

2 Chronicles

The Lord Gives Solomon Wisdom

1:1 Solomon son of David solidified his royal authority,¹ for² the LORD his God was with him and magnified him greatly.

1:2 Solomon addressed all Israel, including those who commanded units of a thousand and a hundred, the judges, and all the leaders of all Israel who were heads of families. **1:3** Solomon and the entire assembly went to the worship center³ in Gibeon, for the tent where they met God⁴ was located there, which Moses the LORD's servant had made in the wilderness. **1:4** (Now David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim to the place he had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.⁵ **1:5** But the bronze altar made by Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, was in front of the LORD's tabernacle.⁶ Solomon and the entire assembly prayed to him⁷ there.) **1:6** Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the LORD which was at the meeting tent, and he offered up a thousand burnt sacrifices.

1:7 That night God appeared⁸ to Solomon and said to him, "Tell me⁹ what I should give you." **1:8** Solomon replied to God, "You demonstrated¹⁰ great loyalty to my father David and have made me king in his place. **1:9** Now, LORD God, may your promise¹¹ to my father David be realized,¹² for you have made me king over a great nation as numerous as the dust of the earth. **1:10** Now give me wisdom and discernment so¹³ I can effectively lead this nation.¹⁴ Otherwise¹⁵

no one is able¹⁶ to make judicial decisions for¹⁷ this great nation of yours."¹⁸

1:11 God said to Solomon, "Because you desire this,¹⁹ and did not ask for riches, wealth, and honor, or for vengeance on your enemies,²⁰ and because you did not ask for long life,²¹ but requested wisdom and discernment so you can make judicial decisions for my people over whom I have made you king, **1:12** you are granted wisdom and discernment.²² Furthermore I am giving you riches, wealth, and honor surpassing that of any king before or after you."²³

1:13 Solomon left the meeting tent at the worship center in Gibeon and went to Jerusalem, where he reigned over Israel.²⁴

Solomon's Wealth

1:14 Solomon accumulated²⁵ chariots and horses. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses. He kept them in assigned cities and in Jerusalem.²⁶

1:15 The king made silver and gold as plentiful²⁷ in Jerusalem as stones; cedar was²⁸ as plentiful as sycamore fig trees are in the lowlands.²⁹ **1:16** Solomon acquired his horses from Egypt³⁰ and from Que; the king's traders purchased them from Que. **1:17** They paid 600 silver pieces for each chariot from Egypt, and 150 silver pieces for each horse. They also sold chariots and horses to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Syria.³¹

¹ **tn** Heb "and Solomon son of David strengthened himself over his kingdom."

² **tn** The disjunctive clause (note the vav [v] + subject pattern) probably has a causal nuance here.

³ **tn** Or "high place."

⁴ **tn** Heb "the tent of meeting of God."

⁵ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁶ **sn** The tabernacle was located in Gibeon; see 1 Chr 21:29.

⁷ **tn** Heb "sought [or "inquired of"] him."

⁸ **tn** Or "revealed himself."

⁹ **tn** Heb "ask."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "did."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "you word."

¹² **tn** Or "be firm, established."

¹³ **tn** The cohortative with prefixed vav (ו) following the imperative here indicates purpose/result.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "so I may go out before this nation and come in." The expression "go out...and come in" here means "to lead" (see HALOT 425 s.v. יָצָא qal.4).

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "for." The word "otherwise" is used to reflect the logical sense of the statement.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "who is able?" The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, "no one."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "to judge."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "these numerous people of yours."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "because this was in your heart."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "the life of those who hate you."

²¹ **tn** Heb "many days."

²² **tn** Heb "wisdom and discernment are given to you."

²³ **tn** Heb "which was not so for the kings who were before you, and after you there will not be so."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "and Solomon came from the high place which was in Gibeon [to] Jerusalem, from before the tent of meeting, and he reigned over Israel."

²⁵ **tn** Or "gathered."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "he placed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem."

²⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁸ **tn** The words "as plentiful" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁹ **tn** Heb "he made."

³⁰ **tn** Heb "as the sycamore fig trees which are in the Shephelah."

³¹ **sn** Because Que is also mentioned, some prefer to see v. 16-17 as a reference to Mutsur. Que and Mutsur were located in Cilicia or Cappadocia (in modern southern Turkey). See HALOT 625 s.v. מִטְסוּר.

³² **tn** Heb "and they brought up and brought out from Egypt a chariot for 600 silver (pieces), and a horse for 150, and in the same way to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of

Solomon Gathers Building Materials for the Temple

2:1 (1:18)¹ Solomon ordered a temple to be built to honor the LORD, as well as a royal palace for himself.² 2:2 (2:1) Solomon had³ 70,000 common laborers⁴ and 80,000 stonecutters⁵ in the hills, in addition to 3,600 supervisors.⁶

2:3 Solomon sent a message to King Hiram⁷ of Tyre.⁸ “Help me⁹ as you did my father David, when you sent him cedar logs¹⁰ for the construction of his palace.¹¹ 2:4 Look, I am ready to build a temple to honor¹² the LORD my God and to dedicate it to him in order to burn fragrant incense before him, to set out the bread that is regularly displayed,¹³ and to offer burnt sacrifices each morning and evening, and on Sabbaths, new moon festivals, and at other times appointed by the LORD our God. This is something Israel must do on a permanent basis.¹⁴ 2:5 I will build a great temple, for our God is greater than all gods. 2:6 Of course, who can really build a temple for him, since the sky¹⁵ and the highest heavens cannot contain him? Who am I that I should build him a temple! It will really be only a place to offer sacrifices before him.¹⁶

2:7 “Now send me a man who is skilled in working with gold, silver, bronze, and iron, as well as purple, crimson, and violet colored fab-

rics, and who knows how to engrave. He will work with my skilled craftsmen here in Jerusalem¹⁷ and Judah, whom my father David provided. 2:8 Send me cedars, evergreens, and alnum¹⁸ trees from Lebanon, for I know your servants are adept¹⁹ at cutting down trees in Lebanon. My servants will work with your servants 2:9 to supply me with large quantities of timber, for I am building a great, magnificent temple. 2:10 Look, I will pay your servants who cut the timber 20,000 cors²⁰ of ground wheat, 20,000 cors of barley, 120,000 gallons²¹ of wine, and 120,000 gallons of olive oil.”

2:11 King Hiram²² of Tyre sent this letter to Solomon: “Because the LORD loves his people, he has made you their king.” 2:12 Hiram also said, “Worthy of praise is the LORD God of Israel, who made the sky and the earth! He has given David a wise son who has discernment and insight and will build a temple for the LORD, as well as a royal palace for himself.²³ 2:13 Now I am sending you Hiram Abi²⁴ a skilled and capable man, 2:14 whose mother is a Danite and whose father is a Tyrian.²⁵ He knows how to work with gold, silver, bronze, iron, stones, and wood, as well as purple, violet, white, and crimson fabrics. He knows how to do all kinds of engraving and understands any design given to him. He will work with your skilled craftsmen and the skilled craftsmen of my lord David your father. 2:15 Now let my lord send to his servants the wheat, barley, olive oil, and wine he has promised; 2:16 we will get all the timber you need from Lebanon²⁶ and bring it²⁷ in raft-like bundles²⁸ by sea to Joppa. You can then haul it on up to Jerusalem.”

2:17 Solomon took a census²⁹ of all the male resident foreigners in the land of Israel, after the

Aram by their hand they brought out.”

¹ **sn** Beginning with 2:1, the verse numbers through 2:18 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 2:1 ET = 1:18 HT, 2:2 ET = 2:1 HT, 2:3 ET = 2:2 HT, etc., through 2:18 ET = 2:17 HT. Beginning with 3:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

² **tn** *Heb* “and Solomon said to build a house for the name of the LORD and house for his kingship.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “counted,” perhaps “conscripted” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “carriers of loads.”

⁵ **tn** Or “quarry workers”; *Heb* “cutters” (probably referring to stonecutters).

⁶ **tc** The parallel text of MT in 1 Kgs 5:16 has “thirty-three hundred,” but some Greek MSS there read “thirty-six hundred” in agreement with 2 Chr 2:2, 18.

tn *Heb* “and 3,600 supervisors over them.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “Hiram.” Some medieval Hebrew MSS, along with the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate spell the name “Hiram,” agreeing with 1 Chr 14:1. “Hiram” is a variant spelling referring to the same individual.

⁸ **map** For location see Map1-A2; Map2-G2; Map4-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

⁹ **tn** The words “help me” are supplied in the translation for clarification and stylistic reasons.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “cedars.” The word “logs” has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “to build for him a house to live in it.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “for the name of.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “and the regular display.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “permanently [is] this upon Israel.”

¹⁵ **tn** Or “heavens” (also in v. 12). The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heaven(s)” or “sky” depending on the context.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “Who retains strength to build for him a house, for the heavens and the heavens of heavens do not contain him? And who am I that I should build for him a house, except to sacrifice before him?”

¹⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁸ **tn** This is probably a variant name for alnum trees; see 9:10-11 and the parallel passage in 1 Kgs 10:11-12; cf. NLT. One or the other probably arose through metathesis of letters.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “know.”

²⁰ **sn** As a unit of dry measure a cor was roughly equivalent to six bushels (about 220 liters).

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “20,000 baths” (also in v. 12). (also a second time later in this verse). A bath was a liquid measure roughly equivalent to six gallons (about 22 liters), so this was a quantity of about 120,000 gallons (440,000 liters).

²² **tn** *Heb* “Hiram” (also in v. 12). Some medieval Hebrew MSS, along with the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate spell the name “Hiram,” agreeing with 1 Chr 14:1. “Hiram” is a variant spelling referring to the same individual.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “who has given to David a wise son [who] knows discernment and insight, who will build a house for the LORD and house for his kingship.”

²⁴ **sn** The name *Hiram Abi* means “Hiram [is] my father.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “a son of a woman from the daughters of Dan, and his father a man of Tyre.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and we will cut down trees from Lebanon according to all your need.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “to you,” but this phrase has not been translated for stylistic reasons – it is somewhat redundant.

²⁸ **tn** Or “on rafts.” See the note at 1 Kgs 5:9.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “counted.”

census his father David had taken. There were 153,600 in all. **2:18** He designated¹ 70,000 as common laborers,² 80,000 as stonecutters³ in the hills, and 3,600 as supervisors to make sure the people completed the work.⁴

The Building of the Temple

3:1 Solomon began building the LORD's temple in Jerusalem⁵ on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David. This was the place that David prepared at the threshing floor of Ornan⁶ the Jebusite. **3:2** He began building on the second day of the second month of the fourth year of his reign.⁷

3:3 Solomon laid the foundation for God's temple;⁸ its length (determined according to the old standard of measure) was 90 feet, and its width 30 feet.⁹ **3:4** The porch in front of the main hall was 30 feet long, corresponding to the width of the temple,¹⁰ and its height was 30 feet.¹¹ He plated the inside with pure gold. **3:5** He paneled¹² the main hall¹³ with boards made from evergreen trees¹⁴ and plated it with fine gold, decorated with palm trees and chains.¹⁵ **3:6** He decorated the temple with precious stones; the gold he used came from Parvaim.¹⁶ **3:7** He over-

laid the temple's rafters, thresholds, walls and doors with gold; he carved decorative cherubim on the walls.

3:8 He made the most holy place;¹⁷ its length was 30 feet,¹⁸ corresponding to the width of the temple, and its width 30 feet.¹⁹ He plated it with 600 talents²⁰ of fine gold. **3:9** The gold nails weighed 50 shekels; he also plated the upper areas with gold. **3:10** In the most holy place he made two images of cherubim and plated them with gold. **3:11** The combined wing span of the cherubs was 30 feet.²¹ One of the first cherub's wings was seven and one-half feet long and touched one wall of the temple; its other wing was also seven and one-half feet long and touched one of the second cherub's wings.²² **3:12** Likewise one of the second cherub's wings was seven and one-half feet long and touched the other wall of the temple; its other wing was also seven and one-half feet long and touched one of the first cherub's wings.²³ **3:13** The combined wingspan of these cherubim was 30 feet.²⁴ They stood upright, facing inward.²⁵ **3:14** He made the curtain out of violet, purple, crimson, and white fabrics, and embroidered on it decorative cherubim.

¹ **tn** Heb "made."

² **tn** Heb "carriers of loads."

³ **tn** Or "quarry workers"; Heb "cutters" (probably referring to stonecutters).

⁴ **tn** Heb "and thirty-six hundred [as] supervisors to compel the people to work."

⁵ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁶ **tn** In 2 Sam 24:16 this individual is called אֲרַבְנָה ("Aravna"; traditionally "Araunah"). The form of the name found here also occurs in 1 Chr 21:15; 18-28.

⁷ **sn** This would be April-May, 966 b.c. by modern reckoning.

⁸ **tn** Heb "and these are the founding of Solomon to build the house of God."

⁹ **tn** Heb "the length [in] cubits by the former measure was sixty cubits, and a width of twenty cubits." Assuming a length of 18 inches (45 cm) for the standard cubit, the length of the foundation would be 90 feet (27 m) and its width 30 feet (9 m).

¹⁰ **tc** Heb "and the porch which was in front of the length corresponding to the width of the house, twenty cubits." The phrase היכל הבית (*heykhal habbayit*, "the main hall of the temple," which appears in the parallel account in 1 Kgs 6:3) has been accidentally omitted by homoioarcton after גַּלְיָהוּ (*gal-yehū*, "in front of"). Note that the following form, הַאֲרֶכֶת (*ha'orekhet*, "the length"), also begins with the Hebrew letter *he* (ה). A scribe's eye probably jumped from the initial *he* on היכל to the initial *he* on הַאֲרֶכֶת, leaving out the intervening letters in the process.

¹¹ **tc** The Hebrew text has "one hundred and twenty cubits," i.e. (assuming a cubit of 18 inches) 180 feet (54 m). An ancient Greek witness and the Syriac version read "twenty cubits," i.e., 30 feet (9 m). It is likely that מֵאָה (*me'ah*, "a hundred"), is a corruption of an original אַמּוֹת (*ammot*, "cubits").

¹² **tn** Heb "covered."

¹³ **tn** Heb "the large house."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "wood of evergreens."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and he put up on it palm trees and chains."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "and he plated the house [with] precious stone for beauty, and the gold was the gold of Parvaim."

sn The location of *Parvaim*, the source of the gold for Solomon's temple, is uncertain. Some have identified it with modern Farwa in Yemen; others relate it to the Sanskrit *parvam* and understand it to be a general term for the regions

east of Israel.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "the house of the holy place of holy places."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "twenty cubits." Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), this would give a length of 30 feet (9 m).

¹⁹ **tc** Heb "twenty cubits." Some suggest adding, "and its height twenty cubits" (see 1 Kgs 6:20). The phrase could have been omitted by homoiooteleton.

²⁰ **tn** The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (*kikar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the weight of the gold plating was 40,380 lbs. (18,360 kg).

²¹ **tn** Heb "and the wings of the cherubs, their length was twenty cubits." Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the wingspan of the cherubs would have been 30 feet (9 m).

²² **tn** Heb "the wing of the one was five cubits from the touching of the wall of the house, and the other wing was five cubits from the touching of the wing of the other cherub." Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), each wing would have been 7.5 feet (2.25 m) long.

²³ **tn** Heb "and the wing of the one (הַאֲרֶכֶת, *ha'ekhad*, "the one"; this should probably be emended to הַאֲחֵרָה, *ha'akher*, "the other") cherub was five cubits, touching the wall of the house, and the other wing was five cubits, clinging to the wing of the other cherub."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "the wings of these cherubs were spreading twenty cubits."

²⁵ **tn** Heb "and they were standing on their feet, with their faces to the house." An alternative translation of the last clause would be, "with their faces to the main hall."

3:15 In front of the temple he made two pillars which had a combined length¹ of 52½ feet,² with each having a plated capital seven and one-half feet high.³ 3:16 He made ornamental chains⁴ and put them on top of the pillars. He also made one hundred pomegranate-shaped ornaments and arranged them within the chains. 3:17 He set up the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right side and the other on the left.⁵ He named the one on the right Yakin,⁶ and the one on the left Boaz.⁷

4:1 He made a bronze altar, 30 feet⁸ long, 30 feet⁹ wide, and 15 feet¹⁰ high. 4:2 He also made the big bronze basin called “The Sea.”¹¹ It measured 15 feet¹² from rim to rim, was circular in shape, and stood seven and one-half feet¹³ high. Its circumference was 45 feet.¹⁴ 4:3 Images of bulls were under it all the way around, ten every eighteen inches¹⁵ all the way around. The bulls were in two rows and had been cast with “The Sea.” 4:4 “The Sea” stood on top of twelve bulls. Three faced northward, three westward, three southward, and three eastward. “The Sea” was placed on top of them, and they all faced out-

¹ **sn** The figure given here appears to refer to the combined length of both pillars (perhaps when laid end-to-end on the ground prior to being set up; cf. v. 17); the figure given for the height of the pillars in 1 Kgs 7:15, 2 Kgs 25:17, and Jer 52:21 is half this (i.e., eighteen cubits).

² **tc** The Syriac reads “eighteen cubits” (twenty-seven feet). This apparently reflects an attempt at harmonization with 1 Kgs 7:15, 2 Kgs 25:17, and Jer 52:21.

³ **tn** *Heb* “and he made before the house two pillars, thirty-five cubits [in] length, and the plated capital which was on its top [was] five cubits.” The significance of the measure “thirty-five cubits” (52.5 feet or 15.75 m, assuming a cubit of 18 inches) for the “length” of the pillars is uncertain. According to 1 Kgs 7:15, each pillar was eighteen cubits (27 feet or 8.1 m) high. Perhaps the measurement given here was taken with the pillars lying end-to-end on the ground before they were set up.

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text adds here, “in the inner sanctuary,” but the description at this point is of the pillars, not the inner sanctuary.

⁵ **tn** Or “one on the south and the other on the north.”

⁶ **tn** The name “Yakin” appears to be a verbal form and probably means, “he establishes.”

⁷ **tn** The meaning of the name “Boaz” is uncertain. For various proposals, see BDB 126-27 s.v. בּוֹז. One attractive option is to revocalize the name as בּוֹז (b^ooz, “in strength”) and to understand it as completing the verbal form on the first pillar. Taking the words together and reading from right to left, one can translate the sentence, “he establishes [it] in strength.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “twenty cubits.” Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the length would have been 30 feet (9 m).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “twenty cubits.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “ten cubits.” Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the height would have been 15 feet (4.5 m).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “He made the sea, cast.”

sn The large bronze basin known as “The Sea” was mounted on twelve bronze bulls and contained water for the priests to bathe themselves (see v. 6; cf. Exod 30:17-21).

¹² **tn** *Heb* “ten cubits.” Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the diameter would have been 15 feet (4.5 m).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “five cubits.” Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the height would have been 7.5 feet (2.25 m).

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and a measuring line went around it thirty cubits all around.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “ten every cubit.”

ward.¹⁶ 4:5 It was four fingers thick and its rim was like that of a cup shaped like a lily blossom. It could hold 18,000 gallons.¹⁷ 4:6 He made ten washing basins; he put five on the south side and five on the north side. In them they rinsed the items used for burnt sacrifices; the priests washed in “The Sea.”

4:7 He made ten gold lampstands according to specifications and put them in the temple, five on the right and five on the left. 4:8 He made ten tables and set them in the temple, five on the right and five on the left. He also made one hundred gold bowls. 4:9 He made the courtyard of the priests and the large enclosure and its doors;¹⁸ he plated their doors with bronze. 4:10 He put “The Sea” on the south side, in the southeast corner.

4:11 Hiram Abi¹⁹ made the pots, shovels, and bowls. He finished all the work on God’s temple he had been assigned by King Solomon.²⁰ 4:12 He made²¹ the two pillars, the two bowl-shaped tops of the pillars, the latticework for the bowl-shaped tops of the two pillars, 4:13 the four hundred pomegranate-shaped ornaments for the latticework of the two pillars (each latticework had two rows of these ornaments at the bowl-shaped top of the pillar), 4:14 the ten²² movable stands with their ten²³ basins, 4:15 the big bronze basin called “The Sea” with its twelve bulls underneath, 4:16 and the pots, shovels, and meat forks.²⁴ All the items King Solomon assigned Hiram Abi to make for the LORD’s temple²⁵ were made from polished bronze. 4:17 The king had them cast in earth foundries²⁶ in the region of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan. 4:18 Solomon made so many of these items they did not weigh the bronze.²⁷

4:19 Solomon also made these items for God’s temple: the gold altar, the tables on which

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “all their hindquarters were toward the inside.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “3,000 baths” (note that the capacity is given in 1 Kings 7:26 as “2,000 baths”). A bath was a liquid measure roughly equivalent to six gallons (about 22 liters), so 3,000 baths was a quantity of about 18,000 gallons (66,000 liters).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “and the doors for the enclosure.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “Hiram,” but here this refers to Hiram Abi (2 Chr 2:13). The complete name has been used in the translation to avoid possible confusion with King Hiram of Tyre.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “Hiram finished doing all the work which he did for King Solomon [on] the house of God.”

²¹ **tn** The words “he made” are added for stylistic reasons.

²² **tc** The Hebrew text has עָשָׂה (*‘asah*, “he made”), which is probably a corruption of עָשָׂה (*‘eser*, “ten”; see 1 Kgs 7:43).

²³ **tc** The Hebrew text has עָשָׂה (*‘asah*, “he made”), which is probably a corruption of עָשָׂה (*‘asarah*, “ten”; see 1 Kgs 7:43).

²⁴ **tc** Some prefer to read here “bowls,” see v. 11 and 1 Kgs 7:45.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “Hiram Abi made for King Solomon [for] the house of the LORD.”

²⁶ **tn** Or perhaps, “molds.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “Solomon made all these items in great abundance; the weight of the bronze was not sought.”

the Bread of the Presence¹ was kept, 4:20 the pure gold lampstands and their lamps which burned as specified at the entrance to the inner sanctuary, 4:21 the pure gold flower-shaped ornaments, lamps, and tongs, 4:22 the pure gold trimming shears, basins, pans, and censers, and the gold door sockets for the inner sanctuary (the most holy place) and for the doors of the main hall of the temple. 5:1 When Solomon had finished constructing the LORD's temple, he put the holy items that belonged to his father David (the silver, gold, and all the other articles) in the treasuries of God's temple.

Solomon Moves the Ark into the Temple

5:2 Then Solomon convened Israel's elders – all the leaders of the Israelite tribes and families – in Jerusalem,² so they could witness the transfer of the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the City of David³ (that is, Zion).⁴ 5:3 All the men of Israel assembled before the king during the festival⁵ in the seventh month.⁶ 5:4 When all Israel's elders had arrived, the Levites lifted the ark. 5:5 The priests and Levites carried the ark, the tent where God appeared to his people,⁷ and all the holy items in the tent.⁸ 5:6 Now King Solomon and all the Israelites who had assembled with him went on ahead of the ark and sacrificed more sheep and cattle than could be counted or numbered.⁹

5:7 The priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its assigned¹⁰ place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, in the most holy place under the wings of the cherubs. 5:8 The cherubs' wings extended over the place where the ark sat; the cherubs overshadowed the ark and its poles.¹¹ 5:9 The poles were so long

their ends extending out from the ark were visible from in front of the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen from beyond that point.¹² They have remained there to this very day. 5:10 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets Moses had placed there in Horeb.¹³ (It was there that¹⁴ the LORD made an agreement with the Israelites after he brought them out of the land of Egypt.)

5:11 The priests left the holy place.¹⁵ All the priests who participated had consecrated themselves, no matter which division they represented.¹⁶ 5:12 All the Levites who were musicians, including Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and their sons and relatives, wore linen. They played cymbals and stringed instruments as they stood east of the altar. They were accompanied by 120 priests who blew trumpets. 5:13 The trumpeters and musicians played together, praising and giving thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments, they loudly praised the LORD, singing:¹⁷ "Certainly he is good; certainly his loyal love endures!" Then a cloud filled the LORD's temple.¹⁸ 5:14 The priests could not carry out their duties¹⁹ because of the cloud; the LORD's splendor filled God's temple.

6:1 Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he lives in thick darkness. 6:2 O LORD,²⁰ I have built a lofty temple for you, a place where you can live permanently." 6:3 Then the king turned around²¹ and pronounced a blessing over the whole Israelite assembly as they stood there.²² 6:4 He said, "The LORD God of Israel is worthy of praise because he has fulfilled²³ what he promised²⁴ my father David. 6:5 He told

¹ **tn** *Heb* "the bread of the face/presence."

sn This *bread offered to God* was viewed as a perpetual offering to God. See Lev 24:5-9.

² **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

³ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "Then Solomon convened the elders of Israel, the heads of the tribes, the chiefs of the fathers belonging to the sons of Israel to Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the City of David (it is Zion)."

⁵ **sn** This *festival in the seventh month* was the Feast of Tabernacles, see Lev 23:34.

⁶ **sn** The *seventh month* would be September-October in modern reckoning.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "the tent of assembly."

sn See Exod 33:7-11.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and they carried the ark of the LORD.... The priests and the Levites carried them."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "And King Solomon and all the assembly of Israel, those who had been gathered to him, [were] before the ark, sacrificing sheep and cattle which could not be counted or numbered because of the abundance."

¹⁰ **tn** The word "assigned" is supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹¹ **sn** These *poles* were used to carry the ark. The Levites were to carry it with the poles on their shoulders. See Exod 25:13-15; 1 Chr 15:15.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "they could not be seen outside."

¹³ **sn** *Horeb* is another name for Mount Sinai (cf. Exod 3:1).

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "in Horeb where."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and when the priests went from the holy place." The syntactical relationship of this temporal clause to the following context is unclear. Perhaps the thought is completed in v. 14 after a lengthy digression.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "Indeed [or "for"] all the priests who were found consecrated themselves without guarding divisions."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "like one were the trumpeters and the musicians, causing one voice to be heard, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, and while raising a voice with trumpets and with cymbals and with instruments of music, and while praising the LORD."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and the house was filled with a cloud, the house of the LORD."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "were not able to stand to serve."

²⁰ **tn** The words "O LORD" do not appear in the Hebrew text, but they are supplied in the translation for clarification; Solomon addresses the Lord in prayer at this point.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "turned his face."

²² **tn** *Heb* "and he blessed all the assembly of Israel, and all the assembly of Israel was standing."

²³ **tn** The Hebrew text reads, "fulfilled by his hand," but the phrase "by his hand" is somewhat redundant in contemporary English and has not been translated.

²⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text reads, "promised by his mouth," but the phrase "by his mouth" is somewhat redundant in contemporary English and has not been translated.

