

**This book contains the account of King Solomon's reign and of Israel being divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, after his death. We call this book
1 Kings**

When King David was an old man

¹ When King David was very old [IDM, DOU], even though his servants put many blankets on top of him, he was unable to become warm.

² So they said to him, "Your Majesty, allow us to search for a young virgin who can stay with you and take care of you. She can sleep close to you and enable you to become warm."

³ *The king gave them permission,* so they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful young woman. They found a woman named Abishag, from Shunem town, and brought her to the king.

⁴ She was *truly* very beautiful. She took care of [DOU] the king, but the king did not have sexual relations with her.

Adonijah tried to become the king

⁵⁻⁶ *After Absalom died,* David's oldest surviving son was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. He was a very handsome/good-looking man. But David had never rebuked him about anything he did. *After Absalom died, Adonijah thought that he*

would become king. So he started to boast, saying “I will become king *now*.” Then he provided for himself some chariots, and men to drive them, and horses *to pull them*, and 50 men to run *as his bodyguards* in front of those chariots *wherever he went*.

⁷ One day he conferred with Joab, *David’s army commander*, and Abiathar the priest, and they promised/agreed to help/support Adonijah.

⁸ But Zadok, who was also a priest, Benaiah *who had supervised David’s bodyguards*, Nathan the prophet, Shimei and Rei, and David’s most capable soldiers refused to help/support Adonijah.

⁹ One day Adonijah went to Snake Rock near En-Rogel *Spring, which is near Jerusalem*, to sacrifice some sheep and oxen and fattened cattle. He invited most of his brothers, King David’s other sons, to come. He also invited all of the king’s officials from Judah to come to the celebration. ¹⁰ But he did not invite Nathan or Benaiah or the king’s most capable soldiers or his *younger/half-brother* Solomon.

¹¹ Nathan *found out what they were doing, so he went to* Solomon’s mother Bathsheba *and* asked her, “Have you not heard that Haggith’s son Adonijah is declared himself to be the king? And King David does not know about it! ¹² So if you want to save yourself and your son Solomon from being killed, allow me to tell you what you should do. ¹³ Go immediately to King David. Say to him, ‘Your Majesty, you solemnly promised me [RHQ] that my son Solomon would become the king after you *die*, and that he would sit on your

throne *and rule*. So why is it that Adonijah *has said that he is now the king?*' ¹⁴ Then, while you are still talking to the king, I will come in and tell him that what you are saying to him *about Adonijah* is true."

¹⁵ So Bathsheba went to see the king in his bedroom. He was very old, and Abishag was taking care of him. ¹⁶ Bathsheba bowed very low in front of the king, and the king asked her, "What do you want?"

¹⁷ She replied, "Your Majesty, you solemnly promised me, knowing that Yahweh our God *was listening* [IDM], that my son Solomon would become king after you *die*, and that he would sit on your throne *and rule*. ¹⁸ But now, believe it or not, Adonijah has become king, and you do not know anything about it. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed a lot of oxen and fattened cattle and sheep, and he has invited all of your other sons to the celebration. He has also invited Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of your army, but he did not invite your son Solomon. ²⁰ Your Majesty, all the people [SYN] of Israel are expecting you to tell them who is the one who will become king after you are no longer the king. ²¹ If you do not do that, what will happen is that after you die [EUP] people will consider that my son Solomon and I are rebelling, *and they will execute us because we did not help Adonijah to become king.*"

²² While she was still talking to the king, Nathan came *to the palace*. ²³ The king's servants/advisors told David, "Nathan the prophet

has come.” So *Bathsheba left, and* Nathan went into where the king was and knelt down, with his face on the ground.

²⁴ Then Nathan said, “Your Majesty, have you declared that Adonijah will become king after you are no longer the king? ²⁵ *I say that* because today he has gone down to *En-Rogel Spring* and has sacrificed a lot of oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep. And he has invited all of your other sons, Joab the army commander, and Abiathar the priest. They are all eating and drinking with him and saying ‘We hope/desire that King Adonijah will live a long time!’ ²⁶ But he did not invite me or Zadok the priest or Benaiah or Solomon. ²⁷ Did you, as the king, say that they should do this without telling your other officials who you want to become king [MTY] after you are no longer the king?”

David arranged for Solomon to be declared king

²⁸ Then *after Nathan left the room,* King David said to *one of his servants,* “Tell Bathsheba to come in here again.” So *he went and told her, and* she came in and stood in front of the king.

²⁹⁻³⁰ Then the king said, “Yahweh has rescued me from all my troubles. I promised you, with Yahweh the God whom we Israelis *worship* listening, that your son Solomon would be king after I am no longer the king. Today, as surely as Yahweh lives, *I solemnly declare that* I will do what I promised.” ³¹ Bathsheba knelt down with her face on the ground and said, “Your Majesty,

I hope/desire that you will live for many more years [HYP]!”

³² Then King David said, “Summon Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah.” *So someone went and summoned them.* When they came in, ³³ he said to them, “Put my son Solomon on my mule. Take him with my officials down to Gihon *Spring*. ³⁴ There, you two, Zadok and Nathan, should anoint him, *with olive oil to appoint him to be* the king of Israel. Then you must blow trumpets, and *all the people there must* shout, ‘We hope/desire that King Solomon will live for many years!’ ³⁵ Then follow him back here, and he will come and sit on my throne. He will then become king instead of me. I have appointed him to be the ruler of *all the people of* Israel and of Judah.”

³⁶ Benaiah replied, “We will do that! We hope/wish that Yahweh, who is your God *and our God*, will cause it to happen! ³⁷ King David, Yahweh has helped you; we hope/wish that he will also help Solomon and enable him to become a greater king than you have been.”

³⁸ So Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, and the two groups of men who were the king’s bodyguards went and put Solomon on King David’s mule and escorted him down to Gihon *Spring*. ³⁹ There Zadok took the container of *olive* oil from the Sacred Tent and ◀anointed/poured some oil on▶ Solomon. Then the trumpets were blown, and all the people shouted, “We hope/wish that King Solomon will live for many years!” ⁴⁰ Then all the people followed him back up *to the city*, shouting

joyfully and playing flutes. They shouted very loudly, with the result that the ground shook.

Adonijah's reaction

⁴¹ When Adonijah and all ◀his guests/the people whom he had invited▶ were finishing eating at their celebration, they heard the noise. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpets, he asked, "What is causing all that noise in the city?"

⁴² While he was still speaking, Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest, arrived. Adonijah said, "Come in! You are a man whom we can trust, so you must be bringing us good news!"

⁴³ Jonathan replied, "No, *I do not have good news!* His Majesty, King David, has caused Solomon to be the king! ⁴⁴ He sent Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, and his own group of bodyguards to go with Solomon. They put Solomon on King David's mule. ⁴⁵ They *went down to Gihon Spring*, and there Zadok and Nathan anointed him to become the king. Now they have returned from there to the city, shouting joyfully. That is why there is that great/loud noise that you are hearing. ⁴⁶ So Solomon is now our king [MTY]. ⁴⁷ Furthermore, the palace officials came to His Majesty, King David, to tell him that they approved of what he had done. They said, 'We wish/hope that our God will enable Solomon [MTY] to become more famous than you have been and enable him to be a better king than you have been.' When they said that, the king, lying on his bed, bowed his head to worship *Yahweh*. ⁴⁸ Then he said, 'I praise Yahweh, the God whom

we Israelis *worship*, because he has allowed one of my sons to become the king today, and has permitted me to see it happen.’”

⁴⁹ Then all of Adonijah’s guests ◀trembled/were afraid▶, so they all immediately got up and left and scattered. ⁵⁰ Adonijah was afraid of what Solomon *would do*, so he went *to the Sacred Tent* and grabbed the projections at the corners of the altar, *because he knew that no one would kill him there*. ⁵¹ But someone told Solomon, “Hey/Listen, Adonijah is afraid of you, so he *has gone to the Sacred Tent and* is holding on to the corners of the altar. He is saying, ‘*Before I leave*, I want King Solomon to solemnly promise that he will not command that I be executed.’”

⁵² Solomon replied, “If he proves that he is loyal to me, I will not harm him at all [IDM]. But if he does anything that is wrong, he will be executed.” ⁵³ So King Solomon sent *some men to Adonijah*, and they brought him back from the altar. He came to Solomon and bowed down in front of him. Then Solomon said to him, “Go home.”

2

David’s final instructions before he died

¹ When David *knew that he* was about to die, he gave these final instructions to his son Solomon:

² “I am about to die [EUP], like everyone else on earth does. Be courageous and conduct yourself as an adult should. ³ Do what Yahweh our God tells you to do. Conduct yourself as he wants you to do. Obey all of his laws and commands

and precepts and instructions that are written in the laws that Moses *gave us*. Do this in order that you will prosper in all that you do and wherever you go. ⁴ If you continually do that, Yahweh will do what he promised me: He said, ‘If your descendants do what I tell them to do, and faithfully obey my commands with all their inner beings, they will always be [LIT] the ones who will rule [MTY] Israel.’

⁵ “here is something else *that I want you to do*. You know what Joab did to me. He killed my two army commanders, Abner and Amasa. He murdered them violently [MTY] during a time of peace, pretending that it was a time of war. Those two men ◀were innocent/had not done what was wrong▶. But Joab *killed them and* caused their blood to stain his belt and his sandals. ⁶ Because you are wise, do to him what you think is best *for you to do*, but do not allow him to become old [MTY] and then die [IDM] peacefully.

⁷ “But be kind to the sons of Barzillai, the man from *the Gilead region*, and be sure that they always have enough food to eat [MTY]. Do that because Barzillai helped me when I was running away from your older brother Absalom.

⁸ Also, *you remember* Gera’s son Shimei from Bahurim *town* in the area where the descendants of Benjamin live. *You know what he did to me*. He cursed me terribly on the day I *left Jerusalem and* went to Mahanaim *town*. But when he later came down to see me at the Jordan River, I solemnly promised, while Yahweh listened [MTY], that I would not cause him to be executed. ⁹ But now

you must [LIT] surely punish him. You are a wise man, so you will know what you should do to him. He is an old man [MTY], but be sure that he *loses/sheds* a lot of blood when you kill him [MTY].”

¹⁰ Then David died [EUP] and was buried in *that part of Jerusalem which was called* ‘The City of David’. ¹¹ David had been the king of Israel for 40 years: He ruled for seven years in Hebron and for 33 years in Jerusalem. ¹² Solomon became the ruler/king [MTY] to take the place of his father David and took control of all of the kingdom.

Solomon had Adonijah killed

¹³ *One day* Adonijah came to Solomon’s mother Bathsheba. She said to him, “Have you come because you want things to go well?” He replied, “Yes.”

¹⁴ But then he said, “I have something to ask you to do.” She said, “Tell me *what you want me to do.*”

¹⁵ He said, “You know that all the Israeli people expected me to be their king *because I am David’s oldest surviving son.* But that did not happen. Instead, my *younger* brother became king, because that is what Yahweh wanted.

¹⁶ Now I have one thing that I ask you to do. Please do not refuse to do it.” She replied, “Tell me *what you want me to do.*”

¹⁷ He said, “Please ask King Solomon to give to me Abishag, the woman from Shunem *town,* to be my wife. *I am sure that he will not refuse.*”

¹⁸ Bathsheba replied, “Okay, I will speak to the king for you.”

19 So Bathsheba went to King Solomon, to tell him what Adonijah wanted. The king got up *from his throne* and went to greet her and bowed down to her. Then he sat on his throne again and asked someone to bring a chair for her. So she sat down at the king's right side.

20 Then she said, "I have one small thing which I want you to do; please do not say that you will not do it." The king replied, "Mother, what do you want? I will not refuse you."

21 She said, "Allow Abishag to be given to your *older* brother Adonijah to be his wife."

22 The king replied *angrily*, "What? Are you requesting me to give Abishag to Adonijah? *Does he want me* to allow him to rule the kingdom, too? Because he is my older brother, *does he think that he should be the king?* Does he think that Abiathar should be the priest *instead of Zadok*, and that Joab *should be the army commander instead of Benaiah* because they supported him *when he tried to become the king?*"

23 Then Solomon solemnly promised, requesting Yahweh to listen, "I wish God would strike me and kill me if I do not cause Adonijah to be executed for requesting this! 24 Yahweh has appointed me to be the king and placed me here to rule [MTY] as my father David did. He has promised that my descendants [MTY] will be the kings of Israel. So just as surely as Yahweh lives, I solemnly promise that Adonijah will be executed today!" 25 So King Solomon gave orders

to Benaiah to *go and* kill Adonijah, and Benaiah did that.

²⁶ Then Solomon said to Abiathar the priest, “Go to Anathoth *town*, to your land there. You deserve to be killed, but I will not execute you now, because you were the one who *supervised the men who* carried Yahweh’s Sacred Chest for David my father, and you endured all the troubles that my father endured.” ²⁷ So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being the priest of Yahweh. By doing that he caused to happen what Yahweh had said *many years previously* at Shiloh, *that some day he would get rid* of the descendants [MTY] of Eli.

²⁸ Joab had not supported Absalom *when he tried to become the king*, but he had supported Adonijah. So when Joab heard what had happened, he ran to the Sacred Tent, and he grasped the projections on the corners of the altar, *because he knew that no one would kill him there*. ²⁹ When someone told Solomon that Joab had run to the Sacred Tent and was standing alongside the altar, Solomon told Benaiah, “Go and execute Joab.”

³⁰ So Benaiah went to the Sacred Tent and said to Joab, “The king commands you to come out!” But Joab replied, “No, I will die here.” So Benaiah went back to the king and reported *what he had said to Joab*, and what Joab had replied.

³¹ The king replied to him, “Do what he has requested. Kill him and bury his body. If you do that, my descendants [MTY] and I will no longer be punished for what Joab did when

he killed [MTY] two men who ◀were innocent/had not done anything that is wrong▶. ³² But Yahweh will punish [MTY] Joab for attacking and killing Abner, the commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa, the commander of the army of Judah, two men who were more righteous and better [DOU] men than he is. My father David did not even know that Joab *was planning to murder them*. ³³ Joab and his descendants will be punished [IDM] forever for his murdering Abner and Amasa. But things will forever go well for David's descendants [MTY] who rule [MTY] as King David did."

³⁴ So Benaiah went *into the Sacred Tent* and killed Joab. Joab was buried on his property in the desert *part of Judah*. ³⁵ Then the king appointed Benaiah to be the commander of the army instead of Joab, and he appointed Zadok to be the priest instead of Abiathar.

³⁶ Then the king sent *a messenger* to summon Shimei, and the king said to him, "Build a house for yourself here in Jerusalem. Remain there and do not leave the city to go anywhere. ³⁷ Be sure that the day that you leave Jerusalem and go across the Kidron Brook, you will be executed, and it will be ◀your own fault/what you deserve▶."

³⁸ Shimei replied, "Your Majesty, what you say is good. I will do what you have said." So Shimei remained in Jerusalem for several years.

³⁹ But three years later, two of Shimei's slaves ran away. They went to stay with Maacah's son Achish, the king of Gath *city*. When someone told

Shimei that they were in Gath, ⁴⁰ he put a saddle on his donkey and *got on it and* went to Gath. He found his slaves staying with King Achish and brought them back home.

⁴¹ But someone told King Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had returned. ⁴² So the king sent *a soldier* to summon Shimei and said to him, “I told you to solemnly promise, knowing that Yahweh [MTY] was listening, that you must not leave Jerusalem. I told you [RHQ], ‘Be sure that if you ever leave Jerusalem, you will be executed.’ And you replied [RHQ] to me, ‘What you have said is good; I will do what you have said.’ ⁴³ So why did you not do what you solemnly promised to Yahweh? Why did you disobey what I commanded you?”

⁴⁴ The king also said to Shimei, “You know all the evil things that you did to my father David. So Yahweh will now punish you for the evil things that you did. ⁴⁵ But Yahweh will bless me, and he will enable David’s descendants [MTY] to rule forever.”

⁴⁶ Then the king gave an order to Benaiah, and he went and killed Shimei.

So Solomon was completely in control of the kingdom.

3

Solomon requested wisdom

¹ Solomon went to see the king of Egypt. Solomon *made an agreement with him to marry his daughter*. They also made an alliance/agreement *that their armies would not attack each*

other. Then Solomon brought the king's daughter to live in *the part of Jerusalem called 'The City of David'*. *She lived there* until Solomon's workers had finished building his house and the temple of Yahweh and the wall around Jerusalem. ² *At that time* the temple of Yahweh had not yet been built, so the Israeli people were still offering sacrifices at many other places of worship. ³ Solomon loved Yahweh, and he obeyed all the instructions that his father David had given him. But he also offered sacrifices and burned incense at various altars.

