

Deuteronomy

¹ This is the record of what Moses told all the Israelites during their time in the desert to the east of the Jordan. They were in the Arabah* near Suph, between Paran on the one side and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Di-zahab on the other.

² (It takes eleven days to go from Horeb† to Kadesh-barnea by the road that passes Mount Seir.)

³ On the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year,‡ Moses recounted to the Israelites everything that the Lord had instructed him to tell them.

⁴ This happened after he defeated Sihon king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon, and then at Edrei after he defeated Og king of Bashan, who ruled in Ashtaroth.

⁵ Speaking on the east side of the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain these instructions, saying:§

⁶ The Lord our God told us at Horeb: “You have remained here beside this mountain for long enough.

* **1:1** “The Arabah”: another name for the Jordan Valley. † **1:2** Horeb is another name for Mount Sinai. ‡ **1:3** “Fortieth year”: since leaving Egypt. § **1:5** Moses gives three long speeches which make up most of the book. This speech lasts from 1:6 until 4:40. In order to reduce the number of quotes within quotes, this section does not start or end with quote marks. This procedure is repeated for the other speeches.

⁷ Continue your journey and go to the hill country of the Amorites and all their neighbors, into the Jordan Valley, into the hill country, into the foothills, into the Negev, and along the coast to the country of the Canaanites up to Lebanon, as far as the great River Euphrates.

⁸ Look, I'm giving this land to you. Go and take ownership of the land that the Lord promised he would give to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to their descendants who would follow them."

⁹ That's when I told you, "I can't take responsibility for all of you by myself.

¹⁰ The Lord your God has increased your numbers so much that today there are as many of you as there are stars in the sky.

¹¹ May the Lord, the God of your forefathers, multiply you a thousand times and bless you as he has promised.

¹² But how can I take on all your troubles, burdens, and arguments just by myself?

¹³ You must choose for yourselves wise, experienced men with good judgment from each of your tribes, and I will put them in charge as your leaders."

¹⁴ You replied to me, saying, "Your proposal is a good one."

¹⁵ So I summoned your tribal leaders, men with good judgment, and put them in charge of you, as commanders and officials for your tribes. Some were responsible for thousands, some for hundreds, some for fifties, and some for tens.

¹⁶ At the same time I gave strict instructions to your judges: “Hear the cases brought between your brothers, and make sure you are fair when you judge between a man and his brother or a foreigner living among you.

¹⁷ Don't show any favoritism when you judge—treat the powerful and the common people just the same. Don't let anyone intimidate you, because judgment is done on God's behalf. Bring me any case that is too hard for you, and I will hear it.”

¹⁸ This was also the time I instructed you about everything you had to do.

¹⁹ Following the orders of the Lord our God, we left Horeb and set off towards the hill country of the Amorites, passing through the whole of the large and terrifying desert that you yourselves have experienced. When we reached Kadesh-barnea,

²⁰ I explained to you, “You have reached the hill country of the Amorites, which the Lord our God is giving to us.

²¹ Look, the Lord your God has given you the land! Go and take ownership of the land as the Lord, the God of your forefathers, has told you. Don't be frightened or terrified.”

²² Then you all came to me and suggested, “Let's send men on ahead to explore the land and report back to us about what route to take and which towns we'll come across.”

²³ It seemed like a good plan to me, so I chose twelve of your men, one from each tribe.

²⁴ They set off and went up into the hill country as far as the Valley of Eshcol, exploring the land.

²⁵ They brought back some of the country's fruit, carrying it down to us, and gave us the report: "The Lord our God is giving us good land."

²⁶ But you didn't want to go. You rebelled against the instructions of the Lord your God.

²⁷ You complained while you were in your tents and said, "It's because the Lord hates us that he led us out of Egypt in order to hand us over to the Amorites to be wiped out.

²⁸ Where are we going? Our brothers terrified us* because they told us: "The people are bigger and taller than us; the towns are large, with high walls that reach the sky. We even saw the descendants of the giant Anak there!" "

²⁹ So I told you, "Don't be frightened or scared of them!

³⁰ The Lord your God who leads your way will fight for you in the same way you saw him do for you in Egypt.

³¹ He did the same in the desert—you saw how the Lord your God carried you like a father carries his son during your whole journey until you arrived here."

³² Despite all this, you didn't trust the Lord your God,

³³ who led you on the journey, present in the fire by night and in the cloud by day, looking to

* **1:28** "Terrified us": literally, "caused out hearts to melt."

find a place for you to camp and to show you the way to go.

³⁴ When the Lord heard what you were saying, he got angry and swore an oath:

³⁵ “Not a single one of this evil generation will see the good land I promised to give your forefathers,

³⁶ except Caleb, son of Jephunneh. He will see it, and I will give him and his descendants the land he explored, because he was completely committed to the Lord.”

³⁷ The Lord also got angry with me because of you. He told me, “Even you won't enter the country.

³⁸ However, Joshua, son of Nun, your assistant, will enter it. Encourage him, for he will help Israel to occupy the land.

³⁹ Your small children that you claimed would become prisoners, your children who at the time didn't know good from evil, they will be the ones to enter the land that I will give them, and they will occupy it.

⁴⁰ But now turn around and head back into the desert on the road that leads to the Red Sea.”

⁴¹ But you answered and told me, “We have sinned against the Lord! We will go and we will fight and we will do everything the Lord our God has ordered us to do.” Then you all picked up your weapons and prepared for battle thinking it would be easy to go and fight in the hill country.

⁴² But the Lord instructed me, “Order them not to go and fight because I won't be with

you to prevent you from being defeated by your enemies.”

⁴³ I told you this, but you refused to listen. You defied the instructions of the Lord and arrogantly went to fight in the hill country.

⁴⁴ Then the Amorites living there in the hills came and attacked you. They chased after you like a swarm of bees, killing you all the way from Seir to Hormah.

⁴⁵ You came back to camp and wept before the Lord, but he refused to listen to what you said or to pay attention to you.

⁴⁶ You stayed there in Kadesh for a long time.

2

¹ Then we turned around and headed back into the desert on the road that leads to the Red Sea, as the Lord had told me, and we wandered around Mount Seir for a long time.

² This is when the Lord told me,

³ “You have been wandering around this mountain long enough. Go back north,

⁴ and give these orders to the people: You are going to pass through the territory of your relatives, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be frightened of you, so you need to be very careful.

⁵ Don't fight them, for I'm not going to give you any of their land, not even the size of a footprint, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau and it belongs to him.

⁶ Pay them with money for the food you eat and the water you drink.”

⁷ Remember that the Lord your God has blessed you in everything you've done. He has looked after you during your journey through this large desert. The Lord your God has been with you for these forty years, and you haven't lacked anything.

⁸ So we passed by our relatives, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. We didn't take the Arabah road from Elath and Ezion-geber. Instead we used the road that goes through the desert of Moab.

⁹ Then the Lord told me, "Don't cause the Moabites any trouble or fight them, for I'm not going to give you any of their land, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot and it belongs to them."

¹⁰ (A strong and numerous people called the Emim once lived there. They were as tall as the Anakim, *

¹¹ and just like the Anakim, they were also considered as Rephaim,† but the Moabites called them Emim.

¹² Previously the Horites lived in Seir, but the descendants of Esau took over their land. They killed the Horites and settled there, just like Israel did when they occupied the land that the Lord had given them.)

¹³ Then the Lord told us,‡ "Go and cross over Zered Brook." So we crossed over Zered Brook.

¹⁴ The time it took for us to travel from Kadesh-barnea to when we crossed over the Brook of

* **2:10** See 1:28. † **2:11** "Rephaim": a race of giants. ‡ **2:13** "Then the Lord told us": supplied for clarity.

Zered was thirty-eight years. By this time the entire generation of warriors had died and were no longer part of the camp, as the Lord had sworn to them would happen.

¹⁵ In fact the Lord worked against them to remove them from the camp, until they were all dead.

¹⁶ Once the people's warriors had died,

¹⁷ the Lord told me,

¹⁸ "Today you will cross out of Moab at the border near Ar.

¹⁹ However, when you enter Ammonite territory, don't cause them any trouble or fight with them for I'm not going to give you any Ammonite land, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot and it belongs to them."

²⁰ (This land was previously considered as the country of the Rephaim who used to live there. However, the Ammonites called them Zamzummites.

²¹ They were a strong and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim. But the Lord destroyed them when the Ammonites invaded and drove them out and settled there,

²² just as he'd done for the descendants of Esau who lived in Seir when he destroyed the Horites. § They drove them out and settled where they used to live, and are still there to this day.

²³ The Avvim, living in villages as far away as Gaza, were destroyed by the Philistines,* who

§ 2:22 See verse 12. * 2:23 "Philistines": literally, "Caph-torim."

came from Crete,[†] and settled where they used to live.)

²⁴ Then the Lord told us,[‡] “Get up, go and cross the Arnon Valley. Look, I have handed over to you Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, as well as his land. Go and start taking it over, and fight him in battle.

²⁵ From this day on, I'm going to make all nations on earth dread you—they will be terrified of you. Because of the news they hear about you they will tremble in terror when you appear.”

²⁶ Moses told the Israelites,[§] “From the Kedemoth Desert I sent messengers with an offer of peace to Sihon, king of Heshbon, telling him,

²⁷ ‘Let us pass through your land. We'll stay on the main road and won't turn off either to the right or to the left.

²⁸ Sell us food to eat and water to drink for money. Just let us pass through on foot,

²⁹ just like the descendants of Esau living in Seir and the Moabites living in Ar allowed us, until we cross over the Jordan into the country that the Lord our God is giving to us.”

³⁰ But Sihon king of Heshbon refused to let us pass through, for the Lord your God gave him a stubborn spirit and an obstinate attitude, so the Lord could hand him over to you, as he has now done.

[†] 2:23 “Crete”: literally, “Caphtor.” [‡] 2:24 “Then the Lord told us”: supplied for clarity. [§] 2:26 “Moses told the Israelites”: supplied for clarity.

³¹ Then the Lord told me, “Look, I have started handing Sihon and his land over to you. Now you can begin to conquer and take over his land.”

³² Sihon and his whole army came out to fight us at Jahaz.

³³ The Lord our God handed him over to us, and we killed him, his sons, and all his army.

³⁴ We also captured all his towns, and set apart for destruction* the people of every town: men, women, and children. We didn't leave any survivors.

³⁵ All we took for ourselves was the livestock and plunder from the towns we'd captured.

³⁶ No town had walls too high for us to conquer—from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Valley, the town in the valley, all the way to Gilead. The Lord our God handed them all over to us.

³⁷ But you didn't go anywhere near the country of the Ammonites—the area that borders the Jabbok River or the towns of the hill country, or any other place that the Lord our God had placed off limits.

3

¹ We set off and went up the road towards Bashan. Og, king of Bashan, and his whole army came out to fight us at Edrei.

² But the Lord told me, “Don't be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you, together with

* **2:34** “Set apart for destruction”: a special term that described a dedication to the Lord, indicating that what was promised was to be given over to the Lord and not retained.

all his people and his land. Deal with him as you did with Sihon, king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon.”

³ So the Lord our God handed over to us Og, king of Bashan, and his whole army as well. We killed them and left no survivors.

⁴ We also captured all his towns. There wasn't a single town among all the sixty that we didn't capture. This included the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

⁵ All of these towns were fortified with high walls and gates with bars. There were many more villages as well, those that didn't have walls.

⁶ We set them apart for destruction, just as we did to Sihon, king of Heshbon, killing all the men, women, and children of every city.

⁷ But we took for ourselves all the livestock and plunder from the towns.

⁸ So in summary, at that time we took from the two Amorite kings the land east of the Jordan, from the Arnon Valley all the way to Mount Hermon.

⁹ (Mount Hermon is called Sirion by the Sidonians and Senir by the Amorites.)

¹⁰ The area included all the towns of the plain, all of Gilead, and all of Bashan, up to and including the towns of Salecah and Edrei in the kingdom of Og.

¹¹ (Only Og, king of Bashan, was left of the race of the Rephaim. He had a bed made of iron that was nine cubits long and four cubits wide. It's still in the Ammonite town of Rabbah.)

¹² This is when we took over the land. I assigned to the tribes of Reuben and Gad the land to the north of the town of Aroer in the Arnon Valley, and half the hill country of Gilead, together with its towns.

¹³ I assigned to the half-tribe of Manasseh the rest of Gilead, and all of Bashan, the kingdom of Og. (The whole region of Argob, all the territory of Bashan, was formerly called the land of the Rephaim.)

¹⁴ Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, took over the whole region of Argob right up to the border of the Geshurites and Maacathites and changed the name of Bashan to Havvoth-jair* after himself, which is still its name to this day.

¹⁵ I assigned the rest of† Gilead to the descendants of Machir,

¹⁶ while I assigned to the tribes of Reuben and Gad the area from Gilead to the Arnon Valley, the boundary line being the middle of the valley, all the way to the Jabbok River on the Ammonite border.

¹⁷ The Jordan River in the Arabah bordered it to the west, from the Sea of Galilee to the Sea of the Arabah (the Dead Sea). On the east lay the slopes of the Pisgah mountain range.

¹⁸ This was when I gave you‡ these instructions: “The Lord your God has given you this country as yours to own. All your warriors are to

* **3:14** “Havvoth-jair” means “the villages of Jair.” † **3:15** “The rest of”: supplied for clarity. ‡ **3:18** Referring to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

cross over, ready for battle, leading your fellow Israelites.

¹⁹ However, your wives, your children, and your livestock (I know that you have plenty of livestock) can stay behind in the towns I have given you,

²⁰ until the Lord gives victory to your fellow Israelites and they have peace, just as he has for you, after taking over the land that the Lord your God is giving them on the other side of the Jordan. Then you can all return to the land I have given you to own.”

²¹ This was the time I ordered Joshua: “You've seen with your own eyes everything the Lord your God did to these two kings. The Lord will do the same to all the kingdoms where you're going.

²² Don't be afraid of them, for the Lord your God himself will be fighting on your side.”

²³ This was also the time I pleaded with the Lord, saying,

²⁴ “Lord God, you've really only just begun to show your power and greatness to me, your servant. What god in heaven or on earth has the incredible ability to do the mighty acts you do?

²⁵ Please, let me cross over the Jordan and see the good land there, the beautiful hills, and the mountains of Lebanon!”

²⁶ But the Lord was angry with me because of you, and he refused to listen to me. “That's enough,” he told me. “Don't talk to me about this anymore.

²⁷ Climb up to the top of Mount Pisgah and look west, north, south, and east. Take a long look at the land with your own eyes, because you're not going to cross this Jordan.