David,¹ ‘Since the day I brought my people out of the land of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from all the tribes of Israel to build a temple in which to live.² Nor did I choose a man as leader of my people Israel. 6:6 But now I have chosen Jerusalem as a place to live,³ and I have chosen David to lead my people Israel.’ 6:7 Now my father David had a strong desire to build a temple to honor the LORD God of Israel.⁴ 6:8 The LORD told my father David, ‘It is right for you to have a strong desire to build a temple to honor me.’⁵ 6:9 But you will not build the temple; your very own son will build the temple for my honor.⁶ 6:10 The LORD has kept the promise he made. I have taken my father David’s place and have occupied the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised. I have built this temple for the honor of the LORD God of Israel 6:11 and set up in it a place for the ark containing the covenant the LORD made with the Israelites.’”

6:12 He stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the entire assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. 6:13 Solomon had made a bronze platform and had placed it in the middle of the enclosure. It was seven and one-half feet⁷ long, seven and one-half feet⁸ wide, and four and one-half feet⁹ high. He stood on it and then got down on his knees in front of the entire assembly of Israel. He spread out his hands toward the sky, 6:14 and prayed.¹⁰ “O LORD God of Israel, there is no god like you in heaven or on earth! You maintain covenantal loyalty¹¹ to your servants who obey you with sincerity.¹² 6:15 You have kept your word to your servant, my father David;¹³ this very day you have fulfilled what you promised.¹⁴ 6:16 Now, O LORD God of Israel, keep the promise you made to your servant,

my father David, when you said, ‘You will never fail to have a successor ruling before me on the throne of Israel,¹⁵ provided that your descendants watch their step and obey my law as you have done.’¹⁶ 6:17 Now, O LORD God of Israel, may the promise you made to your servant David be realized.¹⁷

6:18 “God does not really live with humankind on the earth!¹⁸ Look, if the sky and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this temple I have built! 6:19 But respond favorably to¹⁹ your servant’s prayer and his request for help, O LORD my God. Answer²⁰ the desperate prayer²¹ your servant is presenting to you.²² 6:20 Night and day may you watch over this temple, the place where you promised you would live.²³ May you answer your servant’s prayer for this place.²⁴ 6:21 Respond to the requests of your servant and your people Israel for this place.²⁵ Hear from your heavenly dwelling place and respond favorably and forgive.²⁶

6:22 “When someone is accused of sinning against his neighbor and the latter pronounces a curse on the alleged offender before your altar in this temple,²⁷ 6:23 listen from heaven and make a just decision about your servants’ claims. Condemn the guilty party, declare the other innocent, and give both of them what they deserve.²⁸

6:24 “If your people Israel are defeated by an enemy²⁹ because they sinned against you, then if they come back to you, renew their allegiance to you,³⁰ and pray for your help³¹ before you in this temple, 6:25 then listen from heaven, forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them back to the land you gave to them and their ancestors.³²

¹ *tn* Heb “saying.”

² *tn* Heb “to build a house for my name to be there.” Here “name” is used by metonymy for the LORD himself, and thus the expression “to be there” refers to his taking up residence there (hence the translation, “a temple in which to live”). In this case the temple is referred to as a “house” where the LORD himself can reside.

³ *tn* Heb for my name to be there.” See also the note on the word “live” in v. 5.

⁴ *tn* Heb “and it was with the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.”

sn On the significance of the LORD’s “name,” see the note on the word “live” in v. 5.

⁵ *tn* Heb “Because it was with your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was with your heart.”

⁶ *tn* Heb “your son, the one who came out of your body, he will build the temple for my name.”

⁷ *tn* Heb “five cubits.” Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the length would have been 7.5 feet (2.25 m).

⁸ *tn* Heb “five cubits.”

⁹ *tn* Heb “three cubits.” Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the height would have been 4.5 feet (1.35 m).

¹⁰ *tn* Heb “said.”

¹¹ *tn* Heb “one who keeps the covenant and the loyal love.”

¹² *tn* Heb “who walk before you with all their heart.”

¹³ *tn* Heb “[you] who kept to your servant David my father that which you spoke to him.”

¹⁴ *tn* Heb “you spoke by your mouth and by your hand you fulfilled, as this day.”

¹⁵ *tn* Heb “there will not be cut off from you a man from before me sitting on the throne of Israel.”

¹⁶ *tn* Heb “guard their way by walking in my law as you have walked before me.”

¹⁷ *tn* Or “prove to be reliable.”

¹⁸ *tn* Heb “Indeed, can God really live with mankind on the earth?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Of course not,” the force of which is reflected in the translation “God does not really live with mankind on the earth.”

¹⁹ *tn* Heb “turn to.”

²⁰ *tn* Heb “by listening to.”

²¹ *tn* Heb “the loud cry and the prayer.”

²² *tn* Heb “praying before you.”

²³ *tn* Heb “so your eyes might be open toward this house night and day, toward the place about which you said, ‘My name will be there.’”

²⁴ *tn* Heb “by listening to the prayer which your servant is praying concerning this place.”

²⁵ *tn* Heb “listen to the requests of your servant and your people Israel which they are praying concerning this place.”

²⁶ *tn* Heb “hear and forgive.”

²⁷ *tn* Heb “and if the man who sins against his neighbor when one takes up against him a curse to curse him and the curse comes before your altar in this house.”

²⁸ *tn* Heb “and you, hear [from] heaven and act and judge your servants by repaying the guilty, to give his way on his head, and to declare the innocent to be innocent, to give to him according to his innocence.”

²⁹ *tn* Or “are struck down before an enemy.”

³⁰ *tn* Heb “confess [or perhaps, “praise”] your name.”

³¹ *tn* Heb “and they pray and ask for help.”

³² *tn* Heb “fathers” (also in vv. 31, 38).

6:26 “The time will come when¹ the skies² are shut up tightly and no rain falls because your people³ sinned against you. When they direct their prayers toward this place, renew their allegiance to you,⁴ and turn away from their sin because you punish⁵ them, **6:27** then listen from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Certainly⁶ you will then teach them the right way to live⁷ and send rain on your land that you have given your people to possess.⁸

6:28 “The time will come when the land suffers from a famine, a plague, blight, and disease, or a locust⁹ invasion, or when their enemy lays siege to the cities of the land,¹⁰ or when some other type of plague or epidemic occurs. **6:29** When all your people Israel pray and ask for help,¹¹ as they acknowledge their intense pain¹² and spread out their hands toward this temple, **6:30** then listen from your heavenly dwelling place, forgive their sin,¹³ and act favorably toward each one based on your evaluation of their motives.¹⁴ (Indeed you are the only one who can correctly evaluate the motives of all people.)¹⁵ **6:31** Then they will honor¹⁶ you by obeying

you¹⁷ throughout their lifetimes as¹⁸ they live on the land you gave to our ancestors.

6:32 “Foreigners, who do not belong to your people Israel, will come from a distant land because of your great reputation¹⁹ and your ability to accomplish mighty deeds;²⁰ they will come and direct their prayers toward this temple. **6:33** Then listen from your heavenly dwelling place and answer all the prayers of the foreigners.²¹ Then all the nations of the earth will acknowledge your reputation,²² obey²³ you like your people Israel do, and recognize that this temple I built belongs to you.²⁴

6:34 “When you direct your people to march out and fight their enemies,²⁵ and they direct their prayers to you toward this chosen city and this temple I built for your honor,²⁶ **6:35** then listen from heaven to their prayers for help²⁷ and vindicate them.²⁸

6:36 “The time will come when your people²⁹ will sin against you (for there is no one who is sinless!) and you will be angry at them and deliver them over to their enemies, who will take them as prisoners to their land, whether far away or close by. **6:37** When your people³⁰ come to their senses³¹ in the land where they are held prisoner, they will repent and beg for your mercy in the land of their imprisonment, admitting, ‘We have sinned and gone astray³², we have done evil!’ **6:38** When they return to you with all their heart and being³³ in the land where they are held prisoner and direct their prayers toward the land you gave to their ancestors, your chosen city, and the temple I built for your honor,³⁴ **6:39** then listen from your heavenly

¹ **tn** *Heb* “when.” In the Hebrew text vv. 26-27a actually contain one lengthy conditional sentence, which the translation has divided into two sentences for stylistic reasons.

² **tn** Or “heavens” (also in v. 12). The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heaven(s)” or “sky” depending on the context.

³ **tn** *Heb* “they.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “confess [or perhaps, “praise”] your name.”

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew text reads “because you answer them,” as if the verb is from אָנַח (*anah*, “answer”). However, this reference to a divine answer is premature, since the next verse asks for God to intervene in mercy. It is better to revocalize the consonantal text as תַּעֲנֵנִי (*ʾeʿannem*, “you afflict them”), a Piel verb form from the homonym אָנַח (“afflict”).

⁶ **tn** The present translation understands כִּי (*ki*) in an emphatic or asseverative sense (“Certainly”). Other translations have “indeed” (NASB), “when” (NRSV), “so” (NEB), or leave the word untranslated (NIV).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “the good way in which they should walk.”

⁸ **tn** Or “for an inheritance.”

⁹ **tn** Actually two Hebrew words appear here, both of which are usually (but not always) taken as referring to locusts. Perhaps different stages of growth or different varieties are in view, but this is uncertain. NEB has “locusts new-sloughed or fully grown”; NASB has “locust or grasshopper”; NIV has “locusts or grasshoppers”; NRSV has “locust, or caterpillar.”

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “in the land, his gates.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “every prayer, every request for help which will be to all the people, to all your people Israel.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “which they know, each his pain and his affliction.”

¹³ **tn** The words “their sin” are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied for clarification.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and act and give to each one according to all his ways because you know his heart.” In the Hebrew text vv. 28-30a actually contain one lengthy conditional sentence, which the translation has divided up for stylistic reasons.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “Indeed you know, you alone, the heart of all the sons of mankind.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “fear.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “by walking in your ways.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “all the days [in] which.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “your great name.” The word “name” sometimes refers to one’s reputation or honor (thus the translation here, “your great reputation”).

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “and your strong hand and your outstretched arm.”

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “and do all which the foreigner calls to [i.e., “requests of”] you.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “name.” See the note on “reputation” in v. 32.

²³ **tn** *Heb* “fear.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “that your name is called over this house which I built.” The Hebrew idiom “call the name over” indicates ownership. See 2 Sam 12:28.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “When your people go out for battle against their enemies in the way which you send them.”

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “toward this city which you have chosen and the house which I built for your name.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “their prayer and their request for help.”

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “and accomplish their justice.”

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “they”; the referent (God’s people) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “they”; the referent (God’s people) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³¹ **tn** Or “stop and reflect”; *Heb* “bring back to their heart.”

³² **tn** Or “done wrong.”

³³ **tn** Or “soul.”

³⁴ **tn** *Heb* “your name.” The word “name” sometimes refers to one’s reputation or honor (thus the translation here, “your honor”).

dwelling place to their prayers for help,¹ vindicate them,² and forgive your sinful people.

6:40 “Now, my God, may you be attentive and responsive to the prayers offered in this place.” **6:41** Now ascend, O LORD God, to your resting place, you and the ark of your strength! May your priests, O LORD God, experience your deliverance!⁴ May your loyal followers rejoice in the prosperity you give!⁵ **6:42** O LORD God, do not reject your chosen ones!⁶ Remember the faithful promises you made to your servant David!”

Solomon Dedicates the Temple

7:1 When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven⁷ and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the LORD’s splendor filled the temple. **7:2** The priests were unable to enter the LORD’s temple because the LORD’s splendor filled the LORD’s temple. **7:3** When all the Israelites saw the fire come down and the LORD’s splendor over the temple, they got on their knees with their faces downward toward the pavement. They worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying,⁸ “Certainly he is good; certainly his loyal love endures!”

7:4 The king and all the people were presenting sacrifices to the LORD. **7:5** King Solomon sacrificed 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep. Then the king and all the people dedicated God’s temple. **7:6** The priests stood in their assigned spots, along with the Levites who had the musical instruments used for praising the LORD.⁹ (These were the ones King David made for giving thanks to the LORD and which were used by David when he offered praise, saying, “Certainly his loyal love endures.”)¹⁰ Opposite the Levites,¹¹ the priests were blowing the trumpets, while all Israel stood there. **7:7** Solomon consecrated the middle of the courtyard that is in front of the LORD’s temple. He offered burnt sacri-

fices, grain offerings,¹² and the fat from the peace offerings there, because the bronze altar that Solomon had made was too small to hold all these offerings.¹³ **7:8** At that time Solomon and all Israel with him celebrated a festival for seven days. This great assembly included people from Lebo Hamath in the north to the Stream of Egypt in the south.¹⁴ **7:9** On the eighth day they held an assembly, for they had dedicated the altar for seven days and celebrated the festival for seven more days. **7:10** On the twenty-third day of the seventh month, Solomon¹⁵ sent the people home. They left¹⁶ happy and contented¹⁷ because of the good the LORD had done for David, Solomon, and his people Israel.

The Lord Gives Solomon a Promise and a Warning

7:11 After Solomon finished building the LORD’s temple and the royal palace, and accomplished all his plans for the LORD’s temple and his royal palace,¹⁸ **7:12** the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him: “I have answered¹⁹ your prayer and chosen this place to be my temple where sacrifices are to be made.²⁰ **7:13** When²¹ I close up the sky²² so that it doesn’t rain, or command locusts to devour the land’s vegetation,²³ or send a plague among my people, **7:14** if my people, who belong to me,²⁴ humble themselves, pray, seek to please me,²⁵

¹² **tc** The Hebrew text omits reference to the grain offerings at this point, but note that they are included both in the list in the second half of the verse (see note on “offerings” at the end of this verse) and in the parallel account in 1 Kgs 8:64. The construction וְאֵת־הַמִּנְחָה (v^{et}-et-hamminkhah; vav [ו] + accusative sign + noun with article; “grain offerings”) was probably omitted accidentally by homoioarcton. Note the וְאֵת (v^{et}-et) that immediately follows.

¹³ **tn** Heb “to hold the burnt sacrifices, grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.” Because this is redundant, the translation employs a summary phrase: “all these offerings.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “Solomon held the festival at that time for seven days, and all Israel was with him, a very great assembly from Lebo Hamath to the wadi of Egypt.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Solomon) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁶ **tn** The words “they left” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “good of heart.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “and all that entered the heart of Solomon to do in the house of the LORD and in his house he successfully accomplished.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “I have heard.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “temple of sacrifice.” This means the LORD designated the temple as the place for making sacrifices, and this has been clarified in the translation.

²¹ **tn** Or “if.”

²² **tn** Or “heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (shamayim) may be translated “heaven(s)” or “sky” depending on the context.

²³ **tn** Heb “the land,” which stands here by metonymy for the vegetation growing in it.

²⁴ **tn** Heb “over whom my name is called.” The Hebrew idiom “call the name over” indicates ownership. See 2 Sam 12:28.

²⁵ **tn** Heb “seek my face,” where “my face” is figurative for God’s presence and acceptance.

¹ **tn** Heb “their prayer and their requests for help.”

² **tn** Heb “and accomplish their justice.”

³ **tn** Heb “May your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayer of this place.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “be clothed with deliverance.”

⁵ **tn** Heb “and may your loyal ones rejoice in good.”

⁶ **tc** Heb “do not turn away the face of your anointed ones.” Many medieval Hebrew MSS, as well as the ancient versions, read the singular, “your anointed,” which would probably refer to Solomon specifically, rather than the people.

⁷ **tn** Or “the sky.” The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (shamayim) may be translated “heaven(s)” or “sky” depending on the context.

⁸ **tn** The word “saying” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁹ **tn** Heb “and the priests were standing at their posts, and the Levites with the instruments of music of the LORD.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “which David the king made to give thanks to the LORD, for lasting is his loyal love, when David praised by them.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “opposite them”; the referent (the Levites) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

and repudiate their sinful practices,¹ then I will respond² from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.³ **7:15** Now I will be attentive and responsive to the prayers offered in this place.⁴ **7:16** Now I have chosen and consecrated this temple by making it my permanent home;⁵ I will be constantly present there.⁶ **7:17** You must serve me as your father David did. Do everything I commanded and obey my rules and regulations.⁷ **7:18** Then I will establish your dynasty,⁸ just as I promised your father David, ‘You will not fail to have a successor ruling over Israel.’⁹

7:19 ‘But if you people¹⁰ ever turn away from me, fail to obey the regulations and rules I instructed you to keep,¹¹ and decide to serve and worship other gods,¹² **7:20** then I will remove you¹³ from my land I have given you,¹⁴ I will abandon this temple I have consecrated with my presence,¹⁵ and I will make you¹⁶ an object of mockery and ridicule¹⁷ among all the nations. **7:21** As for this temple, which was once majes-

tic,¹⁸ everyone who passes by it will be shocked and say, ‘Why did the LORD do this to this land and this temple?’ **7:22** Others will then answer,¹⁹ ‘Because they abandoned the LORD God of their ancestors,²⁰ who led them out of Egypt. They embraced other gods whom they worshiped and served.²¹ That is why he brought all this disaster down on them.’”

Building Projects and Commercial Efforts

8:1 After twenty years, during which Solomon built the LORD’s temple and his royal palace, **8:2** Solomon rebuilt the cities that Hiram²² had given him and settled Israelites there. **8:3** Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and seized it. **8:4** He built up Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage cities he had built in Hamath. **8:5** He made upper Beth Horon and lower Beth Horon fortified cities with walls and barred gates,²³ **8:6** and built up Baalath, all the storage cities that belonged to him,²⁴ and all the cities where chariots and horses were kept.²⁵ He built whatever he wanted in Jerusalem,²⁶ Lebanon, and throughout his entire kingdom.²⁷

8:7 Now several non-Israelite peoples were left in the land after the conquest of Joshua, including the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.²⁸ **8:8** Their descendants remained in the land (the Israelites were unable to wipe them out). Solomon conscripted them for his work crews and they continue in that role to this very day.²⁹ **8:9** Solomon did not assign Israelites to these work crews;³⁰ the Israelites

¹ *tn* Heb “and turn from their sinful ways.”

² *tn* Heb “hear.”

³ *sn* Here the phrase *heal their land* means restore the damage done by the drought, locusts and plague mentioned in v. 13.

⁴ *tn* Heb “my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer of this place.” Note Solomon’s request in 6:40.

⁵ *tn* Heb “for my name to be there perpetually [or perhaps, “forever].”

⁶ *tn* Heb “and my eyes and my heart will be there all the days.”

⁷ *tn* Heb “As for you, if you walk before me, as David your father walked, by doing all which I commanded you, [and] you keep my rules and my regulations.”

sn Verse 17 is actually a lengthy protasis (“if” section) of a conditional sentence, the apodosis (“then” section) of which appears in v. 18.

⁸ *tn* Heb “I will establish the throne of your kingdom.”

⁹ *tn* Heb “there will not be cut off from you a man ruling over Israel.”

¹⁰ *tn* The Hebrew pronoun is plural, suggesting that Solomon and all Israel (or perhaps Solomon and his successors) are in view. To convey this to the English reader, the translation “you people” has been employed.

¹¹ *tn* Heb “which I placed before you.”

¹² *tn* Heb “and walk and serve other gods and bow down to them.”

¹³ *tn* Heb “them.” The switch from the second to the third person pronoun is rhetorically effective, for it mirrors God’s rejection of his people – he has stopped addressing them as “you” and begun addressing them as “them.” However, the switch is awkward and confusing in English, so the translation maintains the direct address style.

¹⁴ *tn* Heb “them.” See the note on “you” earlier in this verse.

¹⁵ *tc* Instead of “I will throw away,” the parallel text in 1 Kgs 9:7 has “I will send away.” The two verbs sound very similar in Hebrew, so the discrepancy is likely due to an oral transmission error.

tn Heb “and this temple which I consecrated for my name I will throw away from before my face.”

¹⁶ *tn* Heb “him,” which appears in context to refer to Israel (i.e., “you” in direct address). Many translations understand the direct object of the verb “make” to be the temple (NEB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “it”).

¹⁷ *tn* Heb “and I will make him [i.e., Israel] a proverb and a taunt,” that is, a proverbial example of destruction and an object of reproach.

¹⁸ *tn* Heb “and this house which was high/elevated.” The statement makes little sense in this context, which predicts the desolation that judgment will bring. Some treat the clause as concessive, “Even though this temple is lofty [now].” Others, following the lead of several ancient versions, emend the text to, “this temple will become a heap of ruins.”

¹⁹ *tn* Heb “and they will say.”

²⁰ *tn* Heb “fathers.”

²¹ *tn* Heb “and they took hold of other gods and bowed down to them and served them.”

²² *tn* Heb “Hiram” (also in v. 18). Some medieval Hebrew MSS, along with the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate spell the name “Hiram,” agreeing with 1 Chr 14:1. “Hiram” is a variant spelling referring to the same individual.

²³ *tn* Heb “and he built...[as] cities of fortification, [with] walls, doors, and a bar.”

²⁴ *tn* Heb “Solomon.” The recurrence of the proper name is unexpected in terms of contemporary English style, so the pronoun has been used in the translation instead.

²⁵ *tn* Heb “the cities of the chariots and the cities of the horses.”

²⁶ *map* For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁷ *tn* Heb “and all the desire of Solomon which he desired to build in Jerusalem and in Lebanon and in all the land of his kingdom.”

²⁸ *tn* Heb “all the people who were left from the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not from Israel.”

²⁹ *tn* Heb “from their sons who were left after them in the land, whom the sons of Israel did not wipe out, and Solomon raised them up for a work crew to this day.”

³⁰ *tn* Heb “and from the sons of Israel which Solomon did not assign to the laborers for his work.”

served as his soldiers, officers, charioteers, and commanders of his chariot forces.¹ **8:10** These men worked for Solomon as supervisors; there were a total of 250 of them who were in charge of the people.²

8:11 Solomon moved Pharaoh's daughter up from the City of David³ to the palace he had built for her, for he said, "My wife must not live in the palace of King David of Israel, for the places where the ark of the LORD has entered are holy."

8:12 Then Solomon offered burnt sacrifices to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built in front of the temple's porch.⁴ **8:13** He observed the daily requirements for sacrifices that Moses had specified for Sabbaths, new moon festivals, and the three annual celebrations – the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Temporary Shelters.⁵ **8:14** As his father David had decreed, Solomon⁶ appointed the divisions of the priests to do their assigned tasks, the Levitical orders to lead worship and help the priests with their daily tasks,⁷ and the divisions of the gatekeepers to serve at their assigned gates.⁸ This was what David the man of God had ordered.⁹ **8:15** They did not neglect any detail of the king's orders pertaining to the priests, Levites, and treasuries.¹⁰

8:16 All the work ordered by Solomon was completed, from the day the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid until it was finished; the LORD's temple was completed.

8:17 Then Solomon went to Ezion Geber and to Elat on the coast in the land of Edom. **8:18** Hiram sent him ships and some of his sailors, men who were well acquainted with the sea.

They sailed with Solomon's men to Ophir,¹¹ and took from there 450 talents¹² of gold, which they brought back to King Solomon.

Solomon Entertains a Queen

9:1 When the queen of Sheba heard about Solomon,¹³ she came to challenge¹⁴ him¹⁵ with difficult questions.¹⁶ She arrived in Jerusalem¹⁷ with a great display of pomp,¹⁸ bringing with her camels carrying spices,¹⁹ a very large quantity of gold, and precious gems. She visited Solomon and discussed with him everything that was on her mind. **9:2** Solomon answered all her questions; there was no question too complex for the king.²⁰ **9:3** When the queen of Sheba saw for herself Solomon's extensive wisdom,²¹ the palace²² he had built, **9:4** the food in his banquet hall,²³ his servants and attendants²⁴ in their robes, his cupbearers in their robes, and his burnt sacrifices which he presented in the LORD's temple,²⁵ she was amazed.²⁶ **9:5** She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your wise sayings and insight²⁷ was true! **9:6** I did not believe these things until I came and saw them with my own eyes. Indeed, I didn't

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and Hiram sent to him by the hand of his servants, ships, and servants [who] know the sea, and they came with the servants of Solomon to Ophir."

¹² **tn** The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (*kikar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the weight of the gold was 30,285 lbs. (13,770 kg).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "the report about Solomon."

¹⁴ **tn** Or "test."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Solomon." The recurrence of the proper name here is redundant in terms of contemporary English style, so the pronoun has been used in the translation instead.

¹⁶ **tn** Or "riddles."

¹⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "with very great strength." The Hebrew word חַיִל (*khayil*, "strength") may refer here to the size of her retinue or to the great wealth she brought with her.

¹⁹ **tn** Or "balsam oil."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "Solomon declared to her all her words; there was not a word hidden from the king which he did not declare to her." If riddles are specifically in view (see v. 1), then one might translate, "Solomon explained to her all her riddles; there was no riddle too complex for the king."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "all the wisdom of Solomon."

²² **tn** *Heb* "house."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "the food on his table."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the seating of his servants and the standing of his attendants."

²⁵ **tc** The Hebrew text has here, "and his upper room [by] which he was going up to the house of the LORD." But עֲלֵיָהּ רוֹ ('*alhyato*, "his upper room") should be emended to עֲלֵיָהּ רוֹ ('*olato*, "his burnt sacrifice[s]"). See the parallel account in 1 Kgs 10:5.

²⁶ **tn** Or "it took her breath away"; *Heb* "there was no breath still in her."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "about your words [or perhaps, "deeds"] and your wisdom."

¹ **tn** *Heb* "officers of his chariots and his horses."

² **tn** *Heb* "these [were] the officials of the governors who belonged to the king, Solomon, 250, the ones ruling over the people."

³ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the porch."

⁵ **tn** The Hebrew phrase הַמִּשְׁכָּנוֹת (the *khag hassukot*, "[festival of] huts" [or "shelters"]) is traditionally known as the Feast of Tabernacles. The rendering "booths" (cf. NAB, NASB, NRSV) is probably better than the traditional "tabernacles" in light of the meaning of the term סֹכָה (*sukkah*, "hut; booth"), but "booths" are frequently associated with trade shows and craft fairs in contemporary American English. The nature of the celebration during this feast as a commemoration of the wanderings of the Israelites after they left Egypt suggests that a translation like "temporary shelters" is more appropriate.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Solomon) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and the Levites, according to their posts, to praise and to serve opposite the priests according to the matter of a day in its day."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and the gatekeepers by their divisions for a gate and a gate."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "for so [was] the command of David the man of God."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and they did not turn aside from the command of the king concerning the priests and the Levites with regard to any matter and with regard to the treasuries."

hear even half the story!¹ Your wisdom surpasses what was reported to me. 9:7 Your attendants, who stand before you at all times and hear your wise sayings, are truly happy!² 9:8 May the LORD your God be praised because he favored³ you by placing you on his throne as the one ruling on his behalf!⁴ Because of your God's love for Israel and his lasting commitment to them,⁵ he made you king over them so you could make just and right decisions.⁶ 9:9 She gave the king 120 talents⁷ of gold and a very large quantity of spices and precious gems. The quantity of spices the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon has never been matched.⁸ 9:10 (Hiram's⁹ servants, aided by Solomon's servants, brought gold from Ophir, as well as¹⁰ fine¹¹ timber and precious gems. 9:11 With the timber the king made steps¹² for the LORD's temple and royal palace as well as stringed instruments¹³ for the musicians. No one had seen anything like them in the land of Judah prior to that.¹⁴) 9:12 King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba everything she requested, more than what she had brought him.¹⁵ Then she left and returned¹⁶ to her homeland with her attendants.