⁴ One day the king went to Gibeon *city* to offer a sacrifice there, because that was where the most famous/important altar was. In previous years he had offered hundreds of sacrifices on that altar. ⁵ That night, Yahweh appeared to him in a dream. He asked Solomon, "What would you like me to give to you?"

⁶ Solomon replied, "You always greatly and faithfully loved my father David, who served you *well*. You did that because he ◀was faithful to/faithfully obeyed▶ you and acted righteously and honestly toward you. And you have showed how greatly and faithfully you loved him by giving to him me, his son, and now I am ruling [MTY] as he did *before he died*."

⁷ "Now, Yahweh my God, you have appointed me to be the king like my father was. But I am *very young, like* a little child [MET]. I do not know how to lead/rule my people at all [IDM]. ⁸ I am here among the people whom you have chosen. They are a very large group of people; there are

very, very many of them, with the result that no one can count them [DOU]. ⁹ So please enable me to think clearly, in order that I may rule your people *well*. Enable me to know what is good and what is evil. *If you do not do that*, I will never [RHQ] be able to rule this great group of people who belong to you.”

¹⁰ Yahweh was very pleased that Solomon had requested that. ¹¹ God said to him, “You did not request that you live for many years or that you become very rich or that you be able to kill all your enemies. Instead, you have requested that I enable you to be wise, in order that you will be able to know *and to do* what is right *while you govern these people*. ¹² So, I will certainly do what you requested. I will enable you to be very wise [DOU]. The result will be that no one who has lived before you or who will live after you will be as *wise as you are*. ¹³ I will also give you things that you did not request: I will enable you to become very rich and honored, as long as you live. You will be richer and more honored than any other king. ¹⁴ If you conduct your life [IDM] as I want you to, and if you obey all my laws and commandments, as your father David did, I will enable you to live for many years.”

¹⁵ Then Solomon awoke, and he realized that *God had spoken to him in a dream*. Then he went to Jerusalem and stood in front of *the Sacred Tent where the Sacred Chest was*, and he offered many sacrifices that were completely burned *on the altar* and offerings to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. Then he made a feast for all his officials.

Solomon made a very wise decision concerning two women

¹⁶ One day two prostitutes came and stood in front of King Solomon. ¹⁷ One of them said, “Your Majesty, this woman and I live in the same house. I gave birth to a baby while she was there in the house. ¹⁸ Three days after my baby was born, this woman also gave birth to a baby. Only the two of us were in the house; there was no one else there.

¹⁹ “But one night this woman’s baby died because she *accidentally* rolled on top of her baby *while sleeping and smothered it*. ²⁰ So she got up at midnight and took my baby boy who was lying beside me while I was sleeping. She carried him to her bed and brought her dead baby and put it in my bed. ²¹ When I awoke the next morning and was ready to nurse my baby, I saw that it was dead. But when I looked at it closely in the morning light, I saw that it was not my baby!”

²² But the other woman said, “That is not true! The baby that is alive is mine, and the baby that is dead is yours!” Then the first woman said, “No, the dead baby is yours, and the one that is alive is mine!” And they continued to argue in front of the king.

²³ Then the king said, “Both of you are saying, ‘My baby is the one that is alive and the one that is dead is yours.’” ²⁴ So he said to one of his servants, “Bring me a sword.” So the servant brought a sword to the king. ²⁵ Then the king said

to the servant, “Cut the baby that is alive into two parts. Give one part to each of the women.”

²⁶ But the woman whose baby was alive loved her baby very much, so she said to the king, “No, Your Majesty! Do not allow him to kill the baby! Give her the child that is alive!” But the other woman said to the king, “No, cut it in half. Then it will not be her baby or my baby.”

²⁷ Then the king said to the servant, “Do not kill the baby. Give the baby to the woman who said ‘Do not cut the baby in half,’ because she is truly the baby’s mother.”

²⁸ All the Israeli people heard about what the king had decided, and they revered him. They realized that God had truly enabled him to be very wise, to judge people’s matters fairly.

4

Solomon’s governors and officials

¹ Solomon was the king who ruled all of Israel,
² and these were his most important officials:

Zadok’s son Azariah was the priest.

³ Shisha’s sons Elihoreph and Ahijah were the *official* secretaries.

Ahilud’s son Jehoshaphat was the one who announced to the people the king’s decisions.

⁴ Benaiah was the commander of the army.

Zadok and Abiathar were also priests.

⁵ Nathan’s son Azariah was the administrator of the governors.

Another of Nathan’s sons, Zabud, was a priest and the king’s chief advisor.

⁶ Ahishar supervised the servants who worked in the palace.

Abda's son Adoniram supervised the men who were forced to do work *for the government*.

⁷ Solomon appointed twelve men, one to govern *each of the regions* in Israel. They also were required to provide food for the king and all the others who lived and worked in the palace. Each man was required to provide from his own region the food for one month each year. ⁸ Their names were:

Ben-Hur, for the hilly area of the tribe of Ephraim.

⁹ Ben-Deker, for Makaz, Shaalvim, Beth-Shemesh, and Elon-Bethhanan *cities*;

¹⁰ Ben-Hesed, for Arubboth and Socoh *towns* and the area near Hephher *town*;

¹¹ Ben-Abinadab, who was married to Solomon's daughter Taphath, for all the Dor district;

¹² Ahilud's son Baana, for Taanach and Megiddo *towns*, and all the region near Zarethan *city*, and from Beth-Shan *city* south of Jezreel as far as Abel-Meholah *town* and Jokmeam *city*;

¹³ Ben-Geber, for Ramoth *city* in *the Gilead region*, and for the villages in Gilead that belonged to Jair, who was a descendant of Manasseh, and the Argob area in *the Bashan region*. There were 60 large towns in that region altogether, each town with a wall

around it and bronze bars across the gates.

¹⁴ Iddo's son Ahinadab, for Mahanaim *city east of the Jordan River*;

¹⁵ Ahimaaz, who had married Solomon's daughter Basemath, for *the territory of the tribe of Naphtali*;

¹⁶ Hushai's son Baana, for *the territory of the tribe of Asher and for Aloth town*;

¹⁷ Paruah's son Jehoshaphat, for *the territory of the tribe of Issachar*;

¹⁸ Ela's son Shimei, for *the territory of the tribe of Benjamin*;

¹⁹ Uri's son Geber, for the Gilead region, the land that Sihon the king of the Amor people-group *formerly ruled*, and the Bashan area, which was the area that Og *formerly ruled*.

In addition to all those, Solomon appointed one governor for the *territory of the tribe of Judah*.

Solomon's kingdom

²⁰ There were as many people in Judah and Israel as there are grains of sand [HYP] on the seashore. They *had plenty to eat and drink and they were happy*. ²¹ Solomon's kingdom extended from the *Euphrates River in the northeast* to the *Philistia area in the west* and to the border of *Egypt in the south*. The *conquered people* in those areas paid taxes and were under Solomon's control for the rest of his life.

²² *To feed the people in his palace and his guests* Solomon needed people to bring to him every day 150 bushels of fine flour and 300 bushels of wheat, ²³ ten cattle that were kept in stalls/

barns, 20 cattle that were kept in pastures, 100 sheep, and ◀deer and gazelles and roebucks/three kinds of deer▶, and poultry. ²⁴ Solomon ruled over all the area west of the Euphrates River, from Tiphseh city in the northeast to Gaza city in the southwest. He ruled over all the kings in that area. And there was peace between his government and the governments of nearby countries. ²⁵ All during the years that Solomon ruled, the people of Judah and Israel lived safely. Each family had its own grapevines and fig trees.

²⁶ Solomon had 4,000 stalls for the horses that pulled his chariots and 12,000 men who rode on horses (OR, in the chariots).

²⁷ His twelve governors supplied the food that King Solomon needed for himself and for all those who ate in the palace. Each governor supplied food for one month each year. They provided everything [LIT] that Solomon required. ²⁸ They also brought stalks of barley and wheat for the fast horses that pulled the chariots and for the other work horses. They brought it to the places where the horses were kept.

Solomon's wisdom

²⁹ God enabled Solomon to be extremely wise and to have great insight/understanding. He understood about more things than the number of grains of sand on the seashore [HYP]. ³⁰ He was wiser than all the wise men in Arabia and Mesopotamia and all the wise men in Egypt. ³¹ Ethan from Ezrah and Heman and Calcol and Darda and the sons of Mahol were considered

to be very wise, but Solomon was wiser than all of them. People in all the nearby countries heard about Solomon. ³² He composed/wrote 3,000 ◀proverbs/wise sayings▶ and more than 1,000 songs. ³³ He talked about various kinds of plants, from the *huge* cedar trees in Lebanon to the *tiny* hyssop plants that grow in cracks in walls. He also talked about wild animals and birds and reptiles and fish. ³⁴ People came from all over the world to hear the wise things that Solomon said. Many kings sent men to listen to him *and then return and tell them what Solomon said.*

5

Preparations for building the temple

¹ Hiram, the king of Tyre city, had always been a close friend of King David. When he heard that Solomon had been appointed to become the king after his father was no longer king, he sent some messengers to Solomon *to congratulate him.* ² Solomon *gave those messengers* this message to take back to Hiram:

³ “You know that my father David *led his soldiers to fight* many wars against his enemies in the nearby countries. So he could not *arrange to build* a temple in which we [MTY] could worship Yahweh our God, until after Yahweh enabled *the Israeli army* to defeat [IDM] all his enemies. ⁴ But now Yahweh our God has enabled us to have peace with all the surrounding countries. ◀*There is no danger that/We do not need to worry that*▶ we will be

attacked. ⁵ Yahweh promised my father David, ‘Your son, whom I will enable to be king after you are no longer king, will build a temple for me [MTY].’ Because of that, I have decided to build a temple in which we can worship [MTY] Yahweh our God.

⁶ “*o I am requesting that you command your workers to cut cedar trees for me. My men will work with them, and I will pay your workers whatever you decide. But my men cannot do the work alone, because they do not know how to cut down trees like your workers from Sidon city do.*”

⁷ When Hiram heard the message from Solomon, he was very happy and said, “I praise Yahweh today for giving David a very wise son to rule that great nation!”

⁸ He sent this message back to Solomon: “I have heard the message that you sent to me, and I am ready to do what you ask. I will provide cedar and cypress logs. ⁹ My workers will bring the logs down from *the Lebanon mountains* to the *Mediterranean sea*. Then they will *tie them together* to make rafts to float them *in the water* along the coast to the place that you indicate. Then my workers will untie the logs, and your workers will take them from there. What I want you to do is to supply food for the people who work in my palace.”

¹⁰ So Hiram *arranged for his workers to supply* all the cedar and cypress logs that Solomon wanted. ¹¹ Each year Solomon gave Hiram 100,000 bushels of wheat and 110,000 gallons of

pure *olive* oil to feed the people who worked in his palace. ¹² Yahweh enabled Solomon to be wise, just like he had promised. Solomon and Hiram made a treaty/agreement that there would be peace between their *two governments/countries*.

¹³ King Solomon forced 30,000 men from all over Israel to become his workers. ¹⁴ Adoniram was their boss. Solomon divided the men into three groups. Each month 10,000 of them went to Lebanon and worked for a month there, and then they came back home for two months. ¹⁵ Solomon also forced 80,000 men to cut stones in the hilly area and 70,000 men to haul the stones *to Jerusalem*. ¹⁶ And he also assigned 3,600 men to supervise their work. ¹⁷ The king also commanded his workers to cut huge blocks of stones from the quarries and to smooth the sides of the stones. Those huge stones were for the foundation of the temple. ¹⁸ Solomon's workers and Hiram's workers and men from Gebal/Byblos *city* shaped the stones and prepared the timber to build the temple.

6

Solomon's men built the temple

¹ 480 years after the Israeli people left Egypt, during the fourth year that Solomon ruled Israel, early in May, Solomon's workers began to build the temple.

² Inside, *the main part of* the temple was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high. ³ The entrance room was 15 feet long and 30 feet wide,

just as wide as the main part of the temple. ⁴ There were windows in *the walls of* the temple. The windows were narrower on the outside than on the inside. ⁵ Against the two sides and against the back of the temple walls, they built a structure/building that had rooms in it. *This structure had three levels/stories and each was 7-1/2 feet high.* ⁶ *Each room in the lowest level/story was 7-1/2 feet wide. Each room in the middle level/story was nine feet wide. The rooms in the top level/story were 10-1/2 feet wide.* The wall of the temple at the top level/story was thinner than the wall at the middle level/story, and the wall of the middle level/story was thinner than the wall at the bottom level/story. The result was that the rooms could be supported by the wall underneath them, and did not require wooden beams to support them.

⁷ The huge stones for *the foundation of* the temple were cut and shaped at the quarry *to become very smooth.* The result was that while the workers were building the temple there was no noise, because they did not use hammers or chisels or any other iron tools there.

⁸ The entrance to the bottom level/story *of that attached structure* was on the south side of the temple. There were stairs from the bottom level/story to the middle and top level/story. ⁹ So Solomon's *workers* finished building the *framework of the* temple. They made the ceiling from cedar beams and boards. ¹⁰ They built the structure that had three levels/stories, that was against the walls of the temple. Each level/story

was 7-1/2 feet high, and was joined to the temple with cedar beams.

¹¹ Then Yahweh said this to Solomon: ¹² “*I want to tell you* about this temple that you are building. If you continually obey all my statutes and laws and commands, I will do for you what I promised to your father David. ¹³ I will live among the Israeli people, *in this temple*, and I will never abandon them.”

¹⁴ Solomon’s *workers* finished building the temple. ¹⁵ On the inside, they lined/covered the walls with cedar boards. They lined/covered them from the floor to the ceiling. They made the floor from cypress boards. ¹⁶ Inside the back part of the temple they built an inner room, called the Very Holy Place. It was 30 feet long. All the walls of this room were lined with cedar boards. ¹⁷ In front of the Very Holy Place there was a room that was 60 feet long. ¹⁸ The cedar *boards on the walls* inside the temple were decorated with carvings of gourds and flowers. *The walls were* completely covered with cedar boards, with the result that the stones *of the walls behind them* could not be seen.

¹⁹ At the back of the temple they made the Very Holy Place, where the Sacred Chest would be put. ²⁰ That room was 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 30 feet high. They covered the walls with *very thin sheets of pure gold*. *For burning incense* they also made an altar of cedar *boards*. ²¹ Solomon told them to cover the other walls inside the temple with *very thin sheets of pure gold* and to fasten gold chains across the entrance to the Very Holy Place. ²² They covered all the walls of the

temple and the altar that was outside the Very Holy Place with *very thin sheets of gold*.

²³ Inside the Very Holy Place, they made from olive tree wood *large statues of* two creatures with wings. Each one was 15 feet tall. ²⁴⁻²⁶ They each were the same size and had the same shape. They each had two wings *which were spread out*. Each wing was 7-1/2 feet long, with the result that the distance between the outer ends of the two wings was 15 feet. ²⁷ They put those statues next to each other in the Very Holy Place so that the wing of the one touched the one wing of the other in the center of the room, and the outer wings touched the walls. ²⁸ They covered the statues with *very thin sheets of gold*.

²⁹ *Solomon told them to* decorate the walls of the main room and the Very Holy Place by carving representations of winged creatures and palm trees and flowers. ³⁰ They also covered the floor of both rooms with *very thin sheets of gold*.

³¹ They made a set of doors from olive tree wood, and placed them at the entrance to the Very Holy Place. The doorposts joined at the top to form a pointed arch. ³² The doors were decorated by carving on them representations of winged creatures, palm trees, and flowers. All of these things were covered with *very thin sheets of gold*. ³³ They made a rectangular door frame from olive tree wood, and put it *between the entrance room and* the main room. ³⁴ They made two folding doors from cypress wood *and fastened them to the door frame*. ³⁵ The doors were also decorated with wood carvings

of winged creatures, palm trees, and flowers, and they were also covered evenly with *very thin sheets of gold*.

³⁶ They built a courtyard in front of the temple. The walls around the courtyard were made of cedar and stone; to make the walls, between each layer of cedar beams they put down two layers of stone.