²⁸ Instead, put Joshua in charge because he's the one who will cross over, leading the people and helping them to take over the land that you see. Encourage him and support him.”

²⁹ So we remained there in the valley near Beth-peor.

4

¹ People of Israel, pay attention to the rules and regulations I'm teaching you to observe. That way you can stay alive, and go in and take over the country the Lord, the God of your forefathers, is giving you.

² You are not to add to or take away from what I'm telling you, so that you can keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I'm ordering you to follow.

³ You've seen for yourselves what the Lord did at Baal-peor where the Lord your God killed everyone among you who worshiped Baal of Peor.

⁴ Those of you who were faithful to the Lord your God are still alive today, every one of you.

⁵ Listen, I have taught you the rules and regulations just as the Lord my God ordered me to do, so you can follow them in the country that you are about to enter and take over.

⁶ Be careful to observe them, because this will demonstrate your wisdom and insight to the other people living there who are watching. They will find out about all these rules and say, “The people of this great nation are very wise and have good insight.”

⁷ What nation is as great as us, having a god so close to them as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call on him?

⁸ What nation is as great as us, having such good rules and regulations like all these laws that I'm placing before you today?

⁹ Just make sure to be very careful, and really watch what you do, so you don't forget the things you've seen. Keep them in mind as long as you live. Teach them to your children and grandchildren.

¹⁰ That day when you stood in the presence of the Lord your God at Horeb,* the Lord told me, “Have the people come to me and to hear what I have to say, so they may learn to have respect for me throughout their lives here on earth, and so they may teach this to their children.”

¹¹ You gathered and stood at the foot of the mountain. The mountain was on fire, shooting out flames into the sky and producing thick dark clouds.

¹² The Lord spoke to you from the fire. You heard the words, but you didn't see the form of anyone speaking—there was just a voice.

* **4:10** “Horeb”: another name for Mount Sinai.

¹³ He explained to you his agreement, the Ten Commandments, which he ordered you to follow. He wrote them down on two tablets of stone.

¹⁴ This was the time that the Lord ordered me to teach you the rules and regulations that you are to follow when you arrive in the country you're going to own once you've crossed the Jordan.

¹⁵ You didn't see any form when the Lord spoke to you from the fire at Horeb, so be very careful

¹⁶ that you don't spoil your relationship with the Lord by making an idol for yourselves in any shape or form, whether it looks like a male or female,

¹⁷ or any land animal or bird that flies,

¹⁸ or of any animal that crawls on the ground or any fish in the deep sea.

¹⁹ When you look up at the sky and see the sun, moon, and stars—all the heavenly bodies—don't be tempted to bow down to them. Don't worship them like all the other nations on earth in the way that the Lord has allowed.

²⁰ Remember that the Lord took you and led you out of the iron furnace which was in Egypt to be his own people, just as you are today.

²¹ But the Lord was angry with me because of you, and he vowed that I wouldn't cross the Jordan to enter the good land that the Lord your God is giving you to own.

²² So I will not be crossing the Jordan, because I have to die here in this land. But you will cross over and occupy that good land.

²³ However, be careful not to forget the agreement of the Lord your God that he made with you. Don't make an idol for yourselves in the form of anything, because he has forbidden you to do this.

²⁴ For the Lord your God is a fire that burns everything up. He is an exclusive God.

²⁵ After you have been living in the country for a long time and have had children and grandchildren, you may then spoil the relationship you have with the Lord and make an idol in some form. The Lord your God sees this as evil and it makes him angry.

²⁶ If you do this, I call on heaven and earth to be witnesses against you today that you will be completely wiped out from the country that you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. You will not live long there—you will be totally destroyed.

²⁷ The Lord will scatter you among the other nations, and not many of you will survive in the countries where the Lord has exiled you.

²⁸ There you will worship gods of wood and stone made by human beings. These idols can't see or hear or eat or smell.

²⁹ However, if while you're there you decide to come to the Lord your God, you will find him if you come to him whole-heartedly, with complete commitment.

³⁰ When you are in trouble, after you've experienced all these things, then eventually you will return to the Lord your God and do what he says.

³¹ The Lord your God is a merciful God. He

won't abandon you or destroy you or forget the agreement he made with your forefathers, confirmed by a solemn promise.

³² Think about it! Examine the whole of history from the beginning of time, long before you existed, when God made human beings, right up until now. Ask this question anywhere, from one end of the earth to the other: Has anything as amazing as this ever happened before; has anyone ever heard anything like this?

³³ Has a people ever heard the voice of God speaking out of the fire, like you have, and survived?

³⁴ Has any god tried to take a nation out of another nation and make them his own, using tests and signs and miracles and war—with his great power and incredible strength and terrifying actions—like the Lord your God did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes?

³⁵ You were shown all this so you could be certain that the Lord is God and there is no one like him.

³⁶ He made you hear his voice from heaven so you would obey him. On earth he revealed himself through blazing fire, and you heard him speak to you from the fire.

³⁷ Because he loved your forefathers, he chose you, their descendants. He himself led you out of Egypt by his great power,

³⁸ driving out ahead of you nations that were greater and stronger than you, in order to lead you to their land and give it to you as yours to own, just as you do today.

³⁹ So today be sure about this and never forget: the Lord is the only God in heaven above and on the earth below.

⁴⁰ Observe his rules and regulations that I'm giving you right now, so that you and your children will do well, and that you may have long lives in the country that the Lord your God is giving you for all time.

⁴¹ Then Moses assigned three sanctuary towns to the east of the Jordan

⁴² where a person could run to after accidentally killing someone without deliberate hatred. To save their life they could run to one of these towns:

⁴³ Bezer in the desert plain belonging to the tribe of Reuben; Ramoth in Gilead belonging to the tribe of Gad, or Golan in Bashan belonging to the tribe of Manasseh.

⁴⁴ This is the law that Moses placed before the Israelites.

⁴⁵ These are the laws, rules, and regulations Moses gave them after they had come out of Egypt.

⁴⁶ This was when they were in the valley to the east of the Jordan near Beth-peor in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites. He had ruled from Heshbon and had been defeated by Moses and the Israelites after they had left Egypt.

⁴⁷ They took over his country and the country of Og king of Bashan. (They were the two kings of the Amorites who previously ruled on the east side of the Jordan.)

⁴⁸ The territory went from the town of Aroer on

the edge of the Arnon Valley all the way to Mount Sirion,[†] otherwise known as Mount Hermon,

⁴⁹ and included all the Arabah to the east of the Jordan down as far as the Dead Sea beside the slopes of Mount Pisgah.

5

¹ Then Moses called all the Israelites together and told them:^{*} Listen, people of Israel to the rules and regulations that I'm giving you today. Learn them and make sure you follow them carefully.

² Remember that the Lord our God made an agreement with us at Horeb.

³ He didn't make this agreement with our fathers, but with us, all of those who are still alive today.

⁴ The Lord talked with you person to person from the fire on the mountain.

⁵ This was the time when I stood between the Lord and you to tell you what the Lord said, because you were afraid of the fire and refused to go up the mountain. He told you,

⁶ "I am the Lord your God, who led you out of Egypt, out of the prison-house of slavery.

⁷ You must not have any other gods except me.

⁸ You must not make for yourself any kind of idol, whether in the form of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters below.

[†] **4:48** "Sirion," here "Sion," but see 3:9.

^{*} **5:1** See 1:6.

⁹ You must not bow down before them or worship them; for I am the Lord your God and I am passionately exclusive. I lay the consequences of the sin of those who hate me on their sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons;

¹⁰ but I show trustworthy love to the thousands of generations who love me and keep my commandments.

¹¹ You must not use the name of the Lord your God in a wrong way, for the Lord will not forgive anyone who uses his name in a wrong way.

¹² Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you to do.

¹³ You have six days to work and earn your living,

¹⁴ but the seventh day is the Sabbath to honor the Lord your God. On this day you must not do any work—not you, not your son or daughter, not your male slave or female slave or your ox or donkey or any of your livestock, and not the foreigner who is staying with you, so that your male slave and female slave can have the same rest as you.

¹⁵ Remember that you were once slaves in Egypt, and that the Lord your God led you out from there with his great power and incredible strength. This is why the Lord your God has ordered you to keep the Sabbath day.

¹⁶ Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you to do, so that you may live a long time and do well in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

¹⁷ You must not kill people.

18 You must not commit adultery.

19 You must not steal.

20 You must not give false evidence against others.

21 You must not desire to have anyone else's wife. You must not desire to have their house or field, or their male slave or female slave, or their ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to them."

22 In a loud voice the Lord gave these commandments to all of you, speaking from the fire, the cloud, and the deep darkness that covered the mountain. He didn't add anything else. He wrote them down on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

23 When you heard the voice that came from the darkness while the mountain was on fire, all your tribal leaders and elders came to me,

24 and said, "Listen, the Lord our God has revealed his glory and majesty to us, and we have heard his voice that came from the fire. Today we have seen that human beings don't die even when God speaks with them.

25 But we could still die, couldn't we? This enormous fire is going to burn us up, and we'll die if the Lord our God continues to speak to us.

26 Has anybody else ever heard the living God speak from the fire and survived, as we have?

27 You go and listen to everything the Lord our God tells you. Then you can repeat to us everything the Lord our God tells you. We promise to listen and obey."

28 The Lord heard what you told me, and he said to me, "I've heard what these people told you. All that they've said is good.

²⁹ I only wish they really did respect me and always kept my commandments so that they and their children would do well for all time.

³⁰ Go and tell them: ‘You need to return to your tents.’

³¹ But you are to stay here with me so that I can give you all the commandments and rules and regulations you are to teach them to follow in the country that I am giving them to take over and own.”

³² So make sure you do what the Lord your God has ordered you to do—don't go astray in any direction.

³³ Follow all the ways the Lord your God has shown you, so that you do well and live long lives in the country that you will occupy.

6

¹ These are the commandments and rules and regulations that the Lord your God has ordered me to teach you to follow in the country that you're going to enter and occupy.

² This is so you and your children and grandchildren will show respect to the Lord your God throughout your lives by keeping all his rules and regulations that I give you, and so that you may have a long life.

³ Listen, people of Israel, and be careful to observe them, so that you may do well and have many descendants in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your forefathers, promised you.

⁴ Listen, people of Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is the only one.*

⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your mind and with all your being and with all your strength.

⁶ The commands I'm giving you today must stay in your minds.

⁷ You are to explain them carefully to your children and talk about them when you're at home and when you're traveling, when you lie down and when you get up.

⁸ Tie them on your hands as reminders and put them on your foreheads as well.

⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your homes and on your gates.

¹⁰ The Lord your God is going to take you into the country he promised to give you and your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It's a country with large, prosperous towns that you didn't build,

¹¹ with houses full of plenty of good things that you didn't provide, that have wells you didn't dig, and vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant. When you eat and are full

¹² make sure you don't forget the Lord who led you out of Egypt, out of the prison-house of slavery.

¹³ Respect the Lord your God. Worship only him, and make promises only in his name.

¹⁴ Don't worship any other gods, the gods of the peoples around you,

* **6:4** "Is the only one": or "is one."

¹⁵ because the Lord your God, who lives among you, is an exclusive God, and the Lord your God will become angry with you, and he will wipe you out.

¹⁶ Don't test the Lord your God like you did at Massah.[†]

¹⁷ You must be careful to keep the commandments of the Lord your God and the laws and rules he's given you.

¹⁸ Do what's good and right in the Lord's sight so that it will go well for you and that you may enter and take over the good land that the Lord your God promised to give your forefathers.

¹⁹ He will drive out all your enemies ahead of you, just as he said.

²⁰ In the future, when your children come and ask you, "What's the point of decrees and rules and regulations that the Lord our God ordered you to follow?"

²¹ then you are to tell them, "Once we were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord by his power led us out of Egypt.

²² Before our very eyes the Lord brought down incredible and terrifying signs and miracles on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his people.

²³ But he led us out of there to take us here, giving us this country that he had promised to our forefathers.

²⁴ The Lord ordered us to keep all these laws and to respect the Lord our God, so that we would always be safe and well, as we are today

[†] **6:16** See Exodus 17:7.

25 And if we carefully observe each of these commandments as we live in the presence of the Lord, as he instructed us, then we will be right with him.”

7

1 The Lord your God is going to lead you into the land that you are taking over in order to own it, and will drive out ahead of you many other nations: the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, seven nations that are larger and stronger than you.

2 When the Lord your God has handed them over to you to defeat them, then you must set them apart for destruction.* Don't make any peace treaty with them and don't show them any mercy.

3 Don't intermarry with them. Don't let your daughters marry their sons or have their daughters marry your sons,

4 because they will lead your children away from following me to worship other gods. Then the Lord will be angry with you, and he will quickly come and kill you.

5 On the contrary, this is what you are to do to them: tear down their altars, knock down their idolatrous pillars, cut down their Asherah poles, and burn down their idols.

6 For you are the Lord your God's holy people. The Lord your God has chosen you to be his own

* 7:2 See footnote under 2:34.

special people, valued above all other peoples on the earth.

⁷ It wasn't because there were so many of you that the Lord loved you more than any other nation, in fact he chose you though there were so few of you.

⁸ However, because the Lord loved you and kept the promise he gave to your forefathers, He led you out by his power and rescued you from the prison-house of slavery, from the rule of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

⁹ That's why you can be sure that the Lord your God is the true God, the faithful God who keeps his agreement based on trustworthy love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

¹⁰ But he doesn't hesitate to pay back those who hate him by destroying them.

¹¹ So keep the commandments and rules and regulations that I'm giving you to follow today.

¹² If you listen to these regulations and are careful to observe them, then the Lord your God will keep his agreement and the trustworthy love that he promised to your forefathers.

¹³ He will love you and bless you and give you many descendants. He will bless your children and the crops your land produces—your grain, new wine, and olive oil, the calves of your cattle herds and the lambs of your flocks—in the land that he promised your forefathers to give you.

¹⁴ You will be blessed more than any other nation; none of you will be childless, and none of your livestock will fail to have young.

¹⁵ The Lord will keep you from having any kind of sickness. He will not let you have any of the terrible diseases you saw in Egypt, but he will let all who hate you suffer from them.

¹⁶ You are to destroy all the nations the Lord your God hands over to you. Don't look on them with sympathy. Don't worship their gods, for that will end up being a trap to you.

¹⁷ You may say to yourselves, "These nations are stronger than us. How on earth can we drive them out?"

¹⁸ But don't be afraid of them. Make sure you remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and the whole of Egypt:

¹⁹ the amazing tests you witnessed, the signs and miracles, the great power and incredible strength the Lord your God used to lead you out. The Lord your God is going to deal with all the nations you're currently afraid of in the same way.