Solomon's Wealth

9:13 Solomon received 666 talents¹⁷ of gold per year,¹⁸ 9:14 besides what he collected from the merchants¹⁹ and traders. All the Arabian kings and the governors of the land also brought gold and silver to Solomon. 9:15 King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; 600 measures²⁰ of hammered gold were used for each shield. 9:16 He also made three hundred small shields of hammered gold; 300 measures²¹ of gold were used for each of those shields. The king placed them in the Palace of the Lebanon Forest.²²

9:17 The king made a large throne decorated with ivory and overlaid it with pure gold. 9:18 There were six steps leading up to the throne, and a gold footstool was attached to the throne.²³ The throne had two armrests with a statue of a lion standing on each side.²⁴ 9:19 There were twelve statues of lions on the six steps, one lion at each end of each step. There was nothing like it in any other kingdom.²⁵

9:20 All of King Solomon's cups were made of gold, and all the household items in the Palace of the Lebanon Forest were made of pure gold. There were no silver items, for silver was not considered very valuable in Solomon's time.²⁶ 9:21 The king had a fleet of large merchant ships²⁷ manned by Hiram's men²⁸ that sailed the sea. Once every three years the fleet²⁹ came into

¹ **tn** Heb "the half was not told to me."

² **tn** Heb "How happy are your men! How happy are these servants of yours, who stand before you continually, who hear your wisdom!"

³ **tn** Or "delighted in."

⁴ **tn** Heb "as king for the LORD your God."

⁵ **tn** Heb "to make him stand permanently."

⁶ **tn** Heb "to do justice and righteousness."

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (*kikar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the weight of the gold was 8,076 lbs. (3,672 kg).

⁸ **tn** Heb "there has not been like those spices which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon."

⁹ **tn** Heb "Hiram's" (also in v. 21). Some medieval Hebrew MSS, along with the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate spell the name "Hiram," agreeing with 1 Chr 14:1. "Hiram" is a variant spelling referring to the same individual.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "who brought gold from Ophir, brought."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "algum."

¹² **tn** Heb "tracks." The parallel text in 1 Kgs 10:12 has a different term whose meaning is uncertain: "supports," perhaps "banisters" or "parapets."

¹³ **tn** Two types of stringed instruments are specifically mentioned in the Hebrew text, the כִּנּוֹר (*kinnoir*, "zither") and נָבֶל (*nevel*, "harp").

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "there was not seen like these formerly in the land of Judah."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "besides what she brought to the king."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "turned and went."

¹⁷ **tn** The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (*kikar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the weight of the gold Solomon received annually was 44,822 lbs. (20,380 kg).

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "the weight of the gold which came to Solomon in one year was 666 units of gold."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "traveling men."

²⁰ **tn** The Hebrew text has simply "600," with no unit of measure given.

²¹ **tn** The Hebrew text has simply "300," with no unit of measure given.

²² **sn** This name was appropriate because of the large amount of cedar, undoubtedly brought from Lebanon, used in its construction. The cedar pillars in the palace must have given it the appearance of a forest. See 1 Kgs 7:2.

²³ **tc** The parallel text of 1 Kgs 10:19 has instead "and the back of it was rounded on top."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "[There were] armrests on each side of the place of the seat, and two lions standing beside the armrests."

²⁵ **tn** Heb "nothing like it had been made for any kingdom."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "there was no silver, it was not regarded as anything in the days of Solomon."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "for ships belonging to the king were going [to] Tarshish with the servants of Hiram." This probably refers to large ships either made in or capable of traveling to the distant western port of Tarshish.

²⁸ **tn** Heb "servants."

²⁹ **tn** Heb "the fleet of Tarshish [ships]."

port with cargoes of¹ gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.²

9:22 King Solomon was wealthier and wiser than any of the kings of the earth.³ **9:23** All the kings of the earth wanted to visit Solomon to see him display his God-given wisdom.⁴ **9:24** Year after year visitors brought their gifts, which included items of silver, items of gold, clothes, perfume, spices, horses, and mules.⁵

9:25 Solomon had 4,000 stalls for his chariot horses⁶ and 12,000 horses. He kept them in assigned cities and in Jerusalem.⁷ **9:26** He ruled all the kingdoms from the Euphrates River⁸ to the land of the Philistines as far as the border of Egypt. **9:27** The king made silver as plentiful⁹ in Jerusalem as stones; cedar was¹⁰ as plentiful as sycamore fig trees are in the lowlands¹¹. **9:28** Solomon acquired horses from Egypt and from all the lands.

Solomon's Reign Ends

9:29 The rest of the events of Solomon's reign, from start to finish, are recorded¹² in the Annals of Nathan the Prophet, the Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and the Vision of Iddo the Seer pertaining to Jeroboam son of Nebat. **9:30** Solomon ruled over all Israel from Jerusalem¹³ for forty years. **9:31** Then Solomon passed away¹⁴ and was buried in the city of his father David. His son Rehoboam replaced him as king.

The Northern Tribes Rebel

10:1 Rehoboam traveled to Shechem, for all Israel had gathered in¹⁵ Shechem to make Rehoboam¹⁶ king. **10:2** When Jeroboam son of Nebat

heard the news, he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon. Jeroboam returned from Egypt. **10:3** They sent for him¹⁷ and Jeroboam and all Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, **10:4** "Your father made us work too hard!¹⁸ Now if you lighten the demands he made and don't make us work as hard, we will serve you."¹⁹ **10:5** He said to them, "Go away for three days, then return to me." So the people went away.

10:6 King Rehoboam consulted with the older advisers who had served²⁰ his father Solomon when he had been alive. He asked them,²¹ "How do you advise me to answer these people?" **10:7** They said to him, "If you are fair to these people, grant their request, and are cordial to them, they will be your servants from this time forward."²² **10:8** But Rehoboam rejected their advice and consulted the young advisers who served him, with whom he had grown up.²³ **10:9** He asked them, "How do you advise me to respond to these people who said to me, 'Lessen the demands your father placed on us'?"²⁴ **10:10** The young advisers with whom Rehoboam²⁵ had grown up said to him, "Say this to these people who have said to you, 'Your father made us work hard, but now lighten our burden'²⁶ – say this to them: 'I am a lot harsher than my father!²⁷ **10:11** My father imposed heavy demands on you; I will make them even heavier.²⁸ My father punished you with ordinary whips; I will punish you with whips that really sting your flesh."²⁹

¹ *tn* Heb "the ships of Tarshish came carrying."

² *tn* The meaning of this word is unclear; some suggest it refers to "baboons." NEB has "monkeys," NASB, NRSV "peacocks," and NIV "baboons."

³ *tn* Heb "King Solomon was greater than all the kings of the earth with respect to wealth and wisdom."

⁴ *tn* Heb "and all the kings of the earth were seeking the face of Solomon to hear his wisdom which God had placed in his heart."

⁵ *tn* Heb "and they were bringing each one his gift, items of silver...and mules, the matter of a year in a year."

⁶ *tc* The parallel text of 1 Kgs 10:26 reads "fourteen hundred chariots."

⁷ *tn* Heb "he placed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem."

map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁸ *tn* Heb "the River." In biblical Hebrew the Euphrates River was typically referred to simply as "the River."

⁹ *tn* The words "as plentiful" are supplied for clarification.

¹⁰ *tn* Heb "he made cedar."

¹¹ *tn* Heb "as the sycamore fig trees which are in the Shephelah."

¹² *tn* Heb "As for the rest of the events of Solomon, the former and the latter, are they not written?"

¹³ *map* For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁴ *tn* Heb "lay down with his fathers."

¹⁵ *tn* Heb "come [to]."

¹⁶ *tn* Heb "him"; the referent (Rehoboam) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁷ *tn* Heb "They sent and called for him."

¹⁸ *tn* Heb "made our yoke burdensome."

¹⁹ *tn* Heb "but you, now, lighten the burdensome work of your father and the heavy yoke which he placed on us, and we will serve you." In the Hebrew text the prefixed verbal form with *vav* (וַיִּבְרַךְ, וַיִּבְרַךְ, *vav* *na' avdekhā*, "and we will serve you") following the imperative (הַקֵּל, *haqel*, "lighten") indicates purpose/result. The conditional sentence used in the present translation is an attempt to bring out the logical relationship between these forms.

²⁰ *tn* Heb "stood before."

²¹ *tn* Heb "saying."

²² *tn* Heb "If today you are for good to these people and you are favorable to them and speak to them good words, they will be your servants all the days."

²³ *tn* Heb "Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders which they advised and he consulted the young men with whom he had grown up, who stood before him."

²⁴ *tn* Heb "Lighten the yoke which your father placed on us."

²⁵ *tn* Heb "he"; the referent (Rehoboam) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁶ *tn* Heb "Your father made our yoke heavy, but make it lighter upon us."

²⁷ *tn* Heb "My little one is thicker than my father's hips." The referent of "my little one" is not clear. The traditional view is that it refers to the little finger (so NEB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT). As the following statement makes clear, Rehoboam's point is that he is more harsh and demanding than his father.

²⁸ *tn* Heb "and now my father placed upon you a heavy yoke, but I will add to your yoke."

²⁹ *tn* Heb "My father punished you with whips, but I [will punish you] with scorpions." "Scorpions" might allude to some type of torture, but more likely it refers to a type of whip that inflicts an especially biting, painful wound.

10:12 Jeroboam and all the people reported to Rehoboam on the third day, just as the king had ordered when he said, “Return to me on the third day.” **10:13** The king responded to the people harshly. He¹ rejected the advice of the older men **10:14** and followed the advice of the younger ones. He said, “My father imposed heavy demands on you,² I will make them even heavier.³ My father punished you with ordinary whips; I will punish you with whips that really sting your flesh.”⁴ **10:15** The king refused to listen to the people, because God was instigating this turn of events⁵ so that he might bring to pass the prophetic announcement he had made⁶ through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

10:16 When all Israel saw that the king refused to listen to them, the people answered the king, “We have no portion in David – no share in the son of Jesse!⁷ Return to your homes, O Israel!⁸ Now, look after your own dynasty, O David!”⁹ So all Israel returned to their homes.¹⁰ **10:17** (Rehoboam continued to rule over the Israelites who lived in the cities of Judah.) **10:18** King Rehoboam sent Hadoram,¹¹ the supervisor of the work crews, out after them, but the Israelites stoned him to death. King Rehoboam managed to jump into his chariot and escape to Jerusalem.¹² **10:19** So Israel has been in rebellion against the Davidic dynasty to this very day.

11:1 When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he summoned 180,000 skilled warriors from Judah and Benjamin¹³ to attack Israel and restore the kingdom to Rehoboam. **11:2** But the LORD told Shemaiah the prophet,¹⁴ **11:3** “Say this to King Rehoboam son of Solomon of Judah and to all the Israelites in Judah and Benjamin,

11:4 ‘The LORD says this: “Do not attack and make war with your brothers. Each of you go home, for I have caused this to happen.”’¹⁵ They obeyed the LORD and called off the attack against Jeroboam.¹⁶

Rehoboam's Reign

11:5 Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem;¹⁷ he built up these fortified cities throughout Judah: **11:6** Bethlehem,¹⁸ Etam, Tekoa, **11:7** Beth Zur, Soco, Adullam, **11:8** Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, **11:9** Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, **11:10** Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron. These were the fortified cities in Judah and Benjamin. **11:11** He fortified these cities and placed officers in them, as well as storehouses of food, olive oil, and wine. **11:12** In each city there were shields and spears; he strongly fortified them.¹⁹ Judah and Benjamin belonged to him.

11:13 The priests and Levites who lived throughout Israel supported him, no matter where they resided.²⁰ **11:14** The Levites even left their pasturelands and their property behind and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons prohibited them from serving as the LORD's priests. **11:15** Jeroboam²¹ appointed his own priests to serve at the worship centers²² and to lead in the worship of the goat idols and calf idols he had made.²³ **11:16** Those among all the Israelite tribes who were determined to worship the LORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem²⁴ to sacrifice to the LORD God of their ancestors.²⁵ **11:17** They supported²⁶ the kingdom of Judah and were loyal to²⁷ Rehoboam son of Solomon for three years; they followed the edicts of²⁸ David and Solomon for three years.

11:18 Rehoboam married²⁹ Mahalath the daughter of David's son Jerimoth and of³⁰ Abihail, the daughter of Jesse's son Eliab. **11:19** She bore him sons named Jeush, Shemariah, and

¹ **tn** Heb “Rehoboam.” The pronoun “he” has been used in the translation in place of the proper name in keeping with contemporary English style.

² **tc** The Hebrew text reads, “I will make heavy your yoke,” but many medieval Hebrew MSS and other ancient textual witnesses have, “my father made heavy your yoke.”

³ **tn** Heb “but I will add to your yoke.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “My father punished you with whips, but I [will punish you] with scorpions.” “Scorpions” might allude to some type of torture, but more likely it refers to a type of whip that inflicts an especially biting, painful wound.

⁵ **tn** Heb “because this turn of events was from God.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “so that the LORD might bring to pass his word which he spoke.”

⁷ **sn** The people's point seems to be that they have no familial relationship with David that brings them any benefits or places upon them any obligations. They are being treated like outsiders.

⁸ **tn** Heb “each one to your tents, Israel.” The word “return” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁹ **tn** Heb “Now see your house, David.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “went to their tents.”

¹¹ **sn** In the parallel account in 1 Kgs 12:18 this name appears as “Adoniram.”

¹² **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹³ **tn** Heb “he summoned the house of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men, accomplished in war.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “and the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “for his thing is from me.”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “and they heard the words of the LORD and returned from going against Jeroboam.”

¹⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁸ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map7-E2; Map8-E2; Map10-B4.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “he strengthened them greatly, very much.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “and the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel supported him from all their territory.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Jeroboam) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²² **tn** Heb “for the high places.”

²³ **tn** Heb “and for the goats and for the calves he had made.”

²⁴ **tn** Heb “and after them from all the tribes of Israel, the ones giving their heart[s] to seek the LORD God of Israel came [to] Jerusalem.”

²⁵ **tn** Heb “fathers.”

²⁶ **tn** Or “strengthened.”

²⁷ **tn** Or “strengthened.”

²⁸ **tn** Heb “they walked in the way of.”

²⁹ **tn** Heb “took for himself a wife.”

³⁰ **tn** Heb The words “and of” are supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons.

Zaham. **11:20** He later married Maacah the daughter of Absalom. She bore to him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. **11:21** Rehoboam loved Maacah daughter of Absalom more than his other wives and concubines.¹ He had eighteen wives and sixty concubines; he fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters.

11:22 Rehoboam appointed Abijah son of Maacah as the leader over his brothers, for he intended to name him his successor.² **11:23** He wisely placed some of his many sons throughout the regions of Judah and Benjamin in the various fortified cities.³ He supplied them with abundant provisions and acquired many wives for them.⁴

12:1 After Rehoboam's rule was established and solidified, he and all Israel rejected the law of the LORD. **12:2** Because they were unfaithful to the LORD, in King Rehoboam's fifth year, King Shishak of Egypt attacked Jerusalem. **12:3** He had 1,200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen, and an innumerable number of soldiers who accompanied him from Egypt, including Libyans, Sukkites, and Cushites. **12:4** He captured the fortified cities of Judah and marched against Jerusalem.

12:5 Shemaiah the prophet visited Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah who were assembled in Jerusalem because of Shishak. He said to them, "This is what the LORD says: 'You have rejected me, so I have rejected you and will hand you over to Shishak.'⁵ **12:6** The leaders of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is just."⁶ **12:7** When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, he gave this message to Shemaiah:⁷ "They have humbled themselves, so I will not destroy them. I will deliver them soon.⁸ My anger will not be unleashed against⁹ Jerusalem through¹⁰ Shishak. **12:8** Yet they will become his subjects, so they can experience how

serving me differs from serving the surrounding nations."¹¹

12:9 King Shishak of Egypt attacked Jerusalem and took away the treasures of the LORD's temple and of the royal palace; he took everything, including the gold shields that Solomon had made.

12:10 King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them and assigned them to the officers of the royal guard¹² who protected the entrance to the royal palace. **12:11** Whenever the king visited the LORD's temple, the royal guards carried them and then brought them back to the guardroom.¹³

12:12 So when Rehoboam¹⁴ humbled himself, the LORD relented from his anger and did not annihilate him;¹⁵ Judah experienced some good things.¹⁶ **12:13** King Rehoboam solidified his rule in Jerusalem;¹⁷ he¹⁸ was forty-one years old when he became king and he ruled for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the LORD chose from all the tribes of Israel to be his home.¹⁹ Rehoboam's²⁰ mother was an Ammonite named Naamah. **12:14** He did evil because he was not determined to follow the LORD.²¹

12:15 The events of Rehoboam's reign, from start to finish, are recorded²² in the Annals of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the Seer that include genealogical records. **12:16** Then Rehoboam passed away²³ and was buried in the City of David.²⁴ His son Abijah replaced him as king.

Abijah's Reign

13:1 In the eighteenth year of the reign of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah. **13:2** He ruled for three years in Jerusalem.²⁵ His

¹ **sn** *Concubines* were slave women in ancient Near Eastern societies who were the legal property of their master, but who could have legitimate sexual relations with their master. A concubine's status was more elevated than a mere servant, but she was not free and did not have the legal rights of a free wife. The children of a concubine could, in some instances, become equal heirs with the children of the free wife. After the period of the Judges concubines may have become more of a royal prerogative (2 Sam 21:10-14; 1 Kgs 11:3).

² **tn** *Heb* "and Rehoboam appointed for a head Abijah son of Maacah for ruler among his brothers, indeed to make him king."

³ **tn** *Heb* "and he was discerning and broke up from all his sons to all the lands of Judah and Benjamin, to all the fortified cities."

⁴ **tn** "and he asked for a multitude of wives."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "also I have rejected you into the hand of Shishak."

⁶ **tn** Or "fair," meaning the LORD's punishment of them was just or fair.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and I will give to them soon deliverance."

⁹ **tn** Or "gush forth upon."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "by the hand of."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "so they may know my service and the service of the kingdoms of the lands."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "runners" (also in v. 11).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "to the chamber of the runners."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Rehoboam) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the anger of the LORD turned from him and did not destroy completely."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and also in Judah there were good things."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and the king, Rehoboam, strengthened himself in Jerusalem and ruled."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "Rehoboam." The recurrence of the proper name here is redundant in terms of contemporary English style, so the pronoun has been used in the translation instead.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the city where the LORD chose to place his name from all the tribes of Israel."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "because he did not set his heart to seek the LORD."

²² **tn** *Heb* "As for the events of Rehoboam, the former and the latter, are they not written?"

²³ **tn** *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

²⁴ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

²⁵ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

mother was Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel from Gibeah.¹

There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. **13:3** Abijah launched the attack with 400,000 well-trained warriors,² while Jeroboam deployed against him 800,000 well-trained warriors.³

13:4 Abijah ascended Mount Zemaraim, in the Ephraimite hill country, and said: "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel! **13:5** Don't you realize that the LORD God of Israel has given David and his dynasty lasting dominion over Israel by a formal agreement?⁴ **13:6** Jeroboam son of Nebat, a servant of Solomon son of David, rose up and rebelled against his master. **13:7** Lawless good-for-nothing men⁵ gathered around him and conspired⁶ against Rehoboam son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was an inexperienced young man⁷ and could not resist them. **13:8** Now you are declaring that you will resist the LORD's rule through the Davidic dynasty.⁸ You have a huge army,⁹ and bring with you the gold calves that Jeroboam made for you as gods. **13:9** But you banished¹⁰ the LORD's priests, Aaron's descendants, and the Levites, and appointed your own priests just as the surrounding nations do! Anyone who comes to consecrate himself with a young bull or seven rams becomes a priest of these fake gods!¹¹ **13:10** But as for us, the LORD is our God and we have not rejected him. Aaron's descendants serve as the LORD's priests and the Levites assist them with the work.¹² **13:11** They offer burnt sacrifices to the LORD every morning and every evening, along with fragrant incense. They arrange the Bread of the Presence on a ritually clean table

and light the lamps on the gold lampstand every evening. Certainly¹³ we are observing the LORD our God's regulations, but you have rejected him. **13:12** Now look, God is with us as our leader. His priests are ready to blow the trumpets to signal the attack against you.¹⁴ You Israelites, don't fight against the LORD God of your ancestors,¹⁵ for you will not win!"

13:13 Now Jeroboam had sent some men to ambush the Judahite army from behind.¹⁶ The main army was in front of the Judahite army;¹⁷ the ambushers were behind it. **13:14** The men of Judah turned around and realized they were being attacked from the front and the rear.¹⁸ So they cried out for help to the LORD. The priests blew their trumpets, **13:15** and the men of Judah gave¹⁹ the battle cry. As the men of Judah gave the battle cry, the LORD struck down Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. **13:16** The Israelites fled from before the Judahite army,²⁰ and God handed them over to the men of Judah.²¹ **13:17** Abijah and his army thoroughly defeated them;²² 500,000 well-trained Israelite men fell dead.²³ **13:18** That day²⁴ the Israelites were defeated; the men of Judah prevailed because they relied on the LORD God of their ancestors.

13:19 Abijah chased Jeroboam; he seized from him these cities: Bethel²⁵ and its surrounding towns, Jeshanah and its surrounding towns, and Ephron and its surrounding towns. **13:20** Jeroboam did not regain power during the reign of Abijah.²⁶ The LORD struck him down and he died. **13:21** Abijah's power grew; he had²⁷ fourteen wives and fathered twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters.

13:22 The rest of the events of Abijah's reign, including his deeds and sayings,²⁸ are recorded in the writings of the prophet Iddo.

¹ **tn** The parallel text in 1 Kgs 15:2 identifies his mother as "Maacah, the daughter of Abishalom" [=Absalom, 2 Chr 11:20]. Although most English versions identify the mother's father as Uriel of Gibeah, a number of English versions substitute the name "Maacah" here for the mother (e.g., NIV, NCV, CEV, NLT).

² **tn** *Heb* "and Abijah bound [i.e., began] the battle with a force of warriors, four hundred thousand chosen men."

³ **tn** *Heb* "and Jeroboam arranged with him [for] battle with eight hundred thousand chosen men, strong warrior[s]."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "Do you not know that the LORD God of Israel has given kingship to David over Israel permanently, to him and to his sons [by] a covenant of salt?"

sn For other references to a "covenant of salt," see Lev 2:13 and Num 18:19.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "empty men, sons of wickedness."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "strengthened themselves."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "a young man and tender of heart."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the kingdom of the LORD by the hand of the sons of David."

⁹ **tn** Or "horde"; or "multitude."

¹⁰ **tn** In the Hebrew text this is phrased as a rhetorical question, "Did you not banish?" The rhetorical question expects the answer, "Of course you did," the force of which is reflected in the translation "But you banished."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "whoever comes to fill his hand with a bull of a son of cattle, and seven rams, and he is a priest to no-gods."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "and priests serving the LORD [are] the sons of Aaron and the Levites in the work."

¹³ **tn** Or "for."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and his priests and the trumpets of the war alarm [are ready] to sound out against you."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "fathers" (also in v. 18).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and Jeroboam had caused to circle around an ambush to come from behind them."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "Judah."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and Judah turned, and, look, to them [was] the battle in front and behind."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "shouted out."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "Judah."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "them"; the referent (the men of Judah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²² **tn** *Heb* "struck them down with a great striking down."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "and [the] slain from Israel fell, five hundred thousand chosen men."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "at that time."

²⁵ **map** For location see Map4-G4; Map5-C1; Map6-E3; Map7-D1; Map8-G3.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and the strength of Jeroboam was not retained again in the days of Abijah."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "lifted up for himself."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and his ways and his words."

14:1 (13:23)¹ Abijah passed away² and was buried in the City of David.³ His son Asa replaced him as king. During his reign⁴ the land had rest for ten years.

Asa's Religious and Military Accomplishments

14:2 (14:1) Asa did what the LORD his God desired and approved.⁵ 14:3 He removed the pagan altars⁶ and the high places, smashed the sacred pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles.⁷ 14:4 He ordered Judah to seek the LORD God of their ancestors⁸ and to observe his law and commands.⁹ 14:5 He removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah. The kingdom had rest under his rule.¹⁰

14:6 He built fortified cities throughout Judah, for the land was at rest and there was no war during those years; the LORD gave him peace. 14:7 He said to the people of Judah:¹¹ "Let's build these cities and fortify them with walls, towers, and barred gates.¹² The land remains ours because we have followed¹³ the LORD our God and he has made us secure on all sides."¹⁴ So they built the cities¹⁵ and prospered.

14:8 Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Judah, equipped with large shields and spears. He also had 280,000 men from Benjamin who carried small shields and were adept archers; they were all skilled warriors. 14:9 Zerah the Cushite marched against them with an army of 1,000,000¹⁶ men and 300 chariots. He arrived at Mareshah, 14:10 and Asa went out to oppose

him. They deployed for battle in the Valley of Zephathah near Mareshah.

14:11 Asa prayed¹⁷ to the LORD his God: "O LORD, there is no one but you who can help the weak when they are vastly outnumbered.¹⁸ Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you and have marched on your behalf against this huge army.¹⁹ O LORD our God, don't let men prevail against you!"²⁰ 14:12 The LORD struck down the Cushites before Asa and Judah. The Cushites fled, 14:13 and Asa and his army chased them as far as Gerar. The Cushites were wiped out;²¹ they were shattered before the LORD and his army. The men of Judah²² carried off a huge amount of plunder. 14:14 They defeated all the cities surrounding Gerar, for the LORD caused them to panic.²³ The men of Judah²⁴ looted all the cities, for they contained a huge amount of goods.²⁵ 14:15 They also attacked the tents of the herdsmen in charge of the livestock.²⁶ They carried off many sheep and camels and then returned to Jerusalem.²⁷

15:1 God's Spirit came upon Azariah son of Oded. 15:2 He met²⁸ Asa and told him, "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin! The LORD is with you when you are loyal to him.²⁹ If you seek him, he will respond to you,³⁰ but if you reject him, he will reject you. 15:3 For a long time³¹ Israel had no true God, or priest to instruct them, or law. 15:4 Because of their distress, they turned back to the LORD God of Israel. They sought him and he responded to them.³² 15:5 In those days³³ no one could travel safely,³⁴ for total chaos had overtaken all the people of the surrounding lands.³⁵ 15:6 One nation was crushed by another, and one city by another, for God caused them to be in great

¹ sn Beginning with 14:1, the verse numbers through 14:15 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 14:1 ET = 13:23 HT, 14:2 ET = 14:1 HT, 14:3 ET = 14:2 HT, etc., through 14:15 ET = 14:14 HT. Beginning with 15:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

² tn Heb "lay down with his fathers."