³⁷ They laid the foundation of the temple of Yahweh in early May, in the fourth year *that Solomon ruled*. ³⁸ In the eleventh year *that he ruled*, in the middle of October, they finished building the temple and all of its parts, doing exactly what Solomon told them to do. It required seven years to build it.

7

They built a palace for Solomon

¹ They also built a palace for Solomon, but it required 13 years to build it. ² One of the buildings they constructed was *a large ceremonial hall*. It was called the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon. It was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It was supported/held up by four rows of pillars of *wood from cedar trees*. There were 15 pillars in each row. There were cedar beams across each row. ³ *To support the roof* there were cedar beams that connected the rows of pillars. ⁴ On each of the two side walls there were three rows of windows. ⁵ All the windows and doorways had rectangular frames. The windows along the long wall on one side faced the windows on the other side.

⁶ They also built another building called the Hall of Pillars. It was 75 feet long and 45 feet wide. It had a covered porch *whose roof was supported by pillars*.

⁷ Then they made a building called the Hall of the Throne. It was also called the Hall of Judgment. That was where Solomon decided/judged concerning people's disputes. The walls were covered with cedar boards, from the floor to the rafters.

⁸ In the courtyard behind the Hall of Judgment they built a house for Solomon to live in that was made like the other buildings. They also built the same kind of house for his wife, who was the daughter of the king of Egypt.

⁹ All of those buildings and the walls around the palace courtyard were made from costly blocks of stone, from the foundations up to the eaves. The stones were cut *at the quarry*, according to the sizes that were needed, and the sides of the stones were shaped by cutting/smoothing them with saws. ¹⁰ The foundations were also made from huge blocks of stone *that were prepared at the quarry*. Some of them were twelve feet long and some were fifteen feet long. ¹¹ On top of the foundation stones were other blocks of stone that were cut according to the sizes they needed, and cedar beams. ¹² The palace courtyard, the inner courtyard in front of the temple, and the entrance room of the temple had walls made by putting down three layers of cut stones between each layer of cedar beams.

Other things for the temple area

¹³⁻¹⁴ There was a man who lived in Tyre city whose name was Hiram. He knew how to make very nice things from bronze. His father had also lived in Tyre and had also been very skilled at making things from bronze, but Hiram's father was no longer living. His mother was from the tribe of Naphtali. Hiram was very wise and intelligent and was very skilled at making things from bronze. Solomon invited him to come to *Jerusalem and supervise* all the work of making things from bronze, and Hiram agreed.

¹⁵ He made two bronze pillars. Each one was 27 feet tall and 18 feet around. Each was hollow, and the walls of the pillars were 3 in./7.4 cm. thick. ¹⁶ He also made two bronze caps to be put on top of the pillars. Each cap was 7-1/2 feet tall. ¹⁷ Then he made bronze wreaths of chains to decorate the top part of each pillar. ¹⁸ He also made bronze *figures that resembled* pomegranates. He put two rows of pomegranates over the top parts of each pillar. ¹⁹ The top part over each pillar was shaped like a lily. Each *lily leaf* was six feet tall. ²⁰ These top parts were placed on a bowl-shaped section around which was draped the wreaths of chains. He made 200 *figures that represented* pomegranates and put them in two rows around the top/head of each pillar. ²¹ His *helpers* set up the pillars in front of the entrance of the temple. The pillar on the south side was named Jakin, and the pillar on the north side was named Boaz. ²² The bronze top parts that were shaped like

lilies were placed on top of the pillars.

So Hiram and his helpers finished making the bronze pillars.

²³ Hiram also constructed a very large round bronze tank that was made of metal and cast *in a clay mold*. It was 7-1/2 ft./2.3 meters high, 30 feet/9 meters across/wide, and 45 feet/13.5 meters around it. ²⁴ Around the outer edge of the rim of the tank were two rows of gourds that were made of bronze. *But the gourds were not cast separately; they were cast in the same mold as the rest of the tank.* For each foot of length around the rim of the tank there were six *figures of gourds*.

²⁵ Hiram *also cast twelve bronze statues of oxen*. He placed them to face outward. He placed three of them to face north, three to face west, three to face south, and three to face east. His helpers put the bronze tank on the backs of *the statues of the oxen*. ²⁶ *The sides of the tank were 3 in./8 cm. thick. The rim was like the rim of a cup. It curved outward, like the petals of a lily. When the tank was full, it held about 10,000 gallons of water.*

²⁷ Hiram also made ten bronze carts. Each was six feet long and six feet wide and 4-1/2 feet tall. ²⁸ *On the sides of the carts there were panels which were set in frames.* ²⁹ *On those panels were bronze figures of lions, bulls, and winged creatures. Below and above the lions and bulls there were decorations of bronze wreaths.* ³⁰ *Each cart had four bronze wheels and two axles made of bronze. At the top corners of each cart were bronze supports to hold up a basin. On*

these supports were also decorations of bronze wreaths. ³¹ On top of each cart, *under each basin*, was a frame *that resembled* a circular collar. The top of each circular frame was 18 inches above the top of the cart, and the bottom of it was nine inches below the top of the cart. There were also decorations of bronze wreaths on the frame engraved within square panels. ³² The wheels were 27 inches high. They were below the panels. The wheels were connected to axles that had been cast in the same mold as the rest of the cart. ³³ The wheels of the carts were like the wheels of chariots. The axles, the rims, the spokes, and the hubs were all cast *from bronze*.

³⁴ At the top corners of each cart there were handles. These were cast in the same mold as the rest of the cart. ³⁵ There was a nine-inch bronze band around the top of each cart. There were braces attached to the corners of each cart. The bands and the braces were cast in the same mold as the rest of the cart. ³⁶ The braces and the panels *on the sides of the carts* were also decorated with *figures of winged creatures, lions, and palm trees*, whenever there was space for them, and there were bronze wreaths all around them. ³⁷ That is how Hiram made the ten carts. *They were all cast in the same mold, so they were all alike: They all were the same size and had the same shape.*

³⁸ Hiram also made ten bronze basins, one for each cart. Each basin was six feet across and held 200 gallons *of water*. ³⁹ Hiram placed five of the carts on the south side of the temple and five on the north side. He put the big tank at the southeast corner. ⁴⁰ Hiram also made pots,

shovels *for carrying ashes*, and bowls *for carrying the blood of the animals that would be sacrificed*. He completed all the work that King Solomon requested him to do for the temple. *This is a list of the bronze things he made:*

- ⁴¹ the two pillars;
the two top parts to be put over the pillars;
the two wreaths of chains to decorate the tops of the pillars;
- ⁴² the 400 *figures of pomegranates*, in two rows, with 100 in each row, that were placed over the top parts of the pillars;
- ⁴³ the ten carts;
the ten basins;
- ⁴⁴ the big tank;
the twelve *statues of oxen* on whose backs the tank was placed;
- ⁴⁵ the pots, shovels *for the ashes of the altar*, and bowls.

Huram *and his workers* made all these things for King Solomon and put them outside the temple. They were all made of polished bronze.

⁴⁶ They made them by pouring melted bronze into the clay molds that Huram had set up near the Jordan River Valley, between *the cities of Succoth and Zarethan*.

⁴⁷ Solomon did not *tell his workers* to weigh those bronze objects, because there were many items. So no one ever knew what they weighed.

⁴⁸ Solomon's *workers* also made all the gold items for the temple:

the altar;
the table on which the priests put the sacred
bread placed before God;
⁴⁹ the ten lampstands *that were put* in front of
the Very Holy Place, five on the south side
and five on the north side;
the *decorations that resembled* flowers;
the lamps;
the tongs *to grasp the hot coals*;
⁵⁰ the cups, the gold lamp wick snuffers, the
small lamp bowls, the dishes for incense,
the pans *for carrying the hot coals*, and the
hinges for the doors at the entrance to the
Very Holy Place and for the doors at the
entrance *to the main room* of the temple.
Those things were all made of gold.

⁵¹ So Solomon's *workers* finished all the work
for the temple. Then they placed in the temple
storerooms all the things that his father David
had dedicated to Yahweh—all the silver and gold,
and the other valuable items.

8

The sacred chest was brought to the temple

¹ Solomon then summoned to Jerusalem all the
elders of Israel, all the leaders of the tribes, and
the leaders of the clans. He wanted them to join
in bringing Yahweh's Sacred Chest from Zion *Hill
to the temple*, where it was in the part of the
city called 'The City of David'. ² So all the Israeli
leaders came to King Solomon during the Festival
of *Living in Temporary Shelters*, in October.

³ When they had all arrived, the priests lifted up the Sacred Chest ⁴ and brought it to the temple. The descendants of Levi *who assisted the priests* helped them to carry to the temple the Sacred Tent and all the sacred things that had been in the tent. ⁵ Then King Solomon and many of the Israeli people who had gathered in front of Yahweh's Sacred Chest sacrificed a huge amount of sheep and oxen. No one was able to count the sacrifices *because there were so many*.

⁶ The the priests then brought the Sacred Chest into the Very Holy Place in the temple, and they placed it under the wings of the *statues of the winged creatures*. ⁷ The wings of those statues spread out over the Sacred Chest and over the poles by which it was carried. ⁸ The poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen *by people who were standing* at the entrance to the Most Holy Place, but they could not be seen *by people standing* outside the temple. Those poles are still there. ⁹ The only things that were in the Sacred Chest were the two stone tablets that Moses had put there at Sinai *Mountain*, where Yahweh made an agreement with the people after they left Egypt.

¹⁰ When the priests came out of the temple, *suddenly* it was filled with a cloud. ¹¹ It was the glory/radiance of Yahweh that filled the temple, with the result that the priests were not able to continue their work.

¹² Then Solomon prayed this:
“Yahweh, you have placed the sun in the sky,

but you have decided that you would live in very dark *clouds*.

¹³ I have built for you a magnificent temple, a place for you to live in forever.”

¹⁴ Then, while all the people stood there, the king turned around and faced them, and he *asked God to* bless them. ¹⁵ He said, “Praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis belong! By his own power he has done what he promised to give to my father David. What he promised was this:

¹⁶ ‘rom the time that I brought my people out of Egypt, I have never chosen any city in Israel in which a temple should be built for my people to worship me there. But I chose you, David, to rule my people.”

¹⁷ *Then Solomon said*, “My father David wanted to build a temple in order that we Israeli people could worship Yahweh our God there. ¹⁸ But Yahweh said to him, ‘You have wanted to build a temple for me, and what you wanted to do was good. ¹⁹ However, you are not the one *who I want* to build it. It is one of your sons, who *I want to* build a temple for me.’

²⁰ And now Yahweh has done what he promised to do. I have become the king of Israel to succeed my father, and I am ruling my people, like Yahweh promised. I have *arranged for* this temple *to be* built for us Israelis to worship Yahweh, the God, to whom we Israelis belong. ²¹ I have also provided a place *in the temple* for the Sacred Chest in which are the two stone tablets *on which are engraved the Ten*

Commandments of the agreement that Yahweh made with our ancestors when he brought them out of Egypt.”

Solomon’s prayer

²² Then Solomon stood in front of the altar which was facing the Israeli people who had gathered there. He spread out his arms toward heaven, ²³ and he prayed,

“Yahweh, the God whom we Israeli people *belong to/worship*, there is no god like you up in heaven or down here on the earth. You solemnly promised that you would faithfully love us. And that is what you have done for us who earnestly do what you want us to do.

²⁴ You have done the things that you promised my father David, who served you *very well*, that you would do. Truly, you promised to do these things for him, and today we see that by your power you have done them.

²⁵ So now, Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis *belong to/worship*, please do the things that you promised my father that you would do. You told him that there would always be some of his descendants who would rule Israel, if they would conduct their lives as he did.

²⁶ So now, God of us Israeli people, cause what you promised to do for my father David, who served you *well*, to happen.

²⁷ But God, you cannot really live on the earth. There is surely not enough space for you in the sky, or even in the heaven. So there is surely not enough space for you to live in

this temple that my workers have built. ²⁸ But Yahweh, my God, please listen to me while I am praying to you this day, ²⁹ Please keep protecting this temple night and day. This is the place about which you have said, 'I will always be there.' I request that you listen to me whenever I turn toward this temple and pray. ³⁰ I request that when I pray to you and your people pray to you while they turn toward this place, that in your home in heaven you will hear us and forgive us *for the sins that we have committed*.

³¹ If someone is accused of doing something wrong to another person, and they bring him to your altar outside this holy temple, and if he says, 'I did not do that; may God punish me if I am not telling the truth,' ³² then you listen from heaven, and decide who is telling the truth. Then punish the person who is guilty as he deserves to be punished, and declare that the other person is innocent.

³³ And when your Israeli people are defeated by their enemies *in a battle* because they have sinned against you, *and if they are forced to go to some distant country*, if they turn away from their sinful behavior and turn toward this temple and admit that you *have justly punished them*, and if they plead *that you will forgive them*, ³⁴ listen to them from heaven, and forgive your Israeli people for the sins that they *have committed*, and bring them back to this land that you gave to our ancestors.

³⁵ And when you do not allow any rain to fall

on the land because your people have sinned against you, if they turn toward this temple and admit that you *have justly punished them*, if they turn away from their sinful behavior and *humbly* pray to you, ³⁶ listen to them from heaven, and forgive your Israeli people for the sins *that they have committed*. Teach them the right way to conduct their lives. Then send rain on this land that you have given to your people to belong to them *permanently*.

³⁷ And when the people of this land experience famines, or if there is a plague/illness that causes many people to become sick, or if *their crops are destroyed by* very hot winds or *by* mildew or *by* locusts or grasshoppers, or when their enemies surround any of their cities *in order to attack them*, if any of those bad things happen to them, ³⁸ when your Israeli people earnestly plead with you knowing that they are suffering because they *have sinned*, and if they stretch out their arms toward this temple and pray, ³⁹ listen to them from your home in heaven, and forgive them, and help them. You are the only one who knows what people are thinking, so act toward everyone as they deserve, ⁴⁰ in order that your people may then have an awesome respect for you, all the years that they live in this land that you gave to our ancestors.

⁴¹⁻⁴² There will be some foreigners who do not belong to your Israeli people who have come here from countries far away because they have heard that you are very great and

that you perform great miracles. If they come here to this temple to worship you and pray, ⁴³ in your home in heaven, listen to their prayers, and do for them what they request you to do. Do that so that all the people-groups in the world will know about you and revere you, like we your Israeli people do. And then they will know that this temple that I have *caused to be* built to honor you, is where you *should be worshiped*.

⁴⁴ And if you send your people to go to fight against their enemies, if they pray to you, wherever they are, if they turn toward this city that you have chosen and toward this temple that I have caused to be built for you, ⁴⁵ listen in heaven to their prayers; listen to what they plead for you to do, and assist them.

⁴⁶ *It is true that everyone sins.* So, if your people sin against you, and you become angry with them, you may allow their enemies to defeat them and capture them and take them away to their enemies' country, even to countries that are far away. ⁴⁷ If that happens, while they are in those countries to which they were forced to go, if they sincerely repent and plead with you there saying 'We have sinned and have done things that are very wicked,' ⁴⁸ if they very sincerely repent, and turn toward this land that you gave to our ancestors, and toward this city that you have chosen *to be the place where we should worship you*, and toward this temple that I have *caused to be* built for you, and if they

pray, ⁴⁹ then from your home in heaven listen to them while they plead *for your help*, and assist them. ⁵⁰ Forgive them for all the sins that they *have committed* against you, and cause their enemies to be kind to them. ⁵¹ Do not forget that the Israelis are your people; they are your special possession; you brought *our ancestors* out of Egypt where *they were greatly suffering as though* they were in a blazing furnace.

⁵² I request that you always listen to your Israeli people and to me, their king, and heed their prayers whenever they call out to you *to help them*. ⁵³ You chose them from all the other people-groups in the world to belong to you, which is what you told Moses to tell them when you brought our ancestors out of Egypt.”

