

those who hate and persecute you. <sup>8</sup>Then you will again obey the LORD and keep all his commands that I am giving you today.

<sup>9</sup>"The LORD your God will then make you successful in everything you do. He will give you many children and numerous livestock, and he will cause your fields to produce abundant harvests, for the LORD will again delight in being good to you as he was to your ancestors. <sup>10</sup>The LORD your God will delight in you if you obey his voice and keep the commands and decrees written in this Book of Instruction, and if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul.

### The Choice of Life or Death

<sup>11</sup>"This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you to understand, and it is not beyond your reach. <sup>12</sup>It is not kept in heaven, so distant that you must ask, 'Who will go up to heaven and bring it down so we can hear it and obey?' <sup>13</sup>It is not kept beyond the sea, so far away that you must ask, 'Who will cross the sea to bring it to us so we can hear it and obey?' <sup>14</sup>No, the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it.

<sup>15</sup>"Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. <sup>16</sup>For I command you this day to love the LORD your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy.

<sup>17</sup>"But if your heart turns away and you refuse to listen, and if you are drawn away to serve and worship other gods, <sup>18</sup>then I warn you now that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live a long, good life in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy.

<sup>19</sup>"Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! <sup>20</sup>You can make this choice by loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This\* is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the LORD, you will live long in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

### Joshua Becomes Israel's Leader

**31** When Moses had finished giving these instructions\* to all the people of Israel, <sup>2</sup>he said, "I am now 120 years old, and I am no longer able to lead you. The LORD has told me, 'You will not cross the Jordan River.' <sup>3</sup>But the LORD your God himself will cross over ahead of you. He will destroy the nations living there, and you will take possession of their land. Joshua will lead you across the river, just as the LORD promised.

<sup>4</sup>"The LORD will destroy the nations living in the land, just as he destroyed Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites. <sup>5</sup>The LORD will hand over to you the people who live there, and you must deal with them as I have commanded you. <sup>6</sup>So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the LORD your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you."

<sup>7</sup>Then Moses called for Joshua, and as all Israel watched, he said to him, "Be strong and courageous! For you will lead these people into the land that the LORD swore to their ancestors he would give them. You are the one who will divide it among them as their grants of land. <sup>8</sup>Do not be afraid or

discouraged, for the LORD will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; he will neither fail you nor abandon you."

### Public Reading of the Book of Instruction

<sup>9</sup>So Moses wrote this entire body of instruction in a book and gave it to the priests, who carried the Ark of the LORD's Covenant, and to the elders of Israel. <sup>10</sup>Then Moses gave them this command: "At the end of every seventh year, the Year of Release, during the Festival of Shelters, <sup>11</sup>you must read this Book of Instruction to all the people of Israel when they assemble before the LORD your God at the place he chooses. <sup>12</sup>Call them all together—men, women, children and the foreigners living in your towns—so they may hear this Book of Instruction and learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully obey all the terms of these instructions. <sup>13</sup>Do this so that your children who have not known these instructions will hear them and will learn to fear the LORD your God. Do this as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy."

### Israel's Disobedience Predicted

<sup>14</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, "The time has come for you to die. Call Joshua and present yourselves at the Tabernacle,\* so that I may commission him there." So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the Tabernacle. <sup>15</sup>And the LORD appeared to them in a pillar of cloud the stood at the entrance to the sacred tent.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD said to Moses, "You are about to die and join your ancestors. After you are gone, these people will begin to worship foreign gods, the gods of the land where they are going. They will abandon me and break my covenant that I have made with them. <sup>17</sup>Then my anger will blaze forth against them. I will abandon them, hiding my face from them, and they will be devoured. Terrible trouble will come down on them, and on that day they will say, 'These disasters have come down on us because God is no longer among us.' <sup>18</sup>At that time I will hide my face from them on account of all the evil they commit by worshiping other gods.

<sup>19</sup>"So write down the words of this song, and teach it to the people of Israel. Help them learn it, so it may serve as a witness for me against them. <sup>20</sup>For I will bring them into the land I swore to give their ancestors—a land flowing with milk and honey. There they will become prosperous, eat all the food they want, and become fat. But they will begin to worship other gods; they will despise me and break my covenant. <sup>21</sup>And when great disasters come down on them, this song will stand as evidence against them, for it will never be forgotten by their descendants. I know the intentions of these people, even now before they have entered the land I swore to give them."

<sup>22</sup>So that very day Moses wrote down the words of the song and taught it to the Israelites.

<sup>23</sup>Then the LORD commissioned Joshua son of Nun with these words: "Be strong and courageous, for you must bring the people of Israel into the land I swore to give them. I will be with you."

<sup>24</sup>When Moses had finished writing this entire body of instruction in a book, <sup>25</sup>he gave this command to the Levites who carried the Ark of the LORD's Covenant: <sup>26</sup>"Take this Book of Instruction and place it beside the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, so it may remain there as a witness against the people of Israel. <sup>27</sup>For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Even now, while I am still alive and am here with you, you have rebelled against the LORD. How much more rebellious will you be after my death!

<sup>28</sup>Now summon all the elders and officials of your tribes so that I can speak to them directly and call heaven and earth to witness against them. <sup>29</sup>I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt and will turn from the commands I have commanded you to follow. In the days to come, the LORD will come down on you, for you will do what is evil in his sight, making him very angry with your actions."

### The Song of Moses

<sup>30</sup>So Moses recited this entire song publicly to the assembly of Israel:

**32** <sup>1</sup>"Listen, O heavens, and I will speak! Hear, O earth, the words that I say!

Let my teaching fall on you like rain;  
let my speech settle like dew.

Let my words fall like rain on tender grass,  
like gentle showers on young plants.

I will proclaim the name of the LORD;  
how glorious is our God!

He is the Rock; his deeds are perfect.  
Everything he does is just and fair.

He is a faithful God who does no wrong;  
how just and upright he is!

But they have acted corruptly toward him;  
when they act so perversely,  
are they really his children?\*

They are a deceitful and twisted generation.  
Is this the way you repay the LORD,  
you foolish and senseless people?

Isn't he your Father who created you?  
Has he not made you and established you?

Remember the days of long ago;  
think about the generations past.

Ask your father, and he will inform you.  
Inquire of your elders, and they will tell you.

When the Most High assigned lands to the nations,  
when he divided up the human race,  
he established the boundaries of the peoples  
according to the number in his heavenly court.\*

For the people of Israel belong to the LORD;  
Jacob is his special possession.

He found them in a desert land,  
in an empty, howling wasteland.

He surrounded them and watched over them;  
he guarded them as he would guard his own eyes.\*

Like an eagle that rouses her chicks  
and hovers over her young,  
so he spread his wings to take them up  
and carried them safely on his pinions.

The LORD alone guided them;  
they followed no foreign gods.

He let them ride over the highlands  
and feast on the crops of the fields.

He nourished them with honey from the rock  
and olive oil from the stony ground.

He fed them yogurt from the herd  
and milk from the flock,  
together with the fat of lambs.

He gave them choice rams from Bashan, and goats,  
together with the choicest wheat.

You drank the finest wine,  
made from the juice of grapes.

The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. **32:8** As in Dead Sea Scrolls; Masoretic Text reads the number of the sons of Israel. **32:22** Hebrew of Sheol. **32:31** The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

**30:20** Or He. **31:1** As in Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version; Masoretic Text reads *Moses went and spoke*. **31:14** Hebrew *Tent of Meeting*; also in **31:14**.



the LORD will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you."

### Book of Instruction

This entire body of instruction in a book of laws for the priests, who carried the Ark of the LORD to the elders of Israel. <sup>10</sup>Then Moses gave them the law. "At the end of every seventh year, during the Festival of Shelters, <sup>11</sup>you must read this instruction to all the people of Israel when they appear before the LORD your God at the place where you are gathered—all men, women, children, and servants living in your towns—so they may hear the instruction and learn to fear the LORD your God. They must obey all the terms of these instructions. <sup>12</sup>Children who have not known these things must hear them and will learn to fear the LORD as long as you live in the land you are about to occupy."

### Judgment Predicted

Moses said to the people, "The time has come for you to appear before the LORD and present yourselves at the Tabernacle. I will commission him there." So Moses and the elders presented themselves at the Tabernacle. The LORD appeared to them in a pillar of cloud and brought them to the sacred tent.

Moses said to the people, "You are about to die and go down to the underworld. After you are gone, these people will begin to worship other gods, the gods of the land where they are about to go. They will abandon me and break my covenant with them. <sup>17</sup>Then my anger will blaze against them, and I will destroy them, hiding my face from them. They will be devoured. Terrible trouble will come upon them on that day they will say, 'These disasters have come upon us because God is no longer among us. He has hidden his face from them on account of their wickedness by worshipping other gods.' They will remember the words of this song, and teach them to their children. Help them learn it, so it may serve as a witness against them. <sup>20</sup>For I will bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey. There they will become prosperous and become fat. But they will begin to despise me and break my covenant. Then great disasters will come down on them. This is evidence against them, for it will be a witness to their descendants. I know the intentions of their hearts now before they have entered the land."

On that day Moses wrote down the words of this song and taught them to the Israelites.

The LORD commissioned Joshua son of Nave, a strong and courageous man, for you must enter the land I swore to give to your fathers.

When Moses had finished writing this entire book of laws, <sup>25</sup>he gave this command to the people of Israel: "The LORD has said to me, 'Write down the words of this covenant, for you have heard the LORD's voice. You have said, "I will obey all the words the LORD my God says." So I will write down the words of this covenant, and I will place it beside the Ark of the LORD your God, so it may remain a witness against the people of Israel. <sup>27</sup>For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Even now, while I am still with you, you have rebelled against my commands. How much more rebellious will you be after I have died!'"

<sup>28</sup>Now summon all the elders and officials of your tribes, that I can speak to them directly and call heaven and earth to witness against them. <sup>29</sup>I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt and will turn from the way I have commanded you to follow. In the days to come, disaster will come down on you, for you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, making him very angry with your actions."

### The Song of Moses

Moses recited this entire song publicly to the assembly of Israel:

**32** <sup>1</sup>"Listen, O heavens, and I will speak!  
Hear, O earth, the words that I say!

Let my teaching fall on you like rain;  
let my speech settle like dew.

Let my words fall like rain on tender grass,  
like gentle showers on young plants.

I will proclaim the name of the LORD;  
how glorious is our God!

He is the Rock; his deeds are perfect.  
Everything he does is just and fair.

He is a faithful God who does no wrong;  
how just and upright he is!

But they have acted corruptly toward him;  
when they act so perversely,  
are they really his children?\*

They are a deceitful and twisted generation.  
This is the way you repay the LORD,  
you foolish and senseless people?

Remember the your Father who created you?  
Has he not made you and established you?

Remember the days of long ago;  
think about the generations past.

Ask your father, and he will inform you.  
Inquire of your elders, and they will tell you.

When the Most High assigned lands to the nations,  
when he divided up the human race,  
he established the boundaries of the peoples  
according to the number in his heavenly court.\*

For the people of Israel belong to the LORD;  
Jacob is his special possession.

He found them in a desert land,  
in an empty, howling wasteland.

He surrounded them and watched over them;  
he guarded them as he would guard his own  
eyes.\*

Like an eagle that rouses her chicks  
and hovers over her young,  
he spread his wings to take them up  
and carried them safely on his pinions.

The LORD alone guided them;  
they followed no foreign gods.

Let them ride over the highlands  
and feast on the crops of the fields.

He nourished them with honey from the rock  
and olive oil from the stony ground.

He fed them yogurt from the herd  
and milk from the flock,  
together with the fat of lambs.

He gave them choice rams from Bashan, and goats,  
together with the choicest wheat.  
They drank the finest wine,  
made from the juice of grapes.

But they forgot the LORD their God,  
who brought them out of Egypt.  
They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

They forgot the LORD their God,  
who gave them the law and commanded them,  
saying, "Do not worship other gods."

<sup>15</sup> "But Israel\* soon became fat and unruly;  
the people grew heavy, plump, and stuffed!  
Then they abandoned the God who had made them;  
they made light of the Rock of their salvation.

<sup>16</sup> They stirred up his jealousy by worshipping foreign  
gods;  
they provoked his fury with detestable deeds.

<sup>17</sup> They offered sacrifices to demons, which are not God,  
to gods they had not known before,  
to new gods only recently arrived,  
to gods their ancestors had never feared.

<sup>18</sup> You neglected the Rock who had fathered you;  
you forgot the God who had given you birth.

<sup>19</sup> "The LORD saw this and drew back,  
provoked to anger by his own sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup> He said, "I will abandon them;  
then see what becomes of them.  
For they are a twisted generation,  
children without integrity."

<sup>21</sup> They have roused my jealousy by worshipping things that  
are not God;  
they have provoked my anger with their useless  
idols.

Now I will rouse their jealousy through people who are  
not even a people;  
I will provoke their anger through the foolish  
Gentiles.

<sup>22</sup> For my anger blazes forth like fire  
and burns to the depths of the grave.\*  
It devours the earth and all its crops  
and ignites the foundations of the mountains.

<sup>23</sup> I will heap disasters upon them  
and shoot them down with my arrows.

<sup>24</sup> I will weaken them with famine,  
burning fever, and deadly disease.  
I will send the fangs of wild beasts  
and poisonous snakes that glide in the dust.

<sup>25</sup> Outside, the sword will bring death,  
and inside, terror will strike  
both young men and young women,  
both infants and the aged.

<sup>26</sup> I would have annihilated them,  
wiping out even the memory of them.

<sup>27</sup> But I feared the taunt of Israel's enemy,  
who might misunderstand and say,  
"Our own power has triumphed!  
The LORD had nothing to do with this!"

<sup>28</sup> "But Israel is a senseless nation;  
the people are foolish, without understanding.

<sup>29</sup> Oh, that they were wise and could understand this!  
Oh, that they might know their fate!

<sup>30</sup> How could one person chase a thousand of them,  
and two people put ten thousand to flight,  
unless their Rock had sold them,  
unless the LORD had given them up?

<sup>31</sup> But the rock of our enemies is not like our Rock,  
as even they recognize.\*

<sup>32</sup> Their vine grows from the vine of Sodom,  
from the vineyards of Gomorrah.  
Their grapes are poison,  
and their clusters are bitter.

<sup>33</sup> Their wine is the venom of serpents,  
the deadly poison of cobras.

<sup>31:14</sup> Hebrew Tent of Meeting. <sup>32:8</sup> As in Dead Sea Scrolls, which read the number of the sons of God, and Greek version, which reads the number of the angels of God; Masoretic Text reads the number of the sons of Israel. <sup>32:10</sup> Hebrew as the pupil of his eye. <sup>32:15</sup> Hebrew Jeshurun, a term of honor for Israel. <sup>32:22</sup> Hebrew of Sheol. <sup>32:31</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. Greek version reads our enemies are fools.



<sup>34</sup> "The LORD says, 'Am I not storing up these things, sealing them away in my treasury?

<sup>35</sup> I will take revenge; I will pay them back.  
In due time their feet will slip.  
Their day of disaster will arrive,  
and their destiny will overtake them.'

<sup>36</sup> "Indeed, the LORD will give justice to his people,  
and he will change his mind about\* his servants,  
when he sees their strength is gone  
and no one is left, slave or free.

<sup>37</sup> Then he will ask, 'Where are their gods,  
the rocks they fled to for refuge?

<sup>38</sup> Where now are those gods,  
who ate the fat of their sacrifices  
and drank the wine of their offerings?  
Let those gods arise and help you!  
Let them provide you with shelter!

<sup>39</sup> Look now; I myself am he!  
There is no other god but me!  
I am the one who kills and gives life;  
I am the one who wounds and heals;  
no one can be rescued from my powerful hand!

<sup>40</sup> Now I raise my hand to heaven  
and declare, "As surely as I live,

<sup>41</sup> when I sharpen my flashing sword  
and begin to carry out justice,  
I will take revenge on my enemies  
and repay those who reject me.

<sup>42</sup> I will make my arrows drunk with blood,  
and my sword will devour flesh—  
the blood of the slaughtered and the captives,  
and the heads of the enemy leaders."

<sup>43</sup> "Rejoice with him, you heavens,  
and let all of God's angels worship him.\*  
Rejoice with his people, you nations,  
and let all the angels be strengthened in him.\*  
For he will avenge the blood of his servants;  
he will take revenge against his enemies.  
He will repay those who hate him\*  
and cleanse the land for his people."

<sup>44</sup> So Moses came with Joshua\* son of Nun and recited all the words of this song to the people.

<sup>45</sup> When Moses had finished reciting all these words to the people of Israel, <sup>46</sup>he added: "Take to heart all the words of warning I have given you today. Pass them on as a command to your children so they will obey every word of these instructions. <sup>47</sup>These instructions are not empty words—they are your life! By obeying them you will enjoy a long life in the land you will occupy when you cross the Jordan River."

#### Moses' Death Foretold

<sup>48</sup> That same day the LORD said to Moses, <sup>49</sup>"Go to Moab, to the mountains east of the river,\* and climb Mount Nebo, which is across from Jericho. Look out across the land of Canaan, the land I am giving to the people of Israel as their own special possession. <sup>50</sup>Then you will die there on the mountain. You will join your ancestors, just as Aaron, your brother, died on Mount Hor and joined his ancestors. <sup>51</sup>For both of

you betrayed me with the Israelites at the waters of Meribah at Kadesh\* in the wilderness of Zin. You failed to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel there. <sup>52</sup>So you will see the land from a distance, but you may not enter the land I am giving to the people of Israel."

#### Moses Blesses the People

**33** This is the blessing that Moses, the man of God, gave to the people of Israel before his death:

<sup>2</sup> "The LORD came from Mount Sinai  
and dawned upon us\* from Mount Seir;  
he shone forth from Mount Paran  
and came from Meribah-kadesh  
with flaming fire at his right hand.\*

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, he loves his people;\*  
all his holy ones are in his hands.  
They follow in his steps  
and accept his teaching.

<sup>4</sup> Moses gave us the LORD's instruction,  
the special possession of the people of Israel.\*

<sup>5</sup> The LORD became king in Israel\*—  
when the leaders of the people assembled,  
when the tribes of Israel gathered as one."

<sup>6</sup> Moses said this about the tribe of Reuben:\*

"Let the tribe of Reuben live and not die out,  
though they are few in number."

<sup>7</sup> Moses said this about the tribe of Judah:

"O LORD, hear the cry of Judah  
and bring them together as a people.  
Give them strength to defend their cause;  
help them against their enemies!"

<sup>8</sup> Moses said this about the tribe of Levi:

"O LORD, you have given your Thummim and Urim—the sacred lots—to your faithful servants the Levites.\*  
You put them to the test at Massah  
and struggled with them at the waters of Meribah.

<sup>9</sup> The Levites obeyed your word  
and guarded your covenant.

They were more loyal to you  
than to their own parents.  
They ignored their relatives  
and did not acknowledge their own children.

<sup>10</sup> They teach your regulations to Jacob;  
they give your instructions to Israel.

They present incense before you  
and offer whole burnt offerings on the altar.

<sup>11</sup> Bless the ministry of the Levites, O LORD,  
and accept all the work of their hands.  
Hit their enemies where it hurts the most;  
strike down their foes so they never rise again."

<sup>12</sup> Moses said this about the tribe of Benjamin:

"The people of Benjamin are loved by the LORD  
and live in safety beside him.  
He surrounds them continuously  
and preserves them from every harm."

Moses said this about the tribes of Joseph:

"May their land be blessed by the LORD  
with the precious gift of dew from the heavens  
and water from beneath the earth;

with the rich fruit that grows in the sun,  
and the rich harvest produced each month;

with the finest crops of the ancient mountains,  
and the abundance from the everlasting hills;

with the best gifts of the earth and its bounty,  
and the favor of the one who appeared in the burning bush.

May these blessings rest on Joseph's head,  
crowning the brow of the prince among his brothers.

Joseph has the majesty of a young bull;  
he has the horns of a wild ox.

He will gore distant nations,  
driving them to the ends of the earth.  
This is my blessing for the multitudes of Ephraim  
and the thousands of Manasseh."

Moses said this about the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar\*:

"May the people of Zebulun prosper in their travels.  
May the people of Issachar prosper at home in their tents.

They summon the people to the mountain  
to offer proper sacrifices there.  
They benefit from the riches of the sea  
and the hidden treasures in the sand."

Moses said this about the tribe of Gad:

"Blessed is the one who enlarges Gad's territory!  
Gad is poised there like a lion  
to tear off an arm or a head.

The people of Gad took the best land for themselves;  
a leader's share was assigned to them.

When the leaders of the people were assembled,  
they carried out the LORD's justice  
and obeyed his regulations for Israel."

Moses said this about the tribe of Dan:

"Dan is a lion's cub,  
leaping out from Bashan."

Moses said this about the tribe of Naphtali:

"O Naphtali, you are rich in favor  
and full of the LORD's blessings;  
may you possess the west and the south."

Moses said this about the tribe of Asher:

"May Asher be blessed above other sons;  
may he be esteemed by his brothers;

<sup>33:26</sup> Hebrew lacks *Issachar*. <sup>33:26</sup> Hebrew of *Jeshurun*, a term of endearment for Israel. Samaritan Pentateuch and some Greek manuscripts read *They buried him*.

<sup>32:36</sup> Or *will take revenge for*. <sup>32:43a</sup> As in Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version; Masoretic Text lacks the first two lines. Compare Heb 1:6. <sup>32:43b</sup> As in Greek version; Hebrew text lacks this line. <sup>32:43c</sup> As in Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version; Masoretic Text lacks this line. <sup>32:44</sup> Hebrew *Hoshea*, a variant name for Joshua. <sup>32:49</sup> Hebrew *the mountains of Abarim*. <sup>32:51</sup> Hebrew *waters of Meribah-kadesh*. <sup>33:2a</sup> As in Greek and Syriac versions. Hebrew reads *upon them*. <sup>33:2b</sup> Or *came from myriads of holy ones, from the south, from his mountain slopes*. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. <sup>33:3</sup> As in Greek version; Hebrew reads *Indeed, lover of the peoples*. <sup>33:4</sup> Hebrew of *Jacob*. The names "Jacob" and "Israel" are often interchanged throughout the Old Testament, referring sometimes to the individual patriarch and sometimes to the nation. <sup>33:5</sup> Hebrew in *Jeshurun*, a term of endearment for Israel. <sup>33:6</sup> Hebrew lacks *Moses said this about the tribe of Reuben*. <sup>33:8</sup> As in Greek version; Hebrew lacks *the Levites*.



Israelites at the waters of Meribah  
mess of Zin. You failed to demon-  
people of Israel there. <sup>52</sup>So you will  
nce, but you may not enter the land  
of Israel."

ple  
g that Moses, the man of God, gave  
Israel before his death:

Mount Sinai  
us\* from Mount Seir;  
Mount Paran  
ribah-kadesh  
t his right hand.\*  
people;\*  
e in his hands.  
ps  
ching.  
rd's instruction,  
ion of the people of Israel.\*  
g in Israel\*—  
of the people assembled,  
Israel gathered as one."

the tribe of Reuben:\*  
en live and not die out,  
w in number."

the tribe of Judah:  
y of Judah  
gether as a people.  
o defend their cause;  
their enemies!"

the tribe of Levi:  
ven your Thummim and Urim—

servants the Levites.\*  
test at Massah  
h them at the waters of Meribah  
your word  
covenant.

al to you  
parents.  
relatives  
nowledge their own children.  
ulations to Jacob;  
structions to Israel.

se before you  
urnt offerings on the altar  
f the Levites, O LORD,  
e work of their hands.  
ere it hurts the most;  
foes so they never rise again.

the tribe of Benjamin:  
amin are loved by the LORD  
beside him.  
continuously  
em from every harm."

st two lines. Compare Heb 1:5. 32:44 Hebrew  
rt lacks this line. 32:44 Hebrew  
esh. 33:2a As in Greek and Syriac  
nes. The meaning of the Hebrew  
b" and "Israel" are often interchanged.  
33:5 Hebrew in Jeshurun, a term of  
ion; Hebrew lacks the Levites.

Moses said this about the tribes of Joseph:

"May their land be blessed by the LORD  
with the precious gift of dew from the heavens  
and water from beneath the earth;  
with the rich fruit that grows in the sun,  
and the rich harvest produced each month;  
with the finest crops of the ancient mountains,  
and the abundance from the everlasting hills;  
with the best gifts of the earth and its bounty,  
and the favor of the one who appeared in the burning  
bush.  
May these blessings rest on Joseph's head,  
crowning the brow of the prince among his brothers.  
Joseph has the majesty of a young bull;  
he has the horns of a wild ox.  
He will gore distant nations,  
driving them to the ends of the earth.  
This is my blessing for the multitudes of Ephraim  
and the thousands of Manasseh."

Moses said this about the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar\*:

"May the people of Zebulun prosper in their travels.  
May the people of Issachar prosper at home in their  
tents.  
They summon the people to the mountain  
to offer proper sacrifices there.  
They benefit from the riches of the sea  
and the hidden treasures in the sand."

Moses said this about the tribe of Gad:

"Blessed is the one who enlarges Gad's territory!  
Gad is poised there like a lion  
to tear off an arm or a head.  
The people of Gad took the best land for themselves;  
a leader's share was assigned to them.  
When the leaders of the people were assembled,  
they carried out the LORD's justice  
and obeyed his regulations for Israel."

Moses said this about the tribe of Dan:

"He is a lion's cub,  
leaping out from Bashan."

Moses said this about the tribe of Naphtali:

"Naphtali, you are rich in favor  
and full of the LORD's blessings;  
you possess the west and the south."

Moses said this about the tribe of Asher:

"Asher be blessed above other sons;  
may he be esteemed by his brothers;

Hebrew lacks and Issachar. 33:26 Hebrew of Jeshurun, a term of endearment for Israel. 34:2 Hebrew the western sea. 34:6 Hebrew He buried  
Pentateuch and some Greek manuscripts read They buried him.

may he bathe his feet in olive oil.

<sup>25</sup> May the bolts of your gates be of iron and bronze;  
may you be secure all your days."

<sup>26</sup> "There is no one like the God of Israel.\*  
He rides across the heavens to help you,  
across the skies in majestic splendor.

<sup>27</sup> The eternal God is your refuge,  
and his everlasting arms are under you.  
He drives out the enemy before you;  
he cries out, 'Destroy them!'

<sup>28</sup> So Israel will live in safety,  
prosperous Jacob in security,  
in a land of grain and new wine,  
while the heavens drop down dew.

<sup>29</sup> How blessed you are, O Israel!  
Who else is like you, a people saved by the LORD?  
He is your protecting shield  
and your triumphant sword!  
Your enemies will cringe before you,  
and you will stomp on their backs!"

### The Death of Moses

**34** Then Moses went up to Mount Nebo from the plains  
of Moab and climbed Pisgah Peak, which is across  
from Jericho. And the LORD showed him the whole land,  
from Gilead as far as Dan; <sup>2</sup>all the land of Naphtali; the land  
of Ephraim and Manasseh; all the land of Judah, extending  
to the Mediterranean Sea\*; <sup>3</sup>the Negev; the Jordan Valley  
with Jericho—the city of palms—as far as Zoar. <sup>4</sup>Then the  
LORD said to Moses, "This is the land I promised on oath to  
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your  
descendants.' I have now allowed you to see it with your own  
eyes, but you will not enter the land."

<sup>5</sup>So Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land  
of Moab, just as the LORD had said. <sup>6</sup>The LORD buried him\*  
in a valley near Beth-peor in Moab, but to this day no one  
knows the exact place. <sup>7</sup>Moses was 120 years old when he  
died, yet his eyesight was clear, and he was as strong as ever.  
<sup>8</sup>The people of Israel mourned for Moses on the plains of  
Moab for thirty days, until the customary period of mourn-  
ing was over.

<sup>9</sup>Now Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom,  
for Moses had laid his hands on him. So the people of Israel  
obeyed him, doing just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>10</sup>There has never been another prophet in Israel like  
Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. <sup>11</sup>The LORD sent  
him to perform all the miraculous signs and wonders in the  
land of Egypt against Pharaoh, and all his servants, and his  
entire land. <sup>12</sup>With mighty power, Moses performed terrify-  
ing acts in the sight of all Israel.



# JOSHUA

**Author** Joshua, according to Jewish tradition (except for the ending, possibly written by Phinehas the high priest)

**Date Written** 1380 B.C.

**Content** The book of Joshua is about leadership—more specifically, about Joshua's leadership of the Israelites. At the opening of the book, Moses had already died, and Joshua had been appointed his successor. While the Israelites waited on the plains of Moab, Joshua prepared them for battle. Once they were ready, Joshua led them across the Jordan River to begin their conquest of the land God had promised them. The Israelites then fought three campaigns: (1) one in the central region, (2) one in the south, and (3) one in the north. After the initial victories, Joshua and his people divided the land among the tribes of Israel. As the book comes to an end, Joshua is old and close to death, and he urges the Israelites to follow the LORD their God.

## The LORD's Charge to Joshua

**1** After the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. He said, <sup>2</sup>"Moses my servant is dead. Therefore, the time has come for you to lead these people, the Israelites, across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. <sup>3</sup>I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you—<sup>4</sup>from the Negev wilderness in the south to the Lebanon mountains in the north, from the Euphrates River in the east to the Mediterranean Sea\* in the west, including all the land of the Hittites.' <sup>5</sup>No one will be able to stand against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you.

<sup>6</sup>"Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them. <sup>7</sup>Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. <sup>8</sup>Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. <sup>9</sup>This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

## Joshua's Charge to the Israelites

<sup>10</sup>Joshua then commanded the officers of Israel, <sup>11</sup>"Go through the camp and tell the people to get their provisions ready. In three days you will cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you."

<sup>12</sup>Then Joshua called together the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. He told them, <sup>13</sup>"Remember what Moses, the servant of the LORD, commanded you: 'The LORD your God is giving you a place of rest. He has given you this land.' <sup>14</sup>Your wives, children, and livestock may remain here in the land Moses assigned to you on the east side of the Jordan River. But your strong warriors, fully armed, must lead the other tribes across the Jordan to help them conquer their territory. Stay with them <sup>15</sup>until the LORD gives them rest, as he has given you rest, and until they, too, possess the land the LORD your God is giving them. Only then may you return and settle here on the east side of the Jordan River in the land that Moses, the servant of the LORD, assigned to you."

<sup>16</sup>They answered Joshua, "We will do whatever you com-

mand us, and we will go wherever you send us. <sup>17</sup>We will obey you just as we obeyed Moses. And may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses. <sup>18</sup>Anyone who rebels against your orders and does not obey your words and everything you command will be put to death. So be strong and courageous!"

## Rahab Protects the Spies

**2** Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israelite camp at Acacia Grove.\* He instructed them, "Scout out the land on the other side of the Jordan River, especially around Jericho." So the two men set out and came to the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there that night.

<sup>2</sup>But someone told the king of Jericho, "Some Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." <sup>3</sup>So the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab: "Bring out the men who have come into your house, for they have come here to spy out the whole land."

<sup>4</sup>Rahab had hidden the two men, but she replied, "Yes, the men were here earlier, but I didn't know where they were from. <sup>5</sup>They left the town at dusk, as the gates were about to close. I don't know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them." <sup>6</sup>(Actually, she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them beneath bundles of flax she had laid out.) <sup>7</sup>So the king's men went looking for the spies along the road, leading to the shallow crossings of the Jordan River. And as soon as the king's men had left, the gate of Jericho was shut.

<sup>8</sup>Before the spies went to sleep that night, Rahab went on the roof to talk with them. <sup>9</sup>"I know the LORD has given you this land," she told them. "We are all afraid of you. Everyone in the land is living in terror. <sup>10</sup>For we have heard how the LORD made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed.\* <sup>11</sup>No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the LORD your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.

<sup>12</sup>"Now swear to me by the LORD that you will be kind to me and my family since I have helped you. Give me some guarantee that <sup>13</sup>when Jericho is conquered, you will let me live, along with my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families."

<sup>14</sup>"We offer our own lives as a guarantee for your safety

the men agreed. "If you don't betray us, we will keep our promise and be kind to you when the LORD gives us the land."

<sup>15</sup>Then, since Rahab's house was built into the town wall, she let them down by a rope through the window. <sup>16</sup>"Escape to the hill country," she told them. "Hide there for three days from the men searching for you. Then, when they have returned, you can go on your way."

<sup>17</sup>Before they left, the men told her, "We will be bound by the oath we have taken only if you follow these instructions. <sup>18</sup>When we come into the land, you must leave this scarlet rope hanging from the window through which you let us down. And all your family members—your father, mother, brothers, and all your relatives—must be here inside the house. <sup>19</sup>If they go out into the street and are killed, it will not be our fault. But if anyone lays a hand on people inside this house, we will accept the responsibility for their death. <sup>20</sup>If you betray us, however, we are not bound by this oath in any way."

<sup>21</sup>"I accept your terms," she replied. And she sent them on their way, leaving the scarlet rope hanging from the window.

<sup>22</sup>The spies went up into the hill country and stayed there three days. The men who were chasing them searched everywhere along the road, but they finally returned without success.

<sup>23</sup>Then the two spies came down from the hill country, crossed the Jordan River, and reported to Joshua all that had happened to them. <sup>24</sup>"The LORD has given us the whole land," they said, "for all the people in the land are terrified of us."

## The Israelites Cross the Jordan

**3** Early the next morning Joshua and all the Israelites left Acacia Grove\* and arrived at the banks of the Jordan River, where they camped before crossing. <sup>2</sup>Three days later the Israelite officers went through the camp, giving these instructions to the people: "When you see the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, move out from your positions and follow them. <sup>4</sup>Since you have never traveled this way before, they will guide you. Stay about half a mile\* behind them, keeping a clear distance between you and the Ark. Make sure you don't come any closer."

<sup>5</sup>Then Joshua told the people, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do great wonders among you."

<sup>6</sup>In the morning Joshua said to the priests, "Lift up the Ark of the Covenant and lead the people across the river." And so they started out and went ahead of the people.

The LORD told Joshua, "Today I will begin to make you a great leader in the eyes of all the Israelites. They will know that I am with you, just as I was with Moses. <sup>8</sup>Give this command to the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant: When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop there."

<sup>9</sup>So Joshua told the Israelites, "Come and listen to what the LORD your God says. <sup>10</sup>Today you will know that the living God is among you. He will surely drive out the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Geshites ahead of you. <sup>11</sup>Look, the Ark of the Covenant, which belongs to the LORD of the whole earth, will lead you across the Jordan River! <sup>12</sup>Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. <sup>13</sup>The priests will carry the Ark of the LORD, the LORD of all the earth. As soon as their feet touch the water, the flow of water will be cut off upstream, and the river will stand up like a wall."

<sup>14</sup>So the people left their camp to cross the Jordan, and the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of them. <sup>15</sup>It was the harvest season, and the Jordan

1:4 Hebrew *the Great Sea*. 2:1 Hebrew *Shittim*. 2:10a Hebrew *sea of reeds*. 2:10b The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering.

Hebrew *Shittim*. 3:4 Hebrew *about 2,000 cubits* [920 meters]. 3:16 Hebrew *the day after tomorrow*. This day in the ancient Hebrew lunar calendar occurred in late March, April, or



ending, possibly written by Phinehas the

ically, about Joshua's leadership of the ready died, and Joshua had been appointed ns of Moab, Joshua prepared them for ss the Jordan River to begin their conquest hen fought three campaigns: (1) one in the the north. After the initial victories, Joshua i Israel. As the book comes to an end, Joshua to follow the LORD their God.

and we will go wherever you send us. <sup>17</sup>We will ust as we obeyed Moses. And may the LORD you h you as he was with Moses. <sup>18</sup>Anyone who rebel ur orders and does not obey your words and you command will be put to death. So be strong eous!"

### Protects the Spies

Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israh up at Acacia Grove.\* He instructed them, "Scou d on the other side of the Jordan River, especially icho." So the two men set out and came to the prostitute named Rahab and stayed there that

meone told the king of Jericho, "Some Israelites e here tonight to spy out the land." <sup>3</sup>So the king u nt orders to Rahab: "Bring out the men who ave your house, for they have come here to spy out the land."

had hidden the two men, but she replied, "They ere here earlier, but I didn't know where they e. <sup>5</sup>They left the town at dusk, as the gates were ose. I don't know where they went. If you hurry, probably catch up with them." <sup>6</sup>Actually, she had n up to the roof and hidden them beneath the x she had laid out. <sup>7</sup>So the king's men went to the spies along the road leading to the stallion of the Jordan River. And as soon as the king's men the gate of Jericho was shut.

the spies went to sleep that night, Rahab went of to talk with them. <sup>9</sup>"I know the LORD has given land," she told them. "We are all afraid of you in the land is living in terror. <sup>10</sup>For we have heard the LORD made a dry path for you through the Red Sea" left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River. eople you completely destroyed.\* <sup>11</sup>No wonder we melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight ing such things. For the LORD your God is seated d of the heavens above and the earth below. y swear to me by the LORD that you will be kind to my family since I have helped you. Give me a sign that <sup>13</sup>when Jericho is conquered, you will extend with my father and mother, my brothers and all their families."

offer our own lives as a guarantee for your safety.

<sup>14</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest.

the men agreed. "If you don't betray us, we will keep our promise and be kind to you when the LORD gives us the land."

<sup>15</sup>Then, since Rahab's house was built into the town wall, she let them down by a rope through the window. <sup>16</sup>"Escape to the hill country," she told them. "Hide there for three days from the men searching for you. Then, when they have returned, you can go on your way."

<sup>17</sup>Before they left, the men told her, "We will be bound by the oath we have taken only if you follow these instructions. <sup>18</sup>When we come into the land, you must leave this scarlet rope hanging from the window through which you let us down. And all your family members—your father, mother, brothers, and all your relatives—must be here inside the house. <sup>19</sup>If they go out into the street and are killed, it will not be our fault. But if anyone lays a hand on people inside the house, we will accept the responsibility for their death. <sup>20</sup>If you betray us, however, we are not bound by this oath in any way."

<sup>21</sup>"I accept your terms," she replied. And she sent them on their way, leaving the scarlet rope hanging from the window. <sup>22</sup>The spies went up into the hill country and stayed there three days. The men who were chasing them searched everywhere along the road, but they finally returned without success.

<sup>23</sup>Then the two spies came down from the hill country, crossed the Jordan River, and reported to Joshua all that had happened to them. <sup>24</sup>"The LORD has given us the whole land," they said, "for all the people in the land are terrified of us."

<sup>25</sup>Then the two spies came down from the hill country, crossed the Jordan River, and reported to Joshua all that had happened to them. <sup>26</sup>"The LORD has given us the whole land," they said, "for all the people in the land are terrified of us."

### The Israelites Cross the Jordan

<sup>1</sup>Early the next morning Joshua and all the Israelites left Acacia Grove\* and arrived at the banks of the Jordan River where they camped before crossing. <sup>2</sup>Three days later Israelite officers went through the camp, giving these instructions to the people: "When you see the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, move away from your positions and follow them. <sup>3</sup>Since you have traveled this way before, they will guide you. Stay about half a mile\* behind them, keeping a clear distance between you and the Ark. Make sure you don't come any closer."

<sup>4</sup>Then Joshua told the people, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do great wonders among you." <sup>5</sup>The morning Joshua said to the priests, "Lift up the Ark of the Covenant and lead the people across the river." <sup>6</sup>So they started out and went ahead of the people.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD told Joshua, "Today I will begin to make you a great leader in the eyes of all the Israelites. They will know I am with you, just as I was with Moses. <sup>8</sup>Give this command to the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant: 'When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop there.'"

<sup>9</sup>Joshua told the Israelites, "Come and listen to what the LORD your God says. <sup>10</sup>Today you will know that the living God is among you. He will surely drive out the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Hivites ahead of you. <sup>11</sup>Look, the Ark of the Covenant, which belongs to the Lord of the whole earth, will lead you across the Jordan River! <sup>12</sup>Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. <sup>13</sup>The priests will carry the Ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth. As soon as their feet touch the water, the flow of water will be cut off upstream, and the river will stand up like a wall."

<sup>14</sup>Then the people left their camp to cross the Jordan, and the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of them. <sup>15</sup>It was the harvest season, and the Jordan

was overflowing its banks. But as soon as the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark touched the water at the river's edge, <sup>16</sup>the water above that point began backing up a great distance away at a town called Adam, which is near Zarethan. And the water below that point flowed on to the Dead Sea\* until the riverbed was dry. Then all the people crossed over near the town of Jericho.

<sup>17</sup>Meanwhile, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the LORD's Covenant stood on dry ground in the middle of the riverbed as the people passed by. They waited there until the whole nation of Israel had crossed the Jordan on dry ground.

### Memorials to the Jordan Crossing

<sup>1</sup>When all the people had crossed the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, <sup>2</sup>"Now choose twelve men, one from each tribe. <sup>3</sup>Tell them, 'Take twelve stones from the very place where the priests are standing in the middle of the Jordan. Carry them out and pile them up at the place where you will camp tonight.'"

<sup>4</sup>So Joshua called together the twelve men he had chosen—one from each of the tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup>He told them, "Go into the middle of the Jordan, in front of the Ark of the LORD your God. Each of you must pick up one stone and carry it out on your shoulder—twelve stones in all, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>6</sup>We will use these stones to build a memorial. In the future your children will ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' <sup>7</sup>Then you can tell them, 'They remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the Ark of the LORD's Covenant went across.' These stones will stand as a memorial among the people of Israel forever."

<sup>8</sup>So the men did as Joshua had commanded them. They took twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan River, one for each tribe, just as the LORD had told Joshua. They carried them to the place where they camped for the night and constructed the memorial there.

<sup>9</sup>Joshua also set up another pile of twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the place where the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant were standing. And they are there to this day.

<sup>10</sup>The priests who were carrying the Ark stood in the middle of the river until all of the LORD's commands that Moses had given to Joshua were carried out. Meanwhile, the people hurried across the riverbed. <sup>11</sup>And when everyone was safely on the other side, the priests crossed over with the Ark of the LORD as the people watched.

<sup>12</sup>The armed warriors from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh led the Israelites across the Jordan, just as Moses had directed. <sup>13</sup>These armed men—about 40,000 strong—were ready for battle, and the LORD was with them as they crossed over to the plains of Jericho.

<sup>14</sup>That day the LORD made Joshua a great leader in the eyes of all the Israelites, and for the rest of his life they revered him as much as they had revered Moses.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD had said to Joshua, <sup>16</sup>"Command the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant\* to come up out of the riverbed." <sup>17</sup>So Joshua gave the command. <sup>18</sup>As soon as the priests carrying the Ark of the LORD's Covenant came up out of the riverbed and their feet were on high ground, the water of the Jordan returned and overflowed its banks as before.

<sup>19</sup>The people crossed the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month.\* Then they camped at Gilgal, just east of Jericho. <sup>20</sup>It was there at Gilgal that Joshua piled up the twelve stones taken from the Jordan River.

<sup>21</sup>Then Joshua said to the Israelites, "In the future your children will ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' <sup>22</sup>Then you can tell them, 'They remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the Ark of the LORD's Covenant went across.' These stones will stand as a memorial among the people of Israel forever."

<sup>1</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>2</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>3</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>4</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>5</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>6</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>7</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>8</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>9</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>10</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>11</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>12</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>13</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>14</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>15</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>16</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>17</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>18</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>19</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>20</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>21</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest. <sup>22</sup>Hebrew term used here refers to the complete conquest.



children will ask, 'What do these stones mean?' <sup>22</sup>Then you can tell them, 'This is where the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' <sup>23</sup>For the LORD your God dried up the river right before your eyes, and he kept it dry until you were all across, just as he did at the Red Sea\* when he dried it up until we had all crossed over. <sup>24</sup>He did this so all the nations of the earth might know that the LORD's hand is powerful, and so you might fear the LORD your God forever."

**5** When all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings who lived along the Mediterranean coast\* heard how the LORD had dried up the Jordan River so the people of Israel could cross, they lost heart and were paralyzed with fear because of them.

#### Israel Reestablishes Covenant Ceremonies

<sup>2</sup>At that time the LORD told Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise this second generation of Israelites.\*" <sup>3</sup>So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the entire male population of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.\*

<sup>4</sup>Joshua had to circumcise them because all the men who were old enough to fight in battle when they left Egypt had died in the wilderness. <sup>5</sup>Those who left Egypt had all been circumcised, but none of those born after the Exodus, during the years in the wilderness, had been circumcised. <sup>6</sup>The Israelites had traveled in the wilderness for forty years until all the men who were old enough to fight in battle when they left Egypt had died. For they had disobeyed the LORD, and the LORD vowed he would not let them enter the land he had sworn to give us—a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>7</sup>So Joshua circumcised their sons—those who had grown up to take their fathers' places—for they had not been circumcised on the way to the Promised Land. <sup>8</sup>After all the males had been circumcised, they rested in the camp until they were healed.