²⁰ On top of this, the Lord your God will send the hornet[†] against them until anyone who has survived and anyone hiding from you have been killed.

²¹ Don't be frightened of these nations, for the Lord your God, who is with you, is a powerful and awesome God.

²² The Lord your God will drive out these nations ahead of you in stages. You won't be able to get rid of them all at the same time, or you'd be overwhelmed by wild animals.[‡]

[†] **7:20** See note under Joshua 24:12, [‡] **7:22** See Exodus 23:29.

²³ But the Lord your God will hand them over to you and throw them into a terrible panic, until they are wiped out.

²⁴ He will give their defeated kings to you to be killed, and even their names will be forgotten. No one will be able to withstand you; you will completely destroy them.

²⁵ You must burn the idols of their god. Don't desire the silver and gold that covers them. Don't take it or otherwise it will be a trap for you because the Lord your God detests anything to do with idols.

²⁶ Don't bring any detestable idol into your house, otherwise you will be treated just like it—by being set apart for destruction. You are to treat idols as totally despicable, and stay far away from them, because they are set apart for destruction.

8

¹ You must take care to follow every commandment I am giving you today, so that you may live and have many descendants, and go in and take over the country the Lord promised to give to your forefathers.

² Remember how for these forty years the Lord your God has led you all the way through the desert, humbling you and testing you in order to find out what you were really thinking, and whether or not you would keep his commandments.

³ He humbled you, and when you were hungry he gave you manna to eat, which nobody, including you and your forefathers, had ever had before. This was in order to make it clear to you that human beings do not live by only eating bread, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

⁴ During these forty years your clothing didn't wear out and your feet didn't swell up.

⁵ So you should realize that just as a parent disciplines their child, so the Lord your God disciplines you.

⁶ That's why you have to keep the commandments of the Lord your God, following his ways and respecting him.

⁷ For the Lord your God is taking you to a good country. It's a land of streams and pools and springs that flow through the valleys and down the hills;

⁸ It's a land that produces wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey.

⁹ It's a land where you won't run out of food, where you will have everything you need; a land whose rocks contain iron ore and whose hills can be mined for copper.

¹⁰ When you eat and are full, make sure you thank the Lord your God for the good land that he's given you.

¹¹ Make sure you don't forget the Lord your God by disobeying his commandments and rules and regulations that I'm giving you today.

¹² For when you eat and are full, when you build beautiful houses to live in,

¹³ and when your herds and flocks grow larger, and your silver and gold accumulates, and all your possessions increase,

¹⁴ then you will become proud, and you will forget the Lord your God who led you out of Egypt, out of the prison-house of slavery.

¹⁵ He guided you through the immense and terrifying desert with its poisonous snakes and scorpions—a dried up, waterless land. He brought water for you out of a flint rock.

¹⁶ He fed you in the desert with manna that your forefathers had never known, humbling you and testing you, so that eventually you would do well in the future.

¹⁷ You might think to yourselves, “I became rich through all my hard work.”

¹⁸ But remember it's the Lord your God who gives you the ability to become rich, in order to fulfill his agreement he promised to your forefathers that still exists today.

¹⁹ If you ever forget the Lord your God, and run after other gods, worshiping and bowing down to them, I assure you right now that you will definitely die!

²⁰ In the same way the Lord destroyed the nations as you advanced, you will also die if you don't obey the Lord your God.

9

¹ Listen, people of Israel! Shortly you're going to cross the Jordan to enter and take over the country from nations that are larger and

stronger than you, that have large towns with walls that reach up into the sky.

² The people are strong and tall; they are the descendants of the Anakim. You all know about them and you have heard the saying, “Who could ever defeat the sons of Anak?”

³ But you should realize that today the Lord your God is going across ahead of you. He is like a consuming fire; he will destroy them and defeat them ahead of you. You will drive them out and quickly wipe them out, just as the Lord promised you.

⁴ When the Lord your God has driven them out ahead of you, don't say to yourselves, “It's because I'm such a good person that the Lord has brought me here to take over this land.” No, the Lord is driving out these nations ahead of you because they're so wicked.

⁵ It's not because you're so good or moral that you're going to take over their land. No, it's because of their wickedness that the Lord your God is driving out these nations ahead of you, to keep the promise he made to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

⁶ You'd better believe that it's not because you're such good people that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to own, because you are stubborn, hard-hearted people.

⁷ Remember how you provoked the Lord your God in the desert! Don't ever forget it! From the time you left the land of Egypt until you arrived here, you've been constantly rebelling against the Lord.

⁸ At Horeb you provoked the Lord, making him so angry he was about to destroy you.

⁹ This was when I climbed up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets that recorded the agreement the Lord made with you. I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights, and I didn't eat or drink anything.

¹⁰ The Lord gave me the two stone tablets on which he'd written with his finger everything he'd told you when he spoke from the fire on the mountain when we were all assembled there.

¹¹ After forty days and forty nights, the Lord gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the agreement.

¹² The Lord told me, "Hurry! Go down immediately, because your people that you led out of Egypt, are committing a terrible sin. They have disobeyed what I told them so quickly! They have made themselves an idol using molten metal."

¹³ The Lord also told me, "I have been watching these people, and they really are stubborn and hard-hearted.

¹⁴ Leave me, so that I can destroy them and wipe out their name completely. Then I will turn you into a nation even more powerful and more important than them."

¹⁵ I went back down the mountain while it was still on fire, carrying the two tablets of the agreement.

¹⁶ Then I saw how much you had sinned against the Lord your God by making for yourselves a molten calf. You had disobeyed what the Lord had told you so quickly.

17 I threw the two tablets down, smashing them to pieces as you watched.

18 Then I lay down on the ground before the Lord for forty days and forty nights, just as I had before. I didn't eat or drink anything because of all the sins you had committed by doing what was evil in the Lord's sight, making him angry.

19 I was terrified at how angry and furious the Lord was with you. He was ready to destroy you. But once again the Lord listened to me.

20 The Lord was so angry with Aaron he was ready to destroy him, but right then I prayed for Aaron too.

21 I took that abominable thing, the calf you'd made, and burned it. Then I crushed it up and ground it into dust, and I threw it into the stream that descended from the mountain.

22 But you went on provoking the Lord at Taberah, at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah.

23 When the Lord had you leave Kadesh-barnea, he told you, "Go and take over the country that I've given you."

But you defied the command of the Lord your God. You didn't believe him and you didn't obey him.

24 You have been rebelling against the Lord from the day I first knew you.

25 So I lay down on the ground before the Lord for forty days and forty nights, because the Lord had threatened to destroy you.

26 I prayed to the Lord, saying, "Please Lord, God, don't destroy your people that belong to

you, the ones whom you rescued by your great ability and led out of Egypt by your power.

²⁷ Please remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Please disregard the stubbornness of this people and their wicked sin.

²⁸ If you don't, those people back in Egypt will say, 'The Lord brought them out to kill them in the desert because he couldn't take them to the land he'd promised them, and because he hated them.'

²⁹ But they are your people, Lord! They belong to you! You led them out of Egypt by your amazing power and might!"

10

¹ After that the Lord told me, "Cut out two stone tablets just like the first ones, make an Ark out of wood, and come up to me on the mountain.

² I will write the same words on the tablets that were on the first ones, which you broke. Then put them in the Ark."

³ I made an Ark out of acacia wood, cut out two stone tablets like the first ones, and went up the mountain carrying them.

⁴ The Lord wrote what he had before on the tablets, the Ten Commandments that he'd told you when he spoke from the fire on the mountain when we were all assembled there. The Lord gave them to me,

⁵ and I went back down the mountain and put them in the Ark I'd made following the Lord's instructions. They have been there ever since.

⁶ The Israelites went from the wells of the people of Jaakan to Moserah. Aaron died there and was buried, and Eleazar his son took over as priest.

⁷ From there they moved on to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land that had many streams.

⁸ At this time the Lord put the tribe of Levi in charge of carrying the Ark of the Lord's Agreement, as well as serving the Lord by standing in his presence, and of pronouncing blessings in his name, as they continue to do to this day.

⁹ That's why the tribe of Levi has no land allowance or share among the other tribes. The Lord provides what they need, just as the Lord your God promised.

¹⁰ I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights as before, and during that time the Lord listened to my prayers once more and agreed not to destroy you.

¹¹ Then the Lord told me, "Get ready and continue your journey leading the people so they may enter and take over the land that I promised their forefathers to give them."

¹² People of Israel, what does the Lord your God want from you? He wants you to respect the Lord your God by following all his ways. He wants you to love him. He wants you to worship the Lord your God with all your mind and with all your being,

¹³ He wants you to keep the commandments and regulations of the Lord that I am giving you today for your own good.

14 Look! Everything belongs to the Lord your God: the heavens, the highest heavens, and the earth and all that is there.

15 Yet the Lord was attracted to your forefathers and he loved them. He has also chosen you, their descendants, above any other people, even until now.

16 Dedicate yourselves to God.* Don't be stubborn and hard-hearted anymore.

17 For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords. He is the great, powerful, and awesome God. He shows no favoritism and accepts no bribes.

18 He makes sure that orphans and widows receive justice, and he loves the foreigners, providing them with food and clothing.

19 You too must love the foreigner because you yourselves were once foreigners in Egypt.

20 You must respect the Lord your God and worship him. Hold onto him and make your promises in his name.

21 He is the one you should praise and he is your God, who has carried out for you these incredible and awesome miracles that you've seen with your own eyes.

22 When your forefathers went to Egypt there were only seventy of them in total, but now God has increased your numbers so much that there are as many of you as there are stars in the sky.

* **10:16** "Consecrate yourselves to God" literally, "circumcise the foreskin of your heart."

11

¹ Love the Lord your God and do everything he says—his rules, regulations, and commandments.

² You should realize that it's not your children who have experienced the Lord your God's discipline. It was you who saw his greatness, his power and strength;

³ and his miracles. You saw what he did to Pharaoh king of Egypt and his whole country.

⁴ You saw what he did to the Egyptian army and its horses and chariots when he swept them away in the Red Sea, drowning them as they chased after you. The story hasn't changed!

⁵ You saw what he did for you in the desert until you arrived here.

⁶ You saw what he did, right there among you, to Dothan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab of the tribe of Reuben, when the earth split open and swallowed them down—their families, their tents, and all their animals.

⁷ You saw with your own eyes all the amazing things that the Lord has done.

⁸ So you must keep every commandment I am giving you today. That way you will have the strength to enter and take over the country that you are crossing the Jordan to have as your own,

⁹ You will also have long lives in the country that the Lord promised to give your forefathers and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁰ The country you're entering to occupy isn't like the country of Egypt that you've come from.

There you had to sow your seed and work hard irrigating the ground, like taking care of a vegetable garden.

¹¹ But here in the country that you are crossing the Jordan to take over is a land of mountains and valleys that receives plenty of rain

¹² It is a land that the Lord your God takes care of. The Lord your God is always watching over it, all year long.

¹³ So if you pay careful attention to keep the commandments that I'm giving to you today, if you love the Lord your God and worship him with all your mind and with all your being,

¹⁴ then I will send rain for your land at the right time, rain in autumn and spring, so that you can harvest your grain, new wine, and olive oil.

¹⁵ I will also provide grass in the fields for your livestock. You will have more than enough to eat.

¹⁶ But make sure that you're not fooled into worshiping and bowing down to other gods,

¹⁷ or the Lord will become angry with you. He won't send any rain, and the land won't produce any crops, and you will soon die, even in the good land that the Lord is giving you.

¹⁸ Focus your minds on the words that I'm saying. Tie them on your hands as reminders and put them on your foreheads as well.

¹⁹ Teach them to your children and talk about them when you're at home and when you're traveling, when you lie down and when you get up.

²⁰ Write them on the doorposts of your homes and on your gates,

²¹ so that as long as the earth lasts, you and your children may have long lives in the country the Lord promised to give your forefathers.

²² If you are careful to keep all these commandments I am giving you to follow, if you love the Lord your God and follow all his ways and hold onto him,

²³ then the Lord will drive out all these nations ahead of you, and you will take over the country from nations that are greater and stronger than you.

²⁴ Everywhere you walk will belong to you. Your territory will extend from the desert all the way to Lebanon, and from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea.

²⁵ No one will be able to withstand you; the Lord your God will make everyone living there absolutely terrified of you wherever you go, just as he promised you.

²⁶ Look! Today I'm placing before you both a blessing and a curse.

²⁷ You will receive a blessing if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I'm giving you today.

²⁸ But you will receive a curse if you disobey the commandments of the Lord your God and don't keep to the path I'm ordering you to follow today by worshiping some other unknown gods.

²⁹ When the Lord your God takes you into the country you are going in to occupy, announce the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

³⁰ (These mountains are to the west of the Jordan, in the country of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah near Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh.)

³¹ Shortly you're going to cross the Jordan to enter and occupy the country the Lord your God is giving you. When you take it over and settle there,

³² make sure you follow all the rules and regulations that I'm giving you today.

12

¹ These are the rules and regulations you must make sure to follow the whole time you live in the land that the Lord, the God of your forefathers, has given you to own.

² You are to completely destroy all the pagan shrines where the nations you're driving out worshiped their gods: on the top of high mountains, on the hills, and under every green tree.

³ Tear down their altars, knock down their idolatrous pillars, burn down their Asherah poles, and cut down the idols of their gods. Remove any trace of them from everywhere.

⁴ You are not to worship the Lord your God in the way that they did.

⁵ No, you must go to the place the Lord your God will choose from the territory of all your tribes where he will live with you. That's where you must go.

⁶ You'll take there your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and all your offerings—your freewill offerings and offerings to fulfill a promise, along with the firstborn of your herds and flocks.

⁷ That's where, in the presence of the Lord your God, you and your families will eat and celebrate everything you've worked for, because the Lord your God has blessed you.

⁸ You're not to do like we're doing here today. At the moment everyone does what they think is right,

⁹ because you haven't arrived in the land you will own that the Lord your God is giving you and where you will be at peace.

¹⁰ After you cross the Jordan and settle down in the country that the Lord your God is giving you to possess, and he lets you rest from fighting all your enemies and you live in safety,

¹¹ then the Lord your God will choose a place where he will live with you. That's where you are to bring all that I've ordered you—your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and freewill offerings, and all the special gifts that you promise to give to the Lord.

¹² You will celebrate there in the presence of the Lord your God—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, and the Levites living in your towns, because they don't have any share in the allotment of land.

¹³ Make sure you don't present your burnt offerings just anywhere you want.

¹⁴ You are to offer them only in the place the Lord will choose in the territory of one of your tribes. That's where you are to do everything that I order you to do.