³ sn The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

⁴ tn Heb "in his days."

⁵ tn Heb "and Asa did the good and the right in the eyes of the LORD his God."

⁶ tn Heb "the altars of the foreigner."

⁷ sn *Asherah poles.* A leading deity of the Canaanite pantheon was Asherah, wife/sister of El and goddess of fertility. She was commonly worshiped at shrines in or near groves of evergreen trees, or, failing that, at places marked by wooden poles (Hebrew אֲשֵׁרִים [*asherim*], as here). They were to be burned or cut down (Deut 7:5; 12:3; 16:21; Judg 6:25, 28, 30; 2 Kgs 18:4).

⁸ tn Heb "fathers."

⁹ tn Heb "the law and the command."

¹⁰ tn Heb "before him."

¹¹ tn The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" by metonymy for the people of Judah.

¹² tn Heb "and we will surround [them] with wall[s] and towers, doors, and bars."

¹³ tn Heb "sought."

¹⁴ tn Heb "and he has given us rest all around."

¹⁵ tn The words "the cities" are supplied in the translation for clarification and for stylistic reasons.

¹⁶ tn Heb "a thousand thousands."

¹⁷ tn Heb "called out."

¹⁸ tn Heb "there is not with you to help between many with regard to [the one] without strength."

¹⁹ tn Heb "and in your name we have come against this multitude."

²⁰ tn Heb "let not man retain [strength] with you."

²¹ tn Heb "and there fell from the Cushites so that there was not to them preservation of life."

²² tn Heb "they"; the referent (the men of Judah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²³ tn Heb "for the terror of the LORD was upon them."

²⁴ tn Heb "they"; the referent (the men of Judah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁵ tn Heb "for great plunder was in them."

²⁶ tn Heb "and also they struck down the tents of the livestock."

²⁷ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁸ tn Heb "went out before."

²⁹ tn Heb "when you are with him."

³⁰ tn Heb "he will allow himself to be found by you."

³¹ tn Heb "Many days."

³² tn Heb "and he allowed himself to be found by them."

³³ tn Heb "times."

³⁴ tn Heb "there was peace for the one going out or the one coming in."

³⁵ tn Heb "for great confusion was upon all the inhabitants of the lands."

turmoil.¹ **15:7** But as for you, be strong and don't get discouraged,² for your work will be rewarded."³

15:8 When Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he was encouraged.⁴ He removed the detestable idols from the entire land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities he had seized in the Ephraimite hill country. He repaired the altar of the LORD in front of the porch of the LORD's temple.⁵

15:9 He assembled all Judah and Benjamin, as well as the settlers⁶ from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who had come to live with them. Many people from Israel had come there to live⁷ when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. **15:10** They assembled in Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign. **15:11** At that time⁸ they sacrificed to the LORD some of the plunder they had brought back, including 700 head of cattle and 7,000 sheep.⁹ **15:12** They solemnly agreed¹⁰ to seek the LORD God of their ancestors¹¹ with their whole heart and being. **15:13** Anyone who would not seek the LORD God of Israel would be executed, whether they were young or old,¹² male or female. **15:14** They swore their allegiance to the LORD, shouting their approval loudly and sounding trumpets and horns.¹³ **15:15** All Judah was happy about the oath, because they made the vow with their whole heart. They willingly sought the LORD and he responded to them.¹⁴ He made them secure on every side.¹⁵

15:16 King Asa also removed Maacah his grandmother¹⁶ from her position as queen mother¹⁷ because she had made a loathsome Asherah pole. Asa cut down her Asherah pole and crushed and burned it in the Kidron Valley. **15:17** The high places were not eliminated from Israel, yet Asa was wholeheartedly devoted to

the LORD throughout his lifetime.¹⁸ **15:18** He brought the holy items that his father and he had made into God's temple, including the silver, gold, and other articles.¹⁹

Asa's Failures

15:19 There was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign. **16:1** In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, King Baasha of Israel attacked Judah, and he established Ramah as a military outpost to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the land of King Asa of Judah.²⁰ **16:2** Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasuries of the LORD's temple and of the royal palace and sent it to King Ben Hadad of Syria, ruler in Damascus, along with this message: **16:3** "I want to make a treaty with you, like the one our fathers made.²¹ See, I have sent you silver and gold. Break your treaty with King Baasha of Israel, so he will retreat from my land."²² **16:4** Ben Hadad accepted King Asa's offer and ordered his army commanders to attack the cities of Israel.²³ They conquered²⁴ Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim,²⁵ and all the storage cities of Naphtali. **16:5** When Baasha heard the news, he stopped fortifying²⁶ Ramah and abandoned the project.²⁷ **16:6** King Asa ordered all the men of Judah to carry away the stones and wood that Baasha had used to build Ramah.²⁸ He used the materials to build up²⁹ Geba and Mizpah.

16:7 At that time Hanani the prophet³⁰ visited King Asa of Judah and said to him: "Because you relied on the king of Syria and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. **16:8** Did not the Cushites and Libyans have a huge army with chariots and a very large number of horsemen? But when you relied on the LORD, he handed them over to you! **16:9** Certainly³¹ the LORD watches the whole earth carefully³² and is

¹ **tn** Heb "threw them into confusion with all distress."

² **tn** Heb "and let not your hands drop."

³ **tn** Heb "for there is payment for your work."

⁴ **tn** Heb "strengthened himself."

⁵ **tn** Heb "the porch of the LORD."

⁶ **tn** Or "resident foreigners."

⁷ **tn** Heb "had fallen upon him."

⁸ **tn** Or "in that day."

⁹ **tn** The Hebrew term *ts'on* (*ts'o'n*) denotes smaller livestock in general; depending on context it can refer to sheep only or goats only, but their is nothing in the immediate context here to specify one or the other.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "entered into a covenant."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "fathers."

¹² **tn** Heb "whether small or great."

¹³ **tn** Heb "with a loud voice and with a shout and with trumpets and with horns."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "and with all their desire they sought him and he allowed himself to be found by them."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and the LORD gave them rest all around."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "mother," but Hebrew often uses "father" and "mother" for grandparents and even more remote ancestors.

¹⁷ **tn** The Hebrew term *g'virah* (*g'virah*) can denote "queen" or "queen mother" depending on the context. Here the latter is indicated, since Maacah was the wife of Rehoboam and mother of Abijah.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "yet the heart of Asa was complete all his days."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "and he brought the holy things of his father and his holy things [into] the house of God, silver, gold, and items."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "and he built up Ramah so as to not permit going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah."

²¹ **tn** Heb "[May there be] a covenant between me and you [as there was] between my father and your father."

²² **tn** Heb "so he will go up from upon me."

²³ **tn** Heb "and Ben Hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of the armies which belonged to him against the cities of Israel."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "They struck down."

²⁵ **sn** In the parallel passage in 1 Kgs 15:20, this city's name appears as Abel Beth Maacah. These appear to be variant names for the same place.

²⁶ **tn** Heb "building."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "and he caused his work to cease."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "and King Asa took all Judah and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its wood which Baasha had built."

²⁹ **tn** Heb "and he built with them."

³⁰ **tn** Heb "the seer."

³¹ **tn** Or "for."

³² **tn** Heb "the eyes of the LORD move quickly through all the

ready to strengthen those who are devoted to him.⁴ You have acted foolishly in this matter; from now on you will have war. **16:10** Asa was so angry at the prophet, he put him in jail.² Asa also oppressed some of the people at that time.

Asa's Reign Ends

16:11 The events of Asa's reign, from start to finish, are recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel.³ **16:12** In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa developed a foot disease.⁴ Though his disease was severe, he did not seek the LORD, but only the doctors.⁵ **16:13** Asa passed away⁶ in the forty-first year of his reign. **16:14** He was buried in the tomb he had carved out in the City of David.⁷ They laid him to rest on a bier covered with spices and assorted mixtures of ointments. They made a huge bonfire to honor him.⁸

Jehoshaphat Becomes King

17:1 His son Jehoshaphat replaced him as king and solidified his rule over Israel.⁹ **17:2** He placed troops in all of Judah's fortified cities and posted garrisons¹⁰ throughout the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had seized.

17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed in his ancestor¹¹ David's footsteps at the beginning of his reign.¹² He did not seek the Baals, **17:4** but instead sought the God of his ancestors¹³ and obeyed¹⁴ his commands, unlike the Israelites.¹⁵ **17:5** The LORD made his kingdom secure,¹⁶ all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he became very wealthy and greatly respected.¹⁷ **17:6** He was committed to

following the LORD;¹⁸ he even removed the high places and Asherah poles from Judah.

17:7 In the third year of his reign he sent his officials Ben Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah to teach in the cities of Judah. **17:8** They were accompanied by the Levites Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah, and by the priests Elishama and Jehoram. **17:9** They taught throughout Judah, taking with them the scroll of the law of the LORD. They traveled to all the cities of Judah and taught the people.

17:10 The LORD put fear into all the kingdoms surrounding Judah;¹⁹ they did not make war with Jehoshaphat. **17:11** Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat tribute, including a load of silver. The Arabs brought him 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats from their flocks.

17:12 Jehoshaphat's power kept increasing. He built fortresses and storage cities throughout Judah. **17:13** He had many supplies stored in the cities of Judah and an army of skilled warriors stationed in Jerusalem.²⁰ **17:14** These were their divisions by families:

There were a thousand officers from Judah.²¹ Adnah the commander led 300,000 skilled warriors, **17:15** Jehochanan the commander led 280,000, **17:16** and Amasiah son of Zikri, who volunteered to serve the LORD, led 200,000 skilled warriors.

17:17 From Benjamin, Eliada, a skilled warrior, led 200,000 men who were equipped with bows and shields, **17:18** and Jehozabad led 180,000 trained warriors.

17:19 These were the ones who served the king, besides those whom the king placed in the fortified cities throughout Judah.

Jehoshaphat Allies with Ahab

18:1 Jehoshaphat was very wealthy and greatly respected. He made an alliance by marriage with Ahab, **18:2** and after several years²² went down to visit²³ Ahab in Samaria.²⁴ Ahab slaughtered many sheep and cattle to honor

earth."

¹ **tn** Heb "to strengthen himself with their heart, [the one] complete toward him."

² **tn** Heb "and Asa was angry at the seer, and he put him [in] the house of stocks, because of his rage with him over this."

³ **tn** Heb "Look, the events of Asa, the former and the latter, look, they are written on the scroll of the kings of Judah and Israel."

⁴ **tn** Heb "became sick in his feet."

⁵ **tn** Heb "unto upwards [i.e., very severe [was] his sickness, and even in his sickness he did not seek the LORD, only the healers.

⁶ **tn** Heb "lay down with his fathers, and he died."

⁷ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

⁸ **tn** Heb "and they burned for him a large fire, very great."

⁹ **tn** Heb "and strengthened himself over Israel."

¹⁰ **tn** Or perhaps, "governors."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "father."

¹² **tn** Heb "for he walked in the ways of David his father [in] the beginning [times]."

¹³ **tn** Heb "fathers."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "walked in."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and not like the behavior of Israel."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "established the kingdom in his hand."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "and he had wealth and honor in abundance."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "and his heart was high in the ways of the LORD." Perhaps גָּבַהּ (*gavah*, "be high") here means "be cheerful" (*HALOT* 171 s.v.) or "be encouraged" (*BDB* 147 s.v. 3.a).

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "and the terror of the LORD was upon all the kingdoms of the lands which were surrounding Judah."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "and many supplies were his in the cities of Judah, and men of war, warriors of skill in Jerusalem."

map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²¹ **tn** Or perhaps "from Judah, commanders of the thousands."

²² **tn** Heb "at the end of years."

²³ **tn** The word "visit" is supplied in the translation for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

²⁴ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

Jehoshaphat and those who came with him.¹ He persuaded him to join in an attack² against Ramoth Gilead. **18:3** King Ahab of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Will you go with me to attack Ramoth Gilead?” Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, “I will support you; my army is at your disposal and will support you in battle.”³ **18:4** Then Jehoshaphat added,⁴ “First seek an oracle from the LORD.”⁵ **18:5** So the king of Israel assembled 400 prophets and asked them, “Should we attack Ramoth Gilead or not?”⁶ They said, “Attack! God⁷ will hand it over to the king.” **18:6** But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there not a prophet of the LORD still here, that we may ask him?” **18:7** The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, “There is still one man through whom we can seek the LORD’s will.⁸ But I despise⁹ him because he does not prophesy prosperity for me, but always¹⁰ disaster. His name is Micaiah son of Imlah.¹¹ Jehoshaphat said, “The king should not say such things!” **18:8** The king of Israel summoned an officer and said, “Quickly bring Micaiah son of Imlah.”

18:9 Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their respective thrones, dressed in their royal robes, at the threshing floor at¹² the entrance of the gate of Samaria. All the prophets were prophesying before them. **18:10** Zedekiah son of Kenaanah made iron horns and said, “This is what the LORD says, ‘With these you will gore Syria until they are destroyed!’” **18:11** All the prophets were prophesying the same, saying, “Attack Ramoth Gilead! You will succeed; the LORD will hand it over to the king!” **18:12** Now the messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, the prophets are in complete agreement that the king will succeed.¹³ Your words must agree with

theirs; you must predict success!”¹⁴ **18:13** But Micaiah said, “As certainly as the LORD lives, I will say what my God tells me to say!”

18:14 Micaiah¹⁵ came before the king and the king asked him, “Micaiah, should we attack Ramoth Gilead or not?” He answered him, “Attack! You will succeed; they will be handed over to you.”¹⁶ **18:15** The king said to him, “How many times must I make you solemnly promise in¹⁷ the name of the LORD to tell me only the truth?” **18:16** Micaiah¹⁸ replied, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains like sheep that have no shepherd. Then the LORD said, ‘They have no master. They should go home in peace.’” **18:17** The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Didn’t I tell you he does not prophesy prosperity for me, but disaster?” **18:18** Micaiah¹⁹ said, “That being the case, hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the heavenly assembly standing on his right and on his left. **18:19** The LORD said, ‘Who will deceive King Ahab of Israel, so he will attack Ramoth Gilead and die there?’ One said this and another that. **18:20** Then a spirit²⁰ stepped forward and stood before the LORD. He said, ‘I will deceive him.’ The LORD asked him, ‘How?’ **18:21** He replied,

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “let your words be like one of them and speak good.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Micaiah) has been specified in the translation both for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

¹⁶ **sn** One does not expect Micaiah, having just vowed to speak only what the LORD tells him, to agree with the other prophets and give the king an inaccurate prophecy. Micaiah’s actions became understandable later, when we discover that the LORD desires to deceive the king and lead him to his demise. The LORD even dispatches a lying spirit to deceive Ahab’s prophets. Micaiah can lie to the king because he realizes this lie is from the LORD. It is important to note that in v. 13 Micaiah only vows to speak the word of his God; he does not necessarily say he will tell the truth. In this case the LORD’s word is deliberately deceptive. Only when the king adjures him to tell the truth (v. 15), does Micaiah do so.

¹⁷ **tn** Or “swear an oath by.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Micaiah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Micaiah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “the spirit.” The significance of the article prefixed to רִיחַ (*ruakh*) is uncertain, but it could contain a clue as to this spirit’s identity, especially when interpreted in light of verse 23. It is certainly possible, and probably even likely, that the article is used in a generic or dramatic sense and should be translated, “a spirit.” In the latter case it would show that this spirit was vivid and definite in the mind of Micaiah the storyteller. However, if one insists that the article indicates a well-known or universally known spirit, the following context provides a likely referent. Verse 23 tells how Zedekiah slapped Micaiah in the face and then asked sarcastically, “Which way did the spirit from the LORD (רִיחַ יְהוָה, *ruakh-yehovah*) go when he went from me to speak to you?” When the phrase “the spirit of the LORD” refers to the divine spirit (rather than the divine breath or mind, as in Isa 40:7, 13) elsewhere, the spirit energizes an individual or group for special tasks or moves one to prophesy. This raises the possibility that the deceiving spirit of vv. 20-22 is the same as the divine spirit mentioned by Zedekiah in v. 23. This would explain why the article is used on רִיחַ (*ruakh*); he can be called “the spirit” because he is the well-known spirit who energizes the prophets.

¹ **tn** Heb “and Ahab slaughtered for him sheep and cattle in abundance, and for the people who were with him.”

² **tn** Heb “to go up.”

³ **tn** Heb “Like me, like you; and like your people, my people; and with you in battle.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “and Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel.”

⁵ **tn** Heb “the word of the LORD.” Jehoshaphat is requesting a prophetic oracle revealing the Lord’s will in the matter and their prospects for success. For examples of such oracles, see 2 Sam 5:19, 23-24.

⁶ **tn** Heb “Should we go against Ramoth Gilead for war or should I refrain?”

⁷ **tn** Though Jehoshaphat had requested an oracle from “the LORD” (יְהוָה, *yehovah*, “Yahweh”), the Israelite prophets stop short of actually using this name and substitute the title הוֹדוֹת יְהוָה (*hoda’ot yehovah*, “the God”). This ambiguity may explain in part Jehoshaphat’s hesitancy and caution (vv. 7-8). He seems to doubt that the 400 are genuine prophets of the LORD.

⁸ **tn** Heb “to seek the LORD from him.”

⁹ **tn** Or “hate.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “all his days.”

¹¹ **tn** The words “his name is” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹² **tn** Heb “at,” which in this case probably means “near.”

¹³ **tn** Heb “the words of the prophets are [with] one mouth good for the king.”

‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets.’ The LORD¹ said, ‘Deceive and overpower him.’² Go out and do as you have proposed.’ **18:22** So now, look, the LORD has placed a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours, but the LORD has decreed disaster for you.’ **18:23** Zedekiah son of Kenaanah approached, hit Micaiah on the jaw, and said, “Which way did the LORD’s spirit go when he went from me to speak to you?” **18:24** Micaiah replied, “Look, you will see in the day when you go into an inner room to hide.” **18:25** Then the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the city official and Joash the king’s son. **18:26** Say, ‘This is what the king says: “Put this man in prison. Give him only a little bread and water³ until I return safely.”’” **18:27** Micaiah said, “If you really do return safely, then the LORD has not spoken through me!” Then he added, “Take note,⁴ all you people.”

18:28 The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah attacked Ramoth Gilead. **18:29** The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself and then enter⁵ the battle, but you wear your royal attire.” So the king of Israel disguised himself and they entered the battle. **18:30** Now the king of Syria had ordered his chariot commanders, “Do not fight common soldiers or high ranking officers;⁶ fight only the king of Israel!” **18:31** When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “He must be the king of Israel!” So they turned and attacked him, but Jehoshaphat cried out. The LORD helped him; God lured them away from him. **18:32** When the chariot commanders realized he was not the king of Israel, they turned away from him. **18:33** Now an archer shot an arrow at random⁷ and it struck the king of Israel between the plates of his armor. The king⁸ ordered his charioteer, “Turn around and take me

from the battle line,⁹ for I am wounded.” **18:34** While the battle raged throughout the day, the king stood propped up in his chariot opposite the Syrians. He died in the evening as the sun was setting.

19:1 When King Jehoshaphat of Judah returned home safely to Jerusalem,¹⁰ **19:2** the prophet¹¹ Jehu son of Hanani confronted him;¹² he said to King Jehoshaphat, “Is it right to help the wicked and be an ally of those who oppose the LORD?¹³ Because you have done this the LORD is angry with you!¹⁴ **19:3** Nevertheless you have done some good things;¹⁵ you removed¹⁶ the Asherah poles from the land and you were determined to follow the LORD.”¹⁷

Jehoshaphat Appoints Judges

19:4 Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem.¹⁸ He went out among the people from Beer Sheba to the hill country of Ephraim and encouraged them to follow¹⁹ the LORD God of their ancestors. **19:5** He appointed judges throughout the land and in each of the fortified cities of Judah.²¹ **19:6** He told the judges, “Be careful what you do,²² for you are not judging for men, but for the LORD, who will be with you when you make judicial decisions. **19:7** Respect the LORD and make careful decisions, for the LORD our God disapproves of injustice, partiality, and bribery.”²³

19:8 In Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed some Levites, priests, and Israelite family leaders to judge on behalf of the LORD²⁴ and to settle disputes among the residents of Jerusalem.²⁵ **19:9** He commanded them: “Carry out your duties with respect for the LORD, with honesty, and with pure motives.²⁶ **19:10** Whenever your country-

⁹ tn Heb “camp.”

¹⁰ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹¹ tn Or “seer.”

¹² tn Heb “went out to his face.”

¹³ tn Heb “and love those who hate the LORD?”

¹⁴ tn Heb “and because of this upon you is anger from before the LORD.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “nevertheless good things are found with you.”

¹⁶ tn Here בָּעַר (ba’ar) is not the well attested verb “burn,” but the less common homonym meaning “devastate, sweep away, remove.” See HALOT 146 s.v. II בָּעַר.

¹⁷ tn Heb “and you set your heart to seek the LORD.”

¹⁸ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁹ tn Heb “and turned them back to.”

²⁰ tn Heb “fathers.”

²¹ tn Heb “in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city.”

²² tn Heb “see what you are doing.”

²³ tn Heb “and now let the terror of the LORD be upon you, be careful and act for there is not with the LORD our God injustice, lifting up of a face, and taking a bribe.”

²⁴ tn Heb “for the judgment of the LORD.”

²⁵ tc Heb “and to conduct a case [or “for controversy”], and they returned [to] Jerusalem.” Some emend יָשֻׁבוּ (vayyashuvu, “and they returned”) to יָשְׁבוּ (vayyeshvu, “and they lived [in]”). The present translation assumes an emendation to יָשְׁבוּ (yoshi’ev, “residents of”).

²⁶ tn Heb “This you must do with the fear of the LORD, with honesty, and with a complete heart.”

¹ tn Heb “he”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

² tn The Hebrew text has two imperfects connected by גָּמַל (v^ggam). These verbs could be translated as specific futures, “you will deceive and also you will prevail,” in which case the LORD is assuring the spirit of success on his mission. However, in a commissioning context (note the following imperatives) such as this, it is more likely that the imperfects are injunctive, in which case one could translate, “Deceive, and also overpower.”

³ tn Heb “the bread of affliction and the water of affliction.”

⁴ tn Heb “Listen.”

⁵ tn The Hebrew verbal forms could be imperatives (“Disguise yourself and enter”), but this would make no sense in light of the immediately following context. The forms are better interpreted as infinitives absolute functioning as cohortatives (see IBHS 594 §35.5.2a). Some prefer to emend the forms to imperfects.

⁶ tn Heb “small or great.”

⁷ tn Heb “now a man drew a bow in his innocence” (i.e., with no specific target in mind, or at least without realizing his target was the king of Israel).

⁸ tn Heb “he”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

men who live in the cities bring a case before you¹ (whether it involves a violent crime² or other matters related to the law, commandments, rules, and regulations), warn them that they must not sin against the LORD. If you fail to do so, God will be angry with you and your colleagues, but if you obey, you will be free of guilt.³ **19:11** You will report to Amariah the chief priest in all matters pertaining to the LORD's law, and to Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the leader of the family of Judah, in all matters pertaining to the king.⁴ The Levites will serve as officials before you. Confidently carry out your duties!⁵ May the LORD be with those who do well!"

The Lord Gives Jehoshaphat Military Success

20:1 Later the Moabites and Ammonites, along with some of the Meunites,⁶ attacked Jehoshaphat. **20:2** Messengers⁷ arrived and reported to Jehoshaphat, "A huge army is attacking you from the other side of the Dead Sea,⁸ from the direction of Edom.⁹ Look, they are in Hazezon Tamar (that is, En Gedi)." **20:3** Jehoshaphat was afraid, so he decided to seek the LORD's advice.¹⁰ He decreed that all Judah should observe a fast. **20:4** The people of Judah¹¹ assembled to ask for the LORD's help;¹² they came from all the cities of Judah to ask for the LORD's help.¹³

20:5 Jehoshaphat stood before the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem¹⁴ at the LORD's temple, in front of the new courtyard. **20:6** He prayed: "O LORD God of our ancestors,¹⁵ you are the

God who lives in heaven¹⁶ and rules over all the kingdoms of the nations. You possess strength and power; no one can stand against you. **20:7** Our God, you drove out¹⁷ the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and gave it as a permanent possession¹⁸ to the descendants of your friend¹⁹ Abraham. **20:8** They settled down in it and built in it a temple²⁰ to honor you,²¹ saying, **20:9** 'If disaster comes on us in the form of military attack,²² judgment, plague, or famine, we will stand in front of this temple before you, for you are present in this temple.²³ We will cry out to you for help in our distress, so that you will²⁴ hear and deliver us.' **20:10** Now the Ammonites, Moabites, and men from Mount Seir are coming!²⁵ When Israel came from the land of Egypt, you did not allow them to invade these lands.²⁶ They bypassed them and did not destroy them. **20:11** Look how they are repaying us! They come to drive us out of our allotted land which you assigned to us! **20:12** Our God, will you not judge them? For we are powerless against this huge army that attacks us! We don't know what we should do; we look to you for help."²⁷

20:13 All the men of Judah²⁸ were standing before the LORD, along with their infants, wives, and children. **20:14** Then in the midst of the assembly, the LORD's Spirit came upon Jachaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph. **20:15** He said: "Pay attention, all you people of Judah,²⁹ residents of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat! This is what the LORD says to

¹ **tn** *Heb* "and every case which comes to you from your brothers who live in their cities."

² **tn** *Heb* "between blood pertaining to blood."

³ **tn** *Heb* "and anger will be upon you and your brothers; do this and you will not be guilty."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and look, Amariah the chief priest is over you with respect to every matter of the LORD, and Zebadiah...with respect to every matter of the king."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "Be strong and act!"

⁶ **tc** The Hebrew text has "Ammonites," but they are mentioned just before this. Most translations, following some MSS of the LXX, read "Meunites" (see 2 Chr 26:7; so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "they"; the implied referent (messengers) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the Sea"; in context ("from the direction of Edom") this must refer to the Dead Sea, which has been specified in the translation for clarity (cf. NEB, NLT).