⁵⁴ After Solomon had finished praying and pleading to Yahweh *for his help*, he stood up in front of the altar where he had been kneeling. He lifted up his arms. ⁵⁵ Then he *asked God to* bless all the Israeli people. *He prayed* loudly, saying,

⁵⁶ “Praise Yahweh, who has given us his people peace, like he promised that he would do. He has done every one of the good things that he promised to Moses, the man who served him *very well*. ⁵⁷ I pray that our God will be with us like he was with our ancestors, and that he will never abandon us. ⁵⁸ I pray that he will cause us to loyally serve him, to conduct our lives as he wants us to, and to

obey all his commandments and statutes and laws that he gave to our ancestors. ⁵⁹ I pray that Yahweh our God will never forget these words that I have prayed, pleading for his help; I pray that he will think about them by day and by night. I pray that he will always help *us* Israeli people and me, giving us the things that we need day by day. ⁶⁰ If he does that, all the people-groups in the world will know that he is the only one who is God, and that there is no other one who is God. ⁶¹ I pray that you, *his people*, will always be fully committed to Yahweh, and that you will obey all his statutes and commands, like you are doing now.”

Solomon dedicated the temple

⁶² Then the king and all the Israeli people who were there offered sacrifices to Yahweh. ⁶³ They sacrificed 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. Then the king and all the people dedicated the temple.

⁶⁴ On that day, the king also dedicated/set apart the middle part of the courtyard that was in front of the temple. Then he offered sacrifices that would be completely burned *in the courtyard*, the offerings of grain and the fat of the animals that were sacrificed to maintain fellowship with Yahweh. They sacrificed them there because the bronze altar was not big enough for all those sacrifices to be burned on it *that day*.

⁶⁵ Then Solomon and all the Israeli people celebrated the Festival of *Living in Temporary Shelters* for seven days. There was a huge crowd

of people there, some of whom had come from *distant places like Hamath in the far north and the border of Egypt in the far south.* ⁶⁶ On the eighth day, Solomon sent the people to their homes. They all praised him and went home happy because of all the things that Yahweh had done to bless *King David* and his Israeli people.

9

Yahweh's reply to Solomon's prayer

¹ After Solomon's *workers* had finished building the temple and his palace and everything else that Solomon wanted them to build, ² Yahweh appeared to him *in a dream* a second time, like he had appeared to him at *the city of Gibeon.*

³ Yahweh said to him,

“I heard what you prayed and what you pleaded for me to do. I have set apart/dedicated this temple which your *workers* have built to be the place where people will worship me forever. I will always watch over it and protect it.

⁴ “nd as for you, if you conduct your life as I want you to, like your father David did, and if you very sincerely obey all the statutes and laws that I have commanded you to obey,

⁵ I will do what I promised your father that I would do: I promised him that Israel would always be ruled by his descendants.

⁶ “But if you or your descendants turn away from me and disobey the commands and decrees that I have given to you, and

if you start to worship other gods, ⁷ I will remove my Israeli people from the land that I have given to them. I will also abandon this temple that I have set apart/dedicated to be the place where people should worship me. Then people everywhere will despise *the people of Israel* and make fun of them. ⁸ This temple will become a heap of ruins. Everyone who passes by will be astonished *when they see it*, and they will be shocked and say, ‘Why has Yahweh done this to this land and to this temple?’ ⁹ And other people will reply, ‘It happened because the Israeli people abandoned Yahweh their God, the one who brought their ancestors out of Egypt. They started to accept and worship other gods. And that is why Yahweh has caused them to experience all these disasters.’ ”

Other things that Solomon did

¹⁰ Solomon’s *workers* labored for 20 years to build the temple and the palace. ¹¹ Hiram, the king of Tyre had *arranged for his workers* to give Solomon all the cedar and pine *logs* and all the gold that he needed *for this work*. After it was all finished, King Solomon gave to Hiram 20 cities in the Galilee region. ¹² But when Hiram went from Tyre *to Galilee* to see the cities that Solomon had given to him, he was not pleased with them. ¹³ He said to Solomon, “My friend, those cities that you gave me are worthless!” So, that area is still called ‘Worthless’. ¹⁴ Hiram paid Solomon only five tons of gold *for those cities*.

¹⁵ This is a record of the work that King Solomon forced men to do. He forced them to build the temple and his palace and the terraces/landfills *on the east side of the city*, and the wall around Jerusalem, and *to rebuild the cities of Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer.* ¹⁶ *The reason they needed to rebuild Gezer was that the army of the king of Egypt had attacked Gezer and captured it. Then they had burned the houses in the city and killed all the people of the Canaan people-group who lived there. The king of Egypt gave that city to his daughter as a gift when she married Solomon.* ¹⁷ So Solomon's workers also rebuilt Gezer, and they also rebuilt Lower Beth-Horon city. ¹⁸ They also rebuilt Baalath and Tamar *towns in the desert in the southern part of Judah.* ¹⁹ They also built cities where they kept the supplies for Solomon, the places where his horses and chariots were kept. They also built everything else that Solomon wanted them to build, in Jerusalem and in Lebanon, and in other places in the area over which he ruled.

²⁰ There were many people who belonged to the Amor people-group, the Heth people-group, the Periz people-group, the Hiv people-group, and the Jebus people-group who were not killed when the Israelis captured their land. ²¹ *Their descendants still lived in Israel.* It was those people whom Solomon forced to become his slaves *to build all those places*, and they are still slaves. ²² But Solomon did not force any Israeli people to become slaves. Some Israelis became soldiers and army officers and commanders and

drivers of his chariots and soldiers who rode on horses. ²³ There were 550 officials who supervised the slaves who worked *to build all those places*.

²⁴ After *Solomon's wife, who was the daughter of the king of Egypt, moved from the place outside Jerusalem called 'The City of David'* to the palace that Solomon's workers built for her, Solomon *told his workers to fill in the slopes on the east side of the city*.

²⁵ Three times each year Solomon *brought to the temple offerings that were completely burned on the altar and offerings to restore fellowship with Yahweh*. He also brought incense to be burned in the presence of Yahweh.

And so his men finished building the temple.

²⁶ King Solomon's *workers* also built a fleet of ships at Ezion-Geber *city*, which is near Elath *city*, on the shore of the Gulf of Aqaba, in the land belonging to the Edom people-group. ²⁷ *King Hiram sent some very expert sailors to work on the ships with Solomon's workers*. ²⁸ They sailed to *the Ophir region* and brought back to Solomon about 16 tons of gold.

10

The queen of Sheba visited Solomon

¹ The queen *who ruled the Sheba area* heard that Yahweh had caused Solomon to become famous, so she traveled to Jerusalem to ask him questions that were difficult *to answer*. ² She came with a large group of wealthy/influential people, and she brought camels that were loaded

with spices, and valuable gems, and a lot of gold. When she met Solomon, she asked him questions about all the topics/things in which she was interested. ³ Solomon answered all her questions. He explained everything that she asked about, even things that were very difficult. ⁴ The queen realized that Solomon was very wise. She saw his palace; ⁵ she saw the food that was served on his table *every day*; she saw where his officials lived (OR, how his officials were seated at the table), their uniforms, the servants who served the food and wine, and the sacrifices that he took to the temple to be offered. She was extremely amazed.

⁶ She said to King Solomon, “Everything that I heard in my own country about you and about how wise you are is true! ⁷ But I did not believe it was true until I came here and saw it myself. But really, what they told me is only half *of what they could have told me about you*. You are extremely wise and rich, more than what people told me. ⁸ Your wives are very fortunate! Your officials who are constantly standing in front of you and listening to the wise things that you say are also fortunate! ⁹ Praise Yahweh, your God, who has shown that he is pleased with you by causing you to become the king of Israel! God has always loved the Israeli people, and therefore he has appointed you to be their king, in order that you will rule them fairly and righteously.”

¹⁰ Then the queen gave to the king *the things that she had brought*. She gave him almost five tons of gold and a large amount of spices and

valuable gems. Never again did King Solomon receive more spices than the queen gave him at that time.

¹¹ In the ships that belonged to King Hiram, in which they had previously brought gold from Ophir, they also brought a large amount of juniper wood and gems/valuable stones. ¹² King Solomon told his workers to use that wood to make railings/supports in the temple of Yahweh and in the king's palace and also to make harps and lyres for the ◀musicians/men who played musical instruments▶. That wood was the largest amount of (OR, the finest) wood that had ever been seen *in Israel*. And no one since then has ever seen so much wood of that kind.

¹³ King Solomon gave to the queen from Sheba everything that she wanted. He gave her those gifts in addition to the gifts that he always gave *to other rulers who visited him*. Then she and the people who came with her returned to her own land.

Solomon's wealth

¹⁴ Each year there was brought to Solomon a total of 25 tons of gold. ¹⁵ That was in addition to *the taxes* paid to him by the merchants and traders, and the annual taxes paid by the kings of Arabia and by the governors of *the regions in Israel*.

¹⁶ King Solomon's workers *took this* gold and hammered it into thin sheets and covered 200 large shields with those thin sheets of gold; they put ◀almost 15 pounds/more than 6 kg.▶ of gold on each shield. ¹⁷ His workers made 300 smaller shields. They covered each of them with ◀almost

4 pounds/1.5 kg.► of gold. Then the king put those shields in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸ His workers also made for him a large throne. *Part of it was covered with ◀ivory decorations made from►* tusks of elephants and *part of it was covered with very fine gold.*

¹⁹⁻²⁰ There were six steps in front of the throne. There was a statue of a lion on both sides of each step. So altogether there were twelve statues of lions. The back of the throne was rounded at the top. At each side of the throne there was an armrest, and alongside each armrest there was a small statue of a lion. No throne like that had ever existed in any other kingdom. ²¹ All of Solomon's cups were made of gold, and all the various dishes in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon were made of gold. They did not make things from silver, because during the years that Solomon *ruled*, silver was not considered to be valuable. ²² The king had a ◀fleet/large number► of ships that sailed with the ships that King Hiram owned. Every three years the ships returned *from the places to which they had sailed*, bringing gold, silver, ivory, monkeys, and baboons (OR, peacocks).

²³ King Solomon became richer and wiser than any other king. ²⁴ People from all over the world wanted to come and listen to the wise things that Solomon said, things that God had put into his mind. ²⁵ All the people who came to him brought presents: They brought things made from silver or gold, or robes, or weapons (OR, myrrh), or spices, or horses, or mules. The people continued

to do this every year.

²⁶ Solomon acquired 1,400 chariots and 12,000 men who rode *on the horses* (OR, *in the chariots*). Solomon put some of them in Jerusalem and some of them in other cities where he kept his chariots. ²⁷ During the years that Solomon was king, silver became as common in Jerusalem as stones; and *lumber from cedar trees* in the foothills of Judah was as plentiful as *lumber from fig trees*. ²⁸ Solomon's agents bought horses and supervised the men who brought them into Israel from the areas of Musri and Cilicia *that were famous for breeding horses*. ²⁹ In Musri they bought chariots and horses; they paid 600 pieces of silver for each chariot and 150 pieces of silver for each horse. They brought them to Israel. Then they sold many of them to the kings of the Heth people-group and the kings of Syria.

11

Solomon's many wives

¹ King Solomon married many foreign women. First he married the daughter of the king of Egypt. He also married women from the Heth people-group and from the Moab, Ammon, and Edom people-groups, and from Sidon *city*. ² He married them even though Yahweh had commanded the Israeli people, "Do not marry people from those areas, because if you do that, they will surely persuade you [IDM] to worship the gods that they worship!" ³ Solomon married 700 women who were kings' daughters. He also had

300 wives who were his slaves/servants. And his wives caused him to turn away *from worshipping God*.⁴ By the time that Solomon became old, they had persuaded him to worship the gods from their countries. He was not completely dedicated/committed to Yahweh his God like his father [SYN] David had been.⁵ Solomon worshiped Astarte, the goddess that the people of Sidon *worshiped*, and he worshiped Molech, the disgusting god that the Ammon people-group *worshiped*.⁶ That's how Solomon did things that Yahweh said were evil. He did not conduct his life like his father David had done; he did not conduct his life as Yahweh wanted him to.

⁷ On the hill to the east of Jerusalem he built a place to worship Chemosh, the disgusting god that the Moab people-group *worshiped*, and a place to worship Molech, the disgusting god that the Ammon people-group *worshiped*.⁸ He also built places where all his foreign wives could burn incense and offer sacrifices to the gods from their own countries.

⁹⁻¹⁰ Even though Yahweh, the God whom the Israelis *worshiped*, had appeared to Solomon two times, and had commanded him to not worship foreign gods, Solomon refused to obey Yahweh. So Yahweh was angry with Solomon,¹¹ and said to him, "You have chosen to break the agreement that I made with you and to disobey what I commanded you. So I am surely not going to allow you to rule all of your kingdom. I am going to allow one of your officials to rule it."¹² But, because of *what I promised* your father David, I will allow you to rule all your kingdom while

you are still *living*. *After you die*, I will not allow your son to rule the whole kingdom [MTY]. ¹³ But I will not take all the kingdom away from him. Instead, I will allow him to rule one tribe *besides the tribe of Judah*, because of what I promised to David, who served me *well*, and because *I want David's descendants to rule in Jerusalem, where my temple is located.*"

Solomon's enemies

¹⁴ Yahweh caused Hadad, from the family of the kings in the Edom people-group, to rebel against Solomon. ¹⁵⁻¹⁶ What happened was that previously, when David's *army* had conquered the Edom people-group, his army commander Joab had gone there to *help* bury the *Israeli soldiers* who had been killed *in the battle*. Joab and his army remained in the Edom area for six months, and during that time they killed all the males of that area. ¹⁷ Hadad was a young child *at that time*, and he had escaped to Egypt, along with some of his father's servants from the Edom area. ¹⁸ They *went to the Midian region*, and then they went to *the desert area at Paran*. Some other men joined them there. Then they all traveled to Egypt and went to see the king of Egypt. The king gave Hadad some land and ordered his servants to give him some food regularly. ¹⁹ The king liked Hadad. As a result he gave him the sister of his own wife, Queen Tahpenes, to be Hadad's wife.

²⁰ Later Hadad's wife gave birth to a son named Genubath. The sister of Tahpenes ◀*raised him/ brought him up*▶ in the palace, where he lived with the king's sons.

²¹ While Hadad was in Egypt, he heard that David had died [EUP], and that Joab, the commander of David's army, was also dead. So he said to the king of Egypt, "Please allow me to return to my own country."

²² But the king said to him, "Why do you want to go back to your country? Is there something that you lack that you want me to give to you?" Hadad replied, "No, but please just allow me to go." *So the king allowed him to leave, and he returned to his own country and became the king of Edom.*

²³ God also caused another man named Rezon, the son of Eliada, to rebel against Solomon. Rezon had run away from his master, King Hadadezer of *the Zobah area north of Damascus.*

²⁴ Rezon then became the leader of a group of outlaws. That happened after David's *army had defeated Hadadezer and had also killed all his soldiers.* Rezon and his men went to Damascus and started to live there, and *the people there* appointed him to be their king. ²⁵ All during the time that Solomon was alive, while Rezon was ruling *not only Damascus but all of Syria,* he was an enemy of Israel and caused trouble for Israel like Hadad did.

What Yahweh promised to Jeroboam

²⁶ Another man who rebelled against [IDM] Solomon was one of his officials named Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. He was from Zeredah *town in the region where the tribe of Ephraim lives.* His mother was a widow named Zeruah.

²⁷ This is what happened. Solomon's workers were filling in the land/ground on the east side of Jerusalem and repairing the walls *around the city*. ²⁸ Jeroboam was a very capable young man. So, when Solomon saw that he worked very hard, he appointed him to supervise all the men who were forced to work in the areas where the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim live.

²⁹ One day when Jeroboam was walking alone along the road outside of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh *city* met him. Ahijah was wearing a new robe, ³⁰ which he took off and tore into twelve pieces. ³¹ He said to Jeroboam, "Take ten of these pieces for yourself, because Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis *worship*, says to you, 'I am going to tear the kingdom from Solomon, and I am going to enable you to become the ruler of ten of the tribes *of Israel*.' ³² Solomon's *descendants* will still rule one tribe (OR, two tribes), because of *what I promised* David, a man who served me *very well*, and because of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen from all the cities in Israel *to be the city where my people will worship me*. ³³ I am going to do this because Solomon has rejected me and has been worshiping Astarte, the goddess that the people of Sidon worship, Chemosh, the god that the Moab people-group worship, and Milcom, the god that the Ammon people-group worship. He has not conducted his life as I wanted him to. He has not obeyed my statutes and laws, like his father David did.