¹⁵ Of course you can slaughter and eat meat wherever you are, anytime you want, depending on how much the Lord your God has blessed you. All of you, whether you're ceremonially clean or not, can eat it just like you would a gazelle or a deer,

¹⁶ but you are not to eat the blood—pour that out on the ground.

¹⁷ In your towns you must not eat the tithes of your grain or new wine or olive oil, the firstborn of your herds or flocks, any of the offerings that you give to fulfill a promise, your freewill offerings, or your special gifts.

¹⁸ No, you must eat them in the presence of the Lord your God at the place the Lord your God will choose— you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, and the Levites living in your towns. Celebrate in the presence of the Lord your God in everything you do,

¹⁹ and make sure you don't forget about the Levites for as long as you live in your land.

²⁰ When the Lord your God gives you more land as he promised, and you feel like some meat, and say, "I want to have some meat," you can eat it whenever you want.

²¹ If the place where the Lord your God chooses to live with you is a long way away, then you can slaughter any animal from the herd or flock he has given you, following the regulations I

have given you, and you can eat it in your town whenever you want.

²² In fact you can eat it like you would eat a gazelle or deer—whether you're ceremonially clean or not, you can eat it.

²³ Just make sure you don't eat the blood, because the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat.

²⁴ You must not eat the blood; pour it out on the ground.

²⁵ Don't eat it, so that all will go well with you and your children, because you will be doing what is right in the Lord's sight.

²⁶ Take your holy sacrifices and the offerings to fulfill your vows and go to the place the Lord will choose.

²⁷ Present your burnt offerings, the meat and blood, on the altar of the Lord your God. The blood of your other sacrifices is to be poured out beside the altar of the Lord your God, but you are allowed to eat the meat.

²⁸ Make sure you obey everything I'm commanding you, so that it may always go well with you and your children, because you will be following what is good and right in the sight of the Lord your God.

²⁹ When the Lord your God destroys the nations ahead of you as you enter the country to possess, and you drive them out and settle down in their land,

³⁰ make sure you don't fall into the trap of following their ways after they have been destroyed right in front of you. Don't try and

find out about their gods, asking, "I wonder how these people worship their gods? I'll do like they did."

³¹ You must not worship the Lord your God like this, because when they worship their gods they do every kind of abominable thing that the Lord hates. They even burn their sons and daughters as sacrifices to their gods!

³² Be careful to do everything I order you to do. Don't add or take away anything from these instructions.

13

¹ Maybe a prophet or someone who has dreams about the future will come along and give you a prediction about some sign or miracle,

² and the sign or wonder happens. If after that they tell you, "Let's follow other gods that you don't know, and let's worship them,"

³ then you must not listen to what that prophet or dreamer has to say because the Lord your God is trying to find out whether you really love him with all your mind and with all your being.

⁴ You are to follow the Lord your God and respect him. Keep his commandments and do what he says; worship him and hold onto him.

⁵ These kinds of prophets or dreamers must be executed, because they have promoted rebellion against the Lord your God, who led you out of Egypt and rescued you from the prison-house of slavery. They have tried to lead you from the

way that the Lord your God has ordered you to follow. You must eliminate the evil among you.

⁶ Even if your own brother, or your son or daughter, or the wife you love, or your best friend secretly encourages you, saying, "Let's go and worship other gods" unfamiliar to you and your forefathers,

⁷ the gods of the nations around you (whether they live close by or far away, in any direction),

⁸ don't give into them or listen to them. Show them no mercy. Don't spare them or protect them.

⁹ No, you absolutely must kill them! You start killing them, and then have everyone else help.

¹⁰ Stone the person to death for trying to lead you away from the Lord your God, who led you out of Egypt, out of the prison-house of slavery.

¹¹ Then every Israelite will hear about it and be afraid, and won't ever do such an evil thing among you.

¹² It may happen that once you're living in the towns the Lord your God is giving you, you hear

¹³ that evil people have taken over in one of your towns and have led the people there astray, telling them, "Let's go and worship other gods" that you don't know.

¹⁴ If this does happen you need to make a full investigation, inquiring about the facts and interrogating witnesses.

If it's proved beyond doubt that this awful sin has actually been committed among you,

¹⁵ then you have to kill the people living in that town with the sword. Set apart for destruction its people and its livestock.

¹⁶ You must pile up all the people's possessions in the middle of the public square, and completely burn the town and everything in it as a complete burnt offering to the Lord your God. The town must remain a heap of ruins forever. It must never be rebuilt.

¹⁷ Don't take for yourselves anything that has been set apart for destruction so that the Lord won't be angry any more. He will be merciful to you, showing you compassion, and giving you many descendants as he promised to your forefathers,

¹⁸ because you are obeying the Lord your God, keeping all his commandments that I'm giving you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord your God.

14

¹ You are the children of the Lord your God. Don't mutilate yourselves or shave your forehead like pagans do* when they mourn the dead,

² because you are a holy people who belong to the Lord your God. The Lord chose you as his special people out of all the nations on earth.

³ You must not eat anything repulsive.

* **14:1** "Like pagans do": supplied for clarity.

⁴ These are the animals that you are allowed to eat:† cattle, sheep, goats,

⁵ deer, gazelles, wild goats, antelopes, and mountain sheep.

⁶ You can eat any animal that both has a divided hoof and also chews the cud.

⁷ But you are not allowed to eat those that either chew the cud or have a divided hoof. This includes: camels, rabbits, and rock hyraxes. Even though they chew the cud, they don't have a divided hoof. You must treat them as unclean.

⁸ The same applies to the pig. Even though it has a divided hoof, it does not chew the cud. So you must treat it as unclean. You must not eat its meat or touch its dead body.

⁹ When it comes to creatures that live in the water, you are allowed to eat anything that has fins and scales.

¹⁰ But you must not eat anything that does not have fins and scales. You must treat them as unclean.

¹¹ You are allowed to eat any clean bird.

¹² But you must not eat the following: eagle, griffon vulture, bearded vulture,

¹³ buzzard, kites, any kind of falcon,

¹⁴ any member of the crow family,

¹⁵ tawny owl, long-eared owl, gulls, any kind of hawk,

¹⁶ little owl, eagle owl, barn owl,

¹⁷ desert owl, Egyptian vulture, fish owl,

¹⁸ storks, any kind of heron, hoopoe, or bats.

† **14:4** See also the list in Leviticus 11. Not all identifications of the different animals and birds are certain.

¹⁹ All insects that fly are unclean to you; you must not eat them.

²⁰ But you are allowed to eat any clean animal that has wings.

²¹ You must not eat any animal that dies. You can give it to a foreigner in your town, and they can eat it, or you can sell it to a foreigner. You, however, are a holy people who belong to the Lord your God. Don't cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

²² Make sure you pay a tithe of every crop grown each year in your fields.

²³ You are to eat a tenth of your grain, new wine, and olive oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks, in the presence of the Lord your God at the place he will choose to live with you, so that you will learn to always respect the Lord your God.

²⁴ However, if it's too far to carry all the tithe that the Lord your God has blessed you with, because the place where the Lord your God will choose to live with you is too distant,

²⁵ then you can exchange it for money, take the money with you and go to the place the Lord your God will choose.

²⁶ Then you can spend the money on anything you like—cattle, sheep, wine, alcoholic drink, or anything else you want. Then you can have a feast there in the presence of the Lord your God and celebrate with your family.

²⁷ Don't forget to take care of the Levites in your town, because they don't have any share in the allotment of land.

²⁸ At the end of every third year, collect a tenth of all your produce for that year and store it in your town.

²⁹ This way the Levites (who don't have any share in the allotment of land), the foreigners, the orphans, and the widows in your town will be provided with what they need. The Lord your God will bless you in everything you do.

15

¹ You are to cancel debts at the end of every seven years.

² This is the way it will work: If you provided a loan to someone you must cancel it. You are not allowed to collect anything from another Israelite, because the Lord's time of debt cancellation has been announced.

³ You are allowed to collect payments from a foreigner, but you must cancel whatever your fellow Israelite owes you.

⁴ However, you shouldn't have poor people among you, for the Lord will really bless you in the country that the Lord your God is giving you to own.

⁵ You just need to make sure you obey the Lord your God, and that you're careful to follow all these commandments I'm giving you today.

⁶ The Lord your God is going to bless you as he promised. You will lend money to many nations but you won't need to borrow from any of them; you will rule over many nations but you won't be ruled by them.

⁷ If there are Israelites who are poor in any of your towns in the country the Lord your God is giving you, don't act in an unfeeling or miserly way towards them.

⁸ On the contrary. You are to be generous to them, and lend them whatever they need.

⁹ Make sure you don't think evil thoughts like, "The seventh year is coming up when debts will be canceled," so that you look down on the poor with a sneer and refuse to give them anything. They will complain to the Lord about you, and you will be found guilty of sin.

¹⁰ Give and give again to them, and don't feel irritated when you give. When you give generously the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you decide to do.

¹¹ You will always have those who are poor and in need among you, so that's why I'm telling you to give generously to them.

¹² If a Hebrew, one of your own people, whether man or woman, sells themselves to you as a slave and works for you for six years, you have to free them in the seventh year.

¹³ And when you free them, don't send them away with nothing.

¹⁴ Give them plenty of gifts: animals from your flocks, grain from your threshing floor, and wine from your winepress. Give to them as generously as the Lord your God has blessed you.

¹⁵ Don't forget that you were once slaves in Egypt, and the Lord your God set you free. That's why I'm giving you this command today.

¹⁶ However, if your male slave tells you, “I don't want to leave you,” because he loves you and your family and is better off staying with you,

¹⁷ then use a metal tool* to pierce his ear against the door, and he will be your slave for life. Do the same for your female slave.

¹⁸ Don't see it as a problem to free your slave, because your slave's six years of service to you was worth twice what you would have paid to hire someone. The Lord your God will bless you in everything you do for acting in this way.

¹⁹ You are to separate out to give the Lord your God all the firstborn males of your herds and flocks. You must not have the firstborn of your cattle work, and don't shear the firstborn of your sheep.

²⁰ Every year you and your family are to eat these animals that have been sacrificed in the presence of the Lord your God in the place that the Lord will choose.

²¹ However, if an animal has some defect or is lame or blind, in fact if it has any serious defect at all, you are not to sacrifice it to the Lord your God.

²² Eat it at home. All of you, whether you're ceremonially clean or not, can eat it just like you would eat a gazelle or a deer,

²³ but you are not to eat the blood—pour that out on the ground.

* **15:17** “Metal tool,” literally, “an awl.”

16

¹ You are to observe the month of Abib and to celebrate the Passover* to the Lord your God, because it was in the month of Abib that the Lord your God led you out of Egypt by night.

² The Passover sacrifice from your herd or flock must be offered to the Lord your God in the place where the Lord will choose to live with you.

³ Don't eat ordinary bread with it. For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast, the bread of hardship, because you had to leave Egypt in such a hurry. This way you'll remember the day you left Egypt for the rest of your lives.

⁴ Don't have yeast anywhere in your country for seven days. Don't keep any of the meat that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day until the morning.

⁵ Don't sacrifice the Passover animal in any of the towns that the Lord your God is giving you.

⁶ The Passover sacrifice must be offered by you only at the place where the Lord your God will choose to live with you. You are to do this in the evening at sunset-the same time you left Egypt.

⁷ Cook it and eat it in the place the Lord your God will choose. Then in the morning go back to your tents.

⁸ Eat bread without yeast for six days, and then on the seventh day you are to have a holy meeting to honor the Lord your God. You are not to do any work.

* **16:1** See also Exodus 12:14-28; Leviticus 23:4-8; Numbers 28:16-25.

⁹ Count off seven weeks from when you start the grain harvest.

¹⁰ Then celebrate the Festival of Weeks to honor the Lord your God by giving him a freewill offering, depending on just how much the Lord your God has blessed you.

¹¹ You will celebrate in the Lord's presence in the place where he will choose to live with you. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, and the Levites who live in your towns, as well as the foreigners, orphans, and widows among you.

¹² Don't forget that you were once slaves in Egypt, and be careful to follow these regulations.

¹³ Celebrate the Festival of Shelters for seven days once you have finished threshing your grain and pressing your grapes.

¹⁴ Enjoy your feast—you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, and the Levites who live in your towns, as well as the foreigners, orphans, and widows among you.

¹⁵ Celebrate this Festival for seven days to honor the Lord your God in the place he will choose, because the Lord your God will bless your whole harvest and everything you do, so you will be really happy.

¹⁶ All your men must come before the Lord your God in the place He will choose three times every year: the Festival of Bread without Yeast, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Shelters. No one should come before the Lord without an offering.

¹⁷ Each of you is to bring whatever gift you can, depending on how much the Lord your God has blessed you.

¹⁸ Choose judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town that the Lord your God is giving you. They must judge the people fairly.

¹⁹ Don't pervert justice or show favoritism. Don't take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the wise and twists the words of the truthful.

²⁰ Always do what is right and just, so that you may go on living, occupying the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

²¹ Don't ever set up a wooden Asherah pole next to the altar you build for the Lord your God,

²² and don't make for yourselves an idolatrous stone pillar, which the Lord your God hates.

17

¹ Don't sacrifice to the Lord your God cattle or a sheep that has a defect or has something seriously wrong, for that is offensive to the Lord your God.

² There may be a report that one of you, whether a man or a woman, living in a town that the Lord your God gave you, has been found to be sinning in the sight of the Lord your God by breaking the Lord's agreement.

³ This person has done this by going to worship other gods, bowing down to them—or to the sun, moon, or any of the stars of heaven—which I have ordered you not to do.

⁴ If you hear such a report, you need to make a full investigation. If you find out that the report is true, and that such an awful sin has been committed in Israel,

⁵ you must have the man or woman who has committed this terrible act taken outside the town and stoned to death.

⁶ That person is to be executed based on the evidence given by two or three witnesses. No one shall be executed on the evidence given by a single witness.

⁷ The witnesses must act first in executing the person, and then the rest of those who are present. You must eliminate the evil from among you.

⁸ If there's a case before your town court that is too problematic for you to settle, whether the argument is over murder or manslaughter, one legal decision against another, or different degrees of assault, you must take the issue to the place the Lord your God will choose.

⁹ Go to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge in charge. Present the case to them, and they will give you their decision.

¹⁰ You must abide by the decision they give you there at the place the Lord will choose. Make sure you do everything they tell you to do,

¹¹ in accordance with the legal instructions they give you and the verdict they delivered. Don't deviate from the decision they give you.

¹² Anyone who treats with contempt either the priest (who ministers before the Lord your God) or the judge, must be executed. You must

eliminate this evil from Israel.