⁹ **tc** Most Hebrew MSS read "from Aram" (i.e., Syria), but this must be a corruption of "Edom," which is the reading of the LXX and Vulgate.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and he set his face to seek the LORD."

¹¹ **tn** The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" by metonymy for the people of Judah.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "to seek from the LORD." The verb here (בָּקַשׁ, *baqash*) is different from the one translated "seek" in v. 3 (דָּרַשׁ, *darash*).

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "to seek the LORD." The verb here (בָּקַשׁ, *baqash*) is different from the one translated "seek" in v. 3 (דָּרַשׁ, *darash*).

¹⁴ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "fathers" (also in v. 33).

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "are you not God in heaven?" The rhetorical question expects the answer "yes," resulting in the positive statement "you are the God who lives in heaven" employed in the translation.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "did you not drive out?" This is another rhetorical question which expects a positive response; see the note on the word "heaven" in the previous verse.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "permanently."

¹⁹ **tn** Or perhaps "your covenantal partner." See Isa 41:8.

²⁰ **tn** Or "sanctuary."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "for your name." The word "name" sometimes refers to one's reputation or honor (thus the translation here, "to honor you").

²² **tn** *Heb* "sword."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "for your name is in this house." The "name" of the LORD sometimes designates the LORD himself, being indistinguishable from the proper name. In this case the temple is referred to as a "house" where the LORD himself can reside.

²⁴ **tn** Or "so that you may."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "now, look, the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "whom you did not allow Israel to enter when they came from the land of Egypt."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "for [or "indeed"] upon you are our eyes."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "Judah." The words "the men of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" by metonymy for the men of Judah.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "all Judah." The words "you people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" by metonymy for the people of Judah. Unlike the previous instance in v. 13 where infants, wives, and children are mentioned separately, this reference appears to include them all.

you: ‘Don’t be afraid and don’t panic¹ because of this huge army! For the battle is not yours, but God’s. **20:16** Tomorrow march down against them as² they come up the Ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the ravine in front of the Desert of Jeruel. **20:17** You will not fight in this battle. Take your positions, stand, and watch the LORD deliver you,³ O Judah and Jerusalem. Don’t be afraid and don’t panic!⁴ Tomorrow march out toward them; the LORD is with you!’”

20:18 Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face toward the ground, and all the people of Judah⁵ and the residents of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD and worshiped him.⁶ **20:19** Then some Levites, from the Kohathites and Korahites, got up and loudly praised the LORD God of Israel.⁷

20:20 Early the next morning they marched out to the Desert of Tekoa. When they were ready to march, Jehoshaphat stood up and said: “Listen to me, you people of Judah⁸ and residents of Jerusalem! Trust in the LORD your God and you will be safe!⁹ Trust in the message of his prophets and you will win.” **20:21** He met¹⁰ with the people and appointed musicians to play before the LORD and praise his majestic splendor. As they marched ahead of the warriors they said: “Give thanks to the LORD, for his loyal love endures.”¹¹

20:22 When they began to shout and praise, the LORD suddenly attacked¹² the Ammonites, Moabites, and men from Mount Seir¹³ who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. **20:23** The Ammonites and Moabites attacked the men from Mount Seir¹⁴ and annihilated them.¹⁵ When they had finished off the men¹⁶ of Seir, they attacked and destroyed one another.¹⁷

¹ **tn** Or perhaps “don’t get discouraged.”

² **tn** *Heb* “look.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “the deliverance of the LORD with you.”

⁴ **tn** Or perhaps “don’t get discouraged.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “all Judah.” The words “you people of” are supplied in the translation for clarity. See the note on the word “Judah” in v. 15.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “to worship the LORD.”

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “arose to praise the LORD God of Israel with a very loud voice.”

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “O Judah.” The words “you people of” are supplied in the translation for clarity. See the note on the word “Judah” in v. 15.

⁹ **tn** There is a wordplay in the Hebrew text. The Hiphil verb form *הֶאֱמִינוּ* (*ha’aminu*, “trust”) and the Niphal form *תֵּאֱמֵנוּ* (*te’amenu*, “you will be safe”) come from the same verbal root (*אָמַן*, *aman*).

¹⁰ **tn** Or “consulted.”

¹¹ **tn** Or “is eternal.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “set ambushers against.” This is probably idiomatic here for launching a surprise attack.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the sons of Ammon and Moab stood against the residents of Mount Seir.”

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “to annihilate and to destroy.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “residents.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “they helped, each one his fellow, for destruction.” The verb *עָוָר* (*‘azar*), traditionally understood as the well-attested verb meaning “to help,” is an odd fit in this context. It is possible that it is from a homonymic root, perhaps meaning “to attack.” This root is attested in Ugaritic in a nominal form meaning “young man, warrior, hero.” For a discussion of the proposed root, see HALOT 8:11 s.v. עוּר וּרְעוּר.

20:24 When the men of Judah¹⁸ arrived at the observation post overlooking the desert and looked at¹⁹ the huge army, they saw dead bodies on the ground; there were no survivors! **20:25** Jehoshaphat and his men²⁰ went to gather the plunder; they found a huge amount of supplies, clothing,²¹ and valuable items. They carried away everything they could.²² There was so much plunder, it took them three days to haul it off.²³

20:26 On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, where²⁴ they praised the LORD. So that place is called the Valley of Berachah²⁵ to this very day. **20:27** Then all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem with Jehoshaphat leading them; the LORD had given them reason to rejoice over their enemies. **20:28** They entered Jerusalem to the sound of stringed instruments and trumpets and proceeded to the temple of the LORD. **20:29** All the kingdoms of the surrounding lands were afraid of God²⁶ when they heard how the LORD had fought against Israel’s enemies. **20:30** Jehoshaphat’s kingdom enjoyed peace; his God made him secure on every side.²⁷

Jehoshaphat’s Reign Ends

20:31 Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king and he reigned for twenty-five years in Jerusalem.²⁸ His mother was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. **20:32** He followed in his father Asa’s footsteps and was careful to do what the LORD approved.²⁹ **20:33** However, the high places were not eliminated; the people were still not devoted to the God of their ancestors.³⁰

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “Judah.” The words “the men of” are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name “Judah” by metonymy for the men of Judah.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “turned toward.”

²⁰ **tn** Or “army.”

²¹ **tc** The MT reads *בְּגָדִים* (*ʔgarim*, “corpses”), but this seems odd among a list of plunder. A few medieval Hebrew MSS and the Vulgate read *בְּגָדִים* (*vʔgadim*, “clothing”), which fits the context much better.

²² **tn** *Heb* “and they snatched away for themselves so that there was no carrying away.”

²³ **tn** *Heb* “and they were three days looting the plunder for it was great.”

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “for there.”

²⁵ **sn** The name *Berachah*, which means “blessing” in Hebrew, is derived from the verbal root “to praise [or “to bless],” which appears earlier in the verse.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and the terror of God [or “a great terror]” was upon all the kingdoms of the lands.” It is uncertain if *אֱלֹהִים* (*elohim*) should be understood as a proper name here (“God”), or taken in an idiomatic superlative sense.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and his God gave him rest all around.”

²⁸ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “he walked in the way of his father Asa and did not turn from it, doing what is right in the eyes of the LORD.”

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* “and still the people did not set their heart[s] on the God of their fathers.”

20:34 The rest of the events of Jehoshaphat's reign, from start to finish, are recorded in the Annals of Jehu son of Hanani which are included in Scroll of the Kings of Israel.¹

20:35 Later King Jehoshaphat of Judah made an alliance with King Ahaziah of Israel, who² did evil. **20:36** They agreed³ to make large seagoing merchant ships;⁴ they built the ships in Ezion Geber. **20:37** Eliezer son of Dodavahu from Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, "Because⁵ you made an alliance with Ahaziah, the LORD will shatter what you have made." The ships were wrecked and unable to go to sea.⁶

21:1 Jehoshaphat passed away⁷ and was buried with his ancestors⁸ in the City of David.⁹ His son Jehoram¹⁰ replaced him as king.

Jehoram's Reign

21:2 His brothers, Jehoshaphat's sons, were Azariah, Jechiel, Zechariah, Azariahu, Michael, and Shephatiah. All of these were sons of King Jehoshaphat of Israel.¹¹ **21:3** Their father gave them many presents, including silver, gold, and other precious items, along with fortified cities in Judah. But he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the firstborn.

21:4 Jehoram took control of his father's kingdom and became powerful.¹² Then he killed all his brothers,¹³ as well as some of the officials of Israel. **21:5** Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king and he reigned for eight years in Jerusalem.¹⁴ **21:6** He followed in the footsteps of the kings of Israel, just as Ahab's dynasty had done, for he married Ahab's daughter.¹⁵ He did evil in the sight of¹⁶ the LORD.

¹ **tn** *Heb* "the rest of the events of Jehoshaphat, the former and the latter, look, they are written in the records of Jehu son of Hanani, which are taken up in the scroll of the kings of Israel."

² **tn** *Heb* "he." The pronoun has been translated as a relative pronoun for stylistic reasons.

³ **tn** *Heb* "he made an alliance with him."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "make ships to go to Tarshish." This probably refers to large ships either made in or capable of traveling to the distant western port of Tarshish; a "Tarshish-ship" was essentially a large seagoing merchant ship.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "when."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "to go to Tarshish."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "fathers" (also in vv. 10, 12, 19).

⁹ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

¹⁰ **tn** The parallel account in 2 Kgs 8:20-24 has the variant spelling "Joram" for the son of Jehoshaphat.

¹¹ **sn** A number of times in 2 Chronicles "Israel" is used instead of the more specific "Judah"; see 2 Chr 12:6; 23:2). In the interest of consistency some translations (e.g., NAB, NRSV) substitute "Judah" for "Israel" here.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "and Jehoram arose over the kingdom of his father and strengthened himself."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "and he killed all his brothers with the sword."

¹⁴ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

21:7 But the LORD was unwilling to destroy David's dynasty¹⁷ because of the promise¹⁸ he had made to give David a perpetual dynasty.¹⁹

21:8 During Jehoram's²⁰ reign Edom freed themselves from Judah's control and set up their own king.²¹ **21:9** Jehoram crossed over to Zair with his officers and all his chariots. The Edomites, who had surrounded him, attacked at night and defeated him and his chariot officers.²² **21:10** So Edom has remained free from Judah's control to this very day.²³ At that same time Libnah also rebelled and freed themselves from Judah's control²⁴ because Jehoram²⁵ rejected the LORD God of his ancestors. **21:11** He also built high places on the hills of Judah; he encouraged the residents of Jerusalem to be unfaithful to the LORD²⁶ and led Judah away from the LORD.²⁷

21:12 Jehoram²⁸ received this letter from Elijah the prophet: "This is what the LORD God of your ancestor David says: 'You²⁹ have not followed in the footsteps³⁰ of your father Jehoshaphat and of³¹ King Asa of Judah, **21:13** but have instead followed in the footsteps of the kings of Israel. You encouraged the people of Judah and the residents of Jerusalem to be unfaithful to the LORD, just as the family of Ahab

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "house."

¹⁸ **tn** Or "covenant."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "which he made to David, just as he had promised to give him and his sons a lamp all the days." Here "lamp" is metaphorical, symbolizing the Davidic dynasty.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent (Jehoram) has been specified in the translation for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "in his days Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah and enthroned a king over them."

²² **tc** *Heb* "and he arose at night and defeated Edom, who had surrounded him, and the chariot officers." The Hebrew text as it stands gives the impression that Jehoram was surrounded and launched a victorious nighttime counterattack. Yet v. 10 goes on to state that the Edomite revolt was successful. The translation above assumes an emendation of the Hebrew text. Adding a third masculine singular pronominal suffix to the accusative sign before Edom (reading אֹתוֹ [oto, "him"] instead of just אֹת [et]) and taking Edom as the subject of verbs allows one to translate the verse in a way that is more consistent with the context, which depicts an Israelite defeat, not victory. See also 2 Kgs 8:21.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "and Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah until this day."

²⁴ **tn** Or "from Jehoram's control"; *Heb* "from under his hand." The pronominal suffix may refer to Judah in general or, more specifically, to Jehoram.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "he." This pronoun could refer to Judah, but the context focuses on Jehoram's misdeeds. See especially v. 11.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and he caused the residents of Jerusalem to commit adultery." In this context spiritual unfaithfulness to the LORD is in view rather than physical adultery.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and drove Judah away."

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Jehoram) has been specified in the translation for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "Because you..." In the Hebrew text this lengthy sentence is completed in vv. 14-15. Because of its length and complexity (and the tendency of contemporary English to use shorter sentences), the translation has divided it up into several English sentences.

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "walked in the ways."

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "in the ways of."

does in Israel.¹ You also killed your brothers, members of your father's family,² who were better than you. **21:14** So look, the LORD is about to severely afflict³ your people, your sons, your wives, and all you own. **21:15** And you will get a serious, chronic intestinal disease which will cause your intestines to come out.⁴

21:16 The LORD stirred up against Jehoram the Philistines⁵ and the Arabs who lived beside the Cushites. **21:17** They attacked Judah and swept through it.⁶ They carried off everything they found in the royal palace,⁷ including his sons and wives. None of his sons was left, except for his youngest, Ahaziah. **21:18** After all this happened, the LORD afflicted him with an incurable intestinal disease.⁸ **21:19** After about two years his intestines came out because of the disease, so that he died a very painful death.⁹ His people did not make a bonfire to honor him, as they had done for his ancestors.¹⁰

21:20 Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. No one regretted his death;¹¹ he was buried in the City of David,¹² but not in the royal tombs.

Ahaziah's Reign

22:1 The residents of Jerusalem¹³ made his youngest son Ahaziah king in his place, for the raiding party that invaded the city with the Arabs had killed all the older sons.¹⁴ So Ahaziah son of Jehoram became king of Judah. **22:2** Ahaziah was twenty-two¹⁵ years old when he became king and he reigned for one year in Jerusalem. His mother was Athaliah, the grand-

daughter¹⁶ of Omri. **22:3** He followed in the footsteps of Ahab's dynasty,¹⁷ for his mother gave him evil advice.¹⁸ **22:4** He did evil in the sight of¹⁹ the LORD like Ahab's dynasty because, after his father's death, they²⁰ gave him advice that led to his destruction. **22:5** He followed their advice and joined Ahab's son King Joram²¹ of Israel in a battle against King Hazael of Syria²² at Ramoth Gilead in which the Syrians defeated Joram. **22:6** Joram²³ returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds he received from the Syrians²⁴ in Ramah when he fought against King Hazael of Syria. Ahaziah²⁵ son of King Jehoram of Judah went down to visit Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he had been wounded.²⁶

22:7 God brought about Ahaziah's downfall through his visit to Joram.²⁷ When Ahaziah²⁸ arrived, he went out with Joram to meet Jehu son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had commissioned²⁹ to wipe out Ahab's family.³⁰ **22:8** While Jehu was dishing out punishment to Ahab's family, he discovered the officials of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's relatives who were serving Ahaziah and killed them. **22:9** He looked for Ahaziah, who was captured while hiding in Samaria.³¹ They brought him to Jehu and then executed him. They did give him a burial, for they reasoned,³² "He is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with his whole heart." There was no one in Ahaziah's family strong enough to rule in his place.³³

Athaliah is Eliminated

22:10 When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she was determined

¹ **tn** Heb "and you walked in the way of the kings of Israel and caused Judah and the residents of Jerusalem to commit adultery, like the house of Ahab causes to commit adultery."

² **tn** Heb "the house of your father."

³ **tn** Heb "to strike with a great striking."

⁴ **tn** Heb "and you [will have] a serious illness, an illness of the intestines until your intestines come out because of the illness days upon days."

⁵ **tn** Heb "the spirit of the Philistines."

⁶ **tn** Heb "broke it up."

⁷ **tn** Heb "all the property which was found in the house of the king."

⁸ **tn** Heb "in his intestines with an illness [for which] there was no healer."

⁹ **tn** Heb "and it was to days from days, and about the time of the going out of the end for the days, two, his intestines came out with his illness and he died in severe illness."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "and his people did not make for him a fire, like the fire of his fathers."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "and he went without desire."

¹² **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

¹³ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "for all the older [ones] the raiding party that came with the Arabs to the camp had killed."

¹⁵ **tc** Heb "forty-two," but the parallel passage in 2 Kgs 8:26 reads "twenty-two" along with some mss of the LXX and the Syriac.

¹⁶ **tn** The Hebrew term בַּת (*bat*, "daughter") can refer, as here, to a granddaughter. See HALOT 165-66 s.v. הַבָּת 1.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "and also he walked in the ways of the house of Ahab."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "for his mother was his adviser to do evil."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "in the eyes of."

²⁰ **tn** That is, the members of Ahab's royal house.

²¹ **sn** *Jehoram* and *Joram* are alternate spellings of the Israelite king's name (also in vv. 6-7). The shorter form is used in these verses to avoid confusion with King Jehoram of Judah, father of Azariah.

²² **tn** Heb "Aram" (also in v. 6).

²³ **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Joram) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁴ **tn** Heb "which the Syrians inflicted [on] him."

²⁵ **tc** Most Hebrew mss read "Azariah." A few Hebrew mss, the LXX, Vulgate, and Syriac read "Ahaziah" (cf. 2 Kgs 8:29).

²⁶ **tn** Heb "because he was sick," presumably referring to the wounds he received in the battle with the Syrians.

²⁷ **tn** Heb "From God was the downfall of Ahaziah by going to Joram."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Ahaziah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁹ **tn** Heb "anointed."

³⁰ **tn** Heb "to cut off the house of Ahab."

³¹ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

³² **tn** Heb "they said."

³³ **tn** Heb "and there was no one belonging to the house of Ahaziah to retain strength for kingship."

to destroy the entire royal line¹ of Judah.² **22:11** So Jehoshabeath,³ the daughter of King Jehoram,⁴ took Ahaziah's son Joash and sneaked him away⁵ from the rest of the royal descendants who were to be executed. She hid him and his nurse in the room where the bed covers were stored. So Jehoshabeath the daughter of King Jehoram, wife of Jehoiada the priest and sister of Ahaziah, hid him from Athaliah so she could not execute him. **22:12** He remained in hiding in God's temple⁶ for six years, while Athaliah was ruling over the land.

23:1 In the seventh year Jehoiada made a bold move. He made a pact⁷ with the officers of the units of hundreds: Azariah son of Jehoram, Ishmael son of Jehochanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zikri. **23:2** They traveled throughout Judah and assembled the Levites from all the cities of Judah, as well as the Israelite family leaders.

They came to Jerusalem,⁸ **23:3** and the whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the temple of God. Jehoiada⁹ said to them, "The king's son will rule, just as the LORD promised David's descendants. **23:4** This is what you must do. One third of you priests and Levites who are on duty during the Sabbath will guard the doors. **23:5** Another third of you will be stationed at the royal palace and still another third at the Foundation Gate. All the others¹⁰ will stand in the courtyards of the LORD's temple. **23:6** No one must enter the LORD's temple except the priests and Levites who are on duty. They may enter because they are ceremonially pure. All the others should carry out their assigned service to the LORD. **23:7** The Levites must surround the king. Each of you must hold his weapon in his hand. Whoever tries to enter the temple¹¹ must be killed. You must accompany the king wherever he goes."¹²

23:8 The Levites and all the men of Judah¹³ did just as Jehoiada the priest ordered. Each of them took his men, those who were on duty during the Sabbath as well as those who were off duty on the Sabbath. Jehoiada the priest did not release his divisions from their duties. **23:9** Jehoiada the priest gave to the officers of the units of hundreds King David's spears and shields¹⁴ that were kept in God's temple. **23:10** He placed the men at their posts, each holding his weapon in his hand. They lined up from the south side of the temple to the north side and stood near the altar and the temple, surrounding the king.¹⁵ **23:11** Jehoiada and his sons led out the king's son and placed on him the crown and the royal insignia.¹⁶ They proclaimed him king and poured olive oil on his head.¹⁷ They declared, "Long live the king!"

23:12 When Athaliah heard the royal guard¹⁸ shouting and praising the king, she joined the crowd¹⁹ at the LORD's temple. **23:13** Then she saw²⁰ the king standing by his pillar at the entrance. The officers and trumpeters stood beside the king and all the people of the land were celebrating and blowing trumpets, and the musicians with various instruments were leading the celebration. Athaliah tore her clothes and yelled, "Treason! Treason!"²¹ **23:14** Jehoiada the priest sent out the officers of the units of hundreds, who were in charge of the army, and ordered them, "Bring her outside the temple to the guards.²² Put the sword to anyone who follows her." The priest gave this order because he had decided she should not be executed in the LORD's temple.²³ **23:15** They seized her and took her into the precincts of the royal palace through the horses' entrance.²⁴ There they executed her.

¹³ **tn** Heb "all Judah." The words "the men of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" by metonymy for the men of Judah.

¹⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text lists two different types of shields here. Most translations render "the large and small shields" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV; NEB "King David's spears, shields, and bucklers").

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and he stationed all the people, each with his weapon in his hand, from the south shoulder of the house to the north shoulder of the house, at the altar and at the house, near the king all around."

¹⁶ **tn** The Hebrew word עֵדוּת (*edut*) normally means "witness" or "testimony." Here it probably refers to some tangible symbol of kingship, perhaps a piece of jewelry such as an amulet or neck chain (see the discussion in M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* [AB], 128). Some suggest that a document is in view, perhaps a copy of the royal protocol or of the stipulations of the Davidic covenant (see *HALOT* 790-91 s.v.).

¹⁷ **tn** Or "they made him king and anointed him."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "and Athaliah heard the sound of the people, the runners."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "she came to the people."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "and she saw, and behold."

²¹ **tn** Or "Conspiracy! Conspiracy!"

²² **tn** Heb "ranks."

²³ **tn** Heb "for the priest had said, 'Do not put her to death in the house of the LORD.'"

²⁴ **tn** Heb "and they placed hands on her, and she went through the entrance of the gate of the horses [into] the house of the king." Some English versions treat the phrase "gate of the horses" as the name of the gate ("the Horse

¹ **tn** Heb "she arose and she destroyed all the royal offspring." The verb קָם (*qum*, "arise") is here used in an auxiliary sense to indicate that she embarked on a campaign to destroy the royal offspring. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 125.

² **tn** Heb "house of Judah."

³ **sn** *Jehoshabeath* is a variant spelling of the name *Jehosheba* (2 Kgs 11:2).

⁴ **tn** Heb "the king"; the referent (King Jehoram, see later in this verse) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁵ **tn** Heb "stole."

⁶ **tn** Heb "and he was with them in the house of God hiding."

⁷ **tn** Or "covenant."

⁸ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁹ **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Jehoiada the priest, cf. v. 8) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "all the people."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "house."

¹² **tn** Heb "and be with the king in his coming out and in his going out."

23:16 Jehoiada then drew up a covenant stipulating that he, all the people, and the king should be loyal to the LORD.¹ **23:17** All the people went and demolished² the temple of Baal. They smashed its altars and idols.³ They killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altars. **23:18** Jehoiada then assigned the duties of the LORD's temple to the priests, the Levites whom David had assigned to the LORD's temple. They were responsible for offering burnt sacrifices to the LORD with joy and music, according to⁴ the law of Moses and the edict of David. **23:19** He posted guards at the gates of the LORD's temple, so no one who was ceremonially unclean in any way could enter. **23:20** He summoned⁵ the officers of the units of hundreds, the nobles, the rulers of the people, and all the people of land, and he then led the king down from the LORD's temple. They entered the royal palace through the Upper Gate and seated the king on the royal throne. **23:21** All the people of the land celebrated, for the city had rest now that they had killed Athaliah.⁶

Joash's Reign

24:1 Joash was seven years old when he began to reign. He reigned for forty years in Jerusalem.⁷ His mother was Zibiah, who was from Beer Sheba. **24:2** Joash did what the LORD approved⁸ throughout the lifetime⁹ of Jehoiada the priest. **24:3** Jehoiada chose two wives for him who gave him sons and daughters.

24:4 Joash was determined to repair the LORD's temple.¹⁰ **24:5** He assembled the priests and Levites and ordered them, "Go out to the cities of Judah and collect the annual quota of silver from all Israel for repairs on the temple of your God. Be quick about it!" But the Levites delayed.

24:6 So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief priest,¹¹ and said to him, "Why have you not made¹² the Levites collect¹³ from Judah and Jerusalem the tax authorized by Moses the

LORD's servant and by the assembly of Israel at the tent containing the tablets of the law?"¹⁴ **24:7** (Wicked Athaliah and her sons had broken into God's temple and used all the holy items of the LORD's temple in their worship of the Baals.) **24:8** The king ordered a chest to be made and placed outside the gate of the LORD's temple.¹⁵ **24:9** An edict was sent throughout Judah and Jerusalem requiring the people to bring to the LORD the tax that Moses, God's servant, imposed on Israel in the wilderness.¹⁶ **24:10** All the officials and all the people gladly brought their silver and threw it into the chest until it was full. **24:11** Whenever the Levites brought the chest to the royal accountant and they saw there was a lot of silver, the royal scribe and the accountant of the high priest emptied the chest and then took it back to its place. They went through this routine every day and collected a large amount of silver.

24:12 The king and Jehoiada gave it to the construction foremen¹⁷ assigned to the LORD's temple. They hired carpenters and craftsmen to repair the LORD's temple, as well as those skilled in working with iron and bronze to restore the LORD's temple. **24:13** They worked hard and made the repairs.¹⁸ They followed the measurements specified for God's temple and restored it.¹⁹ **24:14** When they were finished, they brought the rest of the silver to the king and Jehoiada. They used it to make items for the LORD's temple, including items used in the temple service and for burnt sacrifices, pans, and various other gold and silver items. Throughout Jehoiada's lifetime, burnt sacrifices were offered regularly in the LORD's temple.

24:15 Jehoiada grew old and died at the age of 130.²⁰ **24:16** He was buried in the City of David²¹ with the kings, because he had accomplished good in Israel and for God and his temple.

24:17 After Jehoiada died, the officials of Judah visited the king and declared their loyalty to him.²² The king listened to their advice.²³ **24:18** They abandoned the temple of the LORD God of their ancestors,²⁴ and worshipped²⁵ the

Gate"; e.g., NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹ **tn** *Heb* "and Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and [between] all the people and [between] the king, to become a people for the LORD."

² **tn** Or "tore down."

³ **tn** Or "images."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "as it is written in."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "took."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "killed Athaliah with the sword."

⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and Joash did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "all the days of."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and it was, later, there was with the heart of Joash to repair the house of the LORD."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "Jehoiada the head"; the word "priest" not in the Hebrew text but is implied.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "sought."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "bring."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the tent of testimony."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and the king said [it] and they made a chest and placed it in the gate of the house of the LORD outside."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and they gave voice in Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the LORD the tax of Moses the servant of God upon Israel in the wilderness."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "doers of the work."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and the doers of the work worked, and the repairs went up for the work by their hand."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and they caused the house of God to stand according to its measurements and they strengthened it."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and Jehoiada grew old and was full of days and died; [he was] one hundred thirty years old when he died."

²¹ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

²² **tn** *Heb* "came and bowed down to the king."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "to them."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "fathers" (also in v. 24).

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "served."

Asherah poles and idols. Because of this sinful activity, God was angry with Judah and Jerusalem. **24:19** The LORD sent prophets among them to lead them back to him.¹ They warned² the people, but they would not pay attention. **24:20** God's Spirit energized³ Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. He stood up before the people and said to them, "This is what God says: 'Why are you violating the commands of the LORD? You will not be prosperous! Because you have rejected the LORD, he has rejected you!'" **24:21** They plotted against him and by royal decree stoned him to death in the courtyard of the LORD's temple. **24:22** King Joash disregarded⁴ the loyalty his father Jehoiada had shown him and killed Jehoiada's⁵ son. As Zechariah⁶ was dying, he said, "May the LORD take notice and seek vengeance!"⁷

24:23 At the beginning⁸ of the year the Syrian army attacked⁹ Joash¹⁰ and invaded Judah and Jerusalem. They wiped out all the leaders of the people and sent all the plunder they gathered to the king of Damascus. **24:24** Even though the invading Syrian army was relatively weak, the LORD handed over to them Judah's very large army,¹¹ for the people of Judah¹² had abandoned the LORD God of their ancestors. The Syrians¹³ gave Joash what he deserved.¹⁴ **24:25** When they withdrew, they left Joash¹⁵ badly wounded. His servants plotted against him because of what he had done to¹⁶ the son¹⁷ of Jehoiada the priest. They murdered him on his bed. Thus¹⁸ he died and was buried in the City of David,¹⁹ but not in the tombs of the kings. **24:26** The conspirators

were Zabad son of Shimeath (an Ammonite woman) and Jehozabad son of Shimrith (a Moabite woman).

24:27 The list of Joash's²⁰ sons, the many prophetic oracles pertaining to him, and the account of his building project on God's temple are included in the record of the Scroll of the Kings.²¹ His son Amaziah replaced him as king.

Amaziah's Reign

25:1 Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for twenty-nine years in Jerusalem.²² His mother was Jehoaddan, who was from Jerusalem. **25:2** He did what the LORD approved,²³ but not with wholehearted devotion.²⁴

25:3 When he had secured control of the kingdom,²⁵ he executed the servants who had assassinated his father.²⁶ **25:4** However, he did not execute their sons. He obeyed the LORD's commandment as recorded in the law scroll of Moses,²⁷ "Fathers must not be executed for what their sons do,²⁸ and sons must not be executed for what their fathers do."²⁹ A man must be executed only for his own sin."³⁰

25:5 Amaziah assembled the people of Judah³¹ and assigned them by families to the commanders of units of a thousand and the commanders of units of a hundred for all Judah and Benjamin. He counted those twenty years old and up and discovered there were 300,000 young men of fighting age³² equipped with spears and shields.³³ **25:6** He hired 100,000 Israelite warriors for a hundred talents³⁴ of silver.

¹ **tn** Heb "and he sent among them prophets to bring them back to the LORD."

² **tn** Heb "testified among."

³ **tn** Heb "clothed."

⁴ **tn** Heb "did not remember."

⁵ **tn** Heb "his"; the referent (Jehoiada) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁶ **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Zechariah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁷ **tn** Heb "and seek [-]." The direct object of "seek" is omitted in the Hebrew text but implied; "vengeance" is supplied for clarification.

⁸ **tn** Heb "turning."

⁹ **tn** Heb "went up against."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "him"; the referent (Joash) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "though with a small amount of men the army of Aram came, the LORD gave into their hand an army [that was] very large."

¹² **tn** Heb "they"; the referent (the people of Judah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹³ **tn** Heb "they"; the referent (the Syrians) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "executed judgments [on] Joash."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "him"; the referent (Joash) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "because of the shed blood of."

¹⁷ **tc** The MT has the plural בני (b'ney, "sons"), but the final yod is dittographic. Note the yod that immediately follows.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "and he died."

¹⁹ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

²⁰ **tn** Heb "his"; the referent (Joash) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²¹ **tn** Heb "And his sons and the abundance of the oracle[s] against him, and the founding of the house of God, look are they not written on the writing of the scroll of the kings?"

²² **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²³ **tn** Heb "he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "a complete heart."

²⁵ **tn** Heb "when the kingdom was secure upon him."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "he killed his servants, the ones who had struck down the king, his father."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "as it is written in the scroll of the law of Moses which the LORD commanded, saying."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "on account of sons."

²⁹ **tn** Heb "on account of fathers."

³⁰ **sn** This law is recorded in Deut 24:16.

³¹ **tn** Heb "Judah." The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" by metonymy here for the people of Judah.

³² **tn** Heb "young men going out to war."

³³ **tn** Heb "holding a spear and a shield."

³⁴ **tn** The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (*kikar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the weight of the silver was 6,730 lbs. (3,060 kg).

25:7 But a prophet⁴ visited him and said: “O king, the Israelite troops must not go with you, for the LORD is not with Israel or any of the Ephraimites.² 25:8 Even if you go and fight bravely in battle, God will defeat you³ before the enemy. God is capable of helping or defeating.”⁴ 25:9 Amaziah asked the prophet: “But what should I do about the hundred talents of silver I paid the Israelite troops?” The prophet⁶ replied, “The LORD is capable of giving you more than that.” 25:10 So Amaziah dismissed the troops that had come to him from Ephraim and sent them home.⁷ They were very angry at Judah and returned home incensed. 25:11 Amaziah boldly led his army to the Valley of Salt,⁸ where he defeated⁹ 10,000 Edomites.¹⁰ 25:12 The men¹¹ of Judah captured 10,000 men alive. They took them to the top of a cliff and threw them over.¹² All the captives¹³ fell to their death.¹⁴ 25:13 Now the troops Amaziah had dismissed and had not allowed to fight in the battle¹⁵ raided¹⁶ the cities of Judah from Samaria¹⁷ to Beth Horon. They killed¹⁸ 3,000 people and carried off a large amount of plunder.

25:14 When Amaziah returned from defeating the Edomites, he brought back the gods of the people¹⁹ of Seir and made them his personal gods.²⁰ He bowed down before them and offered them sacrifices. 25:15 The LORD was angry at Amaziah and sent a prophet to him, who said, “Why are you following²¹ these gods²² that could not deliver their own people from your power?”²³ 25:16 While he was speaking, Amaziah²⁴ said to him, “Did we appoint you to be a royal counselor? Stop prophesying or else

you will be killed!”²⁵ So the prophet stopped, but added, “I know that the LORD has decided²⁶ to destroy you, because you have done this thing and refused to listen to my advice.”

25:17 After King Amaziah of Judah consulted with his advisers,²⁷ he sent this message to the king of Israel, Joash son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, “Come, face me on the battlefield.”²⁸ 25:18 King Joash of Israel sent this message back to King Amaziah of Judah, “A thorn bush in Lebanon sent this message to a cedar in Lebanon, ‘Give your daughter to my son as a wife.’ Then a wild animal of Lebanon came by and trampled down the thorn bush.”²⁹ 25:19 You defeated Edom³⁰ and it has gone to your head.³¹ Gloat over your success,³² but stay in your palace. Why bring calamity on yourself? Why bring down yourself and Judah along with you?”³³

25:20 But Amaziah did not heed the warning,³⁴ for God wanted to hand them over to Joash because they followed the gods of Edom.³⁵ 25:21 So King Joash of Israel attacked. He and King Amaziah of Judah faced each other on the battlefield³⁶ in Beth Shemesh of Judah. 25:22 Judah was defeated by Israel, and each man ran back home.³⁷ 25:23 King Joash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah, son of Joash son of Jehoahaz, in Beth Shemesh and brought him to Jerusalem. He broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate – a distance of about six hundred feet.³⁸ 25:24 He took away all the gold and silver, all the items

²⁵ tn Heb “Stop yourself! Why should they strike you down?”

²⁶ tn The verb יָעַץ (*ya'ats*, “has decided”) is from the same root as יוֹעֵץ (*yo'ets*, “counselor”) in v. 16 and נִצְחָה (*etsah*, “advice”) later in v. 16. The wordplay highlights the appropriate nature of the divine punishment. Amaziah rejected the counsel of God’s prophet; now he would be the victim of God’s “counsel.”

²⁷ tn The words “with his advisers” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁸ tn Heb “let us look at each other [in the] face.” The expression refers here not to a visit but to meeting in battle. See v. 21.

²⁹ sn The *thorn bush* in the allegory is Judah. Amaziah’s success had deceived him into thinking he was on the same level as the major powers in the area (symbolized by the cedar). In reality he was not capable of withstanding an attack by a real military power such as Israel (symbolized by the wild animal).

³⁰ tn Heb “you say [to yourself], ‘look, you have defeated Edom.’”

³¹ tn Heb “and your heart is lifted up.”

³² tn Heb “to glorify.”

³³ tn Heb “Why get involved in calamity and fall, you and Judah with you?”

³⁴ tn Heb “did not listen.”

³⁵ tn Heb “because it was from God in order to give them into the hand because they sought the gods of Edom.”

³⁶ tn Heb “looked at each other [in the] face.” See the note on the expression “Come on, face me on the battlefield” in v. 17.

³⁷ tn Heb “and Judah was struck down before Israel and they fled, each to his tent.”

³⁸ tn Heb “400 cubits.” Assuming a cubit of 18 inches (45 cm), the distance would have been about 600 feet (180 m).

¹ tn Heb “man of God.”

² tn Heb “Israel, all the sons of Ephraim.”

³ tn Heb “cause you to stumble.”

⁴ tn Heb “to cause to stumble.”

⁵ tn Heb “said to the man of God.”

⁶ tn Heb “man of God.”

⁷ tn Heb “and Amaziah separated them, the troops who came to him from Ephraim, to go to their place.”

⁸ tn Heb “and Amaziah strengthened himself and led his people and went to the Valley of Salt.”

⁹ tn Or “struck down.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “sons of Seir.”

¹¹ tn Heb “sons.”

¹² tn Heb “and threw them from the top of the cliff.”

¹³ tn Heb “all of them.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “smashed in pieces.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “had sent back from going with him to the battle.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “stripped.”

¹⁷ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

¹⁸ tn Heb “struck down.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “sons.”

²⁰ tn Heb “caused them to stand for him as gods.”

²¹ tn Heb “seeking,” perhaps in the sense of “consulting [an oracle from].”

²² tn Heb “the gods of the people.”

²³ tn Heb “hand.”

²⁴ tn Heb “he”; the referent (Amaziah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

found in God's temple that were in the care of Obed-Edom, the riches in the royal palace, and some hostages. Then he went back to Samaria.

25:25 King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah lived for fifteen years after the death of King Joash son of Jehoahaz of Israel. **25:26** The rest of the events of Amaziah's reign, from start to finish, are recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel.¹ **25:27** From the time Amaziah turned from following the LORD, conspirators plotted against him in Jerusalem,² so he fled to Lachish. But they sent assassins after him³ and they killed him there. **25:28** His body was carried back by horses,⁴ and he was buried in Jerusalem with his ancestors⁵ in the City of David.⁶

Uzziah's Reign

26:1 All the people of Judah took Uzziah,⁷ who was sixteen years old, and made him king in his father Amaziah's place. **26:2** Uzziah⁸ built up Elat and restored it to Judah after King Amaziah⁹ had passed away.¹⁰

26:3 Uzziah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem.¹¹ His mother's name was Jeholiah, who was from Jerusalem. **26:4** He did what the LORD approved, just as his father Amaziah had done.¹² **26:5** He followed¹³ God during the lifetime of¹⁴ Zechariah, who taught him how to honor God. As long as he followed¹⁵ the LORD, God caused him to succeed.¹⁶

26:6 Uzziah attacked¹⁷ the Philistines and broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod. He built cities in the region of Ashdod and throughout Philistine territory.¹⁸ **26:7** God helped him in his campaigns¹⁹ against the Philistines,

the Arabs living in Gur Baal, and the Meunites. **26:8** The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah and his fame reached²⁰ the border of Egypt, for he grew in power.

26:9 Uzziah built and fortified towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, Valley Gate, and at the Angle.²¹ **26:10** He built towers in the desert and dug many cisterns, for he owned many herds in the lowlands²² and on the plain. He had workers in the fields and vineyards in the hills and in Carmel,²³ for he loved agriculture.²⁴

26:11 Uzziah had an army of skilled warriors trained for battle. They were organized by divisions according to the muster rolls made by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the officer under the authority of Hananiah, a royal official. **26:12** The total number of family leaders who led warriors was 2,600. **26:13** They commanded an army of 307,500 skilled and able warriors who were ready to defend²⁵ the king against his enemies. **26:14** Uzziah supplied shields, spears, helmets, breastplates, bows, and slingstones for the entire army. **26:15** In Jerusalem he made war machines carefully designed to shoot arrows and large stones from the towers and corners of the walls. He became very famous, for he received tremendous support and became powerful.²⁶

26:16 But once he became powerful, his pride destroyed him.²⁷ He disobeyed²⁸ the LORD his God. He entered the LORD's temple to offer incense on the incense altar. **26:17** Azariah the priest and eighty other brave priests of the LORD followed him in. **26:18** They confronted²⁹ King Uzziah and said to him, "It is not proper for you, Uzziah, to offer incense to the LORD. That is the responsibility of the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who are consecrated to offer incense. Leave the sanctuary, for you have disobeyed³⁰ and the LORD God will not honor you!" **26:19** Uzziah, who had an incense censer in his hand, became angry. While he was ranting and raving³¹ at the priests, a skin disease³² appeared on his forehead right there in front of the priests in the LORD's temple near the incense altar.

¹ **tn** Heb "As for the rest of the events of Amaziah, the former and the latter, are they not - behold, they are written on the scroll of the kings of Judah and Israel."

² **tn** Heb "and they conspired against him [with] a conspiracy in Jerusalem."

³ **tn** Heb "and they sent after him to Lachish."

⁴ **tn** Heb "and they carried him on horses."

⁵ **tn** Heb "fathers."

⁶ **tc** The Hebrew text has "Judah," but some medieval mss read "David," as does the parallel passage in 2 Kgs 14:20.

⁷ **tn** The phrase the *City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

⁸ **tn** The parallel account in 2 Kgs 15:1-8 has the variant spelling "Azariah."

⁹ **tn** Heb "he"; the referent (Uzziah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "after the king"; the referent (Amaziah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** "slept with his fathers."

¹² **tn** **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹³ **tn** Heb "he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD, according to all which Amaziah his father had done."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "sought."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "in the days of."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "in the days of his seeking."

¹⁷ **tn** Or "prosper."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "went out and fought."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "in Ashdod and among the Philistines."

²⁰ **tn** The words "in his campaigns" are supplied in the

translation for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

²¹ **tn** Heb "and his name went to."

²² **tn** On the meaning of the Hebrew word מִקְצוֹת (*miqtsot*), see HALOT 628 s.v. מִקְצוֹת. The term probably refers to an "angle" or "corner" somewhere on the eastern wall of Jerusalem.

²³ **tn** Heb "Shephelah."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "workers and vinedressers in the hills and in Carmel." The words "he had" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁵ **tn** Heb "for a lover of the ground he [was]."

²⁶ **tn** Heb "help."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "and his name went out to a distant place, for he did extraordinarily to be helped until he was strong."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "his heart was high [i.e., proud] to destroy."

²⁹ **tn** Or "was unfaithful to."

³⁰ **tn** Heb "stood against."

³¹ **tn** Or "been unfaithful."

³² **tn** Heb "angry."

³³ **tn** Traditionally "leprosy," but this was probably a skin disorder of some type, not leprosy (technically known today as Hansen's disease). See 2 Kgs 5:1.

26:20 When Azariah the high priest and the other priests looked at¹ him, there was a skin disease on his forehead. They hurried him out of there; even the king² himself wanted to leave quickly because the LORD had afflicted him. 26:21 King Uzziah suffered from a skin disease until the day he died. He lived in separate quarters,³ afflicted by a skin disease and banned from the LORD's temple. His son Jotham was in charge of the palace and ruled over the people of the land.

26:22 The rest of the events of Uzziah's reign, from start to finish, were recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.⁴ 26:23 Uzziah passed away⁵ and was buried near his ancestors⁶ in a cemetery⁷ belonging to the kings. (This was because he had a skin disease.)⁸ His son Jotham replaced him as king.

Jotham's Reign

27:1 Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for sixteen years in Jerusalem.⁹ His mother was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. 27:2 He did what the LORD approved, just as his father Uzziah had done.¹⁰ (He did not, however, have the audacity to enter the temple.)¹¹ Yet the people were still sinning.

27:3 He built the Upper Gate to the LORD's temple and did a lot of work on the wall in the area known as Ophel.¹² 27:4 He built cities in the hill country of Judah and fortresses and towers in the forests.

27:5 He launched a military campaign¹³ against the king of the Ammonites and defeated them. That year the Ammonites paid him 100 talents¹⁴ of silver, 10,000 cors¹⁵ of wheat, and

10,000 cors¹⁶ of barley. The Ammonites also paid this same amount of annual tribute the next two years.¹⁷

27:6 Jotham grew powerful because he was determined to please the LORD his God.¹⁸ 27:7 The rest of the events of Jotham's reign, including all his military campaigns and his accomplishments, are recorded in the scroll of the kings of Israel and Judah.¹⁹ 27:8 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for sixteen years in Jerusalem. 27:9 Jotham passed away²⁰ and was buried in the City of David.²¹ His son Ahaz replaced him as king.

Ahaz's Reign

28:1 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for sixteen years in Jerusalem.²² He did not do what pleased the LORD, in contrast to his ancestor David.²³ 28:2 He followed in the footsteps of²⁴ the kings of Israel; he also made images of the Baals. 28:3 He offered sacrifices in the Valley of Ben Hinnom and passed his sons through the fire,²⁵ a horrible sin practiced by the nations²⁶ whom the LORD drove out before the Israelites. 28:4 He offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

28:5 The LORD his God handed him over to the king of Syria. The Syrians²⁷ defeated him and deported many captives to Damascus.²⁸ He was also handed over to the king of Israel, who thoroughly defeated him.²⁹ 28:6 In one day King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel killed 120,000

¹ *tn* Heb "turned toward."

² *tn* Heb "he"; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³ *tn* The precise meaning of בית ההפשיית (*bet hakhafshiyt*, "house of [?]") is uncertain. NASB, NIV, NRSV all have "in a separate house"; NEB has "in his own house...relieved of all duties." For a discussion of various proposals, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 166-67.

⁴ *tn* Heb "As for the rest of the events of Uzziah, the former and the latter, Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet, recorded."

⁵ *tn* Heb "lay down with his fathers."

⁶ *tn* Heb "fathers."

⁷ *tn* Heb "a field of burial."

⁸ *tn* Heb "for they said, 'He had a skin disease.'"

⁹ *map* For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁰ *tn* Heb "he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD, according to all which Uzziah his father had done."

¹¹ *tn* Heb "except he did not enter the house of the LORD."

¹² *tn* Heb "wall of Ophel." See HALOT 861 s.v. וּפְהֵל.

¹³ *tn* Heb "he fought with."

¹⁴ *tn* The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (*kikar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the weight of the silver was 6,730 lbs. (3,060 kg).

¹⁵ *sn* As a unit of dry measure a *cor* was roughly equivalent to six bushels (about 220 liters).

¹⁶ *tn* Heb "10,000 cors of wheat and 10,000 of barley." The unit of measure of the barley is omitted in the Hebrew text, but is understood to be "cors," the same as the measures of wheat.

¹⁷ *tn* Heb "This the sons of Ammon brought to him, and in the second year and the third."

¹⁸ *tn* Heb "because he established his ways before the LORD his God."

¹⁹ *tn* Heb "As for the rest of the events of Jotham, and his battles and his ways, look, they are written on the scroll of the kings of Israel and Judah."

²⁰ *tn* Heb "lay down with his fathers."

²¹ *sn* The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

²² *map* For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²³ *tn* Heb "and he did not do what was proper in the eyes of the LORD, like David his father."

²⁴ *tn* Heb "he walked in the ways of."

²⁵ *sn* This may refer to child sacrifice, though some interpret it as a less drastic cultic practice (NEB "burnt his sons in the fire"; NASB "burned his sons in the fire"; NIV "sacrificed his sons in the fire"; NRSV "made his sons pass through fire"). For discussion see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 266-67.

²⁶ *tn* Heb "like the abominable practices of the nations."

²⁷ *tn* Heb "they"; the referent (the Syrians) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁸ *tn* Heb "and took captive from him a great captivity and brought [them] to Damascus."

²⁹ *tn* Heb "who struck him down with a great striking."

warriors in Judah, because they had abandoned the LORD God of their ancestors.¹ **28:7** Zikri, an Ephraimite warrior, killed the king's son Maasiah, Azrikam, the supervisor of the palace, and Elkanah, the king's second-in-command. **28:8** The Israelites seized from their brothers 200,000 wives, sons, and daughters. They also carried off a huge amount of plunder and took it² back to Samaria.³

28:9 Oded, a prophet of the LORD, was there. He went to meet the army as they arrived in Samaria and said to them: "Look, because the LORD God of your ancestors was angry with Judah he handed them over to you. You have killed them so mercilessly that God has taken notice.⁴ **28:10** And now you are planning⁵ to enslave⁶ the people⁷ of Judah and Jerusalem. Yet are you not also guilty before the LORD your God? **28:11** Now listen to me! Send back those you have seized from your brothers, for the LORD is very angry at you!"⁸ **28:12** So some of⁹ the Ephraimite family leaders, Azariah son of Jehochanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jechizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai confronted¹⁰ those returning from the battle. **28:13** They said to them, "Don't bring those captives here! Are you planning on making us even more sinful and guilty before the LORD?¹¹ Our guilt is already great and the LORD is very angry at Israel."¹² **28:14** So the soldiers released the captives and the plunder before the officials and the entire assembly. **28:15** Men were assigned to take the prisoners and find clothes among the plunder for those who were naked.¹³ So they clothed them, supplied them with sandals, gave them food and drink, and provided them with oil to rub on their skin.¹⁴ They put the ones who couldn't walk on donkeys.¹⁵ They brought them back to their brothers

at Jericho,¹⁶ the city of the date palm trees, and then returned to Samaria.

28:16 At that time King Ahaz asked the king¹⁷ of Assyria for help. **28:17** The Edomites had again invaded and defeated Judah and carried off captives. **28:18** The Philistines had raided the cities of Judah in the lowlands¹⁸ and the Negev. They captured and settled in Beth Shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco and its surrounding villages, Timnah and its surrounding villages, and Gimzo and its surrounding villages. **28:19** The LORD humiliated¹⁹ Judah because of King Ahaz of Israel,²⁰ for he encouraged Judah to sin and was very²¹ unfaithful to the LORD. **28:20** King Tiglath-pileser²² of Assyria came, but he gave him more trouble than support.²³ **28:21** Ahaz gathered riches²⁴ from the LORD's temple, the royal palace, and the officials and gave them to the king of Assyria, but that did not help.

28:22 During his time of trouble King Ahaz was even more unfaithful to the LORD. **28:23** He offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus whom he thought had defeated him.²⁵ He reasoned,²⁶ "Since the gods of the kings of Damascus helped them, I will sacrifice to them so they will help me." But they caused him and all Israel to stumble. **28:24** Ahaz gathered the items in God's temple and removed them. He shut the doors of the LORD's temple and erected altars on every street corner in Jerusalem. **28:25** In every city throughout Judah he set up high places to offer sacrifices to other gods. He angered the LORD God of his ancestors.

28:26 The rest of the events of Ahaz's reign, including his accomplishments from start to finish, are recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel.²⁷ **28:27** Ahaz passed away²⁸

¹⁶ **map** For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-E3; Map10-A2; Map11-A1.

¹⁷ **tc** Most Hebrew MSS read the plural, "kings," but one Hebrew MS, the LXX and Vulgate read the singular "king." Note the singular in v. 20.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "Shephelah."

¹⁹ **tn** Or "subdued."

²⁰ **sn** That is, "of Judah." Frequently in 2 Chronicles "Israel" is substituted for "Judah."

²¹ **tn** The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verbal form to emphasize the degree of Ahaz's unfaithfulness.

²² **tn** Heb "Tilgath-pilneser," a variant spelling of Tiglath-pileser.

²³ **tn** Heb "and he caused him distress and did not strengthen him."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "divided up," but some read הָלְלוּ (*khillets*, "despoiled").

²⁵ **tn** Heb "the gods of Damascus, the ones who had defeated him." The words "he thought" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The perspective is that of Ahaz, not the narrator! Another option is that "the kings" has been accidentally omitted after "gods of." See v. 23b.

²⁶ **tn** Heb "said."

²⁷ **tn** Heb "As for the rest of his events, and all his ways, the former and the latter, look, they are written on the scroll of the kings of Judah and Israel."

²⁸ **tn** Heb "lay down with his fathers."

¹ **tn** Heb "fathers" (also in vv. 9, 25).

² **tn** Heb "the loot." The pronoun ("it") has been used in the translation for stylistic reasons, to avoid redundancy.

³ **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

⁴ **tn** Heb "and you killed them with anger [that] reaches as far as heaven."

⁵ **tn** Heb "saying."

⁶ **tn** Heb "to enslave as male servants and female servants."

⁷ **tn** Heb "sons."

⁸ **tn** Heb "for the rage of the anger of the LORD is upon you."

⁹ **tn** Heb "men from."

¹⁰ **tn** Heb "arose against."

¹¹ **tn** Heb "for to the guilt of the LORD upon us you are saying to add to our sins and our guilty deeds."

¹² **tn** Heb "for great is [the] guilt to us and rage of anger is upon Israel."

¹³ **tn** Heb "and the men who were designated by names arose and took the captives and all their naked ones they clothed from the loot."

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "and poured oil on them."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "and they led them on donkeys, with respect to everyone stumbling."

and was buried in the City of David;¹ they did not bring him to the tombs of the kings of Israel. His son Hezekiah replaced him as king.