³⁴ 'But I will not take the entire kingdom away

from him. I will enable him to rule *Judah* all during the years that he is alive. I will do that because of *what I promised to do for David*, whom I chose *to be the king*, and who served me *well*, and who always obeyed my commandments and laws. ³⁵ But I will take the *other ten tribes* of his kingdom and give them to you *to rule*. ³⁶ I will allow Solomon's son to rule one tribe, in order that descendants [MET] of David will always rule in Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen to be the place where *my people worship* me [MTY]. ³⁷ I will enable you to become the king of Israel, and you will rule over all the territory that you want to. ³⁸ If you obey all that I command you to do, and conduct your life as I want you to, and if you do what I say is right by obeying my laws and commandments like David did, I will help you. I will make sure that your descendants will rule after you *die*, like I *promised to do for David*. ³⁹ Because of *Solomon's sins*, I will punish David's descendants, but I will not continue to punish them forever.' ”

⁴⁰ Solomon *found out what Ahijah told Jeroboam*, so he tried to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam escaped and went to Egypt. He went to Shishak, the king of Egypt, and stayed with him until after Solomon died.

Solomon died

⁴¹ A *record of all the other things that Solomon did*, and all the wise things that he *said and wrote*, was written in the Book Telling what Solomon Did. ⁴² He was the king in Jerusalem who ruled over all of Israel for 40 years. ⁴³ Then

Solomon died [EUP], and was buried in the *part of Jerusalem called 'The City of David'*. And his son Rehoboam became the king.

12

The ten tribes rebelled against Rehoboam

¹ All [HYP] the people of *northern* Israel went to Shechem *city* in order to appoint Rehoboam to be their king. So Rehoboam also went there.

² When Jeroboam, who was still in Egypt, heard about that, he returned from Egypt *to Israel*.

³ The *leaders of the northern tribes* summoned him, and they went together *to talk* to Rehoboam. They said to him, ⁴ “Your father *Solomon* forced us to work very hard [MET] for him. If you ◀lighten these loads/do not force us to work that hard▶, and if you charge us less taxes than we were paying to him, we will serve you *faithfully*.”

⁵ He replied, “Go away, and come back three days from now *and I will give you my answer*.” So those leaders and Jeroboam left.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted the older men who had advised his father Solomon while he was still living. He asked them, “What shall I say to answer those men?”

⁷ They replied, “If you want to serve your people well, speak kindly to those men when you reply to them. If you do that, your people will always serve you *faithfully*.”

⁸ But he ignored what the older men advised him to do. Instead, he consulted the younger men who had grown up with him, who were now

◀his advisors/the ones who told him what would be good to do▶. ⁹ He said to them, “What should I say to the men who are asking me to reduce the *work and taxes* that my father required from them?”

¹⁰ They replied, “This is what you should tell them: ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s waist. ¹¹ What I mean is that my father required you *to work hard and pay high taxes*. But I will make those loads heavier. *It was as though* my father whipped you, but *it will be as though* I will whip you with whips that have pieces of metal in them.’”

¹² So three days later, Jeroboam and all the leaders came to Rehoboam again, as he had told them to do. ¹³ The king ignored the advice of the older men and spoke harshly to the Israeli leaders. ¹⁴ *He told them what the younger men had advised.* He said, “My father put heavy burdens *of work and taxes* on you, but I will put heavier burdens on you. *It was as though* he beat you with whips, but I will beat you with whips that have pieces of metal in them!” ¹⁵ So the king did not pay any attention to the Israeli leaders. But this happened in order that what Yahweh wanted would occur, what he had told the prophet Ahijah about Jeroboam *becoming king of the ten tribes*.

¹⁶ When the Israeli leaders realized that the king did not pay any attention to what they said, they shouted,

“We do not [RHQ] want anything to do with this descendant of King David!

We will not pay attention to what this grandson of Jesse says!

You people of Israel, let's go home!

As for this descendant of David [MTY], he can rule his own kingdom [MTY]!”

So the Israeli leaders returned to their homes. ¹⁷ And *after that*, the *only Israeli* people whom Rehoboam ruled over were those who lived in the territory of *the tribe of Judah*.

¹⁸ Then King Rehoboam sent Adoniram *to talk to the Israeli people*. Adoniram was the man who supervised *all the men who were* forced to work *for Rehoboam*. But the Israeli people killed him by throwing stones at him. When that happened, King Rehoboam quickly got in his chariot and escaped to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Ever since that time, the people of *the northern tribes of Israel* have been rebelling against the descendants [MTY] of *King David*.

²⁰ When the Israeli people heard that Jeroboam had returned *from Egypt*, they invited him to come to a meeting, and there they appointed him to be the king of Israel. Only the people of the tribes of *Judah and Benjamin* continued to be loyal to *the kings descended from King* [MTY] *David*.

²¹ When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he gathered 180,000 of the best soldiers from the tribes [MTY] of *Judah and Benjamin*. He wanted them to fight against the northern tribes of [MTY] *Israel and defeat them*, in order that he could *rule all the tribes of his kingdom* again.

²² But God spoke to the prophet Shemaiah and said this to him: ²³ “Go and tell this to *Solomon’s son* Rehoboam, the king of Judah, and to all the people of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and the people from the northern tribe who live in Judah: ²⁴ ‘Yahweh says that you must not go to fight against your own relatives, the people of Israel. All of you must go home. What has happened is what Yahweh wanted to happen.’” *So Shemaiah went and told that to them, and they all paid attention to what Yahweh had commanded them to do, and they went home.*

Jeroboam’s sins

²⁵ Then Jeroboam’s workers built *walls around Shechem city* in the hilly area *where the descendants of Ephraim lived*, and he ruled from there for a while. He and his workers then left there and went to *Peniel town*, and they built walls around that town.

²⁶⁻²⁷ Then Jeroboam said to himself, “If my people *continue to go* to Jerusalem and offer sacrifices to Yahweh at the temple there, soon they will again become loyal to Rehoboam, the king of Judah [DOU], and they will kill me.”

²⁸ So he consulted *his advisors, and then he did what they suggested*. He *told his workers to make gold statues of two calves*. Then he said to the people, “You have been going to Jerusalem *to worship* for a long time. It is a big trouble for you to continue going there. You people of Israel, look! These statues are the gods that brought our *ancestors up from Egypt! So you can worship these, here!*” ²⁹ He *told his workers to place one*

of the statues in Bethel *city in the south* and one in Dan *city in the north*. ³⁰ So what Jeroboam did caused the people to sin. Some of them went and worshiped the calf at Bethel, and others went and worshiped the other calf at Dan.

³¹ Moses had declared that only men from the tribe of Levi would be priests, but Jeroboam also told his workers to build shrines on hilltops, and then he appointed men who were not from the tribe of Levi to be priests. ³² He also appointed Adonijah and two priests, Elishama and Jehoram. They had a celebration at the end of October, like the celebration of *Living in Temporary Shelters* that occurred in Judah *each year*. On the altar that they built in Bethel, he offered sacrifices to the gold statues of calves that they had made, and he stationed the priests there at the shrines that his workers had built. ³³ Jeroboam went up to that altar on that day in October which he himself had chosen. There on that altar he burned incense *to be a sacrifice*. And he declared that the people should celebrate that festival *on that same day every year*.

13

A prophet condemned the altar at Bethel

¹ One day a prophet, obeying what Yahweh commanded him to do, went from Judah *north* to Bethel. He arrived there right at the time that Jeroboam was standing at the altar, ready to burn incense. ² Saying what Yahweh told him to say, the prophet shouted, “This is what Yahweh

says *about this* altar [APO]: ‘I want you to know that *some day* a descendant [MTY] of King David will be born. His name will be Josiah, and he will come here. He will slaughter at this altar the priests who are burning incense for sacrifices on the hills *in this area*, and he will burn the bones of dead people on this altar.’ ” [APO] ³ Then the prophet also said, “This is what will prove to you that Yahweh has said this: This altar will be split apart, and the ashes that are on it will be scattered.’ ”

⁴ When King Jeroboam heard the prophet say that, he pointed his finger at him and said to his servants, “Seize that man!” But immediately the king’s arm became paralyzed/stiff, with the result that he could not move it. ⁵ And the altar immediately split apart, and the ashes spilled out *on the ground*, which is what the prophet said that Yahweh [MTY] had predicted would happen.

⁶ Then the king said to the prophet, “Please pray that Yahweh will be merciful to me and heal my arm!” So the prophet prayed, and Yahweh completely healed the king’s arm.

⁷ Then the king said to the prophet, “Come home with me and eat some food. And I will also give you a reward *for what you have done!*”

⁸ But the prophet replied, “Even if you would *promise to* give me half of everything that you own [MTY], I will not go with you, and I will not eat or drink anything with you here, ⁹ because Yahweh commanded me not to eat or drink anything here. He also commanded me not to return home on the road on which I came here.”

¹⁰ So he started to return home, but he did not go on the road on which he came to Bethel. He went on a different road.

The old prophet from Bethel

¹¹ At that time there was an old man living in Bethel who was a prophet. His sons came and told him what the prophet *from Judah* had done there on that day, and they also told him what the prophet had said to the king. ¹² Their father said, “On which road did he go?” So his sons showed him the road on which the prophet from Judah had gone *when he left Bethel*. ¹³ Then he said to his sons, “Put a saddle on my donkey.” So they did that, and he got on the donkey. ¹⁴ He went along the road to ◀find/catch up with▶ the prophet from Judah. He found him sitting under an oak tree. He said to him, “Are you the prophet who came from Judah?” He replied, “Yes, I am.”

¹⁵ The old prophet said to him, “Come home with me and eat some food.”

¹⁶ He replied, “No, I am not allowed to go with you into your house, or to eat or drink anything with you, ¹⁷ because Yahweh told me, ‘Do not eat or drink anything here, and do not return home on the road on which you came.’”

¹⁸ Then the old prophet said to him, “I also am a prophet, like you are. Yahweh sent an angel to tell me that I should take you home with me and give you some food and drink.” But the old man was lying *when he said that*. ¹⁹ But because of what the old prophet said, the prophet from

Judah returned with him to his home and ate some food and drank some water with him.

²⁰ While they were sitting at the table, Yahweh spoke to the old man. ²¹ Then he cried out to the prophet from Judah, “This is what Yahweh says: ‘You have disobeyed him, and you have not done what he commanded you to do. ²² Instead, you have come back here and had things to eat and drink in a place where he commanded you not to do that. As a result, you will be killed, and your body will not be buried in the grave where your ancestors are buried.’ ”

²³ When they had finished eating, the old man put a saddle on the donkey for the prophet from Judah, *and the prophet from Judah left.* ²⁴ But as he was going, a lion met him and killed him. The prophet’s corpse was lying on the road, and the donkey was standing beside it, and the lion was also standing beside the corpse. ²⁵ Some men passed by and were surprised to see the corpse on the road and the lion standing next to the corpse. So they went into Bethel and reported what they had seen.

²⁶ When the old man who had brought the prophet from Judah to his home heard about it, he said, “That is the prophet who disobeyed what Yahweh told him to do! That is why Yahweh allowed the lion to attack him and kill him. That is what Yahweh said would happen!”

²⁷ Then he said to his sons, “Put a saddle on my donkey.” So they did that. ²⁸ Then he rode on the donkey and found the prophet’s corpse on the road, and his donkey and the lion were

still standing there alongside the corpse. But the lion had not eaten any of the flesh of the prophet and had not attacked the donkey. ²⁹ The old man picked up the corpse of the prophet and put it on his donkey and brought it back to Bethel, in order to mourn for him and to bury his corpse. ³⁰ He buried the prophet's corpse in the grave where other people in his family *had been buried*. Then he and his sons mourned for him, saying, "*We are very sorry, my brother!*"

³¹ After they had buried him, the old man said to his sons, "When I die, bury my corpse in the grave where we buried the prophet from Judah. Lay my corpse next to his corpse. ³² *And do not forget what he said, because* the things that Yahweh told him to say about the altar in Bethel, and about the shrines on the hills in the towns in Samaria, will surely happen."

³³ But King Jeroboam still did not turn away from continuing to do evil things. Instead, he appointed more priests *who were not descended from Levi*. Anyone who wanted to be a priest, he appointed to be a priest, in order that he could offer sacrifices on the hills. ³⁴ Because he committed that sin, *a few years later* God got rid of most of Jeroboam's descendants and did not allow them to become kings of Israel.

14

Jeroboam's son died

¹ At that time, Jeroboam's son Abijah became very sick. ² Jeroboam said to his wife, "Disguise

yourself, in order that no one will recognize that you are my wife. Then go to Shiloh city, where the prophet Ahijah *lives*. He is the one who predicted/prophesied that I would become the king of Israel. ³ Take with you ten *loaves of bread* and some small flat cakes, and a jar of honey, *and give them* to him. *Tell him about our son, and he will tell you what will happen to him.*" ⁴ So his wife went to Shiloh, to Ahijah's house. Ahijah was unable to see, because he was very old and had become blind.

⁵ But *before she got there*, Yahweh told Ahijah that Jeroboam's wife was coming to inquire about their son, who was very sick. And Yahweh told Ahijah what he should tell her.

When she came to him, she pretended to be another woman. ⁶ But when Ahijah heard her footsteps as she entered the doorway, he said to her, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam! ◀Why do you pretend that you are someone else?/It will not help you to pretend that you are someone else.▶ [RHQ] *Yahweh* has given me bad news to tell you. ⁷ Go and tell Jeroboam that this is what Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis *worship*, says to you: 'I chose you from among the common people and enabled you to become the king of my Israeli people. ⁸ I took *most of* the kingdom of Israel away from David's descendants and gave it to you. But you have not been like David, who served me *very well*. He obeyed all my commandments very sincerely, doing only things that I considered to be right. ⁹ But you have done more evil things/deeds than all those

who ruled before you. You have rejected me, and you have caused me to become very angry by making metal images of other gods so that you *and others* could worship them.

¹⁰ ‘o, I am going to cause terrible things to happen to your family. I will cause all your male descendants to die, young ones and old ones. I will completely get rid of your family [MTY]. I will get rid of your family [MTY] just like a man completely burns dung *to cook his food*. ¹¹ *The corpses of* any members of your family who die in cities will be eaten by dogs. And *the corpses of* any members of your family who die in the open fields will be eaten by vultures. *This will surely happen because* I, Yahweh, have said *that it will happen.*’

¹² So go back home. And as soon as you enter the city, your son will die. ¹³ All the Israeli people will mourn for him and bury him. He is the only one of Jeroboam’s family who will be buried *properly*, because he is the only one of Jeroboam’s family with whom Yahweh is pleased.

¹⁴ Furthermore, Yahweh will appoint for himself a king to rule over Israel who will get rid of Jeroboam’s descendants. And that *will start to happen* today! ¹⁵ Yahweh will punish the people of Israel; he will shake them like *the wind* shakes the reeds *that grow in* a stream. He will expel the Israeli people from this good land that he gave to our ancestors. He will scatter them into countries east of *the Euphrates* River, because they have caused him to become very angry

by *worshiping statues* of the goddess Asherah. ¹⁶ Yahweh will abandon the Israeli people because of the sins that Jeroboam committed, sins which led the Israeli people to commit them.”

¹⁷ Jeroboam’s wife returned home to Tirzah city, *the new capital of Israel*. And just as she entered her house, her son died. ¹⁸ All the Israeli people mourned for him and buried him, which is what Yahweh had told his servant, the prophet Ahijah, would happen.

¹⁹ Everything else that Jeroboam did, and the record of wars that his *army* fought, and how he ruled, is written in the scroll called ‘The History of the Kings of Israel’. ²⁰ Jeroboam ruled for 22 years; then he died [EUP] and his son Nadab became king.

Rehoboam died

²¹ Solomon’s son Rehoboam ruled Judah. He was 41 years old when he started to rule, and he ruled for 17 years. He ruled in Jerusalem, which is the city that Yahweh chose out of all the tribes of Israel to be the place where he should be worshiped [MTY]. Rehoboam’s mother’s name was Naamah; she was from the Ammon people-group.

²² The people of Judah did things that Yahweh considered to be evil. They caused him to become angry because they committed more sins than their ancestors had committed: They worshiped many other gods instead of worshiping only Yahweh. ²³ They built places to worship those gods; on high hills, and under big trees

they set up *stone* pillars to worship the goddess Asherah. ²⁴ Also, there were male prostitutes at these places of worship. The Israeli people did the same disgraceful things that had been done by the people whom Yahweh had expelled while the Israelis were advancing through the land.