<sup>9</sup>Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the shame of your slavery in Egypt." So that place has been called Gilgal\* to this day.

<sup>10</sup>While the Israelites were camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, they celebrated Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month.\* <sup>11</sup>The very next day they began to eat unleavened bread and roasted grain harvested from the land. <sup>12</sup>No manna appeared on the day they first ate from the crops of the land, and it was never seen again. So from that time on the Israelites ate from the crops of Canaan.

#### The LORD's Commander Confronts Joshua

<sup>13</sup>When Joshua was near the town of Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and demanded, "Are you friend or foe?"

<sup>14</sup>"Neither one," he replied. "I am the commander of the LORD's army."

At this, Joshua fell with his face to the ground in reverence. "I am at your command," Joshua said. "What do you want your servant to do?"

<sup>15</sup>The commander of the LORD's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did as he was told.

#### The Fall of Jericho

**6** Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or in. <sup>2</sup>But the LORD said to Joshua, "I have given you

Jericho, its king, and all its strong warriors. <sup>3</sup>You and your fighting men should march around the town once a day for six days. <sup>4</sup>Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. <sup>5</sup>When you hear the priests give one long blast on the rams' horns, have all the people shout\* as loud as they can. Then the walls of the town will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the town."

<sup>6</sup>So Joshua called together the priests and said, "Take up the Ark of the LORD's Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram's horn." <sup>7</sup>Then he gave orders to the people: "March around the town, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the LORD."

<sup>8</sup>After Joshua spoke to the people, the seven priests with the rams' horns started marching in the presence of the LORD, blowing the horns as they marched. And the Ark of the LORD's Covenant followed behind them. <sup>9</sup>Some of the armed men marched in front of the priests with the horns, and some behind the Ark, with the priests continually blowing the horns. <sup>10</sup>"Do not shout; do not even talk," Joshua commanded. "Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!" <sup>11</sup>So the Ark of the LORD was carried around the town once that day, and then everyone returned to spend the night in the camp.

<sup>12</sup>Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the LORD. <sup>13</sup>The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the LORD, blowing their horns. Again the armed men marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the LORD. All this time the priests were blowing their horns. <sup>14</sup>On the second day they again marched around the town once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days.

<sup>15</sup>On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the town as they had done before. But this time they went around the town seven times. <sup>16</sup>The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on the horns, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the town!" <sup>17</sup>Jericho and everything in it must be completely destroyed\* as an offering to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and the others in her house will be spared, for she protected our spies.

<sup>18</sup>"Do not take any of the things set apart for destruction or you yourselves will be completely destroyed, and you will bring trouble on the camp of Israel. <sup>19</sup>Everything made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron is sacred to the LORD and must be brought into his treasury."

<sup>20</sup>When the people heard the sound of the rams' horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the town and captured it. <sup>21</sup>They completely destroyed everything in it with their swords—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, goats, and donkeys.

<sup>22</sup>Meanwhile, Joshua said to the two spies, "Keep your promise. Go to the prostitute's house and bring her out along with all her family."

<sup>23</sup>The men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all the other relatives who were with her. They moved her whole family to a safe place near the camp of Israel.

<sup>24</sup>Then the Israelites burned the town and everything in it. Only the things made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron were

kept for the treasury of the LORD's house. <sup>25</sup>So Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute and her relatives who were with her in the house, because she had hidden the spies Joshua sent to Jericho. And she lives among the Israelites to this day.

<sup>26</sup>At that time Joshua invoked this curse:

"May the curse of the LORD fall on anyone who tries to rebuild the town of Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay its foundation. At the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates."

<sup>27</sup>So the LORD was with Joshua, and his reputation spread throughout the land.

#### Defeats the Israelites

**7** But Israel violated the instructions about the things set apart for the LORD.\* A man named Achan had stolen some of these dedicated things, so the LORD was very angry with the Israelites. Achan was the son of Carmi, a descendant of Zimri\* son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah.

<sup>2</sup>Joshua sent some of his men from Jericho to spy out the town of Ai, east of Bethel, near Beth-aven. <sup>3</sup>When they returned, they told Joshua, "There's no need for all of us to go there; it won't take more than two or three thousand men to attack Ai. Since there are so few of them, don't make all our people struggle to go up there."

<sup>4</sup>So approximately 3,000 warriors were sent, but they were soundly defeated. The men of Ai chased the Israelites from the town gate as far as the quarries,\* and they killed about thirty-six who were retreating down the slope. The Israelites were paralyzed with fear at this turn of events, and their courage melted away.

<sup>5</sup>Joshua and the elders of Israel tore their clothing in distress, threw dust on their heads, and bowed face down to the ground before the Ark of the LORD until evening. <sup>6</sup>Then Joshua cried out, "Oh, Sovereign LORD, why did you bring us across the Jordan River if you are going to let the Amorites win? If only we had been content to stay on the other side! LORD, what can I say now that Israel has fled from its enemies? <sup>7</sup>For when the Canaanites and all the other people living in the land hear about it, they will surround us and wipe our name off the face of the earth. And then what will happen to the honor of your great name?"

<sup>8</sup>But the LORD said to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying on your face like this? <sup>9</sup>Israel has sinned and broken my covenant! They have stolen some of the things that I commanded must be set apart for me. And they have not only hidden them but have lied about it and hidden the things among their own belongings. <sup>12</sup>That is why the Israelites have been set apart for destruction. For now Israel itself has been set apart for destruction. I will not remain with you longer unless you destroy the things among you that were set apart for destruction."

<sup>13</sup>Get up! Command the people to purify themselves in preparation for tomorrow. For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Hidden among you, O Israel, are things set apart for the LORD. You will never defeat your enemies until you remove these things from among you.

<sup>14</sup>In the morning you must present yourselves by tribes, and the LORD will point out the tribe to which the guilty man belongs. That tribe must come forward with its clans, and the LORD will point out the guilty clan. That clan will then

<sup>4:23</sup> Hebrew sea of reeds. <sup>5:1</sup> Hebrew along the sea. <sup>5:2</sup> Or circumcise the Israelites a second time. <sup>5:3</sup> Gibeath-haaraloth means "hill of foreskins." <sup>5:9</sup> Gilgal sounds like the Hebrew word galal, meaning "to roll." <sup>5:10</sup> This day in the ancient Hebrew lunar calendar occurred in late March, April, or early May. <sup>6:17</sup> The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering; similarly in 6:18, 21.

The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering; similarly in 7:11, 12, 13, 15. <sup>7:1b</sup> As in parallel text at 1 Chr 2:6; Hebrew read: Hebrew Shinar. <sup>7:21b</sup> Hebrew 200 shekels of silver, about 5 pounds or 2.3 kilograms in weight. <sup>7:26</sup> Hebrew valley of Achor.



strong warriors. <sup>3</sup>You and your men surround the town once a day in the morning and once in the evening. Each day you are to march around the town, and the priests are to blow the trumpets. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, and the priests are to blow the trumpets. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, and the priests are to blow the trumpets. On the seventh day you are to march around the town seven times, and the priests are to blow the trumpets.

At that time Joshua invoked this curse: "May the curse of the LORD fall on anyone who tries to rebuild the town of Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay its foundation. At the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates."

So the LORD was with Joshua, and his reputation spread throughout the land.

**Defeats the Israelites**  
But Israel violated the instructions about the things set apart for the LORD. A man named Achan had stolen some of these dedicated things, so the LORD was very angry with the Israelites. Achan was the son of Carmi, a descendant of Zimri son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah.

Joshua sent some of his men from Jericho to spy out the town of Ai, east of Bethel, near Beth-aven. When they returned, they told Joshua, "There's no need for all of us to go and attack Ai. Since there are so few of them, don't make all the people struggle to go up there." Approximately 3,000 warriors were sent, but they were soundly defeated. The men of Ai chased the Israelites to the town gate as far as the quarries,\* and they killed thirty-six who were retreating down the slope. The Israelites were paralyzed with fear at this turn of events, and their courage melted away.

Joshua and the elders of Israel tore their clothing in distress and threw dust on their heads, and bowed face down to the LORD before the Ark of the LORD until evening. Then Joshua cried out, "Oh, Sovereign LORD, why did you bring us to the Jordan River if you are going to let the Amorites say, 'If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan River, we would not have fought with Israel?'"

For when the Canaanites and all the other people living in the land hear about it, they will surround us and wipe us off the face of the earth. And then what will happen to the honor of your great name?"

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying on your face like this? Israel has sinned and broken my covenant. They have stolen some of the things that I commanded must be set apart for me. And they have not only stolen them but have lied about it and hidden the things from their own belongings. That is why the Israelites are being driven from their enemies in defeat. For now Israel itself is set apart for destruction. I will not remain with you unless you destroy the things among you that are set apart for destruction."

Joshua said to the people, "Command the people to purify themselves in the morning for tomorrow. For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Hidden among you, O Israel, are things set apart for the LORD. You will never defeat your enemies until you remove these things from among you."

In the morning you must present yourselves by tribes, and the LORD will point out the tribe to which the guilty man belongs. That tribe must come forward with its clans, and the guilty clan will point out the guilty clan. That clan will then

come forward, and the LORD will point out the guilty family. Finally, each member of the guilty family must come forward one by one. The one who has stolen what was set apart for destruction will himself be burned with fire, along with everything he has, for he has broken the covenant of the LORD and has done a horrible thing in Israel."

#### Achan's Sin

Early the next morning Joshua brought the tribes of Israel before the LORD, and the tribe of Judah was singled out. Then the clans of Judah came forward, and the clan of Zerah was singled out. Then the families of Zerah came forward, and the family of Zimri was singled out. Every member of Zimri's family was brought forward person by person, and Achan was singled out.

Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, by telling the truth. Make your confession and tell me what you have done. Don't hide it from me."

Achan replied, "It is true! I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel. Among the plunder I saw a beautiful robe from Babylon,\* 200 silver coins,\* and a bar of gold weighing more than a pound.\* I wanted them so much that I took them. They are hidden in the ground beneath my tent, with the silver buried deeper than the rest."

So Joshua sent some men to make a search. They ran to the tent and found the stolen goods hidden there, just as Achan had said, with the silver buried beneath the rest. They took the things from the tent and brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites. Then they laid them on the ground in the presence of the LORD.

Then Joshua and all the Israelites took Achan, the silver, the robe, the bar of gold, his sons, daughters, cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, tent, and everything he had, and they brought them to the valley of Achor. Then Joshua said to Achan, "Why have you brought trouble on us? The LORD will now bring trouble on you." And all the Israelites stoned Achan and his family and burned their bodies. They piled a great heap of stones over Achan, which remains to this day. That is why the place has been called the Valley of Trouble\* ever since. So the LORD was no longer angry.

#### The Israelites Defeat Ai

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid or discouraged. Take all your fighting men and attack Ai, for I have given you the king of Ai, his people, his town, and his land. You will destroy them as you destroyed Jericho and its king. But this time you may keep the plunder and the livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the town."

So Joshua and all the fighting men set out to attack Ai. Joshua chose 30,000 of his best warriors and sent them out at night with these orders: "Hide in ambush close behind the town and be ready for action. When our main army attacks, the men of Ai will come out to fight as they did before, and we will run away from them. We will let them chase us until we have drawn them away from the town. For they will say, 'The Israelites are running away from us as they did before.' Then, while we are running from them, you will jump up from your ambush and take possession of the town, for the LORD your God will give it to you. Set the town on fire, as the LORD has commanded. You have your orders."

So they left and went to the place of ambush between Bethel and the west side of Ai. But Joshua remained among

\*The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering. See 7:11, 12, 13, 15. 7:1b As in parallel text at 1 Chr 2:6; Hebrew reads *Zabdi*. Also in 7:17, 18. 7:5 Or as far as Shebarim. 7:21b Hebrew 200 shekels of silver, about 5 pounds or 2.3 kilograms in weight. 7:21c Hebrew 50 shekels, about 20 ounces in weight. 7:26 Hebrew valley of Achor.



the people in the camp that night. <sup>10</sup>Early the next morning Joshua roused his men and started toward Ai, accompanied by the elders of Israel. <sup>11</sup>All the fighting men who were with Joshua marched in front of the town and camped on the north side of Ai, with a valley between them and the town. <sup>12</sup>That night Joshua sent 5,000 men to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the town. <sup>13</sup>So they stationed the main army north of the town and the ambush west of the town. Joshua himself spent that night in the valley.

<sup>14</sup>When the king of Ai saw the Israelites across the valley, he and all his army hurried out early in the morning and attacked the Israelites at a place overlooking the Jordan Valley.\* But he didn't realize there was an ambush behind the town. <sup>15</sup>Joshua and the Israelite army fled toward the wilderness as though they were badly beaten. <sup>16</sup>Then all the men in the town were called out to chase after them. In this way, they were lured away from the town. <sup>17</sup>There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel\* who did not chase after the Israelites, and the town was left wide open.

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Point the spear in your hand toward Ai, for I will hand the town over to you." Joshua did as he was commanded. <sup>19</sup>As soon as Joshua gave this signal, all the men in ambush jumped up from their position and poured into the town. They quickly captured it and set it on fire.

<sup>20</sup>When the men of Ai looked behind them, smoke from the town was filling the sky, and they had nowhere to go. For the Israelites who had fled in the direction of the wilderness now turned on their pursuers. <sup>21</sup>When Joshua and all the other Israelites saw that the ambush had succeeded and that smoke was rising from the town, they turned and attacked the men of Ai. <sup>22</sup>Meanwhile, the Israelites who were inside the town came out and attacked the enemy from the rear. So the men of Ai were caught in the middle, with Israelite fighters on both sides. Israel attacked them, and not a single person survived or escaped. <sup>23</sup>Only the king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua.

<sup>24</sup>When the Israelite army finished chasing and killing all the men of Ai in the open fields, they went back and finished off everyone inside. <sup>25</sup>So the entire population of Ai, including men and women, was wiped out that day—12,000 in all. <sup>26</sup>For Joshua kept holding out his spear until everyone who had lived in Ai was completely destroyed.\* <sup>27</sup>Only the livestock and the treasures of the town were not destroyed, for the Israelites kept these as plunder for themselves, as the LORD had commanded Joshua. <sup>28</sup>So Joshua burned the town of Ai,\* and it became a permanent mound of ruins, desolate to this very day.

<sup>29</sup>Joshua impaled the king of Ai on a sharpened pole and left him there until evening. At sunset the Israelites took down the body, as Joshua commanded, and threw it in front of the town gate. They piled a great heap of stones over him that can still be seen today.

### The LORD's Covenant Renewed

<sup>30</sup>Then Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal. <sup>31</sup>He followed the commands that Moses the LORD's servant had written in the Book of Instruction: "Make me an altar from stones that are uncut and have not been shaped with iron tools."\* Then on the altar they presented burnt offerings and peace offerings to the LORD. <sup>32</sup>And as the Israelites watched, Joshua copied onto the stones of the altar\* the instructions Moses had given them.

<sup>33</sup>Then all the Israelites—foreigners and native-born

alike—along with the elders, officers, and judges, were divided into two groups. One group stood in front of Mount Gerizim, the other in front of Mount Ebal. Each group faced the other, and between them stood the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the LORD's Covenant. This was all done according to the commands that Moses, the servant of the LORD, had previously given for blessing the people of Israel.

<sup>34</sup>Joshua then read to them all the blessings and curses Moses had written in the Book of Instruction. <sup>35</sup>Every word of every command that Moses had ever given was read to the entire assembly of Israel, including the women and children and the foreigners who lived among them.

### The Gibeonites Deceive Israel

<sup>9</sup>Now all the kings west of the Jordan River heard about what had happened. These were the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites who lived in the hill country, in the western foothills,\* and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea\* as far north as the Lebanon mountains. <sup>2</sup>These kings combined their armies to fight as one against Joshua and the Israelites.

<sup>3</sup>But when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, <sup>4</sup>they resorted to deception to save themselves. They sent ambassadors to Joshua, loading their donkeys with weathered saddlebags and old, patched wineskins. <sup>5</sup>They put on worn-out, patched sandals and ragged clothes. And the bread they took with them was dry and moldy. <sup>6</sup>When they arrived at the camp of Israel at Gilgal, they told Joshua and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land to ask you to make a peace treaty with us."

<sup>7</sup>The Israelites replied to these Hivites, "How do we know you don't live nearby? For if you do, we cannot make a treaty with you."

<sup>8</sup>They replied, "We are your servants." "But who are you?" Joshua demanded. "Where do you come from?"

<sup>9</sup>They answered, "Your servants have come from a very distant country. We have heard of the might of the LORD your God and of all he did in Egypt. <sup>10</sup>We have also heard what he did to the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River—King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan (who lived in Ashteroth). <sup>11</sup>So our elders and all our people instructed us, 'Take supplies for a long journey. Go meet with the people of Israel and tell them, "We are your servants. Please make a treaty with us."'

<sup>12</sup>"This bread was hot from the ovens when we left our homes. But now, as you can see, it is dry and moldy. <sup>13</sup>These wineskins were new when we filled them, but now they are old and split open. And our clothing and sandals are worn out from our very long journey."

<sup>14</sup>So the Israelites examined their food, but they did not consult the LORD. <sup>15</sup>Then Joshua made a peace treaty with them and guaranteed their safety, and the leaders of the community ratified their agreement with a binding oath.

<sup>16</sup>Three days after making the treaty, they learned that these people actually lived nearby! <sup>17</sup>The Israelites set out once to investigate and reached their towns in three days. The names of these towns were Gibeon, Kephirah, Beerot, and Kiriath-jearim. <sup>18</sup>But the Israelites did not attack the towns, for the Israelite leaders had made a vow to them in the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

The people of Israel grumbled against their leaders because of the treaty. <sup>19</sup>But the leaders replied, "Since we have sworn an oath in the presence of the LORD, the God of Israel,

we cannot touch them. <sup>20</sup>This is what we must do. We must let them live, for divine anger would come upon us if we broke our oath. <sup>21</sup>Let them live." So they made them woodcutters and water carriers for the entire community, as the Israelite leaders directed.

<sup>22</sup>Joshua called together the Gibeonites and said, "Why did you lie to us? Why did you say that you live in a distant land when you live right here among us? <sup>23</sup>May you be cursed! From now on you will always be servants who cut wood and carry water for the house of my God."

<sup>24</sup>They replied, "We did it because we—your servants—were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded his servant Moses to give you this entire land and to destroy all the people living in it. So we feared greatly for our lives because of you. That is why we have done this. <sup>25</sup>Now we are at your mercy—do to us whatever you think is right." <sup>26</sup>So Joshua did not allow the people of Israel to kill them. <sup>27</sup>But that day he made the Gibeonites the woodcutters and water carriers for the community of Israel and for the altar of the LORD—wherever the LORD would choose to build it. And that is what they do to this day.

### Israel Defeats the Southern Armies

<sup>10</sup>Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured and completely destroyed\* Ai and killed its king, just as he had destroyed the town of Jericho and killed its king. He also learned that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel and were now their allies. <sup>2</sup>He and his people became very afraid when they heard all this because Gibeon was a large town—as large as the royal cities and larger than Ai. And the Gibeonite men were strong warriors.

<sup>3</sup>So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent messengers to several other kings: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Jathiah of Lachish, and Debir of Eglon. <sup>4</sup>"Come and help me destroy Gibeon," he urged them, "for they have made peace with Joshua and the people of Israel." <sup>5</sup>So these five Amorite kings combined their armies for a united attack. They moved all their troops into place and attacked Gibeon.

<sup>6</sup>The men of Gibeon quickly sent messengers to Joshua in his camp in Gilgal. "Don't abandon your servants now!" they pleaded. "Come at once! Save us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings who live in the hill country have joined forces to attack us."

<sup>7</sup>So Joshua and his entire army, including his best warriors, left Gilgal and set out for Gibeon. <sup>8</sup>"Do not be afraid of them," the LORD said to Joshua, "for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up against you."

<sup>9</sup>Joshua traveled all night from Gilgal and took the Amorite armies by surprise. <sup>10</sup>The LORD threw them into a panic, and the Israelites slaughtered great numbers of them at Gibeon. Then the Israelites chased the enemy along the road to Beth-horon, killing them all along the way to Azekah and Beth-dahab. <sup>11</sup>As the Amorites retreated down the road from Beth-horon, the LORD destroyed them with a terrible hail from heaven that continued until they reached Azekah. The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.

<sup>12</sup>On the day the LORD gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the LORD in front of all the people of Israel. He said,

"Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon."

The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD. It is also used in 10:28, 35, 37, 39, 40. <sup>10:13a</sup> Or The Book of the Upright. <sup>10:13b</sup>

8:14 Hebrew the Arabah. 8:17 Some manuscripts lack or Bethel. 8:26 The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering. the stones. 9:1a Hebrew the Shephelah. 9:1b Hebrew the Great Sea.



ers, officers, and judges, were in the group stood in front of Mount of Mount Ebal. Each group faced them stood the Levitical priests carrying the ark of the covenant. This was all done as Moses, the servant of the LORD, blessed the people of Israel. Then all the blessings and curses were read from the Book of Instruction. <sup>35</sup>Every word that Moses had ever given was read to the Israelites, including the women and children who lived among them.

## Israel

East of the Jordan River heard about these kings of the Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites in the western foothills,\* and the Mediterranean Sea\* as far north as the Gilead. These kings combined their armies to fight against Israel and the Israelites.

When Gibeon heard what Joshua and Israel had done, they resorted to deception to send ambassadors to Joshua, loading their donkeys with saddlebags and old, patched, worn-out, patched sandals and ragged clothes. They took with them what was dry and parched from the camp of Israel at Gilgal. The men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land to make a peace treaty with us."

Joshua asked these Hivites, "How do we know if you do, we cannot make a treaty with your servants."

Joshua demanded, "Where do your servants have come from?"

They answered, "We have heard of the might of the LORD who did in Egypt. <sup>10</sup>We have also heard of the Amorite kings east of the Jordan, Sihon and King Og of Bashan, whom our elders and all our people told us of for a long journey. Go meet with them, 'We are your servants.'"

Joshua took them from the ovens when we left Egypt. <sup>11</sup>They are dry and moldy. <sup>12</sup>They are now filled them, but now they are parched and their clothing and sandals are worn out."

Joshua examined their food, but they did not eat. Then Joshua made a peace treaty with them, and the leaders of Israel agreed with a binding oath. When they made the treaty, they learned that the Israelites did not attack them. The Israelites had made a vow to themselves that they would not attack the God of Israel.

When the Israelites stumbled against their leaders, the leaders replied, "Since we have heard the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, we have made a treaty with them."

The complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering. <sup>10:25; Deut 27:5-6. 8:32 Hebrew also in 10:28, 35, 37, 39, 40. 10:13a Or The Book of the Upright. 10:13b Or did not set for about a whole day.</sup>

cannot touch them. <sup>20</sup>This is what we must do. We must let them live, for divine anger would come upon us if we broke our oath. <sup>21</sup>Let them live." So they made them woodcutters and water carriers for the entire community, as the Israelite leaders directed.

Joshua called together the Gibeonites and said, "Why do you lie to us? Why did you say that you live in a distant land when you live right here among us? <sup>23</sup>May you be cursed! From now on you will always be servants who cut wood and carry water for the house of my God."

They replied, "We did it because we—your servants—were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded his servant Moses to give you this entire land and to destroy all the people living in it. So we feared greatly for our lives because of you. That is why we have done this. <sup>25</sup>Now we are at your mercy—do to us whatever you think is right."

So Joshua did not allow the people of Israel to kill them. That day he made the Gibeonites the woodcutters and water carriers for the community of Israel and for the altar of the LORD—wherever the LORD would choose to build it. That is what they do to this day.

## Defeats the Southern Armies

Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured and completely destroyed\* Ai and killed its king, just as he had destroyed the town of Jericho and killed its king. He also learned that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel and were now their allies. <sup>2</sup>He and the people became very afraid when they heard all this because Gibeon was a large town—as large as the royal cities larger than Ai. And the Gibeonite men were strong warriors.

So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent messengers to the other kings: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Jachish, and Debir of Eglon. <sup>4</sup>"Come and help me defeat Gibeon," he urged them, "for they have made peace with Joshua and the people of Israel." <sup>5</sup>So these five Amorite kings combined their armies for a united attack. They gathered all their troops into place and attacked Gibeon.

The men of Gibeon quickly sent messengers to Joshua at his camp in Gilgal. "Don't abandon your servants now!" they pleaded. "Come at once! Save us! Help us! For all the Amorite kings who live in the hill country have joined together to attack us."

So Joshua and his entire army, including his best warriors, left Gilgal and set out for Gibeon. <sup>8</sup>"Do not be afraid of them," the LORD said to Joshua, "for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up against you."

Joshua traveled all night from Gilgal and took the Amorite armies by surprise. <sup>10</sup>The LORD threw them into a panic, and the Israelites slaughtered great numbers of them at Gibeon. Then the Israelites chased the enemy along the road to Beth-horon, killing them all along the way to Azekah and Makkedah. <sup>11</sup>As the Amorites retreated down the road from Beth-horon, the LORD destroyed them with a terrible hail from heaven that continued until they reached Azekah. The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.

On the day the LORD gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the LORD in front of all the people of Israel. He said,

"Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon."

The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering. <sup>10:28, 35, 37, 39, 40. 10:13a Or The Book of the Upright. 10:13b Or did not set for about a whole day.</sup>

<sup>13</sup>So the sun stood still and the moon stayed in place until the nation of Israel had defeated its enemies.

Is this event not recorded in *The Book of Jasher*?\* The sun stayed in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day.\* <sup>14</sup>There has never been a day like this one before or since, when the LORD answered such a prayer. Surely the LORD fought for Israel that day!

<sup>15</sup>Then Joshua and the Israelite army returned to their camp at Gilgal.

## Joshua Kills the Five Southern Kings

<sup>16</sup>During the battle the five kings escaped and hid in a cave at Makkedah. <sup>17</sup>When Joshua heard that they had been found, <sup>18</sup>he issued this command: "Cover the opening of the cave with large rocks, and place guards at the entrance to keep the kings inside. <sup>19</sup>The rest of you continue chasing the enemy and cut them down from the rear. Don't give them a chance to get back to their towns, for the LORD your God has given you victory over them."

<sup>20</sup>So Joshua and the Israelite army continued the slaughter and completely crushed the enemy. They totally wiped out the five armies except for a tiny remnant that managed to reach their fortified towns. <sup>21</sup>Then the Israelites returned safely to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah. After that, no one dared to speak even a word against Israel.

<sup>22</sup>Then Joshua said, "Remove the rocks covering the opening of the cave, and bring the five kings to me." <sup>23</sup>So they brought the five kings out of the cave—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. <sup>24</sup>When they brought them out, Joshua told the commanders of his army, "Come and put your feet on the kings' necks." And they did as they were told.

<sup>25</sup>"Don't ever be afraid or discouraged," Joshua told his men. "Be strong and courageous, for the LORD is going to do this to all of your enemies." <sup>26</sup>Then Joshua killed each of the five kings and impaled them on five sharpened poles, where they hung until evening.

<sup>27</sup>As the sun was going down, Joshua gave instructions for the bodies of the kings to be taken down from the poles and thrown into the cave where they had been hiding. Then they covered the opening of the cave with a pile of large rocks, which remains to this very day.

## Israel Destroys the Southern Towns

<sup>28</sup>That same day Joshua captured and destroyed the town of Makkedah. He killed everyone in it, including the king, leaving no survivors. He destroyed them all, and he killed the king of Makkedah as he had killed the king of Jericho. <sup>29</sup>Then Joshua and the Israelites went to Libnah and attacked it. <sup>30</sup>There, too, the LORD gave them the town and its king. He killed everyone in it, leaving no survivors. Then Joshua killed the king of Libnah as he had killed the king of Jericho.

<sup>31</sup>From Libnah, Joshua and the Israelites went to Lachish and attacked it. <sup>32</sup>Here again, the LORD gave them Lachish. Joshua took it on the second day and killed everyone in it, just as he had done at Libnah. <sup>33</sup>During the attack on Lachish, King Hiram of Gezer arrived with his army to help defend the town. But Joshua's men killed him and his army, leaving no survivors.

<sup>34</sup>Then Joshua and the Israelite army went on to Eglon and attacked it. <sup>35</sup>They captured it that day and killed everyone in it. He completely destroyed everyone, just as he had done at Lachish. <sup>36</sup>From Eglon, Joshua and the Israelite army went up to Hebron and attacked it. <sup>37</sup>They captured the



town and killed everyone in it, including its king, leaving no survivors. They did the same thing to all of its surrounding villages. And just as he had done at Eglon, he completely destroyed the entire population.

<sup>38</sup>Then Joshua and the Israelites turned back and attacked Debir. <sup>39</sup>He captured the town, its king, and all of its surrounding villages. He completely destroyed everyone in it, leaving no survivors. He did to Debir and its king just what he had done to Hebron and to Libnah and its king.

<sup>40</sup>So Joshua conquered the whole region—the kings and people of the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills,\* and the mountain slopes. He completely destroyed everyone in the land, leaving no survivors, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded. <sup>41</sup>Joshua slaughtered them from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza and from the region around the town of Goshen up to Gibeon. <sup>42</sup>Joshua conquered all these kings and their land in a single campaign, for the LORD, the God of Israel, was fighting for his people.

<sup>43</sup>Then Joshua and the Israelite army returned to their camp at Gilgal.

#### Israel Defeats the Northern Armies

**11** When King Jabin of Hazor heard what had happened, he sent messages to the following kings: King Jobab of Madon; the king of Shimron; the king of Acshaph; <sup>2</sup>all the kings of the northern hill country; the kings in the Jordan Valley south of Galilee\*; the kings in the Galilean foothills\*; the kings of Naphtoth-dor on the west; <sup>3</sup>the kings of Canaan, both east and west; the kings of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites in the towns on the slopes of Mount Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

<sup>4</sup>All these kings came out to fight. Their combined armies formed a vast horde. And with all their horses and chariots, they covered the landscape like the sand on the seashore. <sup>5</sup>The kings joined forces and established their camp around the water near Merom to fight against Israel.

<sup>6</sup>Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them. By this time tomorrow I will hand all of them over to Israel as dead men. Then you must cripple their horses and burn their chariots."

<sup>7</sup>So Joshua and all his fighting men traveled to the water near Merom and attacked suddenly. <sup>8</sup>And the LORD gave them victory over their enemies. The Israelites chased them as far as Greater Sidon and Misrephoth-maim, and eastward into the valley of Mizpah, until not one enemy warrior was left alive. <sup>9</sup>Then Joshua crippled the horses and burned all the chariots, as the LORD had instructed.

<sup>10</sup>Joshua then turned back and captured Hazor and killed its king. (Hazor had at one time been the capital of all these kingdoms.) <sup>11</sup>The Israelites completely destroyed\* every living thing in the city, leaving no survivors. Not a single person was spared. And then Joshua burned the city.

<sup>12</sup>Joshua slaughtered all the other kings and their people, completely destroying them, just as Moses, the servant of the LORD, had commanded. <sup>13</sup>But the Israelites did not burn any of the towns built on mounds except Hazor, which Joshua burned. <sup>14</sup>And the Israelites took all the plunder and livestock of the ravaged towns for themselves. But they killed all the people, leaving no survivors. <sup>15</sup>As the LORD had commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua. And Joshua did as he was told, carefully obeying all the commands that the LORD had given to Moses.

10:40 Hebrew the Shephelah. 11:2a Hebrew in the Arabah south of Kinnereth. 11:2b Hebrew the Shephelah; also in 11:16. 11:11 The Hebrew text used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the Lord, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering; also in 11:12, 20. 11:16 Hebrew the Shephelah, the Arabah. 12:1 Hebrew the Arabah; also in 12:3, 8. 12:3 Hebrew from the Sea of Kinnereth to the Sea of the Arabah, which is the Salt Sea. 12:8 Hebrew the Shephelah.

<sup>16</sup>So Joshua conquered the entire region—the hill country, the entire Negev, the whole area around the town of Goshen, the western foothills, the Jordan Valley,\* the mountains of Israel, and the Galilean foothills. <sup>17</sup>The Israelite territory now extended all the way from Mount Halak, which leads up to Seir in the south, as far north as Baal-gad at the foot of Mount Hermon in the valley of Lebanon. Joshua killed all the kings of those territories, <sup>18</sup>waging war for a long time to accomplish this. <sup>19</sup>No one in this region made peace with the Israelites except the Hivites of Gibeon. All the others were defeated. <sup>20</sup>For the LORD hardened their hearts and caused them to fight the Israelites. So they were completely destroyed without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

<sup>21</sup>During this period Joshua destroyed all the descendants of Anak, who lived in the hill country of Hebron, Debir, Anak, and the entire hill country of Judah and Israel. He killed them all and completely destroyed their towns. <sup>22</sup>None of the descendants of Anak were left in all the land of Israel, though some still remained in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

<sup>23</sup>So Joshua took control of the entire land, just as the LORD had instructed Moses. He gave it to the people of Israel as their special possession, dividing the land among the tribes. So the land finally had rest from war.

#### Kings Defeated East of the Jordan

**12** These are the kings east of the Jordan River who had been killed by the Israelites and whose land was taken. Their territory extended from the Arnon Gorge to Mount Hermon and included all the land east of the Jordan Valley.\*

<sup>2</sup>King Sihon of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, was defeated. His kingdom included Aroer, on the edge of the Arnon Gorge, and extended from the middle of the Arnon Gorge to the Jabbok River, which serves as a border for the Ammonites. This territory included the southern half of the territory of Gilead. <sup>3</sup>Sihon also controlled the Jordan Valley and regions to the east—from as far north as the Sea of Galilee to as far south as the Dead Sea,\* including the road to Beth-jeshimoth and southward to the slopes of Pisgah.

<sup>4</sup>King Og of Bashan, the last of the Rephaites, lived at Ashtaroth and Edrei. <sup>5</sup>He ruled a territory stretching from Mount Hermon to Salecah in the north and to all of Bashan in the east, and westward to the borders of the kingdoms of Geshur and Maacah. This territory included the northern half of Gilead, as far as the boundary of King Sihon of Heshbon.

<sup>6</sup>Moses, the servant of the LORD, and the Israelites had destroyed the people of King Sihon and King Og. And Moses gave their land as a possession to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

#### Kings Defeated West of the Jordan

<sup>7</sup>The following is a list of the kings that Joshua and the Israelite armies defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, which leads up to Seir. (Joshua gave this land to the tribes of Israel as their possession, <sup>8</sup>including the hill country, the western foothills,\* the Jordan Valley, the mountain slopes, the Jordan wilderness, and the Negev. The people who lived in the region were the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.) These are the kings Israel defeated:

\* The king of Jericho  
The king of Ai, near Bethel  
The king of Jerusalem  
The king of Hebron  
The king of Jarmuth  
The king of Lachish  
The king of Eglon  
The king of Gezer  
The king of Debir  
The king of Geder  
The king of Hormah  
The king of Arad  
The king of Libnah  
The king of Adullam  
The king of Makkedah  
The king of Bethel  
The king of Tappuah  
The king of Hepher  
The king of Aphek  
The king of Lasharon  
The king of Madon  
The king of Hazor  
The king of Shimron-meron  
The king of Acshaph  
The king of Taanach  
The king of Megiddo  
The king of Kedesh  
The king of Jokneam in Carmel  
The king of Dor in the town of Naphtoth-dor\*  
The king of Goyim in Gilgal\*  
The king of Tirzah.

all thirty-one kings were defeated.

#### The Land Yet to Be Conquered

**13** When Joshua was an old man, the LORD said to him, "You are growing old, and much land remains to be conquered. <sup>2</sup>This is the territory that remains: all the regions of the Philistines and the Geshurites, <sup>3</sup>and the larger territory of the Canaanites, extending from the stream of Euphrat on the border of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Hittite. It includes the territory of the five Philistine rulers of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. The land of the Amorites <sup>4</sup>in the south also remains to be conquered. In the following area has not yet been conquered: all the land of the Canaanites, including Mearah (which belongs to the Sidonians), stretching northward to Aphek on the border of the Amorites; <sup>5</sup>the land of the Geshurites and all the Lebanon mountain area to the east, from Baal-gad to Mount Hermon to Lebo-hamath; <sup>6</sup>and all the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, including all the land of the Sidonians.

<sup>7</sup>I myself will drive these people out of the land ahead of the Israelites. So be sure to give this land to Israel as a special possession, just as I have commanded you. <sup>8</sup>Include all this territory as Israel's possession when you divide this land among the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

#### The Land Divided East of the Jordan

<sup>1</sup>the tribe of Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and Gad had already received their grants of land on the east side of the Jordan, for Moses, the servant of the LORD, had previously assigned this land to them.

<sup>2</sup>Their territory extended from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Gorge (including the town in the middle of

Hebrew Naphath-dor, a variant spelling of Naphtoth-dor. 12:23b Greek version of the text reads: "the king of Lo-debar, apparently a variant spelling of Lo-debar (compare 2 Sam 9:4: 1



quired the entire region—the hill country, the whole area around the town of Bethel, the Galilean foothills, the Jordan Valley,\* the mountainous region of the Galilean foothills. <sup>17</sup>The Israelite army went all the way from Mount Halak, which is in the south, as far north as Baal-gad, the northernmost town in the valley of Lebanon. Joshua conquered all those territories, <sup>18</sup>waging war for many years to accomplish this. <sup>19</sup>No one in this region made a treaty with the Israelites except the Hivites of Gibeon. All the other peoples he defeated. <sup>20</sup>For the LORD hardened their hearts so that they would not fight the Israelites. So they were left in the land without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>21</sup>Joshua destroyed all the descendants of the Canaanites in the hill country of Hebron, Debir, Anab, and all the hill country of Judah and Israel. He completely destroyed their towns. <sup>22</sup>None of the Canaanites of Anak were left in all the land of Israel except the Gergesites, who remained in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. <sup>23</sup>Joshua took control of the entire land, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. He gave it to the people of Israel as an inheritance, dividing the land among the twelve tribes. The land finally had rest from war.

### East of the Jordan

the kings east of the Jordan River who were  
by the Israelites and whose land  
extended from the Arnon Gorge  
and included all the land east of the Jordan

the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon. This territory included Arer, on the edge of the Jordan, extended from the middle of the Arnon River, which serves as a border between the territory of the Amorites and the territory of the Israelites. This territory included the southern half of the Jordan Valley, east—from as far north as the Sea of Galilee as the Dead Sea,\* including the slopes of Pisgah southward to the slopes of Pisgah, the last of the Rephaites. He ruled a territory stretching from Salecah in the north and to all of the Jordan River southward to the borders of the kingdom of Moab. This territory included the boundary of King Sihon of the Amorites, as the boundary of King Sihon of the Amorites, and the Israelites of King Sihon and King Og. And this territory was given in possession to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and Manasseh.

### West of the Jordan

list of the kings that Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan. The king of Lebanon to Mount Hajar. Joshua gave this land to the tribes of Israel, including the hill country, the Jordan Valley, the mountain slopes, and the Negev. The people who lived there were the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.) These are the names of the kings that Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan.

phelah; also in 11:16. 11:11 The Hebrews  
by giving them as an offering; also in 11:16.  
in the Sea of Kinnereth to the Sea of the Araby

The king of Jericho  
The king of Ai, near Bethel  
The king of Jerusalem  
The king of Hebron  
The king of Jarmuth  
The king of Lachish  
The king of Eglon  
The king of Gezer  
The king of Debir  
The king of Geder  
The king of Hormah  
The king of Arad  
The king of Libnah  
The king of Adullam  
The king of Makkedah  
The king of Bethel  
The king of Tappuah  
The king of Hephher  
The king of Aphek  
The king of Lasharon  
The king of Madon  
The king of Hazor  
The king of Shimron-meron  
The king of Achsaph  
The king of Taanach  
The king of Megiddo  
The king of Kedesh  
The king of Jokneam in Carmel  
The king of Dor in the town of Naphoth-dor\*  
The king of Goyim in Gilgal\*  
The king of Tirzah.

thirty-one kings were defeated.

## Land Yet to Be Conquered

When Joshua was an old man, the LORD said to him, "You are growing old, and much land remains to be conquered. This is the territory that remains: all the region of the Philistines and the Geshurites, and the larger part of the Canaanites, extending from the stream of the Euphrat to the border of Egypt, northward to the boundary of the Amorites. It includes the territory of the five Philistine rulers of the south: Gath, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. The land of the south also remains to be conquered. In the following area has not yet been conquered: all the region of the Canaanites, including Mearah (which belongs to the Sidonians), stretching northward to Aphek on the border of the Amorites; the land of the Geshurites and all the land of the Amorites; the mountain area to the east, from Baal-gad on the north to Lebo-hamath; and all the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, including all the land of the Sidonians. I will drive these people out of the land ahead of you. So be sure to give this land to Israel as a special possession, just as I have commanded you. Include all this land as Israel's possession when you divide this land among the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

Divided East of the Jordan

tribe of Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and  
already received their grants of land on the east  
Jordan, for Moses, the servant of the LORD, had  
assigned this land to them.

territory extended from Aroer on the edge of  
Gorge (including the town in the middle of

*Naphath-dor*, a variant spelling of Naphoth-dor. **12:23b** Greek version of *Lo-debar*, apparently a variant spelling of Lo-debar (compare 2 Sam 9:4).

### An Allotment for the Tribe of Levi

<sup>14</sup>Moses did not assign any allotment of land to the tribe of Levi. Instead, as the LORD had promised them, their allotment came from the offerings burned on the altar to the LORD, the God of Israel.

## The Land Given to the Tribe of Reuben

<sup>15</sup>Moses had assigned the following area to the clans of the tribe of Reuben.

<sup>16</sup>Their territory extended from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Gorge (including the town in the middle of the gorge) to the plain beyond Medeba. <sup>17</sup>It included Heshbon and the other towns on the plain—Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baal-meon. <sup>18</sup>Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, <sup>19</sup>Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth-shahar on the hill above the valley, <sup>20</sup>Beth-peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoto.

<sup>21</sup>The land of Reuben also included all the towns of the plain and the entire kingdom of Sihon. Sihon was the Amorite king who had reigned in Heshbon and was killed by Moses along with the leaders of Midian—Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba—princes living in the region who were allied with Sihon. <sup>22</sup>The Israelites had also killed Balaam son of Beor, who used magic to tell the future. <sup>23</sup>The Jordan River marked the western boundary for the tribe of Reuben. The towns and their surrounding villages in this area were given as a homeland to the clans of the tribe of Reuben.

### The Land Given to the Tribe of Gad

<sup>24</sup>Moses had assigned the following area to the clans of the tribe of Gad.

<sup>25</sup>Their territory included Jazer, all the towns of Gilead and half of the land of Ammon, as far as the town of Aroer just west of \*Rabbah. <sup>26</sup>It extended from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the territory of Lo-debar. \* <sup>27</sup>In the valley were Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, Zaphon, and the rest of the kingdom of King Sihon of Heshbon. The western boundary ran along the Jordan River, extended as far north as the tip of the Sea of Galilee,\* and then turned eastward. <sup>28</sup>The towns and their surrounding villages in this area were given as a homeland to the clans of the tribe of Gad.

### The Land Given to the Half-Tribe of Manasseh

<sup>29</sup>Moses had assigned the following area to the clans of the half-tribe of Manasseh.

<sup>30</sup>Their territory extended from Mahanaim, including all of Bashan, all the former kingdom of King Og, and the

phelah; also in 11:16. 11:11 The ~~Hebrew~~  
by giving them as an offering; also in ~~11:16~~  
in the Sea of Kinnereth to the Sea of the ~~Arabs~~



sixty towns of Jair in Bashan. <sup>31</sup>It also included half of Gilead and King Og's royal cities of Ashtaroth and Edrei. All this was given to the clans of the descendants of Makir, who was Manasseh's son.

<sup>32</sup>These are the allotments Moses had made while he was on the plains of Moab, across the Jordan River, east of Jericho. <sup>33</sup>But Moses gave no allotment of land to the tribe of Levi, for the LORD, the God of Israel, had promised that he himself would be their allotment.

#### The Land Divided West of the Jordan

**14** The remaining tribes of Israel received land in Canaan as allotted by Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the tribal leaders. <sup>2</sup>These nine and a half tribes received their grants of land by means of sacred lots, in accordance with the LORD's command through Moses. <sup>3</sup>Moses had already given a grant of land to the two and a half tribes on the east side of the Jordan River, but he had given the Levites no such allotment. <sup>4</sup>The descendants of Joseph had become two separate tribes—Manasseh and Ephraim. And the Levites were given no land at all, only towns to live in with surrounding pasturelands for their livestock and all their possessions. <sup>5</sup>So the land was distributed in strict accordance with the LORD's commands to Moses.

