Judah's allocation borders that of Reuben from east to west.

⁸ Adjacent to Judah's allocation, from east to west, is the special area you are to make provision for.* It is to be 25,000 cubits wide, and extend the same length as a tribal allocation from east to west. The sanctuary will be in the middle of it.

⁹ The special allocation you make is for the Lord and shall be 25,000 cubits by 10,000 cubits.

* **48:8** See 45:1-8.

¹⁰ This is to be the holy allocation for the priests. It will be 25,000 cubits long on the north and south sides, and 10,000 cubits wide on the west and east sides. The sanctuary will be in the middle of it. ¹¹ It is for the holy priests, descendants of Zadok, who stayed faithful and did not abandon me when the Israelites abandoned me. ¹² It will be a special part of the land provided for them, a most holy allocation next to that of the Levites.

¹³ The Levites shall have an area 25,000 cubits by 10,000 cubits adjacent to the allocation of the priests. Its entire length will be 25,000 cubits, and its width 10,000[†] cubits. ¹⁴ They are not permitted to sell exchange or transfer any of it, for it is the best part of the land and is holy to the Lord.

¹⁵ The remainder, 5,000 cubits by 25,000 cubits, is for ordinary use by the city for houses and pastureland. The city will be in the middle of it, ¹⁶ and this will be its measurements: 4,500 cubits on all sides, north, south, east, and west. ¹⁷ The city's pastureland will surround it for 250 cubits on all sides, north, south, east, and west.

¹⁸ What remains of the land bordering the holy allocation and running beside it will be 10,000 cubits on both the east side and the west side. The crops it produces will provide food for those who work in the city. ¹⁹ These workers who farm the land will be from all the Israelite tribes.

²⁰ The whole allocation will be a square, 25,000 cubits by 25,000 cubits. You are to make

[†] **48:13** The Septuagint has 20,000.

provision for the holy allocation, together with the area for the city.

²¹ The land that remains on both sides of the holy allocation and of the area for the city will belong to the prince. This land will be next to the tribal allocations and extend east from the 25,000 cubits of the holy section to the eastern border, on the other side west from the 25,000 cubits to the western border. In the middle of them will be the holy section and the Temple sanctuary.

²² The Levites area and the city's area will lie in the middle of the prince's allocation, and will lie between the borders of the allocations of Judah and Benjamin.

²³ These are the allocations for the rest of the tribes:

Benjamin's allocation extends from the eastern boundary of the country to that on the west.

²⁴ Simeon's allocation borders that of Benjamin from east to west.

²⁵ Issachar's allocation borders that of Simeon from east to west.

²⁶ Zebulun's allocation borders that of Issachar from east to west.

²⁷ Gad's allocation borders that of Zebulun from east to west.

²⁸ The southern border of Gad's allocation will be from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, then along the Wadi of Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. ²⁹ This is the land you are to allocate for the tribes of Israel to own and pass on as an inheritance. These are their assigned allocations, declares the Lord God.

³⁰ These are to be the city exits, starting on the north side, which is 4,500 cubits long. ³¹ The city gates are to be named after the tribes of Israel.

There will be three gates on the north side: the gates of Reuben, Judah, and Levi.

³² There will be three gates on the east side, (also 4,500 cubits long): the gates of Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan.

³³ There will be three gates on the south side, (also 4,500 cubits long): the gates of Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun.

³⁴ There will be three gates on the west side, (also 4,500 cubits long): the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali.

³⁵ The distance around the outside of the city will be 18,000 cubits. From that day on the name of the city will be "The Lord Is There."

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