²⁵ When Rehoboam had been ruling for almost five years, King Shishak of Egypt came *with his army* to attack Jerusalem. ²⁶ They took away all the valuable things in the temple and in the king's palace, including the gold shields that Solomon's *workers* had made. ²⁷ King Rehoboam's *workers* made bronze shields to replace them and entrusted them to officers who guarded the entrance to the king's palace. ²⁸ Every time that the king went into the temple, those guards carried those shields; and *when he left the temple* they returned the shields to the storeroom.

²⁹ Everything else that Rehoboam did is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. ³⁰ There were wars continually between *the armies of* Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ³¹ Then Rehoboam died [EUP], and he was buried in *the part of Jerusalem called* 'The City of David', where his ancestors were buried. Then his son Abijah became the king.

15

King Abijah of Judah

¹ After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost 18 years, Abijah became the king of Judah. ² He ruled for three years in Jerusalem. His

mother's name was Maacah, the granddaughter of *David's son Absalom*.

³ Abijah committed the same kind of sins that his father had committed. He was not fully dedicated/committed to Yahweh his God, as his grandfather David had been. ⁴ But, because of *what Yahweh his God had promised to David*, Yahweh gave Abijah a son [MET] to rule in Jerusalem after him, and in order to protect Jerusalem *from their enemies*. ⁵ Yahweh did that because David had always done what pleased Yahweh and because David had always obeyed Yahweh. The only time when he disobeyed Yahweh was when he caused Uriah *to be killed*.

⁶ There were wars between *the armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam* all during the time that Abijah ruled. ⁷ Everything else that Abijah did is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. ⁸ Abijah died [EUP] and was buried in *the part of Jerusalem called 'The City of David'*, and his son Asa became king.

King Asa of Judah

⁹ After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost 20 years, Asa started to rule Judah. ¹⁰ He ruled in Jerusalem for 41 years. His grandmother was Maacah, the granddaughter of Absalom.

¹¹ Asa did what was pleasing to Yahweh, as his ancestor David had done. ¹² He got rid of the male prostitutes that were at the places where the people worshiped idols, and he also got rid of all the idols that his ancestors had made. ¹³ He also removed his grandmother

Maacah so that she no longer had influence in the government *because of* being the mother of a previous king. He did that because she had made a disgusting *wooden* statue of the goddess Asherah. Asa *told his workers to* cut down the statue and burned it in the Kidron Valley. ¹⁴ He was not able to destroy all the places where the people worshiped *idols* on the high hills, but he continued to be dedicated/committed to Yahweh his entire life. ¹⁵ He *told his workers to* place in the temple all the items that his father had dedicated to God, and all the gold and silver things that he had dedicated to God.

¹⁶ There were wars between *the armies of* Asa and Baasha, the king of Israel, all during the time that they ruled. ¹⁷ Baasha's army invaded Judah. They captured Ramah *town north of Jerusalem*. Then they started to build a wall around it in order to prevent people from entering or leaving the area in Judah that was ruled by King Asa.

¹⁸ So Asa *told his workers to* take all the silver and gold that was still in the storerooms in the temple and in the palace. He told them to take it to Damascus and give it to King Ben-Hadad who ruled Syria. Ben-Hadad was the son of Tabrimmon and grandson of Hezion. He told the workers to say this to Ben-Hadad: ¹⁹ "I want there to be a peace treaty between you and me, like there was between your father and my father. For that reason, I am giving you this silver and gold. So now please cancel the treaty that you made with Baasha, the king of Israel, in order that he will take his soldiers

away from attacking mine, *because he will be afraid of your army.*" ²⁰ So the workers went and gave the message to Ben-Hadad, and he did what Asa suggested. He sent his army commanders and their soldiers to attack some of the towns in Israel. They captured Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maacah, the area near Galilee Lake, and all the land of *the tribe of Naphtali.* ²¹ When Baasha heard about that, he *told his soldiers to stop working at Ramah.* He and his soldiers returned to Tirzah and stayed there. ²² Then King Asa sent a message to all the *people in the towns in Judah,* stating that they all were required to go to Ramah and carry away the stones and timber that Baasha's soldiers had been using to build a wall around the city. With those stones and timber they fortified Mizpah city north of Jerusalem, and Geba, a town in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin.

²³ Everything else that Asa did, the armies that his soldiers defeated, and the names of the cities that he caused to be fortified, are [RHQ] written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Judah'. But when Asa became old, he got a disease in his feet. ²⁴ He died [EUP] and was buried where his ancestors were buried in *the part of Jerusalem called 'The City of David'.* Then his son Jehoshaphat became king.

King Nadab of Israel

²⁵ After Asa had been the king of Judah for almost two years, King Jeroboam's son Nadab started to rule Israel. He ruled for two years.

²⁶ He did things that Yahweh considered to be

evil. His behavior was sinful like his father's behavior had been, and what he did led the people of Israel to sin.

²⁷ A man named Baasha, from the tribe of Issachar, planned to harm him. He killed Nadab when Nadab and his army had surrounded Gibbethon city in the Philistia area. ²⁸ That [DOU] was when Asa had been *the king ruling* Judah for almost three years. Then Baasha became the king of Israel.

²⁹ As soon as Baasha became king, *he commanded his soldiers to kill all of Jeroboam's family*. Doing what Yahweh had told the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh would happen, they killed all of Jeroboam's family. None of them ◀was left/remained alive▶. ³⁰ That happened because Yahweh had become very angry with Jeroboam because of all the sins that Jeroboam had committed, and because of the sins that he had persuaded the people of Israel to commit.

³¹ Everything else that Nadab did is written [RHQ] in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. ³² There were wars between *the armies of King Asa and King Baasha* all the time that they ruled.

King Baasha of Israel

³³ After Asa had been the king of Judah for almost three years, Baasha, the son of Ahijah, started to rule Israel at Tirzah city. He ruled for 24 years. ³⁴ He did things that Yahweh considered to be evil, and his behavior was sinful

like his father's had been, and he led the people of Israel to sin.

16

When Baasha ruled Israel

¹ During the time that Baasha *was king of Israel, the prophet* Jehu, Hanani's son, gave Baasha this message that he had received from Yahweh: ² "You were very insignificant/unimportant [IDM] when I caused you to become the ruler of my Israeli people. But you have caused me to become very angry by doing [IDM] the kinds of evil things that King Jeroboam did. You have also caused me to become angry by causing my people to sin. ³ So now I will get rid of you and your family [MTY]. I will do to you just like I did to Jeroboam and his family. ⁴ *The bodies of those in your family who die in this city will not be buried; they will be eaten by dogs; and the corpses of those who die in the fields will be eaten by vultures.*"

⁵ The other things that happened during the time that Baasha ruled Israel, and the things that he did, are written [RHQ] in the scroll called "The History of the Kings of Israel". ⁶ When Baasha died, he was buried in Tirzah, *the capital city*. Then his son Elah became king.

⁷ Yahweh gave that message about Baasha and his family to the prophet Jehu. Baasha had done many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, which caused Yahweh to become angry. Baasha did the same kind of things that King Jeroboam and his family had done previously. Yahweh was

also angry with Baasha because he had killed all of Jeroboam's family.

When Elah ruled Israel

⁸ After Asa had been the king of Judah for almost 26 years, Elah became the king of Israel. Elah ruled in Tirzah for *only* two years.

⁹ A man named Zimri was one of Elah's army officers. He commanded the drivers of half of Elah's army's ◀chariots/two-wheeled vehicles pulled by horses▶. He made plans to kill Elah while Elah was in Tirzah, getting drunk at the house of a man named Arza. Arza was the man who took care of the things in the king's palace. ¹⁰ Zimri went into Arza's house and killed Elah. Then Zimri became the king of Israel. That was when Asa had been the king of Judah for 27 years.

¹¹ As soon as Zimri became king [MTY], he killed all of Baasha's family [MTY]. That included every male [IDM] in Baasha's family and all of Baasha's male friends. ¹² That was just what Yahweh told the prophet Jehu would happen. ¹³ Baasha and his son Elah had sinned and led the Israeli people to sin. They caused Yahweh, the God whom the Israeli people worshiped, to become angry, because they both urged the people *to worship* worthless idols.

¹⁴ Everything else that Elah did is written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'.

When Zimri ruled Israel

¹⁵ So Zimri became the king of Israel after Asa had been king of Judah for 27 years. But Zimri ruled in Tirzah for only seven days. The Israeli

army was beseiging/surrounding Gibeah, a town which belonged to the Philistine people-group. ¹⁶ The men in the Israeli army camp heard that Zimri had secretly planned to kill King Elah, and then had killed him. So on that day the soldiers chose Omri, the commander of their army, to become the king of Israel. ¹⁷ The Israeli army was camped near Gibbethon *city*. When they heard what Zimri had done, they left there and went to Tirzah, and surrounded the city. ¹⁸ When Zimri realized that the city was *about to be* captured, he went into his palace and set it on fire. So the palace burned down, and he died *in the fire*. ¹⁹ He died because he had sinned by doing the things that Yahweh considered to be evil. Jeroboam had led the Israeli people to sin, and Zimri sinned just like Jeroboam had sinned.

²⁰ All the other things that Zimri did, and the record of how he rebelled *against King Elah*, are written in the scroll called ‘The History of the Kings of Israel’.

When Omri ruled Israel

²¹ After Zimri died, the Israeli people were divided. One group wanted Tibni, the son of Ginath, to be their king. The other group wanted Omri *to be the king*. ²² Those who supported Omri ◀were stronger than/defeated▶ those who supported Tibni. So Tibni was killed, and Omri became king.

²³ Omri became king when Asa had been king of Judah for almost 31 years. Omri ruled Israel for 12 years. For the first six years he ruled in

Tirzah. ²⁴ Then he bought a hill from *a man named* Shemer and paid him about ◀150 pounds/70 kg.▶ of silver for it. Then Omri ordered his men to build a city on that hill, and he called it Samaria, to honor Shemer, the man who owned it previously.

²⁵ But Omri did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He did more evil deeds than any of the kings who ruled Israel before he did. ²⁶ *When Jeroboam was previously the king, he had led the Israeli people to sin, and Omri committed the same kind of sins that Jeroboam did. The Israeli people caused Yahweh, the God the Israeli people had worshiped, to become very angry, because they worshiped worthless idols.*

²⁷ Everything that Omri did, and the record of the victories that his *army* won, are written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'.

²⁸ After Omri died, he was buried in Samaria, and his son Ahab became king.

When Ahab ruled Israel

²⁹ Ahab became king of Israel when Asa had ruled Judah for almost 38 years. Ahab ruled in Samaria *city* for 22 years. ³⁰ Ahab did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil. He did more evil things than any of the kings who ruled Israel before he did. ³¹ He committed the same kind of sins that Jeroboam did, but he did things that were worse than the things that Jeroboam did. He married *a woman named* Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, the king of Sidon *city*. Then Ahab started to worship Baal, *the god that the Canaan people-group worshiped.* ³² He built a

temple in Samaria in order that the Israeli people could worship Baal there, and he put an altar there for *making sacrifices to Baal*.³³ He also made an idol that represented Asherah, *Baal's wife*. He did many more things that caused Yahweh to become angry. He did more evil things than any of the previous kings of Israel had done.

³⁴ During the years that Ahab *ruled*, Hiel, a man from Bethel *city*, rebuilt Jericho *city*. But when he started to rebuild the city, his oldest son Abiram died. And *when the city was finished*, while Hiel was building the city gates, his youngest son Segub died. They died just like Yahweh had told Joshua would happen *to the sons of anyone who would rebuild Jericho*.

17

Crows fed Elijah

¹ Elijah was *a prophet* who lived in Tishbe *town* in the Gilead *region*. One day he *went to* King Ahab and said to him, "Yahweh is the God whom we Israelis *worship* and the God whom I worship and serve. Just as certainly as Yahweh lives, there will be no dew or rain for the next few years, if I do not command rain to fall!"

² Then Yahweh said to Elijah, ³ "*Because you have made the king angry with you, escape from the king and, go to the east, to the Kerith Brook, east of where it flows into the Jordan River.* ⁴ You will be able to drink water from the brook, and *you will be able to eat what the crows bring to*

you, because I have commanded them to bring food to you.”

⁵ So Elijah did what Yahweh commanded him to do. He went and camped alongside Kerith Brook. ⁶ Crows brought bread and meat to him every morning and every evening, and he drank *water* from the brook.

⁷ But after a while, the water in the brook dried up, because rain did not fall anywhere in the land. ⁸ Then Yahweh said to Elijah, ⁹ “Go and live in Zarephath *village*, near Sidon *city*. There is a widow there who will give you food to eat. I have *already* told her what to do about that.” ¹⁰ So *Elijah did what God said*. He went to Zarephath. As he arrived at the gates of the village, he saw a widow who was gathering sticks. He said to her, “Would you please bring me a cup of water?” ¹¹ While she was going to get it, he called out to her, “Bring me a piece of bread, too!”

¹² But she replied, “Your God knows that what I am telling you is true: I do not have even one piece of bread in my house. I have only a handful of flour in a jar, and a little *olive* oil in a jug. I was gathering a few sticks to use these to *make a fire and* cook one more meal, and then after my son and I eat that, we will die *from hunger*.”

¹³ But Elijah said to her, “Do not be worried! Go home and do what you said that you were going to do. But first, bake me a little loaf of bread and bring it to me. After you do that, take what is left and prepare some food for you and your son. ¹⁴ *I know that you will be able to do that*, because Yahweh, the God whom we Israelis

worship, says this: ‘There will always be plenty of flour and *olive* oil left in your containers, until the time when I send rain again *and the crops grow again!*’ ”

¹⁵ So the woman did exactly what Elijah told her to do. And she and her son and Elijah had enough food every day, ¹⁶ because the flour in the jar was never finished, and the jug of oil was never empty. That happened just like Yahweh had told Elijah that it would happen.

Elijah restored to life the widow’s son

¹⁷ Some time later, the woman’s son became sick. He continued to get worse, and finally he died. ¹⁸ So the woman went to Elijah and said to him, “You are a prophet; so why have you done this to me? Have you come here to punish me for my sins by causing my son to die?”

¹⁹ But Elijah replied, “Give your son to me.” So she gave her son to him, and he took the boy’s *body* from her and carried it up *the steps* to the room where he stayed. He laid the boy’s *body* on his bed. ²⁰ Then Elijah cried out to Yahweh, “O Yahweh my God, this widow *has kindly allowed* me to stay in her home. So why have you brought this tragedy to her and caused her son to die?” [RHQ] ²¹ Then Elijah stretched himself on top of the boy’s *body* and called out to Yahweh saying, “Yahweh my God, please allow this boy to become alive again!” He did this three times.

²² Yahweh heard what Elijah prayed, and *he caused* the boy *to* become alive again [DOU].

²³ Elijah carried the boy down *the steps* and gave him to his mother. He said, “Look, your son is alive!”

²⁴ The woman said to Elijah, “Now I know *for certain* that you are a prophet and that the words that you speak are truly from Yahweh!”

18

Elijah met with Obadiah

¹ For almost three years there was no rain in Samaria. Then Yahweh said this to Elijah: “Go and meet with King Ahab and *tell him that* I will soon send rain.” ² So Elijah went to talk to Ahab.

In Samaria there was almost no food for anyone to eat. ³ There was a man there named Obadiah. He was in charge of the king’s palace. He greatly revered Yahweh. ⁴ One time when *Queen Jezebel* had *tried to* kill all Yahweh’s prophets, Obadiah hid 100 of them in two caves. He put 50 prophets in each cave, and he brought food and water to them.

⁵ *By this time, the ◀famine/lack of food and water▶ had become very severe in Samaria.* So Ahab summoned Obadiah and said to him, “We must check/look near every spring and in every valley to see if we can find enough grass to give to some of my horses and mules, so that they will not all die.” ⁶ So they both started walking throughout the land. Obadiah went in one direction by himself, and Ahab went in another direction by himself.

⁷ While Obadiah was walking along, he saw Elijah coming toward him. Obadiah recognized

Elijah and bowed down in front of him and said, “Is it really you, Elijah, my master?”

⁸ Elijah replied, “Yes. Now go and tell *Ahab*, your master, that I am here.”