¹³ Then everyone else will hear about it and be afraid, and won't act with contempt in the future.

¹⁴ After you've entered the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and have taken it over and settled in it, and you decide, "Let's have a king to rule over us like all the other nations around us do,"

¹⁵ you can have a king but only one chosen by the Lord your God. He must be an Israelite. You must not have a king who is a foreigner; someone who is not an Israelite.

¹⁶ Your king must not have large numbers of horses,* or send his men to Egypt to buy more horses, because the Lord has declared, "You must never return there again."

¹⁷ He must not have many wives, so they don't lead him away from following the Lord. He must not have large quantities of silver and gold.

¹⁸ Once he is king and sits on his royal throne, he must make a copy for himself of these instructions, writing them on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.

¹⁹ He is to keep it with him, and he is to read from it each day throughout his life, so he may learn to respect the Lord his God by being careful to follow every word of these instructions and regulations.

²⁰ Then he won't think more of himself than his fellow Israelites, and he won't deviate from

* **17:16** Horses were used to provide the king with cavalry to fight battles.

the commandments, so that he and his sons may have long reigns over the kingdom of Israel.

18

¹ The Levitical priests, in fact the whole tribe of Levi, will not have a share in the land allotment with the other Israelites. They are to eat from the food offerings presented to the Lord—that is what they are entitled to receive.

² While they don't own land among the other tribes, the Lord takes care of them, as he promised.

³ The priests' share of a sacrifice of a bull or a sheep that is brought by the people is as follows. The priests are to be given the shoulder, the jaw, and the insides.

⁴ You are to provide them with the firstfruits of your grain, new wine, and olive oil, as well as the first wool sheared from your flock.

⁵ For the Lord your God has chosen Levi and his descendants from all your tribes to stand before him and serve in his name forever.

⁶ If a Levite is convinced he should move from any Israelite town and goes to the place the Lord will choose,

⁷ then he shall be allowed to serve in the name of the Lord his God like all his fellow Levites who stand there in service before the Lord.

⁸ They will all receive the same food allowances, despite him having received money from the sale of his father's property.

⁹ Once you enter the country the Lord your God is giving you, don't copy the offensive ways of the nations there.

¹⁰ No one is to sacrifice their son or daughter in the fire, practice divination or fortune-telling, use magic or sorcery,

¹¹ practice witchcraft, visit a medium or spiritist, or communicate with the dead. Anyone who does such things offends the Lord.

¹² It's because of these offensive things that the Lord your God is driving out the nations before you.

¹³ You are to be innocent of such things in the presence of the Lord your God.

¹⁴ Even though these nations, whose land you will occupy, listen to magicians and fortune-tellers, the Lord your God forbids you to do so.

¹⁵ The Lord your God will send you a prophet like me from your people. You must listen to him.

¹⁶ Remember what you told the Lord your God at Horeb when you were all assembled there. You said, "Please don't let us go on hearing the Lord our God speak to us, or see this terrifying fire anymore! Otherwise we're going to die!"

¹⁷ Then the Lord told me, "They are right in what they're saying.

¹⁸ I'm going to send them a prophet like you from their people. I will give him my messages, and he will tell them everything I order him to say.

¹⁹ I will deal with anyone who does not listen to my message that the prophet speaks in my name.

²⁰ However, if any prophet claims to be delivering a message in my name that I have not ordered him to give, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must be executed.”

²¹ You may be wondering, “How can we be sure that a message hasn't come from the Lord?”

²² When a prophet speaks in the Lord's name and what he says doesn't happen or come true, then that is not a message from the Lord. The prophet has spoken with contempt for the Lord. Don't be intimidated by him.

19

¹ After the Lord your God has destroyed the nations whose land he's giving you, and after you have driven them out and settled in their cities and houses,

² then you are to choose three sanctuary towns in the country that the Lord your God is giving you to own.

³ You are to build roads to these towns. Divide the country the Lord is giving you into three sections. This way anyone who kills someone else can easily run to these towns for protection.

⁴ This is what is to happen when a person accidentally kills someone else without meaning to, and runs to one of these sanctuary towns to save their life.

⁵ For example, if a man goes to cut wood in the forest with his friend and swings his axe to chop down a tree, but the head flies off the handle

and hits and kills his friend, he may run to one of these towns to save his life.

⁶ Otherwise the avenger* in his anger might chase after the man and catch up with him and kill him, if it's a long distance. The man would be killed even though he didn't deserve to die, because he hadn't meant to cause any harm.

⁷ This is the reason why I'm giving this order to choose three sanctuary towns.

⁸ Should the Lord your God expand your territory, as he promised your forefathers, and give you all the land he said he would,

⁹ and if you are careful to keep all these commandments I'm giving you today, loving the Lord your God and always following his ways, then you are to choose three additional sanctuary towns.

¹⁰ In this way the blood of innocent people won't be shed in the country the Lord your God is giving you to own and you won't be responsible for the death of innocent people who aren't guilty of losing their lives.

¹¹ On the other hand, if a man hates someone, hides in wait, and attacks and kills them, and then the killer runs to one of the sanctuary towns,

¹² the elders of his home town must send for him, bring him back, and hand him over to the avenger to be killed.

¹³ Show him no mercy. You are to eliminate from Israel the guilt of shedding the blood of the innocent, and then all will be well.

* **19:6** See Numbers 35:19.

¹⁴ Don't move your neighbor's boundary marker. It was placed there by your ancestors to mark the land allotment you will receive in the country that the Lord your God is giving you to own.

¹⁵ The evidence given by a single witness is not enough to prove a sin or a crime against someone, never mind what offense they are alleged to have committed. The facts must be confirmed by the evidence given by two or three witnesses.

¹⁶ If someone falsely accuses another person of a crime,

¹⁷ both those involved must come to be judged in the presence of the Lord by the priests and judges who are then in office.

¹⁸ The judges shall conduct a full investigation, and if the accuser proves to be a liar who has made false accusations

¹⁹ then you must punish the accuser in the same way they wanted to punish their victim. You must eliminate this evil from among you.

²⁰ Then the rest of the people will hear and be afraid, and they will never again do anything so evil among you. Then everyone else will hear about it and be afraid, and won't ever do anything so evil.

²¹ Don't show any mercy. The rule is life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, and foot for foot.

20

¹ When you go to war with your enemies and

you see horses and chariots, and a larger army than yours, don't be afraid of them, because the Lord your God who led you out of Egypt is with you.

² Before you go into battle, the priest shall come and speak to the army.

³ He is to tell them, "Listen, men of Israel! Today you are going to fight your enemies. Don't be nervous or afraid; don't be panicked or terrified by them.

⁴ For the Lord your God is going with you to fight for you against your enemies, and he will give you the victory."

⁵ The officers shall also speak to the army and tell them, "Is there any man here who has built a new house and hasn't dedicated it to the Lord?*" He can go home, otherwise he might die in battle and another man will dedicate it.

⁶ Is there any man here who has planted a vineyard and hasn't yet enjoyed its fruit? He can go home, otherwise he might die in battle and another man will enjoy its fruit.

⁷ Is there any man here who is engaged to a woman and hasn't married her? He can go home, otherwise he might die in battle and another man will marry her."

⁸ The officers are also to tell the army, "Is there any man here who is afraid or nervous? He can go home, so he won't affect his fellow-soldiers and make them as frightened as himself."

⁹ After the officers have finished speaking to the army, they are to put commanders in charge

* **20:5** "To the Lord": implied.

to lead it into battle.

¹⁰ When you arrive at a town, ready to attack it, you must first make an offer of peace to the people living there.

¹¹ If they accept your offer of peace and open their gates to you, all the inhabitants will become your slave-laborers.

¹² However, if they refuse to make peace with you and decide to fight you, then lay siege to the town.

¹³ Once the Lord your God has handed it over to you, kill every male with the sword.

¹⁴ But you can take as plunder the women, children, livestock, and everything else in the town. You can take and use all your enemies' possessions the Lord your God gives you.

¹⁵ This is the way you are to deal with all the towns that are a long way from you and don't belong to neighboring nations.

¹⁶ However, when it comes to the towns of those nations whose land the Lord your God is giving you to occupy, don't leave anything alive that breathes.

¹⁷ Set them apart for complete destruction—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has ordered you to do.

¹⁸ This is to prevent them from teaching you all the offensive things that they do in worshiping their gods, and by doing so make you sin against the Lord your God.

¹⁹ Now when you lay siege to a town and it goes on for a long time as you fight to capture

it, don't destroy the fruit trees there. You can eat their fruit. Don't cut them down. Are the trees in the orchard human beings that you should also attack?

²⁰ However, you may destroy the trees that you know are not fruit trees. You can use them to build siege equipment to attack the town that is fighting against you until it falls.

21

¹ Someone may be found murdered, lying in a field in the country that the Lord your God is giving you to own, and nobody knows who killed them.

² Your elders and judges must come and measure the distance from the body to the surrounding towns.

³ Then the elders of the town that's found to be nearest to the body shall take a cow that has never been put under a yoke or used for work.

⁴ Take the cow to a valley that has a stream running through it and whose ground has never been plowed or sown. Break the cow's neck there beside the stream.

⁵ The Levitical priests must be there too, because the Lord your God has chosen them to serve him and to give blessings in his name, and to decide on legal disputes and cases of assault.

⁶ Then all the elders of the town nearest the body are to wash their hands in the stream over the dead cow, saying,

⁷ "We had nothing to do with this murder, and we didn't see who did it.

⁸ Lord, please forgive your people Israel who you rescued, and do not hold them guilty of shedding of innocent blood. In this way the guilt for shedding blood will be forgiven.”

⁹ This is how you are to remove from yourselves the guilt of shedding innocent blood, since you have done what is right in the Lord's sight.

¹⁰ When you go to war with your enemies and the Lord your God hands them over to you in defeat, and you capture them,

¹¹ you may see that one of them is a beautiful woman who you like and want to marry.

¹² Take her home and have her shave her head, cut her nails,

¹³ and get rid of the clothes she was wearing when she was captured.

After she has lived in your home and has finished her month of mourning for her father and mother, you may sleep with her and marry her, and she shall be your wife.

¹⁴ However, if you are not happy with her, you must let her leave and go wherever she wants. You are not allowed to sell her for money or treat her like a slave, because you have brought shame on her.

¹⁵ If a man has two wives, one he loves and one he doesn't, and both have sons by him, but the firstborn son is from the wife he doesn't love,

¹⁶ when the time comes for the man to decide what each son will inherit from him, he must not prefer the son of the wife he loves and treat him as the firstborn instead of the son of the wife he doesn't love.

17 No. He is to recognize the firstborn, the son of the wife he doesn't love through the usual custom of* giving him a double portion of all that he owns. The firstborn son is the firstfruits of his father's strength, and so the rights of the firstborn are his.

18 If someone has an obstinate and rebellious son who doesn't obey his parents and doesn't obey them even when he's punished,

19 his parents must take him to the town elders, to the court in his hometown,

20 and tell them, "Our son is obstinate and rebellious, He doesn't obey us. He's a worthless drunk!"

21 Then all the men of his home town will stone him to death. You must eliminate the evil from among you, and every Israelite will hear about it and be afraid.

22 If someone commits a crime punishable by death, and the person is executed by hanging on a tree,

23 don't leave the body hanging there overnight. Make sure you bury the body the same day, because anyone who is hung is under God's curse. Don't defile the country that the Lord your God is giving you to own.

22

1 If you see someone's cow or sheep wandering around, don't just ignore it. Make sure you take it back to its owner.

* 21:17 "Through the usual custom of": supplied for clarity.

² If its owner doesn't live near you, or if you don't know who it is, take the animal home with you and keep it until the owner comes looking, then you can return it.

³ Do the same for whatever else you find that someone has lost—a donkey, a cloak, anything. Don't just ignore it.

⁴ If you see someone's donkey or cow that has fallen down on the road, don't just ignore it. Help lift it up.

⁵ A woman must not wear men's clothing, and a man must not wear women's clothing. Anyone who does this offends the Lord your God.

⁶ If you happen to find a bird's nest with chicks or eggs, whether it's in a tree or on the ground beside the road, and the mother is sitting on the chicks or eggs, don't take the mother with the young.

⁷ You may take the young, but make sure you let the mother go, so that you will do well and have a good long life.

⁸ When you build a new house, be sure to install a railing around your roof, so that you won't be held guilty if someone dies falling from it.

⁹ Don't plant your vineyard with another kind of crop. Otherwise everything you produce—the crop you planted and the fruit of your vineyard—must be dedicated to the Lord.*

¹⁰ Don't harness an ox and a donkey together when you plow.

* **22:9** "To the Lord": supplied for clarity.

¹¹ Don't wear clothes made of wool and linen woven together.

¹² Put tassels on the hem of the cloak you use to cover yourself.

¹³ It may happen that a man marries a woman and sleeps with her, but ends up hating her,

¹⁴ and accuses her of being immoral, giving her a bad name, saying, "I married this woman and slept with her, but I found out she wasn't a virgin."

¹⁵ The woman's parents are to bring the proof of her virginity to the elders at the town gate,

¹⁶ and the father will explain to them, "I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he has ended up hating her.

¹⁷ Now he has accused her of being immoral, saying, 'I found out that your daughter wasn't a virgin.' But here's the proof of her virginity." The parents shall spread out the sheet in front of the town elders.

¹⁸ Then the elders of that city shall take the man and punish[†] him.

¹⁹ They shall also fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give the money to the young woman's father, because this man has given an Israelite virgin a bad name. She is to remain his wife; he is not allowed to divorce her as long as he lives.

²⁰ But if the accusation is true, and there's no proof of the woman's virginity,

²¹ she is to be taken to the door of her father's house, and there the men of her town are to stone her to death. She has done something

[†] **22:18** Probably by a public whipping.

disgraceful in Israel by acting immorally in her father's house. You must eliminate the evil from among you.

²² If a man is found sleeping with someone else's wife, both the man and the woman must die. You must eliminate the evil from Israel.

²³ If a man meets a girl, a virgin engaged to another man, and sleeps with her there in the town,

²⁴ then you must take both of them to the town gate and stone them to death. The young woman is guilty because she did not cry out for help in the town, and the man is guilty because he has brought shame on someone else's fiancée. You must eliminate the evil from among you.

²⁵ However, if the man happens to meet a woman who is engaged out in the countryside, and he attacks her and rapes her, only the man has to die.

²⁶ Don't do anything to the woman, because she has not committed a sin punishable by death. (This is the same kind of situation as when a man attacks someone else and murders them.)

²⁷ When the man raped the woman who was engaged out in the countryside, she shouted out, but there wasn't anyone there to rescue her.