#### Caleb Requests His Land

<sup>6</sup>A delegation from the tribe of Judah, led by Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, came to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb said to Joshua, "Remember what the LORD said to Moses, the man of God, about you and me when we were at Kadesh-barnea. <sup>7</sup>I was forty years old when Moses, the servant of the LORD, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land of Canaan. I returned and gave an honest report, <sup>8</sup>but my brothers who went with me frightened the people from entering the Promised Land. For my part, I wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God. <sup>9</sup>So that day Moses solemnly promised me, 'The land of Canaan on which you were just walking will be your grant of land and that of your descendants forever, because you wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God.'

<sup>10</sup>Now, as you can see, the LORD has kept me alive and well as he promised for all these forty-five years since Moses made this promise—even while Israel wandered in the wilderness. Today I am eighty-five years old. <sup>11</sup>I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then. <sup>12</sup>So give me the hill country that the LORD promised me. You will remember that as scouts we found the descendants of Anak living there in great, walled towns. But if the LORD is with me, I will drive them out of the land, just as the LORD said."

<sup>13</sup>So Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave Hebron to him as his portion of land. <sup>14</sup>Hebron still belongs to the descendants of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite because he wholeheartedly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>15</sup>(Previously Hebron had been called Kiriath-arba. It had been named after Arba, a great hero of the descendants of Anak.)

And the land had rest from war.

#### The Land Given to the Tribe of Judah

**15** The allotment for the clans of the tribe of Judah reached southward to the border of Edom, as far south as the wilderness of Zin.

<sup>2</sup>The southern boundary began at the south bay of the Dead Sea,\* <sup>3</sup>ran south of Scorpion Pass\* into the

15:2 Hebrew the Salt Sea; also in 15:5. 15:3 Hebrew Akabbim. 15:4a Hebrew the sea; also in 15:11. 15:4b Hebrew your. 15:9 Or the spring of Me-nephtoah. 15:12 Hebrew the Great Sea; also in 15:47. 15:18 Some Greek manuscripts read he urged her.

wilderness of Zin, and then went south of Kadesh-barnea to Hebron. Then it went up to Addar, where it turned toward Karka. <sup>4</sup>From there it passed to Azmon until it finally reached the Brook of Egypt, which it followed to the Mediterranean Sea.\* This was their\* southern boundary.

<sup>5</sup>The eastern boundary extended along the Dead Sea to the mouth of the Jordan River.

The northern boundary began at the bay where the Jordan River empties into the Dead Sea, <sup>6</sup>went up from there to Beth-hoglah, then proceeded north of Beth-arabah to the Stone of Bohan. (Bohan was Reuben's son.) <sup>7</sup>From that point it went through the valley of Achor to Debir, turning north toward Gilgal, which is across from the slopes of Adummim on the south side of the valley. From there the boundary extended to the springs at En-shemesh and on to En-rogel. <sup>8</sup>The boundary then passed through the valley of Ben-Hinnom, along the southern slopes of the Jebusites, where the city of Jerusalem is located. Then it went west to the top of the mountain above the valley of Hinnom, and on up to the northern end of the valley of Rephaim. <sup>9</sup>From there the boundary extended from the top of the mountain to the spring at the waters of Nephtoah,\* and from there to the towns on Mount Ephron. Then it turned toward Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim). <sup>10</sup>The boundary circled west of Baalah to Mount Seir, passed along to the town of Kesalon on the northern slope of Mount Jearim, and went down to Beth-shemesh and on to Timnah. <sup>11</sup>The boundary then proceeded to the slope of the hill north of Ekron, where it turned toward Shikkeron and Mount Baalah. It passed Jabneel and ended at the Mediterranean Sea. <sup>12</sup>The western boundary was the shoreline of the Mediterranean Sea.\*

These are the boundaries for the clans of the tribe of Judah.

#### The Land Given to Caleb

<sup>13</sup>The LORD commanded Joshua to assign some of Judah's territory to Caleb son of Jephunneh. So Caleb was given the town of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), which had been named after Anak's ancestor. <sup>14</sup>Caleb drove out the three groups of Anakites—the descendants of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, the sons of Anak.

<sup>15</sup>From there he went to fight against the people living in the town of Debir (formerly called Kiriath-sepher). <sup>16</sup>Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Acsah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher." <sup>17</sup>Othniel, son of Caleb's brother Kenaz, was the one who conquered so Acsah became Othniel's wife.

<sup>18</sup>When Acsah married Othniel, she urged him\* to ask her father for a field. As she got down off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What's the matter?"

<sup>19</sup>She said, "Give me another gift. You have already given me land in the Negev; now please give me springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

#### The Towns Allotted to Judah

<sup>20</sup>This was the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Judah.

<sup>21</sup>The towns of Judah situated along the borders of Edom in the extreme south were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur,

<sup>22</sup>Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, <sup>23</sup>Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan,

<sup>24</sup>Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, <sup>25</sup>Hazor-hadattah, Kerioth-

hezron (that is, Hazor), <sup>26</sup>Amam, Shema, Moladah, <sup>27</sup>Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, <sup>28</sup>Hazar-shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, <sup>29</sup>Baalath, Iim, Ezem, <sup>30</sup>Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah, <sup>31</sup>Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, <sup>32</sup>Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon—twenty-nine towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>33</sup>The following towns situated in the western foothills\* were also given to Judah: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, <sup>34</sup>Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, <sup>35</sup>Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, <sup>36</sup>Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim—fourteen towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>37</sup>Also included were Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, <sup>38</sup>Dilean, Mizpeh, Joktheel, <sup>39</sup>Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, <sup>40</sup>Cabbon, Lahmam, Kitlish, <sup>41</sup>Gederot, Beth-dagon, <sup>42</sup>Maamah, and Makkedah—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>43</sup>Besides these, there were Libnah, Ether, Ashan, <sup>44</sup>Iptah, Ashnah, Nezib, <sup>45</sup>Keilah, Aczib, and Mareshah—nine towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>46</sup>The territory of the tribe of Judah also included Ekron and its surrounding settlements and villages.

<sup>47</sup>From Ekron the boundary extended west and included the towns near Ashdod with their surrounding villages.

<sup>48</sup>It also included Ashdod with its surrounding settlements and villages and Gaza with its settlements and villages, as far as the Brook of Egypt and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

<sup>49</sup>Judah also received the following towns in the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, <sup>50</sup>Dannah, Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir), <sup>51</sup>Anab, Eshtemoah, Anim, <sup>52</sup>Goshen, Holon, and Giloh—eleven towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>53</sup>Also included were the towns of Arab, Dumah, Eshan, <sup>54</sup>Janin, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, <sup>55</sup>Humtah, Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior—nine towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>56</sup>Besides these, there were Maon, Carmel, Ziph, <sup>57</sup>Jurtah, <sup>58</sup>Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, <sup>59</sup>Kain, Gibeath, and Timnah—ten towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>60</sup>In addition, there were Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, <sup>61</sup>Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon—six towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>62</sup>There were also Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim) and Rabbah—two towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>63</sup>In the wilderness there were the towns of Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah, <sup>64</sup>Nibshan, the City of Salt, and Engedi—six towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>65</sup>But the tribe of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites, who lived in the city of Jerusalem, so the Jebusites live there to this day.

#### The Land Given to Ephraim and West Manasseh

**16** The allotment for the descendants of Joseph extended from the Jordan River near Jericho, east of the springs of Jericho, through the wilderness and into the hill country of Bethel. <sup>2</sup>From Bethel (that is, Luz)\* it descended westward to the territory of the Arkites. <sup>3</sup>Then it went as far as Lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer and over to the Mediterranean Sea.\*

This was the homeland allocated to the families of Joseph's sons—Manasseh and Ephraim.

16:2 Hebrew the Shephelah. 16:2 As in Greek version (also see 18:13); Hebrew reads from the sea; also in 17:10.



and then went south of Kadesh. Then it went up to Addar, where it turned. From there it passed to Azmon, then the Brook of Egypt, which it entered the Mediterranean Sea.\* This was their boundary.

The boundary extended along the Dead Sea to the Jordan River.

The boundary began at the bay where the Jordan enters the Dead Sea, went up from there to the north of Beth-lehem, then proceeded north of Beth-lehem to Bohan. (Bohan was Reuben's point.) It went through the valley of the Jordan, turning north toward Gilgal, which is on the slopes of Adummim on the south side. There the boundary extended to the north, then turned west to En-rogel. The boundary passed through the valley of Ben-jamin, then turned north to the southern slopes of the Jebusites, where Jerusalem is located. Then it went up the mountain above the valley of the Jordan to the northern end of the valley. There the boundary extended from the mountain to the spring at the waters of En-rogel. From there to the towns on Mount Ephraim, the boundary turned toward Baalah (that is, Kirjath-baal). The boundary circled west of Baalah to the town of Kesalon, then turned north to the town of Jearim, and went down to the town of Timnah. The boundary then turned north to the hill north of Ekron, then turned toward Shikheron and Mount Baalah, and ended at the Mediterranean Sea. The boundary was the shoreline of the Sea.\*

The boundaries for the clans of the tribe of Judah were:

#### to Caleb

Joshua gave Caleb the land of Hebron, which was the land of the descendants of Sheshai, Achish, and Anah.

Joshua went to fight against the people of the Amorites (formerly called Kiriath-sepher). His daughter Acsah in marriage to him captures Kiriath-sepher.\* Othniel, the son of Kenaz, was the one who captured Kiriath-sepher.

Othniel's wife, who was married to Othniel, she urged him to go to the city of Jerusalem, so the Jebusites live there to this day.

Joshua said to her, "The Lord has fought for you. As she got down off her donkey, she said, 'The Lord has fought for you.'"

#### to Judah

The land allocated to the clans of the tribe of Judah situated along the border of the land of the Amorites.

From the extreme south were Kabzeel, Beer-sheba, Adadah, Kadesh, Hazor, Hadath, Bealoth, Hazor-hadath, and Hazor.

From the north were Hebron, Zior, and Beersheba. The land allocated to the families of Joseph's sons was the Shephelah.

15:4b Hebrew *your*. 15:9 In the Greek version (also see 18:13); Hebrew reads *From Bethel to Luz*. 16:3 Hebrew *the sea*; also in 16:6, 8.

Hebron (that is, Hazor), Amam, Shema, Moladah, Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, Hazar-shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, Baalah, Iim, Ezem, Eltolad, Hormah, Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon—twenty-nine towns with their surrounding villages.

The following towns situated in the western foothills\* were also given to Judah: Eshtaoi, Zorah, Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, Arath, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, Shaaraim, Gederah, and Gederotaim—fourteen towns with their surrounding villages.

Also included were Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, Oleeah, Mizpeh, Joktheel, Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, Libnah, Lahmam, Kitlish, Gederot, Beth-dagon, and Makkedah—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages.

Besides these, there were Libnah, Ether, Ashan, Ziklag, Ashnah, Neziel, Keilah, Azzib, and Mareshah—nine towns with their surrounding villages.

The territory of the tribe of Judah also included Ekron and its surrounding settlements and villages. From Ekron the boundary extended west and included the towns near Ashdod with their surrounding villages.

Also included Ashdod with its surrounding settlements and villages and Gaza with its settlements and villages, as far as the Brook of Egypt and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

Judah also received the following towns in the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, Dannah, Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir), Anab, Eshtemoah, Anim, Goshen, Holon, and Giloh—eleven towns with their surrounding villages.

Also included were the towns of Arab, Dumah, Zanoah, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, Humtah, and Zior—nine towns with their surrounding villages.

Besides these, there were Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Beersheba, Ziklag, Zanoah, Kain, Gibeath, and Mareshah—ten towns with their surrounding villages.

In addition, there were Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon—six towns with their surrounding villages.

There were also Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim) and Zanoah—two towns with their surrounding villages.

In the wilderness there were the towns of Beth-lehem, Middin, Secacah, Nibshan, the City of Salt, and Beersheba—six towns with their surrounding villages.

The tribe of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites, who lived in the city of Jerusalem, so the Jebusites live there to this day.

#### Land Given to Ephraim and West Manasseh

The allotment for the descendants of Joseph extended from the Jordan River near Jericho, east of the city of Jericho, through the wilderness and into the country of Bethel. From Bethel (that is, Luz)\* it went to Ataroth in the territory of the Arkites. Then it went westward to the territory of the Japhletites, then to the lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer and over to the Mediterranean Sea.\*

The land allocated to the families of Joseph's sons was the Shephelah.

16:2 As in Greek version (also see 18:13); Hebrew reads *From Bethel to Luz*. 16:3 Hebrew *the sea*; also in 16:6, 8.

#### The Land Given to Ephraim

The following territory was given to the clans of the tribe of Ephraim.

The boundary of their homeland began at Ataroth-addar in the east. From there it ran to Upper Beth-horon, then on to the Mediterranean Sea. From Micmethath on the north, the boundary curved eastward past Taanath-shiloh to the east of Janoah. From Janoah it turned southward to Ataroth and Naarah, touched Jericho, and ended at the Jordan River. From Tappuah the boundary extended westward, following the Kanah Ravine to the Mediterranean Sea. This is the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Ephraim.

In addition, some towns with their surrounding villages in the territory allocated to the half-tribe of Manasseh were set aside for the tribe of Ephraim. They did not drive the Canaanites out of Gezer, however, so the people of Gezer live as slaves among the people of Ephraim to this day.

#### The Land Given to West Manasseh

The next allotment of land was given to the half-tribe of Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph's older son. Makir, the firstborn son of Manasseh, was the father of Gilead. Because his descendants were experienced soldiers, the regions of Gilead and Bashan on the east side of the Jordan had already been given to them. So the allotment on the west side of the Jordan was for the remaining families within the clans of the tribe of Manasseh: Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida. These clans represent the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph.

However, Zelophehad, a descendant of Hepher son of Gilead, son of Makir, son of Manasseh, had no sons. He had only daughters, whose names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. These women came to Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the Israelite leaders and said, "The Lord commanded Moses to give us a grant of land along with the men of our tribe."

So Joshua gave them a grant of land along with their uncles, as the Lord had commanded. As a result, Manasseh's total allocation came to ten parcels of land, in addition to the land of Gilead and Bashan across the Jordan River, because the female descendants of Manasseh received a grant of land along with the male descendants. (The land of Gilead was given to the rest of the male descendants of Manasseh.)

The boundary of the tribe of Manasseh extended from the border of Asher to Micmethath, near Shechem. Then the boundary went south from Micmethath to the settlement near the spring of Tappuah. The land surrounding Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah itself, on the border of Manasseh's territory, belonged to the tribe of Ephraim. From the spring of Tappuah, the boundary of Manasseh followed the Kanah Ravine to the Mediterranean Sea.\* Several towns south of the ravine were inside Manasseh's territory, but they actually belonged to the tribe of Ephraim. In general, however, the land south of the ravine belonged to Ephraim, and the land north of the ravine belonged to Manasseh. Manasseh's boundary ran along the northern side of the ravine and ended at the Mediterranean Sea. North of Manasseh was the territory of Asher, and to the east was the territory of Issachar.



<sup>11</sup>The following towns within the territory of Issachar and Asher, however, were given to Manasseh: Beth-shan,\* Ibleam, Dor (that is, Napthoth-dor),\* Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo, each with their surrounding settlements.

<sup>12</sup>But the descendants of Manasseh were unable to occupy these towns. They could not drive out the Canaanites who continued to live there. <sup>13</sup>Later, however, when the Israelites became strong enough, they forced the Canaanites to work as slaves. But they did not drive them out of the land.

<sup>14</sup>The descendants of Joseph came to Joshua and asked, "Why have you given us only one portion of land as our homeland when the Lord has blessed us with so many people?"

<sup>15</sup>Joshua replied, "If there are so many of you, and if the hill country of Ephraim is not large enough for you, clear out land for yourselves in the forest where the Perizzites and Rephaites live."

<sup>16</sup>The descendants of Joseph responded, "It's true that the hill country is not large enough for us. But all the Canaanites in the lowlands have iron chariots, both those in Beth-shan and its surrounding settlements and those in the valley of Jezreel. They are too strong for us."

<sup>17</sup>Then Joshua said to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph, "Since you are so large and strong, you will be given more than one portion. <sup>18</sup>The forests of the hill country will be yours as well. Clear as much of the land as you wish, and take possession of its farthest corners. And you will drive out the Canaanites from the valleys, too, even though they are strong and have iron chariots."

### The Allotments of the Remaining Land

**18** Now that the land was under Israelite control, the entire community of Israel gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tabernacle.\* <sup>2</sup>But there remained seven tribes who had not yet been allotted their grants of land.

<sup>3</sup>Then Joshua asked them, "How long are you going to wait before taking possession of the remaining land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has given to you? <sup>4</sup>Select three men from each tribe, and I will send them out to explore the land and map it out. They will then return to me with a written report of their proposed divisions of their new homeland. <sup>5</sup>Let them divide the land into seven sections, excluding Judah's territory in the south and Joseph's territory in the north. <sup>6</sup>And when you record the seven divisions of the land and bring them to me, I will cast sacred lots in the presence of the Lord our God to assign land to each tribe.

<sup>7</sup>"The Levites, however, will not receive any allotment of land. Their role as priests of the Lord is their allotment. And the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh won't receive any more land, for they have already received their grant of land, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave them on the east side of the Jordan River."

<sup>8</sup>As the men started on their way to map out the land, Joshua commanded them, "Go and explore the land and write a description of it. Then return to me, and I will assign the land to the tribes by casting sacred lots here in the presence of the Lord at Shiloh." <sup>9</sup>The men did as they were told and mapped the entire territory into seven sections, listing the towns in each section. They made a written record and then returned to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh. <sup>10</sup>And there at Shiloh, Joshua cast sacred lots in the presence of the Lord to determine which tribe should have each section.

<sup>17:11a</sup> Hebrew *Beth-shean*, a variant spelling of Beth-shan; also in 17:16. <sup>17:11b</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew here is uncertain. <sup>18:1</sup> Hebrew *Taberah*. <sup>18:15a</sup> Or *From there it went to Mozah*. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. <sup>18:15b</sup> Or *the spring at Me-nephtoth*. <sup>18:18</sup> Hebrew *overlooking the Arabah*, or *overlooking Beth-arabah*. <sup>18:19</sup> Hebrew *Salt Sea*. <sup>18:28</sup> Some Greek manuscripts read *Kiriath-jearim*.

### The Land Given to Benjamin

<sup>11</sup>The first allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin. It lay between the territory assigned to the tribe of Judah and Joseph.

<sup>12</sup>The northern boundary of Benjamin's land began at the Jordan River, went north of the slope of Jericho, then west through the hill country and the wilderness of Beth-aven. <sup>13</sup>From there the boundary went south to Bethel (that is, Bethel) and proceeded down to Ataroth-addar on the hill that lies south of Lower Beth-horon.

<sup>14</sup>The boundary then made a turn and swung south along the western edge of the hill facing Beth-horon, ending at the village of Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a town belonging to the tribe of Judah. This was the western boundary.

<sup>15</sup>The southern boundary began at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim. From that western point it ran\* to the spring at the waters of Nephtoth,\* <sup>16</sup>and down to the base of the mountain beside the valley of Ben-Hinnom at the northern end of the valley of Rephaim. From there it went down the valley of Hinnom, crossing south of the slope where the Jebusites lived, and continued down to En-rogel. <sup>17</sup>From En-rogel the boundary proceeded in a northerly direction and came to En-shemesh and on to Geliloth (which is across from the slopes of Adummim). Then it went down to the Stone of Bohan. (Bohan was Reuben's son.) <sup>18</sup>From there it passed along the north side of the slope overlooking the Jordan Valley.\* The border then went down into the valley, <sup>19</sup>ran past the north slope of Beth-hoglah, and ended at the north bay of the Dead Sea,\* which is the southern end of the Jordan River. This was the southern boundary.

<sup>20</sup>The eastern boundary was the Jordan River.

These were the boundaries of the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin.

### The Towns Given to Benjamin

<sup>21</sup>These were the towns given to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin.

Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-kezi, <sup>22</sup>Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, <sup>23</sup>Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, <sup>24</sup>Kephrah, Kishion, Ebez, <sup>25</sup>Remeth, En-gannim, En-tappuah, and Beth-pazzez. <sup>26</sup>The boundary also touched the Jordan River—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages.

This was the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin.

### The Land Given to Simeon

**19** The second allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Simeon. Their homeland was surrounded by Judah's territory.

<sup>2</sup>Simeon's homeland included Beersheba, Sheba, Moladah, <sup>3</sup>Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, <sup>4</sup>Eltolad, Beth-hormah, <sup>5</sup>Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, <sup>6</sup>Be'er-sheva, and Sharuhenn—thirteen towns with their surrounding villages. <sup>7</sup>It also included Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four towns with their villages,

including all the surrounding villages as far south as Be'er-sheva (also known as Ramah of the Negev).

This was the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Simeon. <sup>9</sup>Their allocation of land came from part of what had been given to Judah because Judah's territory was too small for them. So the tribe of Simeon received an allocation within the territory of Judah.

### The Land Given to Zebulun

The third allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Zebulun.

The boundary of Zebulun's homeland started at Sarid. <sup>2</sup>From there it went west, going past Maralah, touching Naphtali, and proceeding to the brook east of Issachar. <sup>3</sup>In the other direction, the boundary went east from Sarid to the border of Kisloth-tabor, and from there to Daberath and up to Japhia. <sup>4</sup>Then it continued east to Gath-hepher, Eth-kazin, and Rimmon and turned toward Neah. <sup>5</sup>The northern boundary of Zebulun passed Hannathon and ended at the valley of Iphtah-el. The towns in these areas included Kattath, Nahalal, Hachalon, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve towns with their surrounding villages.

This was the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Zebulun. These were the towns and their surrounding villages.

### The Land Given to Issachar

The fourth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Issachar.

The boundaries included the following towns: Jezreel, Geliloth, Shunem, <sup>19</sup>Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, Kishion, Ebez, <sup>21</sup>Remeth, En-gannim, En-tappuah, and Beth-pazzez. <sup>22</sup>The boundary also touched the Jordan River—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages.

This was the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Issachar. These were the towns and their surrounding villages.

### The Land Given to Asher

The fifth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Asher.

The boundaries included these towns: Helkath, Hali, Acshaph, <sup>26</sup>Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. The boundary on the west touched Carmel and Shihor-dagon. <sup>27</sup>Then it turned east toward Beth-dagon, and as far as Zebulun in the valley of Iphtah-el, going north to Beth-emek and Neiel. It then continued north to Beth-el, <sup>28</sup>Abdon,\* Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, and as far as Greater Sidon. <sup>29</sup>Then the boundary turned toward Ramah and the fortress of Tyre, where it turned toward Hosah and came to the Mediterranean Sea.\* The territory also included Mehebel, Aczib, <sup>30</sup>Ummah, Akko, and Rehob—twenty-two towns with their surrounding villages.

This was the homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Asher. These were the towns and their surrounding villages.

### The Land Given to Naphtali

The sixth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Naphtali.

Some Hebrew manuscripts (see also 21:30); most Hebrew manuscripts read *En-tappuah*. <sup>19:47a</sup> Or *had trouble holding on to their land*. <sup>19:47b</sup> Hebrew *Leshem*.



to the clans of the tribe of Judah. Their territory assigned to the tribe of Judah.

Benjamin's land began at the slope of Jericho, and the wilderness of the border went south to Ataroth-addar, and down to Beth-horon. The boundary of Zebulun's homeland started at Sarid, from there it went west, going past Maralah, touching Bethesheth, and proceeding to the brook east of Sarid.

The third allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Zebulun. The boundary of Zebulun's homeland started at Sarid.

From there it went west, going past Maralah, touching Bethesheth, and proceeding to the brook east of Sarid. In the other direction, the boundary went from Sarid to the border of Kisloth-tabor, and from there to Daberath and up to Japhia.

Then it continued to Gath-hepher, Eth-kazin, and Rimmon and turned toward Neah. The northern boundary of Zebulun passed Hannathon and ended at the valley of Iphtah-el.

The towns in these areas included Kattath, Nahalal, Rimmon, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve towns with their surrounding villages.

The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Zebulun included these towns and their surrounding villages.

The fourth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Issachar.

The boundaries included the following towns: Jezreel, Shunem, Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, Kishion, Ebez, Remeth, En-gannim, En-tanah, and Beth-pazzez. The boundary also touched Shihazumah, and Beth-shemesh, ending at the Jordan River—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages.

The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Issachar included these towns and their surrounding villages.

The fifth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Asher.

The boundaries included these towns: Helkath, Hali, Achaph, Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. The boundary on the west touched Carmel and Shihor. Then it turned east toward Beth-dagon, and as far as Zebulun in the valley of Iphtah-el, going to Beth-emek and Neiel. It then continued north to Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, and as far as Greater Sidon.

Then the boundary turned toward Ramah and the fortress of Tyre, where it turned toward Hosah and came to the Mediterranean Sea. The territory also included Mehebel, Aczib, Ummah, and Rehob—twenty-two towns with their surrounding villages.

The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Asher included these towns and their surrounding villages.

The sixth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Naphtali.

The boundaries included these towns: Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, Yiron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen towns with their surrounding villages.

The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Naphtali included these towns and their surrounding villages.

The seventh allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Dan.

The land allocated as their homeland included the following towns: Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, Elon, Timnah, Ekron, Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, Me-jarkon, Rakkon, and the territory across from Joppa.

But the tribe of Dan had trouble taking possession of their land, so they attacked the town of Laish. They captured it, slaughtered its people, and settled there. They renamed the town Dan after their ancestor.

The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Dan included these towns and their surrounding villages.

The eighth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Judah. Their territory assigned to the tribe of Judah.

Benjamin's land began at the slope of Jericho, and the wilderness of the border went south to Ataroth-addar, and down to Beth-horon. The boundary of Zebulun's homeland started at Sarid, from there it went west, going past Maralah, touching Bethesheth, and proceeding to the brook east of Sarid.

The third allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Zebulun. The boundary of Zebulun's homeland started at Sarid.

From there it went west, going past Maralah, touching Bethesheth, and proceeding to the brook east of Sarid. In the other direction, the boundary went from Sarid to the border of Kisloth-tabor, and from there to Daberath and up to Japhia.

Then it continued to Gath-hepher, Eth-kazin, and Rimmon and turned toward Neah. The northern boundary of Zebulun passed Hannathon and ended at the valley of Iphtah-el.

The towns in these areas included Kattath, Nahalal, Rimmon, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve towns with their surrounding villages.

The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Zebulun included these towns and their surrounding villages.

The fourth allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Issachar.

The boundaries included the following towns: Jezreel, Shunem, Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, Kishion, Ebez, Remeth, En-gannim, En-tanah, and Beth-pazzez. The boundary also touched Shihazumah, and Beth-shemesh, ending at the Jordan River—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>33</sup>Its boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak at Zaanannim, and extended across to Adami-nekeb, Jabneel, and as far as Lakkum, ending at the Jordan River. <sup>34</sup>The western boundary ran past Aznoth-tabor, then to Hukkok, and touched the border of Zebulun in the south, the border of Asher on the west, and the Jordan River\* on the east. <sup>35</sup>The fortified towns included in this territory were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, <sup>36</sup>Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, <sup>37</sup>Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, <sup>38</sup>Yiron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen towns with their surrounding villages.

<sup>39</sup>The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Naphtali included these towns and their surrounding villages.

#### The Land Given to Dan

<sup>40</sup>The seventh allotment of land went to the clans of the tribe of Dan.

<sup>41</sup>The land allocated as their homeland included the following towns: Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, <sup>42</sup>Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, <sup>43</sup>Elon, Timnah, Ekron, <sup>44</sup>Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, <sup>45</sup>Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, <sup>46</sup>Me-jarkon, Rakkon, and the territory across from Joppa.

<sup>47</sup>But the tribe of Dan had trouble taking possession of their land,\* so they attacked the town of Laish.\* They captured it, slaughtered its people, and settled there. They renamed the town Dan after their ancestor.

<sup>48</sup>The homeland allocated to the clans of the tribe of Dan included these towns and their surrounding villages.

#### The Land Given to Joshua

<sup>49</sup>After all the land was divided among the tribes, the Israelites gave a piece of land to Joshua as his allocation. <sup>50</sup>For the LORD had said he could have any town he wanted. He chose Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim. He rebuilt the town and lived there.

<sup>51</sup>These are the territories that Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the tribal leaders allocated as grants of land to the tribes of Israel by casting sacred lots in the presence of the LORD at the entrance of the Tabernacle\* at Shiloh. So the division of the land was completed.

#### The Cities of Refuge

**20** The LORD said to Joshua, <sup>2</sup>Now tell the Israelites to designate the cities of refuge, as I instructed Moses. <sup>3</sup>Anyone who kills another person accidentally and unintentionally can run to one of these cities; they will be places of refuge from relatives seeking revenge for the person who was killed.

<sup>4</sup>Upon reaching one of these cities, the one who caused the death will appear before the elders at the city gate and present his case. They must allow him to enter the city and give him a place to live among them. <sup>5</sup>If the relatives of the victim come to avenge the killing, the leaders must not release the slayer to them, for he killed the other person unintentionally and without previous hostility. <sup>6</sup>But the slayer must stay in that city and be tried by the local assembly, which will render a judgment. And he must continue to live in that city until the death of the high priest who was in office at the time of the accident. After that, he is free to return to his own home in the town from which he fled.

<sup>7</sup>The following cities were designated as cities of refuge:

<sup>19:29</sup> Hebrew the sea. <sup>19:34</sup> Hebrew and Judah at the <sup>19:47a</sup> Or had trouble holding on to their land. <sup>19:47b</sup> Hebrew Leshem, a variant spelling of Laish. <sup>19:51</sup> Hebrew Tent of Meeting.



Kedesh of Galilee, in the hill country of Naphtali; Shechem, in the hill country of Ephraim; and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), in the hill country of Judah. <sup>8</sup>On the east side of the Jordan River, across from Jericho, the following cities were designated: Bezer, in the wilderness plain of the tribe of Reuben; Ramoth in Gilead, in the territory of the tribe of Gad; and Golan in Bashan, in the land of the tribe of Manasseh. <sup>9</sup>These cities were set apart for all the Israelites as well as the foreigners living among them. Anyone who accidentally killed another person could take refuge in one of these cities. In this way, they could escape being killed in revenge prior to standing trial before the local assembly.

### The Towns Given to the Levites

**21** Then the leaders of the tribe of Levi came to consult with Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of the other tribes of Israel. <sup>2</sup>They came to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan and said, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us towns to live in and pasturelands for our livestock." <sup>3</sup>So by the command of the LORD the people of Israel gave the Levites the following towns and pasturelands out of their own grants of land.

<sup>4</sup>The descendants of Aaron, who were members of the Kohathite clan within the tribe of Levi, were allotted thirteen towns that were originally assigned to the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. <sup>5</sup>The other families of the Kohathite clan were allotted ten towns from the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

<sup>6</sup>The clan of Gershon was allotted thirteen towns from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

<sup>7</sup>The clan of Merari was allotted twelve towns from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

<sup>8</sup>So the Israelites obeyed the LORD's command to Moses and assigned these towns and pasturelands to the Levites by casting sacred lots.

<sup>9</sup>The Israelites gave the following towns from the tribes of Judah and Simeon <sup>10</sup>to the descendants of Aaron, who were members of the Kohathite clan within the tribe of Levi, since the sacred lot fell to them first: <sup>11</sup>Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), in the hill country of Judah, along with its surrounding pasturelands. (Arba was an ancestor of Anak.) <sup>12</sup>But the open fields beyond the town and the surrounding villages were given to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his possession.

<sup>13</sup>The following towns with their pasturelands were given to the descendants of Aaron the priest: Hebron (a city of refuge for those who accidentally killed someone), Libnah, <sup>14</sup>Jattir, Eshtemoa, <sup>15</sup>Holon, Debir, <sup>16</sup>Ain, Juttah, and Bethshemesh—nine towns from these two tribes.

<sup>17</sup>From the tribe of Benjamin the priests were given the following towns with their pasturelands: Gibeon, Geba, <sup>18</sup>Anathoth, and Almon—four towns. <sup>19</sup>So in all, thirteen towns with their pasturelands were given to the priests, the descendants of Aaron.

<sup>20</sup>The rest of the Kohathite clan from the tribe of Levi was allotted the following towns and pasturelands from the tribe of Ephraim: <sup>21</sup>Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim (a city of refuge for those who accidentally killed someone), Gezer, <sup>22</sup>Kibzaim, and Beth-horon—four towns.

<sup>23</sup>The following towns and pasturelands were allotted to the priests from the tribe of Dan: Eltekeh, Gibbethon, <sup>24</sup>Aijalon, and Gath-rimmon—four towns.

<sup>25</sup>The half-tribe of Manasseh allotted the following towns with their pasturelands to the priests: Taanach and Gath-rimmon—two towns. <sup>26</sup>So in all, ten towns with their pasturelands were given to the rest of the Kohathite clan.

**21:36** Hebrew *Jahzah*, a variant spelling of Jahaz.

<sup>27</sup>The descendants of Gershon, another clan within the tribe of Levi, received the following towns with their pasturelands from the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan (a city of refuge for those who accidentally killed someone) and Be-eshterah—two towns.

<sup>28</sup>From the tribe of Issachar they received the following towns with their pasturelands: Kishioh, Daberath, <sup>29</sup>Hammoth-dor, and Kartan—three towns. <sup>30</sup>So in all, the ten towns with their pasturelands were allotted to the clan of Gershon.

<sup>31</sup>The rest of the Levites—the Merari clan—were given the following towns with their pasturelands from the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam, Kartah, <sup>32</sup>Dimnah, and Nahalal—four towns.

<sup>33</sup>From the tribe of Reuben they received the following towns with their pasturelands: Bezer, Jahaz,\* <sup>34</sup>Kedemot, and Mephaath—four towns.

<sup>35</sup>From the tribe of Gad they received the following towns with their pasturelands: Ramoth in Gilead (a city of refuge for those who accidentally killed someone), Mahanaim, <sup>36</sup>Heshbon, and Jazer—four towns. <sup>37</sup>So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the clan of Merari.

<sup>38</sup>The total number of towns and pasturelands within the raelite territory given to the Levites came to forty-eight. <sup>39</sup>Every one of these towns had pasturelands surrounding it.

<sup>40</sup>So the LORD gave to Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they took possession of it and settled there. <sup>41</sup>And the LORD gave them rest on every side, as he had solemnly promised their ancestors. None of their enemies could stand against them, for the LORD helped them conquer all their enemies. <sup>42</sup>Not a single one of all the good promises the LORD had given to the family of Israel was left unfulfilled; everything he had spoken came true.

**The Eastern Tribes Return Home**

**22** Then Joshua called together the heads of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. <sup>2</sup>He told them, "You have done as Moses, the servant of the LORD, commanded you, and you have obeyed every order I have given you. <sup>3</sup>During all this time you have not deserted the LORD. You have been careful to obey the commands of the LORD your God right up to the present day. <sup>4</sup>And now the LORD your God has given the other tribes rest, as he promised them. So go back home to the land that Moses, the servant of the LORD, gave you as your possession on the east side of the Jordan River. <sup>5</sup>But be very careful to obey all the commands and the instructions that Moses gave to you. Love the LORD your God, walk in all his ways, obey his commands, hold firmly to him, and serve him with all your heart and all your soul." <sup>6</sup>So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went home.

<sup>7</sup>Moses had given the land of Bashan, east of the Jordan River, to the half-tribe of Manasseh. (The other half of the tribe was given land west of the Jordan.) As Joshua sent them away and blessed them, <sup>8</sup>he said to them, "Go back to your homes with the great wealth you have taken from your enemies—the vast herds of livestock, the silver, gold, bronze, and iron, and the large supply of clothing. Share the plunder with your relatives."

<sup>9</sup>So the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh left the rest of Israel at Shiloh in the land of Canaan. They started the journey back to their own land of Gilead, the territory that belonged to them according to the LORD's command through Moses.

### The Eastern Tribes Build an Altar

But while they were still in Canaan, and when they came to the place called Geliloth\* near the Jordan River, the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh stopped to build a large and imposing altar.

The rest of Israel heard that the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had built an altar at Geliloth on the edge of the land of Canaan, on the west side of the Jordan River. <sup>12</sup>So the whole community of Israel gathered at Beeroth and prepared to go to war against them. <sup>13</sup>First, however, they sent a delegation led by Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, to talk with the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. <sup>14</sup>In this delegation were ten leaders from Israel, one from each of the ten tribes, and each the head of a family within the clans of Israel.

<sup>15</sup>When they arrived in the land of Gilead, they said to the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, <sup>16</sup>"The whole community of the LORD demands to know why you are turning away from the God of Israel. How could you turn away from the LORD and build an altar for yourselves in rebellion against him? Was our sin at Peor not enough? To this day we are not cleansed of it, even after the plague that struck the entire community of the LORD. <sup>18</sup>And yet today you are turning away from following the LORD. If you rebel against the LORD today, the LORD will be angry with all of us tomorrow."

<sup>19</sup>If you need the altar because the land you possess is not the LORD's, then join us in the LORD's land, where the Tabernacle of the LORD is situated, and share our land with us. But do not rebel against the LORD or against us by building an altar other than the one true altar of the LORD our God. <sup>20</sup>Didn't the anger fall on the entire community of Israel when a member of the clan of Zerah, sinned by stealing the LORD's set apart for the LORD\*? He was not the only one who sinned because of his sin."

Then the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: <sup>22</sup>"The LORD, the Mighty One, is God! The LORD, the Mighty One, is God! He knows the truth, and may Israel know it, too! We have not built the altar in treacherous rebellion against the LORD. If we have done so, do not spare our lives this day. <sup>23</sup>If we have built an altar for ourselves to turn away from the LORD to offer burnt offerings or grain offerings or peace offerings, may the LORD himself punish us."

<sup>24</sup>The truth is, we have built this altar because we fear the LORD. The future your descendants will say to ours, "What have you done to worship the LORD, the God of Israel? The LORD has placed the Jordan River as a barrier between the people and you people of Reuben and Gad. You have no way to reach the LORD." So your descendants may prevent our descendants from worshipping the LORD.

<sup>25</sup>But we decided to build the altar, not for burnt offerings or sacrifices, <sup>26</sup>but as a memorial. It will remind our descendants and your descendants that we, too, have the right to worship the LORD at his sanctuary with our burnt offerings, grain offerings, and peace offerings. Then your descendants will say to ours, "You have no claim to the LORD." If they say this, our descendants can reply, "Look at this altar of the LORD's that our ancestors made. It is not for burnt offerings or sacrifices; it is a reminder of the relationship between us and the LORD, similarly in 22:11. **22:20** The Hebrew term used here referred to destroying them or by giving them as an offering. **22:34** Some manuscripts lack the

ship  
belag  
own  
Only  
Taber  
30Y  
muni  
the tr  
they w  
plied  
cause  
LORD  
being  
32T  
leader  
turned  
happ  
God ar  
34T  
ness,  
that th  
Joshua  
23  
now ve  
and off  
man. 3  
for you  
for you  
homela  
well as  
the Jord  
land wi  
out all  
of their  
6"So  
the Bo  
ther to  
ate with  
even me  
them or  
to the L  
9"For  
for you,  
one of y  
LORD yo  
be very  
12"Bu  
of the s  
if you in  
LORD yo  
stead, th  
backs an  
from this  
14"So  
Deep in  
LORD yo  
15But as  
things he  
disobey  
land he  
LORD yo  
anger wil  
the good



Gershon, another clan within the following towns with the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan for those who accidentally killed someone—two towns.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kishion, Daberath, four towns.

Ashter they received the following towns: Mishal, Abdon, three towns.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ashter they received the following towns: Kedesh in Galilee and those who accidentally killed someone—three towns. So in all, twelve towns were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

The men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh started the journey back to their own land of Gilead, territory that belonged to them according to the LORD's command through Moses.

### Eastern Tribes Build an Altar

While they were still in Canaan, and when they came to the half-tribe of Manasseh had built an altar at Geliloth near the Jordan River, the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh stopped to look at the large and imposing altar.

The rest of Israel heard that the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had built an altar at Geliloth near the Jordan River, the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh stopped to look at the large and imposing altar. The rest of Israel heard that the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had built an altar at Geliloth near the Jordan River, the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh stopped to look at the large and imposing altar.

When they arrived in the land of Gilead, they said to the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, "The community of the LORD demands to know why you are turning away from the God of Israel. How could you turn away from the LORD and build an altar for yourselves in rebellion against the LORD? Was our sin at Peor not enough? To this day we are not cleansed of it, even after the plague that struck the entire community of the LORD. And yet today you are turning away from the LORD. If you rebel against the LORD today, the LORD will be angry with all of us tomorrow."

"You need the altar because the land you possess is not the LORD's land, where the Tabernacle of the LORD is situated, and share our land with us. But do not rebel against the LORD or against us by building an altar. The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

When the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: "The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

When the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: "The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

When the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: "The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

When the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: "The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

When the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: "The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

When the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: "The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

When the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the heads of the clans of Israel: "The LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God. Didn't the LORD make us one people, and the LORD our God is one true altar of the LORD our God."

ship both of us have with the LORD.' 29Far be it from us to rebel against the LORD or turn away from him by building our own altar for burnt offerings, grain offerings, or sacrifices. Only the altar of the LORD our God that stands in front of the Tabernacle may be used for that purpose."

30When Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the community—the heads of the clans of Israel—heard this from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, they were satisfied. 31Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, replied to them, "Today we know the LORD is among us because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD as we thought. Instead, you have rescued Israel from being destroyed by the hand of the LORD."

32Then Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, and the other leaders left the tribes of Reuben and Gad in Gilead and returned to the land of Canaan to tell the Israelites what had happened. 33And all the Israelites were satisfied and praised God and spoke no more of war against Reuben and Gad.

34The people of Reuben and Gad named the altar "Witness," for they said, "It is a witness between us and them that the LORD is our God, too."

### Joshua's Final Words to Israel

23 The years passed, and the LORD had given the people of Israel rest from all their enemies. Joshua, who was now very old, called together all the elders, leaders, judges, and officers of Israel. He said to them, "I am now a very old man. 2You have seen everything the LORD your God has done for you during my lifetime. The LORD your God has fought for you against your enemies. 3I have allotted to you as your homeland all the land of the nations yet unconquered, as well as the land of those we have already conquered—from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea\* in the west. 4This land will be yours, for the LORD your God will himself drive out all the people living there now. You will take possession of their land, just as the LORD your God promised you."

5"Be very careful to follow everything Moses wrote in the Book of Instruction. Do not deviate from it, turning either to the right or to the left. 6Make sure you do not associate with the other people still remaining in the land. Do not even mention the names of their gods, much less swear by them or serve them or worship them. 7Rather, cling tightly to the LORD your God as you have done until now."

8"For the LORD has driven out great and powerful nations for you, and no one has yet been able to defeat you. 9Each one of you will put to flight a thousand of the enemy, for the LORD your God fights for you, just as he has promised. 10So be very careful to love the LORD your God."

11"But if you turn away from him and cling to the customs of the survivors of these nations remaining among you, and if you intermarry with them, 12then know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive them out of your land. Instead, they will be a snare and a trap to you, a whip for your backs and thorny brambles in your eyes, and you will vanish from this good land the LORD your God has given you."

13"Soon I will die, going the way of everything on earth. Deep in your hearts you know that every promise of the LORD your God has come true. Not a single one has failed! 14But as surely as the LORD your God has given you the good things he promised, he will also bring disaster on you if you disobey him. He will completely destroy you from this good land he has given you. 15If you break the covenant of the LORD your God by worshiping and serving other gods, his anger will burn against you, and you will quickly vanish from the good land he has given you."

\*The word *sea* is used here to refer to the Mediterranean Sea. 22:20 The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by giving them as an offering. 22:34 Some manuscripts lack this word. 23:4 Hebrew *the Great Sea*.



## The LORD's Covenant Renewed

**24** Then Joshua summoned all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, including their elders, leaders, judges, and officers. So they came and presented themselves to God.

<sup>2</sup>Joshua said to the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Long ago your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River,\* and they worshiped other gods. <sup>3</sup>But I took your ancestor Abraham from the land beyond the Euphrates and led him into the land of Canaan. I gave him many descendants through his son Isaac. <sup>4</sup>To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir, while Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

<sup>5</sup>"Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I brought terrible plagues on Egypt; and afterward I brought you out as a free people. <sup>6</sup>But when your ancestors arrived at the Red Sea,\* the Egyptians chased after you with chariots and charioteers. <sup>7</sup>When your ancestors cried out to the LORD, I put darkness between you and the Egyptians. I brought the sea crashing down on the Egyptians, drowning them. With your very own eyes you saw what I did. Then you lived in the wilderness for many years.