Hezekiah Consecrates the Temple

29:1 Hezekiah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem.² His mother was Abijah,³ the daughter of Zechariah. **29:2** He did what the LORD approved, just as his ancestor David had done.⁴

29:3 In the first month of the first year of his reign, he opened the doors of the LORD's temple and repaired them. **29:4** He brought in the priests and Levites and assembled them in the square on the east side. **29:5** He said to them: "Listen to me, you Levites! Now consecrate yourselves, so you can consecrate the temple of the LORD God of your ancestors!⁵ Remove from the sanctuary what is ceremonially unclean! **29:6** For our fathers were unfaithful; they did what is evil in the sight of⁶ the LORD our God and abandoned him! They turned⁷ away from the LORD's dwelling place and rejected him.⁸ **29:7** They closed the doors of the temple porch and put out the lamps; they did not offer incense or burnt sacrifices in the sanctuary of the God of Israel. **29:8** The LORD was angry at Judah and Jerusalem and made them an appalling object of horror at which people hiss out their scorn,⁹ as you can see with your own eyes. **29:9** Look, our fathers died violently¹⁰ and our sons, daughters, and wives were carried off¹¹ because of this. **29:10** Now I intend¹² to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, so that he may relent from his raging anger.¹³ **29:11** My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to serve in his presence and offer sacrifices."¹⁴

29:12 The following Levites prepared to carry out the king's orders:¹⁵

From the Kohathites: Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of Azariah;

from the Merarites: Kish son of Abdi and Azariah son of Jehallelel;

from the Gershonites: Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah;

29:13 from the descendants of Elizaphan: Shimri and Jeiel;

from the descendants of Asaph: Zechariah and Mattaniah;

29:14 from the descendants of Heman: Jehiel and Shimei;

from the descendants of Jeduthun: Shemaiah and Uzziel.

29:15 They assembled their brothers and consecrated themselves. Then they went in to purify the LORD's temple, just as the king had ordered, in accordance with the word¹⁶ of the LORD. **29:16** The priests then entered the LORD's temple to purify it; they brought out to the courtyard of the LORD's temple every ceremonially unclean thing they discovered inside.¹⁷ The Levites took them out to the Kidron Valley. **29:17** On the first day of the first month they began consecrating; by the eighth day of the month they reached the porch of the LORD's temple.¹⁸ For eight more days they consecrated the LORD's temple. On the sixteenth day of the first month they were finished. **29:18** They went to King Hezekiah and said: "We have purified the entire temple of the LORD, including the altar of burnt sacrifice and all its equipment, and the table for the Bread of the Presence and all its equipment. **29:19** We have prepared and consecrated all the items that King Ahaz removed during his reign when he acted unfaithfully. They are in front of the altar of the LORD."

29:20 Early the next morning King Hezekiah assembled the city officials and went up to the LORD's temple. **29:21** They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven goats as a sin offering for the kingdom, the sanctuary, and Judah.¹⁹ The king²⁰ told the priests, the descendants of Aaron, to offer burnt sacrifices on the altar of the LORD. **29:22** They slaughtered the bulls, and the priests took the blood and splashed it on the altar. Then they slaughtered the rams and splashed the blood on the altar; next they slaughtered the lambs and splashed the blood on the altar. **29:23** Finally they brought the goats for the sin offering before the king and the assembly, and they placed their hands on them. **29:24** Then the priests slaughtered them. They offered their blood as a sin offering on the altar to make atonement for all Israel, because the

¹ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

² **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

³ **tn** The parallel passage in 2 Kgs 18:2 has "Abi."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD, according to all which David his father had done."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "fathers."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "turned their faces."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and turned the back."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and he made them [an object] of dread and devastation and hissing."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "fell by the sword."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "are in captivity."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "now it is with my heart."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "so that the rage of his anger might turn from us." The jussive with *vav* (ו) conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding statement of intention.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "to stand before him to serve him and to be his servants and sacrificers."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and the Levites arose."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "words" (plural).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "in the temple of the LORD."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "porch of the LORD."

¹⁹ **sn** Perhaps these terms refer metonymically to the royal court, the priests and Levites, and the people, respectively.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

king had decreed¹⁴ that the burnt sacrifice and sin offering were for all Israel.

29:25 King Hezekiah² stationed the Levites in the LORD's temple with cymbals and stringed instruments, just as David, Gad the king's prophet,³ and Nathan the prophet had ordered. (The LORD had actually given these orders through his prophets.) **29:26** The Levites had⁴ David's musical instruments and the priests had trumpets. **29:27** Hezekiah ordered the burnt sacrifice to be offered on the altar. As they began to offer the sacrifice, they also began to sing to the LORD, accompanied by the trumpets and the musical instruments of King David of Israel. **29:28** The entire assembly worshiped, as the singers sang and the trumpeters played. They continued until the burnt sacrifice was completed.

29:29 When the sacrifices were completed, the king and all who were with him bowed down and worshiped. **29:30** King Hezekiah and the officials told the Levites to praise the LORD, using the psalms⁵ of David and Asaph the prophet.⁶ So they joyfully offered praise and bowed down and worshiped. **29:31** Hezekiah said, "Now you have consecrated yourselves⁷ to the LORD. Come and bring sacrifices and thank offerings⁸ to the LORD's temple." So the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and whoever desired to do so⁹ brought burnt sacrifices.

29:32 The assembly brought a total of 70 bulls, 100 rams, and 200 lambs as burnt sacrifices to the LORD,¹⁰ **29:33** and 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep¹¹ were consecrated. **29:34** But there were not enough priests to skin all the animals,¹² so their brothers, the Levites, helped them until the work was finished and the priests could consecrate themselves. (The Levites had been more conscientious about consecrating themselves than the priests.)¹³ **29:35** There was a large number of burnt sacrifices, as well as fat from the peace offerings and drink offerings that accompanied the burnt sacrifices. So the service of the

LORD's temple was reinstated.¹⁴ **29:36** Hezekiah and all the people were happy about what God had done¹⁵ for them,¹⁶ for it had been done quickly.¹⁷

Hezekiah Observes the Passover

30:1 Hezekiah sent messages throughout Israel and Judah; he even wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, summoning them to come to the LORD's temple in Jerusalem¹⁸ and observe a Passover celebration for the LORD God of Israel. **30:2** The king, his officials, and the entire assembly in Jerusalem decided to observe the Passover in the second month. **30:3** They were unable to observe it at the regular¹⁹ time because not enough priests had consecrated themselves and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem. **30:4** The proposal seemed appropriate to²⁰ the king and the entire assembly. **30:5** So they sent an edict²¹ throughout Israel from Beer Sheba to Dan, summoning the people²² to come and observe a Passover for the LORD God of Israel in Jerusalem, for they had not observed it on a nationwide scale as prescribed in the law.²³ **30:6** Messengers²⁴ delivered the letters from the king and his officials throughout Israel and Judah.

This royal edict read:²⁵ "O Israelites, return to the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so he may return²⁶ to you who have been spared from the kings of Assyria.²⁷ **30:7** Don't be like your fathers and brothers who were unfaithful to the LORD God of their ancestors,²⁸ provoking him to destroy them,²⁹ as you can see. **30:8** Now, don't be stubborn³⁰ like your fathers! Submit³¹ to the LORD and come to his sanctuary which he has permanently consecrated. Serve the LORD your God so that he might relent from his raging anger.³²

¹⁴ tn Or "established."

¹⁵ tn Heb "prepared."

¹⁶ tn Heb "the people." The pronoun "they" has been used here for stylistic reasons, to avoid redundancy.

¹⁷ tn Heb "for quickly was the matter."

¹⁸ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁹ tn Heb "at that time."

²⁰ tn Heb "and the thing was proper in the eyes of."

²¹ tn Heb "and they caused to stand a word to cause a voice to pass through."

²² tn The words "summoning the people" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²³ tn Heb "because not for abundance had they done as written."

²⁴ tn Heb "the runners."

²⁵ tn Heb "and according to the command of the king, saying."

²⁶ tn The jussive with vav conjunctive indicates purpose/result after the preceding imperative.

²⁷ tn Heb "to the survivors who are left to you from the palm of the kings of Assyria."

²⁸ tn Heb "fathers" (also in vv. 19, 22).

²⁹ tn Heb "and he made them a devastation" (or, perhaps, "an object of horror").

³⁰ tn Heb "don't stiffen your neck" (a Hebrew idiom for being stubborn).

³¹ tn Heb "give a hand." On the meaning of the idiom here, see HALOT 387 s.v. I 7; 2.

³² tn Heb "so that the rage of his anger might turn from you." The jussive with vav conjunctive indicates purpose/

¹ tn Heb "said."

² tn Heb "he"; the referent (King Hezekiah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³ tn Or "seer."

⁴ tn Heb "stood with" (i.e., stood holding).

⁵ tn Heb "with the words."

⁶ tn Or "seer."

⁷ tn Heb "filled your hand."

⁸ tn Or "tokens of thanks."

⁹ tn Heb "and all who were willing of heart."

¹⁰ tn Heb "and the number of burnt sacrifices which the assembly brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams, two hundred lambs; for a burnt sacrifice to the LORD were all these."

¹¹ tn The Hebrew term אֵימָה (*ts'on*) denotes smaller livestock in general; depending on context it can refer to sheep only or goats only, but there is nothing in the immediate context here to specify one or the other.

¹² tn Heb "the burnt sacrifices."

¹³ tn Heb "for the Levites were more pure of heart to consecrate themselves than the priests."

30:9 For if you return to the LORD, your brothers and sons will be shown mercy by their captors and return to this land. The LORD your God is merciful and compassionate; he will not reject you¹ if you return to him.”

30:10 The messengers journeyed from city to city through the land of Ephraim and Manasseh as far as Zebulun, but people mocked and ridiculed them.² **30:11** But some men from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. **30:12** In Judah God moved the people to unite and carry out the edict the king and the officers had issued at the LORD’s command.³ **30:13** A huge crowd assembled in Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month.⁴ **30:14** They removed the altars in Jerusalem; they also removed all the incense altars and threw them into the Kidron Valley.⁵

30:15 They slaughtered the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and Levites were ashamed, so they consecrated themselves and brought burnt sacrifices to the LORD’s temple. **30:16** They stood at their posts according to the regulations outlined in the law of Moses, the man of God. The priests were splashing the blood as the Levites handed it to them.⁶ **30:17** Because many in the assembly had not consecrated themselves, the Levites slaughtered⁷ the Passover lambs of all who were ceremonially unclean and could not consecrate their sacrifice to the LORD.⁸ **30:18** The majority of the many people from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun were ceremonially unclean, yet they ate the Passover in violation of what is prescribed in the law.⁹ For Hezekiah prayed for them, saying: “May the LORD, who is good, forgive¹⁰ **30:19** everyone who has determined to follow God,¹¹ the LORD God of his ancestors, even if he is not ceremonially clean according to the standards of the temple.”¹² **30:20** The LORD

responded favorably¹³ to Hezekiah and forgave¹⁴ the people.

30:21 The Israelites who were in Jerusalem observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great joy. The Levites and priests were praising the LORD every day with all their might.¹⁵

30:22 Hezekiah expressed his appreciation to all the Levites,¹⁶ who demonstrated great skill in serving the LORD.¹⁷ They feasted for the seven days of the festival,¹⁸ and were making peace offerings and giving thanks to the LORD God of their ancestors.

30:23 The entire assembly then decided to celebrate for seven more days; so they joyfully celebrated for seven more days. **30:24** King Hezekiah of Judah supplied 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep¹⁹ for the assembly, while the officials supplied them²⁰ with 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep. Many priests consecrated themselves. **30:25** The celebration included²¹ the entire assembly of Judah, the priests, the Levites, the entire assembly of those who came from Israel, the resident foreigners who came from the land of Israel, and the residents of Judah. **30:26** There was a great celebration in Jerusalem, unlike anything that had occurred in Jerusalem since the time of King Solomon son of David of Israel.²² **30:27** The priests and Levites got up and pronounced blessings on the people. The LORD responded favorably to them²³ as their prayers reached his holy dwelling place in heaven.

¹³ tn Heb “listened.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “healed.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “and they were praising the LORD day by day, the Levites and the priests with instruments of strength to the LORD.” The phrase בְּקִלְיֵינוּ (*bikhley-’oz*, “with instruments of strength”) might refer to loud sounding musical instruments (NASB “with loud instruments”; NEB “with unrestrained fervour”). The present translation assumes an emendation to בְּקִלְיֵינוּ (*bēkhol-’oz*, “with all strength”); see 1 Chr 13:8, as well as HALOT 805 s.v. קָלוּ and BDB 739 s.v. קָלוּ.

¹⁶ tn Heb “and Hezekiah spoke to the heart of all the Levites.” On the meaning of the idiom “speak to the heart of” here, see HALOT 210 s.v. דַּבֵּר וְלֵב.

¹⁷ tn Heb “who demonstrated skill [with] good skill for the LORD.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “and they ate [during] the appointed time [for] seven days.” מוֹעֵד (*mo’ed*, “appointed time”) is probably an adverbial accusative of time referring to the festival. However, some understand it as metonymically referring to the food eaten during the festival. See BDB 417 s.v.

¹⁹ tn The Hebrew term צֹאן (*ts’on*, translated “sheep” twice in this verse) denotes smaller livestock in general; depending on context it can refer to sheep only or goats only, but their is nothing in the immediate context here to specify one or the other.

²⁰ tn Heb “the assembly.” The pronoun “them” has been used in the translation for stylistic reasons, to avoid redundancy.

²¹ tn Heb “they rejoiced.”

²² tn Heb “and there was great joy in Jerusalem, for from the days of Solomon son of David, king of Israel, there was nothing like this in Jerusalem.”

²³ tn Heb “and it was heard with their voice.” BDB 1034 s.v. שָׁמְעוּ Niph.4 interprets this to mean “hearing was granted to their voice.” It is possible that the name הַדָּבָר (*yēhvah*, “the LORD”) has been accidentally omitted.

result after the preceding imperative.

¹ tn Heb “turn [his] face from you.”

² tn Heb “and they were mocking them and ridiculing them.”

³ tn Heb “also in Judah the hand of God was to give to them one heart to do the command of the king and the officials by the word of the LORD.”

⁴ tn The Hebrew text adds here, “a very large assembly.” This has not been translated to avoid redundancy with the expression “a huge crowd” at the beginning of the verse.

⁵ tn Heb “and they arose and removed the altars which were in Jerusalem, and all the incense altars they removed and threw into the Kidron Valley.”

⁶ tn Heb “from the hand of the Levites.”

⁷ tn Heb “were over the slaughter of.”

⁸ tn Heb “of everyone not pure to consecrate to the LORD.”

⁹ tn Heb “without what is written.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “make atonement for.”

¹¹ tn Heb “everyone [who] has prepared his heart to seek God.”

¹² tn Heb “and not according to the purification of the holy place.”

31:1 When all this was over, the Israelites¹ who were in the cities of Judah went out and smashed the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherah poles, and demolished² all the high places and altars throughout Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh.³ Then all the Israelites returned to their own homes in their cities.⁴

The People Contribute to the Temple

31:2 Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and Levites to do their assigned tasks⁵ – to offer burnt sacrifices and present offerings and to serve, give thanks, and offer praise in the gates of the LORD’s sanctuary.⁶

31:3 The king contributed⁷ some of what he owned for burnt sacrifices, including the morning and evening burnt sacrifices and the burnt sacrifices made on Sabbaths, new moon festivals, and at other appointed times prescribed⁸ in the law of the LORD. **31:4** He ordered⁹ the people living in Jerusalem¹⁰ to contribute the portion prescribed for the priests and Levites so they might be obedient¹¹ to the law of the LORD. **31:5** When the edict was issued,¹² the Israelites freely contributed¹³ the initial portion of their grain, wine, olive oil, honey, and all the produce of their fields. They brought a tenth of everything, which added up to a huge amount. **31:6** The Israelites and people of Judah¹⁴ who lived in the cities of Judah also contributed a tenth of their cattle and sheep, as well as a tenth of the holy items consecrated to the LORD their God. They brought them and placed them in many heaps.¹⁵ **31:7** In the third month they began piling their contributions in heaps¹⁶ and finished in the seventh month. **31:8** When Hezekiah and the officials came and saw the heaps, they praised the LORD and pronounced blessings on his people Israel.¹⁷

31:9 When Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites about the heaps, **31:10** Azariah, the head priest from the family of Zadok, said to him, “Since the contributions began arriving in the LORD’s temple, we have had plenty to eat and have a large quantity left over. For the LORD has blessed his people, and this large amount remains.” **31:11** Hezekiah ordered that storerooms be prepared in the LORD’s temple. When this was done,¹⁸ **31:12** they brought in the contributions, tithes,¹⁹ and consecrated items that had been offered.²⁰ Konaniah, a Levite, was in charge of all this, assisted by his brother Shimei. **31:13** Jehiel, Azariah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismakiah, Mahath, and Benaiah worked under the supervision of Konaniah and his brother Shimei, as directed by King Hezekiah and Azariah, the supervisor of God’s temple.

31:14 Kore son of Imnah, a Levite and the guard on the east side, was in charge of the voluntary offerings made to God and disbursed the contributions made to the LORD and the consecrated items. **31:15** In the cities of the priests, Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah faithfully assisted him in making disbursements to their fellow priests²¹ according to their divisions, regardless of age.²² **31:16** They made disbursements to all the males three years old and up who were listed in the genealogical records – to all who would enter the LORD’s temple to serve on a daily basis and fulfill their duties as assigned to their divisions.²³ **31:17** They made disbursements to the priests listed in the genealogical records by their families, and to the Levites twenty years old and up, according to their duties as assigned to their divisions, **31:18** and to all the infants, wives, sons, and daughters of the entire assembly listed in the genealogical records, for they faithfully consecrated themselves. **31:19** As for the descendants of Aaron, the priests who lived in the outskirts of all their cities,²⁴ men were assigned²⁵ to disburse portions to every male among the priests and to every Levite listed in the genealogical records.

31:20 This is what Hezekiah did throughout Judah. He did what the LORD his God considered good and right and faithful. **31:21** He wholeheartedly and successfully reinstated

¹ **tn** Heb “all Israel.”

² **tn** Or “tore down.”

³ **tn** Heb “the high places and the altars from all Judah and Benjamin and in Ephraim and in Manasseh until finished.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “and the sons of Israel returned, each to his possession to their cities.”

⁵ **tn** Heb “and Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and the Levites according to their divisions, each in accordance with his service for the priests and for the Levites.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “in the gates of the encampments of the LORD.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “the portion of the king [was].”

⁸ **tn** Heb “as written.”

⁹ **tn** Heb “said to.”

¹⁰ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹¹ **tn** Heb “might hold firmly.”

¹² **tn** Heb “and when the word spread out.”

¹³ **tn** Heb “the sons of Israel multiplied.”

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “and the sons of Israel and Judah.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “heaps, heaps.” Repetition of the noun draws attention to the large number of heaps.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “they began the heaps, to establish.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “they blessed the LORD and his people Israel.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “and they prepared.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “tenth.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “and holy things in faithfulness.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “to their brothers.”

²² **tn** Heb “like great, like small” (i.e., old and young alike).

²³ **tn** Heb “in addition enrolling them by males from a son of three years and upwards, to everyone who enters the house of the LORD for a matter of a day in its day, for their service by their duties according to their divisions.”

²⁴ **tn** Heb “the priests in the fields of the pastureland of their cities in every city and city.”

²⁵ **tn** Heb “designated by names.”

service in God's temple and obedience to the law, in order to follow his God.¹

Sennacherib Invades Judah

32:1 After these faithful deeds were accomplished, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah. He besieged the fortified cities, intending to seize them.² **32:2** When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had invaded and intended to attack Jerusalem,³ **32:3** he consulted with his advisers and military officers about stopping up the springs⁴ outside the city, and they supported him. **32:4** A large number of people gathered together and stopped up all the springs and the stream that flowed through the district.⁵ They reasoned,⁶ "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find plenty of water?" **32:5** Hezekiah⁷ energetically rebuilt⁸ every broken wall. He erected towers and an outer wall,⁹ and fortified the terrace of the City of David.¹⁰ He made many weapons and shields.

32:6 He appointed military officers over the army¹¹ and assembled them in the square at the city gate. He encouraged them,¹² saying, **32:7** "Be strong and brave! Don't be afraid and don't panic¹³ because of the king of Assyria and this huge army that is with him! We have with us one who is stronger than those who are with him.¹⁴ **32:8** He has with him mere human strength,¹⁵ but the LORD our God is with us to help us and fight our battles!" The army¹⁶ was encouraged by the words of King Hezekiah of Judah.

32:9 Afterward King Sennacherib of Assyria, while attacking Lachish with all his military might, sent his messengers¹⁷ to Jerusalem. The message was for King Hezekiah of Judah and all

the people of¹⁸ Judah who were in Jerusalem. It read: **32:10** "This is what King Sennacherib of Assyria says: 'Why are you so confident that you remain in Jerusalem while it is under siege?'¹⁹ **32:11** Hezekiah says, "The LORD our God will rescue us from the power²⁰ of the king of Assyria." But he is misleading you and you will die of hunger and thirst!²¹ **32:12** Hezekiah is the one who eliminated²² the LORD's²³ high places and altars and then told Judah and Jerusalem, "At one altar you must worship and offer sacrifices." **32:13** Are you not aware of what I and my predecessors²⁴ have done to all the nations of the surrounding lands? Have the gods of the surrounding lands actually been able to rescue their lands from my power?²⁵ **32:14** Who among all the gods of these nations whom my predecessors annihilated was able to rescue his people from my power?²⁶ **32:15** Now don't let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you like this. Don't believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to rescue his people from my power or the power of my predecessors. So how²⁷ can your gods rescue²⁸ you from my power?"

32:16 Sennacherib's²⁹ servants further insulted³⁰ the LORD God and his servant Hezekiah. **32:17** He wrote letters mocking the LORD God of Israel and insulting him with these words:³¹ "The gods of the surrounding nations could not rescue their people from my power. Neither can Hezekiah's god rescue his people from my power."³² **32:18** They called out loudly in the Judahite dialect to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, trying to scare and terrify them so they could seize the city. **32:19** They talked about the

¹ **tn** *Heb* "and in all the work which he began with regard to the service of the house of God and with respect to the law and with respect to the commandment, to seek his God; with all his heart he acted and he succeeded."

² **tn** *Heb* "and he said to break into them for himself."

³ **tn** *Heb* "and his face was for war against Jerusalem."

map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the waters of the springs."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and they closed up all the springs and the stream that flows in the midst of the land." Here אֶרֶץ (*arets*, "land") does not refer to the entire land, but to a smaller region like a district.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "land, saying."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Hezekiah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "strengthened himself and built."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and outside the wall another one."

¹⁰ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and he placed officers of war over the people."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "he spoke to their heart[s]."

¹³ **tn** Or perhaps, "and don't be discouraged."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "for with us [is] a greater [one] than with him."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "With him is an arm of flesh."

¹⁶ **tn** Or "people."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "servants."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "all Judah." The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" here by metonymy for the people of Judah.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "On what are you trusting that [you] are living during the siege in Jerusalem."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "hand."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "Is not Hezekiah misleading you to give you over to die by hunger and thirst, saying, 'The LORD our God will rescue us from the hand of the king of Assyria?'"

²² **tn** *Heb* "Did not he, Hezekiah, eliminate...?" This rhetorical question presupposes a positive reply ("yes, he did") and so has been translated here as a positive statement.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "fathers" (also in vv. 14, 15), but in this context the term does not necessarily refer to Sennacherib's ancestors, but to his predecessors on the Assyrian throne.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "hand."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "hand."

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "how much less."

²⁸ **tn** The verb is plural, suggesting that the preceding אֱלֹהֵיהֶם (*elohekhem*) be translated "your gods," rather than "your God."

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent (Sennacherib) has been specified in the translation for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

³⁰ **tn** *Heb* "spoke against."

³¹ **tn** *Heb* "and speaking against him, saying."

³² **tn** *Heb* "Like the gods of the nations of the lands who did not rescue their people from my hand, so the god of Hezekiah will not rescue his people from my hand."

God of Jerusalem as if he were one of the man-made gods of the nations of the earth.

32:20 King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed about this and cried out to heaven. **32:21** The LORD sent a messenger¹ and he wiped out all the soldiers, princes, and officers in the army of the king of Assyria. So Sennacherib² returned home humiliated.³ When he entered the temple of his god, some of his own sons⁴ struck him down with the sword. **32:22** The LORD delivered Hezekiah and the residents of Jerusalem from the power of King Sennacherib of Assyria and from all the other nations.⁵ He made them secure on every side.⁶ **32:23** Many were bringing presents⁷ to the LORD in Jerusalem and precious gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah. From that time on he was respected by⁸ all the nations.

Hezekiah's Shortcomings and Accomplishments

32:24 In those days Hezekiah was stricken with a terminal illness.⁹ He prayed to the LORD, who answered him and gave him a sign confirming that he would be healed.¹⁰ **32:25** But Hezekiah was ungrateful; he had a proud attitude, provoking God to be angry at him, as well as Judah and Jerusalem.¹¹ **32:26** But then Hezekiah and the residents of Jerusalem humbled themselves and abandoned their pride, and the LORD was not angry with them for the rest of Hezekiah's reign.¹²

32:27 Hezekiah was very wealthy and greatly respected. He made storehouses for his silver, gold, precious stones, spices, and all his other valuable possessions.¹³ **32:28** He made storerooms for the harvest of grain, wine, and olive oil, and stalls for all his various kinds of live-

stock and his flocks.¹⁴ **32:29** He built royal cities¹⁵ and owned a large number of sheep and cattle, for God gave him a huge amount of possessions.

32:30 Hezekiah dammed up the source of the waters of the Upper Gihon and directed them down to the west side of the City of David.¹⁶ Hezekiah succeeded in all that he did. **32:31** So when the envoys arrived from the Babylonian officials to visit him and inquire about the sign that occurred in the land,¹⁷ God left him alone to test him, in order to know his true motives.¹⁸

32:32 The rest of the events of Hezekiah's reign, including his faithful deeds, are recorded in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz, included in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel.¹⁹ **32:33** Hezekiah passed away²⁰ and was buried on the ascent of the tombs of the descendants of David. All the people of Judah and the residents of Jerusalem buried him with great honor.²¹ His son Manasseh replaced him as king.

Manasseh's Reign

33:1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned for fifty-five years in Jerusalem.²² **33:2** He did evil in the sight of²³ the LORD and committed the same horrible sins practiced by the nations²⁴ whom the LORD drove out ahead of the Israelites. **33:3** He rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he set up altars for the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the stars in the sky²⁵ and worshiped²⁶ them. **33:4** He built altars in the LORD's temple, about which the LORD had said, "Jerusalem will be my permanent home."²⁷ **33:5** In the two courtyards of the

¹ tn Or "an angel."

² tn Heb "he"; the referent (Sennacherib) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³ tn Heb "and he returned with shame of face to his land."