²⁸ If a man happens to meet a virgin who is not engaged, and he grabs her and rapes her, and someone sees them,

²⁹ the man must pay the woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and he must marry her because he has brought shame on her. He is not allowed to divorce her as long as he lives.

³⁰ A man must not marry his father's wife, so that he won't bring shame on his father.

23

¹ No man whose genitals have been damaged or cut off is allowed to enter the Lord's sanctuary.

² No one of mixed race* is allowed to enter the Lord's sanctuary, and none of his descendants may do so either, up to the tenth generation.

³ No Ammonite or Moabite or any of their descendants are allowed to enter the Lord's sanctuary, up to the tenth generation.

⁴ For they did not come to meet you with food and water on your journey from Egypt, and they hired Balaam, son of Beor, from Pethor in Mesopotamia, to curse you.

⁵ But the Lord your God refused to listen to Balaam. The Lord your God turned what was meant to be a curse into a blessing for you because the Lord your God loves you.

⁶ Don't arrange a peace treaty with them or help them out as long as you live.

⁷ Don't look down on an Edomite, for they are your relatives. Don't look down on an Egyptian either, because you lived as foreigners in their country.

⁸ The third generation of their children are allowed to enter the Lord's sanctuary.

* **23:2** "Mixed race": the word is only used here and in Zechariah 9:6, and it's meaning is unclear. Some take it to mean "illegitimate," and others "born of incest."

⁹ When you are in an army camp during a war with your enemies, make sure you avoid anything wrong.

¹⁰ Any man there who becomes unclean because of a release of semen must leave the camp and remain outside.

¹¹ Towards the end of the day he must wash himself with water, and at sunset he may return to the camp.

¹² Choose a place outside the camp to be used as a toilet.

¹³ You need to have a spade as part of your equipment so that you can dig a hole, and then when you're finished you can cover up your excrement.

¹⁴ The Lord your God is present with you in your camp to keep you safe and to defeat your enemies. Your camp must be kept holy, because if he sees anything unclean among you, he will leave you.

¹⁵ Don't send a slave back to their master if they have come to you for protection.

¹⁶ Let the slave live in your country wherever they want, in whatever town they want. Don't mistreat them.

¹⁷ No Israelite women or men are to be cult prostitutes.

¹⁸ Don't bring into the house of the Lord your God any money from a prostitute, whether a woman or a man,[†] using it to fulfill a promise to the Lord, for both are offensive to the Lord your God.

[†] **23:18** "Man": the Hebrew uses the derogatory term, "dog."

¹⁹ Don't charge a fellow Israelite interest on money, food, or any other kind of loan.

²⁰ You may charge a foreigner interest, but not an Israelite, so that the Lord your God may bless you in everything you do in the country that you are going in to occupy.

²¹ If you make a promise to the Lord your God, don't be slow in keeping it, because he will definitely demand that you fulfill it and you will be guilty of sin if you don't.

²² If you don't make such promises then you won't be guilty of sin.

²³ But make sure to carry out what you've said to the Lord your God, because it was you who freely chose to make such a promise.

²⁴ When you walk through your neighbor's vineyard, you can eat as many grapes as you want, but you must not collect any to take with you.

²⁵ When you walk through your neighbor's grainfield, you may pick the ears of grain with your hand, but you must not use a sickle to harvest it.

24

¹ Should a man marry a woman, but then isn't pleased with her because he finds out something shameful* about her, he is allowed to write out a certificate of divorce for her, give it to her, and send her out of his house.

* **24:1** "Shameful": the word means "nakedness" or "genitals." The issue is likely to be something related to sex.

² Suppose that after leaving his house, she goes and marries another man,

³ and suppose the second man also ends up hating her, writes out a certificate of divorce for her, gives it to her, and sends her out of his house—or he may happen to die.

⁴ The first husband who divorced her is not permitted to marry her again after she was shamed, for that offends the Lord. You are not to bring guilt upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you to own.

⁵ If a man has just got married, he is not to be sent to war or made to do any other duties. He is free to stay at home for one year and make his wife happy.

⁶ Don't accept a pair of millstones, or even just an upper millstone, as security for a debt, because that would put the borrower's life in danger.†

⁷ Anyone caught kidnapping a fellow Israelite must be executed, whether the kidnapper makes him a slave or sells him. You must eliminate the evil from among you.

⁸ When it comes to infectious skin diseases, make sure you follow carefully all the instructions of the Levitical priests. Be careful to follow the orders I've given them.

⁹ Remember what the Lord your God did to Miriam on the journey out of Egypt.

¹⁰ If you lend anything to someone, don't go into their house to take some kind of security.

† **24:6** For without the mill the family would not be able to grind grain to make bread.

11 Stand outside while they go inside and bring the security out to you.

12 If he is a poor man he may give his cloak as security,[‡] but you must not keep it when you go to sleep.

13 Make sure you give it back by sunset, so that he can sleep in his own cloak and thank you, and you will be counted as doing good by the Lord your God.

14 Don't mistreat a paid servant who is poor and needy, whether he's an Israelite or a foreigner living in one of your towns.

15 Pay his wages every day before sunset, because he is poor and is relying on them. If you don't he may complain to the Lord about you, and you will be found guilty of sin.

16 Fathers are not to be executed because of their children, and children are not to be executed because of their fathers. Each person is to be executed because of their own sin.

17 Don't treat foreigners or orphans unjustly; don't take a widow's cloak as security.

18 Remember that you were once slaves in Egypt, and the Lord your God rescued you from that place. That's why I'm ordering you to do this.

19 If when you're harvesting in your field you forget a sheaf there, don't go back for it. Leave it for the foreigners, the orphans, and the widows,

[‡] 24:12 "He may give his cloak as security": supplied for clarity. From the context this is what has happened, but the text does not make this explicit.

so that the Lord your God may bless you in everything you do.

²⁰ When you shake the olive trees to knock down the olives, don't go over the branches again. What's left is for the foreigners, the orphans, and the widows.

²¹ When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, don't go over the vines again. What's left is for the foreigners, the orphans, and the widows.

²² Remember you were once slaves in Egypt. That's why I'm ordering you to do this.

25

¹ If there is some legal argument between two people, they are to go to court to have the case judged, in order to justify the one who is right and condemn the one who is wrong.

² If the person who is guilty is sentenced to be flogged, the judge shall order them to lie down and be flogged before him with the number of lashes the crime deserves.

³ They are not to receive more than forty lashes. More than that would be to publicly humiliate them.

⁴ Don't muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain.

⁵ When two brothers live near to each other and one of them dies without having a son, the widow is not to marry a stranger outside the family. Her husband's brother is to marry her

and sleep with her, fulfilling the requirements of a brother-in-law to provide her with children.*

⁶ The first son she has will be named after the dead brother, so that his name won't be forgotten in Israel.

⁷ However, if the man refuses to marry his brother's widow, she shall go to the elders at the town gate and tell them, "My husband's brother is refusing to keep his brother's name alive in Israel. He doesn't want to perform the requirements of a brother-in-law for me."

⁸ The town elders are to summon him and talk with him. If he continues to refuse and says, "I don't want to marry her,"

⁹ his brother's widow is to confront him in the presence of the elders, pull off his sandal, spit in his face, and announce, "This is what happens to the man who refuses to keep his brother's family name alive."

¹⁰ From then on his family name in Israel will be called "The Family of the Pulled-off Sandal."

¹¹ If two men are fighting, and one of their wives intervenes to save her husband from being beaten, and she grabs hold of the attacker's genitals,

¹² you are to cut her hand off. Don't show her any mercy.

¹³ Don't have two different measuring weights in your bag, one that's heavy and one that's light.

¹⁴ Don't have two different measuring containers in your house, one that's large and one that's small.

* **25:5** See Genesis 38:8.

¹⁵ Make sure you always use accurate and true weights and measures. In that way you will have long lives in the country the Lord your God is giving you.

¹⁶ Anyone who doesn't do so and cheats like this offends the Lord your God.

¹⁷ Remember what the Amalekites did to you on your way out of Egypt.

¹⁸ They came out to confront you when you were tired and weary from your journey, and they attacked all those of you who were lagging behind. They didn't have any respect for God.

¹⁹ Once the Lord your God gives you peace after fighting your enemies in the country that he's giving you to take over and own, you are to wipe out even the memory of the Amalekites from the earth. Don't forget!

26

¹ Once you've entered the country that the Lord your God is giving you to own, and you take it over and settle there,

² take some of the firstfruits of all your crops produced by the land that the Lord your God is giving you and place them in a basket. Then go to the place the Lord your God will choose to live with you,

³ and tell the priest in charge at the time, "Today I declare to the Lord your God that I now live in the country that the Lord promised our forefathers to give us."

⁴ The priest will take the basket from you and place it in front of the altar of the Lord your God.

⁵ Then this is what you are to publicly declare before the Lord your God, “My father was an Aramean* who moved from place to place. There were only a few of them when he and his family went to live in Egypt. But they became a large and powerful nation.

⁶ But the Egyptians treated us very badly, oppressing us and forcing us to do hard labor.

⁷ We cried out for help to the Lord, the God of our forefathers; and the Lord answered us as he saw how much we were suffering, forced to work so hard in such cruelty.

⁸ The Lord led us out of Egypt with his great power and incredible strength and terrifying actions, signs and miracles.

⁹ He brought us here and gave us this country, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁰ Look, Lord! I have brought you the first-fruits of the land that you have given me.” You shall place the basket before the Lord your God and bow down in worship before him.

¹¹ Then you, the Levites, and the foreigners who live with you are to celebrate all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your family.

¹² Once you've finished storing up a tenth of all your crops in the third year (the year of the tithe), you shall give it to the Levites, the

* **26:5** Probably referring to Jacob.

foreigners, the orphans, and the widows, so they will have enough to eat in your towns.

¹³ Then you are to make this declaration in the presence of the Lord your God: “I have brought the holy tithe and I have given it to the Levite, the foreigners, the orphans, and the widows as you have ordered me to do. I have not broken or forgotten your commandments.

¹⁴ I have not eaten any of the holy tithe while in mourning, or taken any of it while I was unclean, or used any of it as an offering for the dead. I have obeyed the Lord my God. I have done everything you ordered me to do.

¹⁵ Please look down from your home in heaven, and bless your people the Israelites and the country you have given us as you promised our fathers—a land flowing with milk and honey.”

¹⁶ Today the Lord your God orders you to carry out these rules and regulations. Make sure you follow them with all your mind and with all your being.

¹⁷ Today you have publicly declared that the Lord is your God and that you will follow his ways, keep rules and commandments and regulations, and obey what he says.

¹⁸ Today the Lord has announced that you are a special people who belong to him as he promised. He has announced that you are to keep all his commandments.

¹⁹ He has announced that he will give you greater praise and reputation and honor than

any other nation he has made. He has announced that you will be a holy people to the Lord your God, as he promised.

27

¹ Moses and the Israelite elders of Israel gave these instructions to the people: Keep all the commandments I* am giving you today.

² The day you cross the Jordan into the country the Lord your God is giving you, set up some large stones and paint them with whitewash.

³ Then write all these laws on them once you've crossed over to enter the country that the Lord your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your forefathers, promised you.

⁴ After you've crossed the Jordan, you are to set up these stones on Mount Ebal, having painted them with whitewash, as I've ordered you to do today.

⁵ Also build a stone altar there to the Lord your God, an altar of stones. Don't use any stone tools in its construction.

⁶ Build the altar of the Lord your God with uncut stones and sacrifice burnt offerings on it to the Lord your God.

⁷ That is also where you are to sacrifice and eat your peace offerings,† celebrating in the presence of the Lord your God.

⁸ Write all these laws clearly on the stones.

* **27:1** "I": Moses is speaking. † **27:7** See Exodus 20:24.

9 Moses and the Levitical priests gave these orders to all the Israelites: “Be quiet, people of Israel, and listen! Today you have become the people of the Lord your God.

10 So obey what the Lord your God tells you, and follow commandments and regulations that I'm giving you today.”

11 That day Moses gave these orders to the people:

12 After you've crossed the Jordan, the following tribes are to stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin.

13 The following tribes are to stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

14 Then the Levites will shout in a loud voice so every Israelite can hear:

15 “A curse on anyone who makes a carved image or a metal idol and worships it in secret. It's only an object that someone made, and it's offensive to the Lord!” Everyone says “Amen!”

16 “A curse on anyone who dishonors their father or mother.” Everyone says “Amen!”

17 “A curse on anyone who moves their neighbor's boundary stone!” Everyone says “Amen!”

18 “A curse on anyone who allows a blind man to wander in the road!” Everyone says “Amen!”

19 “A curse on anyone who doesn't treat foreigners, the orphans, and widows fairly!” Everyone says “Amen!”

20 “A curse on any man who sleeps with his father's wife, for he has disgraced his father!” Everyone says “Amen!”

21 “A curse on anyone who has sex with any animal!” Everyone says “Amen!”

22 “A curse on any man who sleeps with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother!” Everyone says “Amen!”

23 “A curse on any man who sleeps with his mother-in-law!” Everyone says “Amen!”

24 “A curse on anyone who secretly attacks his neighbor!” Everyone says “Amen!”

25 “A curse on anyone who accepts a bribe to kill someone who's innocent!” Everyone says “Amen!”

26 “A curse on anyone who doesn't carefully obey all these laws by keeping them!” Everyone says “Amen!”

28

¹ If you truly obey what the Lord your God tells you, and carefully follow all his commandments that I'm giving you today, then the Lord your God will place you high above all the nations of the earth.

² You will have all the following blessings and even more, if you do what the Lord your God says.

³ You will be blessed when you're in the town; you will be blessed when you're in the countryside.

⁴ You will be blessed with many children. You will be blessed with good harvests. You will be blessed with livestock—your cattle will have many calves, and your sheep will have many lambs.

⁵ You will be blessed with plenty of bread.*

⁶ You will be blessed wherever you go and in everything you do.

⁷ The Lord will defeat the enemies who come to attack you. They will come at you from one direction, but they will scatter seven different ways.

⁸ The Lord will bless your income[†] and everything you do. The Lord your God will bless you in the country he is giving you.

⁹ The Lord will make you his holy people, just as he promised you, if you obey the Lord your God's commandments and follow his ways.

¹⁰ Then everyone on earth will see that the Lord has chosen you to be his,[‡] and they will be afraid of you.

¹¹ The Lord will make you very prosperous. You will have many children, your livestock will produce plenty of young, and your land will grow good harvests—all this in the country the Lord promised your forefathers he would give you.