<sup>8</sup>"Finally, I brought you into the land of the Amorites on the east side of the Jordan. They fought against you, but I destroyed them before you. I gave you victory over them, and you took possession of their land. <sup>9</sup>Then Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, started a war against Israel. He summoned Balaam son of Beor to curse you, <sup>10</sup>but I would not listen to him. Instead, I made Balaam bless you, and so I rescued you from Balak.

<sup>11</sup>"When you crossed the Jordan River and came to Jericho, the men of Jericho fought against you, as did the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I gave you victory over them. <sup>12</sup>And I sent terror\* ahead of you to drive out the two kings of the Amorites. It was not your swords or bows that brought you victory. <sup>13</sup>I gave you land you had not worked on, and I gave you towns you did not build—the towns where you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them.

<sup>14</sup>"So fear the LORD and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD alone. <sup>15</sup>But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD."

<sup>16</sup>The people replied, "We would never abandon the LORD and serve other gods. <sup>17</sup>For the LORD our God is the

one who rescued us and our ancestors from slavery in the land of Egypt. He performed mighty miracles before our very eyes. As we traveled through the wilderness among our enemies, he preserved us. <sup>18</sup>It was the LORD who drove out the Amorites and the other nations living here in the land. So we, too, will serve the LORD, for he alone is our God."

<sup>19</sup>Then Joshua warned the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD, for he is a holy and jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. <sup>20</sup>If you abandon the LORD and serve other gods, he will turn against you and destroy you, even though he has been so good to you."

<sup>21</sup>But the people answered Joshua, "No, we will serve the LORD!"

<sup>22</sup>"You are a witness to your own decision," Joshua said. "You have chosen to serve the LORD."

"Yes," they replied, "we are witnesses to what we have said."

<sup>23</sup>"All right then," Joshua said, "destroy the idols among you, and turn your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel."

<sup>24</sup>The people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God. We will obey him alone."

<sup>25</sup>So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day at Shechem, committing them to follow the decrees and regulations of the LORD. <sup>26</sup>Joshua recorded these things in the Book of God's Instructions. As a reminder of their agreement, he took a huge stone and rolled it beneath the terebinth tree beside the Tabernacle of the LORD.

<sup>27</sup>Joshua said to all the people, "This stone has heard everything the LORD said to us. It will be a witness to testify against you if you go back on your word to God."

<sup>28</sup>Then Joshua sent all the people away to their own homelands.

## Leaders Buried in the Promised Land

<sup>29</sup>After this, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110. <sup>30</sup>They buried him in the land he had been allocated, at Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim north of Mount Gaash.

<sup>31</sup>The people of Israel served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him—those who had personally experienced all that the LORD had done for Israel.

<sup>32</sup>The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought along with them when they left Egypt, were buried at Shechem, in the parcel of ground Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor for 100 pieces of silver.\* This land was allotted in the territory allotted to the descendants of Joseph.

<sup>33</sup>Eleazar son of Aaron also died. He was buried in the hill country of Ephraim, in the town of Gibeah, which had been given to his son Phinehas.

24:2 Hebrew *the river*; also in 24:3, 14, 15. 24:6 Hebrew *sea of reeds*. 24:12 Often rendered *the hornet*. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. 24:32 Hebrew *100 kesitahs*; the value or weight of the kesitah is no longer known.

## JUDGES

**Author** Samuel, according to Jewish tradition  
**Written** Uncertain, perhaps around 1000 B.C.

**Content** Often the greatest heroes appear in the midst of

the book of Judges, where true heroes and heroines after the people have fallen into sin. After Joshua of Israel settled their allotted portions of land. They serve as their king. But this required that the people rarely existed during this period. The people sought the ways of their pagan neighbors. To punish them, neighbors to oppress them. The Israelites then raised up various leaders among them to drive out the judges. They not only defeated their enemies and Israelites' hearts back to God. But time after time their oppressive neighbors, they lost their zeal for

## Judah and Simeon Conquer the Land

After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the LORD, "Which tribe should go first to attack the Canaanites?" The LORD answered, "Judah, for I have given them victory over the land."

The men of Judah said to their relatives from the tribe of Simeon, "Join with us to fight against the Canaanites living in the territory allotted to us. Then we will help you conquer their territory." So the men of Simeon went with Judah.

When the men of Judah attacked, the LORD gave them victory over the Canaanites and Perizzites, and they killed 10,000 enemy warriors at the town of Bezek. While at Bezek they encountered King Adoni-bezek and fought against him. Adoni-bezek escaped, but the Israelites soon captured him and cut off his thumbs and big toes.

Adoni-bezek said, "I once had seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off, eating scraps from under my table. Now God has paid me back for what I did to them." They took him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

The men of Judah attacked Jerusalem and captured all its people and setting the city on fire. Then they went down to fight the Canaanites living in the hill country, the Negev, and the western foothills. Judah fought against the Canaanites in Hebron (formerly called Kiriath-arba), defeating the forces of Sheshai, Ahiman, and

from there they went to fight against the people living in the town of Debir (formerly called Kiriath-sepher).

Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Acsah in marriage to whoever attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher." Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother, Kenaz, was the one who conquered it, so Acsah became Othniel's wife.

When Acsah married Othniel, she urged him\* to ask her father for a field. As she got down off her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What's the matter?"

She said, "Let me have another gift. You have already given me land in the Negev; now please give me springs of water, too." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

When the tribe of Judah left Jericho—the city of the Kenites, who were descendants of Moses' father-in-law, traveled with them into the wilderness of Ju-

dah. The Greek version and Latin Vulgate read *he urged her*. 1:17a Targum of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering. Beth-shean, a variant spelling of Beth-shan.



# JUDGES

**Author** Samuel, according to Jewish tradition

**Written** Uncertain, perhaps around 1000 B.C.

**Content** Often the greatest heroes appear in the midst of the worst chaos and confusion. This is true in the book of Judges, where true heroes and heroines repeatedly are called upon to save the day after the people have fallen into sin. After Joshua's armies conquered Canaan, the twelve tribes of Israel settled their allotted portions of land. They had no earthly king, because God was to serve as their king. But this required that the people follow and obey God—a situation that rarely existed during this period. The people soon became unfaithful to God and practiced the ways of their pagan neighbors. To punish their disobedience, God allowed the Israelites' neighbors to oppress them. The Israelites then repented and asked God to rescue them, and so he raised up various leaders among them to drive out the enemy. These leaders were known as judges. They not only defeated their enemies and drove them from the land but they turned the Israelites' hearts back to God. But time after time, soon after the people were delivered from their oppressive neighbors, they lost their zeal for God, and the whole cycle began again.

## and Simeon Conquer the Land

After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the LORD, "Which tribe should go first to attack the Canaanites?" The LORD answered, "Judah, for I have given them victory over the land."

The men of Judah said to their relatives from the tribe of Simeon, "Join with us to fight against the Canaanites living in the territory allotted to us. Then we will help you conquer your territory." So the men of Simeon went with Judah.

When the men of Judah attacked, the LORD gave them victory over the Canaanites and Perizzites, and they killed many enemy warriors at the town of Bezek. While at Bezek, they encountered King Adoni-bezek and fought against him and the Canaanites and Perizzites were defeated. Adoni-bezek escaped, but the Israelites soon captured him and cut off his thumbs and big toes.

Adoni-bezek said, "I once had seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off, eating scraps from under my table. Now God has paid me back for what I did to them." They took him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

The men of Judah attacked Jerusalem and captured the city and all its people and setting the city on fire. Then the men of Judah fought the Canaanites living in the hill country of the Negev, and the western foothills. Judah fought against the Canaanites in Hebron (formerly called Kirjath-arba), defeating the forces of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Gai.

There they went to fight against the people living in the town of Debir (formerly called Kiriath-sepher). Deborah said, "I will give my daughter Acsah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher."

Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother, Kenaz, was the one who captured it, so Acsah became Othniel's wife. When Acsah married Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. As she got down off her donkey, Caleb said, "What's the matter?"

She said, "Let me have another gift. You have already given me the field, and in the Negev, now please give me springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

When the tribe of Judah left Jericho—the city of the Kenites, who were descendants of Moses' father-in-law, traveled with them into the wilderness of Judah.

1:14 Greek version and Latin Vulgate read *he urged her*. 1:17a The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete destruction of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering. 1:17b *Hormah* means "destruction."

dah. They settled among the people there, near the town of Arad in the Negev.

Then Judah joined with Simeon to fight against the Canaanites living in Zephath, and they completely destroyed\* the town. So the town was named Hormah.\* In addition, Judah captured the towns of Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron, along with their surrounding territories.

## Israel Fails to Conquer the Land

The LORD was with the people of Judah, and they took possession of the hill country. But they failed to drive out the people living in the plains, who had iron chariots. The town of Hebron was given to Caleb as Moses had promised. And Caleb drove out the people living there, who were descendants of the three sons of Anak.

The tribe of Benjamin, however, failed to drive out the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem. So to this day the Jebusites live in Jerusalem among the people of Benjamin.

The descendants of Joseph attacked the town of Bethel, and the LORD was with them. They sent men to scout out Bethel (formerly known as Luz). They confronted a man coming out of the town and said to him, "Show us a way into the town, and we will have mercy on you." So he showed them a way in, and they killed everyone in the town except that man and his family. Later the man moved to the land of the Hittites, where he built a town. He named it Luz, which is its name to this day.

The tribe of Manasseh failed to drive out the people living in Beth-shan,\* Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, Megiddo, and all their surrounding settlements, because the Canaanites were determined to stay in that region. When the Israelites grew stronger, they forced the Canaanites to work as slaves, but they never did drive them completely out of the land.

The tribe of Ephraim failed to drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, so the Canaanites continued to live there among them.

The tribe of Zebulun failed to drive out the residents of Kitron and Nahalol, so the Canaanites continued to live among them. But the Canaanites were forced to work as slaves for the people of Zebulun.

The tribe of Asher failed to drive out the residents of Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Aczib, Helbah, Aphik, and Rehob.



<sup>32</sup>Instead, the people of Asher moved in among the Canaanites, who controlled the land, for they failed to drive them out.

<sup>33</sup>Likewise, the tribe of Naphtali failed to drive out the residents of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath. Instead, they moved in among the Canaanites, who controlled the land. Nevertheless, the people of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath were forced to work as slaves for the people of Naphtali.

<sup>34</sup>As for the tribe of Dan, the Amorites forced them back into the hill country and would not let them come down into the plains. <sup>35</sup>The Amorites were determined to stay in Mount Heres, Aijalon, and Shaalvim, but when the descendants of Joseph became stronger, they forced the Amorites to work as slaves. <sup>36</sup>The boundary of the Amorites ran from Scorpion Pass\* to Sela and continued upward from there.

### The LORD's Messenger Comes to Bokim

**2** The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said to the Israelites, "I brought you out of Egypt into this land that I swore to give your ancestors, and I said I would never break my covenant with you. <sup>2</sup>For your part, you were not to make any covenants with the people living in this land; instead, you were to destroy their altars. But you disobeyed my command. Why did you do this? <sup>3</sup>So now I declare that I will no longer drive out the people living in your land. They will be thorns in your sides,\* and their gods will be a constant temptation to you."

<sup>4</sup>When the angel of the LORD finished speaking to all the Israelites, the people wept loudly. <sup>5</sup>So they called the place Bokim (which means "weeping"), and they offered sacrifices there to the LORD.

### The Death of Joshua

<sup>6</sup>After Joshua sent the people away, each of the tribes left to take possession of the land allotted to them. <sup>7</sup>And the Israelites served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and the leaders who outlived him—those who had seen all the great things the LORD had done for Israel.

<sup>8</sup>Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110. <sup>9</sup>They buried him in the land he had been allocated, at Timnath-serah\* in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

### Israel Disobeys the LORD

<sup>10</sup>After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the LORD or remember the mighty things he had done for Israel.

<sup>11</sup>The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight and served the images of Baal. <sup>12</sup>They abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They went after other gods, worshiping the gods of the people around them. And they angered the LORD. <sup>13</sup>They abandoned the LORD to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth. <sup>14</sup>This made the LORD burn with anger against Israel, so he handed them over to raiders who stole their possessions. He turned them over to their enemies all around, and they were no longer able to resist them. <sup>15</sup>Every time Israel went out to battle, the LORD fought against them, causing them to be defeated, just as he had warned. And the people were in great distress.

### The LORD Rescues His People

<sup>16</sup>Then the LORD raised up judges to rescue the Israelites from their attackers. <sup>17</sup>Yet Israel did not listen to the judges but prostituted themselves by worshiping other gods. How

1:36 Hebrew *Akrabbim*. 2:3 Hebrew *They will be in your sides*; compare Num 33:55. 2:9 As in parallel text at Josh 24:30; Hebrew reads *Timnath*, a variant spelling of *Timnath-serah*. 3:8 *Aram-naharaim* means "Aram of the two rivers," thought to have been located between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers in northwestern Mesopotamia.

quickly they turned away from the path of their ancestors who had walked in obedience to the LORD's commands.

<sup>18</sup>Whenever the LORD raised up a judge over Israel, he was with that judge and rescued the people from their enemies throughout the judge's lifetime. For the LORD took pity on his people, who were burdened by oppression and suffering. <sup>19</sup>But when the judge died, the people returned to their corrupt ways, behaving worse than those who had lived before them. They went after other gods, serving and worshiping them. And they refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.

<sup>20</sup>So the LORD burned with anger against Israel. He said, "Because these people have violated my covenant, which I made with their ancestors, and have ignored my command, <sup>21</sup>I will no longer drive out the nations that Joshua left unconquered when he died. <sup>22</sup>I did this to test Israel—to see whether or not they would follow the ways of the LORD as their ancestors did." <sup>23</sup>That is why the LORD left those nations in place. He did not quickly drive them out or allow Joshua to conquer them all.

### The Nations Left in Canaan

**3** These are the nations that the LORD left in the land to test those Israelites who had not experienced the war of Canaan. <sup>2</sup>He did this to teach warfare to generations of Israelites who had no experience in battle. <sup>3</sup>These are the nations: the Philistines (those living under the five Philistine rulers), all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites living in the mountains of Lebanon from Mount Baal-hermon to Lebo-hamath. <sup>4</sup>These people were left to test the Israelites—to see whether they would obey the commands the LORD had given to their ancestors through Moses.

<sup>5</sup>So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and they intermarried with them. Israelite sons married their daughters, and Israelite daughters were given in marriage to the sons. And the Israelites served their gods.

### Othniel Becomes Israel's Judge

<sup>7</sup>The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight. They forgot the LORD their God, and they served the images of Baal and the Asherah poles. <sup>8</sup>Then the LORD burned with anger against Israel, and he turned them over to King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram-naharaim.\* And the Israelites served Cushan-rishathaim for eight years.

<sup>9</sup>But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD raised up a rescuer to save them. His name was Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother, Kenaz. <sup>10</sup>The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he became Israel's judge. He went to war against King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram, and the LORD gave Othniel victory over him. <sup>11</sup>There was peace in the land for forty years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

### Ehud Becomes Israel's Judge

<sup>12</sup>Once again the Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight. <sup>13</sup>The LORD gave King Eglon of Moab control over Israel because of their evil. <sup>14</sup>Eglon enlisted the Ammonites and the Amalekites as allies, and then he went out and defeated Israel, taking possession of Jericho, the city of palms. <sup>15</sup>And the Israelites served Eglon of Moab for eighteen years.

<sup>16</sup>But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help, the LORD again raised up a rescuer to save them. His name was Ehud son of Gera, a left-handed man of the tribe of Benjamin.

The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tribute money to King Eglon of Moab. <sup>16</sup>So Ehud made a double-edged dagger that was about a foot\* long, and he strapped it to his right thigh, keeping it hidden under his clothing. <sup>17</sup>He brought the tribute money to Eglon, who was very fat.

<sup>18</sup>After delivering the payment, Ehud started home with those who had helped carry the tribute. <sup>19</sup>But when Ehud reached the stone idols near Gilgal, he turned back. He came to Eglon and said, "I have a secret message for you."

So the king commanded his servants, "Be quiet!" and he sent them all out of the room.

<sup>20</sup>Ehud walked over to Eglon, who was sitting alone in a cool upstairs room. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you!" As King Eglon rose from his seat, <sup>21</sup>Ehud reached with his left hand, pulled out the dagger strapped to his right thigh, and plunged it into the king's belly. <sup>22</sup>The dagger went so deep that the handle disappeared beneath the king's fat. So Ehud did not pull out the dagger, and the king's bowels emptied.\* <sup>23</sup>Then Ehud closed and locked the doors of the room and escaped down the latrine.\*

<sup>24</sup>After Ehud was gone, the king's servants returned and found the doors to the upstairs room locked. They thought the king might be using the latrine in the room, <sup>25</sup>so they waited. But when the king didn't come out after a long delay, they became concerned and got a key. And when they opened the doors, they found their master dead on the floor.

<sup>26</sup>While the servants were waiting, Ehud escaped, passing the stone idols on his way to Seirah. <sup>27</sup>When he arrived in the hill country of Ephraim, Ehud sounded a call to arms. Then he led a band of Israelites down from the hills.

<sup>28</sup>"Follow me," he said, "for the LORD has given you victory over Moab's enemy." So they followed him. And the Israelites took control of the shallow crossings of the Jordan River across from Moab, preventing anyone from crossing.

<sup>29</sup>They attacked the Moabites and killed about 10,000 of their strongest and most able-bodied warriors. Not one of them escaped. <sup>30</sup>So Moab was conquered by Israel that day, and there was peace in the land for eighty years.

### Shamgar Becomes Israel's Judge

<sup>31</sup>After Ehud, Shamgar son of Anath rescued Israel. He once killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad.

### Deborah Becomes Israel's Judge

<sup>1</sup>After Ehud's death, the Israelites again did evil in the LORD's sight. <sup>2</sup>So the LORD turned them over to King Jabin of Hazor, a Canaanite king. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-haggoyim. <sup>3</sup>Sisera had 900 iron chariots, ruthlessly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years. Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD for help.

<sup>4</sup>Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who was judging Israel at that time. <sup>5</sup>She would sit under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites would go to her for judgment. <sup>6</sup>One day she sent for Barak son of Abinoam, who lived in Naphtali in the land of Naphtali. She said to him, "This is the LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: Call out 10,000 warriors from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun at Mount Tabor. <sup>7</sup>And I will call out Sisera, commander of Jabin's army, along with his chariots and warriors, to the Ki-sion River. There I will give you victory over him."

<sup>8</sup>Barak told her, "I will go, but only if you go with me." <sup>9</sup>"Very well," she replied, "I will go with you. But you will have no honor in this venture, for the LORD's victory over Jabin will be because of Deborah."

1:10 Hebrew *gomed*, the length of which is uncertain. 3:22 Or *and it came out behind him*. 4:11 Or *father-in-law*.



from the path of their ancestors  
to the LORD's commands.  
I raised up a judge over Israel,  
I rescued the people from their ene-  
my's lifetime. For the LORD took  
pity on the oppressed and the  
burdened by oppression and  
died, the people returned to  
me, living worse than those who  
went after other gods, serving  
and they refused to give up their  
ways.

with anger against Israel. He said,  
"I have violated my covenant, and  
I have ignored my commands,  
but the nations that Joshua left  
behind did this to test Israel—to  
see if they would follow the ways of the LORD.  
That is why the LORD left those  
nations so that he could quickly drive them out or allow  
them to stay."

**Canaanites**  
This is the LORD left in the land  
who had not experienced the  
warfare to generations of  
experience in battle. These are the  
people living under the five Philistines,  
the Sidonians, and the Hivites.  
The Canaanites on Mount Baal-hermon  
were left to test the LORD.  
They would obey the commands  
of their ancestors through Moses.

Jael lived among the Canaanites,  
the Hivites, and Jebusites.  
The Israelite sons married their  
daughters, and they were given in marriage  
to serve their gods.

#### Jael's Judge

In the LORD's sight. They forgot  
the LORD who saved them from  
the hand of King Cushan-rishaim.  
And the Israelites were  
in distress for eight years.

The LORD cried out to the LORD  
to raise up a rescuer to save them.  
The LORD sent Deborah, the wife  
of Lappidoth, a Canaanite king.  
The LORD sent Sisera, who lived in  
Harosheth-haggoyim. Sisera had  
900 iron chariots, ruthlessly oppressed the  
Israelites for twenty years. Then the people of Israel  
cried out to the LORD for help.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who  
was speaking for the LORD at that time. She would sit  
under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel  
in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites  
would go to her for judgment.

#### Jael's Judge

The LORD did evil in the LORD's sight.  
The LORD sent Sisera, the commander of his  
army, who lived in Harosheth-haggoyim. Sisera  
had 900 iron chariots, ruthlessly oppressed the  
Israelites for twenty years. Then the people of Israel  
cried out to the LORD for help.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who  
was speaking for the LORD at that time. She would sit  
under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel  
in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites  
would go to her for judgment.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who  
was speaking for the LORD at that time. She would sit  
under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel  
in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites  
would go to her for judgment.

Benjamin. The Israelites sent Ehud to deliver their tribute  
money to King Eglon of Moab. So Ehud made a double-  
edged dagger that was about a foot\* long, and he strapped it  
to his right thigh, keeping it hidden under his clothing. He  
brought the tribute money to Eglon, who was very fat.

After delivering the payment, Ehud started home with  
those who had helped carry the tribute. But when Ehud  
reached the stone idols near Gilgal, he turned back. He came  
to Eglon and said, "I have a secret message for you."

So the king commanded his servants, "Be quiet!" and he  
sent them all out of the room.

Ehud walked over to Eglon, who was sitting alone in a  
upstairs room. And Ehud said, "I have a message from  
the LORD for you!" As King Eglon rose from his seat, Ehud  
reached with his left hand, pulled out the dagger strapped to  
his right thigh, and plunged it into the king's belly. The  
dagger went so deep that the handle disappeared beneath  
the king's fat. So Ehud did not pull out the dagger, and the  
king's bowels emptied.\* Then Ehud closed and locked the  
doors of the room and escaped down the latrine.\*

After Ehud was gone, the king's servants returned and  
found the doors to the upstairs room locked. They thought  
Ehud might be using the latrine in the room, so they waited.  
When the king didn't come out after a long delay, they  
became concerned and got a key. And when they opened  
the doors, they found their master dead on the floor.

While the servants were waiting, Ehud escaped, passing  
the stone idols on his way to Seirah. When he arrived in  
his country of Ephraim, Ehud sounded a call to arms.  
He led a band of Israelites down from the hills.

"Follow me," he said, "for the LORD has given you victory  
over your enemy." So they followed him. And the Israelites  
took control of the shallow crossings of the Jordan  
across from Moab, preventing anyone from crossing.  
They attacked the Moabites and killed about 10,000 of  
the strongest and most able-bodied warriors. Not one of  
them escaped. So Moab was conquered by Israel that day,  
and there was peace in the land for eighty years.

#### Shamgar Becomes Israel's Judge

After Ehud's death, the Israelites again did evil in the  
LORD's sight. So the LORD turned them over to King  
Jabin of Hazor, a Canaanite king. The commander of his  
army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-haggoyim. Sisera  
had 900 iron chariots, ruthlessly oppressed the Israelites  
for twenty years. Then the people of Israel cried out to the  
LORD for help.

#### Deborah Becomes Israel's Judge

After Ehud's death, the Israelites again did evil in the  
LORD's sight. So the LORD turned them over to King  
Jabin of Hazor, a Canaanite king. The commander of his  
army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-haggoyim. Sisera  
had 900 iron chariots, ruthlessly oppressed the Israelites  
for twenty years. Then the people of Israel cried out to the  
LORD for help.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who  
was speaking for the LORD at that time. She would sit  
under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel  
in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites  
would go to her for judgment.

The LORD did evil in the LORD's sight.  
The LORD sent Sisera, the commander of his  
army, who lived in Harosheth-haggoyim. Sisera  
had 900 iron chariots, ruthlessly oppressed the Israelites  
for twenty years. Then the people of Israel cried out to the  
LORD for help.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who  
was speaking for the LORD at that time. She would sit  
under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel  
in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites  
would go to her for judgment.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who  
was speaking for the LORD at that time. She would sit  
under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel  
in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites  
would go to her for judgment.

Sisera will be at the hands of a woman." So Deborah went  
with Barak to Kedesh. At Kedesh, Barak called together  
the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, and 10,000 warriors  
went up with him. Deborah also went with him.

Now Heber the Kenite, a descendant of Moses' brother-  
in-law\* Hobab, had moved away from the other members of  
his tribe and pitched his tent by the oak of Zaanannim near  
Kedesh.

When Sisera was told that Barak son of Abinoam had  
gone up to Mount Tabor, he called for all 900 of his iron  
chariots and all of his warriors, and they marched from  
Harosheth-haggoyim to the Kishon River.

Then Deborah said to Barak, "Get ready! This is the day  
the LORD will give you victory over Sisera, for the LORD is  
marching ahead of you." So Barak led his 10,000 warriors  
down the slopes of Mount Tabor into battle. When Barak  
attacked, the LORD threw Sisera and all his chariots and war-  
riors into a panic. Sisera leaped down from his chariot and  
escaped on foot. Then Barak chased the chariots and the  
enemy army all the way to Harosheth-haggoyim, killing all  
of Sisera's warriors. Not a single one was left alive.

Meanwhile, Sisera ran to the tent of Jael, the wife of  
Heber the Kenite, because Heber's family was on friendly  
terms with King Jabin of Hazor. Jael went out to meet Sis-  
era and said to him, "Come into my tent, sir. Come in. Don't  
be afraid." So he went into her tent, and she covered him  
with a blanket.

"Please give me some water," he said. "I'm thirsty." So  
she gave him some milk from a leather bag and covered him  
again.

"Stand at the door of the tent," he told her. "If anybody  
comes and asks you if there is anyone here, say no."

But when Sisera fell asleep from exhaustion, Jael qui-  
etly crept up to him with a hammer and tent peg in her hand.  
Then she drove the tent peg through his temple and into the  
ground, and so he died.

When Barak came looking for Sisera, Jael went out to  
meet him. She said, "Come, and I will show you the man you  
are looking for." So he followed her into the tent and found  
Sisera lying there dead, with the tent peg through his temple.

So on that day Israel saw God defeat Jabin, the Canaan-  
ite king. And from that time on Israel became stronger  
and stronger against King Jabin until they finally destroyed  
him.

#### The Song of Deborah

On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang  
this song:

"Israel's leaders took charge,  
and the people gladly followed.  
Praise the LORD!

"Listen, you kings!  
Pay attention, you mighty rulers!  
For I will sing to the LORD.  
I will make music to the LORD, the God of Israel.

"LORD, when you set out from Seir  
and marched across the fields of Edom,  
the earth trembled,  
and the cloudy skies poured down rain.

The mountains quaked in the presence of the LORD,  
the God of Mount Sinai—  
in the presence of the LORD,  
the God of Israel.

\* Now groomed, the length of which is uncertain. 3:22 Or and it came out behind. 3:23 Or and went out through the porch; the meaning of the  
word is uncertain. 4:11 Or father-in-law.



- 6 "In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, and in the days of Jael, people avoided the main roads, and travelers stayed on winding pathways.
- 7 There were few people left in the villages of Israel\*—until Deborah arose as a mother for Israel.
- 8 When Israel chose new gods, war erupted at the city gates. Yet not a shield or spear could be seen among forty thousand warriors in Israel!
- 9 My heart is with the commanders of Israel, with those who volunteered for war. Praise the LORD!
- 10 "Consider this, you who ride on fine donkeys, you who sit on fancy saddle blankets, and you who walk along the road.
- 11 Listen to the village musicians\* gathered at the watering holes. They recount the righteous victories of the LORD and the victories of his villagers in Israel. Then the people of the LORD marched down to the city gates.
- 12 "Wake up, Deborah, wake up! Wake up, wake up, and sing a song! Arise, Barak! Lead your captives away, son of Abinoam!
- 13 "Down from Tabor marched the few against the nobles. The people of the LORD marched down against mighty warriors.
- 14 They came down from Ephraim—a land that once belonged to the Amalekites; they followed you, Benjamin, with your troops. From Makir the commanders marched down; from Zebulun came those who carry a commander's staff.
- 15 The princes of Issachar were with Deborah and Barak. They followed Barak, rushing into the valley. But in the tribe of Reuben there was great indecision.
- 16 Why did you sit at home among the sheepfolds—to hear the shepherds whistle for their flocks? Yes, in the tribe of Reuben there was great indecision.
- 17 Gilead remained east of the Jordan. And why did Dan stay home? Asher sat unmoved at the seashore, remaining in his harbors.
- 18 But Zebulun risked his life, as did Naphtali, on the heights of the battlefield.
- 19 "The kings of Canaan came and fought, at Taanach near Megiddo's springs, but they carried off no silver treasures.
- 20 The stars fought from heaven. The stars in their orbits fought against Sisera.
- 21 The Kishon River swept them away—that ancient torrent, the Kishon. March on with courage, my soul!
- 22 Then the horses' hooves hammered the ground, the galloping, galloping of Sisera's mighty steeds.
- 23 'Let the people of Meroz be cursed,' said the angel of the LORD. 'Let them be utterly cursed,

because they did not come to help the LORD—to help the LORD against the mighty warriors.'

- 24 "Most blessed among women is Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. May she be blessed above all women who live in tents.
- 25 Sisera asked for water, and she gave him milk. In a bowl fit for nobles, she brought him yogurt.
- 26 Then with her left hand she reached for a tent peg, and with her right hand for the workman's hammer. She struck Sisera with the hammer, crushing his head. With a shattering blow, she pierced his temples.
- 27 He sank, he fell, he lay still at her feet. And where he sank, there he died.
- 28 "From the window Sisera's mother looked out. Through the window she watched for his return, saying, 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why don't we hear the sound of chariot wheels?'
- 29 "Her wise women answer, and she repeats these words to herself:
- 30 'They must be dividing the captured plunder—with a woman or two for every man. There will be colorful robes for Sisera, and colorful, embroidered robes for me. Yes, the plunder will include colorful robes embroidered on both sides.'
- 31 "LORD, may all your enemies die like Sisera! But may those who love you rise like the sun in all its power!"

Then there was peace in the land for forty years.

#### Gideon Becomes Israel's Judge

**6** The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight. So the LORD handed them over to the Midianites for seven years.<sup>2</sup> The Midianites were so cruel that the Israelites made hiding places for themselves in the mountains, caves, and strongholds.<sup>3</sup> Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, marauders from Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east would attack Israel,<sup>4</sup> camping in the land and destroying crops as far away as Gaza. They left the Israelites with nothing to eat, taking all the sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys.<sup>5</sup> These enemy hordes, coming with their livestock and tents, were as thick as locusts; they arrived on droves of camels too numerous to count. And they stayed until the land was stripped bare.<sup>6</sup> So Israel was reduced to starvation by the Midianites. Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help.

<sup>7</sup>When they cried out to the LORD because of Midian, the LORD sent a prophet to the Israelites. He said, "This is the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of slavery in Egypt. <sup>8</sup>I rescued you from the Egyptians and from those who oppressed you. I drove out your enemies and gave you your land. <sup>9</sup>I told you, 'I am the LORD your God. You must not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you now live.' But you have not listened to me."

<sup>11</sup>Then the angel of the LORD came and sat beneath the great tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash of the clan Abiezer. Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat at

bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites. The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, "Mighty hero, the LORD is with you!"

<sup>13</sup>"Sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, 'The LORD brought us out of Egypt'? But now the LORD has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites."

<sup>14</sup>Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!"

<sup>15</sup>"But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!"

<sup>16</sup>The LORD said to him, "I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one

Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me. Don't go away until I come back and bring my offering to

He answered, "I will stay here until you return."

<sup>18</sup>Gideon hurried home. He cooked a young goat, and with a basket\* of flour he baked some bread without yeast. Then, carrying the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, he brought them out and presented them to the angel, who was under the great tree.

<sup>19</sup>The angel of God said to him, "Place the meat and the unleavened bread on this rock, and pour the broth over it." Gideon did as he was told. <sup>21</sup>Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and bread with the tip of the staff in his hand, and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed all he brought. And the angel of the LORD disappeared.

<sup>22</sup>When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he cried out, "Oh, Sovereign LORD, I'm doomed! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!"

<sup>23</sup>"It is all right," the LORD replied. "Do not be afraid. You will not die." <sup>24</sup>And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and named it Yahweh-Shalom (which means "the LORD is at peace"). The altar remains in Ophrah in the land of the clan Abiezer to this day.

<sup>25</sup>That night the LORD said to Gideon, "Take the second part from your father's herd, the one that is seven years old, and cut down your father's altar to Baal, and cut down the Asherah pole standing beside it. <sup>26</sup>Then build an altar to the LORD here on this hilltop sanctuary, laying the stones carefully. Sacrifice the bull as a burnt offering on the altar, using as fuel the wood of the Asherah pole you cut down."

<sup>27</sup>So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD commanded. But he did it at night because he was afraid of the other members of his father's household and the people of the town.

<sup>28</sup>Early the next morning, as the people of the town began their work, someone discovered that the altar of Baal had been torn down and that the Asherah pole beside it had been cut down. In their place a new altar had been built, and on it were the remains of the bull that had been sacrificed. <sup>29</sup>The people said to each other, "Who did this?" And after asking around and making a careful search, they learned that it was Gideon, the son of Joash.

<sup>30</sup>"Bring out your son," the men of the town demanded of Gideon. "He must die for destroying the altar of Baal and for cutting down the Asherah pole."

<sup>31</sup>But Joash shouted to the mob that confronted him, "Are you defending Baal? Will you argue his case?"

<sup>32</sup>He drew an ephah (20 quarts or 22 liters). <sup>7:3</sup> Hebrew may leave Mount Gilead. The ephah is another name for Mount Gilboa.

5:7 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. 5:11 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.



come to help the LORD—  
against the mighty warriors.

women is Jael,  
the Kenite.

above all women who live in

and she reached for a tent peg,  
hand for the workman's hammer.

in the hammer, crushing his head  
blow, she pierced his temples.

et.

Sisera's mother looked out,  
how she watched for his return.

long in coming?

the sound of chariot wheels?

power,  
these words to herself:

ing the captured plunder—  
two for every man.

robes for Sisera,  
considered robes for me.

include  
providing on both sides.

emies die like Sisera!

love you rise like the sun in all

the land for forty years.

el's Judge

il in the LORD's sight. So the LORD

to the Midianites for seven years.

cruel that the Israelites made

ves in the mountains, caves,

the Israelites planted their

Amalek, and the people of the

mping in the land and destroying

They left the Israelites with

sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys.

coming with their livestock

locusts; they arrived on

count. And they stayed

So Israel was reduced to

the Israelites cried out to the LORD

to the LORD because of Midian.

the Israelites. He said, "This

el, says: I brought you up out

ou from the Egyptians and

ove out your enemies and

am the LORD your God. You

the Amorites, in whose

ot listened to me."

the LORD came and sat

ch belonged to Joash of the

Joash was threshing wheat

corn of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites.

The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, "Mighty

the LORD is with you!"

"Sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all

happened to us? And where are all the miracles our an-

cestors told us about? Didn't they say, 'The LORD brought us

out of Egypt'? But now the LORD has abandoned us and

anded us over to the Midianites."

"Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go with the

rength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I

ending you!"

"But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel? My

is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am

east in my entire family!"

"The LORD said to him, "I will be with you. And you will

the Midianites as if you were fighting against one

Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show

sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me.

Don't go away until I come back and bring my offering to

he answered, "I will stay here until you return."

Gideon hurried home. He cooked a young goat, and

a basket\* of flour he baked some bread without yeast.

carrying the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, he

brought them out and presented them to the angel, who was

the great tree.

The angel of God said to him, "Place the meat and the

bread on this rock, and pour the broth over it."

Gideon did as he was told. Then the angel of the LORD

the meat and bread with the tip of the staff in his

and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed all he

brought. And the angel of the LORD disappeared.

When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD,

ed out, "Oh, Sovereign LORD, I'm doomed! I have seen

angel of the LORD face to face!"

"It is all right," the LORD replied. "Do not be afraid. You

not die." And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there

named it Yahweh-Shalom (which means "the LORD is

peace"). The altar remains in Ophrah in the land of the clan

Manasseh to this day.

That night the LORD said to Gideon, "Take the second

from your father's herd, the one that is seven years old.

down your father's altar to Baal, and cut down the Ashe-

rah standing beside it. Then build an altar to the LORD

God here on this hilltop sanctuary, laying the stones

carefully. Sacrifice the bull as a burnt offering on the altar,

and use the wood of the Asherah pole you cut down."

Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD

commanded. But he did it at night because he was

afraid of the other members of his father's household and

people of the town.

Early the next morning, as the people of the town began

work, someone discovered that the altar of Baal had been

cut down and that the Asherah pole beside it had been

cut down. In their place a new altar had been built, and on it

lay the remains of the bull that had been sacrificed. Then

the men said to each other, "Who did this?" And after asking

around and making a careful search, they learned that it was

the son of Joash.

"Bring out your son," the men of the town demanded of

Joash. "He must die for destroying the altar of Baal and for

cutting down the Asherah pole."

Joash shouted to the mob that confronted him,

"Are you defending Baal? Will you argue his case?"

an ephah [20 quarts or 22 liters]. 7:3 Hebrew may leave Mount Gilead. The identity of Mount Gilead is uncertain in this context. It is perhaps

another name for Mount Gilboa.

Whoever pleads his case will be put to death by morning! If  
Baal truly is a god, let him defend himself and destroy the  
one who broke down his altar!"<sup>32</sup>From then on Gideon was  
called Jerub-baal, which means "Let Baal defend himself,"  
because he broke down Baal's altar.

### Gideon Asks for a Sign

<sup>33</sup>Soon afterward the armies of Midian, Amalek, and the  
people of the east formed an alliance against Israel and  
crossed the Jordan, camping in the valley of Jezreel. <sup>34</sup>Then  
the Spirit of the LORD took possession of Gideon. He blew a  
ram's horn as a call to arms, and the men of the clan of Abie-  
zer came to him. <sup>35</sup>He also sent messengers throughout Ma-  
nasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, summoning their  
warriors, and all of them responded.

<sup>36</sup>Then Gideon said to God, "If you are truly going to use  
me to rescue Israel as you promised, <sup>37</sup>prove it to me in this  
way. I will put a wool fleece on the threshing floor tonight. If  
the fleece is wet with dew in the morning but the ground is  
dry, then I will know that you are going to help me rescue Is-  
rael as you promised." <sup>38</sup>And that is just what happened.  
When Gideon got up early the next morning, he squeezed  
the fleece and wrung out a whole bowlful of water.

<sup>39</sup>Then Gideon said to God, "Please don't be angry with  
me, but let me make one more request. Let me use the fleece  
for one more test. This time let the fleece remain dry while  
the ground around it is wet with dew." <sup>40</sup>So that night God  
did as Gideon asked. The fleece was dry in the morning, but  
the ground was covered with dew.

### Gideon Defeats the Midianites

**7** So Jerub-baal (that is, Gideon) and his army got up early  
and went as far as the spring of Harod. The armies of  
Midian were camped north of them in the valley near the  
hill of Moreh. <sup>2</sup>The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many  
warriors with you. If I let all of you fight the Midianites, the  
Israelites will boast to me that they saved themselves by  
their own strength. <sup>3</sup>Therefore, tell the people, 'Whoever is  
timid or afraid may leave this mountain\* and go home.'" So  
22,000 of them went home, leaving only 10,000 who were  
willing to fight.

<sup>4</sup>But the LORD told Gideon, "There are still too many!  
Bring them down to the spring, and I will test them to deter-  
mine who will go with you and who will not." <sup>5</sup>When Gideon  
took his warriors down to the water, the LORD told him, "Di-  
vide the men into two groups. In one group put all those who  
cup water in their hands and lap it up with their tongues like  
dogs. In the other group put all those who kneel down and  
drink with their mouths in the stream." <sup>6</sup>Only 300 of the  
men drank from their hands. All the others got down on  
their knees and drank with their mouths in the stream.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD told Gideon, "With these 300 men I will res-  
cue you and give you victory over the Midianites. Send all  
the others home." <sup>8</sup>So Gideon collected the provisions and  
rams' horns of the other warriors and sent them home. But  
he kept the 300 men with him.

The Midianite camp was in the valley just below Gideon.  
<sup>9</sup>That night the LORD said, "Get up! Go down into the Midian-  
ite camp, for I have given you victory over them!" <sup>10</sup>But if you  
are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant  
Purah. <sup>11</sup>Listen to what the Midianites are saying, and you  
will be greatly encouraged. Then you will be eager to attack."

So Gideon took Purah and went down to the edge of the  
enemy camp. <sup>12</sup>The armies of Midian, Amalek, and the peo-  
ple of the east had settled in the valley like a swarm of



locusts. Their camels were like grains of sand on the seashore—too many to count! <sup>13</sup>Gideon crept up just as a man was telling his companion about a dream. The man said, "I had this dream, and in my dream a loaf of barley bread came tumbling down into the Midianite camp. It hit a tent, turned it over, and knocked it flat!"

<sup>14</sup>His companion answered, "Your dream can mean only one thing—God has given Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite, victory over Midian and all its allies!"

<sup>15</sup>When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship before the LORD. \* Then he returned to the Israelite camp and shouted, "Get up! For the LORD has given you victory over the Midianite hordes!" <sup>16</sup>He divided the 300 men into three groups and gave each man a ram's horn and a clay jar with a torch in it.

<sup>17</sup>Then he said to them, "Keep your eyes on me. When I come to the edge of the camp, do just as I do. <sup>18</sup>As soon as I and those with me blow the rams' horns, blow your horns, too, all around the entire camp, and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!'"

<sup>19</sup>It was just after midnight,\* after the changing of the guard, when Gideon and the 100 men with him reached the edge of the Midianite camp. Suddenly, they blew the rams' horns and broke their clay jars. <sup>20</sup>Then all three groups blew their horns and broke their jars. They held the blazing torches in their left hands and the horns in their right hands, and they all shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"

<sup>21</sup>Each man stood at his position around the camp and watched as all the Midianites rushed around in a panic, shouting as they ran to escape. <sup>22</sup>When the 300 Israelites blew their rams' horns, the LORD caused the warriors in the camp to fight against each other with their swords. Those who were not killed fled to places as far away as Beth-shittah near Zererah and to the border of Abel-meholah near Tabath.

<sup>23</sup>Then Gideon sent for the warriors of Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh, who joined in chasing the army of Midian. <sup>24</sup>Gideon also sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down to attack the Midianites. Cut them off at the shallow crossings of the Jordan River at Beth-barah."

So all the men of Ephraim did as they were told. <sup>25</sup>They captured Oreb and Zeeb, the two Midianite commanders, killing Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. And they continued to chase the Midianites. Afterward the Israelites brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was by the Jordan River.

#### Gideon Kills Zebah and Zalmunna

**8** Then the people of Ephraim asked Gideon, "Why have you treated us this way? Why didn't you send for us when you first went out to fight the Midianites?" And they argued heatedly with Gideon.

<sup>2</sup>But Gideon replied, "What have I accomplished compared to you? Aren't even the leftover grapes of Ephraim's harvest better than the entire crop of my little clan of Abiezer? <sup>3</sup>God gave you victory over Oreb and Zeeb, the commanders of the Midianite army. What have I accomplished compared to that?" When the men of Ephraim heard Gideon's answer, their anger subsided.

<sup>4</sup>Gideon then crossed the Jordan River with his 300 men, and though exhausted, they continued to chase the enemy. <sup>5</sup>When they reached Succoth, Gideon asked the leaders of the town, "Please give my warriors some food.

They are very tired. I am chasing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian."

<sup>6</sup>But the officials of Succoth replied, "Catch Zebah and Zalmunna first, and then we will feed your army."

<sup>7</sup>So Gideon said, "After the LORD gives me victory over Zebah and Zalmunna, I will return and tear your flesh with the thorns and briers from the wilderness."

<sup>8</sup>From there Gideon went up to Peniel\* and again asked for food, but he got the same answer. <sup>9</sup>So he said to the people of Peniel, "After I return in victory, I will tear down this tower."

<sup>10</sup>By this time Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with 15,000 warriors—all that remained of the allied armies of the east, for 120,000 had already been killed. <sup>11</sup>Gideon circled around by the caravan route east of Nobah and Jogbehah, taking the Midianite army by surprise. <sup>12</sup>Zebah and Zalmunna, the two Midianite kings, fled, but Gideon chased them down and captured all their warriors.