⁹ Obadiah objected. He said, “Sir, I have not [RHQ] harmed you at all. So why are you sending me back to Ahab? He will kill me! ¹⁰ Yahweh your God *knows that I am telling the truth when I solemnly declare that King Ahab has searched in every kingdom all over the world [HYP] to find you. Each time that some king said to him, ‘Elijah is not here,’ Ahab demanded that the king of that country solemnly swear/declare that the king was telling the truth. ¹¹ Now you say to me, ‘Go and tell your master that Elijah is here!’ ¹² But as soon as I leave you, the Spirit of Yahweh will carry you away, and I will not know where he will take you. So when I tell Ahab that you are here and he comes to me and he does not find you here, he will kill me! But I do not deserve to die because I have revered Yahweh since I was a boy. ¹³ My master, have you not heard about what I did when Jezebel wanted to kill all of Yahweh’s prophets? I hid 100 of them in two caves and took food and water to them. ¹⁴ Now, sir, you say, ‘Go and tell your master that Elijah is here.’ But if I do that, and he comes and you are not here, he will kill me!”*

¹⁵ But Elijah replied, “Yahweh, the Almighty One whom I serve [IDM], knows that *I am telling the truth as I solemnly declare that I will go to meet with Ahab today.*”

Elijah killed the prophets of Baal

¹⁶ So Obadiah went to tell Ahab that Elijah had come. Ahab went to meet with him. ¹⁷ When he saw Elijah, he said to him, “Is that you, the one who causes trouble for *the people of Israel*?”

¹⁸ Elijah replied, “It is not I who have caused trouble for the people of Israel! You and your family are the ones who have caused trouble! You have refused to obey Yahweh’s commands, and you have worshiped the idols of Baal instead. ¹⁹ So now, command all the Israeli people to come to Carmel Mountain, and *be sure to* bring all the 450 prophets who worship Baal and the 400 prophets who worship *the goddess Asherah*, the ones to whom *your wife* Jezebel brings food and water.”

²⁰ So Ahab summoned all his prophets and all the other *Israeli* people to the top of Carmel Mountain, and *Elijah went up there too*. ²¹ Then Elijah stood in front of them and said, “How long [RHQ] are you going to be undecided *about who is truly God*? If Yahweh is *truly* God, then worship/serve him. If Baal is truly God, then worship/serve him!” But the people said nothing *in reply, because they were afraid of what Jezebel would do to them if they admitted that they worshiped Yahweh*.

²² Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only true prophet of Yahweh who is left, but Baal has 450 prophets. ²³ Bring two bulls. The prophets of Baal may choose the one that they want. They must *kill it and* cut it into pieces and lay the pieces on the wood that is on the altar that they

have made. But they must not light a fire *under the wood*. *I will kill the other bull and cut it in pieces and lay the pieces on the altar that I make.*

²⁴ Then they must call to their god [MTY], and I will call to Yahweh. The god who answers by lighting a fire to *the wood that is on that altar is the true God!*”

Then all the people thought that Elijah’s suggestion was good.

²⁵ Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “You call to Baal first, because there are many of you. Choose one of the bulls and prepare it, and then call to your god. But do not light a fire under the wood!” ²⁶ So they killed one of the bulls and cut it up and placed the pieces on the altar. Then they called out to Baal all morning. They shouted, “Baal, answer us!” But no one answered. There was no reply at all [DOU].

Then they danced wildly around the altar that they had made.

²⁷ About noontime, Elijah started to make fun of them. He said, “*Surely* Baal is a god, so it seems that you must shout louder! Perhaps he is thinking about something, or perhaps he has gone to the toilet. Or perhaps he is traveling somewhere, or perhaps he is asleep and you need to wake him up!” ²⁸ So they shouted louder. Then, doing one of the things that they frequently did *when they worshiped Baal*, they slashed/cut themselves with knives and swords until a lot of blood flowed. ²⁹ They continued calling out to Baal all afternoon. But there was no reply, no answer, no god who paid attention.

³⁰ Then Elijah called to the people saying, “Come closer!” So they all crowded around him. Then Elijah repaired the altar of Yahweh that had previously been ◀ruined/torn down▶ *by the prophets of Baal*. ³¹ Then he took twelve *large* stones, each one to represent one of the Israeli tribes. The names of those tribes were given to them by their ancestor Jacob. ³² With these stones he rebuilt Yahweh’s altar. Then around the altar he dug a little ditch that was large enough to hold about ◀three gallons/12 liters▶ of water. ³³ He piled wood on top of the stones. He killed the bull and cut it in pieces. Then he laid the pieces on top of the wood. Then he said, “Fill four large jars with water, and pour the water on top of the pieces of meat and the wood.” So they did that.

³⁴ Then he said, “Do the same thing again!” So they did it again. Then he said “Do it a third time!” So they did it again.

³⁵ As a result, the water flowed down below the altar and filled the ditches.

³⁶ When it was time to offer the evening sacrifices, Elijah walked close *to the altar* and prayed. He said, “Yahweh, you who are the God that *our ancestors* Abraham and Isaac and Jacob *worshipped*, prove today that you are the God whom the Israeli people *should worship*, and prove that I am your servant. Prove that I have done all these things because you told me to do them. ³⁷ Yahweh, answer me! Answer me in order that these people will know that you, Yahweh God, *have the power to do what you say*

that you will do, and that you have caused them to trust in [IDM] you again!”

³⁸ Immediately a fire from Yahweh flashed down from the sky. The fire burned up the pieces of meat, the wood, the stones, and the dirt *that was around the altar*. It even dried up all the water in the ditch!

³⁹ When the people saw that, they prostrated themselves on the ground and shouted, “Yahweh is God! Yahweh is God!”

⁴⁰ Then Elijah commanded them, “Seize all the prophets of Baal! Do not allow any of them to escape!” So the people seized all the prophets of Baal, and took them down the mountain to the Kishon Valley, and Elijah killed them all there.

Elijah prayed for rain

⁴¹ Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go and get something to eat and drink. *But do it quickly, because it is soon going to rain very hard!*” ⁴² So Ahab *and his men* left to prepare a big meal. But Elijah went back up to the top of Carmel Mountain and prayed.

⁴³ Then he said to his servant, “Go and look out toward the sea, *to see if there are any rain clouds.*” So his servant went and looked, *and came back* and said, “I do not see anything.” This happened six times. ⁴⁴ But when the servant went the seventh time, he came back and said, “I saw a very small cloud above the sea. *As I extend my arm*, the cloud is about the size of my hand/fist.”

Then Elijah shouted to him, “Go and tell King Ahab to get his chariot ready and go home

immediately! If he does not do that, the rain will stop him!” ⁴⁵ Very soon the sky was full of black clouds. There was a strong wind, and then it began to rain very hard. Ahab got into his chariot and started to return to Jezreel city. ⁴⁶ Yahweh gave extra strength to Elijah. He tucked his cloak into his belt *in order to run fast*, and he ran ahead of Ahab’s *chariot* all the way *17 miles/26 km.* to Jezreel.

19

Elijah fled to the desert and then to Sinai Mountain

¹ When Ahab got home, he told *his wife* Jezebel what Elijah had done. He told her that Elijah had killed all the prophets of Baal. ² So Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: “By this time tomorrow I will have *killed* you, just like you *killed all those prophets of Baal*. If I do not do that, I hope the gods will kill me.”

³ When Elijah received *her message*, he was afraid. So *taking his servant with him*, he fled in order that he would not be killed. He went *far south* to Beersheba, in Judah. He left his servant there. ⁴ Then he went by himself further *south* into the desert. He walked all day. He sat down under a broom tree and prayed that *Yahweh* would allow him to die. He said, “Yahweh, I’ve had enough. So allow me to die, because for me to live is no better than *being with* my ancestors *who have died*.”

⁵ Then he lay down under the broom tree and slept. But while he was sleeping, an angel

touched him and *woke him up and* said to him, “Get up and eat some food!”

⁶ Elijah looked around and saw some bread which had been baked on hot stones, and he also saw a jar of water. So he ate some bread and drank some water and lay down *to sleep* again.

⁷ Then the angel *who had been sent by* Yahweh came again and touched him, and said, “Get up and eat some *more* food, because you need *more strength* to go on a long journey.” ⁸ So he got up and ate and drank some more, and because of doing that, he got enough strength to enable him to travel for forty days and nights to Sinai Mountain, the mountain *that was dedicated to* God. ⁹ He went into a cave there and slept there that night.

Yahweh gave instructions to Elijah

The next morning, Yahweh said to him “Elijah, why are you here?” ¹⁰ Elijah replied, “I have zealously served you, Yahweh, God Almighty. But the Israeli people have broken the agreement that they made with you. They have torn down your altars, and they have killed all of your prophets. I am the only one whom they have not killed, and now they are trying to kill me, too. *So I am running away from them.*”

¹¹ Yahweh said to him, “Go out and stand in front of me on this mountain while I pass by.” *Suddenly* a strong windstorm struck the mountain. As a result, rocks were loosened from the mountainside. But Yahweh was not in

the wind. Then there was an earthquake, but Yahweh was not in the earthquake.

¹² Then there was a fire, but Yahweh was not in the fire. Then there was a sound like someone whispering quietly. ¹³ When Elijah heard that, he wrapped his cloak around his face. He went out of the cave and stood at its entrance. And he heard Yahweh speaking to him, saying again, “Elijah, why are you here?”

¹⁴ He replied again, “I have zealously served you, Yahweh, God Almighty. But the Israeli people have broken the agreement that they made with you. They have torn down your altars, and they have killed all of your prophets. I am the only one whom they have not killed, and now they are trying to kill me, too. *So I am running away from them.*”

¹⁵ Then Yahweh told him, “Go back to the desert near Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint *with olive oil* a man named Hazael, *to appoint him* to be the king of Syria. ¹⁶ Then anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi, to be the king of Israel, and also anoint Elisha the son of Shaphat, from Abel-Meholah *town*, to become my prophet after you are dead. ¹⁷ Hazael’s army *will kill many people*, and those who escape from *being killed* by his army will be killed by Jehu’s *army*, and those who escape from *being killed* by Jehu’s army will be killed by Elisha. ¹⁸ But *you need to know that* there are still 7,000 people in Israel who have never bowed to *worship* Baal or kissed his *idol.*”

Elijah summoned Elisha

¹⁹ So Elijah went *to Syria* and found Elisha as he was plowing a field with a team of oxen. There were eleven other men who were in front of him, plowing with teams of oxen in the same field. Elijah went to Elisha, and took off his own coat and put it on Elisha, *to show Elisha that he wanted him to take his place as a prophet. Then he started to walk away.* ²⁰ Elisha left the oxen standing there and ran after Elijah, and said to him, “I will go with you, but first let me kiss my parents goodbye.”

Elijah replied, “Okay, go home. But do not forget why I have *given my cloak* to you!” ²¹ So Elisha went back *to his oxen*. He killed them *and cut them in pieces* and used the wood from the plow to build a fire to roast the meat. He distributed the meat to the other people *in his town*, and they all ate some. Then he went with Elijah and became his helper.

20

The Syrian army attacked Israel

¹ Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria, gathered all his army, and he persuaded 32 other kings to join him with their armies and horses and chariots. They marched to *Samaria city, the capital of Israel*, and surrounded it, and *prepared to attack* it. ² Ben-Hadad sent messengers into the city to King Ahab, to say this to him: “This is what King Ben-Hadad says: ³ ‘*You must give to me all your silver and gold, your ◀good-looking/most beautiful▶ wives/women and strongest children.*’ ”

⁴ The king of Israel replied to them, “Tell this to King Ben-Hadad: ‘I agree to do what you requested. You can have me and everything that I own.’”

⁵ *The messengers told that to* Ben-Hadad, and he *sent them back with* another message: “I sent a message to you saying that you must give me all your silver and gold and your wives and your children. ⁶ But *in addition to that*, about this time tomorrow, I will send some of my officials to search your palace and the houses of your officials, and to bring to me everything that pleases them.”

⁷ King Ahab summoned all the leaders of Israel, and said to them, “You can see/realize for yourselves that this man is trying to cause much trouble. He sent me a message insisting that I must give him my wives and my children, my silver and my gold, and I agreed to do that.”

⁸ The leaders and all the other people said to him, “Do not pay any attention to him! Do not do what he is requesting!”

⁹ So Ahab said to Ben-Hadad’s messengers, “Tell the king that I agree to give him the things that he first requested, but I do not agree to allow his officials to take anything that they want from my palace and from the houses of my officials.” So the messengers *reported that to King Ben-Hadad, and they* returned with another message from Ben-Hadad.

¹⁰ In that message he said, “*We will destroy your city completely, with the result that there will not be enough dust and rubble left for each*

of my soldiers to have one handful! I hope/wish that the gods will strike me dead if we do not do that!”

¹¹ King Ahab replied *to the messengers*, “Tell King Ben-Hadad that a soldier who is putting on his armor *preparing to fight a battle* [MTY] should not boast at that time; he *should wait until* after he wins the battle.”

¹² Ben-Hadad heard that message while he and the other rulers were drinking *wine* in their temporary shelters. He told his men to prepare to attack [MTY] the city. So his men did that.

Ahab's soldiers won their first victory over the Syrians

¹³ At that moment, a prophet came to King Ahab and said to him, “This is what Yahweh says: ‘*Do not be at all afraid of* [RHQ] the large enemy army that you see! I will enable your army to defeat them today, and you will know that it is I, Yahweh, *who have the power to do what I say that I will do.*’ ”

¹⁴ Ahab asked, “What group *of our army* will defeat them?” The prophet replied, “The young soldiers who are commanded by the district governors will do it.” The king asked, “Who should lead the attack?” The prophet replied, “You should!”

¹⁵ So Ahab gathered the young soldiers who were commanded by the district governors. There were 232 of those men. Then he also summoned all the Israeli army. There were *only* 7,000 soldiers. ¹⁶ They started to attack at noon, while Ben-Hadad and the other rulers were

getting drunk in their temporary shelters. ¹⁷ The young soldiers advanced first. Some scouts who had been sent out by Ben-Hadad reported to him, “There are men coming out of Samaria *city*”!

¹⁸ He said, “It does not matter whether they are coming to fight against us or to ask for peace. Capture them, but do not kill them

¹⁹ The young Israeli soldiers went out of the city to attack *the Syrian army*, and the other soldiers in the Israeli army followed them. ²⁰ Each *Israeli soldier* killed a *Syrian* soldier. The rest of the Syrian army then ran away, and the Israeli soldiers pursued them. But King Ben-Hadad escaped riding his horse, along with some other men riding horses. ²¹ Then the king of Israel went out *of the city*, and he and his soldiers captured *all the other Syrian* horses and chariots, and also killed a large number of Syrian soldiers.

²² Then that same prophet went to King Ahab and said to him, “Go back and prepare your soldiers, and think carefully about what will be necessary for you to do, because the king of Syria with attack with his army again in the springtime of next year.”

²³ *After the Syrian army was defeated*, Ben-Hadad’s officials said to him, “The gods that the Israelis *worship* are gods *who live* in the hills. *Samaria is built on a hill*, and that is why their soldiers were able to defeat us. But if we fight against them in the plains/lowlands, we certainly will be able to defeat them. ²⁴ So, this is what you should do: You must remove the 32 kings *who*

are leading your troops and replace them with army commanders. ²⁵ Then gather an army like the army that was defeated. Gather an army that has as many horses and chariots as the first army had. Then we will fight the Israelis in the plains/lowlands, and we will surely defeat them.”

Ben-Hadad agreed with them, and he did what they suggested. ²⁶ In the spring of the following year, he gathered his soldiers and marched *with them* to Aphek city east of Galilee Lake, to fight against the Israeli army. ²⁷ The Israeli army was also gathered together, and they were equipped with the things that they needed *for the battle*. Then they marched out and formed two groups facing the Syrian army. Their army was very small; they resembled two small flocks of goats, whereas the Syrian army *was very large and spread all over the countryside*.

²⁸ A prophet came to King Ahab and said to him, “This is what Yahweh says: ‘The Syrians say that I am a god who lives in the hills, and that I am not a god who lives in the valleys. So I will *show that they are wrong by* enabling your men to defeat this huge army [IDM] *in the valley*, and you will know that I, Yahweh, *have done it.*’ ”

²⁹ The two armies stayed in their tents for seven days, in groups that faced each other. Then, on the seventh day, they started fighting. The Israeli army killed 100,000 Syrian soldiers. ³⁰ The other Syrian soldiers ran away into Aphek City. Then the wall of the city collapsed and killed 27,000 more Syrian soldiers.

Ben-Hadad also escaped into the city, and hid in the back room of a house. ³¹ His officials went to him and said, “We have heard a report that the Israelis act mercifully. So allow us to go to the king of Israel, wearing coarse sacks around our waists and ropes on our heads/necks *to indicate that we will be his slaves*. Perhaps *if we do that*, he will allow you to remain alive.”