⁴ tn Heb "and some from those who went out from him, from his inward parts."

⁵ tn Heb "and from the hand of all."

⁶ tc The Hebrew text reads literally, "and he led him from all around." However, the present translation assumes an emendation to וַיָּנַח לָהֶם מִכָּל־צִדָּה (vayyanakh lahem missaviv, "and he gave rest to them from all around"). See 2 Chr 15:15 and 20:30.

⁷ tn Or perhaps, "offerings."

⁸ tn Heb "lifted up in the eyes of."

⁹ tn Heb "was sick to the point of dying."

¹⁰ tn Heb "and he spoke to him and a sign he gave to him."

¹¹ tn Heb "but not according to the benefit [given] to him did Hezekiah repay, for his heart was high, and there was anger against him and against Judah and Jerusalem."

map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹² tn Heb "and Hezekiah humbled himself in the height of his heart, he and the residents of Jerusalem, and the anger of the LORD did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah."

¹³ tc The Hebrew text reads literally, "and shields and all the desirable items." The present translation assumes an emendation to מַגִּדָּנִים (magidanim, "shields") to מִגְדָּנִים (migdanim, "precious items"). See v. 23.

¹⁴ tn Heb "and stalls for all beasts and beasts, and flocks for the stalls." The repetition of בְּהֵמָה (b^hemah, "beast") here indicates various kinds of livestock.

¹⁵ tn Heb "and cities he made for himself."

¹⁶ sn The phrase the City of David refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

¹⁷ tn Heb "and when the envoys of the officials of Babylon, who sent to him to inquire concerning the sign which was in the land, [arrived]."

¹⁸ tn Heb "to know all [that was] in his heart."

¹⁹ tn Heb "and the rest of the deeds of Hezekiah and his faithful acts, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah son of Amoz the prophet upon the scroll of the kings of Judah and Israel."

²⁰ tn Heb "lay down with his fathers."

²¹ tn Heb "and honor they did to him in his death, all Judah and the residents of Jerusalem."

²² map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²³ tn Heb "in the eyes of."

²⁴ tn Heb "like the abominable practices of the nations."

²⁵ tn The phrase הַשָּׁמַיִם כֻּלָּם (khol ts^hva' hashamayim), traditionally translated "all the host of heaven," refers to the heavenly lights, including stars and planets. In 1 Kgs 22:19 these heavenly bodies are pictured as members of the Lord's royal court or assembly, but many other texts view them as the illegitimate objects of pagan and Israelite worship.

²⁶ tn Or "served."

²⁷ tn Heb "In Jerusalem my name will be permanently."

LORD's temple he built altars for all the stars in the sky. **33:6** He passed his sons through the fire¹ in the Valley of Ben Hinnom and practiced divination, omen reading, and sorcery. He set up a ritual pit to conjure up underworld spirits and appointed magicians to supervise it.² He did a great amount of evil in the sight of the LORD and angered him.³ **33:7** He put an idolatrous image he had made in God's temple, about which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, "This temple in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will be my permanent home."⁴ **33:8** I will not make Israel again leave the land I gave to their ancestors,⁵ provided that they carefully obey all I commanded them, the whole law, the rules and regulations given to Moses."⁶ **33:9** But Manasseh misled the people of⁶ Judah and the residents of Jerusalem so that they sinned more than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed ahead of the Israelites.

33:10 The LORD confronted⁷ Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. **33:11** So the LORD brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria. They seized Manasseh, put hooks in his nose,⁸ bound him with bronze chains, and carried him away to Babylon. **33:12** In his pain⁹ Manasseh¹⁰ asked the LORD his God for mercy¹¹ and truly¹² humbled himself before the God of his ancestors.¹³ **33:13** When he prayed to the LORD,¹⁴ the LORD¹⁵ responded to him¹⁶ and answered favorably¹⁷ his

cry for mercy. The LORD¹⁸ brought him back to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh realized that the LORD is the true God.

33:14 After this Manasseh¹⁹ built up the outer wall of the City of David²⁰ on the west side of the Gihon in the valley to the entrance of the Fish Gate and all around the terrace; he made it much higher. He placed army officers in all the fortified cities in Judah.

33:15 He removed the foreign gods and images from the LORD's temple and all the altars he had built on the hill of the LORD's temple and in Jerusalem; he threw them outside the city. **33:16** He erected the altar of the LORD and offered on it peace offerings and thank offerings. He told the people of²¹ Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. **33:17** The people continued to offer sacrifices at the high places, but only to the LORD their God.

33:18 The rest of the events of Manasseh's reign, including his prayer to his God and the words the prophets²² spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, are recorded²³ in the Annals of the Kings of Israel. **33:19** The Annals of the Prophets include his prayer, give an account of how the LORD responded to it, record all his sins and unfaithful acts, and identify the sites where he built high places and erected Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself.²⁴ **33:20** Manasseh passed away²⁵ and was buried in his palace. His son Amon replaced him as king.

Amon's Reign

33:21 Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned for two years in Jerusalem.²⁶ **33:22** He did evil in the sight of²⁷ the LORD, just like his father Manasseh had done. He offered sacrifices to all the idols his father Manasseh had made, and worshiped²⁸ them. **33:23** He did not humble himself before the LORD as his father Manasseh had done.²⁹

¹ **tn** Or "he sacrificed his sons in the fire." This may refer to child sacrifice, though some interpret it as a less drastic cultic practice (NEB, NASV "made his sons pass through the fire"; NIV "sacrificed his sons in the fire"; NRSV "made his sons pass through fire"). For discussion see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 266-67.

² **tn** *Heb* "and he set up a ritual pit, along with a conjurer." Hebrew אֹב (ʾov, "ritual pit") refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. In 1 Sam 28:7 the witch of Endor is called a בַּעַלְתֵּי אֹב (ba'alat 'ov, "owner of a ritual pit"). See H. Hoffner, "Second Millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew 'OB,'" *JBL* 86 (1967): 385-401.

³ **tn** *Heb* "and he multiplied doing what is evil in the eyes of the LORD, angering him."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I chose from all the tribes of Israel, I will place my name permanently" (or perhaps "forever").

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "I will not again make the feet of Israel wander from the land which I established for their fathers."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "misled Judah." The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" here by metonymy for the people of Judah.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "spoke to."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "and they seized him with hooks."

⁹ **tn** Or "distress."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Manasseh) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "appeased the face of the LORD his God."

¹² **tn** Or "greatly."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "fathers."

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "him"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "was entreated by him," or "allowed himself to be entreated by him."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "heard."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Manasseh) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁰ **sn** The phrase *the City of David* refers here to the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, not to Bethlehem. See 2 Sam 5:7.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "told Judah." The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the name "Judah" here by metonymy for the people of Judah.

²² **tn** Or "seers."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "look, they are."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and his prayer and being entreated by him, and all his sin and his unfaithfulness and the places where he built high places and set up Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself – behold, they are written on the words of his seers."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "lay down with his fathers."

²⁶ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

²⁸ **tn** Or "served."

²⁹ **tn** *Heb* "as Manasseh his father had humbled himself."

Amon was guilty of great sin.¹ **33:24** His servants conspired against him and killed him in his palace. **33:25** The people of the land executed all who had conspired against King Amon, and they² made his son Josiah king in his place.

Josiah Institutes Religious Reforms

34:1 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned for thirty-one years in Jerusalem.³ **34:2** He did what the LORD approved⁴ and followed in his ancestor David's footsteps;⁵ he did not deviate to the right or the left.

34:3 In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his ancestor⁶ David. In his twelfth year he began ridding⁷ Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, Asherah poles, idols, and images. **34:4** He ordered the altars of the Baals to be torn down,⁸ and broke the incense altars that were above them. He smashed the Asherah poles, idols and images, crushed them up and sprinkled the dust over the tombs of those who had sacrificed to them. **34:5** He burned the bones of the pagan priests⁹ on their altars; he purified Judah and Jerusalem. **34:6** In the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali, and in the ruins¹⁰ around them, **34:7** he tore down the altars and Asherah poles, demolished the idols, and smashed all the incense altars throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

34:8 In the eighteenth year of his reign, he continued his policy of purifying the land and the temple.¹¹ He sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the city official, and Joah son of Joahaz the secretary to repair the temple of the LORD his God. **34:9** They went to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the silver that had been brought to God's temple. The Levites who guarded the door had collected it from the people of¹² Manasseh and Ephraim and from all who were left in Israel, as well as from all the people of¹³ Judah and Benjamin and the resi-

dents of¹⁴ Jerusalem. **34:10** They handed it over to the construction foremen¹⁵ assigned to the LORD's temple. They in turn paid the temple workers to restore and repair it.¹⁶ **34:11** They gave money to the craftsmen and builders to buy chiseled stone and wood for the braces and rafters of the buildings that the kings of Judah had allowed to fall into disrepair.¹⁷ **34:12** The men worked faithfully. Their supervisors were Jahath and Obadiah (Levites descended from Merari), as well as Zechariah and Meshullam (descendants of Kohath). The Levites, all of whom were skilled musicians, **34:13** supervised the laborers and all the foremen on their various jobs.¹⁸ Some of the Levites were scribes, officials, and guards.

34:14 When they took out the silver that had been brought to the LORD's temple, Hilkiah the priest found the law scroll the LORD had given to Moses. **34:15** Hilkiah informed Shaphan the scribe, "I found the law scroll in the LORD's temple." Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan. **34:16** Shaphan brought the scroll to the king and reported,¹⁹ "Your servants are doing everything assigned to them. **34:17** They melted down the silver in the LORD's temple²⁰ and handed it over to the supervisors of the construction foremen." **34:18** Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a scroll." Shaphan read it out loud before the king. **34:19** When the king heard the words of the law scroll, he tore his clothes. **34:20** The king ordered Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah,²¹ Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, **34:21** "Go, seek an oracle from²² the LORD for me and those who remain in Israel and Judah. Find out about²³ the words of this scroll that has been discovered. For the LORD's fury has been ignited against us,²⁴ because our ancestors²⁵ have not obeyed the word of the LORD by doing all that this scroll instructs!"²⁶

¹ **tn** Heb "for he, Amon, multiplied guilt."

² **tn** Heb "and the people of the land."

³ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁴ **tn** Heb "he did what was proper in the eyes of the LORD."

⁵ **tn** Heb "and walked in the ways of David his father."

⁶ **tn** Heb "father."

⁷ **tn** Heb "purifying."

⁸ **tn** Heb "and they tore down before him the altars of the Baals."

⁹ **tn** Heb "the priests"; the qualifying adjective "pagan" has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

¹⁰ **tn** "In their ruins" is the marginal reading (*Qere*) of the Hebrew text.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "to purify the land and the house."

¹² **tn** Heb "from Manasseh and Ephraim." The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the names "Manasseh and Ephraim" here by metonymy for the people of Manasseh and Ephraim.

¹³ **tn** Heb "all Judah and Benjamin." The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarity. The Hebrew text uses the names "Judah and Benjamin" here by metonymy for the people of Judah and Benjamin.

¹⁴ **tc** The Hebrew consonantal text (*Kethib*) assumes the reading, "and the residents of." The marginal reading (*Qere*) is "and they returned."

¹⁵ **tn** Heb "doer[s] of the work."

¹⁶ **tn** Heb "and they gave it to the doers of the work who were working in the house of the LORD to restore and to repair the house."

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "of the houses that the kings of Judah had destroyed."

¹⁸ **tn** Heb "[were] over the laborers and were directing every doer of work for work assignment and work assignment."

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "returned still the king a word, saying."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "that was found in the house of the LORD."

²¹ **tn** The parallel account in 2 Kgs 22:12 has the variant spelling "Achbor son of Micaiah."

²² **tn** Or "inquire of."

²³ **tn** Heb "concerning."

²⁴ **tn** Heb "for great is the anger of the LORD which has been ignited against us."

²⁵ **tn** Heb "fathers" (also in vv. 32, 33).

²⁶ **tn** Heb "by doing according to all that is written on this scroll."

34:22 So Hilkiah and the others sent by the king¹ went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah,² the supervisor of the wardrobe.³ (She lived in Jerusalem in the Mishneh⁴ district.) They stated their business;⁵ **34:23** and she said to them: "This is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'Say this to the man who sent you to me: **34:24** "This is what the LORD says: 'I am about to bring disaster on this place and its residents, the details of which are recorded in the scroll which they read before the king of Judah. **34:25** This will happen because they have abandoned me and offered sacrifices⁶ to other gods, angering me with all the idols they have made.⁷ My anger will ignite against this place and will not be extinguished!'" **34:26** Say this to the king of Judah, who sent you to seek an oracle from the LORD: "This is what the LORD God of Israel says concerning the words you have heard: **34:27** 'You displayed a sensitive spirit⁸ and humbled yourself before God when you heard his words concerning this place and its residents. You humbled yourself before me, tore your clothes and wept before me, and I have heard you,' says the LORD. **34:28** 'Therefore I will allow you to die and be buried in peace.⁹ You will not have to witness all the disaster I will bring on this place and its residents.'"" Then they reported back to the king.

34:29 The king summoned all the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem.¹⁰ **34:30** The king went up to the LORD's temple, accompanied by all the people of Judah, the residents of Jerusalem, the priests, and the Levites. All the people were there, from the oldest to the youngest. He read aloud all the words of the scroll of the covenant that had been discovered in the LORD's temple. **34:31** The king stood by his pillar¹¹ and renewed¹² the covenant before the LORD, agreeing to follow¹³ the LORD and to obey his commandments, laws, and rules with all his heart and

being,¹⁴ by carrying out the terms¹⁵ of this covenant recorded on this scroll. **34:32** He made all who were in Jerusalem and Benjamin agree to it.¹⁶ The residents of Jerusalem acted in accordance with the covenant of God, the God of their ancestors. **34:33** Josiah removed all the detestable idols from all the areas belonging to the Israelites and encouraged¹⁷ all who were in Israel to worship the LORD their God. Throughout the rest of his reign¹⁸ they did not turn aside from following the LORD God of their ancestors.

Josiah Observes the Passover

35:1 Josiah observed a Passover festival for the LORD in Jerusalem.¹⁹ They slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the first month. **35:2** He appointed the priests to fulfill their duties and encouraged them to carry out their service in the LORD's temple. **35:3** He told the Levites, who instructed all Israel about things consecrated to the LORD, "Place the holy ark in the temple which King Solomon son of David of Israel built. Don't carry it on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and his people Israel! **35:4** Prepare yourselves by your families according to your divisions, as instructed²⁰ by King David of Israel and his son Solomon. **35:5** Stand in the sanctuary and, together with the Levites, represent the family divisions of your countrymen.²¹ **35:6** Slaughter the Passover lambs, consecrate yourselves, and make preparations for your countrymen to do what the LORD commanded through Moses."²²

35:7 From his own royal flocks and herds, Josiah supplied the people with 30,000 lambs and goats for the Passover sacrifice, as well as 3,000 cattle.²³ **35:8** His officials also willingly contributed to the people, priests, and Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the leaders of God's temple, supplied 2,600 Passover sacrifices and 300 cattle. **35:9** Konaniah and his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, along with Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabab, the officials of the Levites, supplied the Levites with 5,000 Passover sacri-

¹ **tn** *Heb* "and those who [were sent by] the king."

² **tn** The parallel account in 2 Kgs 22:14 has the variant spelling "son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas."

³ **tn** *Heb* "the keeper of the clothes."

⁴ **tn** Or "second." For a discussion of the possible location of this district, see M. Cogán and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 283.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "and they spoke to her like this."

⁶ **tn** Or "burned incense."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "angering me with all the work of their hands." The present translation assumes this refers to idols they have manufactured (note the preceding reference to "other gods"). However, it is possible that this is a general reference to their sinful practices, in which case one might translate, "angering me by all the things they do."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "Because your heart was tender."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "Therefore, behold, I am gathering you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your tomb in peace."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "and the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem."

¹¹ **tc** This assumes an emendation to עמודו (*ammudo*), see 23:13. The MT reads "at his place."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "cut," that is, "made" or "agreed to."

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "walk after."

¹⁴ **tn** Or "soul."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "words."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and he caused to stand everyone who was found in Jerusalem and Benjamin."

¹⁷ **tn** Or "caused, forced."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "all his days."

¹⁹ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "written."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "and stand in the sanctuary by the divisions of the house of the fathers for your brothers, the sons of the people, and a division of the house of a father for the Levites."

²² **tn** *Heb* "according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "and Josiah supplied for the sons of the people sheep, lambs and sons of goats, the whole for the Passover sacrifices for everyone who was found according to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand cattle. These were from the property of the king."

fices and 500 cattle. **35:10** Preparations were made,¹ and the priests stood at their posts and the Levites in their divisions as prescribed by the king. **35:11** They slaughtered the Passover lambs and the priests splashed the blood,² while the Levites skinned the animals. **35:12** They reserved the burnt offerings and the cattle for the family divisions of the people to present to the LORD, as prescribed in the scroll of Moses.³ **35:13** They cooked the Passover sacrifices over the open fire as prescribed and cooked the consecrated offerings in pots, kettles, and pans. They quickly served them to all the people. **35:14** Afterward they made preparations for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the descendants of Aaron, were offering burnt sacrifices and fat portions until evening. The Levites made preparations for themselves and for the priests, the descendants of Aaron. **35:15** The musicians, the descendants of Asaph, manned their posts, as prescribed by David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's prophet.⁴ The guards at the various gates did not need to leave their posts, for their fellow Levites made preparations for them. **35:16** So all the preparations for the LORD's service were made that day, as the Passover was observed and the burnt sacrifices were offered on the altar of the LORD, as prescribed by King Josiah. **35:17** So the Israelites who were present observed the Passover at that time, as well as the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. **35:18** A Passover like this had not been observed in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet. None of the kings of Israel had observed a Passover like the one celebrated by Josiah, the priests, the Levites, all the people of Judah and Israel who were there, and the residents of Jerusalem. **35:19** This Passover was observed in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign.

Josiah's Reign Ends

35:20 After Josiah had done all this for the temple,⁵ King Necho of Egypt marched up to do battle at Carchemish on the Euphrates River.⁶ Josiah marched out to oppose him. **35:21** Necho⁷ sent messengers to him, saying, "Why are you opposing me, O king of Judah?⁸ I am not attacking you today, but the kingdom with which I am

at war.⁹ God told me to hurry. Stop opposing God, who is with me, or else he will destroy you."¹⁰ **35:22** But Josiah did not turn back from him;¹¹ he disguised himself for battle. He did not take seriously¹² the words of Necho which he had received from God; he went to fight him in the Plain of Megiddo.¹³ **35:23** Archers shot King Josiah; the king ordered his servants, "Take me out of this chariot,¹⁴ for I am seriously wounded." **35:24** So his servants took him out of the chariot, put him in another chariot that he owned, and brought him to Jerusalem,¹⁵ where he died. He was buried in the tombs of his ancestors;¹⁶ all the people of Judah and Jerusalem mourned Josiah. **35:25** Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah which all the male and female singers use to mourn Josiah to this very day. It has become customary in Israel to sing these; they are recorded in the Book of Laments.

35:26 The rest of the events of Josiah's reign, including the faithful acts he did in obedience to what is written in the law of the LORD¹⁷ **35:27** and his accomplishments, from start to finish, are recorded¹⁸ in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

Jehoahaz's Reign

36:1 The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem.¹⁹ **36:2** Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. **36:3** The king of Egypt prevented him from ruling in Jerusalem and imposed on the land a special tax²⁰ of one hundred talents²¹ of silver and a talent of gold. **36:4** The king of Egypt made Jehoahaz's²² brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem,

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "Not against you, you, today, but against the house of my battle."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "Stop yourself from [opposing] God who is with me and let him not destroy you."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and Josiah did not turn his face from him."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "listen to."

¹³ **map** For location see Map1-D4; Map2-C1; Map4-C2; Map5-F2; Map7-B1.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "carry me away."

¹⁵ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "fathers."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "and his faithful acts according to what is written in the law of the LORD."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "look, they are written."

¹⁹ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁰ **tn** Or "a fine."

²¹ **tn** The Hebrew word כִּכָּר (*kikar*, "circle") refers generally to something that is round. When used of metals it can refer to a disk-shaped weight made of the metal or, by extension, to a standard unit of weight. According to the older (Babylonian) standard the "talent" weighed 130 lbs. (58.9 kg), but later this was lowered to 108.3 lbs. (49.1 kg). More recent research suggests the "light" standard talent was 67.3 lbs. (30.6 kg). Using this as the standard for calculation, the weight of the silver was 6,730 lbs. (3,060 kg).

²² **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent (Jehoahaz) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹ **tn** *Heb* "and the service was prepared."

² **tn** *Heb* "from their hand."

³ **tn** *Heb* "and they put aside the burnt offering[s] to give them to the divisions of the house of the fathers for the sons of the people to bring near to the LORD as it is written in the scroll of Moses – and the same with the cattle."

⁴ **tn** Or "seer."

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "After all this, [by] which Josiah prepared the temple."

⁶ **tn** The word "River" is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (Neco) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "What to me and to you, king of Judah?"

and changed his name to Jehoiakim. Necho seized his brother Jehoahaz and took him to Egypt.

Jehoiakim's Reign

36:5 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned for eleven years in Jerusalem.¹ He did evil in the sight of² the LORD his God. **36:6** King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked him,³ bound him with bronze chains, and carried him away⁴ to Babylon. **36:7** Nebuchadnezzar took some of the items in the LORD's temple to Babylon and put them in his palace⁵ there.⁶

36:8 The rest of the events of Jehoiakim's reign, including the horrible sins he committed and his shortcomings, are recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel and Judah.⁷ His son Jehoiachin replaced him as king.

Jehoiachin's Reign

36:9 Jehoiachin was eighteen⁸ years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem.⁹ He did evil in the sight of¹⁰ the LORD. **36:10** At the beginning of the year King Nebuchadnezzar ordered him to be brought¹¹ to Babylon, along with the valuable items in the LORD's temple. In his place he made his relative¹² Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

Zedekiah's Reign

36:11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled for eleven years in Jerusalem.¹³ **36:12** He did evil in the

sight of¹⁴ the LORD his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, the LORD's spokesman. **36:13** He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him vow allegiance¹⁵ in the name of God. He was stubborn and obstinate, and refused to return¹⁶ to the LORD God of Israel. **36:14** All the leaders of the priests and people became more unfaithful and committed the same horrible sins practiced by the nations.¹⁷ They defiled the LORD's temple which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

The Babylonians Destroy Jerusalem

36:15 The LORD God of their ancestors¹⁸ continually warned them through his messengers,¹⁹ for he felt compassion for his people and his dwelling place. **36:16** But they mocked God's messengers, despised his warnings,²⁰ and ridiculed his prophets.²¹ Finally the LORD got very angry at his people and there was no one who could prevent his judgment.²² **36:17** He brought against them the king of the Babylonians, who slaughtered²³ their young men in their temple.²⁴ He did not spare²⁵ young men or women, or even the old and aging. God²⁶ handed everyone over to him. **36:18** He carried away to Babylon all the items in God's temple, whether large or small, as well as what was in the treasuries of the LORD's temple and in the treasuries of the king and his officials. **36:19** They burned down the LORD's temple and tore down the wall of Jerusalem.²⁷ They burned all its fortified buildings and destroyed all its valuable items. **36:20** He deported to Babylon all who escaped the sword. They served him and his sons until the Persian kingdom rose to power. **36:21** This took place to fulfill the LORD's message delivered

¹ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

² **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

³ **tn** *Heb* "came up against him."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "to carry him away."

⁵ **tn** Or "temple."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "in Babylon." Repeating the proper name "Babylon" here would be redundant in contemporary English, so "there" has been used in the translation.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "As for the rest of the events of Jehoiakim, and his horrible deeds which he did and that which was found against him, look, they are written on the scroll of the kings of Israel and Judah."

⁸ **tc** The Hebrew text reads "eight," but some ancient textual witnesses, as well as the parallel text in 2 Kgs 24:8, have "eighteen."

⁹ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "sent and brought him."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "and he made Zedekiah his brother king." According to the parallel text in 2 Kgs 24:17, Zedekiah was Jehoiachin's uncle, not his brother. Therefore many interpreters understand **רֵעִי** here in its less specific sense of "relative" (NEB "made his father's brother Zedekiah king"; NASB "made his kinsman Zedekiah king"; NIV "made Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, king"; NRSV "made his brother Zedekiah king").

¹³ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "in the eyes of."

¹⁵ **tn** Or "made him swear an oath."

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "and he stiffened his neck and strengthened his heart from returning."

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "like the abominable practices of the nations."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "fathers."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "and the LORD God of their fathers sent against them by the hand of his messengers, getting up early and sending."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "his words."

²¹ **tn** All three verbal forms ("mocked," "despised," and "ridiculed") are active participles in the Hebrew text, indicating continual or repeated action. They made a habit of rejecting God's prophetic messengers.

²² **tn** *Heb* "until the anger of the LORD went up against his people until there was no healer."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "killed with the sword."

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "in the house of their sanctuary."

²⁵ **tn** Or "show compassion to."

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

through Jeremiah.¹ The land experienced² its sabbatical years,³ it remained desolate for seventy years,⁴ as prophesied.⁵

Cyrus Allows the Exiles to Go Home

36:22 In the first year of the reign of⁶ King Cyrus of Persia, in fulfillment of the promise he delivered through Jeremiah,⁷ the LORD moved⁸ King Cyrus of Persia to issue a written decree throughout his kingdom. **36:23** It read: “This is what King Cyrus of Persia says: ‘The LORD God of the heavens has given to me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build for him a temple in Jerusalem⁹ in Judah. May the LORD your God energize you who belong to his people, so you may be able to go back there!’”¹⁰

¹ **tn** *Heb* “to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah.”

² **tn** Or “accepted.”

³ **sn** According to Lev 25:4, the land was to remain uncultivated every seventh year. Lev 26:33-35 warns that the land would experience a succession of such sabbatical rests if the people disobeyed God, for he would send them away into exile.

⁴ **sn** Concerning the *seventy years* see Jer 25:11.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “all the days of the desolation it rested to fulfill the seventy years.”

sn Cyrus’ edict (see vv. 22-23) occurred about fifty years after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 b.c., which is most naturally understood as the beginning point of the “days of desolation” mentioned in v. 21. The number “seventy” is probably used in a metaphorical sense, indicating a typical lifetime and suggesting a thorough or complete judgment that would not be lifted until an entirely new generation emerged.

⁶ **tn** The words “the reign of” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “to complete the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah.”

sn Regarding the *promise he delivered through Jeremiah* see Jer 29:10.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “stirred the spirit of.”

⁹ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “Whoever [is] among you from all his people – may the LORD his God [be] with him so that he may go up.”