<sup>13</sup>After this, Gideon returned from the battle by way of Heres Pass. <sup>14</sup>There he captured a young man from Succoth and demanded that he write down the names of all the seventy-seven officials and elders in the town. <sup>15</sup>Gideon then returned to Succoth and said to the leaders, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna. When we were here before, you taunted me saying, 'Catch Zebah and Zalmunna first, and then we will feed your exhausted army.'" <sup>16</sup>Then Gideon took the elders of the town and taught them a lesson, punishing them with thorns and briers from the wilderness. <sup>17</sup>He also tore down the tower of Peniel and killed all the men in the town.

<sup>18</sup>Then Gideon asked Zebah and Zalmunna, "The man you killed at Tabor—what were they like?"

"Like you," they replied. "They all had the look of a king's son."

<sup>19</sup>"They were my brothers, the sons of my own mother," Gideon exclaimed. "As surely as the LORD lives, I would kill you if you hadn't killed them."

<sup>20</sup>Turning to Jether, his oldest son, he said, "Kill them! But Jether did not draw his sword, for he was only a boy and was afraid."

<sup>21</sup>Then Zebah and Zalmunna said to Gideon, "Be a man! Kill us yourself!" So Gideon killed them both and took the royal ornaments from the necks of their camels.

#### Gideon's Sacred Ephod

<sup>22</sup>Then the Israelites said to Gideon, "Be our ruler! You and your son and your grandson will be our rulers, for you have rescued us from Midian."

<sup>23</sup>But Gideon replied, "I will not rule over you, nor will my son. The LORD will rule over you! <sup>24</sup>However, I do have a request—that each of you give me an earring from the plunder you collected from your fallen enemies." (The enemies being Ishmaelites, all wore gold earrings.)

<sup>25</sup>"Gladly!" they replied. They spread out a cloak, and each one threw in a gold earring he had gathered from the plunder. <sup>26</sup>The weight of the gold earrings was forty-three pounds,\* not including the royal ornaments and pendant the purple clothing worn by the kings of Midian, or the chains around the necks of their camels.

<sup>27</sup>Gideon made a sacred ephod from the gold and put it in Ophrah, his hometown. But soon all the Israelites prostituted themselves by worshiping it, and it became a trap for Gideon and his family.

<sup>28</sup>That is the story of how the people of Israel defeated Midian, which never recovered. Throughout the rest of Gideon's lifetime—about forty years—there was peace in the land.

<sup>29</sup>Then Gideon\* son of Joash returned home. <sup>30</sup>He had seventy sons born to him, for he had many wives. <sup>31</sup>He also had a concubine in Shechem, who gave birth to a son, whom he named Abimelech. <sup>32</sup>Gideon died when he was very old, and he was buried in the grave of his father, Joash, at Ophrah in the land of the clan of Abiezer.

<sup>33</sup>As soon as Gideon died, the Israelites prostituted themselves by worshiping the images of Baal, making Baal-berith their god. <sup>34</sup>They forgot the LORD their God, who had rescued them from all their enemies surrounding them. <sup>35</sup>Nor did they show any loyalty to the family of Jerub-baal (that is, Gideon), despite all the good he had done for Israel.

#### Abimelech Rules over Shechem

**9** One day Gideon's\* son Abimelech went to Shechem to visit his uncles—his mother's brothers. He said to them and to the rest of his mother's family, <sup>2</sup>"Ask the leading citizens of Shechem whether they want to be ruled by all seventy of Gideon's sons or by one man. And remember that I am your own flesh and blood!"

<sup>3</sup>So Abimelech's uncles gave his message to all the citizens of Shechem on his behalf. And after listening to this proposal, the people of Shechem decided in favor of Abimelech because he was their relative. <sup>4</sup>They gave him seventy silver coins from the temple of Baal-berith, which he used to hire some reckless troublemakers who agreed to follow him. <sup>5</sup>He went to his father's home at Ophrah, and there, on a stone, they killed all seventy of his half brothers, the sons of Gideon. \* But the youngest brother, Jotham, escaped and hid.

<sup>6</sup>Then all the leading citizens of Shechem and Beth-millo met at a meeting under the oak beside the pillar\* at Shechem and made Abimelech their king.

#### Jotham's Parable

When Jotham heard about this, he climbed to the top of Mount Gerizim and shouted,

"Listen to me, citizens of Shechem!

Listen to me if you want God to listen to you!

Once upon a time the trees decided to choose a king.

First they said to the olive tree,

"Be our king!"

But the olive tree refused, saying,

"Should I quit producing the olive oil

that blesses both God and people,

just to wave back and forth over the trees?"

Then they said to the fig tree,

"You be our king!"

But the fig tree also refused, saying,

"Should I quit producing my sweet fruit

just to wave back and forth over the trees?"

Then they said to the grapevine,

"You be our king!"

But the grapevine also refused, saying,

"Should I quit producing the wine

that cheers both God and people,

just to wave back and forth over the trees?"

Then all the trees finally turned to the thornbush and said,

"Come, you be our king!"

And the thornbush replied to the trees,

"If you truly want to make me your king,

7:15 As in Greek version; Hebrew reads *he bowed*. 7:19 Hebrew at the beginning of the second watch. 8:8 Hebrew Penuel, a variant spelling of Peniel. Also in 8:9, 17. 8:26 Hebrew 1,700 shekels (19.4 kilograms).

Hebrew Jerub-baal; see 6:32. 9:1 Hebrew Jerub-baal's (see 6:32); also in 9:2, 24. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. 9:28 Hebrew Who is Shechem? 9:29 As reads in Targum; compare 9:41. 9:37a Or the center of the land. 9:37b Hebrew



hasing Zebah and Zalmunna, the

Succoth replied, "Catch Zebah and we will feed your army."

The LORD gives me victory over Zebah and tear your flesh with the wilderness."

ent up to Peniel\* and again asked me answer. <sup>9</sup>So he said to the people in victory, I will tear down the

and Zalmunna were in Karkor with remained of the allied armies already been killed. <sup>11</sup>Gideon cr-

on route east of Nobah and Jogbe army by surprise. <sup>12</sup>Zebah and ate kings, fled, but Gideon chased all their warriors.

turned from the battle by way of a young man from Succoth. Write down the names of all the elders in the town. <sup>15</sup>Gideon then

aid to the leaders, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna first, and then we will

ere here before, you taunted me. Zalmunna first, and then we will

ed all the men in the town. Zebah and Zalmunna, "The men were they like?"

"They all had the look of a king. I am the LORD's, I would not

ers, the sons of my own mother. I am the LORD's, I would not

ldes son, he said, "Kill them!" sword, for he was only a boy and

unna said to Gideon, "Be a man!" n killed them both and took the necks of their camels.

o Gideon, "Be our ruler! You will be our rulers, for you have

will not rule over you, nor will I er you! <sup>24</sup>However, I do have me an earring from the pun-

fallen enemies." (The enemies gold earrings.)

They spread out a cloak and a earring he had gathered from the gold earrings was forty times

the royal ornaments and pendants by the kings of Midian, or the

their camels. Ephod from the gold and putting it, and it became a trans-

ow the people of Israel de- red. Throughout the rest of years—there was peace in the

ew Peniel, a variant spelling of Peniel.

<sup>29</sup>Then Gideon\* son of Joash returned home. <sup>30</sup>He had twenty sons born to him, for he had many wives. <sup>31</sup>He also had a concubine in Shechem, who gave birth to a son, whom he named Abimelech. <sup>32</sup>Gideon died when he was very old, and he was buried in the grave of his father, Joash, at Ophrah in the land of the clan of Abiezer.

<sup>33</sup>As soon as Gideon died, the Israelites prostituted themselves by worshipping the images of Baal, making Baal-berith their god. <sup>34</sup>They forgot the LORD their God, who had rescued them from all their enemies surrounding them. <sup>35</sup>Nor did they show any loyalty to the family of Jerub-baal (that is, Gideon), despite all the good he had done for Israel.

#### Abimelech Rules over Shechem

<sup>9</sup>One day Gideon's\* son Abimelech went to Shechem to visit his uncles—his mother's brothers. He said to them and to the rest of his mother's family, <sup>2</sup>"Ask the leading citizens of Shechem whether they want to be ruled by all seventy of Gideon's sons or by one man. And remember that I am your own flesh and blood!"

<sup>3</sup>So Abimelech's uncles gave him a message to all the citizens of Shechem on his behalf. And after listening to this proposal, the people of Shechem decided in favor of Abimelech because he was their relative. <sup>4</sup>They gave him seventy silver coins from the temple of Baal-berith, which he used to hire some reckless troublemakers who agreed to follow him. <sup>5</sup>He went to his father's home at Ophrah, and there, on a stone, they killed all seventy of his half brothers, the sons of Gideon. \* But the youngest brother, Jotham, escaped and hid.

<sup>6</sup>Then all the leading citizens of Shechem and Beth-millo called a meeting under the oak beside the pillar\* at Shechem and made Abimelech their king.

#### Jotham's Parable

When Jotham heard about this, he climbed to the top of Mount Gerizim and shouted,

"Listen to me, citizens of Shechem!

Listen to me if you want God to listen to you!

Once upon a time the trees decided to choose a king.

First they said to the olive tree,

"Be our king!"

But the olive tree refused, saying,

"Should I quit producing the olive oil

that blesses both God and people,

just to wave back and forth over the trees?"

Then they said to the fig tree,

"You be our king!"

But the fig tree also refused, saying,

"Should I quit producing my sweet fruit

just to wave back and forth over the trees?"

Then they said to the grapevine,

"You be our king!"

But the grapevine also refused, saying,

"Should I quit producing the wine

that cheers both God and people,

just to wave back and forth over the trees?"

Then all the trees finally turned to the thornbush and

said,

"Come, you be our king!"

And the thornbush replied to the trees,

"If you truly want to make me your king,

come and take shelter in my shade.

If not, let fire come out from me

and devour the cedars of Lebanon."

<sup>16</sup>Jotham continued, "Now make sure you have acted honorably and in good faith by making Abimelech your king, and that you have done right by Gideon and all of his descendants. Have you treated him with the honor he deserves for all he accomplished? <sup>17</sup>For he fought for you and risked his life when he rescued you from the Midianites. <sup>18</sup>But today you have revolted against my father and his descendants, killing his seventy sons on one stone. And you have chosen his slave woman's son, Abimelech, to be your king just because he is your relative.

<sup>19</sup>"If you have acted honorably and in good faith toward Gideon and his descendants today, then may you find joy in Abimelech, and may he find joy in you. <sup>20</sup>But if you have not acted in good faith, then may fire come out from Abimelech and devour the leading citizens of Shechem and Beth-millo; and may fire come out from the citizens of Shechem and Beth-millo and devour Abimelech!"

<sup>21</sup>Then Jotham escaped and lived in Beer because he was afraid of his brother Abimelech.

#### Shechem Rebels against Abimelech

<sup>22</sup>After Abimelech had ruled over Israel for three years,

<sup>23</sup>God sent a spirit that stirred up trouble between Abimelech and the leading citizens of Shechem, and they revolted.

<sup>24</sup>God was punishing Abimelech for murdering Gideon's

seventy sons, and the citizens of Shechem for supporting

him in this treachery of murdering his brothers. <sup>25</sup>The citi-

zens of Shechem set an ambush for Abimelech on the hill-

tops and robbed everyone who passed that way. But

someone warned Abimelech about their plot.

<sup>26</sup>One day Gaal son of Ebed moved to Shechem with his

brothers and gained the confidence of the leading citizens

of Shechem. <sup>27</sup>During the annual harvest festival at She-

chem, held in the temple of the local god, the wine flowed

freely, and everyone began cursing Abimelech. <sup>28</sup>"Who is

Abimelech?" Gaal shouted. "He's not a true son of She-

chem,\* so why should we be his servants? He's merely the

son of Gideon, and this Zebul is merely his deputy. Serve the

true sons of Hamor, the founder of Shechem. Why should

we serve Abimelech? <sup>29</sup>If I were in charge here, I would get

rid of Abimelech. I would say\* to him, 'Get some soldiers,

and come out and fight!"

<sup>30</sup>But when Zebul, the leader of the city, heard what Gaal

was saying, he was furious. <sup>31</sup>He sent messengers to Abime-

lech in Arumah,\* telling him, "Gaal son of Ebed and his broth-

ers have come to live in Shechem, and now they are inciting

the city to rebel against you. <sup>32</sup>Come by night with an army

and hide out in the fields. <sup>33</sup>In the morning, as soon as it is

daylight, attack the city. When Gaal and those who are with

him come out against you, you can do with them as you wish."

<sup>34</sup>So Abimelech and all his men went by night and split

into four groups, stationing themselves around Shechem.

<sup>35</sup>Gaal was standing at the city gates when Abimelech and

his army came out of hiding. <sup>36</sup>When Gaal saw them, he said

to Zebul, "Look, there are people coming down from the

hilltops!"

Zebul replied, "It's just the shadows on the hills that look

like men."

<sup>37</sup>But again Gaal said, "No, people are coming down from

the hills.\* And another group is coming down the road past

the Diviners' Oak.\*"

\*Hebrew Jerub-baal; see 6:32.

\*Hebrew Jerub-baal's (see 6:32); also in 9:2, 24.

\*Hebrew Who is Shechem?

\*Hebrew reads And he said.

\*Hebrew reads In Tormah; compare 9:41.

\*Hebrew reads Or the center of the land.

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;

\*Hebrew reads Or in secret;



<sup>38</sup>Then Zebul turned on him and asked, "Now where is that big mouth of yours? Wasn't it you that said, 'Who is Abimelech, and why should we be his servants?' The men you mocked are right outside the city! Go out and fight them!"

<sup>39</sup>So Gaal led the leading citizens of Shechem into battle against Abimelech. <sup>40</sup>But Abimelech chased him, and many of Shechem's men were wounded and fell along the road as they retreated to the city gate. <sup>41</sup>Abimelech returned to Arumah, and Zebul drove Gaal and his brothers out of Shechem.

<sup>42</sup>The next day the people of Shechem went out into the fields to battle. When Abimelech heard about it, <sup>43</sup>he divided his men into three groups and set an ambush in the fields. When Abimelech saw the people coming out of the city, he and his men jumped up from their hiding places and attacked them. <sup>44</sup>Abimelech and his group stormed the city gate to keep the men of Shechem from getting back in, while Abimelech's other two groups cut them down in the fields. <sup>45</sup>The battle went on all day before Abimelech finally captured the city. He killed the people, leveled the city, and scattered salt all over the ground.

<sup>46</sup>When the leading citizens who lived in the tower of Shechem heard what had happened, they ran and hid in the temple of Baal-berith. <sup>47</sup>Someone reported to Abimelech that the citizens had gathered in the temple, <sup>48</sup>so he led his forces to Mount Zalmon. He took an ax and chopped some branches from a tree, then put them on his shoulder. "Quick, do as I have done!" he told his men. <sup>49</sup>So each of them cut down some branches, following Abimelech's example. They piled the branches against the walls of the temple and set them on fire. So all the people who had lived in the tower of Shechem died—about 1,000 men and women.

<sup>50</sup>Then Abimelech attacked the town of Thebez and captured it. <sup>51</sup>But there was a strong tower inside the town, and all the men and women—the entire population—fled to it. They barricaded themselves in and climbed up to the roof of the tower. <sup>52</sup>Abimelech followed them to attack the tower. But as he prepared to set fire to the entrance, <sup>53</sup>a woman on the roof dropped a millstone that landed on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull.

<sup>54</sup>He quickly said to his young armor bearer, "Draw your sword and kill me! Don't let it be said that a woman killed Abimelech!" So the young man ran him through with his sword, and he died. <sup>55</sup>When Abimelech's men saw that he was dead, they disbanded and returned to their homes.

<sup>56</sup>In this way, God punished Abimelech for the evil he had done against his father by murdering his seventy brothers. <sup>57</sup>God also punished the men of Shechem for all their evil. So the curse of Jotham son of Gideon was fulfilled.

#### Tola Becomes Israel's Judge

**10** After Abimelech died, Tola son of Puah, son of Dodo, was the next person to rescue Israel. He was from the tribe of Issachar but lived in the town of Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim. <sup>2</sup>He judged Israel for twenty-three years. When he died, he was buried in Shamir.

#### Jair Becomes Israel's Judge

<sup>3</sup>After Tola died, Jair from Gilead judged Israel for twenty-two years. <sup>4</sup>His thirty sons rode around on thirty donkeys, and they owned thirty towns in the land of Gilead, which are still called the Towns of Jair. <sup>5</sup>When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon.

#### The Ammonites Oppress Israel

<sup>6</sup>Again the Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight. They served the images of Baal and Ashtoreth, and the gods of

Aram, Sidon, Moab, Ammon, and Philistia. They abandoned the LORD and no longer served him at all. <sup>7</sup>So the LORD burned with anger against Israel, and he turned them over to the Philistines and the Ammonites, <sup>8</sup>who began to oppress them that year. For eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites east of the Jordan River in the land of the Amorites (that is, in Gilead). <sup>9</sup>The Ammonites also crossed to the west side of the Jordan and attacked Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim.

The Israelites were in great distress. <sup>10</sup>Finally, they cried out to the LORD for help, saying, "We have sinned against you because we have abandoned you as our God and have served the images of Baal."

<sup>11</sup>The LORD replied, "Did I not rescue you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, <sup>12</sup>the Sidonians, the Amalekites, and the Moabites? When they oppressed you, you cried out to me for help, and I rescued you. <sup>13</sup>Yet you have abandoned me and served other gods. So I will not rescue you anymore. <sup>14</sup>Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen! Let them rescue you in your hour of distress!"

<sup>15</sup>But the Israelites pleaded with the LORD and said, "We have sinned. Punish us as you see fit, only rescue us today from our enemies." <sup>16</sup>Then the Israelites put aside their foreign gods and served the LORD. And he was grieved by their misery.

<sup>17</sup>At that time the armies of Ammon had gathered for war and were camped in Gilead, and the people of Israel assembled and camped at Mizpah. <sup>18</sup>The leaders of Gilead said to each other, "Whoever attacks the Ammonites first will become ruler over all the people of Gilead."

#### Jephthah Becomes Israel's Judge

**11** Now Jephthah of Gilead was a great warrior. He was the son of Gilead, but his mother was a prostitute. <sup>2</sup>Gilead's wife also had several sons, and when these half brothers grew up, they chased Jephthah off the land. "You will not get any of our father's inheritance," they said, "for you are the son of a prostitute." <sup>3</sup>So Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Soon he had a band of worthless rebels following him.

<sup>4</sup>At about this time, the Ammonites began their war against Israel. <sup>5</sup>When the Ammonites attacked, the elders of Gilead sent for Jephthah in the land of Tob. The elders said, <sup>6</sup>"Come and be our commander! Help us fight the Ammonites!"

<sup>7</sup>But Jephthah said to them, "Aren't you the ones who hated me and drove me from my father's house? Why do you come to me now when you're in trouble?"

<sup>8</sup>"Because we need you," the elders replied. "If you lead us in battle against the Ammonites, we will make you ruler over all the people of Gilead."

<sup>9</sup>Jephthah said to the elders, "Let me get this straight. If the LORD gives me victory over the Ammonites, will you really make me ruler over all the people of Gilead?" <sup>10</sup>"The LORD is our witness," the elders replied. "We want offering."

<sup>11</sup>So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the LORD gave him victory. <sup>12</sup>He made him their ruler and commander of the army. <sup>13</sup>At Mizpah, in the presence of the LORD, Jephthah repeated what he had said to the elders.

<sup>14</sup>Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of Ammon, asking, "Why have you come out to fight against my land?" <sup>15</sup>The king of Ammon answered Jephthah's messengers, "When the Israelites came out of Egypt, they stole my land."

the Arnon River to the Jabbok River and all the way to the Jordan. Now then, give back the land peaceably."

Jephthah sent this message back to the Ammonite king:

"This is what Jephthah says: Israel did not steal any land from Moab or Ammon. <sup>16</sup>When the people of Israel arrived at Kadesh on their journey from Egypt after crossing the Red Sea, <sup>17</sup>they sent messengers to the king of Edom asking for permission to pass through his land. But their request was denied. Then they asked the king of Moab for similar permission, but he wouldn't let them pass through either. So the people of Israel stayed in Kadesh.

<sup>18</sup>Finally, they went around Edom and Moab through the wilderness. They traveled along Moab's eastern border and camped on the other side of the Arnon River. But they never once crossed the Arnon River into Moab, for the Arnon was the border of Moab.

<sup>19</sup>Then Israel sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled from Heshbon, asking for permission to cross through his land to get to their destination. <sup>20</sup>But King Sihon didn't trust Israel to pass through his land. Instead, he mobilized his army at Jahaz and attacked them. <sup>21</sup>But the LORD, the God of Israel, gave his people victory over King Sihon. So Israel took control of all the land of the Amorites, who lived in that region, <sup>22</sup>from the Arnon River to the Jabbok River, and from the eastern wilderness to the Jordan.

<sup>23</sup>So you see, it was the LORD, the God of Israel, who took away the land from the Amorites and gave it to Israel. Why, then, should we give it back to you? <sup>24</sup>You keep whatever your god Chemosh gives you, and we will keep whatever the LORD our God gives us. <sup>25</sup>Are you any better than Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he try to make a case against Israel for disputed land? Did he go to war against them?

<sup>26</sup>Israel has been living here for 300 years, inhabiting Heshbon and its surrounding settlements, all the way to Aroer and its settlements, and in all the towns along the Arnon River. Why have you made no effort to recover it before now? <sup>27</sup>Therefore, I have not sinned against you. Rather, you have wronged me by attacking me. Let the LORD, who is judge, decide today which of us is right—Israel or Ammon."

But the king of Ammon paid no attention to Jephthah's message.

#### Jephthah's Vow

<sup>28</sup>At that time the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he went throughout the land of Gilead and Manasseh, including Mizpah in Gilead, and from there he led an army against the Ammonites. <sup>29</sup>And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD. He said, "If you give me victory over the Ammonites, I will give to the LORD whatever comes out of my house to meet me when I return in triumph. I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering."

<sup>30</sup>So Jephthah led his army against the Ammonites, and the LORD gave him victory. <sup>31</sup>He crushed the Ammonites, devastating about twenty towns from Aroer to an area near Abel-keramim. In this way Israel defeated the Ammonites.

<sup>32</sup>When Jephthah returned home to Mizpah, his daughter came out to meet him, playing on a tambourine and dancing joy. She was his one and only child; he had no other sons or daughters. <sup>33</sup>When he saw her, he tore his clothes in an-

9:46 Hebrew *El-berith*, another name for Baal-berith; compare 9:4. 10:4 Hebrew *Havvoth-jair*.

16 Hebrew *sea of reeds*.







## The Birth of Samson

**13** Again the Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight, so the LORD handed them over to the Philistines, who oppressed them for forty years.

<sup>2</sup>In those days a man named Manoah from the tribe of Dan lived in the town of Zorah. His wife was unable to become pregnant, and they had no children. <sup>3</sup>The angel of the LORD appeared to Manoah's wife and said, "Even though you have been unable to have children, you will soon become pregnant and give birth to a son. <sup>4</sup>So be careful; you must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. <sup>5</sup>You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and his hair must never be cut. For he will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. He will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines."

<sup>6</sup>The woman ran and told her husband, "A man of God appeared to me! He looked like one of God's angels, terrifying to see. I didn't ask where he was from, and he didn't tell me his name. <sup>7</sup>But he told me, 'You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must not drink wine or any other alcoholic drink nor eat any forbidden food. For your son will be dedicated to God as a Nazirite from the moment of his birth until the day of his death.'"

<sup>8</sup>Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, saying, "Lord, please let the man of God come back to us again and give us more instructions about this son who is to be born."

<sup>9</sup>God answered Manoah's prayer, and the angel of God appeared once again to his wife as she was sitting in the field. But her husband, Manoah, was not with her. <sup>10</sup>So she quickly ran and told her husband, "The man who appeared to me the other day is here again!"

<sup>11</sup>Manoah ran back with his wife and asked, "Are you the man who spoke to my wife the other day?"

"Yes," he replied, "I am."

<sup>12</sup>So Manoah asked him, "When your words come true, what kind of rules should govern the boy's life and work?"

<sup>13</sup>The angel of the LORD replied, "Be sure your wife follows the instructions I gave her. <sup>14</sup>She must not eat grapes or raisins, drink wine or any other alcoholic drink, or eat any forbidden food."

<sup>15</sup>Then Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Please stay here until we can prepare a young goat for you to eat."

<sup>16</sup>"I will stay," the angel of the LORD replied, "but I will not eat anything. However, you may prepare a burnt offering as a sacrifice to the LORD." (Manoah didn't realize it was the angel of the LORD.)

<sup>17</sup>Then Manoah asked the angel of the LORD, "What is your name? For when all this comes true, we want to honor you."

<sup>18</sup>"Why do you ask my name?" the angel of the LORD replied. "It is too wonderful for you to understand."

<sup>19</sup>Then Manoah took a young goat and a grain offering and offered it on a rock as a sacrifice to the LORD. And as Manoah and his wife watched, the LORD did an amazing thing. <sup>20</sup>As the flames from the altar shot up toward the sky, the angel of the LORD ascended in the fire. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell with their faces to the ground.

<sup>21</sup>The angel did not appear again to Manoah and his wife. Manoah finally realized it was the angel of the LORD, <sup>22</sup>and he said to his wife, "We will certainly die, for we have seen God!"

<sup>23</sup>But his wife said, "If the LORD were going to kill us, he wouldn't have accepted our burnt offering and grain offering. He wouldn't have appeared to us and told us this wonderful thing and done these miracles."

<sup>24</sup>When her son was born, she named him Samson. And the LORD blessed him as he grew up. <sup>25</sup>And the Spirit of the

13:4 Hebrew *any unclean thing*; also in 13:7, 14. 14:11 Hebrew *they*. 14:15 As in Greek version; Hebrew reads *seventh*.

LORD began to stir him while he lived in Mahaneh-dan, which is located between the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol.

## Samson's Riddle

**14** One day when Samson was in Timnah, one of the Philistine women caught his eye. <sup>2</sup>When he returned home, he told his father and mother, "A young Philistine woman in Timnah caught my eye. I want to marry her. Get her for me."

<sup>3</sup>His father and mother objected. "Isn't there even one woman in our tribe or among all the Israelites you could marry?" they asked. "Why must you go to the pagan Philistines to find a wife?"

But Samson told his father, "Get her for me! She looks good to me." <sup>4</sup>His father and mother didn't realize the LORD was at work in this, creating an opportunity to work against the Philistines, who ruled over Israel at that time.

<sup>5</sup>As Samson and his parents were going down to Timnah, a young lion suddenly attacked Samson near the vineyards of Timnah. <sup>6</sup>At that moment the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him, and he ripped the lion's jaws apart with his bare hands. He did it as easily as if it were a young goat. But he didn't tell his father or mother about it. <sup>7</sup>When Samson arrived in Timnah, he talked with the woman and was very pleased with her.

<sup>8</sup>Later, when he returned to Timnah for the wedding, he turned off the path to look at the carcass of the lion. And he found that a swarm of bees had made some honey in the carcass. <sup>9</sup>He scooped some of the honey into his hands and ate it along the way. He also gave some to his father and mother, and they ate it. But he didn't tell them he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion.

<sup>10</sup>As his father was making final arrangements for the marriage, Samson threw a party at Timnah, as was the custom for elite young men. <sup>11</sup>When the bride's parents saw him, they selected thirty young men from the town to be his companions.

<sup>12</sup>Samson said to them, "Let me tell you a riddle. If you solve my riddle during these seven days of the celebration, I will give you thirty fine linen robes and thirty sets of festive clothing. <sup>13</sup>But if you can't solve it, then you must give me thirty fine linen robes and thirty sets of festive clothing."

"All right," they agreed, "let's hear your riddle."

<sup>14</sup>So he said:

"Out of the one who eats came something to eat;  
out of the strong came something sweet."

Three days later they were still trying to figure it out. <sup>15</sup>On the fourth\* day they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband to explain the riddle for us, or we will burn down your father's house with you in it. Did you invite us to this party just to make us poor?"

<sup>16</sup>So Samson's wife came to him in tears and said, "You don't love me; you hate me! You have given my people a riddle, but you haven't told me the answer."

"I haven't even given the answer to my father or mother," he replied. "Why should I tell you?" <sup>17</sup>So she cried whenever she was with him and kept it up for the rest of the celebration. At last, on the seventh day he told her the answer because she was tormenting him with her nagging. Then he explained the riddle to the young men.

<sup>18</sup>So before sunset of the seventh day, the men of the town came to Samson with their answer:

"What is sweeter than honey?  
What is stronger than a lion?"

Samson replied, "If you hadn't plowed with my heifer, you wouldn't have solved my riddle!"

<sup>19</sup>Then the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon him. He went down to the town of Ashkelon, killed thirty men, took their belongings, and gave their clothing to the men who had solved his riddle. But Samson was furious about what had happened, and he went back home to live with his father and mother. <sup>20</sup>So his wife was given in marriage to the man who had been Samson's best man at the wedding.

## Samson's Vengeance on the Philistines

**15** Later on, during the wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat as a present to his wife. He said, "I'm going into my wife's room to sleep with her," but her father wouldn't let him in.

<sup>2</sup>"I truly thought you must hate her," her father explained, "so I gave her in marriage to your best man. But look, her younger sister is even more beautiful than she is. Marry her instead."

<sup>3</sup>Samson said, "This time I cannot be blamed for everything I am going to do to you Philistines." <sup>4</sup>Then he went out and caught 300 foxes. He tied their tails together in pairs, and he fastened a torch to each pair of tails. <sup>5</sup>Then he lit the torches and let the foxes run through the grain fields of the Philistines. He burned all their grain to the ground, including the sheaves and the uncut grain. He also destroyed their vineyards and olive groves.

<sup>6</sup>"Who did this?" the Philistines demanded. "Samson," was the reply, "because his father-in-law from Timnah gave Samson's wife to be married to his best man." <sup>7</sup>So the Philistines went and got the woman and her father and burned them to death.

<sup>8</sup>"Because you did this," Samson vowed, "I won't rest until I take my revenge on you!" <sup>9</sup>So he attacked the Philistines with great fury and killed many of them. Then he went to a cave in the rock of Etam.

<sup>10</sup>The Philistines retaliated by setting up camp in Judah, spreading out near the town of Lehi. <sup>11</sup>The men of Judah asked the Philistines, "Why are you attacking us?" <sup>12</sup>The Philistines replied, "We've come to capture Samson. We come to pay him back for what he did to us."

<sup>13</sup>So 3,000 men of Judah went down to get Samson at the cave in the rock of Etam. They said to Samson, "Don't you realize the Philistines rule over us? What are you doing to us?" But Samson replied, "I only did to them what they did to

me. <sup>14</sup>But the men of Judah told him, "We have come to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines."

<sup>15</sup>"All right," Samson said. "But promise that you won't kill yourselves."

<sup>16</sup>"We will only tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines," they replied. "We won't kill you." So they tied him up with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

<sup>17</sup>As Samson arrived at Lehi, the Philistines came shouting in triumph. But the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon Samson, and he snapped the ropes on his arms as if they were burnt strands of flax, and they fell from his wrists. <sup>18</sup>Then he found the jawbone of a recently killed donkey. He picked it up and killed 1,000 Philistines with it. <sup>19</sup>Then Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey,  
I've piled them in heaps!  
With the jawbone of a donkey,  
I've killed a thousand men!"

15:19 Hebrew *Ramath-lehi*. 15:19 Hebrew *En-hakkore*. 16:2 As in Greek and Syriac version; Hebrew reads *1,100 shekels*, about 28 pounds or 12.5 kilograms in weight. 16:13-14 As in Greek and Syriac version; Hebrew reads *anyone else*. / So while he slept, Delilah wove the seven braids of his hair into the



... else. / So while he slept, Delilah wove the seven braids of his h

So while he slept, Delilah wove the seven braids of his hair into the fabric. <sup>14</sup>Then she tightened it with the loom shuttle.\* Again she cried out, "Samson! The Philistines have

... else. / So while he slept, Delilah wove the seven braids of his h



come to capture you!" But Samson woke up, pulled back the loom shuttle, and yanked his hair away from the loom and the fabric.

<sup>15</sup>Then Delilah pouted, "How can you tell me, 'I love you,' when you don't share your secrets with me? You've made fun of me three times now, and you still haven't told me what makes you so strong!" <sup>16</sup>She tormented him with her nagging day after day until he was sick to death of it.

<sup>17</sup>Finally, Samson shared his secret with her. "My hair has never been cut," he confessed, "for I was dedicated to God as a Nazirite from birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as anyone else."

<sup>18</sup>Delilah realized he had finally told her the truth, so she sent for the Philistine rulers. "Come back one more time," she said, "for he has finally told me his secret." So the Philistine rulers returned with the money in their hands. <sup>19</sup>Delilah lulled Samson to sleep with his head in her lap, and then she called in a man to shave off the seven locks of his hair. In this way she began to bring him down,\* and his strength left him.

<sup>20</sup>Then she cried out, "Samson! The Philistines have come to capture you!"

When he woke up, he thought, "I will do as before and shake myself free." But he didn't realize the LORD had left him.

<sup>21</sup>So the Philistines captured him and gouged out his eyes. They took him to Gaza, where he was bound with bronze chains and forced to grind grain in the prison.

<sup>22</sup>But before long, his hair began to grow back.

### Samson's Final Victory

<sup>23</sup>The Philistine rulers held a great festival, offering sacrifices and praising their god, Dagon. They said, "Our god has given us victory over our enemy Samson!"

<sup>24</sup>When the people saw him, they praised their god, saying, "Our god has delivered our enemy to us! The one who killed so many of us is now in our power!"

<sup>25</sup>Half drunk by now, the people demanded, "Bring out Samson so he can amuse us!" So he was brought from the prison to amuse them, and they had him stand between the pillars supporting the roof.

<sup>26</sup>Samson said to the young servant who was leading him by the hand, "Place my hands against the pillars that hold up the temple. I want to rest against them." <sup>27</sup>Now the temple was completely filled with people. All the Philistine rulers were there, and there were about 3,000 men and women on the roof who were watching as Samson amused them.

<sup>28</sup>Then Samson prayed to the LORD, "Sovereign LORD, remember me again. O God, please strengthen me just one more time. With one blow let me pay back the Philistines for the loss of my two eyes." <sup>29</sup>Then Samson put his hands on the two center pillars that held up the temple. Pushing against them with both hands, <sup>30</sup>he prayed, "Let me die with the Philistines." And the temple crashed down on the Philistine rulers and all the people. So he killed more people when he died than he had during his entire lifetime.

<sup>31</sup>Later his brothers and other relatives went down to get his body. They took him back home and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol, where his father, Manoah, was buried. Samson had judged Israel for twenty years.

### Micah's Idols

**17** There was a man named Micah, who lived in the hill country of Ephraim. <sup>2</sup>One day he said to his mother, "I heard you place a curse on the person who stole 1,100

pieces\* of silver from you. Well, I have the money. I was the one who took it."

"The LORD bless you for admitting it," his mother replied. <sup>3</sup>He returned the money to her, and she said, "I now dedicate these silver coins to the LORD. In honor of my son, I will have an image carved and an idol cast."

<sup>4</sup>So when he returned the money to his mother, she took 200 silver coins and gave them to a silversmith, who made them into an image and an idol. And these were placed in Micah's house. <sup>5</sup>Micah set up a shrine for the idol, and he made a sacred ephod and some household idols. Then he installed one of his sons as his personal priest.

<sup>6</sup>In those days Israel had no king; all the people did what ever seemed right in their own eyes.

<sup>7</sup>One day a young Levite, who had been living in Bethlehem in Judah, arrived in that area. <sup>8</sup>He had left Bethlehem in search of another place to live, and as he traveled, he came out of Micah's shrine, he said, "What are you doing?"

Be quiet and come with us," they said. "Be a father and a priest to all of us. Isn't it better to be a priest for an entire tribe and clan of Israel than for the household of just one man?"

He replied, "I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am looking for a place to live."

<sup>10</sup>"Stay here with me," Micah said, "and you can be a father and priest to me. I will give you ten pieces\* of silver a year, plus a change of clothes and your food." <sup>11</sup>The Levite agreed to this, and the young man became like one of Micah's sons.

<sup>12</sup>So Micah installed the Levite as his personal priest, and he lived in Micah's house. <sup>13</sup>"I know the LORD will bless me now," Micah said, "because I have a Levite serving as my priest."

### Idolatry in the Tribe of Dan

**18** Now in those days Israel had no king. And the tribe of Dan was trying to find a place where they could settle, for they had not yet moved into the land assigned to them when the land was divided among the tribes of Israel. <sup>2</sup>The men of Dan chose from their clans five capable warriors from the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol to scout out a land for them to settle in.

When these warriors arrived in the hill country of Ephraim, they came to Micah's house and spent the night there. <sup>3</sup>While at Micah's house, they recognized the young Levite as their priest, so they went over and asked him, "Who brought you here, and what are you doing in this place? Why are you here?" <sup>4</sup>He told them about his agreement with Micah, that he had been hired as Micah's personal priest.

<sup>5</sup>Then they said, "Ask God whether or not our journey will be successful."

<sup>6</sup>"Go in peace," the priest replied. "For the LORD is with you on your journey."

<sup>7</sup>So the five men went on to the town of Laish, where they noticed the people living carefree lives, like the Sidonians. They were peaceful and secure.\* The people were wealthy because their land was very fertile. And they lived a great distance from Sidon and had no allies nearby.

<sup>8</sup>When the men returned to Zorah and Eshtaol, their relatives asked them, "What did you find?"

<sup>9</sup>The men replied, "Come on, let's attack them! We have seen the land, and it is very good. What are you waiting for? Don't hesitate to go and take possession of it. <sup>10</sup>When we get there, you will find the people living carefree lives. They have given us a spacious and fertile land, lacking in nothing."

<sup>11</sup>So 600 men from the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol. <sup>12</sup>They camped

west of Kiriath-jearim in Judah, which is called Mahaneh-dan\* to this day. <sup>13</sup>Then they went on from there to the hill country of Ephraim and came to the house of Micah.

<sup>14</sup>The five men who had scouted out the land around Laish explained to the others, "These buildings contain a sacred ephod, as well as some household idols, a carved image, and a cast idol. What do you think you should do?" <sup>15</sup>Then the five men turned off the road and went over to Micah's house, where the young Levite lived, and greeted him kindly. <sup>16</sup>Then the 600 armed warriors from the tribe of Dan stood at the entrance of the gate, <sup>17</sup>the five scouts entered the shrine and removed the carved image, the sacred ephod, the household idols, and the cast idol. Meanwhile, the priest was standing at the gate with the 600 armed warriors.

<sup>18</sup>When the priest saw the men carrying all the sacred objects out of Micah's shrine, he said, "What are you doing?"

"Be quiet and come with us," they said. "Be a father and a priest to all of us. Isn't it better to be a priest for an entire tribe and clan of Israel than for the household of just one man?"

<sup>19</sup>The young priest was quite happy to go with them, so he carried along the sacred ephod, the household idols, and the carved image. <sup>21</sup>They turned and started on their way again, carrying their children, livestock, and possessions in front of them.

<sup>22</sup>When the people from the tribe of Dan were quite a distance from Micah's house, the people who lived near Michah came chasing after them. <sup>23</sup>They were shouting as they caught up with them. The men of Dan turned around and said to Micah, "What's the matter? Why have you called these men together and chased after us like this?"

"What do you mean, 'What's the matter?'" Micah replied. "You've taken away all the gods I have made, and my inheritance, and I have nothing left!"

<sup>25</sup>The men of Dan said, "Watch what you say! There are some short-tempered men around here who might get angry with you and your family." <sup>26</sup>So the men of Dan continued on their way. When Micah saw that there were too many of them for him to attack, he turned around and went home.

<sup>27</sup>Then, with Micah's idols and his priest, the men of Dan came to the town of Laish, whose people were peaceful and secure. They attacked with swords and burned the town to the ground. <sup>28</sup>There was no one to rescue the people, for they lived a great distance from Sidon and had no allies nearby. This happened in the valley near Beth-rehob.

<sup>29</sup>Then the people of the tribe of Dan rebuilt the town and lived there. <sup>30</sup>They renamed the town Dan after their ancestor, Israel's son, but it had originally been called Laish.

<sup>31</sup>Then they set up the carved image, and they appointed Jonathan son of Gershom, son of Moses,\* as their priest. This family continued as priests for the tribe of Dan until the Exile. <sup>32</sup>So Micah's carved image was worshiped by the tribe of Dan as long as the Tabernacle of God remained at Shiloh.

### The Levite and His Concubine

**19** Now in those days Israel had no king. There was a man from the tribe of Levi living in a remote area of the hill country of Ephraim. One day he brought home a woman from Bethlehem in Judah to be his concubine. <sup>2</sup>But she became angry with him\* and returned to her father's house in Bethlehem.

<sup>3</sup>After about four months, her husband set out for Bethlehem to speak personally to her and persuade her to come back.

16:19 Or she began to torment him. Greek version reads He began to grow weak. 17:10 Hebrew 10 shekels, about 4 ounces or 114 grams in weight. 18:7 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

17:2 Hebrew 1,100 shekels, about 28 pounds or 12.5 kilograms in weight. 18:30 As in an ancient Hebrew tradition. 19:2 Or she was unfaithful to him. 19:3 As in Greek version; Hebrew reads now I'm going to the Tabernacle of the LORD.



from you. Well, I have the money. I was...  
less you for admitting it," his mother replied.  
the money to her, and she said, "I now dedicate  
to the LORD. In honor of my son, I will have  
an idol cast."

She returned the money to his mother, she took  
the silver and gave them to a silversmith, who made  
an image and an idol. And these were placed in  
Micah's house. Micah set up a shrine for the idol, and he  
employed the ephod and some household idols. Then he  
made his sons as his personal priest.

At that time Israel had no king; all the people did what  
was right in their own eyes.

A young Levite, who had been living in Bethlehem,  
arrived in that area. He had left Bethlehem to find  
another place to live, and as he traveled, he came to  
the hill country of Ephraim. He happened to stop at a  
place where he was traveling through. "Where are you  
going?" he asked him.

"I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am  
looking for a place to live."

"Stay with me," Micah said, "and you can be as  
one of my sons. I will give you ten pieces\* of silver  
a year, and I will give you a change of clothes and your food." 11 The Levite  
agreed, and the young man became like one of his  
sons.

Micah installed the Levite as his personal priest in his  
house. 13 "I know the LORD will bless me," Micah  
said, "because I have a Levite serving as my priest."

**The Tribe of Dan**

In those days Israel had no king. And the tribes  
were trying to find a place where they could settle.  
They had not yet moved into the land assigned to them.  
The land was divided among the tribes of Israel. The  
tribe of Dan chose from their clans five capable warriors,  
sons of Zorah and Eshtaul, to scout out a place for  
the tribe.

These warriors arrived in the hill country of Ephraim,  
near Micah's house, and spent the night there. When  
they went over and asked him, "Who brought you here?  
What are you doing in this place? Why are you here?"  
He told them about his agreement with Micah, and  
how he had been hired as Micah's personal priest.

"Ask God whether or not our journey will be  
successful," the priest replied. "For the LORD will  
show us the way."

The men went on to the town of Laish, where the  
people were living carefree lives, like the Sodomites.  
The land was peaceful and secure. The people were  
prosperous, and their land was very fertile. And they  
were safe from Sidon and had no allies nearby.  
The men returned to Zorah and Eshtaul, and told  
them, "What did you find?"

"We found a place," they replied, "where we can settle.  
It is very good. What are you waiting for? Go  
there and take possession of it. You will find the  
people living carefree, and the land is spacious and  
fertile, lacking in nothing. The people are peaceful  
and secure, and they have no allies nearby. The  
men from the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons,  
went out from Zorah and Eshtaul. 12 They came  
about four months, and their husband set out for  
Bethlehem to see her personally and persuade her to  
come with him."

100 shekels, about 28 pounds or 12.5 kilograms. The  
weight of the silver is uncertain.

west of Kiriath-jearim in Judah, which is called  
Bethlehem-dan\* to this day. 13 Then they went on from there  
into the hill country of Ephraim and came to the house of  
Micah.

The five men who had scouted out the land around Laish  
explained to the others, "These buildings contain a  
sacred ephod, as well as some household idols, a carved image,  
and a cast idol. What do you think you should do?" 15 Then  
the five men turned off the road and went over to Micah's  
house, where the young Levite lived, and greeted him kindly.  
The 600 armed warriors from the tribe of Dan stood at  
the entrance of the gate, 17 the five scouts entered the shrine  
and removed the carved image, the sacred ephod, and the  
household idols, and the cast idol. Meanwhile, the priest was  
standing at the gate with the 600 armed warriors.

When the priest saw the men carrying all the sacred objects  
out of Micah's shrine, he said, "What are you doing?"