¹² The Lord will provide rain for your land at the right time from his heavenly storehouse to

* **28:5** Literally, “your basket and kneading bowl will be blessed.” Similarly the opposite in verse 17. † **28:8** Literally, “order a blessing on your barns.” ‡ **28:10** Literally, “called by the name of the Lord.”

bless all your work growing crops. You will lend money to many nations but you won't need to borrow from any of them.

¹³ The Lord will put you in first place, not the last. You will only go up, never down, as long as you listen to and follow carefully the commandments of the Lord your God that I'm giving you today.

¹⁴ Don't deviate from any of my instructions today. Don't go and worship other gods.

¹⁵ But if you don't obey the Lord your God by following carefully all his commandments and regulations I'm giving you today, then you will experience all the following curses and more:

¹⁶ You will be cursed when you're in the town; you will be cursed when you're in the countryside.

¹⁷ You will be cursed by not having bread.

¹⁸ You will be cursed by not having children, and by not having good harvests, and by your cattle not having calves, and your sheep not having lambs.

¹⁹ You will be cursed wherever you go and in everything you do.

²⁰ The Lord will send you curses, making you confused and frustrated in everything you do, until you are brought down and die quickly because of the evil that you've done by abandoning him. §

²¹ The Lord will give you infectious diseases until he has wiped you out from the country you

§ 28:20 "Him": Hebrew "me."

are entering.

²² Then the Lord will hit you with sickness that makes you waste away, with a severe fever and swelling like you're burning up, while your crops are damaged by drought and blight and mildew. These will attack you until you die.

²³ The sky above you will be like bronze, and the earth beneath you will be like iron.

²⁴ The Lord will change the rain of your land into dust and sand; it will fall from the sky on you until you're destroyed.

²⁵ The Lord will have your enemies defeat you. You will attack them from one direction, but you will scatter seven different ways. Everyone on earth will be horrified at what happens to you.

²⁶ Your dead bodies will be food for birds of prey and wild animals, and there won't be anyone to scare them away.

²⁷ The Lord will give you boils like he did to the Egyptians, with swellings and scabs and skin rashes that can't be cured.

²⁸ The Lord will drive you mad; he will blind you and confuse you

²⁹ so that even at noon you will be groping around like a blind man in the dark. You won't be successful in what you do. You'll be persecuted and robbed the whole time, and no one will come and save you.

³⁰ You will be engaged to marry a woman, but another man will sleep with her. You will build a house but you won't live in it. You will plant a vineyard but won't benefit from any harvest.

³¹ Your ox will be slaughtered right in front of you, but you won't eat any of it. Your donkey will be taken away and won't be returned to you. Your sheep will be taken by your enemies, and no one will come and save you.

³² Your sons and daughters will be taken away as slaves to other nations while you watch, and you'll wear your eyes out crying over them, but there won't be anything you can do about it.

³³ A foreign nation you've never heard of will eat all the crops you worked so hard to grow. You will be continually persecuted and downtrodden.

³⁴ What you see will drive you mad.

³⁵ The Lord will give you painful boils that can't be cured on your knees and thighs, in fact from head to toe.

³⁶ The Lord will exile you and your chosen king to a foreign nation that neither you nor your forefathers have ever heard of. There you will worship other gods, idols made of wood and stone.

³⁷ You will be something that horrifies all the nations where you've been exiled by the Lord. They will laugh at you and ridicule you.

³⁸ You will sow a lot of seed in the field, but harvest very little because the locusts will destroy it.

³⁹ You will plant vineyards and care for them, but you won't harvest the grapes or drink the wine, because the grapes will be eaten by maggots.

⁴⁰ You will have olive trees all over the country

but you won't have any olive oil to use,* because the olives will drop early from the trees.

⁴¹ You will have sons and daughters, but you won't have them for long, because they will be taken off into captivity as slaves.

⁴² Locust swarms will destroy all your trees and crops.

⁴³ Foreigners who live with you will rise higher and higher in status above you, while you sink lower and lower.

⁴⁴ They will lend to you, but you will not lend to them. They will be the first, and you will be the last.

⁴⁵ All these curses will come down on you. They will chase after you and attack you until you die because you did not obey the Lord your God and keep the commandments and regulations he gave you.

⁴⁶ They will be lasting evidence, visible signs of what happened to you and your descendants.

⁴⁷ Because you did not serve the Lord your God with happiness and with a joyful attitude,

⁴⁸ you will serve your enemies that the Lord sends to attack you. You will be hungry, thirsty, naked, and poor. He will tie an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you.

⁴⁹ The Lord will bring a nation to attack you from a long way off, from the ends of the earth. They will swoop down upon you like an eagle, this nation whose language you won't understand.

* **28:40** "Use": literally, "anoint," the process of applying olive oil to the skin.

⁵⁰ They are a ruthless nation that doesn't have respect for the old and doesn't have mercy on the young.

⁵¹ They will eat your lambs and calves and the crops you've grown until you are destroyed. They won't leave you any grain or new wine or olive oil, no calves from your herds or lambs from your flocks, so you'll die of starvation.

⁵² They will besiege all the towns in your country, until the high, fortified walls that you trust in have fallen. They will besiege all your towns in your country that the Lord your God has given you.

⁵³ You'll end up eating your children, the flesh of the sons and daughters the Lord your God gave you, because of the siege and the suffering that your enemy will cause you.

⁵⁴ The kindest and most sensitive man among you will refuse to share his food with his brother, the wife he loves, and those of his own children who are left.

⁵⁵ He will refuse to share with any of them the flesh of his children that he's forced to eat because he doesn't have anything else because of the siege and suffering your enemy has caused you in all your towns.

⁵⁶ The kindest and most sensitive woman among you, so kind and sensitive she wouldn't ever go barefoot on the ground, will refuse to share her food, a baby and its afterbirth, with the husband she loves and her own son and daughter.

⁵⁷ She will even secretly eat the babies she

gives birth to, as well as the afterbirth, since she doesn't have anything else because of the siege and the suffering your enemy has caused in all your towns,

⁵⁸ If you don't carefully observe all these laws written down in this book so that you may show respect for this glorious and awesome Lord your God,

⁵⁹ he will bring down on you and your descendants unbelievable disasters, intense and long-lasting diseases, and terrible and incurable sicknesses.

⁶⁰ He will give you all the diseases you were terrified of in Egypt, and they will stay with you.

⁶¹ The Lord will also give you every sickness and disease, even those not recorded in this Book of the Law, until you are destroyed.

⁶² You who grew as numerous as the stars in the sky will end up as only a few, because you would not obey what Lord your God told you.

⁶³ In the same way as he wanted to make you prosperous and increase in number, so now he will wipe you out and destroy you. You will be uprooted from the country you are going in to own.

⁶⁴ The Lord will scatter you among the nations all over the earth, and there you will worship other gods, gods made of wood and stone, which you and your fathers had never heard of.

⁶⁵ You won't find any place to rest among those nations, no place of your own. The Lord will make you anxious, with failing eyesight and a mind full of despair.

⁶⁶ You will see your life hanging in the balance as you doubt. You will be afraid day and night, terrified you won't survive.

⁶⁷ In the morning you'll say, "I wish it was evening!" and in the evening you'll say, "I wish it was morning!" because you're so frightened by the terrifying things you see.

⁶⁸ The Lord will send you back to Egypt in ships to a place that I said you weren't ever meant to see again. You will put yourselves on sale there to your enemies as male and female slaves, but nobody will want to buy you.

29

¹ The following are the terms of the agreement that the Lord ordered Moses to make with the Israelites in the country of Moab. This was in addition to the agreement he had made with them at Horeb.*

² Moses called all the Israelites together and announced to them, You saw with your own eyes everything the Lord did in Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his officials, and to his whole country.

³ You saw with your own eyes the amazing tests, and those great signs and miracles.

⁴ But up to now the Lord has not given you minds that understand, or eyes that see, or ears that hear, saying,

⁵ For forty years I led you through the desert, but your clothes and sandals didn't wear out.

* **29:1** "Horeb": another name for Mount Sinai.

⁶ You didn't have bread to eat, or wine or alcohol to drink in order that you would realize that I am the Lord your God.

⁷ When we arrived here, Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan marched out to fight us in battle, but we defeated them.

⁸ We took their land and gave it to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh to own.

⁹ So make sure you keep and follow the terms of this agreement in order that you may be successful in everything you do.

¹⁰ Every one of you stands here today before the Lord your God: you tribal leaders, officials, and all the men of Israel,

¹¹ your children and wives, and the foreigners in your camps who cut your firewood and carry your water.

¹² You're here so you can enter into the agreement of the Lord your God, which he is making with you today, and accept his solemn promise,

¹³ and so he can confirm you today as his people. He will be your God as he told you and as he promised your forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

¹⁴ It's not only with you that the Lord is making this agreement and solemn promise,

¹⁵ those who are standing here with us today in the presence of the Lord our God, but also with those who are not here today.

¹⁶ You know very well what it was like when we lived in the land of Egypt and our experiences

as we passed through the nations on the way here.

¹⁷ You saw their disgusting religious practices and their idols of wood and stone, and silver and gold.

¹⁸ You need to make sure today that there's no man or woman, family or tribe of yours who wants to turn from the Lord our God and go and worship the gods of these nations. Make sure there is nothing like that among you that would produce such poison and bitterness.

¹⁹ For when someone like that hears the words of this solemn promise, they think they'll still receive a blessing, telling themselves, "I'll be safe, even though I'll go on doing whatever I feel like." Such an attitude would destroy good and bad alike.†

²⁰ The Lord would never want to pardon them. In fact, his passionate anger will burn against them, and every curse written in this book will fall on them. The Lord will erase their name from the earth,

²¹ and will punish them as an example to all the Israelite tribes, in accordance with all the curses of the agreement written in this Book of the Law.

²² Later generations, your descendants and foreigners from far away, will see how the Lord has brought disaster on the country and devastated it.

²³ The whole country will be a burning wasteland of sulfur and salt. Nothing is sown; it's

† **29:19** "Destroy good and bad alike": literally, "destroy the well-watered with the parched."

totally unproductive; no plant grows there—just like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord destroyed in his furious anger.

²⁴ Everyone everywhere will ask, “Why did the Lord do this to the country? Why did he get so terribly angry?”

²⁵ The people will answer, “It’s because they abandoned the agreement of the Lord, the God of their forefathers, which he made with them when he led them out of Egypt.

²⁶ They went off and worshiped other gods, bowing down to gods they’d never heard of—gods that the Lord had not given to them.

²⁷ That’s why the Lord was so angry with this land, and he rained down on it every curse written in this book.

²⁸ The Lord uprooted them from their country in his anger, rage, and fury, and he threw them out, leaving them in another land, where they are to this day.”

²⁹ The Lord our God has secrets that belong to him, but what has been revealed belong to us and to our descendants forever, so that we may follow everything in this law.

30

¹ One day after you experience all this, the blessings and curses I’ve told you about, you’ll think about them, living in all the different nations where the Lord your God has exiled you.

² When that happens, and when you and your children come back to the Lord your God, and when you do what he says with all your mind and all your being in accordance with everything I'm telling you today, then the Lord your God will be merciful to you.

³ He will bring you back home, gathering you from all the nations where he scattered you.

⁴ Even if you're exiled to the ends of the earth, I will gather you from there and bring you back.

⁵ The Lord your God will bring you home to the country that belonged to your forefathers and you will own it again. He will make you successful, and you will have even more descendants than your forefathers.

⁶ The Lord your God will make you and your descendants his again,* and you will love him with all your mind and with all your being, so that you'll live.

⁷ Then the Lord your God will place all these curses upon your enemies instead, on those who hate and persecute you.

⁸ You will once again do what the Lord tells you and follow all his commandments that I'm giving you today.

⁹ The Lord your God will make you successful in everything you do, you will have children, your livestock will be productive, and you will

* **30:6** "Make you and your descendants his again": literally, "circumcise the hearts of you and your descendants." Circumcision was a sign of God's "ownership" of the people, and circumcision of the heart was a description of true dedication to the Lord.

have good harvests. The Lord will once again be happy to do you good, as he did to your forefathers,

¹⁰ if you obey the Lord your God by keeping his commandments and regulations written in this book of the Law, and if you come back to him with all your mind and with all your being.

¹¹ The instruction I'm giving you today isn't too difficult for you to follow. It's not as if it's so far from you that it's impossible to achieve.

¹² It's not in heaven so you have to ask, "Who is going to go up to heaven to get it for us and let us know what it says so we can obey it?"

¹³ It's not across the ocean so you have to ask, "Who is going to cross the ocean to get it for us and let us know what it says so we can obey it?"

¹⁴ No—you have this instruction right there before you. It's in the words you speak and in the thoughts you think, so obey it.

¹⁵ Listen! Today I've placed a choice before you: life and what's good, or death and what's evil.

¹⁶ I'm telling you today to love the Lord your God, to follow his ways, and to keep his commandments, rules, and regulations, so you can live and grow in number, and so the Lord your God may bless you in the country that you are entering and will own.

¹⁷ If you disregard this and you refuse to listen, if you're lured into bowing down to other gods and worshiping them,

¹⁸ then I warn you right now that you will definitely die. You won't live long in the country

that you're going to own after you cross the Jordan.

¹⁹ I call on heaven and earth to be my witnesses against you today that I have placed before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life, so you and your descendants will live,

²⁰ so you will love the Lord your God, obey him, and hold onto him. For he is your life, and he will give you long lives in the country that the Lord promised to give your forefathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

31

¹ Once Moses had finished* giving these instructions to all the Israelites,

² he told them, I'm now a hundred and twenty years old. I can't get around like I used to, and the Lord has told me, "You are not to cross the Jordan."

³ The Lord your God himself is going to lead you across. He will destroy these nations as you advance, and you will take over their land. Joshua will cross ahead of you, as the Lord said.

⁴ The Lord will do to them what he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and their land when he destroyed them.

⁵ The Lord will hand them over to you, and you will deal with them exactly as I've told you.

⁶ Be strong! Be brave! Don't be frightened or terrified of them, because the Lord your God will

* **31:1** Dead Sea Scrolls and Septuagint reading.

go with you. He won't ever leave you or abandon you.

⁷ Moses called for Joshua and told him in front of all the Israelites, “Be strong!! Be brave! You will accompany this people into the country that the Lord promised to give their forefathers, and you are to allocate it for them to own.

⁸ The Lord himself goes ahead of you. He will be with you. He won't ever leave you or abandon you. Don't be afraid and don't be discouraged.”

⁹ Moses wrote this law down and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the Ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the Israelite elders.

¹⁰ Moses gave them these orders, “At the end of every seven years, the year when debts are canceled during the Festival of Shelters,

¹¹ when all the Israelites come before the Lord your God at the place he will choose, you are to read this law for everyone to hear.