³² *The king permitted them to do that*, so they wrapped coarse sacks around their waists and put ropes on their heads/necks, and they went to the king of Israel and said to him, “Ben-Hadad, who greatly respects you, says, ‘Please do not kill me.’” Ahab replied, “Is he still alive? He is like a brother to me!”

³³ Ben-Hadad’s officials were trying to find out if Ahab would act mercifully, and when Ahab said “brother,” they ◀were optimistic/thought that Ahab would be merciful▶. So they replied, “Yes, he is like your brother!” Ahab said, “Go and bring him to me.” So they *went and* brought Ben-Hadad to him. *When Ben-Hadad arrived*, Ahab told him to get in his chariot *and sit with him*.

³⁴ Ben-Hadad said to him, “I will give back to you the towns that my father’s army took from your father. And I will allow you to set up market areas for your merchants in Damascus *my capital*, just as my father did in Samaria *your capital*.” Ahab replied, “Because you agree to do that, I will not execute you.” So Ahab made an agreement with Ben-Hadad, and allowed him to go home.

³⁵ Then Yahweh spoke to a member of a group of prophets and said to him, "Ask one of your fellow prophets to strike and wound you." *So he did what Yahweh told him to do. He said to one of his fellow prophets, 'Strike me and wound me.'* But that man refused to do it.

³⁶ So the prophet said to him, "Because you refused to obey what Yahweh told you to do, a lion will kill you as soon as you leave me." And as soon as he left that prophet, a lion suddenly pounced on him and killed him.

³⁷ Then the prophet found another prophet, and said to him, "Strike me!" So that man hit him *very hard* and injured him. ³⁸ Then the prophet put a large bandage/cloth over his face so that no one would recognize him. Then he went and stood alongside the road, waiting for the king to come by. ³⁹ When the king passed by, the prophet cried out to him, saying "Your majesty, *after I was wounded* while I was fighting in a battle, a soldier brought to me one of our enemies that he had captured, and said to me, 'Guard this man! If he escapes, you must pay me 3,000 pieces of silver, and if you do not pay that, you will be executed!' ⁴⁰ But while I was busy doing other things, the man escaped!" The king of Israel said to him, "That is your problem! You yourself have said that you deserve to be punished."

⁴¹ The prophet immediately took off the bandage, and the king of Israel recognized that he was one of the prophets. ⁴² And the prophet said to him, "This is what Yahweh says: 'You have

allowed that man *Ben-Hadad* to escape after I commanded you to be sure to execute him! Since you did not do that, you will be killed instead. And your army will be destroyed because you allowed *some of* his army to escape!”⁴³ The king went back home to Samaria, very angry and depressed/dejected.

21

Jezebel arranged for Naboth to be killed

¹ King Ahab had a palace in Jezreel city. Near the palace was a vineyard owned by a man from that city whose name was Naboth. ² One day, Ahab *went to* Naboth and said to him, “Your vineyard is close to my palace. I would like to buy it, so that I can plant some vegetables there. In exchange, I will give you a better vineyard *somewhere else*, or if you prefer, I will pay you for your vineyard.”

³ But Naboth replied, “That land belonged to my ancestors, *so I want to keep it*. I hope that Yahweh will never allow me to give that land to you!”

⁴ So Ahab became very sullen and angry because of what Naboth had said. He went home and lay down on his bed. He turned his face toward the wall, and he refused to eat anything.

⁵ His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so depressed? Why are you refusing to eat anything?”

⁶ Ahab replied, “I talked to Naboth, that man from Jezreel. I told him that *I wanted* his

vineyard. *I said, 'I will buy it from you, or I will give you another vineyard for it.'* But he refused *to let me have it.*"

⁷ His wife replied, "You are [RHQ] the king of Israel, *so you can get whatever you want* Get up, and eat some food and do not worry *about what Naboth said.* I will get Naboth's vineyard for you."

⁸ Then Jezebel wrote some letters, and she signed Ahab's name on them. She used his official seal to seal them. Then she sent them to the older leaders and other important men who lived in Naboth's town. ⁹ This is what she wrote in the letters: "Proclaim a day when all the people will *gather together and* ◀fast/abstain from eating food▶. Give to Naboth an important place to sit among them. ¹⁰ Then find two men who always cause trouble. Give them places to sit opposite/facing him. Tell these men to testify that they heard Naboth say things that criticized God and the king. Then take Naboth out of the city and kill him by throwing stones at him."

¹¹ The leaders *received the letters and* did what Jezebel had written in the letters for them to do. ¹² They declared a day on which the people would all ◀fast/abstain from food▶. And they gave Naboth a seat in a place where honored people sat, in front of the people. ¹³ Two men who always caused trouble sat opposite/facing Naboth. While everyone was listening, they stated that they had heard Naboth say things that criticized God and the king. So the people seized Naboth. They took him outside the city and killed

him *by throwing* stones at him. ¹⁴ Then those leaders sent a message to Jezebel, saying “We have executed Naboth.”

¹⁵ When Jezebel found out that Naboth had been killed, she told Ahab, “Naboth is dead. Now you can go and take possession of the vineyard that he refused to sell to you.” ¹⁶ When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went to the vineyard to claim that he now owned it.

¹⁷ Then Yahweh spoke to Elijah the prophet. He said, ¹⁸ “Go to Samaria and talk to Ahab, the king of Israel. He is in the vineyard of a man named Naboth. He has gone there to claim that he now owns it. ¹⁹ Tell Ahab that this is what I, Yahweh, say to him: ‘You have murdered Naboth and taken his land.’ So I am telling you this: ‘In the same place where *Naboth died and* dogs came and licked up Naboth’s blood, *you will die and* the dogs will lick up your blood, too!’ ”

²⁰ So when Elijah met with Ahab, Ahab said to him, “You, my enemy, have found me!” [RHQ] Elijah answered, “Yes, I have found you. You have never stopped doing the things that Yahweh says are wrong.

²¹ So this is what Yahweh says to you: ‘I will soon get rid of you. I will kill you, and I will also kill every male in your household, including those who are slaves and those who are not slaves. ²² Your family will all be killed, just like the family of King Jeroboam and like the family of King Baasha were killed. I will get rid of you because you have caused me to become very

angry, and you have also led the Israeli people to sin.’

²³ Yahweh has also told me that *your wife Jezebel will be killed, and dogs in Jezreel will eat her corpse.* ²⁴ The *dead bodies of the* members of your family who die in this city *will not be buried, they will be eaten by dogs, and the corpses of those who die in the fields will be eaten by vultures.*”

²⁵ There was no man no man like Ahab who always did things that Yahweh considered to be evil. His wife Jezebel incited/urged him to do *many of* those things. ²⁶ The most abominable/detestable thing that Ahab did was to worship idols, just like the Amor people-group had done. And that is why Yahweh took the Amor people’s land from them and gave it to the Israelis.

²⁷ After Elijah finished talking to Ahab, Ahab tore his clothes *to show that he was sorry for all the sins that he had committed.* He put on rough clothes that were made from sacks, and he refused to eat anything. He even wore those rough clothes made from sacks when he slept, to show that he was sorry.

²⁸ Then Yahweh said this to Elijah: ²⁹ “I have seen [RHQ] that Ahab is now very sorry for all the evil things that he has done. So the things that I promised to do to his *family* will not happen while he is still alive. I will cause them to happen after his son becomes king. Then those things will happen to his family.” [MTY]

22

Jehoshaphat talked with Ahab

¹ For almost three years there was no war between Syria and Israel. ² Then King Jehoshaphat, who ruled Judah, went to *visit* King Ahab, who ruled Israel. ³ *While they were talking*, Ahab said to his officials, “Do you realize that the Syrians are still occupying our city of Ramoth in *the Gilead region*? And we are doing nothing to retake that city!” ⁴ Then he turned to Jehoshaphat and asked, “Will your *army* join my *army* to fight against the people of Ramoth *and retake that city*?”

Jehoshaphat replied, “*Certainly I will do whatever you want*, and you may command my troops. You may take my horses into battle, also.” ⁵ Then he added, “But we should ask Yahweh first, to find out what he wants us to do.” ⁶ So Ahab summoned about 400 of his prophets together, and he asked them, “Should my *army* go to fight the people in Ramoth and retake that city, or not?”

They answered, “Yes, go *and attack them*, because God will enable your *army* to defeat them.”

⁷ But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no prophet of Yahweh here whom we can ask?”

⁸ The King of Israel replied, “There is one man we can talk to. We can ask him if he can find out what Yahweh wants. His name is Micaiah; he is the son of Imlah. But I hate him, because when he ◀prophesies/tells what God says to him▶ he never says *that anything good will happen* to me.

He always predicts *that bad things will happen to me.*”

Jehoshaphat replied, “King Ahab, you should not say that!”

⁹ So the king of Israel told one of his officers to summon Micaiah immediately.

Micaiah prophesied against Ahab

¹⁰ The king of Israel and the king of Judah were wearing their ◀royal robes/robes that showed that they were kings▶. They were sitting on thrones at the place where people threshed grain, near the gate of Samaria city. All of Ahab’s prophets were standing in front of the kings, ◀prophesying/predicting what was going to happen▶. ¹¹ One of them, whose name was Zedekiah, the son of Kenaanah, had made from iron *something that resembled horns of a bull*. Then he proclaimed *to Ahab*, “This is what Yahweh says: ‘With horns like these your army will keep attacking the Syrians *like a bull attacks another animal* [MET], until you completely destroy them!’ ”

¹² All the *other* prophets of Ahab agreed. They said, “Yes! If you go up to attack Ramoth city in the Gilead region, you will be successful, because Yahweh will enable you to defeat them!”

¹³ Meanwhile, the messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, “Listen to me! All the other prophets are predicting that the king’s army will defeat the Syrians. So be sure that you agree with them and say ◀what

will be favorable/that the king's army will be successful►.”

14 But Micaiah replied, “As surely as Yahweh lives, I will tell him only what Yahweh tells me to say.”

15 When Micaiah came to Ahab, Ahab asked him, “Micaiah, should we go to fight against *the people of Ramoth*, or not?”

Micaiah replied, “Sure, go! Yahweh will enable your army to defeat them!” 16 But King Ahab *realized that Micaiah was ◀lying/being sarcastic▶*, so he said to Micaiah, “I have told you [RHQ] many times that you must always tell only the truth when you say what Yahweh *has revealed to you!*”

17 So Micaiah said to him, “*The truth is that in a vision I saw all the troops of Israel scattered on the mountains. They seemed to be like sheep that did not have a shepherd. And Yahweh said, ‘Their master has been killed. So tell them all to go home peacefully.’*”

18 Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “I told you [RHQ] that he never predicts *that* anything good *will happen to me!* He *always* predicts *that* bad things *will happen to me.*”

19 But Micaiah continued, saying, “Listen to what Yahweh showed to me! *In a vision* I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, with all the armies of heaven surrounding him, on his right side and on his left side. 20 And Yahweh said, ‘Who can persuade Ahab to go to fight against the people of Ramoth, in order that he may be killed there?’

Some suggested one thing, and others suggested something else. ²¹ Finally one *evil* spirit came to Yahweh and said, ‘I can do it!’

²² Yahweh asked him, ‘How will you do it?’

The spirit replied, ‘I will go and inspire all of Ahab’s prophets to tell lies.’ Yahweh said, ‘You will be successful; go and do it!’ ²³ So now *I tell you that* Yahweh has caused all of your prophets to lie to you. Yahweh has decided that something terrible will happen to you.”

²⁴ Then Zedekiah walked over to Micaiah and slapped him on his face. He said, “Do you think that Yahweh’s Spirit left me in order to speak to you?” [RHQ]

²⁵ Micaiah replied, “You will find out for yourself *which of us Yahweh’s Spirit has truly spoken to* on the day when you go into a room of some house to hide *from the Syrian troops!*”

²⁶ King Ahab commanded *his soldiers*, “Seize Micaiah and take him to Amon, the governor of this city, and to my son Joash. ²⁷ Tell them that I have commanded that they should put this man in prison and give him only bread and water. Do not give him anything else to eat until I return safely from the battle!”

²⁸ Micaiah replied, “If you return safely, *it will be clear that* it was not Yahweh who told me what to say to you!” Then he said *to all those who were standing there*, “Do not forget what I have said *to King Ahab!*”

Ahab died in the battle

²⁹ So the King of Israel and the King of Judah *led their armies to Ramoth, in the Gilead region.*

³⁰ King Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “I will put on different clothes, *in order that no one will recognize that I am the king*. But you should wear your ◀royal robe/robe that shows that you are a king▶.” So Ahab disguised himself, and they both went into the battle.

³¹ The King of Syria told this to his thirty-two men who were driving the chariots: “Attack only the king of Israel!” ³² So when the men who were driving the Syrian chariots saw Jehoshaphat *wearing ◀his royal robes/clothes that showed he was the king▶*, they pursued him. They shouted, “There is the king of Israel!” But when Jehoshaphat cried out, ³³ they realized that he was not the king of Israel. So they stopped pursuing him.

³⁴ But one *Syrian* soldier shot an arrow at Ahab, without knowing that it was Ahab. The arrow struck Ahab between the places where the parts of his armor joined together. Ahab told the driver of his chariot, “Turn the chariot around and take me out of here! I have been severely wounded!” ³⁵ The battle continued all the day. Ahab was sitting propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrian troops. The blood from his wound ran down to the floor of the chariot. And late in the afternoon he died. ³⁶ Just as the sun was going down, someone among the Israeli troops shouted, “*The battle is ended!* Everyone should return home!”

³⁷ So king Ahab died, and they took his body *in the chariot* to Samaria city and buried his body there. ³⁸ They washed his chariot alongside the

pool in Samaria, a pool where the prostitutes bathed. And dogs *came and* licked the king's blood, just like Yahweh had predicted would happen.

³⁹ The account/record of the other things that happened while Ahab was ruling, and about the palace decorated with much ivory *that they built for him*, and the cities that were built for him, was written in the scroll called 'The History of the Kings of Israel'. ⁴⁰ When Ahab died, his body was buried where his ancestors were buried. Then his son Ahaziah became king.

Jehoshaphat ruled in Judah

⁴¹ Before King Ahab died, when he had been ruling in Israel for four years, Asa's son Jehoshaphat started to rule in Judah. ⁴² Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he started to rule, and he ruled in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. ⁴³ Jehoshaphat was a good king, just like his father Asa had been. He did things that pleased Yahweh. But while he was king, he did not remove all the pagan altars *that the people had built* on the hilltops. So the people continued to offer sacrifices *to idols* on those altars and burned incense there. ⁴⁴ Jehoshaphat also made *a peace agreement* with the king of Israel.

⁴⁵ All the other things that happened while Jehoshaphat was ruling, and the great things that he did and the victories his *troops* won, are written in the scroll called 'The History of the

Kings of Judah'. ⁴⁶ Jehoshaphat's father Asa *had tried to expel* the male prostitutes that stayed at the pagan shrines, but some of them were still there. Jehoshaphat got rid of them.

⁴⁷ At that time, there was no king in Edom; a ruler who had been appointed by Jehoshaphat ruled there.

⁴⁸ Jehoshaphat *ordered some Israeli men to build a fleet/group of ships to sail south to the Ophir region to get gold.* But they were wrecked at Ezion-Geber/Elath, so the ships never sailed.

⁴⁹ Before the ships were wrecked, Ahab's son Ahaziah suggested to Jehoshaphat, "Allow my sailors to go with your sailors," but Jehoshaphat refused.

⁵⁰ When Jehoshaphat died, his *body* was buried where his ancestors were buried in *Jerusalem*, the city where King David *had ruled*. Then Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram became king.

Ahaziah ruled in Israel

⁵¹ Before King Jehoshaphat died, when he had been ruling in Judah for 17 years, Ahab's son Ahaziah began to rule in Israel. Ahaziah ruled in Samaria for two years. ⁵² He did many things that Yahweh considered to be evil, doing the *evil things* that his father and mother had done and the evil things that Jeroboam had done—the king who had led all the Israeli people to sin *by worshipping idols*. ⁵³ Ahaziah bowed in front of Baal's idol and worshiped it. That caused Yahweh, the God who was the true God of the Israeli people, to become very angry, just as

Ahaziah's father had caused Yahweh to become angry.

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Note that in addition to the rules above, revising and adapting God's Word involves a great responsibility to be true to God's Word. See Revelation 22:18-19.

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