"Be quiet and come with us," they said. "Be a father and  
a teacher to all of us. Isn't it better to be a priest for an entire  
tribe and clan of Israel than for the household of just one  
man?"

The young priest was quite happy to go with them, so he  
went along with the sacred ephod, the household idols, and the  
cast image. 21 They turned and started on their way again,  
taking their children, livestock, and possessions in front of  
them.

When the people from the tribe of Dan were quite a  
distance from Micah's house, the people who lived near Micah  
came chasing after them. 23 They were shouting as they  
came up with them. The men of Dan turned around and  
said to Micah, "What's the matter? Why have you called  
the men together and chased after us like this?"

"What do you mean, 'What's the matter?'" Micah re-  
plied. "You've taken away all the gods I have made, and my  
son, and I have nothing left!"

The men of Dan said, "Watch what you say! There are  
short-tempered men around here who might get angry  
with you and your family." 26 So the men of Dan continued  
on their way. When Micah saw that there were too many of  
them to fight, he turned around and went home.

Then, with Micah's idols and his priest, the men of Dan  
went to the town of Laish, whose people were peaceful and  
secure. They attacked with swords and burned the town to  
the ground. 28 There was no one to rescue the people, for  
they lived a great distance from Sidon and had no allies  
nearby. This happened in the valley near Beth-rehob.

Then the people of the tribe of Dan rebuilt the town and  
lived there. 29 They renamed the town Dan after their ances-  
tor's son, but it had originally been called Laish.

Then they set up the carved image, and they appointed  
the son of Gershom, son of Moses,\* as their priest. This  
man continued as priests for the tribe of Dan until the Ex-  
odus. Micah's carved image was worshiped by the tribe of  
Dan as the Tabernacle of God remained at Shiloh.

**Levite and His Concubine**

Now in those days Israel had no king. There was a  
man from the tribe of Levi living in a remote area of  
the hill country of Ephraim. One day he brought home a  
concubine from Bethlehem in Judah to be his concubine. 2 But  
she became angry with him\* and returned to her father's  
house in Bethlehem.

After about four months, her husband set out for Bethle-  
hem to see her personally and persuade her to come  
back with him."

18:30 As in an ancient Hebrew tradition, some Greek manuscripts, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads  
19:2 Or she was unfaithful to him. 19:3 As in Greek version; Hebrew reads When she brought him to. 19:18 As in Greek version (see  
19:18) reads now I'm going to the Tabernacle of the Lord.

back. He took with him a servant and a pair of donkeys.  
When he arrived at her father's house, her father saw him  
and welcomed him. 4 Her father urged him to stay awhile, so  
he stayed three days, eating, drinking, and sleeping there.

5 On the fourth day the man was up early, ready to leave,  
but the woman's father said to his son-in-law, "Have some-  
thing to eat before you go." 6 So the two men sat down to-  
gether and had something to eat and drink. Then the  
woman's father said, "Please stay another night and enjoy  
yourself." 7 The man got up to leave, but his father-in-law kept  
urging him to stay, so he finally gave in and stayed the night.

8 On the morning of the fifth day he was up early again,  
ready to leave, and again the woman's father said, "Have  
something to eat; then you can leave later this afternoon." So  
they had another day of feasting. 9 Later, as the man and his  
concubine and servant were preparing to leave, his father-in-  
law said, "Look, it's almost evening. Stay the night and enjoy  
yourself. Tomorrow you can get up early and be on your way."

10 But this time the man was determined to leave. So he  
took his two saddled donkeys and his concubine and  
headed in the direction of Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). 11 It was  
late in the day when they neared Jebus, and the man's ser-  
vant said to him, "Let's stop at this Jebusite town and spend  
the night there."

12 "No," his master said, "we can't stay in this foreign town  
where there are no Israelites. Instead, we will go on to Gibe-  
eah. 13 Come on, let's try to get as far as Gibeah or Ramah,  
and we'll spend the night in one of those towns." 14 So they went  
on. The sun was setting as they came to Gibeah, a town in the  
land of Benjamin, 15 so they stopped there to spend the  
night. They rested in the town square, but no one took them  
in for the night.

16 That evening an old man came home from his work in  
the fields. He was from the hill country of Ephraim, but he  
was living in Gibeah, where the people were from the tribe  
of Benjamin. 17 When he saw the travelers sitting in the town  
square, he asked them where they were from and where  
they were going.

18 "We have been in Bethlehem in Judah," the man re-  
plied. "We are on our way to a remote area in the hill country  
of Ephraim, which is my home. I traveled to Bethlehem, and  
now I'm returning home. \* But no one has taken us in for the  
night, 19 even though we have everything we need. We have  
straw and feed for our donkeys and plenty of bread and  
wine for ourselves."

20 "You are welcome to stay with me," the old man said. "I  
will give you anything you might need. But whatever you do,  
don't spend the night in the square." 21 So he took them  
home with him and fed the donkeys. After they washed  
their feet, they ate and drank together.

22 While they were enjoying themselves, a crowd of  
troublemakers from the town surrounded the house. They  
began beating at the door and shouting to the old man, "Bring  
out the man who is staying with you so we can have sex with  
him."

23 The old man stepped outside to talk to them. "No, my  
brothers, don't do such an evil thing. For this man is a guest in  
my house, and such a thing would be shameful. 24 Here, take  
my virgin daughter and this man's concubine. I will bring  
them out to you, and you can abuse them and do whatever  
you like. But don't do such a shameful thing to this man."

25 But they wouldn't listen to him. So the Levite took hold  
of his concubine and pushed her out the door. The men of  
the town abused her all night, taking turns raping her until

18:30 As in an ancient Hebrew tradition, some Greek manuscripts, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads  
19:2 Or she was unfaithful to him. 19:3 As in Greek version; Hebrew reads When she brought him to. 19:18 As in Greek version (see  
19:18) reads now I'm going to the Tabernacle of the Lord.



morning. Finally, at dawn they let her go. <sup>26</sup>At daybreak the woman returned to the house where her husband was staying. She collapsed at the door of the house and lay there until it was light.

<sup>27</sup>When her husband opened the door to leave, there lay his concubine with her hands on the threshold. <sup>28</sup>He said, "Get up! Let's go!" But there was no answer. <sup>\*</sup> So he put her body on his donkey and took her home.

<sup>29</sup>When he got home, he took a knife and cut his concubine's body into twelve pieces. Then he sent one piece to each tribe throughout all the territory of Israel.

<sup>30</sup>Everyone who saw it said, "Such a horrible crime has not been committed in all the time since Israel left Egypt. Think about it! What are we going to do? Who's going to speak up?"

#### Israel's War with Benjamin

**20** Then all the Israelites were united as one man, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south, including those from across the Jordan in the land of Gilead. The entire community assembled in the presence of the LORD at Mizpah. <sup>2</sup>The leaders of all the people and all the tribes of Israel—400,000 warriors armed with swords—took their positions in the assembly of the people of God. <sup>3</sup>(Word soon reached the land of Benjamin that the other tribes had gone up to Mizpah.) The Israelites then asked how this terrible crime had happened.

<sup>4</sup>The Levite, the husband of the woman who had been murdered, said, "My concubine and I came to spend the night in Gibeah, a town that belongs to the people of Benjamin. <sup>5</sup>That night some of the leading citizens of Gibeah surrounded the house, planning to kill me, and they raped my concubine until she was dead. <sup>6</sup>So I cut her body into twelve pieces and sent the pieces throughout the territory assigned to Israel, for these men have committed a terrible and shameful crime. <sup>7</sup>Now then, all of you—the entire community of Israel—must decide here and now what should be done about this!"

<sup>8</sup>And all the people rose to their feet in unison and declared, "None of us will return home! No, not even one of us! <sup>9</sup>Instead, this is what we will do to Gibeah; we will draw lots to decide who will attack it. <sup>10</sup>One-tenth of the men\* from each tribe will be chosen to supply the warriors with food, and the rest of us will take revenge on Gibeah\* of Benjamin for this shameful thing they have done in Israel." <sup>11</sup>So all the Israelites were completely united, and they gathered together to attack the town.

<sup>12</sup>The Israelites sent messengers to the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What a terrible thing has been done among you! <sup>13</sup>Give up those evil men, those troublemakers from Gibeah, so we can execute them and purge Israel of this evil."

But the people of Benjamin would not listen. <sup>14</sup>Instead, they came from their towns and gathered at Gibeah to fight the Israelites. <sup>15</sup>In all, 26,000 of their warriors armed with swords arrived in Gibeah to join the 700 elite troops who lived there. <sup>16</sup>Among Benjamin's elite troops, 700 were left-handed, and each of them could sling a rock and hit a target within a hairsbreadth without missing. <sup>17</sup>Israel had 400,000 experienced soldiers armed with swords, not counting Benjamin's warriors.

<sup>18</sup>Before the battle the Israelites went to Bethel and asked God, "Which tribe should go first to attack the people of Benjamin?"

The LORD answered, "Judah is to go first."

<sup>19</sup>So the Israelites left early the next morning and

camped near Gibeah. <sup>20</sup>Then they advanced toward Gibeah to attack the men of Benjamin. <sup>21</sup>But Benjamin's warriors who were defending the town, came out and killed 22,000 Israelites on the battlefield that day.

<sup>22</sup>But the Israelites encouraged each other and took their positions again at the same place they had fought the previous day. <sup>23</sup>For they had gone up to Bethel and wept in the presence of the LORD until evening. They had asked the LORD, "Should we fight against our relatives from Benjamin again?"

And the LORD had said, "Go out and fight against them." <sup>24</sup>So the next day they went out again to fight against the men of Benjamin, <sup>25</sup>but the men of Benjamin killed another 18,000 Israelites, all of whom were experienced with the sword.

<sup>26</sup>Then all the Israelites went up to Bethel and wept in the presence of the LORD and fasted until evening. They also brought burnt offerings and peace offerings to the LORD. <sup>27</sup>The Israelites went up seeking direction from the LORD (In those days the Ark of the Covenant of God was in Bethel.) <sup>28</sup>And Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron was the priest. The Israelites asked the LORD, "Should we fight against our relatives from Benjamin again, or should we stop?"

The LORD said, "Go! Tomorrow I will hand them over to you."

<sup>29</sup>So the Israelites set an ambush all around Gibeah. <sup>30</sup>They went out on the third day and took their positions the same place as before. <sup>31</sup>When the men of Benjamin came out to attack, they were drawn away from the town. And as they had done before, they began to kill the Israelites. About thirty Israelites died in the open fields and along the roads, one leading to Bethel and the other leading back to Gibeah.

<sup>32</sup>Then the warriors of Benjamin shouted, "We're defeating them as we did before!" But the Israelites had planned advance to run away so that the men of Benjamin would chase them along the roads and be drawn away from the town.

<sup>33</sup>When the main group of Israelite warriors reached Baal-tamar, they turned and took up their positions. Meanwhile, the Israelites hiding in ambush to the west\* of Gibeah jumped up to fight. <sup>34</sup>There were 10,000 elite Israelite troops who advanced against Gibeah. The fighting was heavy that Benjamin didn't realize the impending disaster. <sup>35</sup>So the LORD helped Israel defeat Benjamin, and the Israelites killed 25,100 of Benjamin's warriors, all of whom were experienced swordsmen. <sup>36</sup>Then the men of Benjamin saw that they were beaten.

The Israelites had retreated from Benjamin's warriors in order to give those hiding in ambush more room to maneuver against Gibeah. <sup>37</sup>Then those who were hiding rushed from all sides and killed everyone in the town. <sup>38</sup>They then arranged to send up a large cloud of smoke from the town as a signal. <sup>39</sup>When the Israelites saw the smoke, they turned and attacked Benjamin's warriors.

By that time Benjamin's warriors had killed about 1,000 Israelites, and they shouted, "We're defeating them as we did in the first battle!" <sup>40</sup>But when the warriors of Benjamin looked behind them and saw the smoke rising into the air from every part of the town, <sup>41</sup>the men of Israel turned and attacked. At this point the men of Benjamin became terrified, because they realized disaster was close at hand. <sup>42</sup>They turned around and fled before the Israelites toward the wilderness.

But they couldn't escape the battle, and the people who came out of the nearby towns were also killed. <sup>\*</sup> The Israelites surrounded the men of Benjamin and chased them relentlessly, finally overtaking them east of Gibeah. <sup>44</sup>That day 18,000 of Benjamin's strongest warriors died in battle. <sup>45</sup>The survivors fled into the wilderness toward the rock of Rimmon, but Israel killed 5,000 of them along the road. They continued the chase until they had killed another 2,000 near Gidom.

<sup>46</sup>So that day the tribe of Benjamin lost 25,000 strong warriors armed with swords, <sup>47</sup>leaving only 600 men who fled to the rock of Rimmon, where they lived for four months. <sup>48</sup>And the Israelites returned and slaughtered everything in all the towns—the people, the livestock, and everything they found. They also burned down all the towns that came to.

#### Israel Provides Wives for Benjamin

**21** The Israelites had vowed at Mizpah, "We will never give our daughters in marriage to a man from the tribe of Benjamin." <sup>2</sup>Now the people went to Bethel and sat in the presence of God until evening, weeping loudly and bitterly. <sup>3</sup>"O LORD, God of Israel," they cried out, "why has this happened in Israel? Now one of our tribes is missing from Israel!"

<sup>4</sup>Early the next morning the people built an altar and presented their burnt offerings and peace offerings on it. Then they said, "Who among the tribes of Israel did not come to Mizpah when we held our assembly in the presence of the LORD?" At that time they had taken a solemn oath in the LORD's presence, vowing that anyone who refused to come would be put to death.

The Israelites felt sorry for their brother Benjamin and said, "Today one of the tribes of Israel has been cut off. How can we find wives for the few who remain, since we have sworn by the LORD not to give them our daughters in marriage?"

<sup>5</sup>So they asked, "Who among the tribes of Israel did not come to Mizpah when we assembled in the presence of the LORD?" And they discovered that no one from Jabesh-gilead attended the assembly. <sup>6</sup>For after they counted all the men, no one from Jabesh-gilead was present.

<sup>7</sup>So the assembly sent 12,000 of their best warriors to Jabesh-gilead with orders to kill everyone there, including the women.

<sup>\*</sup> battle, for the people from the nearby towns also came out and killed them.

<sup>\*</sup> here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either

19:28 Greek version adds *for she was dead*. 20:10a Hebrew *10 men from every hundred, 100 men from every thousand, and 1,000 men from every 10,000*. 20:10b Hebrew *Geba*, in this case a variant spelling of Gibeah; also in 20:33. 20:33 As in Greek and Syriac versions and Latin Vulgate; Hebrew *hiding in the open space*.



when they advanced toward Gibeon. But Benjamin's warriors came out and killed 22,000 of them that day.

Encouraged each other and took the place they had fought the previous day up to Bethel and wept until evening. They had asked the LORD, "Should we fight against our relatives from Benjamin?"

"Go out and fight against them," the LORD answered. "I will be with you." So the men of Benjamin went out again to fight against the men of Israel. The men of Benjamin killed another 18,000 of them, but the LORD was with them.

They went up to Bethel and wept in the morning and fasted until evening. They offered peace offerings to the LORD and sought direction from the LORD. The Covenant of God was in Benjamin.

Leazar and grandson of Aaron asked the LORD, "Should we fight against Benjamin again, or should we stop?"

"Tomorrow I will hand them over to you," the LORD answered. "Set an ambush all around Gibeon. On the third day and took their positions there."

When the men of Benjamin were drawn away from the town before, they began to kill the Israelites in the open fields and around Bethel and the other leading towns.

Benjamin shouted, "We're defeating them!" But the Israelites had planned to do that the men of Benjamin were drawn away from the roads and be drawn away from the roads.

A group of Israelite warriors remained in ambush to the west of Gibeon. When the men of Benjamin were drawn away from the roads, the Israelites came out of their ambush and took up their positions.

There were 10,000 elite warriors in the Israelite army. The fighting was fierce, but the Israelites didn't realize the impending disaster. They had defeated Benjamin, and the LORD had given them victory.

100 of Benjamin's warriors were killed. Then the Israelites were beaten. The LORD had given them victory, but they had not followed his commands.

Benjamin's warriors were drawn away from Benjamin's warriors. The LORD had given them victory, but they had not followed his commands.

A large cloud of smoke from the town. The Israelites saw the smoke, and the LORD had given them victory, but they had not followed his commands.

Benjamin's warriors had killed another 18,000 of them. The LORD had given them victory, but they had not followed his commands.

But when the warriors of Benjamin saw the smoke rising from the town, the men of Benjamin became discouraged. The LORD had given them victory, but they had not followed his commands.

The LORD had given them victory, but they had not followed his commands. The LORD had given them victory, but they had not followed his commands.

wilderness. But they couldn't escape the battle, and the people who came out of the nearby towns were also killed.\* The Israelites surrounded the men of Benjamin and chased them relentlessly, finally overtaking them east of Gibeon. That day 18,000 of Benjamin's strongest warriors died in battle. The survivors fled into the wilderness toward the rock of Rimmon, but Israel killed 5,000 of them along the road. They continued the chase until they had killed another 2,000 near Gidom.

So that day the tribe of Benjamin lost 25,000 strong warriors armed with swords, leaving only 600 men who fled to the rock of Rimmon, where they lived for four months. And the Israelites returned and slaughtered everything in all the towns—the people, the livestock, and everything they found. They also burned down all the towns that came to.

### Provides Wives for Benjamin

The Israelites had vowed at Mizpah, "We will never give our daughters in marriage to a man from the tribe of Benjamin." Now the people went to Bethel and sat in the presence of God until evening, weeping loudly and crying, "O LORD, God of Israel, why has this happened in Israel? Now one of our tribes is missing from Israel!"

The next morning the people built an altar and presented their burnt offerings and peace offerings on it. They said, "Who among the tribes of Israel did not come to Mizpah when we held our assembly in the presence of the LORD?" At that time they had taken a solemn oath in the LORD's presence, vowing that anyone who refused to come would be put to death.

The Israelites felt sorry for their brother Benjamin and today one of the tribes of Israel has been cut off. How can we find wives for the few who remain, since we have sworn by the LORD not to give them our daughters in marriage?"

They asked, "Who among the tribes of Israel did not come to Mizpah when we assembled in the presence of the LORD?" and they discovered that no one from Jabesh-gilead attended the assembly. For after they counted all the tribes, no one from Jabesh-gilead was present.

The assembly sent 12,000 of their best warriors to Jabesh-gilead with orders to kill everyone there, including

the people from the nearby towns also came out and killed them. 20:43 The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. 21:11 The Hebrew refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering.

women and children. 11 "This is what you are to do," they said. "Completely destroy\* all the males and every woman who is not a virgin." 12 Among the residents of Jabesh-gilead they found 400 young virgins who had never slept with a man, and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh in the land of Canaan.

The Israelite assembly sent a peace delegation to the remaining people of Benjamin who were living at the rock of Rimmon. 14 Then the men of Benjamin returned to their homes, and the 400 women of Jabesh-gilead who had been spared were given to them as wives. But there were not enough women for all of them.

The people felt sorry for Benjamin because the LORD had made this gap among the tribes of Israel. 16 So the elders of the assembly asked, "How can we find wives for the few who remain, since the women of the tribe of Benjamin are dead? 17 There must be heirs for the survivors so that an entire tribe of Israel is not wiped out. 18 But we cannot give them our own daughters in marriage because we have sworn with a solemn oath that anyone who does this will fall under God's curse."

Then they thought of the annual festival of the LORD held in Shiloh, south of Lebonah and north of Bethel, along the east side of the road that goes from Bethel to Shechem. 20 They told the men of Benjamin who still needed wives, "Go and hide in the vineyards. 21 When you see the young women of Shiloh come out for their dances, rush out from the vineyards, and each of you can take one of them home to the land of Benjamin to be your wife! 22 And when their fathers and brothers come to us in protest, we will tell them, 'Please be sympathetic. Let them have your daughters, for we didn't find wives for all of them when we destroyed Jabesh-gilead. And you are not guilty of breaking the vow since you did not actually give your daughters to them in marriage.'"

So the men of Benjamin did as they were told. Each man caught one of the women as she danced in the celebration and carried her off to be his wife. They returned to their own land, and they rebuilt their towns and lived in them.

Then the people of Israel departed by tribes and families, and they returned to their own homes.

In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes.

21:11 The Hebrew refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering.



# RUTH

**Author** Samuel, according to Jewish tradition (although the genealogy suggests it was written after his death)

**Date Written** Between 1375 and 1050 B.C.

**Content** God often uses the most unlikely people to accomplish his plans and purposes. In this book, Ruth, a Moabite widow, willingly leaves her homeland to care for her mother-in-law, Naomi, who is also a widow. Being a Moabite, Ruth was not a part of God's chosen people, Israel, but she chose to follow God anyway. God rewarded her for her faithfulness and her kindness to her mother-in-law. First, he provided for Ruth's physical needs. As Ruth went out to get food, she came upon a field, where the owner allowed her to gather as much leftover grain as she needed. But God's provision did not stop at Ruth's immediate physical needs. The owner of the field, Boaz, also happened to be a relative of Naomi. Boaz took a sincere interest in Ruth, and eventually they were married. God continued to show his faithful love to Ruth and Boaz by honoring them through their descendants—King David and, hundreds of years later, Jesus Christ.

## Elimelech Moves His Family to Moab

**1** In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a severe famine came upon the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah left his home and went to live in the country of Moab, taking his wife and two sons with him. <sup>2</sup>The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi. Their two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. And when they reached Moab, they settled there.

<sup>3</sup>Then Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup>The two sons married Moabite women. One married a woman named Orpah, and the other a woman named Ruth. But about ten years later, <sup>5</sup>both Mahlon and Kilion died. This left Naomi alone, without her two sons or her husband.

## Naomi and Ruth Return

<sup>6</sup>Then Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had blessed his people in Judah by giving them good crops again. So Naomi and her daughters-in-law got ready to leave Moab to return to her homeland. <sup>7</sup>With her two daughters-in-law she set out from the place where she had been living, and they took the road that would lead them back to Judah.

<sup>8</sup>But on the way, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back to your mothers' homes. And may the LORD reward you for your kindness to your husbands and to me. <sup>9</sup>May the LORD bless you with the security of another marriage." Then she kissed them good-bye, and they all broke down and wept.

<sup>10</sup>"No," they said. "We want to go with you to your people."

<sup>11</sup>But Naomi replied, "Why should you go on with me? Can I still give birth to other sons who could grow up to be your husbands? <sup>12</sup>No, my daughters, return to your parents' homes, for I am too old to marry again. And even if it were possible, and I were to get married tonight and bear sons, then what? <sup>13</sup>Would you wait for them to grow up and refuse to marry someone else? No, of course not, my daughters! Things are far more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD himself has raised his fist against me."

<sup>14</sup>And again they wept together, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye. But Ruth clung tightly to Naomi. <sup>15</sup>"Look," Naomi said to her, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. You should do the same."

1:20 Naomi means "pleasant"; Mara means "bitter." 1:21 Or has testified against me.

<sup>16</sup>But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. <sup>17</sup>Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!" <sup>18</sup>When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said nothing more.

<sup>19</sup>So the two of them continued on their journey. When they came to Bethlehem, the entire town was excited by their arrival. "Is it really Naomi?" the women asked.

<sup>20</sup>"Don't call me Naomi," she responded. "Instead, call me Mara,\* for the Almighty has made life very bitter for me. I went away full, but the LORD has brought me home empty. Why call me Naomi when the LORD has caused me to suffer and the Almighty has sent such tragedy upon me?"

<sup>22</sup>So Naomi returned from Moab, accompanied by her daughter-in-law Ruth, the young Moabite woman. They arrived in Bethlehem in late spring, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

## Ruth Works in Boaz's Field

**2** Now there was a wealthy and influential man in Bethlehem named Boaz, who was a relative of Naomi's husband, Elimelech.

<sup>20</sup>One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go down into the harvest fields to pick up the stalks of grain left behind by anyone who is kind enough to let me do it."

Naomi replied, "All right, my daughter, go ahead." Ruth went out to gather grain behind the harvesters. And it happened, she found herself working in a field that belonged to Boaz, the relative of her father-in-law, Elimelech.

<sup>4</sup>While she was there, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters. "The LORD be with you!" he said.

"The LORD bless you!" the harvesters replied.

<sup>5</sup>Then Boaz asked his foreman, "Who is that young woman over there? Who does she belong to?"

<sup>6</sup>And the foreman replied, "She is the young woman from Moab who came back with Naomi. <sup>7</sup>She asked me this morning if she could gather grain behind the harvesters. She has been hard at work ever since, except for a few minutes' rest in the shelter."

<sup>8</sup>Boaz went over and said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don't go

to other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. <sup>9</sup>See which part of the field they are harvesting and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to treat you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself to the water they have drawn from the well."

Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. "What have I done to deserve such kindness?" she asked. "I am only a foreigner."

"Yes, I know," Boaz replied. "But I also know about everything you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband. I have heard how you left your father and mother and your own land to live here among complete strangers. <sup>12</sup>May the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done."

<sup>13</sup>"I hope I continue to please you, sir," she replied. "You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, even though I am not one of your workers."

<sup>14</sup>At mealtime Boaz called to her, "Come over here, and eat yourself to some food. You can dip your bread in the wine." So she sat with his harvesters, and Boaz gave her roasted grain to eat. She ate all she wanted and still had some left over.

<sup>15</sup>When Ruth went back to work again, Boaz ordered his young men, "Let her gather grain right among the sheaves without stopping her. <sup>16</sup>And pull out some heads of barley from the bundles and drop them on purpose for her. Let her pick them up, and don't give her a hard time!"

<sup>17</sup>So Ruth gathered barley there all day, and when she came out the grain that evening, it filled an entire basket. <sup>18</sup>She carried it back into town and showed it to her mother-in-law.

Ruth also gave her the roasted grain that was left from her meal.

<sup>19</sup>"Where did you gather all this grain today?" Naomi asked. "Where did you work? May the LORD bless the one who helped you!"

Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man in whose field she had worked. She said, "The man I worked with is named Boaz."

<sup>20</sup>"May the LORD bless him!" Naomi told her daughter-in-law. "He is showing his kindness to us as well as to your dead husband. <sup>21</sup>That man is one of our closest relatives, one of our family redeemers."

Then Ruth<sup>a</sup> said, "What's more, Boaz even told me to stay back and stay with his harvesters until the entire harvest is completed."

"Good!" Naomi exclaimed. "Do as he said, my daughter. Stay with his young women right through the whole harvest. You might be harassed in other fields, but you'll be safe with him."

<sup>22</sup>So Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz's fields and gathered grain with them until the end of the barley harvest. Then she continued working with them through the wheat harvest in early summer. And all the while she stayed with her mother-in-law.

## at the Threshing Floor

<sup>1</sup>One day Naomi said to Ruth, "My daughter, it's time that you find a permanent home for you, so that you will be married for. <sup>2</sup>Boaz is a close relative of ours, and he's been kind by letting you gather grain with his young women. Tonight he will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor. So do as I tell you—take a bath and put on perfume and dress in your nicest clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, and don't let Boaz see you until he has finished eating and

drunk. <sup>3</sup>When he lies down, go and lie at his feet. <sup>4</sup>He will tell you what to do."

Ruth did everything that Naomi told her to do. She went to the threshing floor, and she lay at Boaz's feet.

<sup>5</sup>Boaz came and ate and drank and was merry. Then he lay down. Ruth went and lay at his feet, just as Naomi had told her to do.

<sup>6</sup>Boaz woke up in the middle of the night. He turned and found a woman lying at his feet.

<sup>7</sup>"What are you doing here?" he asked. Ruth told him everything that Naomi had told her to do.

<sup>8</sup>Boaz said, "All right, my daughter. Do whatever you like. I will do what you say. <sup>9</sup>But don't tell this to any of the young men here. If they hear about it, they will laugh at me."

<sup>10</sup>Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now you can go. Wash your feet and eat and drink, and be satisfied. <sup>11</sup>When you get up tomorrow, go to the river and wash your face. Then come and sit with my young women."

<sup>12</sup>So Ruth went and did what Boaz told her to do. She washed her face and feet at the river, and she came and sat with the young women.

<sup>13</sup>When Boaz got up in the morning, he found that Ruth had come and sat with the young women.

<sup>14</sup>Boaz said to Ruth, "Now you can go. Wash your face and feet at the river, and come and sit with my young women."

<sup>15</sup>So Ruth went and did what Boaz told her to do. She washed her face and feet at the river, and she came and sat with the young women.

<sup>16</sup>When Boaz got up in the morning, he found that Ruth had come and sat with the young women.

<sup>17</sup>Boaz said to Ruth, "Now you can go. Wash your face and feet at the river, and come and sit with my young women."

<sup>18</sup>So Ruth went and did what Boaz told her to do. She washed her face and feet at the river, and she came and sat with the young women.

<sup>19</sup>When Boaz got up in the morning, he found that Ruth had come and sat with the young women.

<sup>20</sup>Boaz said to Ruth, "Now you can go. Wash your face and feet at the river, and come and sit with my young women."

<sup>21</sup>So Ruth went and did what Boaz told her to do. She washed her face and feet at the river, and she came and sat with the young women.

<sup>22</sup>When Boaz got up in the morning, he found that Ruth had come and sat with the young women.

<sup>23</sup>Boaz said to Ruth, "Now you can go. Wash your face and feet at the river, and come and sit with my young women."

<sup>24</sup>So Ruth went and did what Boaz told her to do. She washed her face and feet at the river, and she came and sat with the young women.



other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. \*See which part of the field they are harvesting and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to touch you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself with the water they have drawn from the well."

Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. "What have I done to deserve such kindness?" she asked. "I am only a foreigner."

"Yes, I know," Boaz replied. "But I also know about the kindness you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband. I have heard how you left your father and mother and your own land to live here among strangers. <sup>12</sup>May the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done."

"I hope I continue to please you, sir," she replied. "You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, even though I am not one of your workers."

"At mealtime Boaz called to her, 'Come over here, and help yourself to some food. You can dip your bread in the soup.' So she sat with his harvesters, and Boaz gave her roasted grain to eat. She ate all she wanted and still some was left over."

When Ruth went back to work again, Boaz ordered his harvesters, "Let her gather grain right among the sheaves and stop her. <sup>16</sup>And pull out some heads of barley from the bundles and drop them on purpose for her. Let her pick them up, and don't give her a hard time!"

Ruth gathered barley there all day, and when she returned at evening, it filled an entire basket.\* She carried it back into town and showed it to her mother-in-law. Boaz also gave her the roasted grain that was left over from his meal.

"Where did you gather all this grain today?" Naomi asked. "Where did you work? May the LORD bless the one who hired you!"

Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man in whose field she had worked. She said, "The man I worked with is named Boaz."

"May the LORD bless him!" Naomi told her daughter-in-law. "He is showing his kindness to us as well as to your dead husband. \* That man is one of our closest relatives, one of our family redeemers."

Ruth\* said, "What's more, Boaz even told me to stay here and stay with his harvesters until the entire harvest is completed."

"Praise the LORD!" Naomi exclaimed. "Do as he said, my daughter. Stay with his young women right through the whole harvest. You won't be harassed in other fields, but you'll be safe with them."

Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz's fields and gathered grain with them until the end of the barley harvest. Then she continued working with them through the wheat harvest in early summer. And all the while she stayed with her mother-in-law.

**The Threshing Floor**  
One day Naomi said to Ruth, "My daughter, it's time that you find a permanent home for you, so that you will be able to marry. <sup>2</sup>Boaz is a close relative of ours, and he's been kind to letting you gather grain with his young women. He will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor."

"I tell you—take a bath and put on perfume and wear your nicest clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, and wait for Boaz to see you until he has finished eating and drinking. <sup>4</sup>Be sure to notice where he lies down; then go and uncover his feet and lie down there. He will tell you what to do."

"I will do everything you say," Ruth replied. <sup>6</sup>So she went down to the threshing floor that night and followed the instructions of her mother-in-law.

<sup>7</sup>After Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he lay down at the far end of the pile of grain and went to sleep. Then Ruth came quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. <sup>8</sup>Around midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet! <sup>9</sup>"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am your servant Ruth," she replied. "Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer."

<sup>10</sup>"The LORD bless you, my daughter!" Boaz exclaimed. "You are showing even more family loyalty now than you did before, for you have not gone after a younger man, whether rich or poor. <sup>11</sup>Now don't worry about a thing, my daughter. I will do what is necessary, for everyone in town knows you are a virtuous woman. <sup>12</sup>But while it's true that I am one of your family redeemers, there is another man who is more closely related to you than I am. <sup>13</sup>Stay here tonight, and in the morning I will talk to him. If he is willing to redeem you, very well. Let him marry you. But if he is not willing, then as surely as the LORD lives, I will redeem you myself! Now lie down here until morning."

<sup>14</sup>So Ruth lay at Boaz's feet until the morning, but she got up before it was light enough for people to recognize each other. For Boaz had said, "No one must know that a woman was here at the threshing floor." <sup>15</sup>Then Boaz said to her, "Bring your cloak and spread it out." He measured six scoops\* of barley into the cloak and placed it on her back. Then he\* returned to the town.

<sup>16</sup>When Ruth went back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "What happened, my daughter?"

Ruth told Naomi everything Boaz had done for her, <sup>17</sup>and she added, "He gave me these six scoops of barley and said, 'Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'"

<sup>18</sup>Then Naomi said to her, "Just be patient, my daughter, until we hear what happens. The man won't rest until he has settled things today."

#### Boaz Marries Ruth

**4** Boaz went to the town gate and took a seat there. Just then the family redeemer he had mentioned came by, so Boaz called out to him, "Come over here and sit down, friend. I want to talk to you." So they sat down together. <sup>2</sup>Then Boaz called ten leaders from the town and asked them to sit as witnesses. <sup>3</sup>And Boaz said to the family redeemer, "You know Naomi, who came back from Moab. She is selling the land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. <sup>4</sup>I thought I should speak to you about it so that you can redeem it if you wish. If you want the land, then buy it here in the presence of these witnesses. But if you don't want it, let me know right away, because I am next in line to redeem it after you."

The man replied, "All right, I'll redeem it."

<sup>5</sup>Then Boaz told him, "Of course, your purchase of the land from Naomi also requires that you marry Ruth, the Moabite widow. That way she can have children who will carry on her husband's name and keep the land in the family."

<sup>6</sup>"Then I can't redeem it," the family redeemer replied, "because this might endanger my own estate. You redeem the land; I cannot do it."

<sup>7</sup>Now in those days it was the custom in Israel for anyone transferring a right of purchase to remove his sandal and

#### Boaz's Field

A healthy and influential man in Bethlehem who was a relative of Naomi's husband.

Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go and pick up the stalks of grain that are left behind. It's kind enough to let me do it."

That night, my daughter, go ahead and gather grain behind the harvesters. Don't let yourself working in a field that is the property of your father-in-law, Elimelech.

One day, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and said to Ruth, "The LORD be with you," he said to the harvesters.

His foreman, "Who is that young woman who does she belong to?"

He replied, "She is the young woman who came with Naomi. <sup>7</sup>She asked me to let her gather grain behind the harvesters ever since, except for a few days."

He said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. When you gather grain, don't go far from the field. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. <sup>2</sup>See which part of the field they are harvesting and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to touch you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself with the water they have drawn from the well."

Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. "What have I done to deserve such kindness?" she asked. "I am only a foreigner."

"Yes, I know," Boaz replied. "But I also know about the kindness you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband. I have heard how you left your father and mother and your own land to live here among strangers. <sup>12</sup>May the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done."

"I hope I continue to please you, sir," she replied. "You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, even though I am not one of your workers."

"At mealtime Boaz called to her, 'Come over here, and help yourself to some food. You can dip your bread in the soup.' So she sat with his harvesters, and Boaz gave her roasted grain to eat. She ate all she wanted and still some was left over."

When Ruth went back to work again, Boaz ordered his harvesters, "Let her gather grain right among the sheaves and stop her. <sup>16</sup>And pull out some heads of barley from the bundles and drop them on purpose for her. Let her pick them up, and don't give her a hard time!"

Ruth gathered barley there all day, and when she returned at evening, it filled an entire basket.\* She carried it back into town and showed it to her mother-in-law. Boaz also gave her the roasted grain that was left over from his meal.

"Where did you gather all this grain today?" Naomi asked. "Where did you work? May the LORD bless the one who hired you!"

Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man in whose field she had worked. She said, "The man I worked with is named Boaz."

"May the LORD bless him!" Naomi told her daughter-in-law. "He is showing his kindness to us as well as to your dead husband. \* That man is one of our closest relatives, one of our family redeemers."

Ruth\* said, "What's more, Boaz even told me to stay here and stay with his harvesters until the entire harvest is completed."

"Praise the LORD!" Naomi exclaimed. "Do as he said, my daughter. Stay with his young women right through the whole harvest. You won't be harassed in other fields, but you'll be safe with them."

Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz's fields and gathered grain with them until the end of the barley harvest. Then she continued working with them through the wheat harvest in early summer. And all the while she stayed with her mother-in-law.

\* was about an ephah (20 quarts or 22 liters). 2:20 Hebrew to the living and to the dead. 2:21 Hebrew Ruth the Moabite. 3:15a Hebrew an unknown quantity. 3:15b Most Hebrew manuscripts read he; many Hebrew manuscripts, Syriac version, and Latin Vulgate read she.



hand it to the other party. This publicly validated the transaction. <sup>8</sup>So the other family redeemer drew off his sandal as he said to Boaz, "You buy the land."

<sup>9</sup>Then Boaz said to the elders and to the crowd standing around, "You are witnesses that today I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. <sup>10</sup>And with the land I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife. This way she can have a son to carry on the family name of her dead husband and to inherit the family property here in his hometown. You are all witnesses today."

<sup>11</sup>Then the elders and all the people standing in the gate replied, "We are witnesses! May the LORD make this woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, from whom all the nation of Israel descended! May you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. <sup>12</sup>And may the LORD give you descendants by this young woman who will be like those of our ancestor Perez, the son of Tamar and Judah."

#### The Descendants of Boaz

<sup>13</sup>So Boaz took Ruth into his home, and she became his wife. When he slept with her, the LORD enabled her to become

4:20 As in some Greek manuscripts (see also 4:21); Hebrew reads *Salma*.

pregnant, and she gave birth to a son. <sup>14</sup>Then the women of the town said to Naomi, "Praise the LORD, who has now provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel. <sup>15</sup>May he restore your youth and care for you in your old age. For he is the son of your daughter-in-law who loves you and has been better to you than seven sons!"

<sup>16</sup>Naomi took the baby and cuddled him to her breast. And she cared for him as if he were her own. <sup>17</sup>The neighbor women said, "Now at last Naomi has a son again!" And they named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David.

<sup>18</sup>This is the genealogical record of their ancestor Perez:

Perez was the father of Hezron.

<sup>19</sup>Hezron was the father of Ram.

Ram was the father of Amminadab.

<sup>20</sup>Amminadab was the father of Nahshon.

Nahshon was the father of Salmon.\*

<sup>21</sup>Salmon was the father of Boaz.

Boaz was the father of Obed.

<sup>22</sup>Obed was the father of Jesse.

Jesse was the father of David.

# 1 SAMUEL

**Author** Uncertain; some have suggested Samuel and  
**Date Written** Uncertain, perhaps around 1000 B.C.

**Content** The choices people make say a lot about their lives—some good and some bad. The first choice was a woman who was unable to have children. So her prayer and granted her request. Grateful for a child, Samuel, to the LORD from the time he entered the Tabernacle, and eventually he himself became a prophet. The Israelites rejected Samuel's sons as judges over them. Samuel warned the Israelites that they would have one anyway. Thus began the history of Israel with a man named Saul to be Israel's first king. At first, Saul was a good king, but soon he began to make some very bad choices. David, a shepherd from Bethlehem, was chosen to be king on David's life; but by the end of the book, Saul was to become the next king.

## Elkanah and His Family

<sup>1</sup>There was a man named Elkanah who lived in Ramah in the region of Zuph\* in the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph of Ephraim. <sup>2</sup>Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not.

Each year Elkanah would travel to Shiloh to worship and offer sacrifices to the LORD of Heaven's Armies at the Tabernacle. The priests of the LORD at that time were the two sons of Eli—Hophni and Phinehas. <sup>4</sup>On the days Elkanah presented sacrifices, he would give portions of the meat to Peninnah and each of her children. <sup>5</sup>And though he loved Hannah, he would give her only one choice portion\* because the LORD had given her no children. <sup>6</sup>So Peninnah would taunt Hannah and make fun of her because the LORD had kept her from having children. <sup>7</sup>Year after year it was the same—Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. Each time, Hannah would be reduced to tears and would not even eat.

"Why are you crying, Hannah?" Elkanah would ask. "Aren't you eating? Why be downhearted just because you have no children? You have me— isn't that better than having ten sons?"

## Hannah's Prayer for a Son

After a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place near the entrance of the Tabernacle. <sup>10</sup>Hannah was in anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the LORD. She made this vow: "O LORD of Heaven's Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the LORD, his hair will never be cut.\*"

As she was praying to the LORD, Eli watched her. Her lips were moving but he heard no sound, so he thought she was drunk. "How long will you stand here with your lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought

Greek version; Hebrew reads in Ramathaim-zophim; compare 1:19. 1:5 Or And the Hebrew is uncertain. 1:7 Hebrew the house of the LORD; also in 1:24. 1:5-6 neither wine nor intoxicants. 1:20 Samuel sounds like the Hebrew term for a Nazirite for all time. 1:24a As in Dead Sea Scrolls, Greek and Syriac versions; Hebrew reads quarts or 22 liters. 1:28 Hebrew he.



# 1 SAMUEL

**Author** Uncertain; some have suggested Samuel and the prophets Nathan and Gad  
**Written** Uncertain, perhaps around 1000 B.C.

**Content** The choices people make say a lot about their character. The book of 1 Samuel is full of choices—some good and some bad. The first significant choice in 1 Samuel is made by Hannah, a woman who was unable to have children. She chose to cry out to God for a child. God heard her prayer and granted her request. Grateful to God for his goodness, Hannah dedicated her child, Samuel, to the LORD from the time he was born. So Samuel grew up among the priests at the Tabernacle, and eventually he himself became the leading priest. Near the end of Samuel's life, the Israelites rejected Samuel's sons as judges over Israel and asked him to appoint a king over them. Samuel warned the Israelites that a king would oppress them, but they chose to have one anyway. Thus began the history of Israel's kings. Samuel anointed a tall, handsome man named Saul to be Israel's first king. At first Saul appeared to make some good decisions. But soon he began to make some very bad choices, and God brought an end to his reign. David, a shepherd from Bethlehem, was chosen to take Saul's place. Saul made several attempts on David's life; but by the end of the book, Saul and his son are dead, and David is in line to become the next king.

## Samuel and His Family

There was a man named Elkanah who lived in Ramah in the region of Zuph\* in the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph of Ephraim. <sup>2</sup>Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not.

Each year Elkanah would travel to Shiloh to worship and offer sacrifices to the LORD of Heaven's Armies at the Tabernacle. The priests of the LORD at that time were the two sons of Eli: Hophni and Phinehas. <sup>4</sup>On the days Elkanah presented sacrifices, he would give portions of the meat to Peninnah and her children. <sup>5</sup>And though he loved Hannah, he did not give her any choice portion\* because the LORD had not given her any children. <sup>6</sup>So Peninnah would taunt her and make fun of her because the LORD had kept her from having children. <sup>7</sup>Year after year it was the same—Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. Each time, Hannah would be reduced to tears and would not even eat.

"Why are you crying, Hannah?" Elkanah would ask. "Aren't you eating? Why be downhearted just because you have no children? You have me— isn't that better than having ten sons?"

## Hannah's Prayer for a Son

After a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place near the entrance of the Tabernacle.\* <sup>10</sup>Hannah was in great anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the LORD. She made this vow: "O LORD of Heaven's Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been committed to the LORD, his hair will never be cut.\*"

While she was praying to the LORD, Eli watched her. Her lips were moving but hearing no sound, he thought

she had been drinking. <sup>14</sup>"Must you come here drunk?" he demanded. "Throw away your wine!"

<sup>15</sup>"Oh no, sir!" she replied. "I haven't been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the LORD. <sup>16</sup>Don't think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow."

<sup>17</sup>"In that case," Eli said, "go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him."

<sup>18</sup>"Oh, thank you, sir!" she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad.

## Samuel's Birth and Dedication

<sup>19</sup>The entire family got up early the next morning and went to worship the LORD once more. Then they returned home to Ramah. When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the LORD remembered her plea, <sup>20</sup>and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel,\* for she said, "I tasked the LORD for him."