¹² Have the people gather together—the men, women, children, and the foreigners living with you—so that they can listen and learn to respect the Lord your God and to carefully observe all the instructions of this law.

¹³ Then their children who are ignorant of the law will listen and learn to respect the Lord your God for as long as you live in the country you are going to occupy once you cross the Jordan.”

¹⁴ Then the Lord told Moses, “Listen, you are soon going to die. Tell Joshua to meet you, and then both of you are to come and stand before

me at the Tent of Meeting, so that I may appoint him as leader.”

Moses and Joshua went to stand before the Lord at the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁵ The Lord appeared there at the tent in a pillar of cloud. The cloud stood at the entrance to the tent.

¹⁶ The Lord told Moses, “You will join your ancestors in death, and these people are going to prostitute themselves by worshiping the foreign gods of the country they are entering. They will abandon me and break the agreement I’ve made with them.

¹⁷ Then I will abandon them and turn away from them, so they will be destroyed, and they will experience many disasters and problems.

At that time they’ll say, ‘We’re suffering these disasters because our God has abandoned us!’

¹⁸ Then I will definitely ignore them because of all the evil they have done by worshiping other gods.

¹⁹ So write down this song and teach it to the Israelites. Help them learn to sing it, so it will provide evidence for me against them.

²⁰ Once I’ve led them into the country that I promised to give their forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey, they will have plenty to eat and will do well. Then they will go and worship other gods, and they will abandon me and break my agreement.

²¹ Once they’ve experienced plenty of trouble and suffering, this song will testify against them, because their descendants won’t forget the

words. I know what they're like, even before I lead them into the country that I promised to give them.”

²² Right then Moses wrote down this song and taught it to the Israelites.

²³ Then the Lord appointed Joshua son of Nun as leader, and told him, “Be strong! Be brave! For you are going to lead the Israelites into the country that I promised to give them, and I will be with you.”

²⁴ After Moses had finished writing down this Law in a book from start to finish,

²⁵ he ordered the Levites who carried the Ark of the Lord's Agreement:

²⁶ “Place this book of the Law beside the Ark of the Lord your God's Agreement, so that it will be kept there as a evidence against you.

²⁷ I know how stubborn and rebellious you are. If you've already started rebelling against the Lord while I'm still alive, how much worse will you get after I die?

²⁸ Summon all the elders of your tribes and all your officers to gather here before me so that I can tell them this directly and call on heaven and earth as witnesses against them.

²⁹ I know that after my death you will become completely immoral, leaving the path I have ordered you to follow. In the future, evil things will happen to you because of the evil sins you commit in the sight of the Lord, making him angry by what you do.”

³⁰ Then Moses recited all the words of this song as the Israelites listened.

32

¹ Heaven, listen as I speak; Earth, hear what I'm saying.

² May my teaching fall gently like the rain; may my words drop lightly like the dew, like soft rain on new grass, like spring showers on growing plants.

³ I will praise the Lord's character. Tell everyone how great he is!

⁴ He is the Rock. Everything he does is perfect, for all his ways are right. He is the trustworthy God who is never unjust; he is fair and honest.

⁵ His children have acted immorally towards him; so they are no longer his children because of their sinful stains. They are a perverse and corrupt people.

⁶ Is this any way to repay the Lord, you foolish, stupid people? Isn't he your Father who created you? Isn't he the one who turned you into a nation and made you strong?

⁷ Remember the olden days; think about the generations of the past. Go and ask your father about them, and he will explain them to you. Talk to your elders, and they will tell you what you need to know.

⁸ The Most High gave the nations their lands when he divided the human race; he fixed their

borders depending on their gods.*

⁹ But the Lord's people are his, Israel is his chosen one.

¹⁰ He found you in a desert land, in a desolate wasteland of whirlwinds. He protected you; he cared for you; he looked after you as the one he loved the most.†

¹¹ Like an eagle watching over‡ its nest, hovering over its chicks, he spread his wings and picked you up and carried you along.§

¹² The Lord was the only one who led you; no foreign god was with him.

¹³ The Lord gave you the high country to rule,* and fed you with the crops of the field to eat. He sustained you with honey from the rock and olive oil from the flinty crag,

¹⁴ with yogurt from the herd and milk from the flock, with the fat of lambs, with rams from Bashan, and goats, along with the best wheat. You drank the wine made from the best grapes.

* **32:8** "Depending on their gods": this phrase is unclear. The Masoretic text has "according to the number of the sons of Israel." Some of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint have "according to the number of gods." If the latter is the correct reading, it may mean that each nation was separated and given its borders in relationship to the gods they worshiped. † **32:10** "The one he loved the most": or, "the apple of his eye." ‡ **32:11** "Watching over": Septuagint reading. Hebrew, "rouses."

§ **32:11** "Along": literally, "on his pinions," the name of a part of a bird's wing that is not often used in English. * **32:13** "He gave him the high country to rule": literally, "He set him on the backs of the land."

15 But Israel,[†] you grew fat and rebelled—fat, overweight, and bloated with food. You abandoned the God who made you and despised the Rock of your salvation.

16 You made the Lord jealous by worshiping foreign gods; you made him angry with such disgusting practices.

17 You offered sacrifices to demons instead of God, to gods you didn't know anything about, to brand-new gods that your forefathers didn't worship.

18 You dismissed the Rock who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave birth to you.

19 The Lord rejected them when he saw this; his sons and daughters made him angry.

20 He said: “I will turn away from them. Then I'll see what happens to them! They are a perverse people, unfaithful children.

21 They have made me jealous by worshiping things that are not God; they have made me angry with their useless idols. So I will make them jealous using a people that aren't really a nation; I will make them angry using ignorant foreigners.

22 My anger has been set on fire, burning down to the depths of the grave,[‡] destroying the earth and all it produces, even setting fire to the foundations of the mountains.

23 I will pile disasters on them; I will use up my arrows shooting at them.

[†] 32:15 Literally, “Jeshurun,” meaning, “the good one.” [‡] 32:22 “The grave”: literally, “Sheol.”

24 They will waste away from hunger, destroyed by disease and poisonous plague. I will send wild animals to bite them with their teeth, the fangs of snakes that slide along the ground.

25 Outside in the streets the sword kills their children, inside their homes, they die from fright; young men and young women, children and old people.

26 I would have told them I was going to cut them to pieces[§] and wipe out even the memory of them;

27 but I didn't want to hear their conquerors jeering, their enemies misunderstanding what had happened and saying, 'We won all by ourselves, the Lord didn't have anything to do with it.'

28 Israel is a nation that doesn't think straight; none of them understand anything.

29 How I wish they were wise, so they could understand it; they would recognize what was going to happen to them.

30 How on earth could one man chase after a thousand, or two make ten thousand run away, unless their Rock of protection had sold them, unless the Lord had surrendered them?

31 The rock they rely on is not like our Rock, as even our enemies admit.*

32 But their vine comes from the vine of Sodom, from the fields of Gomorrah. Their grapes are poisonous; they are bitter bunches.

§ 32:26 "Cut them to pieces": or, "scatter them." * 32:31 Septuagint reading.

33 Their wine is the poison of serpents, deadly snake venom.

34 I've stored this all up; it's sealed in my vaults.

35 I make sure justice is done, I will repay. The time is coming when they will fall, their day of disaster is approaching, their doom will soon arrive."

36 The Lord is going to vindicate his people; he will be merciful to his servants when he sees that they have no strength left, and that everyone is gone, whether slave or free.

37 He'll ask, "What happened to your gods, the rock where you went for protection?

38 Who ate the fat of your sacrifices and drank the wine of your drink offerings? Have them come and help you; have them come and protect you!

39 Listen! I am the only God! There is no other God except me! I bring death, and I give life; I wound, and I heal. No one can be rescued from my power.

40 I hold up my hand to heaven and solemnly declare on my eternal life,

41 when I sharpen my shining sword and pick it up to execute judgment, I will repay my enemies and punish those who hate me as they deserve.

42 My arrows will become drunk with blood, as my sword eats flesh; the blood of those who are killed and captured, the heads of the enemy's leaders."

43 Celebrate with him! Let all God's angels worship him![†] Celebrate, foreigners, with his people; because he will pay back those who killed his children.[‡] He will punish his enemies, and repay those who hate him;[§] he will purify his land and his people.

44 Then Moses came with Joshua son of Nun and recited all the words of this song for the people to hear.

45 After Moses finished reciting the whole song to all the Israelites,

46 he told them, "Think about all these words I've declared to you today, so you can order your children to follow carefully everything in this law.

47 Don't treat these words as trivial because they are your life, and by them you will have long lives in the country that you will own after crossing the Jordan."

48 That same day the Lord told Moses,

49 "Climb up into the Abarim mountains to Mount Nebo, in the land of Moab opposite Jericho, and look over the country of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites for them to own.

50 There on the mountain you've climbed, you will die and join your people in death, in the same way your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and joined his people.

[†] **32:43** This line is not in the Masoretic text, but does occur in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint. It is also quoted in Hebrews 1:6. [‡] **32:43** Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint reading.

[§] **32:43** "Repay those who hate him": Septuagint and Vulgate reading.

⁵¹ For there at the waters of Meribah-kadesh in the Desert of Zin, you both were unfaithful to me. You misrepresented me to the Israelites when you didn't treat me as holy in their presence.

⁵² Though you will see the country that I am giving the Israelites from a distance, you won't enter it."

33

¹ The following is the blessing that Moses the man of God gave to the Israelites before he died.

² He said, The Lord came from Mount Sinai and shone on us from Mount Seir; he blazed out from Mount Paran coming with ten thousand holy ones, holding flaming fire at his right hand.

³ How much you love the people; you hold all the holy ones in your hand. They sit down at your feet to listen to your words:

⁴ the law that Moses delivered to us that belongs to all the Israelites.

⁵ The Lord became King in Israel* when the people's leaders gathered, when the tribes of Israel assembled.

⁶ To Reuben he said, "May he live and not die, but may he only have a few men."

⁷ To Judah he said: "Lord, please hear the cry of Judah and reunite him with his people. Even though he fights for himself, may you help him against his enemies."

⁸ To Levi he said: "Your Thummim were given to Levi and your Urim to those dedicated to God,

* **33:5** "Israel": literally, "Jeshurun." See 32:15. Also verse 26.

the ones you tested at Massah and argued with at the waters of Meribah.

⁹ Levi said that he didn't pay attention to his father and mother, that he didn't acknowledge his brothers, and that he didn't recognize his children.† The Levites did what you said and kept your agreement.

¹⁰ They will teach your regulations to Jacob and your law to Israel. They will place incense before you, and sacrifice whole burnt offerings on your altar.

¹¹ Lord, please bless what they have, and accept their service for you. Destroy those who attack them; make sure their enemies never rise again.”

¹² To Benjamin he said: “May the one the Lord loves be kept safe and secure in the Lord. The Lord always protects him, letting him rest on his shoulders.”

¹³ To Joseph he said: “May the Lord bless his land with the best gifts of heaven—with the dew and water from the depths below;

¹⁴ with the best crops ripened by the sun and the best produce of the seasons;

¹⁵ with the finest contributions of the ancient mountains and the best materials of the everlasting hills;

¹⁶ with the best gifts of the land and everything in it, along with the appreciation of the one who was in the burning bush. May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph like a crown for this prince among his brothers.

† **33:9** Meaning that he wasn't influenced by the opinion of anyone in his family.

17 He is as majestic as a firstborn bull; his horns are like those of a wild ox. He will use them to gore the nations, driving them to the ends of the earth. The horns represent the ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh.”

18 To Zebulun he said: “Celebrate, Zebulun, in your travels and Issachar, in your tents.

19 They will summon the peoples‡ to a mountain; will offer the appropriate sacrifices there. They will enjoy the rich produce of the seas and from trading on the seashores.”

20 To Gad he said: “Blessed is he who makes Gad's territory larger! Gad is like a lion lying in wait, ready to rip off an arm or a head.

21 He chose the best land for himself, for he was allocated a ruler's share. He met with the people's leaders; he did what the Lord said was right, following the Lord's regulations for Israel.”

22 To Dan he said: “Dan is a young lion that leaps out of Bashan.”

23 To Naphtali he said: “Naphtali is really favored, full of the Lord's blessing. He shall take over the land to the west and south.”

24 To Asher he said: “May Asher be blessed more than all the other sons; may he be favored above his brothers and bathe his feet in olive oil.

25 May the bolts of your gate be strong as iron and bronze, and may you be strong all your life.”

26 There is no one like the God of Israel, who rides across the heavens to come to help you; who rides the clouds in majesty.

‡ 33:19 “Peoples”: whether this refers to other Israelite tribes or foreign nations is unclear.

²⁷ The eternal God is your home, and he holds you up with his everlasting arms. He drives out the enemy ahead of you, and gives the order, “Destroy him!”

²⁸ As a result Israel lives in peace; Jacob has no trouble in a country of grain and new wine, where the heavens drip with dew.

²⁹ How blessed you are, Israel! Is there anyone like you, a people saved by the Lord? He is the shield that protects you, the sword that gives you confidence. Your enemies will tremble before you, and you shall tread them[§] underfoot.

34

¹ Moses left the plains of Moab and went to Mount Nebo, climbing right to the top of Pisgah that faces in the direction of Jericho. The Lord showed him the whole country, from Gilead all the way to Dan.

² This included all the territories of Naphtali, Ephraim and Manasseh, Judah as far as the Mediterranean Sea,

³ the Negev, and the Jordan Valley from Jericho (the city of palms) down to Zoar.

⁴ The Lord told him, “This is the country I solemnly promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when I said, ‘I’m giving it to your descendants.’ I have allowed you to see it for yourself, but you’re not going to enter it.”

§ 33:29 Or “their high places,” the pagan shrines.

⁵ Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the country of Moab, just as the Lord had said.

⁶ He buried him in a valley there in Moab that is opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows to this day where Moses' grave is.

⁷ Moses was 120 when he died, yet he was still seeing clearly and he was still strong.

⁸ The Israelites mourned for Moses on the plains of Moab for thirty days, until the time of mourning was over.

⁹ Joshua, son of Nun, was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had placed his hands on him to dedicate him.* The Israelites paid attention to him, and followed the instructions the Lord had given to Moses.

¹⁰ Since then there has never been a prophet in Israel like Moses who was the Lord's close friend.†

¹¹ The Lord sent him to carry out all the signs and miracles in Egypt to convince Pharaoh and his officials, and all the people in the country.

¹² Moses did these amazing things with tremendous power as the Israelites watched.

* **34:9** See Numbers 27:18. † **34:10** "Who was the Lord's close friend": literally, "whom the Lord knew face to face."

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