<sup>21</sup>The next year Elkanah and his family went on their annual trip to offer a sacrifice to the LORD. <sup>22</sup>But Hannah did not go. She told her husband, "Wait until the boy is weaned. Then I will take him to the Tabernacle and leave him there with the LORD permanently.\*"

<sup>23</sup>"Whatever you think is best," Elkanah agreed. "Stay here for now, and may the LORD help you keep your promise." So she stayed home and nursed the boy until he was weaned.

<sup>24</sup>When the child was weaned, Hannah took him to the Tabernacle in Shiloh. They brought along a three-year-old bull\* for the sacrifice and a basket\* of flour and some wine. <sup>25</sup>After sacrificing the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. <sup>26</sup>"Sir, do you remember me?" Hannah asked. "I am the woman who stood here several years ago praying to the LORD. <sup>27</sup>I asked the LORD to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. <sup>28</sup>Now I am giving him to the LORD, and he will belong to the LORD his whole life." And they\* worshiped the LORD there.

\*Hebrew reads in Ramathaim-zophim; compare 1:19. 1:5 Or And because he loved Hannah, he would give her a choice portion. The Hebrew is uncertain. 1:7 Hebrew the house of the LORD; also in 1:24. 1:9 Hebrew the Temple of the LORD. 1:11 Some manuscripts add neither wine nor intoxicants. 1:20 Samuel sounds like the Hebrew term for "asked of God" or "heard by God." 1:22 Some manuscripts add as a Nazirite for all time. 1:24a As in Dead Sea Scrolls, Greek and Syriac versions; Masoretic Text reads three bulls. 1:24b Hebrew and an or 22 liters. 1:28 Hebrew he.



## Hannah's Prayer of Praise

2 Then Hannah prayed:

- "My heart rejoices in the LORD!  
The LORD has made me strong.\*  
Now I have an answer for my enemies;  
I rejoice because you rescued me.  
2 No one is holy like the LORD!  
There is no one besides you;  
there is no Rock like our God.  
3 "Stop acting so proud and haughty!  
Don't speak with such arrogance!  
For the LORD is a God who knows what you have done;  
he will judge your actions.  
4 The bow of the mighty is now broken,  
and those who stumbled are now strong.  
5 Those who were well fed are now starving,  
and those who were starving are now full.  
The childless woman now has seven children,  
and the woman with many children wastes away.  
6 The LORD gives both death and life;  
he brings some down to the grave\* but raises  
others up.  
7 The LORD makes some poor and others rich;  
he brings some down and lifts others up.  
8 He lifts the poor from the dust  
and the needy from the garbage dump.  
He sets them among princes,  
placing them in seats of honor.  
For all the earth is the LORD's,  
and he has set the world in order.  
9 "He will protect his faithful ones,  
but the wicked will disappear in darkness.  
No one will succeed by strength alone.  
10 Those who fight against the LORD will be shattered.  
He thunders against them from heaven;  
the LORD judges throughout the earth.  
He gives power to his king;  
he increases the strength\* of his anointed one."

11 Then Elkanah returned home to Ramah without Samuel.  
And the boy served the LORD by assisting Eli the priest.

## Eli's Wicked Sons

12 Now the sons of Eli were scoundrels who had no respect for the LORD<sup>13</sup> or for their duties as priests. Whenever anyone offered a sacrifice, Eli's sons would send over a servant with a three-pronged fork. While the meat of the sacrificed animal was still boiling, the servant would stick the fork into the pot and demand that whatever it brought up be given to Eli's sons. All the Israelites who came to worship at Shiloh were treated this way. 15 Sometimes the servant would come even before the animal's fat had been burned on the altar. He would demand raw meat before it had been boiled so that it could be used for roasting.

16 The man offering the sacrifice might reply, "Take as much as you want, but the fat must be burned first." Then the servant would demand, "No, give it to me now, or I'll take it by force." 17 So the sin of these young men was very serious in the LORD's sight, for they treated the LORD's offerings with contempt.

18 But Samuel, though he was only a boy, served the LORD.

He wore a linen garment like that of a priest.\* 19 Each year his mother made a small coat for him and brought it to him when she came with her husband for the sacrifice. 20 Before they returned home, Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, "May the LORD give you other children to take the place of this one she gave to the LORD.\*" 21 And the LORD gave Hannah three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

22 Now Eli was very old, but he was aware of what his sons were doing to the people of Israel. He knew, for instance, that his sons were seducing the young women who assisted at the entrance of the Tabernacle.\* 23 Eli said to them, "I have been hearing reports from all the people about the wicked things you are doing. Why do you keep sinning? 24 You must stop, my sons! The reports I hear among the LORD's people are not good. 25 If someone sins against another person, God\* can mediate for the guilty party. But if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede?" But Eli's sons wouldn't listen to their father, for the LORD was already planning to put them to death.

26 Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew taller and grew in favor with the LORD and with the people.

## A Warning for Eli's Family

27 One day a man of God came to Eli and gave him this message from the LORD: "I revealed myself\* to your ancestor when the people of Israel were slaves in Egypt. 28 I chose your ancestor Aaron\* from among all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer sacrifices on my altar, to burn incense, and to wear the priestly vest\* as he served me. And I assigned the sacrificial offerings to you priests. 29 So why do you scorn my sacrifices and offerings? Why do you give your sons more honor than you give me—for you and the have become fat from the best offerings of my people Israel?"

30 Therefore, the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I promise that your branch of the tribe of Levi\* would always be my priests. But I will honor those who honor me, and I will despise those who think lightly of me. 31 The time is coming when I will put an end to your family, so it will no longer serve as my priests. All the members of your family will die before their time. None will reach old age. 32 You will waste with envy as I pour out prosperity on the people of Israel. But no members of your family will ever live out their days. 33 Those who survive will live in sadness and grief, and the children will die a violent death.\* 34 And to prove that what I have said will come true, I will cause your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, to die on the same day!

35 "Then I will raise up a faithful priest who will serve me and do what I desire. I will establish his family, and they will be priests to my anointed kings forever. 36 Then all of your surviving family will bow before him, begging for money and food. 'Please,' they will say, 'give us jobs among the priests so we will have enough to eat.'"

## The LORD Speaks to Samuel

3 Meanwhile, the boy Samuel served the LORD by assisting Eli. Now in those days messages from the LORD were very rare, and visions were quite uncommon.

4 One night Eli, who was almost blind by now, had gone to bed. 5 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was sleeping in the Tabernacle\* near the Ark of God. 6 Suddenly the LORD called out, "Samuel!"

"Yes?" Samuel replied. "What is it?" 5 He got up and ran to Eli. "Here I am. Did you call me?"

"I didn't call you," Eli replied. "Go back to bed." So he did.

7 Then the LORD called out again, "Samuel!"

Again Samuel got up and went to Eli. "Here I am. Did you call me?"

"I didn't call you, my son," Eli said. "Go back to bed."

8 Samuel did not yet know the LORD because he had never had a message from the LORD before. 9 So the LORD called a third time, and once more Samuel got up and went to Eli. "Here I am. Did you call me?"

Then Eli realized it was the LORD who was calling the boy. 10 He said to Samuel, "Go and lie down again, and if someone calls again, say, 'Speak, LORD, your servant is listening.'" Samuel went back to bed.

11 And the LORD came and called as before, "Samuel! Samuel!"

And Samuel replied, "Speak, your servant is listening."

12 Then the LORD said to Samuel, "I am about to do a great thing in Israel. 12 I am going to carry out all my promises against Eli and his family, from beginning to end. 13 I have warned him that judgment is coming upon his family because his sons are blaspheming God\* and he has not disciplined them. 14 So I have vowed that the sins of Eli and his sons will never be forgiven by sacrifices or offerings."

## Samuel Speaks for the LORD

15 Samuel stayed in bed until morning, then got up and opened the doors of the Tabernacle\* as usual. He was afraid to tell Eli what the LORD had said to him. 16 But Eli called out to him. "Samuel, my son."

"Here I am," Samuel replied.

17 What did the LORD say to you? Tell me everything. And God strike you and even kill you if you hide anything from me!" 18 So Samuel told Eli everything; he didn't hold anything back. "It is the LORD's will," Eli replied. "Let him do what he thinks best."

19 As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him, and everything Samuel said proved to be reliable. 20 And all Israel, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south, knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD. 21 The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh and gave messages to Samuel there at the Tabernacle. 22 And Samuel's words went out to the people of Israel.

## The Philistines Capture the Ark

23 At that time Israel was at war with the Philistines. The Israelite army was camped near Ebenezer, and the Philistines were at Aphek. 24 The Philistines attacked and defeated the army of Israel, killing 4,000 men. 25 After the battle was over, the troops retreated to their camp, and the people of Israel asked, "Why did the LORD allow us to be defeated by the Philistines?" Then they said, "Let's bring the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from Shiloh. If we carry it into battle with us, it\* will save us from our enemies."

26 So they sent men to Shiloh to bring the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of Heaven's Armies, who is enthroned between the cherubim. Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, also went with the Ark of the Covenant of God. 27 When the Israelites saw the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD being brought into the camp, their shout of joy was so loud it made the ground shake!

28 "What's going on?" the Philistines asked. "What's all the shouting about in the Hebrew camp?" When they were told that the Ark of the LORD had arrived, 29 they panicked.

30 Greek version; Hebrew reads his sons have made themselves contemptible. 31:5

2:1 Hebrew has exalted my horn. 2:6 Hebrew to Shiloh. 2:10 Hebrew he exalts the horn. 2:18 Hebrew He wore a linen ephod. 2:20 As in Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version; Masoretic Text reads this one he requested of the LORD. 2:22 Hebrew Tent of Meeting. Some manuscripts lack this entire sentence. 2:25 Or the judges. 2:27 As in Greek and Syriac versions; Hebrew reads Did I reveal myself. 2:28a Hebrew your father. 2:28b Hebrew ephod. 2:30 Hebrew that your house and your father's house. 2:33 As in Dead Sea Scrolls, which read die by the sword; Masoretic Text reads die like mortals. 3:3 Hebrew the Temple of the LORD.







<sup>6</sup>Then the LORD's heavy hand struck the people of Ashdod and the nearby villages with a plague of tumors.\* <sup>7</sup>When the people realized what was happening, they cried out, "We can't keep the Ark of the God of Israel here any longer! He is against us! We will all be destroyed along with Dagon, our god." <sup>8</sup>So they called together the rulers of the Philistine towns and asked, "What should we do with the Ark of the God of Israel?"

The rulers discussed it and replied, "Move it to the town of Gath." So they moved the Ark of the God of Israel to Gath. <sup>9</sup>But when the Ark arrived at Gath, the LORD's heavy hand fell on its men, young and old; he struck them with a plague of tumors, and there was a great panic.

<sup>10</sup>So they sent the Ark of God to the town of Ekron, but when the people of Ekron saw it coming they cried out, "They are bringing the Ark of the God of Israel here to kill us, too!" <sup>11</sup>The people summoned the Philistine rulers again and begged them, "Please send the Ark of the God of Israel back to its own country, or it\* will kill us all." For the deadly plague from God had already begun, and great fear was sweeping across the town. <sup>12</sup>Those who didn't die were afflicted with tumors; and the cry from the town rose to heaven.

### The Philistines Return the Ark

**6** The Ark of the LORD remained in Philistine territory seven months in all. <sup>2</sup>Then the Philistines called in their priests and diviners and asked them, "What should we do about the Ark of the LORD? Tell us how to return it to its own country."

<sup>3</sup>"Send the Ark of the God of Israel back with a gift," they were told. "Send a guilt offering so the plague will stop. Then, if you are healed, you will know it was his hand that caused the plague."

<sup>4</sup>"What sort of guilt offering should we send?" they asked.

And they were told, "Since the plague has struck both you and your five rulers, make five gold tumors and five gold rats, just like those that have ravaged your land. <sup>5</sup>Make these things to show honor to the God of Israel. Perhaps then he will stop afflicting you, your gods, and your land. <sup>6</sup>Don't be stubborn and rebellious as Pharaoh and the Egyptians were. By the time God was finished with them, they were eager to let Israel go.

<sup>7</sup>"Now build a new cart, and find two cows that have just given birth to calves. Make sure the cows have never been yoked to a cart. Hitch the cows to the cart, but shut their calves away from them in a pen. <sup>8</sup>Put the Ark of the LORD on the cart, and beside it place a chest containing the gold rats and gold tumors you are sending as a guilt offering. Then let the cows go wherever they want. <sup>9</sup>If they cross the border of our land and go to Beth-shemesh, we will know it was the LORD who brought this great disaster upon us. If they don't, we will know it was not his hand that caused the plague. It came simply by chance."

<sup>10</sup>So these instructions were carried out. Two cows were hitched to the cart, and their newborn calves were shut up in a pen. <sup>11</sup>Then the Ark of the LORD and the chest containing the gold rats and gold tumors were placed on the cart. <sup>12</sup>And sure enough, without veering off in other directions, the cows went straight along the road toward Beth-shemesh, lowing as they went. The Philistine rulers followed them as far as the border of Beth-shemesh.

<sup>13</sup>The people of Beth-shemesh were harvesting wheat in

the valley, and when they saw the Ark, they were overjoyed.

<sup>14</sup>The cart came into the field of a man named Joshua and stopped beside a large rock. So the people broke up the wood of the cart for a fire and killed the cows and sacrificed them to the LORD as a burnt offering. <sup>15</sup>Several men of the tribe of Levi lifted the Ark of the LORD and the chest containing the gold rats and gold tumors from the cart and placed them on the large rock. Many sacrifices and burnt offerings were offered to the LORD that day by the people of Beth-shemesh. <sup>16</sup>The five Philistine rulers watched all this and then returned to Ekron that same day.

<sup>17</sup>The five gold tumors sent by the Philistines as a guilt offering to the LORD were gifts from the rulers of Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. <sup>18</sup>The five gold rats represented the five Philistine towns and their surrounding villages, which were controlled by the five rulers. The large rock at Beth-shemesh, where they set the Ark of the LORD, still stands in the field of Joshua as a witness to what happened there.

### The Ark Moved to Kiriath-jearim

<sup>19</sup>But the LORD killed seventy men\* from Beth-shemesh because they looked into the Ark of the LORD. And the people mourned greatly because of what the LORD had done. <sup>20</sup>"Who is able to stand in the presence of the LORD, this holy God?" they cried out. "Where can we send the Ark from here?"

<sup>21</sup>So they sent messengers to the people at Kiriath-jearim and told them, "The Philistines have returned the Ark of the LORD. Come here and get it!"

**7** So the men of Kiriath-jearim came to get the Ark of the LORD. They took it to the hillside home of Abinadab and ordained Eleazar, his son, to be in charge of it. <sup>2</sup>The Ark remained in Kiriath-jearim for a long time—twenty years in all. During that time all Israel mourned because it seemed the LORD had abandoned them.

### Samuel Leads Israel to Victory

<sup>1</sup>Then Samuel said to all the people of Israel, "If you are really serious about wanting to return to the LORD, get rid of your foreign gods and your images of Ashtoreth. Determine to obey only the LORD; then he will rescue you from the Philistines." <sup>4</sup>So the Israelites got rid of their images of Baal and Ashtoreth and worshiped only the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>Then Samuel told them, "Gather all of Israel to Mizpah and I will pray to the LORD for you." <sup>6</sup>So they gathered at Mizpah and, in a great ceremony, drew water from a well and poured it out before the LORD. They also went without food all day and confessed that they had sinned against the LORD. (It was at Mizpah that Samuel became Israel's judge.)

<sup>7</sup>When the Philistine rulers heard that Israel had gathered at Mizpah, they mobilized their army and advanced. The Israelites were badly frightened when they learned that the Philistines were approaching. <sup>8</sup>"Don't stop pleading with the LORD our God to save us from the Philistines!" they begged Samuel. <sup>9</sup>So Samuel took a young lamb and offered it to the LORD as a whole burnt offering. He pleaded with the LORD to help Israel, and the LORD answered him.

<sup>10</sup>Just as Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines arrived to attack Israel. But the LORD spoke with a mighty voice of thunder from heaven that day, and the Philistines were thrown into such confusion that the Israelites defeated them. <sup>11</sup>The men of Israel chased them

Mizpah to a place below Beth-car, slaughtering them all along the way.

<sup>12</sup>Samuel then took a large stone and placed it between the towns of Mizpah and Jeshanah.\* He named it Ebenezer (which means "the stone of help"), for he said, "Up to this point the LORD has helped us!"

<sup>13</sup>So the Philistines were subdued and didn't invade Israel again for some time. And throughout Samuel's lifetime, the LORD's powerful hand was raised against the Philistines. <sup>14</sup>The Israelite villages near Ekron and Gath that the Philistines had captured were restored to Israel, along with the rest of the territory that the Philistines had taken. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites in those days.

<sup>15</sup>Samuel continued as Israel's judge for the rest of his life. <sup>16</sup>Each year he traveled around, setting up his court first at Bethel, then at Gilgal, and then at Mizpah. He judged the people of Israel at each of these places. <sup>17</sup>Then he would return to his home at Ramah, and he would hear cases there. And Samuel built an altar to the LORD at Ramah.

### Israel Requests a King

**8** As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel. <sup>2</sup>Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court at Beersheba. <sup>3</sup>But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.

<sup>4</sup>Finally, all the elders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss the matter with Samuel. <sup>5</sup>"Look," they told him, "you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have."

Samuel was displeased with their request and went to the LORD for guidance. <sup>7</sup>"Do everything they say to you," the LORD replied, "for it is me they are rejecting, not you. They don't want me to be their king any longer. <sup>8</sup>Ever since I brought them from Egypt they have continually abandoned me and followed other gods. And now they are giving you the same treatment. <sup>9</sup>Do as they ask, but solemnly warn them about the way a king will reign over them."

### Samuel Warns against a Kingdom

Samuel passed on the LORD's warning to the people who were asking him for a king. <sup>11</sup>"This is how a king will reign over you," Samuel said. "The king will draft your sons and assign them to his chariots and his charioteers, making them before his chariots. <sup>12</sup>Some will be generals and captains of his army,\* some will be forced to plow in his fields and harvest his crops, and some will make his weapons and chariot equipment. <sup>13</sup>The king will take your daughters from you to force them to cook and bake and make perfumes for him. <sup>14</sup>He will take away the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his own officials. <sup>15</sup>He will take a tenth of your grain and your grape harvest and distribute it among his officers and attendants. <sup>16</sup>He will take your male and female slaves and demand the finest of your cattle\* and donkeys for his own use. <sup>17</sup>He will demand a tenth of your flocks, and you will be his slaves. <sup>18</sup>When that day comes you will beg for relief from this king you are demanding, but then the LORD will not help you."

But the people refused to listen to Samuel's warning. <sup>19</sup>So, we still want a king," they said. <sup>20</sup>"We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will judge us and lead us in battle."

So Samuel repeated to the LORD what the people had said, and the LORD replied, "Do as they say, and give them a king." Then Samuel agreed and sent the people home.

5:6 Greek version and Latin Vulgate read tumors; and rats appeared in their land, and death and destruction were throughout the city. 5:11 Or he. 6:19 As in a few Hebrew manuscripts; most Hebrew manuscripts read 70 men, 50,000 men. Perhaps the text should be understood to read the LORD killed 70 men and 50 oxen.

8:12 Hebrew commanders of the army. 8:13 Hebrew 1/4 shekel of silver, about 0.1 ounces or 3 grams in weight.



they saw the Ark, they were overjoyed to the field of a man named Joshua and a large rock. So the people broke up the fire and killed the cows and sacrificed as a burnt offering. <sup>15</sup>Several men of the Ark of the LORD and the chest of rats and gold tumors from the cart and the large rock. Many sacrifices and burnt offerings were to the LORD that day by the people. The five Philistine rulers watched all this from Ekron that same day.

Tumors sent by the Philistines as a guilt offering were gifts from the rulers of Ashdod, Ekron, and Ekron. <sup>18</sup>The five gold rats representing the Philistines towns and their surrounding territory were controlled by the five rulers. The Philistines, where they set the Ark of the LORD in the field of Joshua as a witness to what happened.

### to Kiriath-jearim

and seventy men\* from Beth-shemesh to the Ark of the LORD. And the people were afraid because of what the LORD had done, and in the presence of the LORD, this happened. "Where can we send the Ark from Beth-shemesh?"

Messengers to the people at Kiriath-jearim said, "The Philistines have returned the Ark of the LORD to get it!"

Kiriath-jearim came to get the Ark of the LORD to the hillside home of Abinadab his son, to be in charge of it. <sup>2</sup>The Ark of the LORD was in Kiriath-jearim for a long time—twenty years. All Israel mourned because it seemed that the LORD had abandoned them.

### Israel to Victory

to all the people of Israel, "If you are wanting to return to the LORD, get rid of your images of Ashtoreth. Determine your hearts; then he will rescue you from the Philistines. Get rid of their images of Baal and their idols; then only the LORD will help you."

Samuel said to all Israel to Mizpah, "Gather all of Israel to the LORD for you." "So they gathered at Mizpah for a great ceremony, drew water from a well, and stood before the LORD. They also went without bread and without meat, and they confessed that they had sinned against the LORD. Samuel became Israel's judge. The Philistine rulers heard that Israel had gathered at Mizpah, so they mobilized their army and advanced against Israel. Israel was badly frightened when they learned that the Philistines were approaching. <sup>8</sup>"Don't stop pleading to the LORD to save us from the Philistines," said Samuel. Samuel took a young lamb and offered it as a burnt offering. He pleaded with the LORD, and the LORD answered him.

Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering to the LORD to attack Israel. But the LORD spoke with Samuel from heaven that day, and the Philistines were into such confusion that the Israelites chased them. The men of Israel chased them from Ekron to the border of the Philistines.

There were throughout the city. 5:11 Or he. The text should be understood to read the Lord.

to a place below Beth-car, slaughtering them all the way.

Samuel then took a large stone and placed it between the towns of Mizpah and Jeshanah.\* He named it Ebenezer which means "the stone of help"), for he said, "Up to this point the LORD has helped us!"

So the Philistines were subdued and didn't invade Israel for some time. And throughout Samuel's lifetime, the LORD's powerful hand was raised against the Philistines. The Israelite villages near Ekron and Gath that the Philistines had captured were restored to Israel, along with the territory that the Philistines had taken. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites in those days.

Samuel continued as Israel's judge for the rest of his life. Each year he traveled around, setting up his court first at Mizpah, then at Gilgal, and then at Mizpah. He judged the people of Israel at each of these places. <sup>17</sup>Then he would return to his home at Ramah, and he would hear cases there, and Samuel built an altar to the LORD at Ramah.

### Requests a King

As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel. <sup>2</sup>Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court with him. <sup>3</sup>But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.

Finally, all the elders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss with Samuel. <sup>5</sup>"Look," they told him, "you are now old and your sons are not like you. Give us a king to judge us like the other nations have."

Samuel was displeased with their request and went to the LORD for guidance. <sup>7</sup>"Do everything they say to you," the LORD replied, "for it is me they are rejecting, not you. They don't want me to be their king any longer. <sup>8</sup>Ever since I brought them from Egypt they have continually abandoned me and followed other gods. And now they are giving you the same treatment. <sup>9</sup>Do as they ask, but solemnly warn them about the way a king will reign over them."

### Samuel Warns against a Kingdom

Samuel passed on the LORD's warning to the people who were asking him for a king. <sup>11</sup>"This is how a king will reign over you," Samuel said. "The king will draft your sons and assign them to his chariots and his charioteers, making them run before his chariots. <sup>12</sup>Some will be generals and captains of his army,\* some will be forced to plow in his fields and harvest his crops, and some will make his weapons and chariot equipment. <sup>13</sup>The king will take your daughters from you to be his wives to cook and bake and make perfumes for him. <sup>14</sup>He will take away the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his own officials. <sup>15</sup>He will take a tenth of your grain and your grape harvest and distribute it among his officers and attendants. <sup>16</sup>He will take your best and female slaves and demand the finest of your cattle\* and donkeys for his own use. <sup>17</sup>He will demand a tenth of your flocks, and you will be his slaves. <sup>18</sup>When that day comes, you will beg for relief from this king you are demanding, but then the LORD will not help you."

But the people refused to listen to Samuel's warning. <sup>19</sup>So they said, "We still want a king." <sup>20</sup>"We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will judge us and lead us in battle."

So Samuel repeated to the LORD what the people had said. <sup>21</sup>And the LORD replied, "Do as they say, and give them a king." Then Samuel agreed and sent the people home.

8:12 Hebrew *comm*  
reads *young men*. 9:8 Hebrew  $\frac{1}{4}$  *shekel of silver*, about 0.1 ounces or 3

**9** There was a wealthy, influential man named Kish from the tribe of Benjamin. He was the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup>His son Saul was the most handsome man in Israel—head and shoulders taller than anyone else in the land.

<sup>1</sup>“One day Kish’s donkeys strayed away, and he told Saul, “Take a servant with you, and go look for the donkeys.” <sup>2</sup>So Saul took one of the servants and traveled through the hill country of Ephraim, the land of Shalishah, the Shaalim area, and the entire land of Benjamin, but they couldn’t find the donkeys anywhere.

<sup>3</sup>Finally, they entered the region of Zuph, and Saul said to his servant, “Let’s go home. By now my father will be more worried about us than about the donkeys!”

<sup>4</sup>But the servant said, “I’ve just thought of something! There is a man of God who lives here in this town. He is held in high honor by all the people because everything he says comes true. Let’s go find him. Perhaps he can tell us which way to go.”

<sup>5</sup>“But we don’t have anything to offer him,” Saul replied. “Even our food is gone, and we don’t have a thing to give him.”

<sup>6</sup>“Well,” the servant said, “I have one small silver piece.” We can at least offer it to the man of God and see what happens! <sup>7</sup>(In those days if people wanted a message from God, they would say, “Let’s go and ask the seer,” for prophets used to be called seers.)

<sup>8</sup>“All right,” Saul agreed, “let’s try it!” So they started into the town where the man of God lived.

<sup>9</sup>As they were climbing the hill to the town, they met some young women coming out to draw water. So Saul and his servant asked, “Is the seer here today?”

<sup>10</sup>“Yes,” they replied. “Stay right on this road. He is at the town gates. He has just arrived to take part in a public sacrifice up at the place of worship. <sup>11</sup>Hurry and catch him before he goes up there to eat. The guests won’t begin eating until he arrives to bless the food.”

<sup>12</sup>So they entered the town, and as they passed through the gates, Samuel was coming out toward them to go up to the place of worship.

<sup>13</sup>Now the LORD had told Samuel the previous day, <sup>14</sup>“About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be the leader of my people, Israel. He will rescue them from the Philistines, for I have looked down on my people in mercy and have heard their cry.”

<sup>15</sup>When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said, “That’s the man I told you about! He will rule my people.”

<sup>16</sup>Just then Saul approached Samuel at the gateway and asked, “Can you please tell me where the seer’s house is?”

<sup>17</sup>“I am the seer!” Samuel replied. “Go up to the place of worship ahead of me. We will eat there together, and in the morning I’ll tell you what you want to know and send you on your way. <sup>18</sup>And don’t worry about those donkeys that were lost three days ago, for they have been found. And I am here to tell you that you and your family are the focus of all Israel’s hopes.”

<sup>19</sup>Saul replied, “But I’m only from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel, and my family is the least important of the families of that tribe! Why are you talking like this to me?”

<sup>20</sup>Then Samuel brought Saul and his servant into the hall and placed them at the head of the table, honoring them above the thirty special guests. <sup>21</sup>Samuel then instructed the cook to bring Saul the finest cut of meat, the piece that had

*nders of thousands and commanders of fifties.* **8:16** As in Greek version;  
grams in weight.



been set aside for the guest of honor. <sup>24</sup>So the cook brought in the meat and placed it before Saul. "Go ahead and eat it," Samuel said. "I was saving it for you even before I invited these others!" So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

<sup>25</sup>When they came down from the place of worship and returned to town, Samuel took Saul up to the roof of the house and prepared a bed for him there. <sup>26</sup>At daybreak the next morning, Samuel called to Saul, "Get up! It's time you were on your way." So Saul got ready, and he and Samuel left the house together. <sup>27</sup>When they reached the edge of town, Samuel told Saul to send his servant on ahead. After the servant was gone, Samuel said, "Stay here, for I have received a special message for you from God."

#### Samuel Anoints Saul as King

**10** Then Samuel took a flask of olive oil and poured it over Saul's head. He kissed Saul and said, "I am doing this because the LORD has appointed you to be the ruler over Israel, his special possession." <sup>2</sup>When you leave me today, you will see two men beside Rachel's tomb at Zelzah, on the border of Benjamin. They will tell you that the donkeys have been found and that your father has stopped worrying about them and is now worried about you. He is asking, 'Have you seen my son?'

<sup>3</sup>"When you get to the oak of Tabor, you will see three men coming toward you who are on their way to worship God at Bethel. One will be bringing three young goats, another will have three loaves of bread, and the third will be carrying a wineskin full of wine. They will greet you and offer you two of the loaves, which you are to accept.

<sup>5</sup>"When you arrive at Gibeah of God,\* where the garri-son of the Philistines is located, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the place of worship. They will be playing a harp, a tambourine, a flute, and a lyre, and they will be prophesying. <sup>6</sup>At that time the Spirit of the LORD will come powerfully upon you, and you will prophesy with them. You will be changed into a different person. <sup>7</sup>After these signs take place, do what must be done, for God is with you. <sup>8</sup>Then go down to Gilgal ahead of me. I will join you there to sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings. You must wait for seven days until I arrive and give you further instructions."

#### Samuel's Signs Are Fulfilled

<sup>9</sup>As Saul turned and started to leave, God gave him a new heart, and all Samuel's signs were fulfilled that day. <sup>10</sup>When Saul and his servant arrived at Gibeah, they saw a group of prophets coming toward them. Then the Spirit of God came powerfully upon Saul, and he, too, began to prophesy. <sup>11</sup>When those who knew Saul heard about it, they exclaimed, "What? Is even Saul a prophet? How did the son of Kish become a prophet?"

<sup>12</sup>And one of those standing there said, "Can anyone become a prophet, no matter who his father is?"\* So that is the origin of the saying "Is even Saul a prophet?"

<sup>13</sup>When Saul had finished prophesying, he went up to the place of worship. <sup>14</sup>"Where have you been?" Saul's uncle asked him and his servant.

"We were looking for the donkeys," Saul replied, "but we couldn't find them. So we went to Samuel to ask him where they were."

<sup>15</sup>"Oh? And what did he say?" his uncle asked.

<sup>16</sup>"He told us that the donkeys had already been found,"

9:25 As in Greek version; Hebrew reads and talked with him there. 10:1 Greek version reads over Israel. And you will rule over the LORD's people and send them from their enemies around them. This will be the sign to you that the LORD has appointed you to be leader over his special possession. 10:5 Hebrew Gibeath-elohim. 10:12 Hebrew said, "Who is their father?" 10:27 This paragraph, which is not included in the Masoretic Text, is found in Dead Sea Scrolls 4QSam<sup>a</sup>. 11:1 As in Greek version; Hebrew lacks About a month later.

Saul replied. But Saul didn't tell his uncle what Samuel said about the kingdom.

#### Saul Is Acclaimed King

<sup>17</sup>Later Samuel called all the people of Israel to meet before the LORD at Mizpah. <sup>18</sup>And he said, "This is what the LORD the God of Israel, has declared: I brought you from Egypt and rescued you from the Egyptians and from all of the nations that were oppressing you. <sup>19</sup>But though I have rescued you from your misery and distress, you have rejected your God today and have said, 'No, we want a king instead!' Now, therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by tribes and clans."

<sup>20</sup>So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel before the LORD, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen by lot. <sup>21</sup>Then he brought each family of the tribe of Benjamin before the LORD, and the family of the Matrites was chosen. And finally Saul son of Kish was chosen from among them. But when they looked for him, he had disappeared! <sup>22</sup>So they asked the LORD, "Where is he?"

And the LORD replied, "He is hiding among the baggage." <sup>23</sup>So they found him and brought him out, and he stood head and shoulders above anyone else.

<sup>24</sup>Then Samuel said to all the people, "This is the man the LORD has chosen as your king. No one in all Israel is like him!"

And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

<sup>25</sup>Then Samuel told the people what the rights and duties of a king were. He wrote them down on a scroll and placed it before the LORD. Then Samuel sent the people home again.

<sup>26</sup>When Saul returned to his home at Gibeah, a group of men whose hearts God had touched went with him. <sup>27</sup>But there were some scoundrels who complained, "How can the man save us?" And they scorned him and refused to bring him gifts. But Saul ignored them.

Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had been grievously oppressing the people of Gad and Reuben who lived east of the Jordan River. He gouged out the right eye of each of the Israelites living there, and he didn't allow anyone to come and rescue them. In fact, of all the Israelites east of the Jordan there wasn't a single one whose right eye Nahash had not gouged out. But there were 7,000 men who had escaped from the Ammonites, and they had settled in Jabesh-gilead.\*

#### Saul Defeats the Ammonites

**11** About a month later,\* King Nahash of Ammon led his army against the Israelite town of Jabesh-gilead. But all the citizens of Jabesh asked for peace. "Make a treaty with us, and we will be your servants," they pleaded.

<sup>2</sup>"All right," Nahash said, "but only on one condition. I will gouge out the right eye of every one of you as a disgrace to all Israel!"

<sup>3</sup>"Give us seven days to send messengers throughout Israel!" replied the elders of Jabesh. "If no one comes to save us we will agree to your terms."

<sup>4</sup>When the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and told the people about their plight, everyone broke into tears. <sup>5</sup>Saul had been plowing a field with his oxen, and when he returned to town, he asked, "What's the matter? Why is everyone crying?" So they told him about the message from Jabesh.

<sup>6</sup>Then the Spirit of God came powerfully upon Saul, and he became very angry. <sup>7</sup>He took two oxen and cut them into pieces and sent the messengers to carry them through

Israel with this message: "This is what will happen to the men of anyone who refuses to follow Saul and Samuel into battle!" And the LORD made the people afraid of Saul's army, and all of them came out together as one. <sup>8</sup>When Saul mobilized them at Bezek, he found that there were 300,000 men from Israel and 30,000\* men from Judah.

<sup>9</sup>So Saul sent the messengers back to Jabesh-gilead to say, "We will rescue you by noontime tomorrow!" There was great joy throughout the town when that message arrived!

<sup>10</sup>The men of Jabesh then told their enemies, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you can do to us whatever you wish." <sup>11</sup>But before dawn the next morning, Saul arrived, having divided his army into three detachments. He launched a surprise attack against the Ammonites and slaughtered them the whole morning. The remnant of their army was so badly scattered that no two of them were left together.

<sup>12</sup>Then the people exclaimed to Samuel, "Now where are those men who said, 'Why should Saul rule over us?' Bring them here, and we will kill them!"

<sup>13</sup>But Saul replied, "No one will be executed today, for the LORD has rescued Israel!"

<sup>14</sup>Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us all go to Gilgal to renew the kingdom." <sup>15</sup>So they all went to Gilgal, and in a solemn ceremony before the LORD they made Saul king. Then they offered peace offerings to the LORD, and all the Israelites were filled with joy.

#### Samuel's Farewell Address

**12** Then Samuel addressed all Israel: "I have done as you asked and given you a king. <sup>2</sup>Your king is now your leader. I stand here before you—an old, gray-haired man—my sons serve you. I have served as your leader from the time I was a boy to this very day. <sup>3</sup>Now testify against me in the presence of the LORD and before his anointed one. Whose ox or donkey have I stolen? Have I ever cheated anyone? Have I ever oppressed you? Have I ever taken a bribe or perverted justice? Tell me and I will make right what I have done wrong."

<sup>4</sup>"No," they replied, "you have never cheated or oppressed anyone, and you have never taken even a single bribe."

<sup>5</sup>The LORD and his anointed one are my witnesses to—Samuel declared, "that my hands are clean."

<sup>6</sup>Yes, he is a witness," they replied.

<sup>7</sup>It was the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron," Samuel continued. "He brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt. <sup>8</sup>Now stand here quietly before the LORD as I remind you of all the great things the LORD has done for you and your ancestors."

<sup>9</sup>When the Israelites were\* in Egypt and cried out to the LORD, he sent Moses and Aaron to rescue them from Egypt to bring them into this land. <sup>10</sup>But the people soon forgot the LORD their God, so he handed them over to Sisera, commander of Hazor's army, and also to the Philistines and to the king of Moab, who fought against them.

<sup>11</sup>Then they cried to the LORD again and confessed, 'We have sinned by turning away from the LORD and worshiping the images of Baal and Ashtoreth. But we will worship you alone if you will rescue us from our enemies.' <sup>12</sup>Then the LORD sent Gideon,\* Bedan,\* Jephthah, and Samson to save you, and you lived in safety.

<sup>13</sup>But when you were afraid of Nahash, the king of Ammon, you came to me and said that you wanted a king to

Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version read 70,000. 12:8 Hebrew When Jacob was. The Masoretic Text, referring sometimes to the individual patriarch and sometimes to the nation. 12:11b Greek and Syriac versions read Barak. 12:11c Greek and Syriac versions missing in the Hebrew. 13:1b Hebrew reigned... and two; the number is incorrect in the Masoretic versions; Hebrew reads 30,000.



Meanwhile, Saul stayed at Gilgal, and his men were trembling with fear. <sup>8</sup>Saul waited there seven days for Samuel, as

12:8 Hebrew *When Jacob was*. The names "Jacob" and "Israel" are often interchanged throughout the Bible, referring sometimes to the individual patriarch and sometimes to the nation. 12:11a Hebrew *Jerub-baal*, another name for Gideon; see 6:34. 12:11b Greek and Syriac versions read *Barak*. 12:11c Greek and Syriac versions read *Samson*. 13:1a As in a few Greek manuscripts; the reading in the Hebrew. 13:1b Hebrew *reigned . . . and two*; the number is incomplete in the Hebrew. Compare Acts 13:21. 13:5 As in Greek manuscripts; Hebrew reads *30,000*.



Samuel had instructed him earlier, but Samuel still didn't come. Saul realized that his troops were rapidly slipping away. "So he demanded, 'Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!' And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself."

<sup>10</sup>Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and welcome him, <sup>11</sup>but Samuel said, "What is this you have done?"

Saul replied, "I saw my men scattering from me, and you didn't arrive when you said you would, and the Philistines are at Micmash ready for battle. <sup>12</sup>So I said, 'The Philistines are ready to march against us at Gilgal, and I haven't even asked for the LORD's help!' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering myself before you came."

<sup>13</sup>"How foolish!" Samuel exclaimed. "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you. Had you kept it, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. <sup>14</sup>But now your kingdom must end, for the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart. The LORD has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command."

### Israel's Military Disadvantage

<sup>15</sup>Samuel then left Gilgal and went on his way, but the rest of the troops went with Saul to meet the army. They went up from Gilgal to Gibeah in the land of Benjamin. \* When Saul counted the men who were still with him, he found only 600 were left! <sup>16</sup>Saul and Jonathan and the troops with them were staying at Geba in the land of Benjamin. The Philistines set up their camp at Micmash. <sup>17</sup>Three raiding parties soon left the camp of the Philistines. One went north toward Ophrah in the land of Shual, <sup>18</sup>another went west to Beth-horon, and the third moved toward the border above the valley of Zeboim near the wilderness.

<sup>19</sup>There were no blacksmiths in the land of Israel in those days. The Philistines wouldn't allow them for fear they would make swords and spears for the Hebrews. <sup>20</sup>So whenever the Israelites needed to sharpen their plowshares, picks, axes, or sickles,\* they had to take them to a Philistine blacksmith. <sup>21</sup>(The charges were as follows: a quarter of an ounce of silver\* for sharpening a plowshare or a pick, and an eighth of an ounce\* for sharpening an ax, a sickle, or an ox goad.) <sup>22</sup>So on the day of the battle none of the people of Israel had a sword or spear, except for Saul and Jonathan.

<sup>23</sup>The pass at Micmash had meanwhile been secured by a contingent of the Philistine army.

### Jonathan's Daring Plan

**14** One day Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come on, let's go over to where the Philistines have their outpost." But Jonathan did not tell his father what he was doing.

<sup>2</sup>Meanwhile, Saul and his 600 men were camped on the outskirts of Gibeah, around the pomegranate tree\* at Migron. <sup>3</sup>Among Saul's men was Ahijah the priest, who was wearing the ephod, the priestly vest. Ahijah was the son of Ichabod's brother Ahitub, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of the LORD who had served at Shiloh.

No one realized that Jonathan had left the Israelite camp. <sup>4</sup>To reach the Philistine outpost, Jonathan had to go down between two rocky cliffs that were called Bozez and Seneh. <sup>5</sup>The cliff on the north was in front of Micmash, and the one on the south was in front of Geba. <sup>6</sup>"Let's go across to the outpost of those pagans," Jonathan said to his armor bearer.

<sup>13-15</sup> As in Greek version; Hebrew reads *Samuel then left Gilgal and went to Gibeah in the land of Benjamin*. <sup>13-21a</sup> Hebrew *1 pim* (8 grams). <sup>13-21b</sup> Hebrew *1/5 of a shekel* (4 grams). <sup>14-2</sup> Or around the rock of Rimmon; compare Judg 20:45. <sup>21-13</sup>. <sup>14-14</sup> Hebrew *half a yoke*; a "yoke" was the amount of land plowed by a pair of yoked oxen in one day. <sup>14-18</sup> As in some Greek manuscripts. Hebrew reads "Bring the Ark of God." For at that time the Ark of God was with the Israelites. <sup>14-19</sup> Hebrew *Withdraw your hand*. <sup>14-27</sup> Or his eyes brightened; similarly in 14:29.

"Perhaps the LORD will help us, for nothing can hinder the LORD. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!"

<sup>7</sup>"Do what you think is best," the armor bearer replied. "I'm with you completely, whatever you decide."

<sup>8</sup>"All right then," Jonathan told him. "We will cross over and let them see us. If they say to us, 'Stay where you are or we'll kill you,' then we will stop and not go up to them. <sup>10</sup>But if they say, 'Come on up and fight,' then we will go up. That will be the LORD's sign that he will help us defeat them."

<sup>11</sup>When the Philistines saw them coming, they shouted. "Look! The Hebrews are crawling out of their holes!" <sup>12</sup>Then the men from the outpost shouted to Jonathan, "Come on up here, and we'll teach you a lesson!"

"Come on, climb right behind me," Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "for the LORD will help us defeat them!"

<sup>13</sup>So they climbed up using both hands and feet, and the Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armor bearer killed those who came behind them. <sup>14</sup>They killed some twenty men in all, and their bodies were scattered over about half an acre.\*

<sup>15</sup>Suddenly, panic broke out in the Philistine army, both in the camp and in the field, including even the outposts and raiding parties. And just then an earthquake struck, and everyone was terrified.

### Israel Defeats the Philistines

<sup>16</sup>Saul's lookouts in Gibeah of Benjamin saw a strange sight—the vast army of Philistines began to melt away in every direction. <sup>17</sup>"Call the roll and find out who's missing," Saul ordered. And when they checked, they found that Jonathan and his armor bearer were gone.

<sup>18</sup>Then Saul shouted to Ahijah, "Bring the ephod here! For at that time Ahijah was wearing the ephod in front of the Israelites." <sup>19</sup>But while Saul was talking to the priest, confusion in the Philistine camp grew louder and louder. Saul said to the priest, "Never mind; let's get going!"

<sup>20</sup>Then Saul and all his men rushed out to the battle and found the Philistines killing each other. There was terrible confusion everywhere. <sup>21</sup>Even the Hebrews who had previously gone over to the Philistine army revolted and joined with Saul, Jonathan, and the rest of the Israelites. <sup>22</sup>Likewise the men of Israel who were hiding in the hill country of Ephraim joined the chase when they saw the Philistines running away. <sup>23</sup>So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the battle continued to rage even beyond Beth-aven.

### Saul's Foolish Oath

<sup>24</sup>Now the men of Israel were pressed to exhaustion. Jonathan bit on the end of my stick. Does that deserve death?" "Yes, Jonathan," Saul said, "you must die! May God punish me and even kill me if you do not die for this." But the people broke in and said to Saul, "Jonathan has done this great victory for Israel. Should he die? Far from it! Surely as the LORD lives, not one hair on his head will be touched, for God helped him do a great deed today." So the LORD rescued Jonathan, and he was not put to death.

<sup>25</sup>Then Saul called back the army from chasing the Philistines, and the Philistines returned home.

<sup>26</sup>But one of the men saw him and said, "Your father made the army take a strict oath that anyone who eats food will be cursed. That is why everyone is weary and faint."

<sup>27</sup>"My father has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan claimed. "A command like that only hurts us. See how

ached I am now that I have eaten this little bit of honey. If the men had been allowed to eat freely from the food they found among our enemies, think how many more Philistines we could have killed!"

<sup>28</sup>They chased and killed the Philistines all day from Micmash to Aijalon, growing more and more faint. <sup>29</sup>That evening they rushed for the battle plunder and butchered the sheep, goats, cattle, and calves, but they ate them without draining the blood. <sup>30</sup>Someone reported to Saul, "Look, the men are sinning against the LORD by eating meat that still has blood in it."

<sup>31</sup>That is very wrong," Saul said. "Find a large stone and roll it over here. <sup>32</sup>Then go out among the troops and tell them, 'Bring the cattle, sheep, and goats here to me. Kill them here, and drain the blood before you eat them. Do not sin against the LORD by eating meat with the blood still in it.'"

<sup>33</sup>So that night all the troops brought their animals and slaughtered them there. <sup>34</sup>Then Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first of the altars he built to the LORD.

<sup>35</sup>Then Saul said, "Let's chase the Philistines all night and overthrow them until sunrise. Let's destroy every last one of them."

<sup>36</sup>His men replied, "We'll do whatever you think is best." But the priest said, "Let's ask God first."

<sup>37</sup>So Saul asked God, "Should we go after the Philistines? Will you help us defeat them?" But God made no reply that day.

<sup>38</sup>Then Saul said to the leaders, "Something's wrong! I don't want all my army commanders to come here. We must find out what sin was committed today. <sup>39</sup>I vow by the name of the LORD who rescued Israel that the sinner will surely die, if it is my own son Jonathan!" But no one would tell him who the trouble was.

<sup>40</sup>Then Saul said, "Jonathan and I will stand over here, and you stand over there."

<sup>41</sup>And the people responded to Saul, "Whatever you think is best."

<sup>42</sup>Then Saul prayed, "O LORD, God of Israel, please show who is guilty and who is innocent.\*" Then they cast lots, and Jonathan and Saul were chosen as the guilty ones, and the people were declared innocent.

<sup>43</sup>Then Saul said, "Now cast lots again and choose between me and Jonathan." And Jonathan was shown to be the guilty one.

<sup>44</sup>"Tell me what you have done," Saul demanded of Jonathan.

<sup>45</sup>"I tasted a little honey," Jonathan admitted. "It was only a bit on the end of my stick. Does that deserve death?"

<sup>46</sup>"Yes, Jonathan," Saul said, "you must die! May God punish me and even kill me if you do not die for this."

<sup>47</sup>But the people broke in and said to Saul, "Jonathan has done this great victory for Israel. Should he die? Far from it! Surely as the LORD lives, not one hair on his head will be touched, for God helped him do a great deed today." So the LORD rescued Jonathan, and he was not put to death.

<sup>48</sup>Then Saul called back the army from chasing the Philistines, and the Philistines returned home.

### Saul's Military Successes

<sup>49</sup>When Saul had secured his grasp on Israel's throne, he fought against his enemies in every direction—against the Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. And wherever he turned, he was victorious.\* <sup>50</sup>He per-

<sup>49</sup> Greek version adds *If the fault is with me or my son Jonathan, respond with Urim; but if it is with the LORD, respond with Thummim*. <sup>50</sup> Hebrew reads *acted wickedly*. <sup>51-49</sup> Hebrew *Ishui*, a variant term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the LORD. <sup>52-15</sup>, 18, 20, 21.



will help us, for nothing can hinder the battle whether he has many warriors or not. "I think is best," the armor bearer replied completely, whatever you decide."

Jonathan told him. "We will cross over. If they say to us, 'Stay where you are,' we will stop and not go up to them. If they say to us, 'Come on up and fight,' then we will go up. That sign that he will help us defeat them." The Philistines saw them coming, they shouted, "The Israelites are crawling out of their holes!" The outpost shouted to Jonathan, "Come on and teach you a lesson!"

Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "The LORD will help us defeat them!" Jonathan used both hands and feet, and the armor bearer followed him. Jonathan and his armor bearer killed the Philistines behind them. The Philistines' bodies were scattered over about half a league.

A panic broke out in the Philistine army, both in the field, including even the outposts, and just then an earthquake struck and killed many.

### The Philistines

In Gibeah of Benjamin saw a strange army of Philistines began to melt away. "Call the roll and find out who's missing," Jonathan said. When they checked, they found that Jonathan and his armor bearer were gone.

Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Bring the ephod here. Jonathan was wearing the ephod in front of the Philistine camp. While Saul was talking to the priest, the Philistine camp grew louder and louder. Jonathan said, "Never mind; let's get going!" All his men rushed out to the battle and were killing each other. There was terrible slaughter. Even the Hebrews who had joined the Philistine army revolted and joined Jonathan and the rest of the Israelites. Jonathan and his armor bearer were hiding in the hill country. When they saw the Philistines, Jonathan and his armor bearer said, "The LORD saved Israel that day, and the Philistines were driven beyond Beth-aven."

### Oath

The Israelites were pressed to exhaustion. Jonathan had placed them under an oath, saying, "Anyone who eats before evening—may he be cursed on my enemies." So no one ate anything, though they had all found honeycombs. Jonathan said, "They didn't dare touch the honeycombs because of the oath they had taken."

Jonathan had not heard his father's command. Jonathan put his stick into a piece of honeycomb. After he had eaten it, he felt refreshed. Jonathan and his armor bearer saw him and said, "Your father has put you under a strict oath that anyone who eats food before evening—may he be cursed on my enemies."

Jonathan said, "That is why everyone is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

Jonathan said, "Jonathan is weary and faint. Jonathan has made trouble for us all!" Jonathan said, "I will not command like that only hurts us. See how Jonathan is weary and faint."

### Saul Destroys the Amalekites

One day Samuel said to Saul, "It was the LORD who told me to anoint you as king of his people, Israel. Now listen to this message from the LORD! This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies has declared: I have decided to settle accounts with the nation of Amalek for opposing Israel when they came from Egypt. Now go and completely destroy\* the entire Amalekite nation—men, women, children, babies, cattle, sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys."

So Saul mobilized his army at Telaim. There were 200,000 soldiers from Israel and 10,000 men from Judah. Then Saul and his army went to a town of the Amalekites and lay in wait in the valley. Saul sent this warning to the Kenites: "Move away from where the Amalekites live, or you will die with them. For you showed kindness to all the people of Israel when they came up from Egypt." So the Kenites packed up and left.

Then Saul slaughtered the Amalekites from Havilah all the way to Shur, east of Egypt. He captured Agag, the Amalekite king, but completely destroyed everyone else. Saul and his men spared Agag's life and kept the best of the sheep and goats, the cattle, the fat calves, and the lambs—everything, in fact, that appealed to them. They destroyed only what was worthless or of poor quality.

### The LORD Rejects Saul

Then the LORD said to Samuel, "I am sorry that I ever made Saul king, for he has not been loyal to me and has refused to obey my command." Samuel was so deeply moved when he heard this that he cried out to the LORD all night.

Early the next morning Samuel went to find Saul. Someone told him, "Saul went to the town of Carmel to set up a monument to himself; then he went on to Gilgal."

When Samuel finally found him, Saul greeted him cheerfully. "May the LORD bless you," he said. "I have carried out the LORD's command!"

Then what is all the bleating of sheep and goats and the lowing of cattle I hear?" Samuel demanded.

"It's true that the army spared the best of the sheep, goats, and cattle," Saul admitted. "But they are going to sacrifice them to the LORD your God. We have destroyed everything else."

Then Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! Listen to what the LORD told me last night!"

"What did he tell you?" Saul asked.

And Samuel told him, "Although you may think little of yourself, are you not the leader of the tribes of Israel? The LORD has anointed you king of Israel. And the LORD sent you on a mission and told you, 'Go and completely destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, until they are all dead.' Why

13:20 As in Greek version; Hebrew reads *around the rock of Rimmon*; compare Judg 20:26. 14:18 As in some Greek manuscripts. 14:27 Or *drawn*. 14:28 Or *drawn*. 14:29 Or *drawn*. 14:30 Or *drawn*. 14:31 Or *drawn*. 14:32 Or *drawn*. 14:33 Or *drawn*. 14:34 Or *drawn*. 14:35 Or *drawn*. 14:36 Or *drawn*. 14:37 Or *drawn*. 14:38 Or *drawn*. 14:39 Or *drawn*. 14:40 Or *drawn*. 14:41 Or *drawn*. 14:42 Or *drawn*. 14:43 Or *drawn*. 14:44 Or *drawn*. 14:45 Or *drawn*. 14:46 Or *drawn*. 14:47 Or *drawn*. 14:48 Or *drawn*. 14:49 Or *drawn*. 14:50 Or *drawn*. 14:51 Or *drawn*. 14:52 Or *drawn*. 14:53 Or *drawn*. 14:54 Or *drawn*. 14:55 Or *drawn*. 14:56 Or *drawn*. 14:57 Or *drawn*. 14:58 Or *drawn*. 14:59 Or *drawn*. 14:60 Or *drawn*. 14:61 Or *drawn*. 14:62 Or *drawn*. 14:63 Or *drawn*. 14:64 Or *drawn*. 14:65 Or *drawn*. 14:66 Or *drawn*. 14:67 Or *drawn*. 14:68 Or *drawn*. 14:69 Or *drawn*. 14:70 Or *drawn*. 14:71 Or *drawn*. 14:72 Or *drawn*. 14:73 Or *drawn*. 14:74 Or *drawn*. 14:75 Or *drawn*. 14:76 Or *drawn*. 14:77 Or *drawn*. 14:78 Or *drawn*. 14:79 Or *drawn*. 14:80 Or *drawn*. 14:81 Or *drawn*. 14:82 Or *drawn*. 14:83 Or *drawn*. 14:84 Or *drawn*. 14:85 Or *drawn*. 14:86 Or *drawn*. 14:87 Or *drawn*. 14:88 Or *drawn*. 14:89 Or *drawn*. 14:90 Or *drawn*. 14:91 Or *drawn*. 14:92 Or *drawn*. 14:93 Or *drawn*. 14:94 Or *drawn*. 14:95 Or *drawn*. 14:96 Or *drawn*. 14:97 Or *drawn*. 14:98 Or *drawn*. 14:99 Or *drawn*. 15:1 Or *drawn*. 15:2 Or *drawn*. 15:3 Or *drawn*. 15:4 Or *drawn*. 15:5 Or *drawn*. 15:6 Or *drawn*. 15:7 Or *drawn*. 15:8 Or *drawn*. 15:9 Or *drawn*. 15:10 Or *drawn*. 15:11 Or *drawn*. 15:12 Or *drawn*. 15:13 Or *drawn*. 15:14 Or *drawn*. 15:15 Or *drawn*. 15:16 Or *drawn*. 15:17 Or *drawn*. 15:18 Or *drawn*. 15:19 Or *drawn*. 15:20 Or *drawn*. 15:21 Or *drawn*. 15:22 Or *drawn*. 15:23 Or *drawn*. 15:24 Or *drawn*. 15:25 Or *drawn*. 15:26 Or *drawn*. 15:27 Or *drawn*. 15:28 Or *drawn*. 15:29 Or *drawn*. 15:30 Or *drawn*. 15:31 Or *drawn*. 15:32 Or *drawn*. 15:33 Or *drawn*. 15:34 Or *drawn*. 15:35 Or *drawn*. 15:36 Or *drawn*. 15:37 Or *drawn*. 15:38 Or *drawn*. 15:39 Or *drawn*. 15:40 Or *drawn*. 15:41 Or *drawn*. 15:42 Or *drawn*. 15:43 Or *drawn*. 15:44 Or *drawn*. 15:45 Or *drawn*. 15:46 Or *drawn*. 15:47 Or *drawn*. 15:48 Or *drawn*. 15:49 Or *drawn*. 15:50 Or *drawn*. 15:51 Or *drawn*. 15:52 Or *drawn*. 15:53 Or *drawn*. 15:54 Or *drawn*. 15:55 Or *drawn*. 15:56 Or *drawn*. 15:57 Or *drawn*. 15:58 Or *drawn*. 15:59 Or *drawn*. 15:60 Or *drawn*. 15:61 Or *drawn*. 15:62 Or *drawn*. 15:63 Or *drawn*. 15:64 Or *drawn*. 15:65 Or *drawn*. 15:66 Or *drawn*. 15:67 Or *drawn*. 15:68 Or *drawn*. 15:69 Or *drawn*. 15:70 Or *drawn*. 15:71 Or *drawn*. 15:72 Or *drawn*. 15:73 Or *drawn*. 15:74 Or *drawn*. 15:75 Or *drawn*. 15:76 Or *drawn*. 15:77 Or *drawn*. 15:78 Or *drawn*. 15:79 Or *drawn*. 15:80 Or *drawn*. 15:81 Or *drawn*. 15:82 Or *drawn*. 15:83 Or *drawn*. 15:84 Or *drawn*. 15:85 Or *drawn*. 15:86 Or *drawn*. 15:87 Or *drawn*. 15:88 Or *drawn*. 15:89 Or *drawn*. 15:90 Or *drawn*. 15:91 Or *drawn*. 15:92 Or *drawn*. 15:93 Or *drawn*. 15:94 Or *drawn*. 15:95 Or *drawn*. 15:96 Or *drawn*. 15:97 Or *drawn*. 15:98 Or *drawn*. 15:99 Or *drawn*. 16:1 Or *drawn*. 16:2 Or *drawn*. 16:3 Or *drawn*. 16:4 Or *drawn*. 16:5 Or *drawn*. 16:6 Or *drawn*. 16:7 Or *drawn*. 16:8 Or *drawn*. 16:9 Or *drawn*. 16:10 Or *drawn*. 16:11 Or *drawn*. 16:12 Or *drawn*. 16:13 Or *drawn*. 16:14 Or *drawn*. 16:15 Or *drawn*. 16:16 Or *drawn*. 16:17 Or *drawn*. 16:18 Or *drawn*. 16:19 Or *drawn*. 16:20 Or *drawn*. 16:21 Or *drawn*. 16:22 Or *drawn*. 16:23 Or *drawn*. 16:24 Or *drawn*. 16:25 Or *drawn*. 16:26 Or *drawn*. 16:27 Or *drawn*. 16:28 Or *drawn*. 16:29 Or *drawn*. 16:30 Or *drawn*. 16:31 Or *drawn*. 16:32 Or *drawn*. 16:33 Or *drawn*. 16:34 Or *drawn*. 16:35 Or *drawn*. 16:36 Or *drawn*. 16:37 Or *drawn*. 16:38 Or *drawn*. 16:39 Or *drawn*. 16:40 Or *drawn*. 16:41 Or *drawn*. 16:42 Or *drawn*. 16:43 Or *drawn*. 16:44 Or *draw*



haven't you obeyed the LORD? Why did you rush for the plunder and do what was evil in the LORD's sight?"

<sup>20</sup>"But I did obey the LORD," Saul insisted. "I carried out the mission he gave me. I brought back King Agag, but I destroyed everyone else. <sup>21</sup>Then my troops brought in the best of the sheep, goats, cattle, and plunder to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal."

<sup>22</sup>But Samuel replied,

"What is more pleasing to the LORD:  
your burnt offerings and sacrifices  
or your obedience to his voice?

Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice,  
and submission is better than offering the fat  
of rams.

<sup>23</sup> Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft,  
and stubbornness as bad as worshipping idols.  
So because you have rejected the command of the LORD,  
he has rejected you as king."

### Saul Pleads for Forgiveness

<sup>24</sup>Then Saul admitted to Samuel, "Yes, I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the LORD's command, for I was afraid of the people and did what they demanded. <sup>25</sup>But now, please forgive my sin and come back with me so that I may worship the LORD."

<sup>26</sup>But Samuel replied, "I will not go back with you! Since you have rejected the LORD's command, he has rejected you as king of Israel."

<sup>27</sup>As Samuel turned to go, Saul tried to hold him back and tore the hem of his robe. <sup>28</sup>And Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to someone else—one who is better than you. <sup>29</sup>And he who is the Glory of Israel will not lie, nor will he change his mind, for he is not human that he should change his mind!"

<sup>30</sup>Then Saul pleaded again, "I know I have sinned. But please, at least honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel by coming back with me so that I may worship the LORD your God." <sup>31</sup>So Samuel finally agreed and went back with him, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

### Samuel Executes King Agag

<sup>32</sup>Then Samuel said, "Bring King Agag to me." Agag arrived full of hope, for he thought, "Surely the worst is over, and I have been spared!" <sup>33</sup>But Samuel said, "As your sword has killed the sons of many mothers, now your mother will be childless." And Samuel cut Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.

<sup>34</sup>Then Samuel went home to Ramah, and Saul returned to his house at Gibeath of Saul. <sup>35</sup>Samuel never went to meet with Saul again, but he mourned constantly for him. And the LORD was sorry he had ever made Saul king of Israel.

### Samuel Anoints David as King

**16** Now the LORD said to Samuel, "You have mourned long enough for Saul. I have rejected him as king of Israel, so fill your flask with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be my king."

<sup>2</sup>But Samuel asked, "How can I do that? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me."

"Take a heifer with you," the LORD replied, "and say that you have come to make a sacrifice to the LORD. <sup>3</sup>Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you which of his sons to anoint for me."

15:32 Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version read *Agag arrived hesitantly, for he thought, "Surely this is the bitterness of death."* 16:9 Hebrew *Shamma*, a variant spelling of Shimea; compare 1 Chr 2:13; 20:7. 16:14 Or *an evil spirit*; also in 16:15, 16, 23.

<sup>4</sup>So Samuel did as the LORD instructed. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town came trembling to meet him. "What's wrong?" they asked. "Do you come in peace?"

<sup>5</sup>"Yes," Samuel replied. "I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice. Then Samuel performed the purification rite for Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice, too.

<sup>6</sup>When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, "Surely this is the LORD's anointed!"

<sup>7</sup>But the LORD said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The LORD doesn't judge things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

<sup>8</sup>Then Jesse told his son Abinadab to step forward and walk in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "This is not the one the LORD has chosen." <sup>9</sup>Next Jesse summoned Shimea, but Samuel said, "Neither is this the one the LORD has chosen." <sup>10</sup>In the same way all seven of Jesse's sons were presented to Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." <sup>11</sup>Then Samuel asked, "Are there all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse replied. "But he's out in the fields watching the sheep and goats."

"Send for him at once," Samuel said. "We will not down to eat until he arrives."

<sup>12</sup>So Jesse sent for him. He was dark and handsome, with beautiful eyes.

And the LORD said, "This is the one; anoint him."

<sup>13</sup>So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

### David Serves in Saul's Court

<sup>14</sup>Now the Spirit of the LORD had left Saul, and the LORD sent a tormenting spirit\* that filled him with depression and fear.

<sup>15</sup>Some of Saul's servants said to him, "A tormenting spirit from God is troubling you. <sup>16</sup>Let us find a good musician to play the harp whenever the tormenting spirit troubles you. He will play soothing music, and you will soon be well again."

<sup>17</sup>"All right," Saul said. "Find me someone who plays well and bring him here."

<sup>18</sup>One of the servants said to Saul, "One of Jesse's sons from Bethlehem is a talented harp player. Not only that—he is a brave warrior, a man of war, and has good judgment. He is also a fine-looking young man, and the LORD is with him."

<sup>19</sup>So Saul sent messengers to Jesse to say, "Send me your son David, the shepherd." <sup>20</sup>Jesse responded by sending David to Saul, along with a young goat, a donkey loaded with bread, and a wineskin full of wine.

<sup>21</sup>So David went to Saul and began serving him. Saul loved David very much, and David became his armor bearer.

<sup>22</sup>Then Saul sent word to Jesse asking, "Please let David remain in my service, for I am very pleased with him."

<sup>23</sup>And whenever the tormenting spirit from God troubled Saul, David would play the harp. Then Saul would feel better, and the tormenting spirit would go away.

### Goliath Challenges the Israelites

**17** The Philistines now mustered their army for battle and camped between Socoh in Judah and Azekah in Ephes-dammim. <sup>2</sup>Saul countered by gathering his Israelite

troops near the valley of Elah. <sup>3</sup>So the Philistines and Israelites faced each other on opposite hills, with the valley between them.

<sup>4</sup>Then Goliath, a Philistine champion from Gath, came out of the Philistine ranks to face the forces of Israel. He was nine feet\* tall! <sup>5</sup>He wore a bronze helmet, and his bronze coat of mail weighed 125 pounds.\* <sup>6</sup>He also wore bronze leg armor, and he carried a bronze javelin on his shoulder. <sup>7</sup>The shaft of his spear was as heavy and thick as a spear's beam, tipped with an iron spearhead that weighed 15 pounds.\* <sup>8</sup>His armor bearer walked ahead of him carrying a shield.

<sup>9</sup>Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelites. "Why are you all coming out to fight?" he called. "I am a Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of the king. Choose one man to come down here and fight me! <sup>10</sup>If he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves! <sup>11</sup>I defy the armies of Israel today! Send a man who will fight me!" <sup>12</sup>When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.

### David Sends David to Saul's Camp

David was the son of a man named Jesse, an Ephrathite from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. Jesse was an old man at that time, and he had eight sons. <sup>13</sup>Jesse's three oldest sons—Eliab, Abinadab, and Shimea\*—had already joined Saul's army to fight the Philistines. <sup>14</sup>David was the youngest son. David's three oldest brothers stayed with Saul's army, but David went back and forth so he could help his father with the sheep in Bethlehem.

<sup>15</sup>For forty days, every morning and evening, the Philistine champion strutted in front of the Israelite army.

<sup>16</sup>One day Jesse said to David, "Take this basket\* of grain and these ten loaves of bread, and carry them to your brothers. <sup>17</sup>And give these ten cuts of cheese to your brothers. See how your brothers are getting along, and bring back a report on how they are doing." <sup>18</sup>David's brothers were with Saul and the Israelite army at the valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines.

<sup>19</sup>So David left the sheep with another shepherd and set out early the next morning with the gifts, as Jesse had directed him. He arrived at the camp just as the Israelite army was leaving for the battlefield with shouts and battle cries. When the Israelite and Philistine forces stood facing each other, the army against army. <sup>22</sup>David left his things with the army of supplies and hurried out to the ranks to greet his brothers. <sup>23</sup>As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, came out from the Philistine ranks. Then David heard him shout his usual taunt to the army of Israel.

<sup>24</sup>As soon as the Israelite army saw him, they began to run in fright. <sup>25</sup>"Have you seen the giant?" the men asked. "He comes out each day to defy Israel. The king has offered a reward to anyone who kills him. He will give that man one of his daughters for a wife, and the man's entire family will be exempted from paying taxes!"

<sup>26</sup>David asked the soldiers standing nearby, "What will a soldier get for killing this Philistine and ending his defiance of Israel? Who is this pagan Philistine anyway, that he is allowed to defy the armies of the living God?"

<sup>27</sup>And these men gave David the same reply. They said, "That is the reward for killing him."

<sup>28</sup>But when David's oldest brother, Eliab, heard David talking to the men, he was angry. "What are you doing

\*Hebrew 6 cubits and 1 span [which totals about 9.75 feet or 3 meters]; Dead Sea Scrolls read 6 cubits. 17:5 Hebrew 5,000 shekels [57 kilograms]. 17:7 Hebrew 600 shekels; compare 1 Chr 2:13; 20:7. 17:17 Hebrew *ephah* [20 quarts or 22 liters].



the LORD instructed. When he arrived, the elders of the town came trembling and asked, "Do you come here to sacrifice?"

"I have come to sacrifice to the LORD and come with me to the sacrifice," he said. "The purification rite for Jesse and his sons is to the sacrifice, too."

Then Samuel took one look at Eliab and said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

Then Samuel said, "The LORD has anointed him!" But Samuel said, "Don't judge by his appearance. The LORD does not look at the flesh."

near the valley of Elah. So the Philistines and Israelites ranged each other on opposite hills, with the valley between them.

Then Goliath, a Philistine champion from Gath, came out to fight the Israelite army. He was six feet tall. He wore a bronze helmet, and his coat of mail weighed 125 pounds. He also wore a bronze breastplate, and he carried a bronze javelin on his back. The shaft of his spear was as heavy and thick as a spearhead. His armor bearer walked ahead of him carrying the shield.

Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelite army. "Why are you all coming out to fight?" he called. "I am a Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of the LORD. Choose one man to come down here and fight me! If he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves! I defy the armies of Israel today! Send your champion to fight me!" When Saul and the Israelites heard this, they were terrified and deeply shaken.

#### Sends David to Saul's Camp

David was the son of a man named Jesse, an Ephrathite from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. Jesse was an old man at that time, and he had eight sons. Jesse's three oldest sons—Eliab, Abinadab, and Shimea—had already joined the army to fight the Philistines. David was the youngest son. His three oldest brothers stayed with Saul's army, and David went back and forth so he could help his father with the sheep in Bethlehem.

For forty days, every morning and evening, the Philistine champion strutted in front of the Israelite army.

One day Jesse said to David, "Take this basket\* of bread and these ten loaves of bread, and carry them to your brothers. And give these ten cuts of cheese to your captain. See how your brothers are getting along, and bring back a report on how they are doing." David's brothers were with Saul and the Israelite army at the valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines.

David left the sheep with another shepherd and set out the next morning with the gifts, as Jesse had directed him. He arrived at the camp just as the Israelite army was preparing for the battlefield with shouts and battle cries. The Israelite and Philistine forces stood facing each other against the army.

David left his things with the army supplies and hurried out to the ranks to greet his brothers. As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, came out from the Philistine camp. Then David heard him shout his usual taunt to the Israelite army.

As the Israelite army saw him, they began to run and hide. "Have you seen the giant?" the men asked. "He comes out each day to defy Israel. The king has offered a reward to anyone who kills him. He will give that man his daughter for a wife, and the man's entire family will be exempted from paying taxes!"

David asked the soldiers standing nearby, "What will the reward be for killing this Philistine and ending his defiance of the LORD?" "Who is this pagan Philistine anyway, that he is able to defy the armies of the living God?"

These men gave David the same reply. They said, "The reward for killing him."

When David's oldest brother, Eliab, heard David talking to the men, he was angry. "What are you doing

around here anyway?" he demanded. "What about those few sheep you're supposed to be taking care of? I know about your pride and deceit. You just want to see the battle!"

"What have I done now?" David replied. "I was only asking a question!" He walked over to some others and asked them the same thing and received the same answer. Then David's question was reported to King Saul, and the king sent for him.

#### David Kills Goliath

"Don't worry about this Philistine," David told Saul. "I'll go fight him!"

"Don't be ridiculous!" Saul replied. "There's no way you can fight this Philistine and possibly win! You're only a boy, and he's been a man of war since his youth."

But David persisted. "I have been taking care of my father's sheep and goats," he said. "When a lion or a bear comes to steal a lamb from the flock, I go after it with a club and rescue the lamb from its mouth. If the animal turns on me, I catch it by the jaw and club it to death. I have done this to both lions and bears, and I'll do it to this pagan Philistine, too, for he has defied the armies of the living God! The LORD who rescued me from the claws of the lion and the bear will rescue me from this Philistine!"

Saul finally consented. "All right, go ahead," he said. "And may the LORD be with you!"

Then Saul gave David his own armor—a bronze helmet and a coat of mail. David put it on, strapped the sword over it, and took a step or two to see what it was like, for he had never worn such things before.

"I can't go in these," he protested to Saul. "I'm not used to them." So David took them off again. He picked up five smooth stones from a stream and put them into his shepherd's bag. Then, armed only with his shepherd's staff and sling, he started across the valley to fight the Philistine.

Goliath walked out toward David with his shield bearer ahead of him, sneering in contempt at this ruddy-faced boy. "Am I a dog?" he roared at David, "that you come at me with a stick?" And he cursed David by the names of his gods. "Come over here, and I'll give your flesh to the birds and wild animals!" Goliath yelled.

David replied to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Heaven's Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today the LORD will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head. And then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel! And everyone assembled here will know that the LORD rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the LORD's battle, and he will give you to us!"

As Goliath moved closer to attack, David quickly ran out to meet him. Reaching into his shepherd's bag and taking out a stone, he hurled it with his sling and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank in, and Goliath stumbled and fell face down on the ground.

So David triumphed over the Philistine with only a sling and a stone, for he had no sword. Then David ran over and pulled Goliath's sword from its sheath. David used it to kill him and cut off his head.

#### Israel Routs the Philistines

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they turned and ran. Then the men of Israel and Judah gave a

\* *cup and 1 span* [which totals about 9.75 feet or 3 meters]; Dead Sea Scrolls and Greek version read *4 cubits and 1 span* [which totals about 17.5 Hebrew *5,000 shekels* (57 kilograms)]. 17:7 Hebrew *600 shekels* (6.8 kilograms). 17:13 Hebrew *Shammah*, a variant of *Shamaim*. 17:14 Hebrew *ephah* (20 quarts or 22 liters). 17:18 Hebrew *and take their pledge*.



great shout of triumph and rushed after the Philistines, chasing them as far as Gath\* and the gates of Ekron. The bodies of the dead and wounded Philistines were strewn all along the road from Shaaraim, as far as Gath and Ekron. <sup>53</sup>Then the Israelite army returned and plundered the deserted Philistine camp. <sup>54</sup>(David took the Philistine's head to Jerusalem, but he stored the man's armor in his own tent.)

<sup>55</sup>As Saul watched David go out to fight the Philistine, he asked Abner, the commander of his army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?"

"I really don't know," Abner declared.

<sup>56</sup>"Well, find out who he is!" the king told him.

<sup>57</sup>As soon as David returned from killing Goliath, Abner brought him to Saul with the Philistine's head still in his hand. <sup>58</sup>"Tell me about your father, young man," Saul said.

And David replied, "His name is Jesse, and we live in Bethlehem."

### Saul Becomes Jealous of David

**18** After David had finished talking with Saul, he met Jonathan, the king's son. There was an immediate bond between them, for Jonathan loved David. <sup>2</sup>From that day on Saul kept David with him and wouldn't let him return home. <sup>3</sup>And Jonathan made a solemn pact with David, because he loved him as he loved himself. <sup>4</sup>Jonathan sealed the pact by taking off his robe and giving it to David, together with his tunic, sword, bow, and belt.

<sup>5</sup>Whatever Saul asked David to do, David did it successfully. So Saul made him a commander over the men of war, an appointment that was welcomed by the people and Saul's officers alike.

<sup>6</sup>When the victorious Israelite army was returning home after David had killed the Philistine, women from all the towns of Israel came out to meet King Saul. They sang and danced for joy with tambourines and cymbals.\* <sup>7</sup>This was their song:

"Saul has killed his thousands,  
and David his ten thousands!"

<sup>8</sup>This made Saul very angry. "What's this?" he said. "They credit David with ten thousands and me with only thousands. Next they'll be making him their king!" So from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

<sup>10</sup>The very next day a tormenting spirit\* from God overwhelmed Saul, and he began to rave in his house like a madman. David was playing the harp, as he did each day. But Saul had a spear in his hand, <sup>11</sup>and he suddenly hurled it at David, intending to pin him to the wall. But David escaped him twice.

<sup>12</sup>Saul was then afraid of David, for the LORD was with David and had turned away from Saul. <sup>13</sup>Finally, Saul sent him away and appointed him commander over 1,000 men, and David faithfully led his troops into battle.

<sup>14</sup>David continued to succeed in everything he did, for the LORD was with him. <sup>15</sup>When Saul recognized this, he became even more afraid of him. <sup>16</sup>But all Israel and Judah loved David because he was so successful at leading his troops into battle.

### David Marries Saul's Daughter

<sup>17</sup>One day Saul said to David, "I am ready to give you my older daughter, Merab, as your wife. But first you must prove yourself to be a real warrior by fighting the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "I'll send him out against the Philistines and let them kill him rather than doing it myself."

<sup>17:52</sup> As in some Greek manuscripts; Hebrew reads a valley. <sup>18:6</sup> The type of instrument represented by the word *cymbals* is uncertain. <sup>18:10</sup> C in Greek version; Hebrew reads with Jonathan standing. <sup>20:30</sup> Hebrew You son.

<sup>18</sup>"Who am I, and what is my family in Israel that I should be the king's son-in-law?" David exclaimed. "My father's family is nothing!" <sup>19</sup>So\* when the time came for Saul to give his daughter Merab in marriage to David, he gave her instead to Adriel, a man from Meholah.

<sup>20</sup>In the meantime, Saul's daughter Michal had fallen in love with David, and Saul was delighted when he heard about it. <sup>21</sup>"Here's another chance to see him killed by the Philistines!" Saul said to himself. But to David he said, "Today you have a second chance to become my son-in-law!"

<sup>22</sup>Then Saul told his men to say to David, "The king really likes you, and so do we. Why don't you accept the king's offer and become his son-in-law?"

<sup>23</sup>When Saul's men said these things to David, he replied, "How can a poor man from a humble family afford the bride price for the daughter of a king?"

<sup>24</sup>When Saul's men reported this back to the king, <sup>25</sup>he told them, "Tell David that all I want for the bride price is 100 Philistine foreskins! Vengeance on my enemies is a really want." But what Saul had in mind was that David would be killed in the fight.

<sup>26</sup>David was delighted to accept the offer. Before the time limit expired, <sup>27</sup>he and his men went out and killed 200 Philistines. Then David fulfilled the king's requirement by presenting all their foreskins to him. So Saul gave his daughter Michal to David to be his wife.

<sup>28</sup>When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and how much his daughter Michal loved him, <sup>29</sup>Saul became even more afraid of him, and he remained David's enemy for the rest of his life.

<sup>30</sup>Every time the commanders of the Philistines attacked David was more successful against them than all the rest of Saul's officers. So David's name became very famous.

### Saul Tries to Kill David

**19** Saul now urged his servants and his son Jonathan to assassinate David. But Jonathan, because of strong affection for David, <sup>2</sup>told him what his father was planning. "Tomorrow morning," he warned him, "you must find a hiding place out in the fields. <sup>3</sup>I'll ask my father to let you out there with me, and I'll talk to him about you. Then I'll do everything I can find out."

<sup>4</sup>The next morning Jonathan spoke with his father about David, saying many good things about him. "The king is not sin against his servant David," Jonathan said. "He's never done anything to harm you. He has always helped you in any way he could. <sup>5</sup>Have you forgotten about the time he risked his life to kill the Philistine giant and how the LORD brought him a great victory to all Israel as a result? You were certainly happy about it then. Why should you murder an innocent man like David? There is no reason for it at all!"

<sup>6</sup>So Saul listened to Jonathan and vowed, "As surely as the LORD lives, David will not be killed."

<sup>7</sup>Afterward Jonathan called David and told him what had happened. Then he brought David to Saul, and David set in the court as before.

<sup>8</sup>War broke out again after that, and David led his troops against the Philistines. He attacked them with such fury that they all ran away.

<sup>9</sup>But one day when Saul was sitting at home, with spear in hand, the tormenting spirit\* from the LORD suddenly came upon him again. As David played his harp, <sup>10</sup>Saul hurled the spear at David. But David dodged out of the way, and when the spear stuck in the wall, he fled and escaped into the field.

### Michal Saves David's Life

Then Saul sent troops to watch David's house. They were to kill David when he came out the next morning. But Michal, David's wife, warned him, "If you don't escape tonight, you will be dead by morning." <sup>12</sup>So she helped him climb out through a window, and he fled and escaped. Then she took an idol\* and put it in his bed, covered it with blankets, and put a cushion of goat's hair at its head.

<sup>13</sup>When the troops came to arrest David, she told them he was sick and couldn't get out of bed.

<sup>14</sup>But Saul sent the troops back to get David. He ordered, "Bring him to me in his bed so I can kill him!" <sup>15</sup>But when they came to carry David out, they discovered that it was only an idol in the bed with a cushion of goat's hair at its head.

<sup>16</sup>Why have you betrayed me like this and let my enemy escape?" Saul demanded of Michal.

"I had to," Michal replied. "He threatened to kill me if I didn't help him."

<sup>17</sup>So David escaped and went to Ramah to see Samuel, and he told him all that Saul had done to him. Then Samuel brought David with him to live at Naioth.

<sup>18</sup>When the report reached Saul that David was at Naioth in Ramah, <sup>19</sup>he sent troops to capture him. But when they arrived and saw Samuel leading a group of prophets who were prophesying, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men, and they also began to prophesy. <sup>21</sup>When Saul heard what had happened, he sent his troops, but they, too, prophesied! The same thing happened a third time. <sup>22</sup>Finally, Saul himself went to Ramah and arrived at the great well in Secu. "Where are Samuel and David?" he demanded.

"They are at Naioth in Ramah," someone told him. <sup>23</sup>But on the way to Naioth in Ramah the Spirit of God came even upon Saul, and he, too, began to prophesy all the day and all night, prophesying in the presence of his men. The people who were watching exclaimed, "What's happened to Saul a prophet?"

<sup>24</sup>He tore off his clothes and lay naked on the ground.

<sup>25</sup>Jonathan and his brothers heard of this and came to see him. They were very distressed, and they went to him and wept. <sup>26</sup>Jonathan said to David, "Tomorrow morning I will go with you, and I will tell my father that you have fled. Then I will bring you back to him."

<sup>27</sup>But David said to Jonathan, "Don't do this! If I do, I will surely die. For my father will kill me. I am afraid of my father. But I will do whatever you say."

<sup>28</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>29</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>30</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>31</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>32</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>33</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>34</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>35</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>36</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>37</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>38</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>39</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>40</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>41</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>42</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>43</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>44</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>45</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>46</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>47</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>48</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>49</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>50</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>51</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>52</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>53</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>54</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>55</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>56</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>57</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>58</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>59</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>60</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>61</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>62</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>63</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>64</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>65</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>66</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>67</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>68</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>69</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>70</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>71</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>72</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>73</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>74</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>75</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>76</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>77</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>78</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>79</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>80</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>81</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>82</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>83</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>84</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>85</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>86</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>87</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."

<sup>88</sup>Jonathan said to David, "I will do whatever you say."



is my family in Israel that I should? David exclaimed. "My father has said, 'When the time came for Saul to give his daughter in marriage to David, he gave her to me.'"

Saul's daughter Michal had fallen in love with David. She was delighted when he had the chance to see him killed by his own men. But to David he said, "The king has said, 'Why don't you accept the king's daughter?'"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

David said these things to David, he replied, "Why don't you accept the king's daughter?"

## Michal Saves David's Life

Then Saul sent troops to watch David's house. They were to kill David when he came out the next morning. But Michal, David's wife, warned him, "If you don't escape tonight you will be dead by morning." <sup>12</sup>So she helped him go out through a window, and he fled and escaped. Then she took an idol\* and put it in his bed, covered it with blankets, and put a cushion of goat's hair at its head.

When the troops came to arrest David, she told them he was sick and couldn't get out of bed.

But Saul sent the troops back to get David. He ordered, "Bring him to me in his bed so I can kill him!" <sup>16</sup>But when they came to carry David out, they discovered that it was only an idol in the bed with a cushion of goat's hair at its head.

"Why have you betrayed me like this and let my enemy escape?" Saul demanded of Michal.

"I had to," Michal replied. "He threatened to kill me if I don't help him."

So David escaped and went to Ramah to see Samuel, who told him all that Saul had done to him. Then Samuel brought David with him to live at Naioth. <sup>19</sup>When the report reached Saul that David was at Naioth in Ramah, <sup>20</sup>he sent troops to capture him. But when they arrived and saw Samuel leading a group of prophets who were prophesying, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men, and they also began to prophesy. <sup>21</sup>When Saul heard what had happened, he sent troops, but they, too, prophesied! The same thing happened a third time. <sup>22</sup>Finally, Saul himself went to Ramah and arrived at the great well in Secu. "Where are Samuel and David?" he demanded.

"They are at Naioth in Ramah," someone told him.

But on the way to Naioth in Ramah the Spirit of God came even upon Saul, and he, too, began to prophesy all the way to Naioth! <sup>24</sup>He tore off his clothes and lay naked on the ground all day and all night, prophesying in the presence of the people. The people who were watching exclaimed, "What is Saul a prophet?"

Michal Helps David

David now fled from Naioth in Ramah and found Jonathan. "What have I done?" he exclaimed. "What crime? How have I offended your father that he is so determined to kill me?"

"That's not true!" Jonathan protested. "You're not going to die. He always tells me everything he's going to do, even the little things. I know my father wouldn't hide something from me. It just isn't so!"

Then David took an oath before Jonathan and said, "My father knows perfectly well about our friendship, so I said to myself, 'I won't tell Jonathan—why should I?' But I swear to you that I am only a step away from telling him. I swear it by the LORD and by your own soul!"

"Tell me what I can do to help you," Jonathan exclaimed. "I'll always eat with the king on this occasion, but I'll hide in the field and stay there until the evening of the third day. <sup>6</sup>If your father asks where I am, tell him I've gone home to Bethlehem for an annual sacrifice. <sup>7</sup>If he says, 'Fine!' you will know all is well. <sup>8</sup>If he is angry and loses his temper, you will know he is determined to kill me. <sup>9</sup>Show me this loyalty as my sworn friend—for we made a solemn pact before the LORD—or kill me myself if I have sinned against your father. But please don't betray me to him!"

Jonathan exclaimed, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

Jonathan said, "You know that if I had the chance, I would have killed Saul long ago."

slightest notion my father was planning to kill you, I would tell you at once."

<sup>10</sup>Then David asked, "How will I know whether or not your father is angry?"

<sup>11</sup>"Come out to the field with me," Jonathan replied. And they went out there together. <sup>12</sup>Then Jonathan told David, "I promise by the LORD, the God of Israel, that by this time tomorrow, or the next day at the latest, I will talk to my father and let you know at once how he feels about you. If he speaks favorably about you, I will let you know. <sup>13</sup>But if he is angry and wants you killed, may the LORD strike me and even kill me if I don't warn you so you can escape and live. May the LORD be with you as he used to be with my father. <sup>14</sup>And may you treat me with the faithful love of the LORD as long as I live. But if I die, <sup>15</sup>treat my family with this faithful love, even when the LORD destroys all your enemies from the face of the earth."

<sup>16</sup>So Jonathan made a solemn pact with David,\* saying, "May the LORD destroy all your enemies!" <sup>17</sup>And Jonathan made David reaffirm his vow of friendship again, for Jonathan loved David as he loved himself.

<sup>18</sup>Then Jonathan said, "Tomorrow we celebrate the new moon festival. You will be missed when your place at the table is empty. <sup>19</sup>The day after tomorrow, toward evening, go to the place where you hid before, and wait there by the stone pile.\* <sup>20</sup>I will come out and shoot three arrows to the side of the stone pile as though I were shooting at a target. <sup>21</sup>Then I will send a boy to bring the arrows back. If you hear me tell him, 'They're on this side,' then you will know, as surely as the LORD lives, that all is well, and there is no trouble. <sup>22</sup>But if I tell him, 'Go farther—the arrows are still ahead of you,' then it will mean that you must leave immediately, for the LORD is sending you away. <sup>23</sup>And may the LORD make us keep our promises to each other, for he has witnessed them."

<sup>24</sup>So David hid himself in the field, and when the new moon festival began, the king sat down to eat. <sup>25</sup>He sat at his usual place against the wall, with Jonathan sitting opposite him\* and Abner beside him. But David's place was empty. <sup>26</sup>Saul didn't say anything about it that day, for he said to himself, "Something must have made David ceremonially unclean." <sup>27</sup>But when David's place was empty again the next day, Saul asked Jonathan, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse been here for the meal either yesterday or today?"

<sup>28</sup>Jonathan replied, "David earnestly asked me if he could go to Bethlehem. <sup>29</sup>He said, 'Please let me go, for we are having a family sacrifice. My brother demanded that I be there. So please let me get away to see my brothers.' That's why he isn't here at the king's table."

<sup>30</sup>Saul boiled with rage at Jonathan. "You stupid son of a whore!"\* he swore at him. "Do you think I don't know that you want him to be king in your place, shaming yourself and your mother? <sup>31</sup>As long as that son of Jesse is alive, you'll never be king. Now go and get him so I can kill him!"

<sup>32</sup>"But why should he be put to death?" Jonathan asked his father. "What has he done?" <sup>33</sup>Then Saul hurled his spear at Jonathan, intending to kill him. So at last Jonathan realized that his father was really determined to kill David.

<sup>34</sup>Jonathan left the table in fierce anger and refused to eat on that second day of the festival, for he was crushed by his father's shameful behavior toward David.

<sup>35</sup>The next morning, as agreed, Jonathan went out into the field and took a young boy with him to gather his arrows. <sup>36</sup>"Start running," he told the boy, "so you can find the arrows as I shoot them." So the boy ran, and Jonathan shot an arrow beyond him. <sup>37</sup>When the boy had almost reached the

\**Hebrew* *zeraphim*; also in 19:16. **20:16** *Hebrew* *with the house of David*. **20:19** *Hebrew* *the stone Ezel*. The meaning of the *Hebrew* is uncertain. **20:30** *Hebrew* *You son of a perverse and rebellious woman*.